The Notion of the 'Other' in Multicultural America and Post 9/11 Fiction:

Reading, Responses and Resistance

A Thesis Submitted

To

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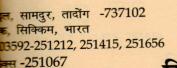**Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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DECLARATION

I, Md Nazme Furkanul Hoque, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis entitled "The Notion of the 'Other' in Multicultural America and Post-9/11 Fiction: Reading, Responses and Resistance", is the record of work done by me, that the contents of the thesis did not form the basis of awards of any previous degree to me, or to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else. The thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other university/ institute. This has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of English, School of Languages and Literature, Sikkim University, Gangtok, India.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "The Notion of the 'Other' in Multicultural America and Post-9/11 Fiction: Reading, Responses and Resistance", submitted to the Sikkim University for partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of English, embodies the result of bonafide research work carried out by Md Nazme Furkanul Hoque under our guidance and supervision. No part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other Degree, Diploma, Association and Fellowship. All the assistance and help received during the course of investigation have been daily acknowledged by him.

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Abstract

With the collapse of the World Trade Center, the multicultural American society started experiencing a change, and many social theorists applied a new interpretation to the term 'multiculturalism' based on the concept of the 'other' for a given community. In the aftermath of the tragedy of the 11th September, 2001, this word became popular and notorious as well as challenged politically. In this thesis the reading of these four novels namely, Don Delillo's *Falling Man(2007)*, John Updike's *Terrorist(2007)* , Mohosin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist(2007)* and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner(2003)* will aim at problematizing and foregrounding the underestimated position of the Muslims as 'other' in the multicultural United States of America. The aims and objectives of this research would be to understand the notion of the 'other' which has been labeled to the Muslims, a specific community and an ethnic group through the popular post 9/11 fictions. As far as the notion is concerned it has become anoverwhelming experience for the Muslims around the world at a juncture bordering on neutrality, liberal humanism and in the most authentic sense of democracy. The intention is to try and figure out the notion of 'othering' through the politics of power, hegemony and the relative instruments causing backlash to the non-Westerners in a broader sense and in particular the Muslims of the Arab or the South Asian origin. Not only that from the nationalistic approach too, nation becomes identical for propagating the sense of 'other'. During the process, the research work has also tried to analyze how the perception of the Muslims after 9/11 makes a notion and how this notion varies in two different interpretations. This study shall try to develop the arguments through the theories of developmental psychology, reader response criticism and cultural study so as to understand the mindscape of the characters of the fictions as well as the writers.

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Chapter -1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Since September 11, 2001, the world has witnessed dramatic changes in the political environment in the Muslim world, a vast and diverse region including countries with significant Muslim populations spanning from western Africa through southern Asia, including Muslim Diasporas spread out throughout the world. Through its response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the subsequent war on terror, and the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq—the United States has become deeply involved in the affairs of the Muslim world, where religion, politics, and culture interact in complicated ways and intersect with the interests of major powers. Consequently, this study emphasizes the impact of and challenge posed by September 11, 2001 on the liberal imagination and the ability to produce "democratic criticism" of the liberal public sphere in the 21st century. As a result of September 11, American culture has been infused with self-reflexive energy, and literature has joined this national self-questioning process.

With the collapse of the World Trade Center, the multicultural American society started experiencing a change, and many social theorists applied a new interpretation to the term 'multiculturalism' based on the concept of the 'other' for a specific community. In the aftermath of the tragedy of the 11th September, 2001, this word became popular and notorious as well as challenged politically. The twin towers and the Pentagon were ravaged by the suicidal attack by Al-Qaeda. In response to genocide, loss of lives, destruction of wealth and destruction of one of the most important sectors and centers of world trade, Western countries focused on the Middle

East and South Asia, especially Afghanistan and Pakistan, which eventually led to United States involvement in the war against terrorism. In Iraq in the Middle East and in Afghanistan in South-Asia, the United States announces war on terrorism. Western media have been obsessed with the activity of the Islamic world, including the Middle East and many of the countries in South-East Asia, since 9/11 and have portrayed the Muslims as the 'other'.

11 September (Tuesday), 2001 stands out as the darkest day in modern history, according to the discourse of World history post-2000. Those who watched the Twin Towers collapse over and over on their television screens will always remember it. Middle-easterners and Muslim Americans agree that 9/11 is a shocking and sad day, but also the first time they have become the victims of the counterattack. Several hate crimes, racial profiling, and discrimination followed the tragic events. These minorities had been discriminated against and stereotyped for years, but the backlash that followed 9/11 was a constant and irresistible force. As soon as the attacks occurred, Americans turned their anger, vengeance and hatred on individuals who appeared Middle Eastern or who had Arabic or Muslim-sounding names.

 The first murder victim born from the backlash was Balbir Sing Sodhi, who was confused with Osama Bin Laden due to his traditional Sikh looks (turban and unshorn hair). Contrary to popular belief, Sikhs do not belong to either the Arab or Muslim races. Following that event, bias incidents surged. No fewer than 645 bias incidents were reported in metropolitan newspapers across the country in the week after 9/11, demonstrating the strategy of nations to categorize a community into a different section away from the mainstream media.

1.2. Race and ethnicity as barriers

In the West, 9/11 may seem to have damaged multiculturalism, due to fears that tolerance for cultural differences will allow radical Islam to spread among immigrant communities. However, a more substantial examination reveals that multiculturalism's fate varies from society to society, due to the ways in which native-immigrant boundaries define cultural differences. Since 9/11, multiculturalism has been particularly threatened wherever a large proportion of migrants are Muslim, and where natives, whether secular or Christian, draw distinctions between themselves and disfavored immigrants based on religion. The U.S. approach to multiculturalism, at least of a "soft" kind, appears to have been less adversely affected than the entire Western has been as a result.

Moreover, it is not uncommon for second-generation youth to suffer from a variety of ethnic penalties and yet can move and even assimilate. As Winant points out, conceptual work still needs to be done in this area, particularly regarding the correlation between the well-developed theories originating in the United States, such as segmented assimilation and new assimilation, and other societies, such as France and Germany (Winant 33).

In conceptual works, attention may also be paid to the differences in the institutions, self-understandings, and histories of these societies. Studying integrating immigrant groups in various societies requires a systematic approach that accounts for the apparent path dependency in the integration process. In conclusion, we could look at the relative chances of assimilation versus something else that Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou have defined as "incorporation into a minority status." (Winant 75).

As part of the argument presented about stratification dynamics in these societies, several privileged native groups will seek to retain their relative social superiority and privileges. Generally, native groups seek to protect their borders from new immigrant groups (Alba 24). They do not, however, have carte blanche to do so - they must build upon the already existing institutional and ideological foundations currently viewed as legitimate; but these constraints also need to be respected. Thus, contemporary immigration situations do not necessarily lead to the same outcomes everywhere, nor are they necessarily accompanied by rigid social stratifications.

The events of 12 September 2001 are described as 'one of those moments in history when the before and after worlds split,' in a New York Times editorial. Today, 20 years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the attacks are more remembered as the trigger, or set-up, for an epoch-defining conflict: the global war on terrorism, dubbed 'War on Terror' by former US president George W. Bush.

A constant remembrance of September 11 has been made in publications and media events, political sloganeering, security measures, etc., but is it really the 'other' that is to be blamed? It sometimes seems that the extraordinary horror of 9/11 has become buried under so much gruesome imagery and narrative under the banner of America's "war on terror" -- Afghanistan, Guantánamo, Baghram, Abu Ghraib, and the ongoing slaughter in Iraq.

It is necessary to add to the list of "sickening images and narratives" those associated with the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the cycle of violence and counter violence set in motion by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Further destruction and death are being caused across the Middle East and South Asia as well as in the West as a result of the ensuing crisis. This has led to the gradual erasure of

9/11 as an isolated, almost monolithic event, especially if we abandon Redfield's US-centric perspective on the 'sickening images and narratives' of others and look at 9/11 and its aftermath from the perspectives of the others.

This builds upon the momentum already established by a body of work that addresses not only the decade-long war in Afghanistan and Iraq, but also its multiple transnational repercussions: reshaping geopolitical power relations; the emergence of new terrorist networks and regional alliances (Iraq, Syria); an increase in terrorist attacks in western countries; the changing discourses on security and the technologies of war; the exploitation of constitutional rights; and concerns about accountability for violence carried out in the name of combating terrorism. We have termed these trajectories global responses because they neither privilege one region over another, nor define one discursive frame against another.

In their studies, they examine the myriad representations of the political and cultural vicissitudes triggered by 9/11 through selected novels, poems, memoirs, and works in which both the plots and characters frequently pass through, sometimes covertly, the Netherlands, Jordan, Senegal, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Mauritania.

1.2.1. Unity and Diversity: An Overview of Multiculturalism

Understanding and promoting diversity in America has always been contingent upon using American multiculturalism as a concept. Theo Goldberg convincingly argues in the introduction of his seminal anthology *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader* that it emerged as a reaction to the prevailing discourse that was assimilationist and monocultural. Goldberg suggests that the notion of high culture in European culture deeply informed this American monoculturalism. In a time of Cold War and imperialism, these "deeply ethnoracialized Eurovision" was now used to bolster U.S.

domestic and geopolitical hegemony. Accordingly, multiculturalism emerged as a multiform revolt "against the monocultural grain" in the 1960s. Yet, the term often lacked consistency and unity as it referred to plurality and difference. Goldberg emphatically warns against reducing the "multicultural condition" that emerged in politics and education to a single definition. Multiculturalism, after all, has multiple roots.

It is rooted in well-established notions of citizenship and assimilation as a result of the Civil Rights Movement, other movements promoting identity politics, and the cultural turn of the 1960s. Multiculturalism is broadly defined as policies that accommodate ethnic, racial, or linguistic diversity in traditionally immigrant countries, such as Canada, Australia, and the United States. However, its meaning differs in different discourses. Policy-oriented movements are promoting a racially, culturally, and ethnically diverse society. Charles Taylor explains that the movement rather than aiming for increased economic and social equality has been driven more by the 'politics of recognition,' which forces society to recognize and 'incorporate' these minorities (Taylor 45).

The multiculturalism movement also spread to American university campuses with force and division. Minority and "subaltern" groups became rallying cries for new academic programs. In addition, this emphasis paved the way for expressions of aesthetic appreciation in literary studies as well as new forms of moral and emotional approval in cultural studies. A number of fiction writers from different cultural backgrounds appeared in American literature textbooks and anthologies. The concept of cultural multiculturalism evolved into a political theory that was studied and canonized by various philosophers during the last decade of the 20th century.

Various adjectives differentiated each manifestation of multicultural ambitions, such as soft and hard; assimilationist and radical; conservative, liberal, and critical; and corporate and integrating. While multiculturalism is multifaceted, encompassing principles and practices as well as concepts and categories, it is most fundamentally a holistic view of society, described by Parekh as "perspectives on life" (Parekh336). It is, in all its forms, a reflection of Western society's power structures. In 1995, even Nathan Glazer sarcastically remarked, "We Are All Multiculturalists Now," but in fact diversity had already been contested from a variety of angles (Glazer 49).

Dinesh D'Souza and Allan Bloom had lamented the loss of a shared American identity and culture, and Samuel Huntington saw multiculturalism as the most "immediate and dangerous challenge" to the American creed and Western civilization, with the potential to lead to "the end of the United States of America as we know it." Multiculturalism was a major cause of the culture wars that erupted in the 1980s during the "multicultural decade" (Huntington 306). More left-leaning intellectuals, such as Arthur Schlesinger and Todd Gitlin, had also fired back at the champions of cultural and ethnic diversity, fearing that the cultural turn would harm liberal agenda. Multiculturalism's cultural essentialistic and particularistic sides were viewed by liberal thinkers as a challenge to the universalistic and tolerant achievements of Enlightenment thought (Gitlin 55). Theorists like David Hollinger and multiracial theorists had begun searching for alternatives to multiculturalism. Multiculturalists, including Emory Elliott, explored the possibility of introducing a new aesthetics into discussions of a multicultural canon from a highly politicized perspective (Elliott et al 4).

1.2.2. Civilization and Culture after 9/11

A significant change in the multicultural debate had been brought about by the Twin
Towers bombing. Americans polarized over concerns about national security and the
country's longstanding commitment to civil liberties during the debate between
liberals and conservatives. Throughout history, America has struggled to define itself.
Multiculturalism has increasingly taken center stage in that struggle. In addition,
multiculturalism entered the international arena in ways it had never done before. As
terrorist attacks mounted and large-scale atrocities occurred in Madrid and London in
2004, many European countries became acutely aware of the contentious issue of
cultural diversity that had long been a concern for Americans intellectuals and
politicians.

America has struggled to define its stance towards American Muslims and the Arab
world while adhering to the multicultural idea amidst the growing threat of Islamic
terrorism. Since the events of 9/11, the multicultural debate has evolved in many
different ways on both sides of the Atlantic. After 9/11, Tariq Modood, a British
sociologist, expressed disillusionment and anxiety about multiculturalism. He
rhetorically asked whether multiculturalism still applied in the 21st century only to
affirm forcefully that it does.

Considering Modood's observation briefly here since it relates to the relevance of this
study, it is a challenge that American Studies should consider. Cultural studies have
always been a central concern of the scholars of American studies, who were and are
heavily influenced by multiculturalism (Larry 6). Political scientists have explored
multiculturalism, while scholars of American Studies have turned their attention to

transnational or globalized American culture. While discussing multiculturalism, these theorists largely ignore the events and aftermath of the 9/11.

 As multicultural societies on both sides of the Atlantic have faced urgent problems since 9/11, the field of American Studies has a significant role to play in this debate, especially since multiculturalism is primarily cultural rather than political in nature. Researchers studying Multiculturalism after 9/11 primarily focus on the cultural context and implications of multiculturalism rather than the political ones, and also how these are expressed in cultural texts.

1.3. Literature Review

Before we proceed further it is essential for us to review the research that has already been done in this field, though no such major analytical discussion has been done except few complete works. Novels, among other literary genres, should offer more critical interpretations of 9/11 than the initial responses of the media, namely shock, anger, grief, revenge, vis-à-vis the notion of 'other'. As a means of representation, 9/11 novels evolved years after the attacks, in contrast to the media who witnessed and covered the terrorist attacks live. Although novels had to wait a couple of years, 164 novels have been published or distributed in the USA that deals directly or indirectly with 9/11. *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali published in 2003, followed by Hari Kunzru's *Transmission* in the following year. *Windows on the World* by Frederick Beigbeder, *The Good Priest's Son* by Reynolds Price, *Saturday* by Ian McEwan, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer, and *Shalimar the Clown* by Salman Rushdie. Jay McInerney's *The Good Life* and John Updike's *Terrorist* continue this irresistible trend in 2006. DeLillo's *Falling Man*, published in 2007, reminds readers of Foer's novel as well as the 2006 documentary *9/11: The*

Falling Man, which helped inspire the book. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid was published and shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2007, and Laila Halaby published her second novel *Once in a Promised Land* which is about the Arab experience as the 'other'. With their novels *Burnt Shadows* and *Saffron Dreams* respectively about 9/11 and the aftermath, two Pakistani-American writers, Kamila Shamsie and Shaila Abdullah, are among the few women writers who have written about 9/11 so far. Not only that, some political and anthropocentric analytical study on the ground was published namely David Simpson's *9/11: The Culture of Commemoration*, Noam Chomsky's *9/11* in 2002, along with his famous piece *Power and Terror: Post 9/11Talks and Interviews* in 2003. Michael Ignatieff's *The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror* in 2004 etc among others.

In the United States, fundamentalism has infiltrated many cultural discourses and is beginning to dominate significant global issues. No matter what the "fundamental code" is, there is a common concern to stick to the beliefs and fundaments that would not allow for a superior system or something distinct. Islamic fundamentalism, extremism, and terrorism were not combated by American fundamentalism.

American Fundamentalism with a strong Christian background, it arose in the 1790s as a "natural opposition to post-modern society, which rejects the existence of absolute truth," and in particular for Protestant Presbyterians who rejected liberalism's interpretation of the Bible and affirmed five Christian principles: "divine, infallible 'Biblical inspiration'; the Virgin birth; the Crucifixion as Christ's atoning for humanity's sin; his bodily resurrection and the objectivity of Christ's miracles" (Johnson and Mabon 196). Fundamentalism seeks out convenient scapegoats in pretty much any standard, established truth, or idea that conflicts with its belief system, regardless of culture or religion. Fundamentalism spread across countries to combat

modernity, imperialism, hegemony, and globalization. "Goodness", "death", "God", and "beliefs" were all considered threats by the churches in the early years of religious fundamentalism (175). Gilligan asserts that the churches succeeded in getting people to reject the scientific revolutions of Freud, Copernicus, and Darwin: "They [churches] understood, correctly, that modern science, whose motto is "take nothing on faith, believe only in things that can be tested" (176–177).

People's minds are affected by religious fundamentalism rapidly and cause them to change their behaviors demonstrating a strong connection between propagating erroneous ideas and establishing fundamental truths. Including politics, economics, and literature, all knowledge branches have their approaches are characterized by certain fundamentals.

In the United States, classical orientalist narratives have been introduced in several literary books and theories such as Ralph Waldo Emerson's *The American Scholar* (1837), Washington Irving's *Mohamet and his Successors* (1849) Leon Uris's *Exodus* (1958), Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* (1993), and Frederick Quinn's *The Sum of All Heresies* (2007).

The fundamentals of American dominance in the Middle East are discussed, even if some of them seem controversial. The following cultural principles, according to Quinn, are in line with the origin of American fundamentalist attitudes toward Islam: "Religiously, Muhammad was either the Antichrist or a fallen Lucifer . . . Personally, he was a flawed human being . . . Politically, he was either a major leader who united the desert tribes for the first time ever or a greedy despot." (Quinn, 26)

Shaheen asserts that the earliest stereotype of American superiority over Arab Muslims is fundamentalist discourse in American culture. Cultural coverage of Arab

character aimed at showing how negatively represented Arabs were used for American writings - "he is the cultural 'other'". . . Arabs look different and threatening. They are portrayed as brute murderers, sleazy rapists, religious fanatics, oil-hungry cash cows, and cultural "others". Arabs are the brute murderers, sleazy rapists, religious fanatics, oil rich dimwits, and abusers of women" (172). Fundamentalism experienced major changes after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, when it went from visibility to prominence.

Post 9/11 American narratives are characterized by fundamentalism. A fundamentalist trend does not only involve religious practices, but also involves a dogmatic attitude that considers a particular belief or practice inviolable (Spencer and Valassopoulos 330). A neoimperialist narrative portrays Islam and Arab Muslims as "good versus evil", "peace versus terror," and "freedom versus slavery", within a more structured, neoimperialist undertaking. A deeper understanding of the Middle East must be derived not only from the constant collusion of scholarly narratives, but also from the more constructive attitude of supporting it with fundamentalist principles as well. Such fundamentalisms are characterized by a deep commitment to myths of American economic and political dominance, says Haider (2012).

 The point isn't here. Many American writers who wrote after 9/11 are hostile to its moderate version as well because of its fundamentalist slant toward harsh criticisms and cultural violence. "Having divided the world into opposing poles of good and evil, fundamentalists use fear and fiction to understand the world". (Brown 298; Semaan 18; Shaykhutdino 52)

The primary purpose of the study is to analyze how fundamentalist thoughts that created a notion of an 'Other' and the impact that fundamentalist thought has on the

image of Arab or South Asian Muslims. A broader study of the ethical implications of 9/11 could include this study and the political and military response to 9/11. The focus of this part of the study will be on some fundamental aspects; they are the factors most responsible for the establishment of a dominant narrative discourse and the development of an autonomous narrative color. Every racial group has been constructed within the context of a larger historical process characterized by relationships and interactions between power and knowledge (Dekel et al. 317; Lake 26; Rane and Ewart 158; Waikar 155).

Creating the narrative of the Muslim identity as a "racial entity" post-9/11 is the product of interactions between power, religion, and knowledge, which resulted in the revival of Christian fundamentalism and its expansion into narrative discourse. A fundamentalist narrative has emerged due to the interaction between colonial agenda, hegemonic knowledge, and American values and Christian beliefs. A discourse could be constructed through politics, imperialism, and religion by narrative writers in the post-9/11 era. Psychologists noted after World War I that attitudes have always been multidetermined by a combination of ideological forces, ideologies, societal factors, and political differences (Bohleber et al. 503).

Recent studies have examined whether discrimination against minorities on the job market increased as a result of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (9/11), not only in the United States (D´avila and Mora 588; Kaushal et al. 276; Rabby and Rodgers 274), but also in other countries such as Canada (Shannon 92), Australia (Goel 598), the UK (Braakmann 432).

According to existing empirical literature, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, hate crimes against Muslims have risen dramatically globally as well as in the United

States. 9/11 was an extremely large-scale terrorist event that fueled acts of aggression and hostility against immigrants and Muslims. Whether these events have caused a change in attitudes in society at large, and whether this effect is uniform across all types of individuals, remains to be seen. A causal link between the 9/11 incident and shifts in attitude in the general population has not been established empirically or in heterogeneous studies of the 9/11 incident. This is to examine causality between a major media event such as 9/11 and public immigration attitudes, controlling for aggregate time trends.

The research in this study contributes more generally to literature concerning how people's views about immigration are affected by factors other than economic self-interest in that it investigates whether the events of 9/11 changed attitudes toward immigration outside of the US. Several studies have consistently found that education or skill level among individuals predicts their views about immigration (e.g. Scheve and Slaughter 134; Mayda 511). Despite interpretations that these findings reflect labor-market dynamics, where low-skilled workers oppose low-skilled immigration out of fear of labor market competition, others have questioned that understanding. Dustmann and Preston (22) report that individual attitudes toward immigration are at least partially influenced by cultural differences rather than by fears of competition.

This study makes contributions to this literature strand. The 9/11 events will provide an exogenous, non-economic shock that will allow identifying non-economic drivers of immigration-related attitudes, and we will be able to measure how education moderates these attitudes in the absence of an economic reality. Furthermore, that research focuses primarily on cross-sectional comparisons and disregards intra-individual variations in attitudes over time.

In fact, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, there has been an increase in negative attitudes toward immigration among Muslim residents. As a result, there was less concern regarding foreign hostility in the wake of the attacks. There was also no evidence that the 9/11 events changed Americans' perceptions of overall economic development or crime, indicating that the 9/11 shock was not economic in nature. Therefore, cultural prejudice plays a significant role in driving immigration-related attitudes and emphasizes that major media events, such as the 9/11 attacks, may trigger public opinion shifts.

DeLillo has been called "the undisputed criterion of the age of spectacle, the poet laureate of the simulacrum, of the depthless image floating over a vacuum of social relations" (Evans, 104). Hans Bertens labels all the definitions of Postmodernism as sharing the same "common denominator," which he calls "a crisis of representation, a loss of faith in our ability to truly represent reality" (Bertens 11). "You have to give the game your full attention, and a game of poker allows you to forget all the problems you've got for a couple of hours" (Amend and Diez 2008). There are other ways to cope with the nightmarish experience of 9/11 besides oblivion. According to Justin and both of Keith's children, the towers never fell down, even if, one day, "they really will." In light of that, the children go exploring, hunting for other incoming airplanes sent by "Bill Lawton," an alternative name for Bin Laden, through a further counter-mimetic effort. Morley discusses the fact that DeLillo deliberately confronts the problems faced by writers in trying to aestheticize mass trauma by writing a fictional performance artist who bases his act on images of real victims (Morley, 305-306). Such a situation represents a moment of counter-hegemonic practice in *Falling Man*, since visual technologies are its apparatus of state control. Lianne plays the role of the camera in this film, thus asserting her autonomy from the state. As Janiak

reenacts the traumatic scene, Cvek suggests that Janiak's performance provides a chance to work through the trauma, as it is opposite the traumatizing media image (Cvek 347). As in the three interludes of DeLillo's *Falling Man*, Marathe is acutely aware of himself as a terrorist. It seems like they learnt how to be "free to", quite like Marathe himself (Conte 180), when they planned and eventually caused the collapse of the WTC. Having a "normal" existence would mean that we would not be able to choose what form of freedom we, or the others, would enjoy, thus reflecting the American people, who complain on Marathe's behalf.

The Twin Tower attacks are the violent deconstruction of that extreme form of efficiency and hegemony as defined by Jean Baudrillard. As such, terrorism might be seen as an expression of positive freedom: it aims for self-determination and perfection and imposes a certain way of living. The artistic logic of Janiak is precisely that of terrorism, as Cvek points out: a body is offered without explanation to the spectator. Janiak's controversial acts are connected to terrorist violence due to his desire for immediate gratification (Cvek 334).

According to DeLillo, the terrorist gets a unique role that sets him apart from the rest of society (Amend and Diez 2008). One obvious indication of this distinction is found in Amir's thought: "He simply stated that there are no others." Others exist only to the extent that they fulfill their role in the design. Others serve this purpose. It is only the useful fact that they are going to die that gives them a claim to their lives." *Falling Man* illustrates how the tragedy penetrates the ordinary disorder of the characters' lives. "The novel insistently explores the way in which the 'ordinary run of hours' of daily life after 9/11 is both greatly different from, while at the same time resembling, the quotidian structure that preceded it", says David Brauner. In *Falling Man*, DeLillo, inspired by his own short story "Looking at Meinhof", creates a kind of

"double vision", showing, on the one hand, how the characters "focus on the immediate concerns of day-to-day life" and, at the same time, how the fall of the Twin Towers altered everything (Brauner 74).

There's more fantasy in post-9/11 literature than realism, fewer wholes, more absence and more doubt (Wagner-Martin, 44). In *Falling Man*, Don DeLillo wrote about a greater-than-reality experience using surrealism (Wagner-Martin, 2013). 9/11 hijackers occupy a narrow narrative space stripped of its social and political specificities in *Falling Man* (Mishra). An analysis of such an event with its association with political whys and wherefores (Mishra) is minimal. As opposed to using politics as an explanation, DeLillo turns to religion to explain 9/11 terrorism and concludes by proposing that Muslims are the ones who are responsible for their wrath (Mishra). Accordingly, DeLillo's representation of Hammad in *Falling Man* is intended to highlight his notion of a binary opposition between western culture and 'Islamic' culture. Hammad, the 9/11 hijacker, is presented as a geopolitical Islam by Delillo in *Falling Man* (Aldalala'a 72). A nihilistic Islam is embodied in Muhammad (80). Throughout the novel, Keith, the 9/11 survivor in the novel, and Hammad's differences in culture and their understanding of their roles in life are emphasized (81).

According to DeLillo, Islamic countries are the source of the Western assault and Muslims represent the lasting danger to Americans. The author nevertheless provides the readers with the "unique perspective" required to gain a deeper understanding of the mindset of a fundamentalist who is planning to slaughter many Americans. This is argued by Nirjharini Tripathy (Tripathy 70). It offers a twofold perspective on both the victims, represented by Keith, his wife, and mother-in-law, as well as the perpetrators, represented by Hammad and Amir (72). In this regard, it is necessary to

situate the novelist's portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the proper geopolitical context.

The aging American critic Harold Bloom is one of a few to argue that the novel is inferior and its significance will fade with time. Specifically, Bloom argues that *The Kite Runner* (2003) is a grindingly honest narrative in the form of a memoir [here echoing Oscar Wilde's saying "all bad poetry is honest"]. Although I have just read through *The Kite Runner*, I cannot regard it as writing (7). The lives of Hassan and Hosseini are very similar. My dad is a driving instructor and my mum is a waitress at Denny's, working graveyard shifts, as well as my dad has been a diplomat (Hossein, Hoby). According to Bloom, "Hassan has also related some incidents from his life that inspired him to write his book. When he was a child, he befriended a family cook".(Bloom 13)   During his investigation, Hosseini discovered the cook was illiterate, due to prejudice against the Hazara, which prevented most from attending school. The way Foster describes narrators (p. 67), they're like cats. The world mostly revolves around them, but they talk about other people.

There are a lot of parallels between *The Kite Runner* and Khaled Hosseini's life. A variety of approaches have been used to investigate Updike's *Terrorist* (2007). Studies of the direct and indirect intension and trauma of the terrorist attacks in *Terrorist* have tended to focus on the traumatic consequences of the assaults. Updike's conception of the Muslim 'other' has also been looked at. Several studies have analyzed Updike's metatextuality of the transnational marriages in *Terrorist* and concluded that he has incited Muslims to reject the American way of life by presenting them as Muslims influenced by Islam intensely. In the stories *Terrorist* and Mohammad Ismail's *Desert of Death and Peace* published in 2011 (Manqoush et al., 10) looked at the use of allusion in relating 9/11 and the occupation of Iraq by the United States.

But neither did they connect Updike's representations of Islam and Muslims to the American colonial wars in Iraq or Afghanistan or to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Scholars have studied the implications of colonialism and orientalism in post-9/11 American novels. The narrative underlying *Terrorist* has been analyzed postcolonially and has three main themes. In the first theme, Updike was considered attempting to represent the Muslim 'other' in the context of the post-9/11 era (Zaidan 2). The second held that the novel challenged conventional and traditional Orientalist binary opposition between the East and the West (Gamal, 52). In addition, another important theme that appears in *Terrorist* is the neo-Orientalist exaggeration of the Muslim other (Arif and Ahmad, 554; Mirzayee et al, 227).

A political perspective was also applied to Updike's novel. *Terrorist* traces the influence of political Zionism on Updike's depiction of Muslims. Using Updike's Orient/Occident imagery to enforce Israel's colonial status in Palestine, she outlined the colonial character of the novel. Updike's representation of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Israeli colonization of Palestine have not been demonstrated, however, as the narrative has a general colonial structure i.e. post-9/11 American War on Terror.

1.3.1. Post-9/11 Literature

Perhaps 9/11 fiction writers in the West are guilty of inviting a one-sided empathy towards their own victims, as a result of being trapped within tropes of melancholy, trauma, respectfulness, and bewilderment that have hindered alternative representations of 9/11. The ensuing 'War on Terror,' which has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent victims, calls for creative outlets that can invoke global empathy. In this regard, Kamila Shamsie and other contemporary Pakistani writers

make a balanced appeal to humanity through their writing. Shamsie argues in *Burnt Shadows* (2009) that all nation-states, including America, justify horrors through rhetoric of war, an assertion she defends as follows: "Too many people seem to think I'm making a particular comment on America, but really I'm taking about nations in wartime and the particular inhuman logic they start to follow when they decide what is an acceptable price for some other nation's people to pay".(Singh 160) A number of critics have discussed the contributions and limitations of the 9/11 genre when it comes to explaining the incomprehensible tragedy of 9/11 (Banita, 22; Däwes, 76; Gray, 44; Keeble, 212; Versluys, 125).

Nevertheless, there are several important observations made by these critics that offer the foundation for a pluralistic approach to mainstream Western fiction. After the Fall: American Literature since 9/11, Richard Gray points out that America hadn't experienced an actual invasion on its own soil since the war with Great Britain in 1812. The destruction caused by Hiroshima and Nagasaki or by the Vietnam War, for instance, would seem extreme compared to the loss of 2995 lives in the attack on the Twin Towers for those who have experienced wars in more direct ways (Gray, 4–5).

An event that was geographically contained, yet metaphorically colossal, triggered America's 'Global War on Terror'. As the World Trade Center towers fell in real time across the globe, the cinematic effect was not only profoundly shocking and symbolically significant, but also challenging and difficult to explain. Thus, 9/11 is more emphatically a 'semiotic event, which involves the demise of meaning-making systems that have been in place for long periods of time' (Versluys 2). Gray believes that American writers must strive for a 'circuitous' approach to address the difficulty of articulating such an attack (Gray 40).

Some writers have 'domesticated' (30) the event in their stories by emphasizing fictitious, individual traumas, and thus avoided the indescribable horror of its larger, more devastating global implications. In its place, Gray suggests a metaphoric treatment, one that privileges deterritorialization and unfamiliarity, and urges an examination beyond the immediate tragedy. Birgit Däwes, one of six categories she identifies in 9/11 fiction which explores the aftermath of the event, has also emphasized the significance of placing 9/11 in a larger context in fiction. Georgiana Banita is particularly mindful of how historical writings should provoke questions concerning "how knowledge of the past (and residual traces) infects our understanding of the present, seen as the organic continuation of history"(Banita 4).

In his article, Daniel O'Gorman brings more insight into the limitations of Western writers' post-9/11 literature, despite the empathetic role it is championed by critics such as Ian McEwan. According to O'Gorman, 9/11 literature promotes empathy and connects readers with others, yet it can do more. It might lead readers to engage with the systems that created the self versus other divisions, as well as how these differences were conceptualized at first. Several writers have attempted to empathise with the Muslim 'Other', but ironically this "otherness" is consistently upheld because it is so archaically stressed. Non-Western/American writers, such as those from Pakistan, have successfully blurred the lines between domestic and foreign language in a way that emphasizes the self within the 'other' and the 'other' within the self (O'Gorman 6).

One desires to provide multifaceted frameworks that challenge the very existence of these divisions, instead of simply generating a single-dimensional empathy that perpetuates difference. Based on the critiques discussed above, one way of 'expanding the 9/11 genre' (O'Gorman 10) is by going beyond novels dealing directly with the

event itself and with the trauma that followed, and engaging with the global repercussions of the event and the overall "war on terror". As a starting point for such an expansion, national solidarity would need to be dislodged as the sole metaphor for 9/11.

Since the media's 'real-time' images of the event were harshly similar to those seen in movies and novels (Gray 9), thereby providing a ready-made symbol for post-9/11 trauma writing, in which coming back from the ashes symbolizes resiliency, patriotism, and survival. While symbolism has helped the public come to terms with an unspeakable event by emphasizing the positives, it has also hampered alternative views that are not part of this nationalist solidarity. Different perspectives are shut out by rigid, singular symbolism. These differences then lead to other-hoods and nation-state ideologies.

1.3.2. 9/11 and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes:

Anti-Muslim sentiments and xenophobic aggression among the US population increased considerably after the 9/11 attacks, as evidenced by aggregate time trends. Several murders have been committed against Arab Americans or those perceived to be Arab Americans, according to the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (2003). A study by Human Rights Watch (2002) and Gould and Klor (3) noted an increase of 16 times in the number of hate crimes committed against Muslims between 2000 and 2001, cited in the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR). Moreover, there is descriptive evidence that 9/11 had a negative impact on attitudes toward immigration beyond the US. As reported by the Toronto Police Service's Hate Crime Unit, 66 percent more hostile acts were committed in late 2001 (Helly, 26).

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, some suggest that attitudes towards the US declined, and there are indications that attitudes in Europe may also have been affected. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence of changing attitudes over time. No systematic empirical evidence of this relationship has been provided in the literature, nor has the causality of the effects been directly tested. This may be due to limited data availability, since most surveys of attitudes toward immigrants are cross-sectional in nature.

The nation's interests, horizons, and politics of the time are reflected in history. Despite sincere debates and political negotiations, the United States could not change its fundamentalist position on all political, cultural, and economic aspects of Arab relations from competition to partnership and understanding (Al-Musawi 177; Colla 114; McLoughlin 274; Meer 502). All of these aspects were also characterized by hegemony and imperialism, in addition to fundamentalist attitudes. This is also true for narrative work. A fundamentalist narrative has played a major role in forming the nation's identity and generating national awareness about security issues since 9/11.: " ...with the emergence of American nationalism came representations of the transition from a hyphenated to a singular identity for the nation" (Grewal 548). It has also become a reflection of American foreign policies "that aim to maintain an imperial kind of globalization" (Eisenstein 9).

Moreover, hegemony cannot be possible without the foundations of hegemony in the Middle East. Based on literature, adherence to fundaments has brought about fundamentalist principles and a rigid commitment to contemporary roles, which are generally exercised in a hegemonic setting. Before discussing the twenty-first century's fundamentalist attitude toward the Middle East, we should take into account American hegemony and Islamist fundamentalism. They have adopted the same level

of fundamentalism as Islamist fundamentalists in their struggle to write (Stein223; Varvin 97).

Due to this relationship, contemporary American novel focuses on South Asians, the Middle East, and Muslims, adapts changes on the institution of American Orientalism, and makes it more imperial: "American novel defines itself within the broader post 9/11 American cultural context which is based on the American political orientations as well as the relationship between politics and aesthetics, and between history and narratives." (Altwaiji 75) The second motive of this study is to examine how Islamists and Islamic fundamentalists are used to represent a wide range of Islamic values and Middle Eastern culture. As a fundamentalist movement based on political Islam, Islamism is today viewed as a separate movement from Islam. Islam means peace and such peace can be achieved through the proper guidance of the holy Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad. He was sent in this world for the entire humanity. Nowadays it is very unfortunate that few Muslims without having deeper understanding of Islam uses it for the individual interest and it turns into political or radical Islam. A good believer of Islam can never follow such path. Out of the ideology of a transnational contemporary movement has emerged a new totalitarianism. It will also examine how Islamic terrorism became a necessity in American novels about the Orientals. Yet, if we don't consider Islamic terrorism in connection with hegemony, we would be making a grave error.

1.3.3. Building Enmity

"After September 11, 2001, Americans begin to ask about what may have led people to mass-murder civilians and die during the same massacre."(Esposito and Mogahed, P. 29) There is fervent search for a killer that has not been identified. Considering the

massive coverage of terrorism carried out by Muslim extremists, the emergence of the Muslim enemy seems inevitable (Lean, 22). A recognizable foe thus replaces the imaginative enemy (Gregory, 406; Khan and Ahmad 94). Accordingly, architectures of enmity reproduce the Muslim Other (Gregory, 408; Khan and Ahmad, 103) - "The intent is to paralyze rational thought, and inject into it a dose of horror so intensely addictive that the fearful will not be able to cope" (Lean 18). For the advancement of apocalyptic worldviews, fear is manufactured with concerted effort (19). It creates a world that allows the annihilation of Muslims to be acceptable (Patel, 18) if all Muslims are somehow responsible for terrorism. As a result of the 9/11 attacks, Huntington's hypothesis of the clash of civilizations was given credence (Gregory, 410; Said, 412).

Huntington claims that future conflicts will be sparked by culture, and that interaction with other civilizations will result in a feeling of difference for each culture. In addition, he emphasizes that religion plays a crucial role in establishing cultural identity and that religious beliefs can be the most influential and differentiating aspect. This binary opposition between 'us' and 'them' will have a significant impact on the definition of their religious and ethnic identities (Huntington, 21). The aftermath of 9/11 would lead to Muslims being viewed as immoral and incapable of adapting to modernity (Gregory, 58).

Gregory argues that the forward-looking West was engaged in a conflict with a fixed Islam, a breeding-ground for barbarians. "Islam and the West tend to juxtapose each other in such a binary manner that the Muslim other is presented as the enemy and perpetrator of 9/11 attacks" (Gilroy 82; Gregory 88; Said 13, Khan & Ahmad 24). In America's post-9/11 war on terror, the Muslim enemy is portrayed as the antithesis of everything human and good (Barnett, 2002). To act like an enemy, he/she

disfranchises his humane qualities in order to announce war on that immoral enemy. "When fighting an enemy, people often use mythology-often religious mythology-to create distance between themselves and the enemy" (Armstrong, 11).

 Whether religious, racial or ideological, they exaggerate those differences (13). Accordingly, narratives are created in order to ensure that the public believes that the opponent is a monster, rather than a human. In Said's analysis, Orientalism is an approach to, and method of, dominating, reshaping, and governing the Orient. This plays an essential role in enhancing post-9/11 American enmities (Gregory, 49).

In this context, the Muslim 'other' is portrayed as America's enemy. Orientalism still appears to dominate Western perceptions of the Oriental more than three centuries after its creation (Little, 24; Said, 64; Gregory, 85; Smith, 607; Kumar, 22). "Orientalism is reproduced today with an amplified fear of the Orient and a definitive link with terrorism". (Kumar, 3) In Gregory's view, "Orientalism is abroad again, reborn and enflamed - because these accretions also create a performative citationary structure" (18).

A Western perception of the Oriental affects its object, the Orient, because of "the practices of those who draw upon it" (18). Since 9/11, Oriental images are revived and invigorated in order to establish a clearer picture of the enemy. A geopolitical analysis of DeLillo's portrayal of Islam and Muslims in *Falling Man* (2007) is offered in this chapter using three constructs that are derived from Sayed (36) and Gregory (2004) conceptualizing of Orientalism and architectures of enmity. By using 'Difference' as a construct, the novel illustrates how difference plays a role in portraying Muslims. 'Islamic agency' examines the narrative's illustration of the association between Islam and Muslims' extremist acts and radical ideologies. As a conflicting ideology, Islam

plays a role in the third construct, 'clashing Islam.' It is actually a clash between the true Islam according to the prophet and the Holy Scriptures and the misunderstood Islam which has been used to fulfill any individual interest.

In addition to the massive impact 9/11 had on Western culture, 9/11 fiction also reflects the "pervasive and enduring" post-9/11 mentality in America (Keeble 190). In this sense, the event continues to have an effect on American culture. Despite the fact that the terrorist attack occurred over a decade ago, literature, film, and scholarly articles and books are still written about it. *Towers Falling* (2016) by Jewell Parker Rhodes, *The Memory of Things* (2016) by Gae Polisner, and *All We Have Left* (2016) by Wendy Mills are a few examples. Moreover, the genre includes films like Martin Guigui's blockbuster *Nine Eleven* starring Charlie Sheen and Whoopi Goldberg. Culture and media in America remain affected by the post-9/11 mentality, resulting in an ever-evolving genre.

There were two entries when *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) was first published. In the first article, Rajini Srikanth examines South Asia's role in the "Global War on Terror"(16), while Deborah Solomon interviews the author in the New York Times (2007). "Manipulative Fictions: Democratic Futures in Pakistan" by Cara Cilano (202) and "Covert Operations in Contemporary Pakistani Fiction"by Muneeza Shamsie (17) are early works that focus on Pakistani literature. According to Gohar Khan's article, "Pakistani fiction challenges stereotypes of the terrorist as a Middle Eastern man from the Middle East, and emphasizes the protagonist's ties to America. The entries in the book are characterized by several recurring themes, including post-9/11 America, globalization, fundamentalism; East meets West, identity and the other (86).

Here, the article "Psychoanalysis and Transformation of Heroes" by Abdul G Awan, Shaista Andleeb and Farhat Yasin from the Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan-Pakistan will appear useful. Both novels by Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (Changez) and Moth *Smoke* (Daru), feature Pakistani heroes. Although *Moth Smoke* is not taken here in this work as a primary novel but the reference is important for the better clarification. While they live in different countries, one in America and the other in Pakistan, the authors highlight a number of similarities between the two characters. During times of crisis, both characters become antiheroes. Changez leaves his successful life in America after 9/11 and returns to Pakistan to start anew. Dastur loses his job after being employed for several years. In order to regain financial stability, he does not have the right contacts.

He begins using drugs and gets incarcerated. The authors write that "the heroes represent the mentality of Pakistanis. One is too ambitious to live and work in America while the other is obsessed with looking rich" (Awan 15). Hamid's Pakistani background gives him a unique perspective on local conditions and thinking. It is concluded that "the heroes pass through a critical situation, and as a result, they are significantly transformed" and "their character changes as a result of the events they encounter and how they express events" (14).

As this essay shows, 9/11 changed the identity of Changez., Sobia Kiran compares the main characters' personal development and identity crises in her article "Identity Crisis as Reflected in Selected Works: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid and *The Black Album* by Hanif Kureishi.". The main characters are each Pakistani but reside in different Western countries. Neither they nor their native countries make them feel at home. Due to Pakistan and Afghanistan's role in the war on terror while at the same time being victims of the war, she suggests that Arabs and

South Asians are experiencing identity crises as the characters in the two novels. Those caught between two worlds face the dilemma of losing their identity, says Kiran (39).

According to Greta Olson's "Identity and Identification in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*," 9/11 still holds a significant place in world history. Authors around the globe have been influenced by it, among other things. In both the novel's discourse and story, Olson discusses how identity and identification are represented. From the standpoint of both the main character and the environment in the United States, she points out that the main character's identity changed after 9/11. Oliver reflects on how *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* leaves the reader to interpret its ending. "Identity, as in national, social, and personal identity, thus becomes central to the interpretation of the novel," writes Olson (17). Her essay on personal identity and thoughts on identity will aid in the analysis of the characters in this essay.

Akbar S Ahmed (142) argues that hysterical attacks on the South Asian, Arab, and Muslim communities after September 11 reinforced "existing stereotypes about Muslims" since "to many Americans Islam is synonymous with terrorism or extremism". Islamophobia and binary thinking soon swept the world. Since the 9/11 attacks, the term "Islamophobia" has existed in different societies for several decades in the form of stereotypes and prejudices. A. G. Noorani (18) points out that this reaction is "a malaise" of today's times, which "banishes reason from religion" and compassion from faith".

 Islamophobia began quickly spreading in the country, and Muslims began to become frustrated at being portrayed negatively (Ahmed, 144). Ahmed argues that "this problem has become more acute since September 11", causing misunderstandings

between the West and Islam, explaining the need for a new intellectual discourse in the context of the "war on terror". The main reason why some writers have chosen the topic of explaining the causes and consequences of terrorism is to build a bridge between the opposing camps, as well as to facilitate the communication between them. Thus, Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* is both a personal and social confession.

1.3.4. 9/11 novels and traumatic experiences

Critique of the reader's response to trauma fiction is an important tool for interpreting it. A reader can become a learning witness when she becomes a member of the "community of witnesses," to quote Anne Whitehead (8).

Stories about collective trauma usually explore both personal and collective aspects; thus, trauma fiction often draws on memories of a traumatic event. Trauma narratives often include the victim/narrator as well as the reader, who may be a confidante or someone with whom the victim/narrator shares the traumatic experience. A traumatic event is personalized in this narrative. In the traumatic narrative, the traumatized individual (victim) vents his or her anger, dwells on the traumatic event/s, or tries to find answers to unanswered questions. Survivors of traumatic experiences may describe incoherent or scattered thoughts, sketchy memories, or abrupt transitions from the present to the past as a result of the shock of the event. Due to the fear of returning to the past, the first emotion is confession, very personal and subtle.

A number of post 9/11 novels are more or less share a sense of trauma and loss. Trauma novels are works of fiction that contain emotional and/or cognitive responses to profound losses, disasters, disruptions, or devastations on an individual or collective level. Trauma narratives "sharpen victims' pain with readers, shifting

between what can and cannot be revealed," says Laurie Vickroy (Vickroy 4). Vickroy highlights three approaches to writing about trauma: transferring traumatic responses, offering information, or empathizing since "literary texts can enable the reader to empathize" (Vickroy 21). Vickroy (30-32) examines the stylistic devices used in trauma fiction and emphasizes the use of symbols, metaphorical language, flashbacks, and the extensive use of "individual and collective memories" (Vickroy 33). Symbols can be used to illustrate different dimensions of trauma when carefully chosen. There are different levels of "affective memory" in a trauma novel (Nora 307). Even though readers of different types may possess different emotions, the degree of empathy is a key factor to a better understanding of the scope and effects of the traumatic event. Vickery (183-185), in his acclaimed book, describes dialogism (in particular, the narrator-reader aspect) as an important structural element of trauma fiction. Reading a trauma novel, which here turns the reader into both a witness to and victim of a wide-ranging collective trauma induces the reader to relive a traumatic event. In order to accurately depict trauma, the event must be recreated as we find in the case of *Falling Man* and *Terrorist*, and similarly in the case of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner*.

A traumatic event is viewed by Tom Toremans as an "ethical charge" (339) present as a code in the process of restating or thinking about trauma. In trauma fiction, facts are emphasized. This allows readers and critics to gain access to extreme experiences and events. The protagonist in trauma fiction becomes "a historical marker of unspeakable experience" and "a symbol of possible future change" (Vickroy xiii). It provides unique depictions of individual trauma, while conveying an event experienced by a large number of people. Due to the traumatized protagonist, the specificity of an individual trauma is brought to light, which is often connected to broader social and

cultural factors. Many fictional characters exaggerate the pain and suffering suffered by thousands of people throughout history.

As a result of September 11, 2001, literature and history have entered a new period: even current events are viewed through 9/11's prism. Sept. 11th, 2001, marked a traumatic event for the United States of America. In the wake of the tragic events of this day and their difficult aftermath, everyone has divided their lives into two sections: BEFORE and AFTER. Jeremy Green asserts, "tragic realism resulted from the search for coherent explanations of the catastrophe" (Green 94). In the post-modern period, executions were seen equally as moral and physical: designs were created for punishing those who did evil, binary opposition and separation emerged in many societies, and Western extremism echoed Islamic fundamentalism by demonizing Islam, Muslims, and Muslim traditions.

It has haunted the media, the academy, the arts and scholarship for a long time now and little care to let them be freed from its thrall, according to A.G. Noorani (Noorani 23). To cope with the September 11th attacks, writers expressed their emotions so that readers could relate to them "on a highly personal level" and find answers to the most troubling questions (Rufle, 25). There have been some authors who have approached this issue as a challenge: some chose to politicize their works, while others remained faithful to the personal aspect of the tragedy by placing it within the boundaries of one social unit, the family, and a microcosm of each individual.

Novels about 9/11 are dominated by the theme of self-destruction: society's confusion is reflected in them. Often, the main character is numb, confused, and disenchanted with society. Often, the main character must face existential questions alone, misunderstood, and differing from society. The result is self-destruction in various

forms. It is usually the protagonist of a story who has strong beliefs, and he or she is often referred to as a hero rather than a victim. In 9/11 literature, there is a great deal of criticism of consumer society and mass media influence. In this novel, a novelist reveals the tragedy of individual and societal injustice, moral apathy and harsh real-life circumstances. The absence of the Twin Towers was replaced, as E. Ann Kaplan states, by "other images – of burning people jumping out of the Towers, of firemen rushing to rescue people […] of the huge cloud of smoke" (Kaplan 2005: 13).

These images are described by witnesses and relatives of the victims in the context of their memories. These novels are often depicted in a direct manner, evoking the news reports and documentaries produced on the day of 9/11. Watching the latest news is often portrayed as terrifying in 9/11 literature. Readers encounter emotional narratives of losses and tragedies that sound very familiar due to the personalization of 9/11 events.

In 9/11 literature, alienation, doubtfulness, and estrangement between family, community, and society characterize the literary form. The wide range of literary interpretations of 9/11 and its aftermath shows the extent to which this period influenced the novel's development. Elliott predicts that "American literature in the twenty-first century will be heavily influenced by the events of that day and by the response of the United States government" (Elliot 446).

 After 9/11, many critics agree that literature started a new era. According to Akbar S. Ahmed in "Postmodernism and Islam: Where to after September 11," "ideas and practices of multicultural harmony, eclecticism and juxtapositions [...] were halted in their tracks on 11 September 2001" (Ahmed 140). "The attack on the financial center

of the West" and "the strike on the Pentagon, the heart of America's military might," as symbols of postmodernism on that fateful day, Ahmed points out (140).

 The latter opinion may seem controversial, but it may prove how the event had an impact on different aspects of life and art. The tragic event initiated many irreversible changes in the American society and culture, as Ahmed states (Ahmed 140): the tragic event was the beginning of the new century in many ways. American society's frustration and loss are echoed in literary texts in many different forms and extend across national borders. The 9/11 novel is characterized by its attempt to disclose a global conflict, which is about the contrast between two different cultures, between American modernity and consumerism and obedience and faith. In many novels, American and Islamic attitudes toward culture, religion, and jihad are in conflict. Alternatively, some people choose to emphasize the contrast between new images of rundown areas and the magnificence of modern buildings.

In an effort to understand what caused the 9/11 catastrophe, the 9/11 novel has been motivated by social curiosity. Many authors have chosen the point of view of the main character to reflect on 9/11 in their literary works: "the language deals obliquely with 9/11 through the precise attention to grammar and language laws in monologue form.". […] Scrutinizing every verb, tense and grammatical configuration, the narrator is preoccupied with life, death, existence" (Morley 300). The novel stresses the importance of the details: it becomes imperative to accurately describe the event and its aftermath.

1.4. Research Problem

The chief question to be investigated in this thesis which is very important to say that gaps are immense and bridges are to be created with ease and trust among the Muslim

'others' and the rest of the world, particularly America. There is no doubt that under the present scenario there are wide discrepancies between the way Muslims in America find themselves and the community worldwide, and how other Americans perceive and project them. Apart from that, even as members of the same larger nation and citizens of the same state, perceptions are so uncompromisingly diverse. The Muslims see and depict themselves as misconceived, misunderstood, mistrusted and mistreated. On the other hand, they are portrayed by others as inherently inclined to threaten, offend and aggress and as 'other'. This clashing segregation of opinion is harmful for the overall harmony and mutual understanding on global level; it is a more potential threat to the integration of a multicultural society. For bridging these gaps of understanding and bringing diverse communities together, literature can play more crucial role than propaganda, media or political debates. Fiction writers may not be supposed to be impassively objective; they, however, need to be unprejudiced and capable of looking at humanity as a single entity especially after the post 9/11 era when the unity of that progressive civilization collapsed, humanity challenged and solidarity disrupted. In this thesis, efforts will be given on the close reading of the novels of two novelists with American identity and two with South Asian (Muslim) identity focusing on the emerging patterns of 'othering' in the contemporary literary discourses and social realities in America. In this thesis the reading of these four novels namely, Don Delillo's *Falling Man*, John Updike's *Terrorist* , Mohosin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* will aim at problematizing & foregrounding the underestimated position of the Muslims as 'other' in the multicultural United States of America.

1.5. Research Questions

- What does the notion of the 'other' mean? Is it strictly confined in a notion or the hypothesis of a particular group of people?

- Why such notion has been labeled to the Muslims, a specific community through the popular post 9/11 fictions?

- Why backlash to the Non-Westerners in a broader sense and in particular the Muslims of the Arab or the South Asian origin is found in America, and how is it reflected in post 9/11 fiction?

- Is it a general monopoly of world capitalistic power and global Politicts?

- Is there a possibility to trace and analyze the difference in the post 9/11 fictions through American as well as Western discourse and the counter discourse from the Asian and Muslim in particular by the close reading of the texts and the theoretical concept like multiculturalism, Orientalism , discourse of power etc?

1.6. Aims and Objectives:

- To investigate the complexity of 'othering' and its relationship to racism.

- To study the perceptions and manifestations constructing the identity of Islam and Muslims in the selected American literary texts to understand the notion of the 'other'.

- To discuss Islamophobia as a recognized form of racism persistent in the selected south Asian literary texts through deconstruction of major themes , point of view, and character depiction

- How the deadly event of the 9/11 frames the critical thinking?

- How the thinkers and theorists relate the incident to the socio-political and literary angle.

- How media portrays Muslims and Islam in Post 9/11 phenomena.

1.7. Rationale

The reason behind choosing the topic is because this period of more than a decade is experiencing vehemently a different notion of misunderstanding, misrepresentation and misconception about Islam and ethnically Muslims in the world. The controversial belief of many of the Westerners like Noam Chomsky, David Simpson as well as rest of the intellectual world that the war on terrorism against the two countries Iraq and Afghanistan will cause mass killing of thousands of innocent people including children. They also questioned the mode of operations of the United States which faces counter war and the killing of common folk, destruction of socio-cultural heritage and ethnic unity. Many of the intellectuals expresses their views that such social unrest and political upheaval may produce painful problems for the Islamic States and it could lead towards racism and enwrap a community in severe claustrophobic hazards for long run, as most of the Western media by their 'assumption theory' made the people grow a sense that these countrymen and women are the 'aiding agencies' of terrorism. From that very time of the declaration of the war against terrorism, public interests have been shifted swiftly to the topics related to Islam, terrorism, Middle-East, South-Asian Islamic countries, war-killing-disaster-refugees and many other things. This has been problematized in the selected novels for this research like Don Delillo's *Falling Man*, John Updike's *Terrorist*, Mohosin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. The research is also significant for the Islamic revivalism and emergence of liberal Islam as a political force in the Muslim World, and the spread of extremism in the name of

terrorism in the recent decades has once again forced religion and Muslims to the forefront in the present day international affairs. People, chiefly Muslims and the governments in the Islamic countries are directly affected by politics and policies of just one country namely the United States because of the global reach of the influence and power of America.

1.8. Methodology:

The method adopted to take this research work towards completion is fairly simple and straight forward. The present study adopted a qualitative way of research. Qualitative method often deals with the social world and its problems. 'Qualitative researchers borrow ideas from the population they studied and develop new ideas' (Neuman145). They aim to discover the occurrence and underlying motives of social phenomena. Through such research we can analyze the various factors that were selected for investigation. However, 'to apply qualitative research in practice is relatively a difficult job' (Kothari 4). It is exploratory in nature: "an exploratory study may not have as rigorous a methodology as it is used in conclusive studies, and sample sizes may be smaller. But it helps to do the exploratory study as methodically as possible, if it is going to be used for major decisions about the way we are going to conduct our next study" (Nargundkar, 41). Singh defined exploratory research as: "the initial research, which forms the basis of more conclusive research. It can even help in determining the research design, sampling methodology and data collection method" (Singh 64).

The entire research work will be divided into five chapters that will take up the analysis of the texts chosen for the purpose of this research individually on the basis of the tools discussed above and finally leading to a collective conclusive analysis.

The intention is to trace and analyse the difference in the post 9/11 fictions through American as well as Western discourse and the counter discourse from the Asian and Muslim in particular by the close reading of the texts and the theoretical concepts like 'hegemony', 'hybridity', multiculturalism etc. The Orientalistic approach of Edward Said, and power discourse of Michel Foucault will provide a lens to this thesis to be looked at. A historical- analytical approach has been adopted here to explain the issues and developments by the use of primary and secondary sources. Imagology will also be used for this research to frame a concept of the dominant discourses of America while presenting a nation, culture, gender, religion, or ethnicity. Thus Imagological studies lead us to an image which is usually called stereotype, and in the case of post 9/11 era while dealing with Islam and Muslims with an image of an 'other'.

1.9. Limitations: Like any other research works this research work also has certain limitations. This research would try to do an analytical and theoretical study and it restricts itself to just that. The fictions chosen for the purpose of this research are apt representatives of the mindsets and multicultural dilemma of the progressive USA while framing the notion of Muslims as 'other' in the respective post 9/11 era .It may be felt that there could have been other texts and contexts taken up for this study, but these texts best represent the purpose of this research and most appropriately cater to the psychological perceptions of the people belonging to the super power American society. Another thing to keep in mind is that there will always be scope for more analysis. Moreover keeping in mind the present scenario of the USA while encountering the Muslim World the fictions seem to represent the challenging phase and phenomena in its best possible flavour. However, there may be some aspects that remain untouched which shall be taken up for further research.

1.10. Chapter Overview: The thesis has been divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction, this opening chapter includes background of the study of research, post 9/11 literature and its outlook towards Islam and Muslims, literature review, research problem, research statement, research objectives, research gap, methodology and it paves the way for reading the texts for the core argument of the thesis.

Chapter 2 is titled 'responding to 9/11: Framing the 'other' in Don Delillo's *Falling Man* and John Updike's *Terrorist'*. In this chapter these novels portray the experiences of American characters who are confronted with 9/11 and suffer from disorientation and loss. The negotiation of this loss takes place in relation to entanglements with the terrorist figure in particular and Muslims in general who penetrates the physical and psychological spaces of these characters. The two novels unfold the American responses against the event and its new outlook towards Muslims and Islam. The study with the help of these two novels unsettle the distinction between terrorist and terrorised in order to negotiate a new American identity after 9/11 where the notion of 'other' became a discourse of disdain, disorientation and dismantle the vulnerability of the American multicultural society .

Chapter 3: In the third chapter namely 'Fictions Write Back: Reinventing Identity in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner'*arguments have developed its shape by the help of two South Asian fiction where the characters, being a Muslim and hence being an 'other' face challenges to establish their identities and return to their root. With the abhorrent incident taking

place in 9/11, it changed drastically the image of the Muslims, and non-American Nationalities worldwide. Through these two novels Hamid and Hosseini write back the experiences of their own Nation and continent.

Chapter 4: 'Discourse of Power and Narrative as Resistance' discusses the theoretical aspects of the notion of 'otherisation' of Muslim. The fact is that comparison of discourses shaped by the novels under study with those shaped by orientalists allows us to generalize Edward Said's theory of Orientalism to the attitude and behaviour of the West towards Islam and Muslims and other Asian and Arab nationalities in post 9/11 period. It also seeks to highlight the Foucauldian analysis in which social groups interact and experience tension and emphasizes the transitory nature of culture as well as its power to transform.

Chapter 5: Conclusion is the lastchapter ofthe thesis that summarizes the entire study and develops the arguments for the findings. It will denote the conclusive approach to the study where the approach of multiculturalism offers an adequate understanding of the individual requirement to negotiate a plurality of cultural models in a context of changing boundaries. Multiculturalism provides productive solutions and categories to deal with the fiction which exhibit migration and post 9/11 sociological, political and psychological perspectives.It also denotes the future scope of research in this field and also provides a detailed bibliography of the study.

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CHAPTER -II

Responding to 9/11: Framing the 'Other' in Don Delillo's *Falling Man* and John

Updike's *Terrorist*

9/11 has resulted in a wide range of cultural and artistic responses. In thepost-9/11 literature, narratives have been commemorative, and heroic, and have attempted to work through collective and individual pangs and represent the 'Other' as terror machinery shaped and characterized by the War on Terror, the Patriot Act, Wiki Leaks, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Abu Ghraib, and Guantánamo Bay. Many early films by political or progressive directors, like Oliver Stone's *World Trade Center* (2006) or Paul Greengrass's *United 93* (2005), were considered apolitical. For their focus on domestic situations, novels by some of the world's greatest writers, like Don DeLillo and Jay McInerney, were immediately criticized for avoiding a wider context, historical, or political discussion of 9/11 in favor of the relationship dramas revolving around 9/11. There has been a rapid proliferation of criticism of these texts and their limitations, culminating in Richard Gray's assessment that, in these texts, "the crisis is in every sense of the word domesticated" (Gray 133).

This chapter tends to highlight the way 9/11 narratives—including novels, poetry, television, film, and theatre – fetishes the domestic and perhaps narcissistically emphasize personal wounding as a neurotic diversion from 9/11's global and political implications during the first decade after 9/11. We hope that this study begins to challenge the cultural and paternalistic biases that have limited success and to recognize that there is no such thing as domesticity in the framework for success against which they have commonly been read. Many 9/11 narratives have been

criticized for their reaction to a collectively traumatized nation's psychic wound- a wound that leads to a strategic otherization of a particular community.

Michael Rothberg famously criticized 9/11 literature as a "failure of the imagination," narrowing the discussion about why the imagination was viewed as failing; perception itself often had a local or domestic focus still entangled in the immediate effects of trauma. Despite trauma theory and its insights being needed to understand the national trauma, its widespread application, and privileging have limited narrative possibilities in regards to 9/11.

In this study, discussion has been made on how aesthetics which make absent the voices of others have shaped this perspective politically and effectively. By doing so, they emphasize "us versus them" binaries in thinking and practice that have supported and perpetuated war throughout history.

A largely untouched canon of 9/11 fiction is examined here in the context of two novels. Many of us have been reminded of our antecedents in domination by these omissions and also by the limited renderings of Others, which have replicated racial, sexual, religious, and class hegemonies. Although early critics emphasized the "retreat" to domesticity, this collection focuses less on criticizing these early critics than on re-politicizing them, highlighting narrative strengths in identified deficiencies, and retelling stories of the Other in a new context. Through these omissions and limitations, we hope to have created a space where new narratives can emerge that are less hegemonic and more representative of a variety of artistic perspectives on the event of the aftermath of 9/11.

These narratives have moved beyond the 9/11 literary box that critics imposed early on the genre, in part because they begin to shift the paradigm for understanding 9/11. A narrative performs cultural work when it teaches us about ourselves through

personal relationships, rather than in a harsh, overtly political manner. While attempting to impose order upon a genre that reflects so much pain and trauma, we've also produced a kind of synecdoche of healing whose whole hasn't yet emerged - perhaps it won't until years from now. It is presumed that America has entered into a prefigured process of healing based on the ideation of healing and the trauma studies framework that foregrounds it. Through politics and media, we have determined both what caused the wound and how to recover from it.

America appears to have become attached to the possibility of health, without fully understanding the dangerous politics it implies. Lauren Berlant explains "cruel optimism" as "maintaining an attachment to a problematic object in advance of its loss" (Berlant 21). The goal of healing is a "cruel optimism "that evokes the binary corollaries of sickness and health—trauma and recovery—without ever understanding how health and recovery might manifest within a wounded nation. It is a cruel optimism that assumes that a nation carries with it indelible traces of a healable wound.

"Texts are not only a reflection of social realities 'but … an integral component in shaping [those] realities" (Hall67). "The world is known through 'the representational orders contained within the text" (Silverman 67). When fiction is written with the values and ideas that are scavenged from other beliefs and values set as the matters of subjects in the new ideologies, texts have been formulated in a new way. The ideologies of literary text shapes which have remained in living have contoured the masses of general beliefs.

This particular chapter has attempted to explore the racial discrimination, complexity, and 'otherness' of Muslims in the world which existed after 9/11and how it has been represented with the help of fiction writers which can be observed in the

two novels i.e. *Terrorist* by John Updike and *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo. A single level of discourse isn't sufficient for capturing at once for all, but fiction is proving itself as a helpful source for understanding its complexities which have been dismantled by deconstructing the narratives.

2.1. Don Delillo's *Falling Man* as a Post-9/11 Novel

This novel begins with one of the key characters and focalisers, Keith Neudecker, who narrowly avoids death when escaping one of the towers, just moments before the jet hits the second tower. The other important character is Keith's wife, Lianne, who, despite not being an immediate survivor, becomes engrossed in 9/11 by watching the news 24/7 and collecting newspaper stories. They have a kid named Justin, who appears to be dealing with the events in the same way as his parents, by searching the skies with his friends for planes. Keith also has a romantic relationship with Florence, another 9/11 victim. However, Keith's relationships with Lianne and Florence do not work out, so he relocates to Vegas to pursue a career as a professional poker player. Keith goes to Lianne's house—his previous home—right after the attacks at the beginning of the novel, while dazed: "It wasn't until he got in the truck and shut the door that he understood where he'd been going all along" (DeLillo 7).

Keith instinctively goes to his estranged wife and child; while this may be the beginning of a story in which a relationship is redeemed and the trauma of 9/11 is overcome, the relationship is never redeemed and the trauma is never conquered. Several literary devices are used to support the tone of final destruction. The first is the novel's non-chronological structure; flashbacks and narrative jumps appear to happen at random, with paragraphs seemingly unrelated and jumping from one

subject to another. The third-person point of view is another frequent technique demonstrated; however, the characters are rarely named by name.

For example, when Keith is the focalizer, he isn't given a name and isn't introduced as a character in the first chapter or any other chapter—he simply exists alongside the other characters; "he wore a suit and carried a briefcase" (DeLillo3) is the only description of Keith given in the first chapter, which creates the "every person" effect.

The reader doesn't realize Keith is the focalizer until his name is stated later in the chapter. Direct speaking dialogue, in addition to the perplexing point of view, is another strategy for creating confusion, because the dialogues are direct quotations with little indication of who says what, thus the reader loses track of who is who. The dearth of descriptive passages adds to the uncertainty; the only descriptive parts are nostalgic flashbacks or engaged poker games, which are used to avoid reality and the 9/11 tragedy. Because they include flashbacks to events from the main character's upbringing, as well as to September 11th, when the main character is reliving the assaults, the story is non-chronological. The effect of the 9/11 shock is enhanced by this asynchronous pattern. The events of the horrific day are recounted in the novel's last chapter. This return to the beginning of the novel represents an unbreakable trauma cycle. Kavadlo discusses that "*Falling Man* undermines its linearity, which both begins and ends with the towers' fall, and the individuality of its characters, who are nearly impossible to visualize, seldom described, and routinely introduced by reference less pronouns" (Kavadlo 48). Because linearity and chronology convey structure, this linearity is weakened to emphasize the influence of the counter-narrative.

The 9/11 trauma victim who was unable to heal is then represented by Keith. Balaey demonstrates how trauma fiction is created by "providing a picture of the

individual who suffers, but paints it in such a way as to suggest that this protagonist is an "every person" figure (Balaey 17). This is accomplished in *Falling Man* by overusing pronouns, yet in a way that makes sense "leaves its pronouns without antecedents, in a way that challenges what we think of characterizations" (Kavadlo 48). Keith uses pronouns to represent any traumatized American man. "Throughout the story, the use of "he" and "she" is abundant," Versluys observes. The main character is rarely addressed by his name, and most chapters and paragraphs begin with "he" or "she." The usage of a narrative point of view has two effects: it creates a sense of separation and it makes the story more interesting (Versluys 24). For starters, this pronoun is used to depict Keith's disconnection from his surroundings. People are merely referred to as "they" instead of being described. "He was walking north […]. They had handkerchiefs pressed to their mounts. They had shoes in their hands, a woman with a shoe in each hand, running past him. They ran and fell, some of them, confused and ungainly, with debris coming down around them, and there were people taking shelter under cars". (DeLillo 3)

The son of Lianne, Justin along with his friends, is searching for the skies with the help of binoculars for 'Bill Lawton'- a mispronunciation of Osama Bin Laden. After the 9/11 attack, it is the youngsters' customary habit. Emotionally, it was re-directed at the proper level that is towards Keith in the hope of reviving the marriage of her, the relationship shared by Lianne along with Nina who is related to her as a mother. Openly, Nina is not willing to accept the marriage of Keith and Lianne and criticizes their relationship after the 9/11 attacks. Lianne is found to be an artist and she decorated the apartment like a museum.

An art dealer, Martin is dating Nina and discusses often God, nature, and the meaning of life. Because of the opinion differences, they have separated from each

other. Meanwhile, frustration was shown by Keith to Eastern music which is played in the neighborhood. Finally, the novel's second part shows Keith abdicating the domestic life along with Justine and Lianne and finding a proper point of position in poker professional tournaments. Often, he recalls the co-worker who is also a player of poker who has embraced death during the World Trade Centre collapse. The small sections of the novel also describe Muslim Middle-Eastern life, Hammad who is living in Manhattan. Hammad is taking flight lessons (how to fly aeroplanes) on Gulf Coast. In a consequent manner; his level of similarities with people who are the Twin Towers attackers had been released. An image of a gruesome and clear crash is described at the end of the novel through the eyes of Keith who has witnessed it. It has ended with the help of predicting another attack with a previous horrific memory blended again.

Dellilo who is a fictional writer, living in America has been regarded as a cult writer and is known for 20th and 21stcentury-realistic depiction. His levels of works construct supposedly faith which is about tragic events and truth in the world which is happening. His novels are currently living in time which gives out the reflection of dangers around us. In an actual manner, his novel begins with a fear of resistance and the crashing horrors of the Twin Towers. Undoubtedly, the text reflects the turn of the 20th century.

The novel is set in ashes of smoke which is the consequence of the 9/11 attack. The novel is always in the direction of circular motion, taking the readers between the two ends and in a repeated manner bringing them to a focal point. Frequently, the character's minds are at the crash thought. 'Fear' is the novel's calling card. Many passages identify a post-9/11 burdensome apprehension of Muslims and Islam.

"The novel has been regarded as a book detailing a series of interlocking global forces that appear to converge at an explosive point in time and space that might be said to represent the locus of Boston, New York, and Washington on a late summer morning early in the 21st century" (Rich).

"In his earlier novel '*Whitenoise',* DeLillo predicted 'The airborne toxic event' that proved a strong harbinger of 'The steady march of international terror towards the locus of Boston, New York, and Washington" (Rich). "September 11 attacks entirely changed the inner American life. The tide of anger turned towards the Muslims and Islam. Through the descriptions of the cell phone, the lost shoes, the handkerchiefs mashed in the faces of running men and women" (Rich 2007). The writer has attempted to relate the level of chaos to the Muslim level of immigrants. "The writer attempts to relate the chaos to Muslim immigrants. At heart, the novel implies the writer's contempt towards policies of America" (Rich).

The particular novel has encountered the media portrayal of the event which brings enormous changes in American lives. Even though this novel shares the matter of common subject with Updike's works which is bringing forward Muslims and Islam as threats, yet technique of the novelist is said to be unlike Updike. DeLillo doesn't portray the character of Muslims as a kind of mouthpiece for exposing the faith of Islam and Muslims as a kind of threat. Other than this he was describing American characters as 9/11 victims who had been under stress after horrific sights witnessing.

The 'turn-of-the-century America' is the undercurrent of the novel. Frequently, the American characters' lives are under a sense of stress along with grief and loss. The role of the narrator has dominated the novel. This particular novel has laid its level foundation on the essay of DeLillo, "*In the Ruins of the Future*" and

promises a deal that is at the greater level for a description of terrorism, but it has turned out to be a strong level of defense which is against Islam. Media trials and representation have incorporated the ideologies. This novel claims in itself to speak the Media power; electronic format and printed format which have portrayed and emphasized the thoughts that are aimed to be inculcated in the readers/viewer's mind.

The novel of DeLillo, *Falling Man* (2007) is based on similar kind of assumptions that have been encountered already, however, its American projections involve characters of America; the terror and trauma which they have gone through with the help of experiencing and visualizing the Twin Towers escape, some rescue and aftermaths of any kind of disaster on the life of America. Majorly, the novel covers the attitudes of the Americans which have developed reminiscent of Muslims of historical grievances of old Muslim-American people. At its core, the text signifies the role of media, characterized by a more highly exaggerated stereotyping and confrontational hostility' towards Muslims and Islam" (Said xi). As has been discussed in the earlier stages, the text articulates ways of the American life which encompasses marriage, separation, and family as the regular themes. It starts with America's chaotic picture from the perspective of Keith who is directly affected because of the disaster: "It was not a street anymore but a world, a time and space of falling ash and near night". His mentality was obsessed with 'the fall's buckling rumble and roar' (Delillo3). It is a changed picture of a peaceful and calm world before the attacks.

The particular scene in a whole manner has prepared the mind of readers to look at a world that has turned terrified and weary in a shorter period. "The whole scene prepares the readers 'minds for looking into a world that turned weary and terrified in seconds. Introduction of, Lianne, an American character immediately

succeeds in giving reference to Shelly's poem 'Revolt of Islam' to connect the thread of the falling of the towers, directly, to the denouncement of Islam. Although the narrative calls it merely a 'coincidence', however, it is not actually so simple" (Delillo 8).

As the title suggests the *Revolt of Islam* is bringing tyranny and war in the minds of readers. Even though it had been written by a renowned person, Shelly who is a romantic, the poet doesn't deal directly with the Islam religion. But the poem addresses the Ottoman Empire's reign which carries a historical level of significance. The themes had been dealing in a revolutionary manner along with the reforms and 'anti-religious sentiments', and for the French Revolution's offshoots. In the mind, it was borne that for its thoughts which are direct kind of blasphemous, the statements of anti-religion must be changed by Shelly on the advice of his publisher. His life's unevenness has inspired Shelly to write this poem. The poem's central figures have visited the 'temple of the spirit' and indicated that the French Revolution's failure in an important manner was the personal result and spiritual level of objectives. In that politics wasn't involved. The poem reference in *Falling Man* in the 9/11 attacks milieu has assumed the level of revolt as Islam's necessary component, which has spiritual primarily and goals that are personal and manifest politics. The Muslims who had been 'a competent nation', of America had been alarmed by its power which was lost (Anidjar).

The attacks in the name of radical Islam and spirit have spoiled the name of the religion. *Revolt of Islam* this very title has enticed the apprehension of the readers. It is also implied that the fear among Muslims and Islam is going to overtake its faith along with America. The level of Hierarchy that is between America and Islam has, if it has been reversed, may create havoc in the world of modern-day. In this situation,

the reference of the poem also signifies a long record of fear of European people of Islam that they are arriving in the USA to blow up the country's trade centre.

The *Revolt of Islam*, this title has reinforced the assault that has been assumed. It has entailed the century-long suppression of African Muslims and Islam comes back against the particular oppressor. The poem of Shelly is set in the Ottoman regime context. The empire had been defeated and held to be captive comportment. It had been distributed between the Victorious Empires of British and France. Caliphate had gone through a revolution after the defeat however it had remained Muslim symbolic unity. The imperial incursion of the foreigners has demolished the level of the caliphate with local modernist cooperation. But, with the help of the common usage of the American contemporary as 'that was history' and which has no more importance has followed by trauma in the minds of the American people.

The reference to the *Revolt of Islam* in *Falling Man* is bringing history into the picture. The powers of Western society have abolished and subjugated the Ottoman Empire of Muslims and the 9/11 attacks, at present have been visualized as Muslims' come back. It has signified imperialism as an important binary to the concern of Islam. Over the ages, America has played an important role in the economic, political, and social structures of the entire Islamic globe. Therefore, It has earned terminology in a negative manner like 'Great Satan' and 'Devil America' in the specific language of the revolution that took place in Iran. It defined America as 'a seducer' distracting Muslims from the right path. The image of 'a ram's head and… a fanciful fish with a tusk and a trunk' on the postcard that Lianne receives dovetail within the religious paradigm of white supremacy a racial as well as cultural interpretation" (Delillo 8). The ram's head is said to be a devil's biblical allusion representative. The goat's and ram's heads have been recognized to be holy in

witchcraft and Satanism. The fish symbol is Jesus Christ's biblical representation as the Saviour. In the Bible, Jesus has been reported to feed 5000 people with the help of 2 kinds of fish. His disciples have been called by him as 'fishers of men'. The baptism practice was immersed in the early Christian period which established a parallel in-between converts and fish.

"Fish also symbolizes persecution of the believers in Christianity. Greeks, Romans and later Christians used fish as a symbol to distinguish a friend from enemy" (Cofeman 2008). The ram and fish image which is on the card has been reciprocated every other. Here ram is an expression of fundamental Islam used symbolically which is persecuting America that has been represented by the fish's innocent image. Thus, the text has created fear which is against the people of the Muslim community and depicted them as oppressors and assassins. "Emphasis on 'a large illustrated R' demonstrates the seriousness of the situation. These symbols can also be interpreted as 'enactments of religious rituals' utilized to show a demonized image of Islam" (Hubel etal.146).

The particular level of narration has referred to an immigrant who is Islam which is in larger number in America and has been placed at the level of hierarchy in the lower manner "due to the structure of white hegemony". "It was challenging in spotting a taxi at the correct time when each driver of the cab had been named Mohammad in New York" (Delillo 28). "They [Muslims] have been hating us for a long time. In a sense, they have been hating us for centuries" (Lewis 1990). The text renders from the initial pages a mindset of typical American and directs the hatred which is towards Muslims because of their genealogy along with religion.

2.2. Is there a Binary? Chapter 4 of the novel illustrates a scene of mystery and fear identifying "men in chanted prayer, voices in chorus in praise of God Allah-

uu Allah-uu Allah-uu"(Delillo 2007, p.38). It has appeared to be a mystifying image of Islam, with the help of the people of America who have accused Islam of being fearful. By this music, Lianne has been frustrated with the people of the neighbourhood who is far away. The scenes' mysterious description shows the intolerance of Lianne towards the mystic music of Islam.

This particular kind of text is associated, here, with the Americans' fear of everything that had been related to the Islamic rituals and religion. The arguments of Lianne had shown the irrationality in which the music had been located in the terrain of Islamic tradition. She is getting annoyed bya piece of specific music, tambourines, chanting voices, wailing music, and lutes in some period: She had been hearing many kinds of traditions in other sets, North African, Middle Eastern, song of Bedouin perhaps or else the dances of Sufi, the music which is located in the tradition of Islam, and she thought of knocking door and allowing her for saying some sort of things. Her phobia was reflected by her attitude.

The kind of references to the echo of Sufi music which is a discrepancy to Americans is related to the traditions of Islam. During the 9[th]and the 10[th]centuries, Sufi music which was derived from ascetic and mystical movements that laid its foundation in Islam, is re-telling of the history of the golden age of Islam. 'The Golden Age' has been reflected in the rise of Islam with the ages of the caliphate system, and, in those ages in the fields of the economic, scientific, and cultural spheres huge development took place. This particular period was marked by rulers of Abbasid who endeavoured to translate it into Arabic from classic knowledge. Quran and Hadith had been followed and valued during this period as proper guidance towards gaining scientific knowledge and development. Remarkably, the music was influenced by it too.

Thus, the music has developed into a philosophy that is mystical and has conveyed the devotion which had been accompanied by rituals and religious observation. To the present date, Sufi music has been defined as the communication channel which is between 'meditation and prayers'. The performers or the listeners have lost in a spiritual world. A particular level of reference is to the insolence of Sufi music and Sufi music has been supplemented with the help of many kinds of adjectives like 'wailing' for creating a negative level of impact on the mind of readers which is about traditions and Eastern values. This particular musicophobia or the fear of Sufi music is connected to the Western hesitation towards Islam and is reflected here because of its golden history when it was grown and developed. 'Are they going to come back?' is the question in Americans 'minds along with a constant level of fear that the Muslims have to overtake.

Sufi's beat intensified their anxiety of Lianne and this stopped her from going to her flat of Elena. In her intensity of fury, she has combated Elena in an argument who spoke in favour of the music being as comforting and peaceful. The music has produced turmoil and disharmony in the mind of Lainne. She had been frightened highly and not able to absorb the mystical notes' spiritual implications. Her constant level of efforts to associate mystical music with the 9/11 disaster have shown her concern and trepidation. But it had been irrational as music had no job to do with the Twin Towers bombing. Anybody is going to take it in a personal manner under these kinds of circumstances.

The psychological panic is extreme and compels her to slam 'the door which is located behind her whenever she hears the bark of a dog over the solo lute sound from Kurdistan/ Egypt/ Turkey. The text illustrates in this contrast, that jazz music is Lianne's preference in moments which is stressful. This has indicated the prejudice of

narrative for elevating the American point of traditions with the help of Islamic conventions. Delillo has also created an aura with the help of portraying music that depicts that Americans are frightened of Sufi.

Jazz music has appeared to form a 'binary' to the music of the Sufi genre (Derrida 1966). This particular novel has exposed jazz music fondness of Lianne and is cherished in the USA for its level of contribution to the historical background of WW2 after which the USA emerged as a victorious superpower. It has an exhilarating and strong effect with a great amount of power for improvising. But this Jazz music feature has indicated its lack of meditation and mental soothness.

It has been expanding, changing, and evolving characteristics for countering Sufi music and its meditative, traditional, and calm spirit. Since it has passed through many kinds of stages for evolving and distinguishing itself from other kinds of traditional music, it has attracted individuality and newness. Their preference of Lianne to play her records of Jazz shows her transformative desire from the atmosphere of horror-stricken into a new and calm atmosphere. It has highlighted Islam's Western 'closed views' as a monolithic kind of religion that had been incompatible along with the modernity (Runnymede Trust Report 1997).

According to the text, a kind of anger that is against the music of the Sufi genre has been enmeshed unintentionally with the fright of Muslims. Continuously, the text has drawn the attention of the readers to its height of contribution for emphasizing the American hegemony with the help of depicting some irrational attitude of Lianne towards the customs of Muslims. She is feeling unpleasant at Elena who is playing 'this kind of music at a sensitive time' (Dellilo 49). Her frustration has preceded the method of remembrance to "the newspapers of the dead one's profiles"(Delillo52).She has also said that her level of exasperation has been

entangled with the help of music leading her to think, with the help of Muslims such as: "the persons who have thought including alike, talk along with eating the same food at the same time, which is telling the same kind of prayer, words for the lot more number of words, in the instance of the same kind of prayer, dusk and dawn, with the help of following the moon and sun arc" (Delillo 68).

Islam and its Sufi beliefs had been disapproved as a power of secret and it had been apprehended for taking 'American government control'. Such a kind of scattered thoughts made her in a restless position. These have signified the Muslim's unity as a fierce level of bludgeon that is in and out of narrative which is over the fear of growing American. The text has emphasized the American level of ideology of the method of locating Islam with some problematic attitudes. In a Steady manner, it has moved towards Islam and Muslims, categorizing them as the people of extremists. It has emphasized the ideology of anti – Islam which springs from the term 'aporias', but the narrative contradicts to it.

According to Kundnani, "Lianne's meditation over of Muslim unity posits question on the concept of multiculturalism and that identifies another contradiction of the text. In a land of various ethnic communities and groups, multiculturalism seems beyond question. A diffident notion of Islam runs parallel to it".(Kundnani 21) Capitalism appears to be a twofold opposition in a strong manner which is a diffident notion for the religion of Islam that is presented in the novel. As per the view of Lance, "Capitalism also appears as a strong binary opposition to Islam in the novel. The idea of racism displaced from physical appearance as a source of bias and discrimination inscribe racism in capitalism" (Lance 2002).

Here the spiritual values had been lost and overdependence on many kinds of labour has invited more number of immigrants. It has effects that are long-lasting on

the psychological health of humans when hatred and jealousy have positively surpassed moral virtues. Contrarily, the novel has picked up Islamic mysticism as creating disorder in the minds of Muslims, which had been countered by the effects in contradictory philosophy form that have asserted the liberal and secular kind of approach Americans have in life.

"In a frequent way, the narrative articulates the envy of Muslims in power and control of America. Dellilo in the novel asserts, "These old men who sit in beach chairs, veined white bodies and baseball caps, they control our world" (Delillo 173). Kalpan said that there said to be a "disconnect which is in-between USA and other places of the world and the economic supremacy and differences in culture have widened this kind of gap" (Kaplan12).

2.3. Mindscetch of Characters:

In this novel, Muslim characters have visualized America as a kind of corrupt which is struggling for allowing to degrade the name of Islam. These kinds of intentions are said to be heinous. It is a technique of narrating something to communicate such kind of thoughts through the characters having Muslim names to make the account credible. It has reassured a variety of readers about the information which is reliable. An abrogating type of fallout in the surroundings of the 9/11 attacks, America is reflected in the wider approach through the viewpoint of Islam which is, in fact, budding from thoughts of American sentiment. These kinds of attacks have rejuvenated mistrust and rift towards Islam. When we have established a connection which is in-between Islamophobia and racism, we have observed that the events of 9/11 tasks some sort of 'otherness' to a particular faith of people. Further, it has reflected a re-established notion of the 'other' which has been cloaked with religious

fear. Through the mind of a Muslim character, the text has augmented the Muslim thought of detestation of the West.

Muslims and Americans have reciprocated the hatred. The text is intended to consider many kinds of Muslims who are participating in terrorist activities which are widely spread throughout. Making ideologically enemy is the best mode to serve American Imperialism which is an ingredient that resulted in anti-Semitism and Muslim 'otherness'. The narrative has formulated the anti-Semitic notion which is through the minds of Muslims. The group of Hammad considered the Jewish people as stupid people. The narrative intends to outline the Muslims as anti-modernists and racists. Amir, an 'intense' man and group leader, has announced the Islamic philosophy. The following standpoint is preached by him: "Islam is the world outside the prayer room as well as the surahs in the Koran. Islam is the struggle against the enemy, near enemy and far, Jews first, for all things unjust and hateful, and then Americans"(Dellilo 79-80). The anti-Jews scramble which is above-mentioned and the novel's anti-American stance refers to the 'difference 'that is presented in the text; the difference between Jews and Muslims, and in-between Americans and Muslims (Derrida 130). In way of a better approach, the text has invoked its Christian and Jew readers to understand Muslims and Islam as an opposition to them. This is for attaining imperialistic prime goals. In political behavior, setting two kinds of enemies at the front is benefiting the superpower.

Hence, the novel has various agenda. In addition, the second objective that has appeared to be a pervasive manner that is the attitude of hostility towards Jews is believed to vanish from the horizon of the globe in the lieu of the Muslim civilization.

In the narrative *Falling Man,* all the characters of the fiction are exposed to the omniscient narrator. In the novel, he knows the lives and thoughts of everyone. With

the help of this technique, *Falling Man* has brought the views about Amir among the Americans. It is kind of an attempt to show a conservative mentality, in banning the person from the delight and happiness of life. It was assumed already as monolithic; the novel has depicted Islam as a religion that is primitive and hostile. No doubt, Islam has denounced the extramarital affairs, gluttony, and sloth. Thus, its intensity of portrayal as a religion that is conservative discloses the 'aporia' of the narrative (Derrida 130)."It signifies also that the entire text has been shaped in a contradiction, which is incomprehensible and centralized. It is the opinion of difference for marginalizing the faith of Islam as discrepant and obstinate religion" (Derrida 131).

The text again rethinks the identity of Muslims as confusing in behavior and said to be hostile. The characters of Muslims subvert America's hegemonic hierarchies (Hubel etal. 42). It is getting meaning which is new in the juxtaposing society of America to the values of Islam, a binary level which is appearing more strongly through the novel. The religious branding allows the writer to incorporate the supremacy in America's socio-historical context from the past which continues in society of the present day as a form of fear of Islam.

"The text is permitting us to deconstruct and to see the religion as a kind of source to beliefs which is conceived ideas covered into racist notion" (Rana 154). The novel's narrator goes into the mind of Hammad. Hammad who is a character of Muslim is getting ready for the suicide bombing with the help of lessons of harsh religious teachings. This has been demonstrated as the brainwashing procedure. The radical type of belief is pressuring him to adopt radical kind of ways. Systematically, this indoctrinated him with a yearning for the spirituality and morality of this corporeal world.

Through the character, Dellilo says, "The things have faded in the dust. It's better to leave these kinds of things behind when we have eaten and slept over here along with all kinds of people and houses and cars. This is all dust particles of light and fire of days for coming". (Delillo 171)

In the Islamic faith, it is believed that the human being is created from dust. These kinds of beliefs have been reinforced with the help of the mind of Hammad. His mind is a kind of a mechanism for articulating many kinds of religious notions. "They sat around a table on day one and pledged to accept their duty, which was for each of them, in blood trust, to kill Americans". (Delillo171) The entire scene emphasizes the Muslims to be a warrior who has been trained. These kinds of statements show the terrorism that has been preceded by some actions that are planned and systematic. It has invoked many kinds of thoughts in which these kinds of men did not attack America in an arbitrarily motivated emotion. The plan was done in a well-organized manner. This particular type of Faith has provided them the moral support for mass destruction and bloodshed. The faith has convinced them to ransack this kind of world of infidels and bigots. Mentors have inculcated these kinds of defiant thoughts in minds of them.

Brainwashing was highlighted in a kind of narrative manner as a tool that is important and that is used in dragging people to the extremity of religion. Hammad has gone through the 'radicalization' process for taking the action of lethal in an excessive manner. When the narrative has communicated his radicalization process, it has failed to assert that all kinds of Muslims are going to fall victim to such a kind of situation. Ironically, its argument is denied by the text. It has constructed the identity of Hammad as a terrorist and informs the reader in such a way that terrorists aren't

"born Muslims". However, the extreme level of reinforcing process of ideas and values is going to turn any kind of this path easily:

…the landscape [Afghanistan] consumed him …It was all Islam, the rivers and streams. Pick up a stone and hold it in your fist, this is Islam. God's name on every tongue throughout the countryside…he wore a bomb vest and knew he was a man now, finally, ready to close the distance to God. (Delillo172)

Hammad's mentor, who is named Amir, recites Islamic quotes to justify the American attacks. Amir said "Never have we destroyed a nation whose term of life was not ordained beforehand. The text signifies the opposition of Islam to America. It grows ironic when it views America from a Muslim perspective as a world of 'illusion" (Delillo 173).

"The narrative reflects the reassertion of Islam in American fiction subsumed under the term 'terrorism'. As a common recognition, media and literature itemized terrorism a 'Muslim' constituent. It elucidates many things particularly marginalization of Muslims based on their creed. Not merely the 9/11 disaster but the American lifestyle heavily influenced the common perception and understanding of Islam. Often assumed in opposition to democracy, derogatory concepts relate to it. Islam's identification with fundamentalism led America to form a concept of Muslims as ones 'who wish to return to and replicate the past' (Esposito24). The person named Amir has demonstrated these kinds of arguments: "The time is coming, our truth our shame, and each man becomes the other, and the other still another …being crowded by other cultures, other futures the Allen folding will of capital markets and foreign policies" (Delillo80).

"Amir leads a group of seven students at university that represents Muslims in America discontented and uncomfortable by their surroundings and they 'wish' to

have their own space 'space… in the mosque, in the portable prayer room at the university" (Delillo80). Martin in his conversation with Lianne and Nina promotes the same arguments, "They want their place in the world, their global union, not ours. It's an old dead war… But it's everywhere and it's rational" (Delillo 80).

"They want their place in the world, their global union, not ours. It's an old dead war… But it's everywhere and it's rational" (Delillo 116). The conversation between Nina, Martin, and Lianne has demonstrated a confrontational attitude towards Muslims and their appearances. Nina has become offensive in every instance when she is speaking of Muslims. Her thoughts had been infused with the rage and fear that had resulted from the 9/11 frustration. She has criticized the beliefs of Islam and accused Muslims of their fundamentalism and irrationality.

"They invoke God constantly. This is their oldest source, then the oldest word…It's what men feel. It's the thing that happens among men, the blood that happens when an idea begins to travel, whatever's behind it…How convenient it is to find a system of belief that justifies these feelings and these killings" (Delillo 112).

"Nina seemingly affronts the belief system that promotes bloodshed. However, at this Point the narrative advocates the false assumptions that undermine Islamic beliefs and portray them as lethal and devastating for American people and society. Nina refuses to understand the problems of Muslims if any. She explicates her argument as follows: 'First they kill you, then you try to understand them. Maybe eventually, you will leave their names but they have to kill first" (Delillo113).

These kinds of arguments have articulated the anti-Muslim philosophy of the text. The usage of the pronoun 'you' has emphasized the victim. "'You' is a reference to the American people being kind and thoughtful towards Muslims and immigrants. It highlights the text's binary opposition of 'you' and 'them' to outline

'you' as the innocent American people victim of ferocious Muslims who like 'viral infection[s]'are reproducing themselves" (Delillo 113). In all the cases a close reading of the text reveals a strong attempt to alienate and depict Muslims and Islam as 'other' in fiction as well as in society.

2.4. John Updike's *Terrorist* as Post-9/11 novel

Updike's novel *Terrorist*, published in the year 2006, has been set as a precise instance for accentuating assumptions of American writers about Islam as a frightful and monolithic religion. It is the twenty-second novel of this American novelist. It has portrayed the characters who are Muslims in negative assumptions creating problems for this community living in America and the West (Runnymede Trust Report 1997). The novel deals with the subject matter which is said to be risky as it explicitly targets Islam as a faith and Muslims as its fanatic and radical followers.

The novel is set in post-9/11 New Jersey, with a despondent and depressed Muslim character named Ahmad seeking guidance from an 'imam,' who is a Muslim religious scholar, for setting himself on a "straight path". It is nothing but an example of an orthodox believer.

Ahmad Ashmaway Mulloy, an 18-year-old boy, born to an Egyptian father and a mother of Irish descent is the major character of the novel. The story of the novel revolves around his character. Ahamad was deserted by his father when he was three years old. The mother of Ahmad, very often viewed as 'a lapsed Catholic' separated Ahmad from his father and possessed seemingly a disposition in a careless manner upon carrying the ambitions which are based on worldly aspirations. When Ahmad was 11, he had been converted to Islam. The imam of a local mosque has expounded Allah's and Holy Quran's words to him. Ahmad has engaged himself in

Arabic language learning and lessons of Quranic teachings under the supervision of Sheikh Rashid so that his spiritual aspiration can be achieved with refined progress.

During the novel's course of development, American society and its materialism and hedonism threaten the faith of Ahmad. The multi-stranded plots have gathered around him while the family of a Lebanese immigrant employs him in a furniture store. Comparatively guiltless in the present-day evil world, Ahmad Mulloy establishes himself as a befitting apprentice who thinks 'the student's faith can surpass the master's faith. He is said to be passionate in the expression of the strength and vigor of this kind of devotion. Sheikh Rashid has directed him to a group that is exploiting his faith and his level of aspirations for paradise. No one is said to have been successful in diverting Ahmad from that which he called the 'straight path', neither Jack Levy, who is the counselor at Central High School, nor Joryleen Grant, who is his black classmate. Teresa, Ahmad's mother, has attempted to sabotage Ahmad's decision to pursue a career in truck driving. Sheikh Rashid has initiated Ahmad for the pursuit of truck driving as a practical skill in a better manner than academic studies preference.

According to his view, academic studies have been working for the advancement and development of a country that is secular and weakens the beliefs of religion. However, his driving skill of a truck has implicated him in a terrorist plot to blow up the Hudson River and Lincoln Tunnel, to annihilate America's 'infidels.' Ahmad agrees to blow himself up in this type of scheme, which takes him to a meeting place, but his level of associates isn't there. To avoid the arrest with the help of the federal agents, Ahmad proceeded to undertake the mission alone. Levy gets an alert for the planned attacks of Ahmad with the help of his sister-in-law, who is

named Hermione, and encounters his truck laden with many kinds of explosives immediately on the road toward his destination before getting on the highway.

While he was stuck in traffic in the Lincoln Tunnel, the person, Levy, attempted to convince Ahmed to forgo the plan of bombing. He has exposed Charlie Chehab, who is an associate of Ahmed in the bombing plan, as an agent of the CIA, who has been killed by many others who have been involved in this kind of plan. At this particular stage, Levy has confessed to having an affair with a person named Teresa, who is Ahmad's mother for many months. Ahmad softens dramatically, influenced by Levy's suggestion that he should reconsider what kind of Islamic belief he has asked him to hold. He had suspended his attack plan and raided with Levy and his saviour on the help of the way to Manhattan so that he could return to New Jersey via the George Washington Bridge. Ironically, a particular Jew has translated the true level of religion, which is for him, which has left the readers into the domain to mistrusting Muslims.

Updike believed in scientific knowledge's changing nature, whereas the beliefs of religion have less logic. "He was a staunch believer of Karl Barth's theory which was based on the notion that 'it's scripture and nothing else" (Benjamin 2014). Updike supported Barth's views about the 'yes and no of life'. His peculiarity was writing well about 'religious doubts' (Benjamin 2014). "This attitude is well exposed in *Terrorist*. The congregation description in the initial chapters reflects his immersion in Christian theology contrasted with Islam later on. In one of his interviews, he declared 'the congregation of his hometown Massachusetts church as the rock of his faith' (Cipolla 2009).

"He had a deep study of Scriptures and Christian theology. Although he was diffident to claim authority in religious matters, however, his novel reflects his

attempt to assert his grip on Islamic theology. Yet his philosophy of God and religion appear odd at times 'choosing divine comfort while rejecting divine commands...the love of God without the holiness of God". (McDermott 2015) A tone of phobia has overwhelmed this novel's setting from its initial stage. It initiated its opening with Ahmad's introduction, an important Muslim character, contemplating on the devils that have sidetracked him in the worst manner. Ahmad attends at Central High School in New Jersey where he discovers himself encircled by 'infidels'. Ahmed envisages Americans as people who have 'deviated from the straight path' with 'shifty eyes and hollow voices betray[ing] their lack of belief'. (Updike 3)

These surroundings generate the background of the story. Further, the character's interchange delineates the atmosphere in straight relation with the action of the fiction. Ahmad stays in a place where "girls sway and sneer and expose their soft bodies and alluring hair". (Updike 3) "Their bare bellies adorned with shining naval studs and low-down purple tattoos, ask, what else is there to see?"(Updike 3) This situation leads him to immense obstacles to survive his life according to his religious way of life. He is utterly disturbed by his ambiance – "his school, other students and weak Christian teacher". (Updike 3) Thus, the first page of the narrative categorizes an important disagreement between American society and Islam from Ahmad's point of view. He is 'excluded' and 'subordinated' in many ways. (Wieviorka 14)
"Islam was presumed as inherently violent. Updike's novel portrays such 'essentialized' Islamic beliefs assumed by Americans to explain the innate and biological differences in the form of religious identity markers; naturally possessed by Muslims as shared characteristics". (Fredrickson 3)

These kinds of characteristics have been reflected in the extremist ideology of Ahmed which has been illustrated in further detail with the help of Quranic verses.

"Therefore, 'values and beliefs' are shared features of Islamophobia and racism creating a connection between both. Religious practices as cultural 'markers' permeate the narrative and delineate the racial profiling of Ahmad constructing his anti-American character. 'Infidels, they think safety lies in the accumulation of the things of this world". (Fredrickson 4) Hence, "beliefs and values" shared racism and Islamophobic features which create a strong connection between the both. The practices of religion as the cultural level of' markers' have permeated the delineation and narrative of Ahmad's racial profiling, which is constructing his character as an anti-American. "Infidels, they think safety lies in the accumulation of the things of this world". (Updike 4)

The chapter as a whole spectates America from Ahmad's perception. "If there is a next, an inner devil murmurs, and finally, his religious ideas and their assimilation foreshadow". (Updike 5) The text at this stage ironically grows speculative by asking many questions. Ahmad's conception of Americans elucidates the novel's philosophy well in later chapters. His regard for his American mother 'as a mistake that his father made' shows his anti-American disposition (Updike 170):

Who would forever stoke Hell's boilers? What infinite source of energy would forever maintain opulent Eden, feeding its dark-eyes hour is, swelling its heavy hanging fruits, renewing the streams and splashing fountain, in which God, as described in the ninth surah of the Quran, takes eternal good pleasure? (Updike 5)

This novel's other binary opposition has been represented by a disagreement between Christianity and Islam. The face of Islam is radical and fanatic, which is in contrast to the benign of Christianity and the flexible level of the disposition, which is an assault in the exaggerated manner that is made to be believed and appealing with false notes supplementation. The novel narrates an event in the series, which is through the

consciousness of Ahmad making it more dramatic. From Ahmad, the voice of the narrator is distinct in a clear manner. "A narrative in third-person has conceived the entire level of action which is expressed through the character of Ahmad". (Jahn 95)

It has reinforced the 'unforgiving fire', which is an Islamic idea. "It reinforces the Islamic idea of 'unforgiving fire'. False notes scatter in the novel to loathe Muslims and their faith and uncertainties in a reader's mind. Muhammad could not proclaim the fact of eternal fire too often". (Updike 7) Earlier, the narrator had drawn many analogies from the concept of physics. At present, it has counted on computer science to prove that Islamic beliefs are false. In a clear approach, this attitude has emerged in the form of racism. "Deconstruction of the text identifies false notes in the text to portray a cruel face of Islam. 'Women are animals easily led". (Updike 10) "Why do girls have to tell the time? To make themselves important, like those fat lettered graffiti for those who spray them on helpless walls". (Updike 17) The predisposition of Islam as a patriarchal religion extends through these arguments. Ahmad's thoughts reflect authorial intent to distract readers by making religious beliefs controversial.

Updike puts forward an argument that draws attention to the 'existence of the second law of thermodynamics' in opposition to the Islamic idea of hell. (Updike 5) However, Islam has never juxtaposed the science of physics to evolve a hierarchical relation. Revealed in the 7th century, the "Quran accurately substantiates scientific theories and logics. In many places, we find revelations in the Quran validating the existing state of the universe. Apart from including a misreading of the Quran, Updike's narrative is critical of its core philosophy. It mentions God's splendid position in Eden and relates it to the growing height of Ahmad in contrast 'to the insects unseen in the grass".(Updike 5)

The dissimilarity reflects ridicule of the Unseen and it also points out the narrator's loss of faith. It must be kept in mind that target readers are mainstream Americans who are lost in the logic illustrated by these texts. At this point, the storyline develops a binary between atheism and Islam. "Referring to the second law of thermodynamics, the narrative mocks the notions of hell and heaven described by the Quran. The second law of thermodynamics defines that the total entropy of an isolated system can only increase over time. Entropy is the disorder and deterioration of a system. In ideal states, it remains constant. However, ideal states are scarce. This law emphasizes the 'all energy exchange' that is 'the potential energy of the state is less than its initial state". (Foote 199) The narrative has relied on physics and its law to prove the Quran to be in doubt by introducing this thermodynamics hell concept.

Texts intended to generate doubts, and maintain their claims for a long, as readers grow interested to carry out investigations into the proposed questions. Everyday questions about religion instigate fears and apprehensions of the skeptic questioner. Drawing distinctions between science and the Quran has been a normal technique of Western and American writers. Mistreatment of Islamic ideas in comparison to scientific theories builds suspicion. Contrarily, researchers have investigated and highlighted the comments of 'those who have a deep knowledge of science' articulating their belief in the Quran in a much stronger way. (Gunny 38) "We believe in the Quran. All that it contains comes from God". (Gunny 38) The texts of post-9/11 literature have served "the same kind of purpose with the help of representing the Muslims and Islam, which is fearsome in a disproportional manner and is excoriating Islam for rationalizing 'the threat of Islam' and proving that militant Islam is said to be dangerous to the West". (Said 1) "Assaults on Muslims articulate a fear of Islam". (Said 1)

In John Updike's *Terrorist*, the first impression we get after reading the narrative is that Ahmad is a misguided and de-tracked youth. His religious beliefs are responsible for his rigid outlook, which is incompatible with the contemporary thinking of the modern world. We also tend to be sympathetic with Ahmad whose religious beliefs are exploited for terrorist activities. We feel a strong dislike for his mentor Shaikh Rashid who is using Ahmad for his nefarious designs. Similarly, we also hold a negative view of Ahmad's father who left his family when Ahmad was only three. On the other hand, Jack Levy, despite his extra-marital affair with Ahmad's mother, wins our sympathy when he convinces Ahmad to abandon his suicide mission. Upon scrutiny, it reveals that all the Muslim characters in the narrative, with few exceptions, are presented as intolerant, anarchists, and hostile to democratic values.

They are mere stereotypes and are reduced to monolithic entities. Though their appearances and ethnicities differ they share the same religious commonalities; they are naïve, fanatics, fundamentalists, and incompatible with the modern world. They are not representing themselves; it is the narrator who is representing them before the readers. They lack substance. They are puppets whose strings are in the hands of Updike. Their mouths are filled with words that are very tantalizing and express the mindset of American media, like, "True believers believe in Jihad…they believe…in action. They believe that something can be done…they believe that a billion followers of Islam need not have their eyes ears and souls corrupted by the poisonous entertainments of Hollywood and a ruthless economic imperialism whose Christian-Jewish God is a decrepit idol, a mere mask concealing the despair of atheists." The tug of war between the dominant and marginalized elements in the society is persistent.

These texts have supported the idea implicitly or explicitly that behind every kind of attack in America is said to be the Islamic ideology of extremism as its root cause. This has confirmed the racist idea as a "moving target" which is adapting and changing multiple definitions as per the global scenario. The thoughts of Muslim characters and Islamic ideology have been painted with aggression as the inherent philosophy of the novel. The contradictions have been constructed to explain the point of view of the narrative and capture the attention of readers. European and American hegemony often conceives Islam as a hazard for European countries and America that threatens the solidarity of the region. Reversal of hierarchies features the main idea of the novel. (Derrida 132) Updike highlights the 'essentialized differences' between Islam and America in the context of religion. (Fredrickson 2002) The narrator's viewpoint unites many threads of the novel *Terrorist*, which are causing conflicts. The confusion and ironical alienation in the 'born and bred' mind of Ahmad, who is an American Muslim, have perpetuated his image as a stereotype.

"The narrative emphasizes the environment at the expense of characters, rebellious and disapproving of the American society. Perception of Christian worshippers as 'kinky-haired kafirs', reflect insanity of Ahmad's mind that views 'the singe of hellfire' for Americans". (Updike 17) "It develops Ahmad's image as a psychopath with abnormal and violent social behavior. His mind emulates religious thoughts but with a bitter and extreme disposition. Uncertainties intrude his mind many times. He has the mind of an obstinate child who desperately requires the attention of his parents. Aggression is a discernible element in his interaction with Joryleen, 'I am not of your faith' he reminds her solemnly". (Updike 10) "His reaction to her religious ideas constructs him as a fanatic Muslim. If you don't take your religion seriously, you shouldn't go". (Updike 11)

The narrative depicts an extremely violent picture of fundamentalist Islam - a plain view of Islam as a threat- "a historic enemy whose faith… [is]distinctly opposed to West".(Esposito 169) "It is to condition how non-Muslims treat Muslims. American characters in the novel share the same opinion of Islam and Muslims. Ahmad's mother, Teresa denounces Islamic beliefs in chapter two of the book 'I've never believed in people being pots of clay, to be shaped" (Updike 90). "Islam teaches the doctrine of all human beings as products of clay shaped in various moulds. Teresa, Ahmad's mother is weary of the situation and behaves indifferently towards Ahmad, particularly his religious matters. If Ahmad believes in God so much, let God take care of him" (Updike 91). Her words articulate the American philosophy of individualism, "Life is something to be lived, let it happen" (Updike 91).

Another American character, "Tylenol (Ahmad's school fellow) reserves a partial and biased attitude towards Ahmad. He mocks Ahmad as of being an Arab origin. A flying fuck is when you do it to yourself, like all you Arabs do. You all faggots" (Updike 98). Joryleen also discourages Ahmad saying "he still has his head up there in Arab Neverland" (Updike 219). Beth calls Muslims "Baptist fundamentalist, only worse because they don't care if they die" (Updike 131). She even quotes the prophet's name to encourage her statements. She refers to "mischievous high school boys who mock Muslims calling themselves Mohammedans just to annoy their parents" (Updike 131). Beth is tremendously fearful of Muslims and bombing. "She quite often recalls the fall of the Twin Towers in New York. It seemed a paradise, especially the escalators and the toy department on the top floor. All that's gone. We can never be happy again – we Americans" (Updike 132). Her sister, Hermione shares similar sentiments.

The Imam Shaikh Rashid "has a weak disposition in comparison to his disciple Ahmad is almost ten or twenty years younger. The material world around him augments worldly desires in him 'to soften the Prophet's words... but they were not to be blend" (Updike7). These images produce a desolate illustration of Islam. Islamic teachings necessitate explanation rather than to be understood literally. Shaikh Rashid, this character is the mastermind behind the terrorist plot. He is a man of cool and calm temperament. His sermons and preaching gradually alter Ahmad's mind to prepare him for the suicidal attack. He is the demigod of Islamic teaching with special skill on notions of Jihad and martyrdom, which is not the 'only' and the proper teaching of Islam. In the novel the representation of a Muslim imam emerges out of American fears of reversal of 'hierarchy' (Derrida 1967) in the global scenario. Constantly, the preaching of Shaikh hammers the mind of Ahmad:

"My teacher at the mosque says that all unbelievers are our enemies" (p.68).

"My teacher at the mosque thinks that the dark-eyed virgins are symbolic of a bliss one cannot imagine without concrete images" (p.71).

"He (sheik) said the college track exposed me to corrupting influences–bad philosophy and bad literature. Western culture is Godless" (p.38).

"He (sheik) feels that such a relativistic approach trivializes religion" (p.39).

"My teacher thinks I should drive a truck" (p.41).

"My teacher knows people who might need a driver" (p.42).

"Even Ahmad's mother describes the imam as an authoritative figure. 'He hated shaking my hand". (Updike 91)

Such out-of-context teachings made Ahmad choose a different path which is not desirable. The narrator allegedly penetrates the minds of characters to illustrate the point of view of the story. Disapproving of the thoughts and beliefs inculcated in a

youngster's mind is nothing but the expression of a narrator's 'politically fraught nature', set to explain how a teenage Muslim American is trained to blow up oneself. The novel conceives "Muslim characters into stereotypes of terrorism. It classifies Ahmad's religiosity under antagonism by two religions, Christianity and Judaism" (Updike 53-55). Here a historical manifestation of racism in the form of the fear of a particular religion dominates the discourse of the novel. "Racist ideologies rest upon religion as the main constituent of difference. The novel raises much suspicion and warning among the readers against religion. And all the children of Islam murmured against Moses and against Aaron". (Updike 55)

As a supreme component of the experience, ethno-cultural differences decisively lead to the validation of racism against Muslims. Behaviour and dress as ethno-cultural markers are the essentials to portray Muslims as highly incapacitated and inept to adopt modern American ways of life (Fredrickson 32). Levy and Beth's marriage (a Jew and a Christian) 'a brave mismatch, a little loving mud in history's eye' also represents ethno-cultural differences (Updike 25). The narrative has adhered to what Fredrickson has upheld as the root cause for eliminating the "other". It has created an otherization for the specific community. To avoid a biased perspective, fiction writers have frequently chosen the narrator and kept themselves detached from them. In this particular novel, the narrator is omniscient and looks at the world from different standpoints to discern each character and their thoughts and feelings. The broad logic is based on Islam's generalized misconception as a kind of threat to Europe and America. Updike, a skilled writer, directs the attention of his readers to the ideas and details that he needs to establish with the help of the point of view of the fiction:

"My teacher at the mosque says that all unbelievers are our enemies" (p.68).

"I am a good Muslim, in a world that mocks faith" (p.69).

"The world is too terrible to cherish" (p.72).

"The human spirit asks for self–denial" (p.72).

"I trust you will not be returning to the kafir church in the center of town" (p.109).

"They [your wives and children] distract you from jihad, from the struggle to become holy and closer to God" (p 108).

The above-mentioned verses have been quoted from the Quran to indicate the anti-Islamic viewpoint of the fiction. The novel has articulated Islam and Muslims' inherent violent nature for safeguarding the exclusive authority of America over the world of Muslims and Arabs. Muslims have assumed following an irrational creed which has led them to fanaticism. The text also supports the notion of the 'other' for Islam and Muslims.

Since the 9/11 attacks, the fright of Islam has been ticking on the American clocks. Mounting anger progressively transformed into fear through a sequence of explosions targeted in the name of Islam due to which danger and threat assimilated into fear. The narrative's use of Ahmad's visual power to provoke counter-arguments signifies the scholarly investigation to unravel the combination of racism and religion. 'Causes' determine all events and human actions. "The fear arises in America because of 'cultural determinism' with its philosophy that Muslims behave emotionally under the strong influence of their faith and culture" (Cigar 317). Faith as the base of their individuality determines and builds up their attitudes. The novel mirrors these details. Further, the disaster provided rationale and justification for anti-Muslim racism. It embodies religion as a guided missile. Because creed seizes the perception of 'hell'

most notably, the text articulates that fear of eternal condemnation guides these Muslim extremists to terrorism.

The whole discussion regenerates the fears and horrors of the 9/11 disaster. It translates the racist attitude of Americans toward Muslims through mockery, sarcasm, and exaggeratedly out-of-context details quoted from the Quran. Many times these quotes appear purposefully plunged into the characters' minds and the situation without any relevance. Towards the end, it turns out to be the story of a terrorist's character development. The climax portrays Jew characters surpassing Muslims. Throughout there is a 'fear of regression' elevated to America's possible incorporation into Islamic society (Peter 313). The fear is unfolded by the action of American and Jew characters configuring Muslims with their ideology as 'undesirable and problematic' (Peter 314). Ahmed's character 'being Muslim' is 'far more complicated' disclosed by Levy (Chang 2). Ahmed is perceived as a threat because of his irreconcilable faith. The narrative overturns the Islamic faith to position "Americans at a supreme position. Contrasting American characters blemishes Muslim identity. Complexities of religious faith rather than biological differences evolve the main philosophy of the novel. Muslim racial identity is based on differences in religious opinions where faith is regarded as an 'essentialized' component to recognize Muslims as others" (Fredrickson 2002).

Implied fear of the text is not about Islam as a converting force against Christianity. It is about the fright of Islam as an overruling strength rising in American social and political fields. This originates the text 'Islamophobic'; a phobia formed out of religious and cultural racism. The philosophy of the text is a clear vilification of Islam and its beliefs. "Her religion is the wrong one" (Updike 15).

"Working as an apparatus, racism in the text implies difference and power in the form of religious practices and assertion of American supremacy" (Frederickson 9).

Muslims have sustained the status of 'others' in these two novels. Americans and Westerners attempt to use their intellectual power constantly to reinforce stereotypes of Muslims and Islam. American supremacy lies in the forces that are said to be social, political, and economic hegemony, which is over the remaining common people. The globalization process has blurred the boundaries of the world, but the attacks of 9/11 have sharpened these kinds of things again in a rigorous manner with the help of bringing racism, which is overt, back into American social and Western discourse. The arguments that support democratic ideals and American hegemony in these two novels have attempted to assert Muslims' inferiority and their religion as incompatible with the American and Western world.

The novels have criticized the US government's policies towards Middle Eastern Muslim countries. Immigration, as the novel's primary concern, has indicated the intention, which is authorial, of banning all Muslims in the world from crossing the shores of America. Post-9/11 America has tightened its immigration policies; however, America is currently feeling threatened. The immigration policy reforms imposed a tough level of restrictions on Muslims. A significant change was the establishment of the Homeland Security Department in 2002, which the two selected novels thematize to encounter Muslim terrorists. Each novel articulates security measures such as screening, data collection, and traveling for Muslim immigrant characters. These novels recount the relationship between immigrants and national security. These kinds of novels have recounted the national security and immigrant relationship.

Updike welcomes Homeland Security's hard work enlightening the Americans about the 'threat levels' on a regular basis (Updike 43). His style of writing reflects the despised immigrants in Ahmad's father's character portrayal, "I've made it very clear to him what a loser his father was. An opportunistic, clueless loser, who hasn't sent us a postcard, let alone a fucking cheek, for fifteen years" (Updike 89).

Delillo also discusses the immigration dilemma by describing New York at the time of 9/11 "when every cab driver… was named Mohammad" (Delillo 28). Every person apprehends the name of Muhammad with fear. The arguments lead to the notion of 'otherization' that is sustained throughout the novels. These illustrations symbolize a malignant American attitude toward immigrants.

This is the approach that DeLillo takes in *Falling Man*. Although it does eventually take us into one of the towers in the aftermath of the impact of the first plane, most of the novel deals with the emotional and psychological fall-out of a survivor from one of the towers, Keith Neudecker, and his estranged wife, Lianne, rather than with the events of 9/11 itself. Indeed, the metonym "9/11" is conspicuous by its absence from the novel, and there is no mention either of George Bush, al-Quaida, the "War on Terror," or Osama Bin Laden. Indeed, the novel draws attention to this last omission through the title of its first section, "Bill Lawton," which is the name a group of children (mishearing' Bin Laden') give to the mysterious entity that they ceaselessly scan the skies for in the post-9/11 period.

Similarly, the falling man of the novel's title turns out to be not the iconic image from Richard Drew's photograph, but a performance artist, David Janiak, who, in the weeks after the collapse of the World Trade Center, stages several falls from high buildings with the aid of a safety harness that arrests his descent." As he refuses to be interviewed, Janiak's motives remain obscure, and his obituary (he dies,

mysteriously, of natural causes at the age of thirty-nine) notes that "[t]here is some dispute over the issue of [whether Janiak] intended to reflect the body posture of a particular man who was photographed falling from the north tower of the World Trade Center, headfirst, arms at his sides, one leg bent, a man set forever in free fall against the looming background of the column panels in the tower" (DeLillo 221). Whether wittingly or not, however, Janiak's act provides a series of distorted replays of the men and women who chose to leap from the towers rather than be burnt or suffocated inside.

The criticism of these novels has also exposed the intentions of the author in making the supremacy of Americans visible, which is visible by the process of normalizing it as a perspective of the 'other'. Emerging at a pace that has been accelerated, Islamophobia is seen in America and is looking at Islam and Muslims as 'other'. The novels that are selected have the opportunity to inscribe the dominance of America in opposition to the ideology of Islam. The instrument is Islam, which is a viable tool to reinforce prejudice with the help of scavenging its beliefs and values whenever possible. Meaning is found to never be static. It has changed as per the scenario. Various categories of contexts have delivered different kinds of meaning. The analysis identifies contemporary racism echoing extreme religious rhetoric and making them an 'other' in post-9/11 America.

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CHAPTER - III

Fictions Write Back: Reinventing Identity in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*

It is made evident by xenophobia that is exhibited by the mainstream society towards Muslims living in the west, especially those who exhibit their religious sensitivities overtly, whether that is through the hijab for women or a beard for men. However, that is not the point of the story. Changez is not religiously fundamentalist. Despite experiencing discrimination in the second half of the book, he does not claim that his faith has been re-awakened. Therefore, he cannot be dismissed simply as a "hot head" or "religious nuttier" - especially since his perspective is the only one told in the story. Certainly, he undergoes a political awakening, but it doesn't result from atavistic anti-modernism, resentment of western materialism and immorality, opposition to global capitalism, or any of the other default positions that western politicians and media attribute to Islamic radicals.

"Do not be frightened of my beard. I am a lover of America" (Hamid 1). In Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Changez, the protagonist from Pakistan, utters these words, which emphasize the conflict between identity and representation. Based on Changez's appearance, he feels that this tension is related to the way he is portrayed post- 9/11, because of his political activism, he is constructed by the media as a potential terrorist figure, and he describes American society as a fundamentalist and exclusionary place. He is torn between his loyalty to Pakistan and his life in the US. All of these factors have an impact on his self-understanding.

Changez is a Princeton graduate who lives in New York and works at Underwood Samson, one of the most prestigious valuation firms in the country. A

Princeton graduate named Erica has a troubled relationship with him, since he excels at his job. He loses his identity with the US's national myths and his view of American life after the 9/11 attacks, becoming "increasingly marginalized within the post-9/11 milieu" (Hartnell 336). According to him, the US is a "fundamentalist" as he refers to the nation's adherence to national myths of economic and political dominance. His disillusionment with his American dream is caused by his perception of American fundamentalism, and the conflict between his fundamentalism and the American dream makes him develop "an envious distaste towards the world of wealth and power in which he now exists" (King 684). As he views it, America's involvement in the conflict between India and Pakistan is self-interested and undermines the War on Terror. Changez narrates the story when he has returned to Lahore after leaving New York, describing his experiences as a university lecturer with a counterterror agent after returning from New York. The man appears to have targeted Changez because he held "anti- American" (Hamid 203) protests at his university, and "[t]he reader is supposed throughout the novel to be suspended between the most benign and most sinister interpretations of the interaction between the two of them, something Hamid takes to mirror relations between the 'East' and 'West'" (Khawaja 55).

Ironically, the title of the novel refers not to a religious, cultural, or political fundamentalism, nor does it suggest his anti-American sentiments, for which he is suspected and for which an unknown American man seems to be plotting against him. He instead gets enmeshed in the fundamentals of American society, a concept he despises and hates, but which he also embodies, as he experiences economic dominance in New York.

As Changez and his Princeton classmates are on holiday in Greece, he muses on his distaste for American economic dominance, wondering: "by what quirk of human history my companions – many of whom I would have regarded as upstarts in my own country, so devoid of refinement were they – were in a position to conduct themselves in the world as though they were its ruling class" (Hamid 24). He later rebelled against this economic dominance as a result of his initial distaste.

Changez appears to be in conflict with his identity at various points in the novel, striving to be part of American society but appearing to be an outsider as well, and by being critical of American fundamentals and foreign policy, he later actively resists full inclusion. Using the analogy of a fortified and militant castle to represent the United States, Changez shows how the US has developed after 9/11: "Gazing up at the soaring towers of the city, I wondered what manner of host would sally forth from so grand a castle" (90); and "upon entering Underwood Samson's reception area, the space has the appearance of being "reminiscent of the gleaming façade of some exalted and exclusive temple" (Hamid 180). American society is maintained as a fortress by a variety of means: The country is represented in various ways: through immigration officers, through ethnocultural ideas of what it means to be American, it illustrates Changez's desire and failure to have sex with Erica as well as national myths, like the American dream.

Changez can identify with this power by constructing a view of America as a stronghold. As well, he discusses illusions and myths as factors that contribute to American nationalism, and begins to re-construct a narrative of Pakistan, his country of birth, as he begins identifying with it once again. Changez's characterization as a potential terrorist figure echoes this concern with myth, storytelling, and representation, placing the American and Pakistani identities at odds with each other.

During his narration of his story to an American man, he says: "[Y]ou should not imagine that we Pakistanis are all potential terrorists, just as we should not imagine that you Americans are all undercover assassins" (Hamid 209). As the reader unravels the mystery of his true identity, the reader begins to suspect the American might be an undercover assassin, as Anna Hartnell points out:

"The suggestion that the American might himself be armed and hostile while the ostensibly peaceable narrator may have turned to jihadi violence informs an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and impending violence, an atmosphere that challenges and implicates the reader's own processes of identification". (337)

Changez's confusion about his identity is echoed by the hostility between these two figures. With his depiction of an American man as a symbol of American fundamentalism, Changez conveys the idea that he is viewed as an outsider to American culture, and he also underscores the resistance against America shown by the outsider. On a business trip to Manila with Underwood Samson colleagues, Changez notices the effects of this mutual hostility on his identity: "There was an undisguised hostility in his expression; I had no idea why […] his dislike was so obvious, so intimate, that it got under my skin" (Hamid 76). Identifying with this Filipino, Changez says they had "shared a sort of Third World sensibility" (Hamid 77), through which he reflects on the differences in culture, as well as the fundamentalism he opposes:

"I looked at [my colleague] – at his fair hair and light eyes and, most of all, his oblivious immersion in the minutiae of our work – and thought, you are so foreign. I felt in that moment much closer to the Filipino [man] than to him; I felt I was play-

acting when in reality I ought to be making my way home, like the people on the [Manila] street". (77)

Important here is how he comments that what struck him "most of all" was his colleague's "oblivious immersion in the minutiae of [their] work" (Hamid 77). Changez demonstrates how this devotion to the details of capitalist systems – what he refers to as fundamentalism – is his main obstacle to inclusion within American society. Khawaja explains: "After a while he comes to the resentful realization that life in America has made him a traitor to his identity, and made him a mercenary for American interests" (Hamid 55), a position which is reflected through the hostility he experiences from the Filipino man with whom he shares the "Third World sensibility" (Hamid 77).

Having once insisted that he is not an American, Changez later identifies strongly with his once-resisting Pakistani identity and Muslim identity, and dispenses with his identification as an American. As an outsider, Changez engages with representation and identity in a way similar to Khaled Hosseini's post-9/11 novel *The Kite Runner*. Having been born in Afghanistan, Hosseini lives outside the country of his origin, making him a diaspora writer. His family was granted political asylum in the USA in 1980 after being born in Afghanistan.

A careful reading of his writings shows that he approaches the sociological, cultural, and political past of individuals and nations using memory as a thread. Two Afghanis and two Pakistanis immigrate to the United States in Hosseini and Hamid's novels. As the protagonists explore fundamentalism through the lens of theories of fundamentalism, they offer two differing perspectives on terrorists and American society. Money, sport, militancy, sex, and religious devotion are all images that are

related to masculinity for both the American society and the terrorist. Despite the political conditions that they confront, both protagonists experience personal development in a manner that reflects their readings of representations of identity and news media.

It is crucial to reach up to Hosseini's inner experiences of the nation from a psychological and emotional standpoint. His sketches reflect the good old days of his country as well as the present day, and he expresses many worries for the nation. In order to differentiate between a nation and a country, there is an important derivation. In contrast, a nation refers to the people of the country, which has an autonomous political structure. There is often a common culture and history among tightly knit groups of people.

Afghanistan is a large country, but it is a poor nation, making the discussion of Hosseini's novels and himself crucial. Hosseini provides a comprehensive description of Afghanistan and its past, present, and the way the tradition is being revived in his works. His sense of responsibility to his nation is so strong that he even organizes a foundation trust to help Afghan refugees and those affected by the war. Hosseini is struggling because he is not recognized by his nation; he is not recognized by his country.

As a fundamental right, his rights and freedom are not respected in his own nation. This way of telling the story of *The Kite Runner* (2003) makes it more than just a story. It is a metaphorical journey of a migrant writer returning home to help the development of his nation. As a responsible citizen, he fulfilled his duties in that way. To read the notions of the sky, kites, and thread objectively, one must see them as metaphors for life. In comparison to land with strict boundaries, the sky is a space

without boundaries that resists the free movement of people. Kite provides freedom and non-resistance to movement in the same way as a human figure. In other words, "kites were the one paper thin slice of intersection between those spheres."(43)

It is impossible for a kite to fly on the ground since it finds its space in the sky. Hence, kites are fluid objects. An individual's thread may be interpreted as a connection to their past, their country of origin, which holds them back from joining the diaspora. It is the threads those people are holding as if they are reminiscing. The theme of the novel could be related to migration and the transmission of people through a series of metaphors in the entire book. The main storyline barely mentions these issues, but both are very significant subtexts that reinforce the transnational issue.

After the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, Amir, sonof a wealthy Afghan businessman immigrates with his father to America and tells the story of how they made their way to the United States. The American writer meets his wife Soraya while living in California, and he becomes a successful author after becoming part of the Afghan subculture. Amir is haunted by the memories of his childhood, when, as a child, he witnessed and failed to protect his servant Hassan from being assaulted and raped by his father in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, Amir returns after receiving a letter from one of Hassan's friends, Rahim Khan, and learns that Hassan is the father of Sohrab, who was kidnapped by a Taliban member. In an act of redemption, Amir rescues Sohrab because he did not prevent or speak up about Hassan's rape as a child.

It appears there are some barriers to Amir's inclusion in American society even as he sees America as a place of redemption. This is especially evident in the way that Amir's father is unwilling to accept his status as a disempowered immigrant, referred

to as Baba in the novel. Amir and Baba rarely interact with non-Afghan Americans in the novel as well. When America appears to be idealized to such an extent in a novel, this lack of interaction becomes even more evident. During a meeting with a government official, Baba was offered food stamps as a result of these rare encounters: "Baba dropped the stack of food stamps on her desk. 'Thank you but I don't want,' Baba said. 'I work always. In Afghanistan I work, in America I work. [...] I don't like it free money… "(Hosseini 114).

One of Baba's ways of resisting his reliance and powerlessness is by refusing to accept financial assistance. During his time in Afghanistan, Baba's associations with symbols of power that the novel constructs as masculine and which, ironically, are idealized in Amir's experience of America, make him the embodiment of power. Even though he is adept at implementing these masculine ideals, Baba cannot maintain his power in America. Even though Baba embodies the images of masculine power and upholds the national myth of the American Dream, he is unable to be a leader in the US because of the ethnocultural boundary that surrounds American identity according to the novel. Despite his American citizenship, Baba still maintains his Afghan identity. In light of the refusal of food stamps, Amir reflects on this identification: "And that was how Baba ended those humiliating food stamp moments at the cash register and alleviated one of his greatest fears: that an Afghan would see him buying food with charity money. Baba walked out of the welfare office like a man cured of a tumor" (Hosseini 114). His physical deterioration and, ultimately, the diagnosis of cancer, signify his loss of power in America, at the same time identity crisis, too, appears on the surface.

As Amir approached his own American dream, he recalls his high school graduation in California: "Baba's beard was graying, his hair thinning at the temples,

and hadn't he been taller in Kabul?" (Hosseini 114). As a result of his decline, he has lost power within America. He still sees himself as an Afghan even though he lives in California, and he is not able to accept his new status in American society.

As opposed to Baba, who struggles to integrate and loses power, Amir thrives in his new life. According to Anis Shivani, "Hosseini is avoiding some of the harshest truths. Amir's transformation into an enviable writer in America seems too easily earned, since it comes with his marriage to an angelic wife, the daughter of an exiled Afghan general" (33).

When Amir moved to America, he also rekindled the troubled relationship he shared with Baba when he was a child in Afghanistan. I believe the two characters will be able to connect because of a change in the power dynamic between them, where Baba's family name is no longer valuable and where Amir's skills as a writer become valuable. Rather than being defined by money and influence, Baba is no longer the embodiment of masculine ideals. As a result, Baba's once-overpowering masculine presence no longer exerts a disempowering effect on Amir. Because Amir adheres to the requisites of American integration, he can adopt this position in America: he takes English courses at university when his father declines, and as a result, his father protests and attempts to preserve aspects of Afghan culture, while he accepts the mores of American society.

The Kite Runner begins chapter one with the following rendering: "I remember the precise moment, crouching behind a crumbling mud wall, peeking into the alley near the frozen creek. That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past. I've learned about how you can bury it because the past claws its way out." (Hosseini 1)

As a first-person narrator, it is clear that the writer longs for his past, as expressed in his mental and psychological state. The past he speaks of is partly his own, but it also reflects the past of the country. The novel begins on a chilling note. Towards the end of the narration, the narrator mentions the geographic location of San Francisco, "the city I now call home" (Hosseini 1). Multiple interpretations are possible. The meaning is more suggested when the word 'now' is used. Leaving behind something and accepting the present are indications that something has been left behind. In fact, home isn't here but for the moment it's ok to accept it. To quote:

"Diaspora people, with a sense of identity borne from living in a diaspora community. This sense is influenced by the past migratory history of their parents or grandparents. This is a community of people living together in one country who acknowledge that old country... a notion often buried deeply in language, custom, religion and folklore..." (Cohen, ix)

In *The Kite Runner*, a community of Afghan immigrants in America attempts to rebuild their Afghan identities through traditional practices. Migrant writers like Hosseini seek to bring recognition back to their homelands. *The Kite Runner* presents the following perspective: "Iran was a rising power in Asia and most people around the world couldn't even find Afghanistan on a world map." (Hosseini 50)

Or Because of terror and the Taliban, Afghanistan occupies more space in the news than it did in his first novel. In such circumstances, through a meaningful piece of writing, a responsible writer must be able to remove assumptions and hypotheses. *The Kite Runner's* preface reveals that many people around the world have taken action and helped in rescue and rehabilitation camps after reading the book. Throughout the novel, dates are referenced which contributes to the authenticity of the

story. After a long time, Amir's return to Afghanistan is again seen as a return to the past with his driver remarking, "You've always been a tourist here, you just didn't know it" (Hosseini 204).

An important observation can be found that a tourist observes only the things that are aesthetically pleasing whereas a true citizen of a state critically observes and offers a complete picture of his state. As a result of Taliban occupation, Afghanistan has become a dangerous place, as shown in the dialogue between the characters. 'Afghanistan' is the subject of the protagonist's novel as he's a professional writer. Hossieni may have shown himself and his expectations in regard to him in this novel. For example, he is asked to do the following: "Do you write about Afghanistan? Maybe you should write about Afghanistan again... tell the rest of the world what Taliban are doing to our country ". (Hosseini 206)

The Kite Runner, by contrast, shows little awareness of how Afghan citizens and expatriate characters are viewed within American society, a stark contrast between *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner*. In *The Kite Runner*, even Amir, who is strong in his associations with America, is strongly identified with the Afghan subculture. Throughout the novel, this Afghan community is rarely able to interact with Americans outside of their own community, highlighting a feeling of exclusion from broader American society. In addition to achieving the American dream, Amir is also able to adopt the main symbol of American power, economic success. Despite only representing the Afghan subculture, he does not seem to acknowledge or experience ethnocultural boundaries. In fact, by demonstrating the poverty of these people and the roots of their identity in Afghanistan, Amir demonstrates that it is possible to achieve wealth and no longer feel an attachment to Afghanistan. Despite his appropriation of this symbol of power and acting out what

Changez views as American economic fundamentalism, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* depicts Changez as always conscious of his position as an outsider.

As the characters react to and experience the 9/11 attacks, you can see the contrast between the ways in which they identify with America. According to Hartnell, "the weeks after September 11 saw a sharp rise in attacks not just on Arab Americans but on a range of ethnic groups who might be perceived as 'Muslims' by hostile Americans wanting to display their ostensible patriotism" (338). In a chapter in which Changez assesses a company, a man shouts at him: "Fucking Arab" (Hamid, 134), Changez responds: "I am not, of course, an Arab" (Hamid 134).

As a result of his appearance, Changez is portrayed as the enemy, and his position as an outsider is emphasized. "9/11 is the most significant obstacle to his inclusion in American society for him, since it represents the final coupling of his own American dream. Amir, on the other hand, sees it as an opportunity to establish himself as an Afghani in American society, following increased interest from the United States in Afghanistan as positive news, emphasizing the War on Terror. His enemy is the Taliban, without mentioning hostile feelings towards Arab-Americans or Muslims" (Hamid 316). Understanding how identity is constructed around an event is also affected by where the attacks are placed within each narrative. As a postscript to the main narrative, *The Kite Runner* refers to the attacks near the end of the book, when Amir's identity as an anti-terrorist and American is already confirmed. The attacks are described nearly halfway through The Reluctant Fundamentalist, when Changez is traveling to Manila. They contribute to his loss of identity with America.

In spite of his initial displeasure, Changez is surprised by the images of the attacks. When he describes seeing the news about the attacks on television, he invokes

the notion of fiction: "I turned on the television and saw what at first, I took to be a film. But as I continued to watch, I realized that it was not fiction but news. I stared as one – and then the other – of the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center collapsed" (Hamid 83). As he continues to compare the horror of the attacks to fiction, he tries to justify his initial apathy: "But at that moment, my thoughts were not with the victims of the attack – death on television moves me most when it is fictitious and happens to characters with whom I have built up relationships over multiple episodes – no, I was caught up in the symbolism of it all, the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to her knees". (Hamid 83)

Changez also refers to various myths that contribute to the formation of the American identity, myths that have become more prevalent since 9/11. Changez concludes: "And then I smiled. Yes, despicable as it may sound, my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased" (Hamid 83). Having the symbols of the economic fundamentalism which he constantly references given up is the source of his pleasure, in the words of Leach, "[t]he attack on the World Trade Center can [...] be seen as an attack [...] on the symbols of capitalism" (Hamid 90). Following the events of 9/11, the US becomes even less conducive to Changez, and it is clear he has already begun to distance himself from America and identify strongly with Pakistani identity. The dual nature of his identity compels him to see the attack on America as both an attack on the enemy and a reclaim of power by identifying with the "Third World sensibility" (Hamid 77).

Again, referring to violence, he connects national pride to the destruction of others in his tale to the American man he narrates it to: "[S]urely you cannot be completely innocent of such feelings yourself. Do you feel no joy at the video clips – so prevalent these days – of American munitions laying waste the structures of your

enemies?"(Hamid 84). He then discusses his conflicted identity as a dual American and a hostile American: "But you are at war, you say? Yes, you have a point. I was not at war with America. Far from it: I was the product of an American university; I was earning a lucrative American salary; I was infatuated with an American woman" (Hamid 84). Despite being connected to society, Changez feels like an outsider within it.

In *the Kite Runner*, the 9/11 attacks are seen in a very different light. Changez, for most of his narrative, resides in the shadow of the attacks, whereas Amir mentions them in passing and they do not appear to significantly impact his identity. Sohrab's father Hassan has lived in Afghanistan since he was a child when he was raped by Assef, the same person who has since become a member of the Taliban. He rescues Sohrab from Assef and leads the attack. As Sohrab begins to form a family with Amir and Soraya in America, he is afflicted by trauma from his past in Afghanistan, and as he refuses to speak, the attacks begin: "While Sohrab was silent, the world was not. One Tuesday morning last September, the Twin Towers came crumbling down and, overnight, the world changed. The American flag suddenly appeared everywhere, on the antennae of yellow cabs weaving around traffic, on the lapels of pedestrians walking the sidewalks in a steady stream, even on the grimy caps of San Francisco's panhandlers sitting beneath the awnings of small art galleries and open-fronted shops. One day I passed Edith, the homeless woman who plays the accordion every day on the corner of Sutter and Stockton, and spotted an American flag sticking on the accordion case at her feet". (Hamid 316)

As Amir mentions in his essay, the rise of American nationalism has little effect on his identity, and he does not address the way Afghan-Americans are perceived in America post-9/11. According to Steven Salaita, "no single event shaped

the destiny of Arab Americans more than 9/11" (Salaita 151). Amir does not make mention of this shift in his narrative. Consequently, at least in his own mind, Amir is a full-fledged American citizen, and the greater visibility of Afghanistan has made him feel that way: "Soon after the attacks, America bombed Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance moved in, and the Taliban scurried like rats into the caves. Suddenly, people were standing in grocery store lines and talking about the cities of my childhood, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif". (Hosseini 316)

The 9/11 attacks and their aftermath also ironically allow Amir to embrace his Afghan identity, by helping to restore a hospital on the "border of Afghanistan and Pakistan" (Hosseini 317) and "even adopting Islam" (Hosseini 318), "yet none of these factors impact his identification with America. After the attacks, General Taheri also returns to Afghanistan to assume the ministry position which Soraya had once mocked him for hoping to return to (Hosseini 317)". It is clear that the characters seem to have an unproblematically thriving Afghan identity after these attacks, and they regain a sense of power in the process.

This final section of the novel does not include any voices from outside Afghanistan. It appears to involve a dialogue of identity and representation between Afghanistan and Afghanistan-American subcultures, as opposed to the broader American population as in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. There is a contrast in the positions of the protagonists that enables them to approach American society from different viewpoints, including the myths that constitute it and the gatekeepers that enshrine it. The character's identification with this figure, which is seen as a threat to the place in which they inhabit, also greatly influences the representation of the terrorist in each novel. Within their respective narratives, the two protagonists present

very different perspectives on terrorism due to the contrasting way they view their respective positions in America.

In this light, terrorist figures can be viewed as the means by which each character identifies with America. "Changez is represented as a terrorist by American media, and he criticises the American conception of terrorism inherent to the War on Terror by suggesting that America's foreign involvement might also be seen as terrorism" (Hamid 202- 3). The novel concludes with him returning to Lahore, growing a beard, and accepting his Pakistani identity. Amir, on the other hand, identifies himself with the United States as opposed to Afghanistan. Amir's narrative focuses on Assef as the terrorist figure, who seems inherently evil. In addition to kidnapping Sohrab, Assef is the one who assaulted and raped Sohrab's father Hassan when he was a child. The novel portrays him as an amalgam of destructive and hateful behavior: "drug addict" (Hamid 241), "fundamentalist, self-proclaimed admirer of Hitler" (Hamid 35), and a Taliban member.

In his book, Edward W. Said observes that "extremely negative images [of Arabs and Islam]: the stereotypes of lustful, vengeful, violent, irrational, fanatical people" (Said 114) gained popularity following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, an image which pertains to the hyperbolised figure of Mohamed Assef. In his view, modern-day Afghanistan is a desolate and unredeemable place. When Assef was a child, Amir described him thusly: "His word was law, and if you needed a little legal education, then those brass knuckles were just the right teaching tool. I saw him use those knuckles once on a kid from the Karteh-Char district. I will never forget how Assef's blue eyes glinted with a light not entirely sane and how he grinned, how he grinned, as he pummeled that poor kid unconscious. […] Years later, I learned an English

word for the creature that Assef was, a word for which a good Farsi equivalent does not exist: sociopath." (Hosseini 36)

In addition to holding beliefs in Afghan racial purity, Assef is remarkably accommodating, in contrast to Amir. As a child, Assef refers to Hassan, who identifies himself as a member of the ethnic minority group Hazara: "Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always has been, always will be. We are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans, not this Flat-Nose here. His people pollute our homeland, our Watan. They dirty our blood." (Hosseini 35) Despite his discrimination, Assef is actually "half-German and has blond hair and blue eyes." (35)Assef, as a member of the Taliban, conceals his differences by wearing a turban and dark sunglasses, which challenge the concept of ethnocultural boundaries of Afghan identity that he tries to preserve. Through the racist, fundamentalist, and violent politics of the Taliban, Amir's construction of the terrorist figure, Assef, allows him to disavow any identification with Afghanistan and represent the obstacle to his identification with it. The terrorist act of Assef gives him authority over national identity and he refers to the act as "[p]ublic justice" (Hosseini 242).

Amir responds: "In the west, they have an expression for that […] They call it ethnic cleansing" (Hosseini 249). Without being aware of its negative connotations, Assef adopts the term in a positive way: "Ethnic cleansing. I like it. I like the sound of it" (Hosseini 249). It is through Assef's ability to reposition violence within positive labels that he is granted an additional form of power. Furthermore, he shows an awareness of how the violence forms a narrative in its own right, a narrative that he uses as a means of imposing his strictures onto Afghans as a "show" (Hosseini 242).

In Assef's case, image plays a crucial role given how he is linked to a religious figure and to a popular musical figure, and he is positioned in a context that contains symbols of masculine power, such as sport, religion, and so on. Even though the terrorist becomes dehumanized, he is nonetheless portrayed as hypermasculine and as being capable of narrating his own understanding of violence. As the terrorist figure in a novel such as *The Kite Runner* signifies Amir's gap between Afghanistan and his new American home in the upcoming War on Terror, it allows him to build himself against a simplified notion of the terrorist figure. Through a battle with Assef, he is able to express his masculine power and defeat this symbol of evil. This terrorist figure represents a constant encapsulation of Amir's troubled past in Afghanistan and a barrier to building a stable national identity. Due to his role in the rape of Hassan, Assef is directly responsible for Amir's childhood shame. Amir dispels Assef's ambivalence by confronting him with violence, in addition to connecting him with the American identity.

Through Baba's paternal power, Assef and Amir are able to resolve their conflicts. Assef's generosity and love protect Amir from the evils of Baba, as Amir explains: "It [...] occurred to me how lucky I was to have Baba as my father, the sole reason, I believe, Assef had mostly refrained from harassing me too much" (Hosseini 36-37). Baba, the ultimate symbol of masculinity in both novels, is able to protect Baba due to his economic power, subtly suggesting that it is due to his economic power that he is able to protect him. In order to assert his own masculinity, Amir must battle Assef after Baba's death. Moreover, after defeating Assef, Amir becomes a father figure to Sohrab after struggling to conceive with his wife.

In her essay, Janette Edwards explains why tensions were created in the film version of *The Kite Runner* when depictions of Hassan's rape were shown. The point

of discomfort, she points out, "is not the celluloid rape of a male child. It is the vision, celluloid or otherwise" and making an other "to a member of one ethnic group – in this case, the Hazara, who are mostly Shi'a Muslims – by his historical oppressor, namely, a Shunni Pahstun" (4). Assef's act of sexual violence shows his cultural dominance by also being violent towards Hassan.

In contrast, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* portrays Changez, the narrator of the novel, as a terrorist figure in the perspective of America while also presenting him as a human-like character. The "otherisation" of Changez, at least in the beginning, was not directly related to violence but rather to his public demonstrations against American foreign policy, which were supported by capitalist fundamentalists. Among his criticisms are: "America was engaged only in posturing. As a society, you were unwilling to reflect upon the shared pain that united you with those who attacked you. You retreated into myths of your own difference, assumptions of your own superiority. And you acted out these beliefs on the stage of the world, so that the entire planet was rocked by the repercussions of your tantrums, not least my family, now facing war thousands of miles away. Such an America had to be stopped in the interest not only of the rest of humanity, but also in your own. I resolved to do so, as best I could". (Hamid 167)

Changez is ultimately placed within the 'other' group of people. The argument that terrorism and counterterrorism are interchangeable in the US-led War on Terror is unsettling just as Changez has deconstructed the concept of fundamentalism in this novel. According to him: "A common strand appeared to unite these conflicts, and that was the advancement of a small coterie's concept of American interests in the guise of the fight against terrorism, which was defined to refer only to the organized and politically motivated killing of civilians by killers not wearing the uniforms of

soldiers. I recognized that if this was to be the single most important priority of our species, then the lives of those of us who lived in lands in which such killers also lived had no meaning except as collateral damage. This, I reasoned, was why America felt justified in bringing so many deaths to Afghanistan and Iraq, and why America felt justified in risking so many more deaths by tacitly using India to pressure Pakistan". (Hamid 178)

It is evident that Changez represents a shift in how we perceive terrorists. As a result of his interaction with American society and eventually becoming disillusioned with what he perceives to be American fundamentalism, he has publicly disagreed with American society. As he moves to Lahore after leaving New York, Changez speaks of an aspect of terrorism echoed within *The Kite Runner*, in which the media depicts and prefigures the reality of terrorists. According to the media, Changez' demonstrations are being framed as an act of resistance to America: "I had in the meanwhile gotten a job as a university lecturer, and I made it my mission on campus to advocate a disengagement from your country by mine […] it was not difficult to persuade [students] of the merits of participating in demonstrations for greater independence in Pakistan's domestic and international affairs, demonstrations that the foreign press would later, when our gatherings grew to newsworthy size, come to label anti-American". (Hamid 179)

In explaining how the media frames terrorism, he says: "When the international television news networks came to our campus, I stated to them [...] that no country inflicts death so readily upon the inhabitants of other countries, frightens so many people so far away, as America. I was perhaps more forceful on this topic than I intended" (Hamid 182). Changez positions the United States as embodying terrorism. He nevertheless associates himself with it through media: "[M]y brief

interview appeared to resonate: it was replayed for days, and even now an excerpt of it can be seen in the occasional war-on-terror montage. Such was its impact that I was warned by my comrades that America might react to my admittedly intemperate remarks by sending an emissary to intimidate me or worse". (Hamid 182-183)

Changez's story is narrated to this "emissary" (Hamid 183). Two different incarnations of "terrorism" are presented in Changez and America, unsettled by the simplistic definition of terrorism presented in the novel. A terrorist figure is integral to the formation of American identities in the decade following 9/11, and also impacts how American characters in novels are portrayed. Seeing American society as both a terror force and a route to redemption in one novel, and as a place of salvation and redemption through antiterrorism in the other, illuminates their different reactions to the power associated with America.

Both novels are about the outsiders, but the "inside" or the native is also an important element to reside proudly in the USA. According to Schildkraut, who discusses American national identity, "[c]citizenship, like any other group identity, entails distinguishing group members from non-members" (515), and she suggests that some of this is done through an ethnocultural lens, such as "the idea that American identity is defined by white Protestantism rooted in Northern European heritage and ancestry [...] continues to play a powerful role in shaping what people think of as 'American'"" (514). In addition to this cultural fit barrier, Middle Eastern descent presents a further aggravating factor as "[t]he added component of a horrific domestic attack carried out by people of Middle Eastern descent introduces a pervasive sense of threat that buttresses this ethnocultural tendency even more" (Schildkraut 515).

As in Baudrillard's conception of consumer society, American society is encircled by power and wealth and opposes terrorism, similar to a society that sees itself as an encircled Jerusalem, rich and threatened. That is its ideology" (Baudrillard 36). "This conception of American power, what Changez refers to in terms of castle" (Hamid 90) or "temple" (Hamid 180), persists throughout both the novels via narrative. Changez illustrates this narrative through fundamentalism and myth, while Amir represents it through patriotism and the American Dream. In many ways, Changez criticizes these national myths while Amir seems to revere them. This reflects a difference in attitude towards how America is narrated in the novels. Changez sees America as oppressive and exclusionary, whereas Amir perceives it as more permeable and accepting.

In addition to his description of Israel as one of the "real men" (Hosseini 109) the novel makes a rare reference to the Palestinian conflict, which has many implications for the construction of identity. According to Amir, "[t]he bit about Israel used to draw the ire of Afghans in Fremont who accused him of being pro-Jewish and, de facto, anti-Islam" (Hosseini 109), and Baba responds to criticisms of Israeli dominance by saying: "Then do something about it! Take action. You're Arabs, help the Palestinians, then!" (Hosseini 109). Salaita seems to explain why Afghans in Fremont reacted so violently to Baba's comments as follows: "[n]othing has been of more concern to Arab Americans since 1967 than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict [...] American support for Israel has long enraged Arab Americans (and others), thereby providing Arab Americans with a [...] political purpose" (150). In an apparent homage to Amir, Baba subverts this assumed alliance by placing himself within the sphere of America and power, removing himself from any Arabic identity.

Amir's idealised picture of American life serves as a counterbalance to Afghanistan's poverty. Occasionally, he gives glimpses of the disenfranchised status of immigrants in American society, but he fails to reflect on how these examples undermine his view of American society, such as when he briefly recounts how an "[Afghan] surgeon […] was now running a hot dog stand in Hayward" (Hosseini 319), and In telling this story, Baba explains how his unrelenting belief in the American dream, coupled with his reliance on hard work, prevents him from achieving the economic power he once had in Afghanistan.

In Fremont, California, however, the presence of an Afghan subculture complicates Amir's simplistic identification with America. Amir's ease with existing in American society is unsettled by the representation of the subculture. Despite living the American dream, his subculture illustrates how difficult it is for him to integrate into the larger society in the U.S., so he replicates a version of Afghanistan to feel like he belongs. There is also a substantial destabilization of Amir's simplistic myth about America as a place of freedom and abundance by the fact that most Afghan expats – including Baba himself – cannot realize this American dream and have to sell their wares at a Fremont flea market. Described by Amir as a flea market, it is comprised of "[Afghan] mechanics and tailors selling hand-me-down wool coats and scraped bicycle helmets, alongside former ambassadors, out-of-work surgeons, and university professors" (Hosseini 120), Their disempowerment in American society is evident. Amir's simplistic view of America is thus complicated by the novel. Despite the mythology of an inclusive and idealized America, this subculture questions this myth.

Changez presents a much less permeable characterization of the American experience, criticizing its mythology. His narrative is not restricted to interactions with Pakistani Americans. As a result, he presents America in a critical light,

especially after 9/11, as he attempts to fully integrate while accepting his Pakistani heritage, something that is portrayed as impossible for him to achieve in America after 9/11. According to Hartnell, "while the novel everywhere points to an America that gestures back to old world colonialism and the global division that are its legacy, [Changez] apparently yearns for an 'other' America; one that, like Erica, occupies the 'otherworldly' space" (Hamid 345).

This "otherworldly" (Hamid 345) interaction represents the desire to engage with others, a quality that is lacking in Changez's depiction of America. Changez comes face-to-face with one of the symbolic gatekeepers of American society, a U.S. immigration officer, upon returning from the Philippines: "When we arrived, I was separated from my team at immigration. They joined the queue for American citizens; I joined the one for foreigners. The officer who inspected my passport was a solidly built woman with a pistol at her hip and a mastery of English inferior to mine; I attempted to disarm her with a smile. 'What is the purpose of your trip to the United States?' she asked me. 'I live here,' I replied. 'That is not what I asked you, sir,' she said. 'What is the purpose of your trip to the United States?'". (Hamid 86)

Changez became even more aware of his outsider status after the attacks of September 11, 2001. Changez decides to grow a beard after visiting his parents in Pakistan in spite of "the difficulties it could well present [...] at immigration" (Hamid 147). In his words: "It was, perhaps, a form of protest on my part, a symbol of my identity, or perhaps I sought to remind myself of the reality I had just left behind; I do not now recall my precise motivations" (Hamid 147-8).

The Kite Runner is contrasted upon two aspects by Changez in this discussion. Changez creates a distinction between reality and fiction by mentioning Pakistan as

reality (Hamid 148), while in Amir's account, America is presented as the reality whose narrative power over a fictionalized Afghanistan holds sway. Similarly, the beard is represented as leading to exclusion in *The Kite Runner*, seen in "Amir having to wear a fake beard to gain inclusion into Afghanistan" (Hosseini 202), and his portrayal of the Taliban as identical is as follows: "A handful of stern-faced young men sat on their haunches in the cab, Kalashnikovs slung on their shoulders. They all wore beards and black turbans" (Hosseini 216-7).

Underwood Samson co-workers see Changez's beard as a symbol of differentiation and uniqueness: "I know only that I did not wish to blend in with the army of clean-shaven youngsters who were my co-workers" (Hamid 148). This symbol represents each character's connection to national identity, as is the case for Changez with his Pakistani "reality" (Hamid 148), and Amir with the "artificial" (Hosseini 202) identity of Afghans. Symbolically represented by the beard in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* Hartnell describes "a national culture determined to assimilate difference only as past, as history. If heritage is not converted to history and basically discarded, as is the case with Changez, who [...] insists on wearing a beard [...] then integration on any terms is no longer possible" (342).

He seems to be critical of the way American mythology is shaped, but he acknowledges that narrative identifies nations, and he challenges what he sees as the American myth of "destitute radicals" which they "see on [their] television channels" (Hamid 116), with a representation which allows him pride in his identity, one of "saints and poets and […] conquering kings" (Hamid 116). The reason that Changez disapproves of America's myths is that they seek to other an identity that he has a connection to. Hartnell describes Lahore as having "its decidedly bloody nature along with the 'shadowy' figures and places [...] underscore the fact that the novel

deliberately filters the city through Orientalist stereotypes, demonstrating its status as a menace in the imagination of the western reader" (Hartnell 337). There are a number of comments from American listeners that underscore this assessment, and that demonstrate the precarious position Changez finds herself in when dealing with America's interpretation of Changez as dangerous.

Amir and Changez characterize America differently in terms of how they situate it within either reality or fiction, and how they attribute to it different functions of protection and exclusion. There are various ways of identifying with America's power based on these constructions. In order to fulfill both of the purposes that Amir and Changez emphasize, the maintenance of the boundaries of America are significant. As the characters encounter physical limitations and various gatekeepers, they maintain the boundaries of America.

As Changez experiences his time in America, the limits of tolerance are evident where "he experiences resistance when he grows a beard, when he encounters an immigrations officer after 9/11 who questions his belonging in America" (Hamid 86), and "when he is hatefully assaulted and referred to as an Arab" (Hamid 134). Changez's acceptance into American society appears to be limited in the post-9/11 world. There are two distinct forms of boundaries here, namely the outsider's own sense of distance, which manifests physically and within cultural symbols, and the barriers to entry, which display elements that maintain American power and exclusivity. Insecurity about physicality and discomfort about cultural symbols are provoked by gatekeeper reactions - and both of these factors interact with each other - both physicality and cultural symbols elicit stronger reactions from gatekeepers. According to Baudrillard, physicality has an important role within American society because "[t]he body is a cultural fact. [...] In a capitalist society, the general status of

private property applies also to the body, to the way we operate socially with it and the mental representation we have of it" (Baudrillard 129).

As Changez identifies early with New York and its acceptance of symbols of culture through which he identifies, 9/11 plays a key role in influencing American intolerance and boundaries in the book, changing Changez's concept of New York considerably after the attacks. Changez sees 9/11 as exposing the boundaries of tolerance.

Although he initially identifies with New York's diversity, even this identification runs counter to Underwood Samson's economic fundamentalism, and Changez realizes he has to start associating differently with this embodiment of American power. The symbol of his Pakistani identity is ultimately avoided by him. In his description of the Underwood Samson recruits with whom he was in contact, he says: "I was the only non-American in our group, but I suspected my Pakistaniness was invisible, cloaked by my suit, by my expense account, and – most of all – by my companions" (Hamid 82). Changez's ideals of New York, however, begin to crumble once these symbols do not adequately obscure his Pakistaniness. In the context of 9/11, the War on Terror and the possibility of conflict between Pakistan and India, the American dream is crumbling in his eyes: "I wonder now, sir, whether I believed at all in the firmness of the foundations of the new life I was attempting to construct for myself in New York. Certainly I wanted to believe; at least I wanted not to disbelieve with such an intensity that I prevented myself as much as was possible from making the obvious connection between the crumbling of the world around me and the impending destruction of my personal American dream" (Hamid 106).

This disillusionment is reflected in his interaction with Erica. The relationship between Erica and him, and the way he views America sours over time. Erica's failure to establish a relationship with Changez can be explained by an identity crisis and a lack of identity: "It occurred to me that my attempts to communicate with her might have failed in part because I did not know where I stood on so many issues of consequence; I lacked a stable core. I was not certain where I belonged – in New York, in Lahore, in both, in neither – and for this reason, when she reached out to me for help, I had nothing of substance to give her" (Hamid 168).

Erica's unwillingness to embrace Changez as a lover, as indicated by her physical distance, seems to correspond with America's boundaries surrounding Changez's view of the country. In this case, Erika represents a gatekeeper who is hesitant to accept Changez as a whole because of her reliance on myth, specifically her dreams of her deceased boyfriend Chris, initially subdued, but becoming more intense after 9/11. After the 9/11 attacks, Changez turns away from the American dream, which becomes a symbol of how it can no longer sustain itself. According to Changez, "[t]he attacks churned up old thoughts in [Erica's] head" (91), signifying how she inhabits a space of fiction and myth which Changez also associated with America. Changez becomes fixated on understanding these "old thoughts" (Hamid 91), the attacks also illustrate how these myths are used to maintain the identity of America post-9/11 and also characterize Erica since they show how the attacks exacerbate the myths. In this regard, Erica offers a personal reflection on 9/11: "Like so many others in the city after the attacks, she appeared deeply anxious. Yet her anxieties seemed only indirectly related to the prospect of dying at the hands of terrorists. The destruction of the World Trade Center had, as she had said, churned up old thoughts that had settled in the manner of sediment to the bottom of a pond; now

the waters of her mind were murky with what previously had been ignored. I did not know if the same was true of me" (Hamid 94).

As Amir in *The Kite Runner*, he is not hindered from becoming an American by these barriers. Although 9/11 has been a devastating disaster for America, Amir insists on feeling like a part of America throughout his novel, and by highlighting the destruction and desolation of Afghanistan as well as his own emotional struggles, he represents the presence of exclusionary forces: "Long before the Roussi army marched in to Afghanistan, long before villages were burned and schools destroyed, long before mines were planted like seeds of death and children buried in rock-piled graves, Kabul had become a city of ghosts for me." (119)

Hassan's betrayal, the "harelipped ghost" (Hamid 119) As a result, Afghanistan becomes emotionally separated from him. As an example, he describes his relationship with America: "America was different. America was a river, roaring along, unmindful of the past. I could wade into this river, let my sins drown to the bottom, let the waters carry me someplace far, Someplace with no ghosts, no memories, and no sins. If for nothing else, for that, I embraced America" (Hamid 119). The idea that the United States is "unmindful of the past" (Hamid 119) directly contradicts Changez's assessment of America being "trapped within old ideas" (Hamid 91). Unlike other characters who inhabit the world, Amir represents the perceived "postcolonial moment" (Hamid 343) and a sense of newness and difference. His viewpoints give credence to the protection of American imperialism, which is "roaring along, unmindful of the past" (Hamid 119), and it may be able to free him from his guilt since there are "no ghosts, no memories, and no sins" (Hamid 119).

Throughout the novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, the American flag is used as a symbol for a militaristic America, one that embraces violence as a means of declaring a national identity. National identities are maintained through cultural symbols such as these. Changez views this as a demonstration of power flaunting in the face of terrorism, as opposed to an indication of power disturbance reflected in 9/11. It seems that economic dominance, militancy or violence, religion or devotion, and sport as a symbol of competition that can be associated with power has been evoked in both novels. Changez portrays American power by discussing American aggression toward the East after 9/11, saying:

"America was gripped by a growing and self-righteous rage in those weeks of September and October […] the mighty host I had expected of your country was duly raised and dispatched – but homeward, towards my family in Pakistan" (Hamid 107). It was difficult to ignore the rumors I overheard at the Pak-Punjab Deli: Pakistan's relationship with Islamic countries is deteriorating, yet he maintains his American identity, "I ignored as best I could the rumors I overheard at the Pak-Punjab Deli: Pakistani cabdrivers were being beaten to within an inch of their lives; the FBI was raiding mosques, shops, and even people's houses; Muslim men were disappearing, perhaps into shadowy detention centers for questioning or worse. I reasoned that these stories were mostly untrue; the few with some basis in fact were almost certainly being exaggerated; and besides, those rare cases of abuse that regrettably did transpire were unlikely ever to affect me because such things invariably happened, in America as in all countries, to the hapless poor, not to Princeton graduates earning eighty thousand dollars a year". (Hamid 108)

Changez reaches the zenith of his belief in American economic fundamentalism at this point, he deems himself unaffected by discrimination because

he keeps wealth by "earning eighty thousand dollars a year" (Hamid 108). Moreover, Changez demonstrates how Muslims were targeted following 9/11, highlighting the ethnocultural discourses involved.

In America post-9/11, Changez identifies with Afghanistan and refers to the nation as one of the victims of the War on Terror. Bruce King says: "A motif that runs through the novel is the narrator's assumption that Afghanistan is the victim of an American invasion and that Afghanistan is somehow part of Pakistan. [...] Hamid sees the American presence as part of a long history of foreign invasion" (Hamid 685). When viewing visuals of a "what was described as a daring raid on a Taliban command post" (Hamid 114) on the news, Changez remarks: "Afghanistan was Pakistan's neighbor, our friend, and a fellow Muslim nation besides, and the sight of what I took to be the beginning of its invasion by your countrymen caused me to tremble with fury" (Hamid 114). When Changez sees the news, "Changez arrives late to work for the first time" (Hamid 114), Shows how war causes a disconnection from the economic foundations of America. Changes in politics and changes in Changez's self-understanding are linked together in this rupture, "I was no longer capable of so thorough a self-deception…But I remained aware of the embers glowing within me, and that day I found it difficult to concentrate on the pursuit – at which I was normally so capable – of fundamentals" (Hamid 114).

His connection to fundamentals is affected by cultural barriers, and he begins to question whether these fundamentals will be enough to keep him included in American society: "I had heard tales of the discrimination Muslims were beginning to experience in the business world – stories of rescinded job offers and groundless dismissals – and I did not wish to have my position at Underwood Samson compromised" (Hamid 137). Changez internalizes the post-9/11 political climate as

"internal conflicts" (Hamid 137), as his identification with the East conflicts with his place in American society as 'other'.

Throughout the story, Changez switches from being an American to being Pakistani. The novel's shifting identities and perspectives appear to be a reaction to the political upheavals and the 9/11 attack. Post 9/11 American scenario, the War on Terror, and the treatment of Muslims in the US as 'other', all shape Changez's narrator perspective, enabling him to criticize the US to a greater extent.

Similarly, Amir personalizes political situations. Edwards indeed observes, "Hosseini uses the characters of his novel as analogous for ethnic tensions within Afghanistan, where Assef's rape of Hassan links to the disempowerment of the Hazara group to which Hassan belongs" (Edwards 4). Amir reflects: "The curious thing was, I never thought of Hassan and me as friend [...] because history isn't easy to overcome. Neither is religion. In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shia, and nothing was ever going to change that" (24). Parallels between personal and political narratives provide a platform for highlighting how understandings of the self are reflected in representations of the nation. Amir and Changez are surrounded by the fiction and myth of their own nations.

Changez is for Pakistan and so as Amir for Afghanistan. By relegating these characters to myth, the home nation gains a heightened sense of reality and authority, as well as a narrative power over this othered identity. By having the protagonists narrate both novels, this narrative power is demonstrated, as well as how subjectivity and identity are fundamental to the construction of these representations. Changez's ideas about the empire of America and Amir's brilliant narrative of the American dream are both informed by their identification with and views of America. Narratives

facilitate one's alignment with or departure from a particular national identity. It is apparent that the novels reflect a confusion of power in the aftermath of 9/11 event.

For Changez, these same identifications are reflected by his beard and by the barrier he has built with Erica, and Amir's scars, associated with his masculinity, and also by his physical discomfort caused by Assef's assaults. Changez's identity is also shaped by the visual, as images of 9/11 and the war in Afghanistan evoke powerful emotional reactions. Media representations of the Taliban have shaped Amir's experience of this enemy, and he is able to essentialise the Taliban's role in terror. Narrative plays an important role in renegotiating power in the wake of 9/11, as it interacts with the identities of each character. Both the novels display this identity crisis in the United States and also express the religious and cultural otherisation of Muslims.

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Chapter- IV

Discourse of Power and Narrative as Resistance

4.1. Fiction as critical discourse

Numerous novels have been published in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The literature of psychic trauma has been particularly popular among them, a fiction criticizedand depoliticized due to its lack of concern for the attacks' global context and political ramifications. Numerous writers have attempted to depict the country and its population's reaction to the September 11th attacks. It implies that the world has changed, at least in the minds of Americans (Daniel,401). As a result of 9/11's terror and trauma, it cannot be named by language, leaving this event unknown, known only by its date (Borradori,147). In American foreign policy, September 11th represents the beginning of a new era and is considered the birth of the "Global War on Terror" (GWOT) (Daniel 401). In spite of the constant revision of history, 9/11 has become an iconic event in the public mind, becoming "an instant memory" (John Ellis, 7). National security and foreign policy are directly related to that. September 11th, as a fixed origin that permeates the whole of the post-9/11 discourse, is an unmoving foundation.

Media and politics played a critical role in shaping discourse after the 11th September attacks. Thus, both those in power and ordinary citizens are at risk of serious threats pertaining to religion, and particularly Islam. Most of these people were influenced by the influence of the media, since it was the media's role to provide various versions of reality and shape public opinion (Yusof et al., 105). According to Yusof, this association dominated the scene in the aftermath of the attacks, directly affecting the western view of Arabs and Muslims as threats that must be dealt with. Media in addition to informing

people that Islam is a religion of terrorism "played a significant role in persuading the whole world to support the USA in opposing terrorism" (Yusof et al.,105), thus proving the power of the media in influencing discourse, including the 9/11 discourse. Even so, despite the impact the media had on their way of thinking, they appeared at first to be considerate of innocent Muslims. Americans reassessed Islam negatively only after their fears of terrorism subsided" (Smith, 1-2). In general, the media's association of Islam with violence led to the change in perspective (Smith, 2); media reports portrayed it as violent and dangerous.

There was a significant increase in the prevalence of anti-Muslim media discourses in the USA as a result of this (Ahmed and Matthes 231). Creating such prejudice toward Muslims led to the establishment of a binary opposition between Muslims and non-Muslims. Soon after, Muslims were viewed as outsiders and as threats to "us" (Ahmed and Matthes 222). As Ahmed and Matthes explain, the opposition between "us" and "them" was merely an expression of media representations of Muslims as a threat to democracy and freedom (231). In spite of media mischaracterizations of Islam and Muslims and the negative impact these had on society, many scholars insisted on reassessing the stigma placed on Muslims and rethinking their position as threats to non-Muslim societies (Ahmed and Matthes 234).

Media and politicians alike played an important role in the construction of Americans' perceptions of Muslims as terrorists. These politicians were reacting to September 11th in some way, which led to this outcome. According to Grauwmans (3), George W. Bush announced in response to the growing terrorist threat that he would wage a "War on Terror," which affected a wide range of countries. "As a consequence of the war on terror, the United States invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, and its military presence in Central Asia has increased" (Graauwmans,3).

Based on the different definitions and views / viewpoints of terror that critics have adopted, terrorism has given rise to a wide range of discourses and ideas. In her book "Spivak on Terror," Gayatri Spivak Chakravorty describes terrorism as an 'abstract enemy' who is at war, but does not wear uniforms, and whose actions cannot be punished according to specific rules. There are various perspectives on terrorism; one is that it means "either the use of violence to achieve political ends, or the use of violence to achieve one's political ends" (Majumdar, xiv).

The September 11, 2001 terror attacks on New York City's World Trade Center have elevated terrorism in its contemporary form into a magnified spectacle. As a symbol of the success of Western capitalism, the World Trade Center was reduced to rubble, and was the site of the most sensational terror attack. Moreover, it became an example of "powerless power against the rage of the powerful." (Majumdar, xv). As a result, terrorism or terror is today a focal point of global politics.

As a result of terror, many narratives have developed on violence and terror - from those of bombings and being blown up with explicit or silent political messages, to accounts of burning buildings and individuals with personal interpretations, to accounts of ethnic cleansing and walls. Literature that reflects emotional and physical violence is therefore replete with narratives of trauma, fear, and violence. Literature has therefore covered a wide range of topics in relation to terrorism, including descriptions of terror strikes and reactions to them, a discussion of terrorism as war, the aftermath of terror strikes, issues of terrorism and victimization, trauma and terrorism, and revenge and terrorism.

There is a myriad of relevance to politics, religion, society, and literature in the 21st century in the discussion of violence and terror. As a political discourse and as a literary discourse, these issues are unique due to the international reaction they created. There are

literary works reflecting on violence and terror in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, not only from the United States but from Latin America, France, India, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. By themselves, these responses give an idea of the spectacle and the shock the event caused. There has been much discussion of violence and terror and literature related to the issue, like literature about the holocaust, World Wars, religious genocides, 9/11 terrorist attacks, or domestic violence. In comparison to research done on the 9/11 attacks or other terror attacks all around the world, only a limited amount of information has been gathered regarding South Asian literary responses to violence and terror. Terror is also not an unknown phenomenon in literature; it is experienced and reflected in literature. While terrorism is a relatively new phenomenon and likely to have come into existence in the 20th century, terror goes back to the times of war, occupation, and border tensions, and it continues even today. There have been many wars and violent outbreaks, such as communal violence, terrorist attacks and bomb blasts throughout the world, which have impacted and influenced many forms of literature that reflect terror and terrorism, such as holocaust literature, Partition literature, trauma literature, 9/11 literature, 26/11 literature, etc.

Media and politicians have the power to shape discourse, for the latter are both instruments and effects of political power (Mills, 55). Therefore, people who do not have power are not able to create a certain "reality", as was stated above. It follows that, "those who hold positions of authority and are regarded as experts have the power to speak the truth.

 A statement made by a person who does not belong to a position of power will be considered untrue" (Mills, 58). Because it was created by "those in positions of authority" (Mills, 58), the reality of Muslims as terrorists was affected and was believed by many non-Muslims. Additionally, "[n]o one is capable of making statements or of having statements taken seriously by others. It is better to associate some statements with those in

positions of power or with institutions than others ("Mills, 65). According to Mills ,"some groups are not powerful enough to speak the truth because they lack the ability to speak the truth."(Mills, 58)

9/11 fictional discourse not only affected society, but also reached the literary sphere. Due to this, several writers have highlighted the Americans' innocence and victimization in the wake of terrorist attacks. In his assessment of 9/11 literature, the critic Martin Randall concludes "that the dominant discourse has sacralized the event and ... that this discourse has impacted 9/11 literature" (Eikosalo, 88). This reveals how much importance and attention are given to the attacks. The fiction written after 9/11 tends to focus on trauma, be it cultural or psychological. Due to the attacks, the main character is traumatized and has difficulty dealing with reality. *Falling Man* (2007) by Don DeLillo is a good example. Keith, his wife, and their son, Justin are all portrayed as traumatized characters in this work by DeLillo.

DeLillo's writing also examines religion and terrorism, as well as the characters' suspicion of religion. She is afraid of becoming "consumed by God," which has driven her to seek solace in religion (Derosa, 159). Moreover, Hammad is portrayed as a terrorist. Using American traumatized characters and Muslim terrorist characters, DeLillo appears to be trying to convey to the reader "the story of slow reconstruction (the people of the United States struggling to heal from the attacks) and the story of Hammad, a terrorist whose sole purpose it is to destroy" (Bounar, 69). DeLillo seems to be drawing a connection between God and terrorism by depicting Hammad as a terrorist (Bounar, 70). John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006) is another work which focuses on terrorism in relation to Islam and Muslims. It features Ahmad Asmawy Mulloy and his imam, Shaikh Rashid, as well as several characters from the Muslim world. Ahmad used to follow this individual until he

was inducted into a terrorist cell. Muslim characters are shown as untrustworthy and other characters to doubt their actions and behavior in the novels.

According to Eikonsalo," John Updike's *Terrorist*, like DeLillo's *Falling Man*, emphasizes our need to keep our eyes open, because evil walks among us unnoticed" (Eikonsalo, 84). Both authors emphasize that Muslim characters should not be trusted and non-Muslim characters should maintain their 'eyes open' to avoid being deceived (Eikonsalo, 84). The idea of Muslims as terrorists and violent, once again, shows how dominant discourse affects writers' thinking. They believe in one version of reality and one truth, which is that Muslims are bad. Further, both DeLillo and Updike explore "the mind of a terrorist" (Bounar, 69) in order to shed light on its workings. Hence, these two writers, among many others, attempt to reinforce negative stereotypes associated with Islam and Muslims as a result of 9/11 discourse on religion and terrorism. According to Mills (55), discourse can both act as a tool of power and let the opposing side gain a foothold (hindrance, stumbling block, point of resistance). Consequently, if no discourse takes place, there will be no "resistance". In this context, resistance, however, doesn't mean there's an "oppressor" and a "victim".

Instead, it is described as a tool to "exercise" power (Mills, 40). In terms of 9/11 discourse, it is very important to mention that what is being referred to is also "the means of resistance" (Mills,55). In light of what was previously stated, it would appear that post 9/11 fiction is primarily about non-Muslim characters' trauma and victimization. However, on the other hand, there appears to be a vast body of other novels that have a similar theme but try to deconstruct the negative image given to Muslims as terrorists and to Islam as a religion of violence. It is the works of these writers that can be considered as alternative versions of reality and as a form of resistance to the dominant discourse.

It is an entirely different reality than what they are used to. The "victims", with whom the reader had once sympathized, become the "victimizers" in such literature. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) by Mohsin Hamid and *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini are examples among many of these works. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is an excellent book for those who are seeking a different perspective, a different perspective on the aftermath of 9/11" (Bounar, 81-82). As a result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, fictional discourse underwent major transformations from being visible to becoming highly visible.

4.2. Post-9/11 Discourses as Discursive Formation

Described as a 'discursive formation' by Foucault,the post-9/11 discourse shares a system of relations and collateral spaces. These shared relations constitute the enunciative field from which text within a discursive formation receives its meaning, for Foucault. The interrelationships between terrorism, war, and national security in the 9/11 context are the radicles of a speech field from which judges, scholars, and politicians draw, both consciously and unconsciously. Yet, historically and institutionally, this enunciative field also include fundamental historical and institutional relationships that contribute to its meaning and constrain its scope. The true nature of a novel lies in its innumerable relationships and connections, although it may appear to be a self-contained whole.

As Foucault puts it, "The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands; and it cannot remain within the little parallelepiped that contains it: its unity is variable and relative."(Bush 66). Although the Global War on Terror (GWOT) at first glance appears to be a whole, this unity must be examined, as well as the discourse formation as a whole, which must "be regarded in its raw, neutral state."(Dreyfus et al. 44). Rather than conceiving of the world as subjective, objective, or the product of

our individual consciousness, Foucault proposes "a world in which relation is primary; it is structures that give their objective faces to matter."(Chartier 70). Accordingly, Foucault's work affirms that the relational aspects of discourse are essential to meaning rather than secondary. Foucault's philosophy is relevant to the post-9/11 discussion because it is a "philosophy of relation."(Foucault, 83) First, the post-9/11 discourse is premised on the idea of 9/11 as an origin, a radical disruption in discourse that is the ultimate reference points for a new system of relationships. The 9/11 attacks are mentioned or discussed in almost every case involving Guantanamo prisoners or other detainees (Veyne, 202).

Four years after 9/11, Justice O'Connor, writing in Hamdi, immediately described 9/11 as a "difficult time". One can hardly imagine Justice O'Connor and other judges not having referenced 9/11; this is not to say they should not have done so. Retracing the origin of these issues is an important task. The whole discourse following 9/11, including the judicial discourse, can be explained by a single shared relationship, a single origin. Second, the discourse of the post-9/11 period has a referential context that produces some objects and changes them continuously.

4.3. Orientalism and Resistance

It shows how power transforms into a narrative that can ridicule, criticize or malign anyone at any point of time. Thus, an obvious possibility of resistance against it must be formed through an alternative narrative which can challenge the dominant narratives and examine it though a counter narrative. Edward Said's publication of *Orientalism* (1978) has had such an impact on the way colonial discourse is understood, that it has continued to generate controversy, adulation, and criticism for two decades. In his intervention, Said demonstrates how representations of 'others'

have been institutionalized in the United States since at least the eighteenth century as a part of its cultural dominance. In the nineteenth-century, imperialism reached its height as Europeans became more familiar with the 'Orient' through various disciplines, institutional structures, inquiry processes, and distinctive ways of thinking.

The reason Said was fascinated by this way of knowing Europe's other populations is that it effectively demonstrated the link between knowledge and power, since it constructed and dominated Orientals in the process of knowing them. In that sense, the very term 'Oriental' illustrates how it works: by identifying and homogenizing at the same time, it implies a range of knowledge as well as an ability to handle that which is named. Said's analysis of Orientalism demonstrates how Europe's strategies for knowing colonized societies simultaneously served as strategies for dominating them.

Said's views on Orientalism isprimarily as a way to define and locate America's other groups. Orientalism was in fact a group of related disciplines about America, and its arguments centered around racial and linguistic origins, as well as national distinctiveness. Accordingly, the detailed and elaborate analyses of Oriental languages, histories, and cultures take place within the context of the supremacy and importance of America's civilization. Several influential scholars dominated the discourse to the point where myths, opinions, hearsays, and prejudices quickly assumed status as fact.

In its political nature, *Orientalism* is a work of art. There is no intent to examine the diversity of disciplines or to elaborate exhaustively on the historical or cultural origins of *Orientalism*, but rather to reverse the gaze of the discourse, to look at it from the

perspective of one who is Orientated —to "inventory the traces upon…the Oriental subject, of the culture whose domination has been so powerful a fact in the life of all Orientals" (Said, 25). The recurrent paradox running through Said's work is how he can claim to be 'Oriental. *Orientalism*, however, is a product of his experience of living in a country where the term "East" symbolizes danger and threat.

Said's 'uniquely punishing destiny' is evidently the source of Orientalist thought. By employing the tools and techniques of his adopted professional location, a Palestinian Arab living in America discerns how cultural hegemony is maintained. In his view, his intention was to provoke, and in this way, to cultivate "a new approach to the Orient" (Said, 28). Moreover, if the binary between Orient and Occident was completely abolished, "we shall have advanced a little in the process of what Welsh Marxist cultural critic Raymond Williams has called the "unlearning" of "the inherent dominative mode" (Said, 28).

The term 'fundamentalism' is one of the most ubiquitous aspects of post 9/11 American narrative. Fundamentalism is not restricted to practices in religions; rather, it is a broad cultural tendency that entails "a dogmatic attitude to the inviolability of a particular attitude or practice" (Spencer and Valassopoulos, 330). Fundamentalist narrative presents Islam and Arab Muslims in a neo imperial manner as a sustained project of empirical knowledge and western intellectual engagement where there exists good vs. evil, peacefulness vs. terror and freedom vs. unfreedom. Knowledge of the Middle East is presented not only by the constant collusion of scholarly narrative but also by the more constructive attitude of how to support it with fundamentalist precepts. The essential position here is that "such fundamentalism is characterized by a deep commitment to national myths of America's economic and political domination" (Haider, 217). This is not the point. None of post 9/11 American writers

are aware of the fundamentalist attitude in its sharp criticism and culturally brutal images, and many are even against its moderate version. Such fundamentalist commitment to thoughts and ideas that covertly express the will of particular writers, in its division of the world into opposing poles of the good and evil is a method of understanding the world that is manifested in terror but explicitly gained by fiction (Semaan, 21; Altwaiji 205).

Examining fundamentalist thought is the principal theme of the study; in addition, the image of Arab Muslims will be examined as a consequence of fundamentalist thought of American writers. There are some fundamental aspects this part of the study shall refer to; they represent the most important factors which facilitated the establishment of an autonomous narrative color and make the development of mainstream narrative discourse significant. The construction of any racial group is a part of a larger historical process characterized by the relationship between and interactions of power and knowledge (Dekel et al., 319; Lake, 25; Rane and Ewart, 157; Waikar, 161). In addition to power and knowledge, post 9/11 narrative construction of the Muslim identity as a "racial entity" is a product of the interaction between power, religion and knowledge resulting in the revival of the Christian fundamentalism and its expansion to the field of narrative discourse. Thus, a fundamentalist narrative has been developed due to the interactions of colonial agendas, hegemonic knowledge, the American values and the Christian beliefs. In this context, it was possible for post-9/11 narrative writers to write a discourse through a system made up of politics, imperialism and religion.

Orientalism is inspired by Said's own work of identity creation. A book like this is intellectually powerful because of the way it analyzes the way a variety of disciplines operate within multiple discursive boundaries, but what makes the book so

compelling is its 'worldly' quality, written by an author whose psyche is still shaped by Orientalist discourse, a writer who still feels Orientalist 'knowledge" effects. In intellectual debate, passion can be a confusing and unreflective factor, and while Orientalism's popularity may be explained by this passion, many critics refuse to take its global nature into account, reducing their understanding of its significance.

Publication of *Orientalism* revived and revitalized the term Orientalism, which had faded from popularity before, but in the late 1970s. Despite their sophistication, contemporary Oriental studies are inescapably shaped by the traditional representations of the Orient (particularly the Middle East) and assumptions that underpin the discourses of Orientalism. Despite Said's complaints about Orientalism's sometimes indiscriminate use, there is little doubt that it has had a profound impact on social theory as a whole. By 1995, Orientalism had become a 'collective book' that outlived its author more than anyone had anticipated. It is a book that continues to grow in that the analysis of the strategies of Orientalism has been useful in identifying the specific cultural and discursive operations of imperial culture in many ways. In other words, the analysis turns on the ideological nature of representation and the ways in which powerful representations come to be accepted, despite their stereotypical and often caricatured nature.

Throughout his work, Said reveals ways in which the main philological, historical, and creative writers in the nineteenth century constructed and controlled the Orient textually. A colonial administration used the knowledge gained through the construction of and rendering visible of the Orient to establish a system of rule itself is a great resistance to the dominative power. "Oriental despotism, Oriental sensuality, Oriental modes of production, and Oriental splendour" (Said, Interview: Edward W. Said, 47).For Said, the best way to illustrate this is to consider the way in which these

legacies manifest themselves in American foreign policy. An intricate articulation of the ways in which Orientalism has been able to absorb influences such as Positivism, Marxism, and Darwinism without altering its fundamental tenets is outlined in the book.

Orientalism derives from the name Orientalist, which traditionally refers to those who study the Orient. Different people define 'the Orient' differently. Americans perceive it as synonymous with the Far East, particularly Japan and China, whereas Western Europeans, especially the British and French, conjure up different images. In addition to being adjacent to Europe, "it is also home to some of Europe's most powerful, richest and oldest colonies, its main source of civilizations and languages, and the place from which it derives many of its most profound and recurrent images of the Other" (Said, 1).

Orientalism refers to three separate, but interdependent pursuits: an academic discipline, a way of thinking and a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient. A discipline of academic study, Orientalism emerged in the late eighteenth century, and it has since accumulated a body of knowledge that has allowed Western interpretations of it to persist. Orientalism is "the discipline by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery and practice"(Said, 73). As a style of thought it is "based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction" (Said, 2) between the Orient and the Occident.

It encompasses a broader range of writers, such as Aeschylus the classical Greek playwright (524-455 BC), Dante Alighieri the medieval Italian poet (1265-1335), Victor Hugo the French novelist (1802–85), and Karl Marx the German social scientist and revolutionary (1818–83). A third definition of Orientalism as a corporate

institution demonstrates its amorphous nature as a vehicle for dominating and authorizing the Orient. Thus, Orientalism is necessarily linked inextricably to colonialism.

Said argues in Orientalism that the West distorted the East's image by using its own values. Orientalism is, according to Said, "a special place that the Orient has in the experience of Europeans and Westerners". "Orientalism" is a "style of thought" premised on an understanding of the fundamental differences between East and West. In order to understand the history of Orientalism, he examines the work of scholars like Cromer and Balfour. He sees Orientalism, then, as a system of representations enframed by a whole number of forces that brought the Orient into the West, Western consciousness, and ultimately, the West's empire (Said 203).

The West sees the East as static, a criticism Said makes of the Orientalist tradition (Said, 106). According to Said, the East can change, but Orientalists ignore this because it does not fit their static conception of it. To control the citizens of the Orient, the West dehumanizes them. White middle-class Westerners believe it is their human prerogative not just to manage, but to own the nonwhite world, simply because "it" by definition is not quite as human as they are" (Said, 108). Based on this, Said suggests that the West stereotypes the East and its inhabitants. According to Said, an important characteristic of Orientalism is its "habit of employing highly generalized categories" such as race or language, and under "these categories" there is the "rigid binary distinction between 'ours' and 'theirs'" (Said, 227).

The West defines itself by the characteristics of the East; whatever they are, we are not and visa-versa, regardless of any similarities between the two. A vital component of Orientalism is fear of Islam. There is a Near Orient and a Far Orient in the East

(Said, 58). Islam is the religion of the Near Orient. Throughout the Middle Ages when the Islamic conquests occurred, Europe has viewed Islam with fear. The result is that Europe is afraid to engage with Islam because it is equated with "terror, devastation, demons, and hordes of hated barbarians" (Said 59). Westerners perceive the Orient as a threat both because of "sex, inhuman beauty and endless distance" (Said 167). The West is nevertheless drawn to the Orient because it is also associated with "sexual promise, untiring sensuality, and unlimited desire" (Said 188).

To the West, the East is both intriguing and threatening. Arab citizens, especially, are stereotyped as being Orientals, according to Said. According to Said, the portrayal of Arabs has changed from a stereotype of camel riding nomads to a caricature of incompetence and easy defeat since the late 1970s (Said 285). Arabs and the Arab world have been portrayed negatively and stereotypically in the West for ages. As Said puts it, there are two kinds of Arabs in the West. "There are good Arabs (the ones who comply with the request) and bad Arabs (the ones who do not comply, and are thus terrorists)". (Said 206)

Those who oppose colonialism are labeled "bad" and even terrorists, while those who support it enable Western colonialism. The Arab world is further characterized by male dominance and passive behavior, as opposed to the democratic West, (Said 311) emphasizing the distinction between "us" and "them." The edition of Orientalism used in this thesis was published in 2003, and it features a new preface by Said.

Since the September 11 attacks, American interest in Orientalism has revived, and the book has been republished as he reflects on his own work in the preface, Said penned only months before he died. After 9/11, "demeaning generalizations and triumphalist clichés" have been even more prevalent in the United States, he laments (Said, xiii).

As he explicitly states, "The media and self-appointed experts on Islamic culture have actively encouraged the wars against the Islamic world by re-cycling their unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations" (Said, xv).

According to him, *Orientalism* can be used as a "humanistic critique" to foster greater "understanding and exchange of ideas" among scholars instead of "polemical, thought-stopping fury" that focuses only on a collective identity (Said, xvii).

Orientalism is examined as a discourse in Said's book by drawing upon Foucault. Orient discourse was a discipline through which European culture managed and produced the Orient, according to the Edward Said Reader (Bayoumi 64). Said's humanist perspectives do not align with his use of Foucauldian methods, according to Clifford (Clifford, 212). By borrowing from Foucault, Said hopes to "extend Foucault's notion of a discourse to the creation of exotic cultures" (Clifford 213). This problem is also identified by Robert Nichols. According to Nichols, discourses "can be said to both create and to misrepresent or distort the object of study" (Nichols 127). The idea of *Orientalism* as a discursive approach is complicated since, according to Said, Orientalist ideas about the East are false. Said's use of Foucault may be accurate or inaccurate, but it is inadvertently falling into the very binary thinking it criticizes that Orientalism demonstrates its tendency to split the world into two categories.

As a result of 9/11, the American classical orientalist academia has been infected with a "neo" dynamism that has injected new life into issues relating to the Arab world, the most stagnant and dictatorial region of the world. Orient is regarded as the Orient in nineteenth-century European usage, which is defined by "Arabs, Turks, and Indians" (Lewis and Wigen 54). The world's political relationships and interests have changed significantly since the publication of *Orientalism* in 1978. At the same time, the

conceptualization of the "Orient" has been shaped by escalating global political changes, resulting in a reshaping of its geography. In response to 9/11, the American military responded by retaliating against the terrorists, as well as changes in world politics, reevaluating the classic Orient. (Merskin 161)

4.4. Reflection on 9/11 through narratives

Over what may be called the 9/11-decade, literature on September 11 has gauged minute shifts in the national psyche from 2001 till date. The literature of this genre frequently questioned its own necessity, as well as its link to a location, time, or aftermath. Accordingly, the terrorist attacks intensified ongoing negotiations of what literature is permitted and expected to address, along with the degree of faithfulness or sincerity that this literature should demonstrate. As a result of expectations inflated about the great American 9/11 novel, the public gained a better understanding of how and at what distance writers viewed the events. A number of established novelists experienced fractures in their literary careers, including Don DeLillo, Philip Roth, John Updike, Jay McInerney, and David Foster Wallace, who addressed the attacks in an explicit manner; and Jonathan Franzen, Paul Auster, and Dave Eggers, who preferred a diffuse and ambient approach to terror's aftermath. 9/11 authorship is strikingly dominated by white male canon of late modern American literature, raising questions about diversity and representation. To what extent does a literary history of the 9/11 decade shed light on US gender and race relations in the twenty first century?

9/11 fiction reveals as much about its era as it does about its omissions. This literary moment inevitably fell into relative obscurity after 9/11, which makes it crucial to understand its significance in this transition. What was happening in American letters in the days before 9/11? The towers buckled and collapsed because of what nascent

fictional structures? Among the controversies raging at the time were those surrounding the 'glamorous congestion' of contemporary fiction and simulated vitality - the sheer exhaustion of realist conventions. This cacophony of voices became hushed as the incomprehensible silence that followed the attacks sucked the life out of the gap where lively imagination once thrived. There are events and measures attached to these fantasies, such as civil liberties curtailed, detention camps created, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

They impacted literary production as well as criticism, because they shifted attention from cultural wars to clashes of civilizations, pushing postmodernist trends of the 1990s towards domestic rather than global politics. Righteous zeitgeist remnants have endured far beyond the flurry of early terror fictions and journalism. Following the fault lines of domestic and international conflict, the first two waves of 9/11 literature follow the same path. In contrast, the third tries to create an aesthetic driven by individual and planetary affect, which distills elements of both. We need to understand pre-9/11 debates around the tyranny of realism in order to understand 9/11 as a corporeal and geological rift.

Such 9/11 novels may be perceived as little more than fictionalized depictions of a conflict between the American Self and the Terrorist Other. Identities are understood as totalized forms of identity in discourses on conflict and difference in the wake of 9/11, particularly in the mediatized aftermath.

Narratives of any time are always a reflection of the national interests, wide horizons, and the state's politics of that period. In quite recent history the United States could not change its fundamentalist attitude in all political, cultural and economic aspects of relationship with the Arab world to partnership, understanding and competition by

fostering sincere political negotiations and intellectual debates (Al-Musawi, 179; Colla, 115; McLoughlin, 284; Meer, 504). In addition to fundamentalist attitudes, all these aspects were marked by hegemony and imperialism. Narrative work is no exception. Fundamentalist narratives after the 9/11 attacks have become to a large degree an essential element in the formation of the national identity and national awareness about major security issues: ". . . the effect of the resurgence of American nationalism, also brought with its representations of a shift from hyphenated to a singular American identity (Grewal 548). Fundamentalism in American novel has not only become a statement against Islamic terrorism, and so on, but also a reflection of the American foreign policies "that aim at maintaining an imperial kind of globalization (Eisenstein 9). Then, the cultural concerns are how to continue holding the fundaments without which there would not be a powerful hegemonic role in the Middle East. In the literature, adherence to fundaments has led to fundamentalist principles and rigid commitment to contemporary roles usually set in a hegemonic context.

Contemporary American narratives have appropriated "the language of national self-protection" that facilitates the promotion of neo-liberal agendas into a "defense of America's 'human rights' universalism," whereby the complexion of imperial interests' changes (Jameson 66). Several narrative works on fundamentalist Islam thematize a conflict neither of American modernism nor of Islamic fundamentalism but goes beyond the issue of the Muslim world and the Christian America, upon which readers and critics try to investigate the conflict so as to acquire the fantasy of visible clash by the use of dichotomies. Such dichotomies in post 9/11 narratives ignore "the need to reflect on, criticize and put right not only Islamic fundamentalism but also a no less destructive and dogmatic faith in the rectitude of the 'West', in its

social and economic structures, and in its entitlement to sermonize other people and rearrange their countries" (Spencer 156). Not surprisingly, many narrative writers have ventured to represent the face-off between Islamic extremist groups and the United States as an equal affair between the fundamentalist beliefs of Islam and the righteousness and irreproachableness of American culture.

When narrative writers associate Islam as a religion with concepts of fundamentalism, extremism, and an apocalyptic vision, they underline the existence of the latent violence in religion and its followers. It is a clash of Eastern and Western fundamentalisms, be it imperial vs. anti-imperial, a part of the hegemonic policy of the United States and the Jihadist reaction to it or a cultural interaction through nonviolent means: "Fundamentalism does not, however, necessarily imply violence. In fact, most people we call fundamentalists today are not violent and tries to pursue their goals by peaceful means" (Varvin 95). Therefore, American novel has become a hot button concept for scholars interested in investigating the American neoimperial interests in the Arab world though; American orientalist discourse has been existent for two centuries and boosted its approach using the techniques of the British and American Orientalisms. This strong relationship between narrative work and political agendas is indebted to both cultural hegemony theory and neo-orientalism where post 9/11 novel represents divergent agendas of the state and situates its interests in texts to rationalize exploitations and military retaliations abroad. These overt themes in post 9/11 American novel, according to Rubin and Verheul, "led Americans to recast their perceptions of diversity and assimilation within a national framework, and at the same time to reevaluate the position of the United States in the world" (Rubin7). This interesting feature clusters around Foucault's concepts of knowledge and hegemony in which post 9/11 novel's symbolic power and the new geopolitical realm reflect a

strong relationship between state's agendas and production of knowledge: "We should admit rather that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 27).

The study of fundamentalist narratives complies with Bhabha's assumption in *Terror and after* (2010) that "the decision to implement and administer terror, whether it is done in the name of god or the state, is a political decision"(Bhabha, 3). Fundamentalism, according to Gauthier is "responsible for producing "persuasive" literature or an "authoritative form of discourse" in which writers failed to successfully face the challenging "coercive behavior" of the terrorists: "It was almost as though there needed to be a period of silence before novelists could recover their voices" (Gauthier 11).

Elaborating on this point further, Sherry Jones said in 2008 that Muslims, Islamic culture and the Middle East region were not known to her: "As a feminine, I was disturbed by these reports and I wanted to learn more. I knew very little about Middle Eastern culture or Islam at the time" (Jones 254). Within a year, she wrote two major contributions to post 9/11 American narrative about the Muslims: *The Jewel of Medina* (2008) and *The Sword of Medina* (2009), a sequel to *The Jewel*; both are on the wives of prophet Mohammed and Islamic culture. Such deployment of fundamentalist images serves to privilege a cultural and hegemonic war that is "imperialistic in nature and might even, so profound is its militant certainty and its sense of mission, be described as fundamentalist" (Spencer and Valassopoulos 331). Post 9/11 American narrative, according to Spencer and Valassopoulos, is "one such

dogma" that is "credited with the unimpeachable authority of divine scripture" (331). Tariq Ali uses the term "clash of fundamentalisms" to refer to the particular relationship between American narratives and Islamic fundamentalism (Ali, 46). According to Ali's argument, narratives are also tainted by proliferation of radical images and by their openness to repetitive divergent interpretations. This influence of fundamentalist thoughts on texts always adheres tightly to classical scripts and sits easily with the classical orientalist agendas. Moreover, in a world in which neo-imperial practices are not criticized, it has become convenient for writers to situate narratives in the larger framework of the colonial project and continue with the classical past which introduces the oriental as inferior, uncivilized and perpetrator.

Edward Said's term 'Orientalism' describes a discourse used to present the people of the East as "an ideal Other," a people in such opposition to the West that they form a near perfect binary (Said 227). While such rhetoric is still employed after 9/11 and Islam is similarly racialized, it also differs in that the people of the "Orient" are highlighted as mobilizing, as preparing a mission against the West. The physical Orient remains "outside history" and "placid," thus depicting it ripe for attack, and its geography a monotonous mass of desert (Said 235). However, the people have become something to be feared, not just ignorant and "backwards," but "barbaric" enough to actually pose a threat to the US (Said 59). This discourse at its time of conception was constructive in negating the achievements of the Middle East, to make it seem like a non-reactionary, unmoving, slow place in need of "progress." After 9/11, the images and rhetoric of Orientalism are adapted for daily use by media outlets and politicians and they are adorned with new characteristics that make their "backwardness" seem like an agenda capable of penetrating the US. The message of the War on Terror seems more urgent once the Orient takes on a violent nature.

In the article "(Un)tolerated Neighbour," Aysem Seval argues that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* "reveals the illusory nature of the liberal discourse of tolerance and the impossibility of maintaining that illusion in emerging representations of self and Other after 9/11" (Seval 103). In the light of the above examples, one can see the pattern of failure recurring time and time again. Studying these novels can reveal as much about the failure of traditional western ideologies, which the West still lauds, as it can reveal about the dichotomies of Muslim identities in South Asia. Making Islam from a South Asian Muslim Perspective, Madeline Clements notes that politicians and the media interpreted 9/11 as a "civilisational, global, moral battle that could potentially be manipulated in the interests of revised geopolitical agenda" (Clements 25).

Using Seval's terminology, the "domesticating attitude of post 9/11 discourse paints the War on Terror as a uniting struggle the way Dyer explains westerns were used to represent the physical spread of America's manifest destiny" (Seval 103). Their implications transcend a routine government announcement and go beyond being an inconvenience to a select few; they foster suspicion and justify actions intended to confirm that suspicion. Patriot Act, in particular, enables social organization, determining who is monitored and who is not based on identity, anxiety, and fear. The political and social context provided by this will help readers understand the time period depicted in the novels, a time when the Muslim identity was used to justify everything from minor discrimination to political decisions that had global repercussions. Moreover, it provides a clear landscape of how representations have evolved, regressed, and improved, as well as opportunities for improvement.

Economic upward mobility is Changez's principal motivation, and his sense of self is determined by social status and wealth. As soon as 9/11 occurs and he is forced to

face the illusion of acceptance, he is suddenly thrust into the same strata as his colleagues, the same amount of acceptance and privilege minus a few minors, harmless racial remarks. In the following passages, Changez discusses how he navigates opportunities and how he ascends the social ladder in a very subtle way. Changez recalls his interview with Jim for a competitive position at Underwood Samson, and he discusses becoming increasingly impatient about the economic decline of his family. At the same time, he works multiple work study jobs and hides the fact that he is in need of money from his wealthy peers.

Later in the novel, Changez employs certain aspects of his immigrant background to his advantage, a lesson he learned from Jim while they were interviewing each other. Jim teaches Changez how to capitalize on his "shame" and how to use the discipline and work ethics he has developed from his disadvantaged financial background as selling points at his company. Changez is reluctant to share his drive and growth with Jim. Changez realizes, based on Jim's impression of him, that he too had been a part of a "pragmatic and effective" hiring process to choose certain employees seen as assets and weed out potential bad investments.

In her essay "Possessed by Whiteness" Delphine Munos views this celebration of 'Changez's 'difference' as "the sense of social shame that he [Jim] shares with his protege and that fuels the race-free, all-American 'rags to riches' standard narrative into which he cast his own life."(Munos 401) Changez is also surrendering his life to the flame of the American Dream, which he hopes will transform him into a "race-free, all-American" who is free from social shame. Changez has a childish faith that his professional success will lead him into the locus of color-free Americanness; he believes his upward mobility will make him a product of it. To successfully remove oneself from race, one must eliminate the associated frugality. Changez's desire to

assimilate into white success could be explained in such terms by Dyer: "The dynamism of white instability, especially in its claims to universality, is also what entices those outside to seek to cross its borders and those inside to aspire ever upwards within it" (Dyer 40).

This 'instability' is dynamic because of its many paradoxes: "at once a sort of race and the human race, an individual and a universal subject" (Dyer 39). Rather than being bound to the propertiesof his race, Changez wants to surpass them and "cross" into the universality of this white race. He wants to be like his white coworkers, "unmarked and unproblematic" (Dyer 39). His presence in this sphere is illegitimate unless his former identity is erased and replaced. He must "aspire ever upwards within it" now that he has crossed the limits of whiteness Only then will he be able to compensate for the financial necessity and low social standing that come with being an immigrant. He can be both an ambiguous race (a multicultural yet non-threatening, hard-working American) and the spirit of the 'human race,' a man of will and direction at the pinnacle of human success, the capitalist company, once he is free of these marks. Changez is well aware of how his look affects others, and he quickly recognizes that the correct amount of foreignness can help him advance rather than hinder him: "I have subsequently wondered why my mannerisms so appealed to my senior colleagues. Perhaps it was my speech: like Pakistan, America is, after all, a former English colony, and it stands to reason, therefore, that an Anglicized accent may in your country continue to be associated with wealth and power, just as it is mine. Or perhaps it was my ability to function both respectfully and with self-respect in a hierarchical environment …. I was aware of an advantage conferred upon me by my foreignness, and I tried to utilize it as much as I could." (Hamid 41)

Changez's employment of an Anglicized accent is admired and welcomed since it connotes "money" and "power," which are traits more strongly linked with the white majority than with immigrants. Changez is distinguished from other South Asian immigrants by his significantly less stereotypical accent and intonation; his accent is considered as sophisticated rather than a caricature of himself. The ambiguity of his race can be a source of amazement and even admiration rather than scorn and derision in his first encounter with someone. It makes him appear smarter, more intriguing, and reflects a childhood influenced by both western and "exotic" eastern ideas, making him popular among liberal socialites and allowing him admission into the "real world," where huge powerful jobs await. Here cultural hegemony plays a vital role to upgrade Changez and mold him to a shape that can easily satisfy the Western taste.

He is investing in whiteness in order to achieve that zone of authority and gain material success and access: "I suspected my Pakistaniness was invisible, cloaked by my suit, by my expense account, and - most of all- by my companions" (Hamid 71). It's almost as if his continual presence of American "companions" will only satiate his curiosity about his foreignness. His performance necessitates a monetary and clothes investment in his bank account. He also interacts "respectfully" in the pecking order, but with enough "self-respect" to not be complacent, adjusting his immigrant mentality to the hostile climate of Wall Street. His self-assurance, refusal to settle, and overall demeanor pique intrigue, but they do not endanger his senior colleagues; he creates a mix of familiarity and mystery, which is a "benefit" to his career.

Changez exhibits an unusual mannerism when the doorman of Erica's building gives him a coldly disapproving expression: "Naturally I responded with an equally cold and rather imperious tone - carefully calibrated to convey both that I had taken

offense and that I found it beneath myself to say so" (Hamid49). Although it comes "naturally" to him, this impersonal and harsh attitude has evolved over time, implying innumerable similar situations to which he has learnt to respond, an effortless calculation to handle the problem of minor, everyday discrimination. Changez had used his body language and "imperious tone" to inform the doorman that, despite his prejudices towards men of colour, he belongs outside the building and Changez belongs inside. The doorman's dislike and disapproval of a man like him entering the building has no bearing on whether he can enter or not.

Not only is this a fact of their social circumstances, but Changez is above taking offence and reacting to the doorman's all-too-familiar expression of unease, a state that Changez has attained not through some sort of inner peace and forgiveness, but through practicing confidence in his new identity. The fact that he finds dealing with a doorman's opinion of him beneath him is the result of old-fashioned ideas about service workers and a newfound survival tool, confidence in one's standing, a mix of arrogance and the need to maintain the image of an ordinary, law abiding American despite his race working against this appearance of well-being. Changez is a rising star in both silence and action. Changez begins to explore the individuals he has chosen to be like and the implications of his integration after 9/11 in the following sections; his experiences take on a darker tone.

During a business trip to the Philippines, Changez encounters a Filipino man who looks at him with scorn through the window of his automobile. This exchange lingers with him, and despite the repeated reminders of rigorous work at a high-stakes firm, he is distracted by his coworker's random: "I looked at him - at his fair hair and light eyes and, most of all, his oblivious immersion in the minutiae of our work - and thought, you are so foreign. I felt in that moment much closer to the Filipino driver

than to him" (Hamid 67). Changez refers to blonde hair and blue eyes as "strange" for the first time in the narrative. As Bhabha says about Fanon's work: "From that overwhelming disorientation of nausea Fanon makes his answer: the black man wants the objectifying confrontation with otherness". (Bhabha 120) Changez is having a "objectifying confrontation" with his white co-worker's "otherness." Karamat Lone also engages in such an encounter with the powerful, exacerbating his Muslim community's already existent otherness. Changez realises that he and his co-workers must function in a condition of amnesia in order to perform the difficult process of evaluating the elements that make up workers' lives; their fundamentalism is a "immersion" in numbers that necessitates an act of ignorance of irrelevant minutiae.

Perhaps there is no difference between doing this job in a tiny American town, New York City, or the Philippines for Changez's employees. He has a vague remembrance of being back in Asia, as well as some connection to this strange yet familiar third-world country, far closer to him than Manhattan. He is one of many analysts, but the driver manages to disturb Changez's peace and force him to consider the absurdity of his sudden rise in social hierarchy, taunting his self-assurance and waking him up from the ignorance required to maintain his American assimilation and confidence in his upward mobility. Racial imagery is made up of indicators, which are often employed to create a dangerous, evil "Other" that will be isolated in the end. Changez uses racial images of eye and hair colour to recognise "others" in his environment.

Speaking of the post-9/11 New York he returns to, Changez finds that "... America, too, was increasingly giving itself over to a dangerous nostalgia at that time" (Hamid 114-15). When Erica's mental breakdown over the loss of her partner is compared to the nation's nostalgia, the US feels mourned and sympathized with. However, just like Erica's nostalgia, America's nostalgia has the potential to be disastrous. Politicians and

citizens are gradually moving towards a patriotism founded in the history of divinely inspired expansionism and shows of military prowess in foreign areas to demonstrate American survival after sorrow, much like Trump's promise of returning to an America that was great. As Mahmutovic points out, "Hamid's America is not mother America. It is not a matriarchal protector and caregiver, but an object of desire. It is a young traumatized woman with an unhealthy nostalgia and historical amnesia, which are aggravated but not caused by 9/11". (Mahmutovic 10) Changez wants America, but the tragedies are exacerbating the country's "unhealthy" devotion to the past and perpetual forgetting. Fundamentalisms focused on dividing people are gaining traction, and he is being pressured to pick a side. His future is no longer illuminated by the hope he felt after graduating, and he begins to question his place in America as it focuses its patriotism on him.

When their connection progresses sexually, Changez takes on the role of Erica's deceased boyfriend (Chris) and finds himself at a fork in the road: "My satiation was understandable to me; my shame was more confusing. Perhaps, by taking on the persona of another, I had diminished myself in my own eyes" (Hamid 106). His sexual satiation is nearly sinful, coming from a false sense of identity, and his "shame" comes from relinquishing his identity for a love built in passion for someone else. Hamid carries the "representational foci of his adopted nation into Underwood Samson (US) and Erica (America), that is corporate capitalism and the American nation" (Mahmutovic 10). In addition to this array of professional and "political allegiances" that his "identity seems to necessitate" is "Changez's affinity to his homeland and the middle eastern countries under attack". (Mahmutovic10) The setting of Erica as a "representational foci of Changez's adoption of Whiteness extend the cause of his repulsion. He is not only losing his identity by pleasing Erica, but also

in the exhausting demand of global civic engagement" (Mahmutovic 10). As Roman says "if upward mobility grants wages, it also imposes a tax. This tax reveals the impossibility of straight-line assimilation into a white mainstream" (Roman 12). Changez is witnessing the "impossibility" of smooth assimilation, as well as the costs he must pay to keep the identity security he believed he possessed.

Whiteness is an embodiment they choose to accept for the sake of personal success, rather than a force penetrating them without consent. Changez, unlike Karamat Lone, abandons this project. Changez thinks that his identity needs to be remade at this moment, and he begins with a bodily transformation: "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, for multiple reasons, I was deeply angry" (Hamid 130). Changez's beard is a physical reassertion and reminder of what he considers to be his identity, an attempt to reclaim the self-respect he has lost as a result of his declining act with Erica. He no longer wants to be the "single-minded" employee who is completely absorbed in his work and unaware of the concerns that affect the rest of the world. The events of 9/11 and subsequent events are personal to Changez; they are not inconvenient politics that should be kept outside the office.

His evident ties to the countries concerned, as well as his employees' awareness of this, persuades him that by assuming the terrifying appearance of a beard, he may embrace rather than reject his empathies. Changez rejects the conflicting position of being a western citizen or being in the process by claiming his physical identity. He's reacting to his coworker's overblown patriotic "nostalgia" by contrasting his bodily foreignness, dark skin, and thick hair with his own physical foreignness, dark skin, and thick hair.As Munos argues "the post-9/11 context makes it even clearer that the ethnic part of hyphenated identities must remain skin-deep and definitely not hinder

the pursuit of 'true' Americanness" (Munos 401). While his supervisor Jim initially tolerates the nonsensical personal expression, he eventually loses patience with it because it cannot be changed "co-opted and altered … into pre-existing raceless romances of upward mobility" (Munos 401).

Because they are perceived as fundamentally opposed to the free-mined, linearly developing superpower, the recognized trait is too intimately tied with race, a classic feature of Orientalist depictions of dark-skinned individuals, unable to be hijacked into ideals of economic prosperity and social advancement. Changez is the "tolerated neighbor" (Seval 103). "He is a part of his coworkers' world and a contributor to his firm, a part of New York. He becomes the untolerated neighbor once he decides to tear at the facade with his defiant beard" (Seval 103). Both he and Jim are aware of the unstated likelihood that his stupid solidarities will hinder him from getting promoted. The reader's own paranoia and propensity of assessing the Other's physicality is acknowledged by disclosing Changez's psychology with honesty.

Changez is increasingly associating the company with an army of fundamentalists, a vision of "clean-shaven," twenty-somethings with tunnel vision in matters of success and prosperity, who can only see through the company's single-mined drives and principles, similar to the fundamentalists surfacing in Changez's home. Changez sees both as extreme oppositions to who he is, and this picture compliments rather than opposes the conventional image of bearded guys with weapons and turbans. Changez recognizes his organization as a divisive enterprise built on the basics of financial value, and his workforce would not describe themselves as members of a uniformed army trained to fulfill that cause. While they regard Changez's beard as an odd commitment to old-fashioned beliefs, he sees their faces and dress as allegiance to the goals of a firm he no longer wants to be a part of.

The recognition, as well as the urge to distance oneself from these workers, is rooted in the Middle East's post-9/11 reaction. He does not find the "common white [American] identity" being advertised to promote the newest "imperial project" appealing (Dyer 19). He can't say he's "very angry" since his fury is no longer considered a normal human feeling, but rather a criminal and invalid aspect of who he is as a dark-skinned Muslim. Isma, on the other hand, is unable to express her rage as a "model mourner" because her brother dies escaping the fundamentalism he has chosen rather than dying of natural causes. Their widely diverse socioeconomic positions contribute to some of the inequality. Changez is one of his company's most valuable employees, thus his behavior is tolerated and he is not fired right away. Meanwhile, Isma is dealing with the law, which two of her family members have blatantly broken. Her life and rage are public, whereas Changez barely irritates a few people at work. While many of Changez's coworkers sympathize with him, few do so for Isma, despite her innocence. Because her family's crimes are also being brought against her, she has no defense to justify her fury and free speech.

Madeline Clements analyses the differences between the terms 'affiliation' and 'affinity' and how those processes are realized in the context of South Asian Muslims in her book *Writing Islam from a South Asian Muslim Perspective*. Affiliation is described as "a 'turn' from a lost or outmoded natural familial 'filiations' to a critically created and 'compensatory' cultural and societal system of 'affiliation' … an individual's desire to become an 'agent' or 'bearer' of a particular notion of 'civilization' or 'culture" (Clements 3). Affinity is "a more natural, unplanned or even involuntary sense of being drawn to a particular community grouping, geographical area, or imaginative realm" (Clements 3). Changez's initial association with his Manhattan firm's highly educated, socially elite, and ambitious young men and

women was consensual "turn from [his] lost or outmoded natural familial 'filiation'" with his family and Pakistan. "Having been so far from home and experiencing the loss of his family's financial wellbeing and social prosperity elicits in Changez a desire to form new affiliations; he is experiencing what Roman calls a crisis of affiliation" (Roman 1). Similarly in the case with Amir in Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* where a crucial Afghani identity crisis can be seen in few characters like Baba, and Hosseini himself confessed the truth about the war centered Afghan Identity was a little bit embarrassing for many Afghans who took refuge to the United States in the post 9/11 scenario.

Not only does he want to be apart of this new, "compensatory cultural and societal system," but he wants to be seen as assimilated enough to be a default representation of this affiliation, a "bearer' of [his new] notion of civilization." Changez makes numerous references to the historical magnificence of the subcontinent's civilizations, which is reflected in Pakistan's remaining architecture. He laments the loss of his family's old money respectability, as well as, in a broader sense, the erasure of an older civilisation as a new, more aggressively international one emerges. As a result of his capitalist employment and elite connections, he welcomes this new style of civilisation. His reaction to post-9/11 injustices, the "rage" he feels at the US' capacity to put any nation in peril, is the result of "a more natural, unplanned, or even involuntary sensation of being drawn" to countries that are physically close to Pakistan, as well as to the "community grouping" of Muslims. He has a "unplanned" fondness for persons who are similar to him in terms of culture, religion, or physical appearance. The beard becomes a symbol of friendship. Cutler observes that much of the talk about assimilation is social in nature "reaffirms the superiority of white middle-class values and behaviors by opposing them to self-defeating gestures of

'ethnic solidarity'" (Cutler 17). Changez's "self-defeating gesture" of solidarity with his fellow Muslims via a politically charged physical identity runs counter to his upper-class white beliefs. His choice to abandon aristocratic detachment from "ethnic" issues has a "lower-class" ring to it.

As Cutler remarks, "assimilation reinscribes as fact the fiction of a unitary national culture … and valorizes upward economic mobility in a way that accepts liberal capitalism as a politically neutral index of success and failure, a narrative that Changez buys and participates in" (Cutler 6). Changez employs his "fundamentals" as fair determining agents of which firms get to exist and which employees get to work and produce, claiming that he is a member of the unitary American culture. On the other hand in Khaled Hosseini's novel *The kite Runner* an interreligious fundamentalist attitude can be found through the character portrayal of Hassan who belongs to the Hazara Community, a lesser opponent to the Pasthuns. Amir and Hassan are contradictory characters to each other. One of the contradictions among them is American capitalism and through this an implicit expression of hegemony and power can be seen.

In Hamid's novel "Changez does not see fault in this because he is convinced of the detached nature of justice his principles promote, ignoring the politics of US involvement in foreign business and the interlinking of race and class that completely delegitimize the processes he practices" (Cutler 6). He also embraces whiteness as a socially neutral, humanist measure of success and failure that, when adopted, ensures equal possibilities, despite its racist roots. Furthermore, unlike the janitors, Changez chooses to be a valued employee of "the empire" since it guarantees him the socioeconomic position he lost in Lahore and the opportunity to advance his career. Changez is a part of it voluntarily and can opt out, despite his profession's cruelty

toward workers and the company's own employees, who are brilliantly chosen and disposed of based on a standardized number game. Changez's "epiphany" contrasts sharply with his early days at the firm, when he gazes down at the streets below his skyscraper and fails to recognize what he has done and will have to do in order to maintain his existence in New York.

Changez soothes his American visitor on his way back to his hotel and assures him that he is not dangerous because of his political positions, which include a commitment to nonviolence. As Changez extends his hand to the American, he notices a metal object, and the tale comes to a close. As Clements explains, "Hamid's reader is left to draw his own conclusions as to which of the characters is the victim and which is the assassin here … and who exactly must be misled or misread in order for this work of fiction to find foundation" (Clements 74). Thus, this work "finds foundation" when the reader accepts Changez's assertions of nonviolence, his analytical appraisal of the global situation, and sympathizes with his struggle to contribute to his profession despite the callings of two opposite extremes. He abandons a career he perceives as becoming increasingly fundamentalist and a society he sees becoming fiercely defensive, while rejecting fundamentalisms that try to absorb him because of his criticism of US foreign actions.

Similarly, Jesse Kavadlo's *American Popular Culture in the Era of Terror* (2015) examines the impact of 9/11 on popular culture, particularly *Falling Man*. While the focus on the indescribable remains critical, the cultural and societal context of 9/11, as well as its influence on the United States, the Western world, and the media, has been just too enormous to overlook. The novel also depicts trauma as unrepresentable and provides a counter-narrative to the government's and media's heroic-narrative; it depicts the events of 9/11 as an unrecoverable trauma; the novel is un-heroic, the

narrative is unpatriotic, and the characters never redeem themselves or recover their lost identities and relationships. The American media and the Bush administration attempted to create a narrative that exaggerated and defended traditional ideals of heroic, military masculinity, which place a premium on physical strength and the power that such strength confers.

In *Falling Man*, the primary characters are the polar opposite of these characteristics; they are terribly traumatized and unable to cope with their trauma. *Falling Man* is described by Kristiaan Versluys as "without a doubt, the darkest and the starkest […] [I]t describes a trauma with no exit, a drift toward death with hardly a glimpse of redemption. […] The endless re-enactment of trauma presented in *Falling Man* allows for no accommodation or resolution" (Versluys1). Kavadlo agrees as well: "Thus DeLillo presents the reader with an utterly changed, collapsed, 'fallen' dystopian city and establishes a mood of uncanny sadness that permeates the novel" (Kavadlo120).

In *Falling Man*, literary strategies are utilized to emphasize the dreadful 9/11 tragedy while also conveying the terrible element of the tragedy. This is accomplished by utilizing the novel's non-chronological structure. The trauma is relived throughout the story, as well as in the conclusion. As the trauma is relived until the end, this means that it is unrecoverable. It also adheres to Caruth's trauma theory, which is founded on Freud's idea of latent trauma, which states that the trauma symptoms and the trauma itself appear much later in the victim's life. Furthermore, by showing this identity-less victim as profoundly traumatized, the use of pronouns strips the key characters of their characterizations and identities, while also undermining the heroic narrative of the American government and media. Instead of disclosing more interiority, the style of stream-of-consciousness and poetry passages emphasizes traumatic separation. Another tactic is conversation, which produces white space and implies distance

between characters by providing that distance to the reader in literary form. As a result, *Falling Man* offers a perspective on trauma as a disruption of the self that confuses and destroys the victim.

The goodness and badness of man are occasionally expressed in literary works. Literary works can be utilized to interpret the changing social systems of society. The characters in this novel's depiction of the bouncing of feelings between some people reflected a circumstance that occurs frequently in a country driven with turmoil. The condition of literature is affected by a reciprocal link between social elements. Various aspects of literature still have a variety of social reflections, including (a) the human social world and its ropes, (b) individual adjustment to the other world, (c) how the aspiration to change the social world, (d) the relationship between literature and politics, and (e) societal conflicts and tensions. That is to say, their interaction will be beneficial to human life. This narrative is about societal turmoil and tensions. And the theme was attempted to be described by the reflection itself. One of them is the bonding, which is attempted to be demonstrated through various characters.

The Kite Runner depicts the characters' intertwined feelings. Firstly, there's the mutual attraction between Amir and Hassan. In this novel, Amir takes over as the main narrator. He is the son of a wealthy trader in Kabul and resides in Wazir Akbar Khan, one of the city's major neighborhoods. "Everyone agreed that my father, my Baba, had built the most beautiful house in the Wazir Akbar Khan district, a new and affluent neighborhood in the northern part of Kabul" (Hoseni 4). His father, Baba, is a wealthy man with numerous businesses. Ali, his devoted servant, also lives in a little hunt at the back of their large home. "On the south end of the garden, in the shadows of a loquat tree, was the servants" home, a modest little mud hut where Hassan lived with his father" (Hoseni 6).

Amir's memory is occasionally flooded with recollections of them playing together in Kabul and enjoying time together. For everyone who has reached the time, memories are always retained in a lengthier duration. It cannot be stopped; it will fly and remain in the minds of all humans. Amir will have no limitations, even if he has never seen Sohrab before. Apart from other concerns covered in this story, both fraternities colour the theme. Many people around the world will appreciate this work because of the strength of brotherhood. Amir's quest to reclaim Sohrab from Assef, which included a fight with Assef that resulted in numerous injuries, became the most effective medicine for absolving him of any remorse he felt toward Hassan, his best friend and brother. The story also serves as a vehicle for the author to reflect on the situation of Afghan society at the time. Hosseini attempted to capture the turbulent period in Afghanistan, including sectarian and ethnic strife, as well as the Taliban administration. Even though he has not stayed in Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion, the novel is seen as a message to be delivered to the world. There is a sense of desire that he wishes to express in writing.

Discriminatory attitudes toward low-income or ethnic minorities are common in one society. In the story, there is a conflict between the high and lower classes. The discriminatory attitude of Pashtun as the upper class toward Hazara as the inferior class is represented in the story. Hassan represented the Hazara while Amir represented the Pashtun. Amir's friends of the same ethnicity tease him because he spends all of his time with Hassan, playing and travelling places. They believe Amir committed the humiliating acts as a result of his intimate relationship with a Hazara boy. Afghanistan is ethnically diverse. The Pashtuns are the most numerous and have traditionally held the most power. Tajik Uzbeks, Turkmen, and Baluchs are among the other ethnic groupings. Despite being the country's third largest ethnic

community, accounting for roughly 20% of the population, Hazaras have long been persecuted by Pashtuns and other communities. It is also done by Taliban, who brutalize Hazaras ethnically. "A few weeks later, the Taliban banned kite fighting. And two years later, in 1998, they massacred the Hazaras in Mazar-i-Sharif" (Hoseni 213).

In Afghanistan, the Hazara people have always been at the bottom of the social ladder. The Taliban compelled them to flee to the highlands and live there. Despite the fact that the Hazara people have been exiled, the Taliban continues to harass them. Approximately 4,000-6,000 Hazaras have been slain. The Taliban primarily targets men, leaving the rest of the family alone. It's also mirrored in the antagonistic figure in the novel, Assef, who abused and tormented Hassan and Sohrab. The majority of Hazaras now live in the Hazarajat, a mountainous region in the central highlands that spans four provinces. The most well-known is Bamian province, which is home to the Bamian Buddha statues, which were destroyed by the Taliban in 2001.

Hazaras used to live in the valleys, but decades of conflict forced them to migrate to the harsh highlands. Many have also gone to Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, in search of a better life, accounting for over half of the city's population today. Hassan, Ali (Hassan's father), and Sohrab are some of the characters in the novel who reflect how Hazara ethnics are constantly subjected to repression, mockery, and abuse. Those individuals represented Hazara ethnics, who have always faced Pashtun tyranny. The following are examples of mockery directed at Hazara's characters in the story: 1) "Of all the neighborhood boys who tortured Ali, Assef was by far the most relentless. He was, in fact, the originator of the Babalu jeer, Hey, Babalu, who did you eat today? Huh? Come on, Babalu, give us smile a smile! And on days when he felt particularly,

inspired, he spiced up his badgering a little, Hey, you flat-nosed Babalu, who did you eat today? Tell us, you slant-eyed donkey!" (Hoseni 38)

"Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always will be. We are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans, not this Flat-Nose here. His people pollute our homeland, our watan. They dirty our blood."(Hoseni40) "We left the bodies in the streets, and if their families tried to sneak out to drag them back into their homes, we'd shoot them too. We left them in the streets for days. We left them for the dogs. Dog meat for dogs." (Hoseini 277) The quotations in the story demonstrate Assef's hatred for Hazara's people. The way Pashtuns threaten Hazaras appears to be illogical. Their actions are motivated by hatred and rage for no apparent reason. Hosseini wishes to describe the social reality that existed among Afghans, including the tensions that emerged and arose. The construction of identity revealed that Hazara is synonymous with being poor, illiterate, and working in a low-wage job, whereas Pashtun is portrayed as being wealthy, literate, and having access to education. What Hosseini described in the story is a mirror that reflects the truth about every scenario that has ever occurred in Afghanistan, even if the situation has altered dramatically since then.

Now is the time for Hazara women to enter the government: President Hamid Karzai chose Habiba Sarobi to lead the province of Bamiyan in March 2005, making her the first Afghan woman to hold the position of governor. In 2004, women in the Fuladi province started farming to support themselves, thanks to a programme started by social welfare worker Sabera Sakhi. They swiftly rose to the top of the wage scale in the area. While compared to the difficult circumstances in Afghanistan when the conflict was still ongoing some years ago, the situation has changed in dealing with ethnic divisions.

On a national level, Hazaras are more progressive when it comes to women's rights to education and participation in public activities. In civic and political forums, educated Hazara women, particularly those who have returned from exile in Iran, are equally active as males. Families from the Hazara community are eager to educate their daughters. Aid agencies have hurried to build schools since the Taliban's authority ended in late 2001, according to UN officials in Bamian, 20 miles to the east, and have succeeded in hiring qualified female instructors to satisfy the demand. The position of Hazaras in Afghanistan has greatly improved after the Taliban were deposed in 2001. The Hazaras are one of the national ethnic minorities recognised in the new Afghan constitution, and they have full citizenship rights. Only two Hazaras were appointed to President Hamid Karzai's initial cabinet, and the only member of their biggest political party, Hizb-e Wahdat, was named vice president. However, Hazaras (who make up about 9% of the population) won 25% of the seats in the most recent parliamentary election. 6 However, in many parts of the country, Hazaras continue to endure discrimination.

Terrorism is a self-evident concept of the non-Western 'Other' in Western media and the US State Department. As a result, terrorism is intrinsically linked to the concept of the enemy in post-9/11 language, a nebulous abstraction that is widespread in disparate political contexts. In a 2005 debate about the "war on terror," George W. Bush, for example, drew a parallel between Islam and communism, despite their political, historical, and cultural differences: "The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our new century. Yet in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century(President Bush Speech) Although many American politicians, including ex-president Bill Clinton, have claimed that the real anti-terror battle is between the West and Islamic

fundamentalism and radicalism, many neoliberal philosophers of the global state, such as Fukuyama, Lewis, and Huntington, understand globalization as an evangelical civilizing project that must dismiss oriental despotism, Muslim fundamentalism, and Islam in general" (Gamal 97). In Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*, Islam is represented as the West's main Other and is "seen as a source of nuclear proliferation, terrorism, and, in Europe, unwanted migrants" (Huntington 215).

The resonance of Updike's *Terrorist* with the aforementioned post-9/11 debate is understandable. The chapter will thus present at this point that Arabs are emotional, hostile, and irrational people, according to Updike. For him, Islam is synonymous with holy war and hatred, fanaticism, brutality, and intolerance. He encapsulates the Western discourse's cultural melancholy in the aftermath of 9/11. The greatest danger comes from inside, not from outside, from the fundamentalist Other. Indeed, the attacks on New York and Washington, DC have sparked a more serious and nuanced discussion of this long-time object of fascination for the western imagination; that a serious writer like Updike has claimed ground largely dominated by the mainstream media since 9/11 marks a step forward from Orientalist depictions of Islam. *Terrorist* is both an examination of the roots of Islamic terrorism and a critique of post-9/11 discourse, according to Updike. Updike explains why in an interview with Book Page: "I think there are enough people complaining about the Arab menace that I can be allowed to try to show this young man as sympathetically as I can" (Herman 700).

Updike plainly believes that such a narrowed perspective is incorrect; therefore he decides to breach the taboo and try "to see things from that point of view." As a result, Updike has his Muslim characters describe how the world appears to them, and their viewpoints somewhat align with Updike's long-held criticisms of American culture as

materialistic and self-destructive. As Hartnell rightly puts it, "the Islamist critique of American society is in many ways Updike's own". (Herman 700)

Since the world politics changed after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, political statements and views changed as well, and representing the neo-Orient in this period reflects the country's political environment and social sentiment (Sanderson and Nikitin, 33). As well, this period's political and cultural production situates American views in history and illustrates how historical contexts influence interpretations. Following 9/11, American culture underwent rapid changes and retaliation followed. Neo-Orientalism has more to do with retaliation and post-9/11 American culture. After 9/11, the Middle East and the classic orientalist discourse, with its binary division between "us" and "them," were brought once again into sharp focus. As a result, Arab Muslim representations of society became more prevalent after 9/11, and terrorism became the most widely used term to describe these individuals. As the Canadian Prime Minister said on September 6, 2011, "Islamic terrorism is the greatest threat to Canada's security" (CBC News, 2011), the war on terrorism does not only involve a fight against Arab terrorists but also involves observing and watching every Muslim. Islam is seen as a threat to western civilization by this view, which includes assumptions spanning many fields of cultural studies.9/11 has therefore, been a global symbolic event marked by retaliation acts by the American government, a change in East-West relationships, and a change in world politics. Consequently, the emergence of neo-Orientalism as an academic movement places the Arab world at the center of the neo-Orientalist map.

Through the use of imagery, giving voice to silenced sections of society and the questioning of the motives and intentions of those in positions of power in the West, 9/11 fiction work to resist the prevailing narrative's powerful hold over the general

public. These novels open up new potentialities, new thoughts and allow for critical engagement with 9/11 and the responses to it. This function of literature is of critical importance as what the dominant narrative threatened is the principles of democracy, namely the right to say and write what we think, to seek out different sources of information and ideas and the right to disagree with the actions of government policies.

Without resistance to suppression and silencing, we all lose our voice and risk living in fear. 9/11 was a significant historical event. History is created through photographs, testimony and our responses to it. If some of these elements are compromised through the exclusion of that which does not fit with the agenda of those in positions of power then history becomes compromised. We are our history. If this history is compromised then so are we. The novels discussed within this thesis offer resistance to the dominant narrative and provide an alternative space from which 9/11 and the responses to it can be reconsidered and critiqued. They also offer the opportunity to imagine new possibilities beyond the prescribed edicts of the dominant narrative.

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CHAPTER –V

Conclusion

Why the post 9/11 literature is important to bring out the notion of the 'other' is the central argument put forth in this thesis. It is one of the most frequently questioned questions about the literary arts. In this day of freely accessible information, what does literature teach us that we do not previously know or cannot simply find out? What can post 9/11 American fiction teach us about the realities of the Muslims and Islam in America in particular, and the West as a whole experience? Some of the answers to these issues are clarified through the examination of four post-9/11 books: Don DeLillo's *Falling Man (2007)*, Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist (2007)*, John Updike's *Terrorist (2007)*, and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner (2003)*.In the aftermath of a tragedy like 9/11, individuals look to the news media to try to make sense of their surroundings and the events that are taking place, as well as to their national leaders for leadership. Although this is a perfectly reasonable reaction, it is not without risk. The information, images, and ideas that are presented to the public are done so with the intention of eliciting a specific response from the audience since the news media and those in positions of political power have vested interests.

This grouping of facts, pictures, and concepts constitutes the prevailing narrative. The bulk of the Western world was also affected, to a greater or lesser extent, by this narrative, even though it was primarily produced by the American news media and targeted at the American people. This is because there is global access to international news networks. I decided to focus my attention on three crucial aspects of the prevalent narrative. The first is America, the land of the brave, which contends that

despite suffering a great deal of loss of life and severe stress, the events' more heroic moments were given far more attention than their more tragic ones.

The second key idea is one that was clearly stated by President Bush when he said "You are with us, or you are with the terrorists."(G.W Bush's 'address to a Joint Session of congress and the American People) The third key idea is that of America as the innocent victim and the terrorists as evil perpetrator. The problem with such views was that it ignored or denied some of the uncomfortable realities of the events of 9/ 11; created an environment within America and beyond where voices of dissent were ignored, ridiculed or punished; and fostered intolerance towards people who looked ethnically similar to those who were involved in the terrorist attacks whilst blatantly ignoring the role American international politics might have played in 9/ 11. This narrative sought to short-circuit the critical capabilities of the general public, creating a fearful and docile populace which did not question the motives or actions of their government.

5.1. Findings of the Chapters: At the outset the introduction of the research begins with a detailed discussion about the study where a strong sense of 'othering' can be found as a result of the aftermath of the 9/11 event. In this chapter such otherisation turned into racism and Islamophobia.A few weeks after 9/11, the U.S. government generated a series of initiatives and policies that targeted Middle Eastern and Muslim immigrant populations, especially men. Ostensibly, these decrees, administrative rule changes, executive orders, and laws aimed to stop terrorism; however, they legitimized the counter attack in the eyes of the American public. From the perspective of Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans, it seemed as if the government was condoning stereotyping and scapegoating. The populations affected by the post-9/11 backlash trace their ancestry to the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia.

The pioneers immigrated at the turn of the twentieth century from present-day Syria and Lebanon. Mostly Christian, they intermarried and assimilated within a couple of generations. A new wave of immigrants coincided with the repeal of restrictive immigration laws in 1965 and social and political turmoil in the Middle East. This time around, the newcomers were overwhelmingly Muslim; many came to pursue university education and stayed. In the final decades of the twentieth century, immigration from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh has increased. In the days immediately after 9/11, there were four confirmed cases of hate-motivated murders. On September 15, 2001, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh, was shot in Mesa, Arizona, at the gas station he owned. Also on September 15, 2001, Waqar Hasan, a Pakistani, was shot dead in his grocery store by Mark Anthony Stroman, a white supremacist in Dallas, Texas. On September 19, 2001, a U.S. citizen of Yemeni descent, Ali Almansoop, was shot in the back while escaping from his attacker, who had broken into his home in Lincoln Park, Michigan. Finally, on October 4, 2001, Vasudev Patel, a gas station owner from India, was killed during an armed robbery in Mesquite, Texas. This was Mark Anthony Stroman's second homicide in less than a month. Another seven murder cases are suspected to be motivated by hate. This clearly shows how the Muslims in particular and people from the South Asia in general became victims of the notion of 'other', and how this otherization left a strong sense of alienation and racial segregation in the Western society. The Introduction of the study explores ethnicity, the superior and inferior complexities of ethnic sects, community, nationality and cultural dominance in the pluralistic American society.

 The second chapter, namely "Responding to 9/11: Framing the 'other' in Don Delillo's *Falling Man* and John Updike's *Terrorist"* encompasses two American

novels. In this chapter these novels portray the experiences of American characters that are confronted with 9/11 or face the global political challenges and suffer from disorientation and loss. The negotiation of this loss takes place in relation to entanglements with the terrorist figure in particular and Muslims in general who penetrates the physical and psychological spaces of these characters. The two novels unfold the American responses against the event and its new outlook towards Muslims and Islam. The study with the help of these two novels unsettle the distinction between the terrorist and the terrorized in order to negotiate a new American identity after 9/11 where the notion of 'other' became a discourse of disdain, disorientation and dismantle the vulnerability of the American multicultural society.

In the third chapter of the thesis **"Fictions Write Back: Reinventing Identity in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner***"** the arguments developed its shape by the help of two South Asian fictions where the characters, being a Muslim and hence being an 'other' faces challenges to establish their identities, they returned to their root and enjoyed soothes. By the abhorrent incident took place in America on September 11, 2001, has changed drastically the image of the Muslims, and non American nationalities worldwide. Through these two novels Hamid and Hosseini write back the experiences of their own nation and continent. It shows the mental torture and physical harassments of the Muslim characters and the community as a whole. Through the chapter one can find out a different type of narrative which is not America centric, and is nothing but an experience and a way of retelling their own stories in comparison to the Americans. A sense of resistance through the south Asian fiction is explored in this chapter.

"Discourse of Power and Narrative as Resistance" is the fourth chapter of the thesis. There are certain points that are important for our attention. At first, it is the fact that comparison of discourses shaped by the novels under study with those shaped by orientalists allows us to generalize Edward Said's theory of Orientalism to the attitude and behavior of the West towards Islam and Muslims and other Asian and Arab nationalities in post 9/11 period. It also highlighted the Foucauldian analysis in which social groups interact and experience tension and emphasizes the transitory nature of culture as well as its power to transform. There are certain differences in tactics but the strategy seems to be the same. Secondly, although the majority of identified and discussed discourses are in the same direction as the power discourse, yet multiple voices seem to be presented, though all of them are not equally heard. However the government and media efforts have brought about reverse results in certain cases such as initiation of people's curiosity for finding out what Islam is all about. Islam was unknown to many in America, but after 9/11 many political leaders, scientists, researchers and thinkers consider it necessary to understand Islam correctly and here fictions become the instrumental tool for the purpose of resistance and through narrative both fiction and non- fiction create a separate discourse in response to the dominant discourses available on 9/11. Both America and Eurocentric approaches of the two American novels have been challenged by the Orientalistic approaches of the South Asian novels.

Cultural exchange and multiculturalism have long been considered a key theoretical notion for the study of migrant writings because of its relationship with contemporary phenomena of global migration and globalization itself. The approach of multiculturalism offers an adequate understanding of the individual requirement to negotiate a plurality of cultural models in a context of changing boundaries.

Multiculturalism provides productive solutions and categories to deal with the fictions which exhibit migration and multiculturalism. It also seeks to highlight the Foucauldian analysis in which social groups interact and experience tension and emphasizes the transitory nature of culture as well as its power to transform. As far as post 9/11 fictions selected for this research is concern which closely deal with the theme and polarization of ethnicity and racism by forming the identity of Muslims as 'other' in the multicultural America, which is in fact a threat to the existence of multiculturalism itself. Jean Baudrillard has rightly remarked in his notable work *The Spirit of Terrorism and Requiem for the Twin Towers* (2002),

" The whole play of history and power is disrupted by

this event, but so, too, are the conditions of analysis.

You have to take your time".

5.2. Cultural and multicultural aspects

Cultural hegemony is opposed by multiculturalism, which respects cultural diversity and the concept of multiple identities. In addition to acknowledging and respecting minority cultures, it underlines the importance of social injustice, marginalization, dislocation, dispossession, and social discrimination. It promotes racial and ethnic harmony, and promotes inter-ethnic, inter-racial understanding and mutual acceptance between all cultures by exploring ways to overcome discriminatory attitudes and jealousies. As part of this research, multiple cultures and subcultures are harmoniously coexisting, tolerance (nondiscriminatory attitude) is valued, minority cultures are protected and privileged, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity is important, cultural, religious, and ethnic identities are important.

Academic circles often find culture to be one of the most stimulating and motivating subjects to study. A broad range of disciplines are included in it, such as anthropology, history, literary studies, sociology, and politics. Despite its slippery nature, culture is an inclusive and comprehensive term. As it evolves and grows, it is not born or created. Thus, its relevance and scope are unclear. Naturalists often use it interchangeably with 'the social'. One particular way of living can be distinguished from another by different beliefs, behaviors, and values. Culture in social science is viewed as something that is learned, not inherent, and covers a wide range of human characteristics. It is generally believed that non-innate characteristics differ from society to society, and the variations are responsible for the formation of multiple cultures. Cultural heritage is a gift given by society to mankind and is considered a social heritage. Culture and civilization, however, have been distinguished by anthropologists. As a result of human moral, spiritual, and intellectual development, culture is regarded as something within ourselves, whereas civilization is something outside of us, including material culture, technology, and social structures. In contrast to civilization, culture encompasses all the achievements of mankind, as well as its external properties. All art forms, recreational activities, and linguistic expressions are considered to be part of culture. There are many different forms of worship, cultures, languages, architecture, dress, and handicrafts within this diversity that contribute to its continuity and richness. Art, music, dance, and drama are only some examples of culture, but it encompasses a way of life as well. The word 'culture' can be used in two different ways. The two are the "thin" and "thick" conceptions of culture, respectively. The idea of being slim applies to the way people dress, eat, create art, dance, and speak. The term "thick" is more inclusive. It denotes an entire way of life—the

cohesive web of beliefs, practices, values, and habits that give a group its own way of life.

A healthy society is one where different cultures coexist peacefully. Such a society stands out for its tolerance, collaboration, patience, respect, and comprehension of every cultural group. Establishing cultural ties, exchanging cultural ideals, and encouraging the peaceful coexistence of numerous cultures—dominant, patriarchal, super ordinate, subordinate, weak, marginal, minority, etc.—are all aspects of multiculturalism. It strengthens the notion of difference and heterogeneity that is represented by the concept of diversity because it is a -ism. It celebrates the distinctiveness and individuality of each culture, which adds greater variety and depth to human life, rather than just pointing out that there are numerous cultures present inside the nation-state. Each of the several cultures that make up a society is a distinct and diverse entity. Therefore, each culture's peculiarity and uniqueness must be acknowledged and taken into account separately. Recent political discourse on social, cultural, and religious issues frequently uses the word "tolerance." It vehemently opposes prejudice and the problems that result from it. Race, culture, and religion all promote their own set of standards and laws in heterogeneous societies.

The likelihood of conflict and friction in society is reduced if we can tolerate differences in race, culture, and religion. Positive forces like 'tolerance' encourage harmonious relationships in human civilisation. We must recognize and tolerate differences, whether they be racial, religious, or cultural, in order to live in a thriving, multicultural community. But differences shouldn't be viewed as a weakness of a particular group or culture. Therefore, it is important to view tolerance as a positive multicultural virtue that promotes social harmony, peace, and cohabitation. All cultures are treated equally and valued under multiculturalism. In a way, each culture

has something worthwhile and admirable to offer. All cultures should therefore be respected and valued equally. Each culture supports its members as a group and gives human life stability, strength, and significance. It goes without saying that valuing culture also entails valuing a community's rights.

It might not be easy to accept another religion. However, recognizing and embracing the religious ideas of many religions are fundamental components of multiculturalism. Only such discussions, which are prevalent in multireligious societies around the world, may lead to peace. The faiths of a nation also frequently influence its culture. The elements of all these religions are therefore present in those who have ingested the culture. It may therefore be difficult to declare that one religion is terrible and the other is beneficial. Multiculturalism emphasizes this feature. Ethnic variety is a defining aspect of any multicultural community, just like religious diversity is. Conflict and rivalry have frequently resulted from ethnic variety. Multiculturalism suggests that each ethnic group has a set of values that is important to it. Although such shattering has already occurred in the world, a majority culture cannot easily destroy a minority's cultural heritage.

5.3. Muslims in America Two Decades after 9/11: Any Change?

The American Muslim community has responded in a variety of creative ways to Islamophobia and shariaphobia. By supporting, participating in, and initiating community and civic engagement projects as well as contributing to U.S. politics, popular culture, and an ongoing national interfaith dialogue, they are reclaiming Islam and American Muslim identity. Among American Muslims today, honoring and celebrating difference is seen as a shared value between Islam and the US. Islam is also seen as a way for them to safeguard themselves against the phobias that negatively impact and threaten their communities.

For American Muslims today, cultural engagement and civic activism are important avenues for preserving their right to religious freedom under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. 501(c)(3) organizations like Clergy Beyond Borders (CBB), founded jointly by Muslim, Jewish, and Christian Americans, illustrate this larger trend among Muslim Americans and their counterparts in other faiths to integrate Islam into American culture and religion. CBB emphasizes the message that all religions contribute to improving the world on their website ("Clergy Beyond Borders"). "Clergy Beyond Borders" calls for mutual recognition and cooperation among religious communities instead of removing meaningful barriers between them ("Clergy Beyond Borders"). CBB's mission is, like American Muslim youth organizations, to teach non-Muslims and Muslims about the particular form of democracy, pluralism, and modernity that distinguishes Islam, or at least American Islam. In order to integrate Islam into the American popular conception of religious pluralism and diversity, Muslim youth are using modern means such as networking, blogging, events on college campuses, and open to the public conferences and seminars that cater to non-Muslims across the nation (Wuthnow 26).

In the wake of 9/11, Muslim-based organizations including the United Muslims of America (UMA), the American Muslim Alliance (AMA), the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), began increasingly to support interfaith engagement across the United States. UMA's website has a full interfaith activism section, adapted from "One God We Trust." According to the description, the mission of UMA is to create a family by understanding and respecting various faiths. Our mission is to promote racial and religious harmony through religious institutions, portraying America as a world leader who stands up for human rights for all." Eboo Patel, famous for his interfaith work

around the world, drew a great deal of attention with the creation of the Interfaith Youth Core, which some compared to the Muslim Peace Corps.

In their pursuit of interfaith cooperation, American Muslims have found an affinity with American Jews (Guttman 69). In an effort not to be left behind by the advances in Muslim interfaith engagement post-9/11, ISNA president Mohamed Magid and a delegation of imams from around the world accompanied Congressman Keith Ellison on a trip sponsored by the United States State Department to the Wall of Death in Auschwitz, Germany to offer prayers where many thousands of Jewish prisoners were killed during the Nazi Holocaust (Benari 54).

In the past 20 years since 9/11, Muslim-Christian alliances have grown widely, which, along with improving Muslim-Jewish relations, may lead to the creation of a more accepting environment for American Muslims in U.S. society (Bilici, 74). Mosques in the United States, which may not be affiliated directly with interfaith organizations, have also allowed Americans of other faiths to participate in worship services and holidays. Prayer services and vigils have also been held at times of national mourning by American Muslims in the last 20 years, regardless of whether the attacker was Muslim (Ubaid 53). During Ramadan, the holy Muslim month of fasting, Muslims are given the opportunity to break their fast with their neighbors (Delinda 55).

In the last 20 years, American Muslims have also actively engaged in intra-faith dialogue and engagement, which refers to efforts to improve Sunni-Shia relations by American Muslims. "Islam doesn't require a Muslim to follow a particular Madh'hab (school of thought)," says Shaikh Mahmood Shaltoot, who runs The American Muslim (TAM), a website dedicated to understanding American Islam. Rather, say: "Every Muslim has the right to follow one of the schools of thought that have been

accurately narrated and whose verdicts have been compiled in their books" (122). Musaji's article is an extensive listing of articles and links dedicated to Sunni–Shi'a, or SuShi, reconciliation, mutual understanding, and intra-faith engagement (Hassaballa 67). Since post 9/11 scenario, American Muslim attitudes have also shifted significantly. After the September 11 attacks, American Muslims are acknowledging Sunni-Shia issues are an increasingly serious problem for the whole Muslim community. The American Muslim community either ignored these issues or assumed sectarianism was not a problem before 9/11. American Muslims may be leading the way forward internationally in the area of Sunni-Shi'a intra-faith activism.

The Washington Declaration Uniting Shi'ah and Sunni Scholars of North America was signed by a group of American Muslim scholars and Imams in September 2013 amid intense violence between Sunnis and Shi'a Muslims in Iraq, Pakistan, Lebanon, Syria and many other countries. According to one of the signatories, "this declaration rejects all forms of sectarian violence between schools of thought within Islam… It calls for the respect of religious symbols of all sects of Islam… (and) for dialogue between the schools of thought and calls for imams to carry this message of mutual respect to their communities". ISNA president Mohamed Magid asserted that "ISNA is a platform for the unity of Muslims—whatever brings Muslim together strengthens all of them."

American Muslim activist youth programs have been among some of the most active groups in the pre- and post-9/11 efforts to integrate Islam into the mainstream of American psyches and culture (Bieringer and Bolton 8). Women in the Muslim community wore purple headscarves on Purple Hijab Day to raise awareness about domestic violence. Green Muslims in the District, based in Washington, D.C., have evolved from a simple blog to a website where they coordinate events for green

activists, such as Zero Trash Parties and networking mixers. Campuses across the country have benefited from the nationwide Ramadan Fast-a-Thon. Students who are not Muslim usually participate in Muslim Student Associations' fast day, on which non-Muslims abstain from food and water from sunrise to sunset, and then partake in a special meal (iftar) and prayers following the fast.

Donating the funds they raise to charity is their goal. The day is spent in communication, and many students report being more able to relate to Muslim students at their universities and in America as a result of the event. Other American Muslim youth programs are run by professionals, such as Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) by Patel, and the Muslim Public Service Network (MPSN).

More and more Muslim college students are finding creative ways to reach out to their local communities outside of their campuses. In March 2012, the Muslim Chaplaincy of Georgetown University, one of only 13 such programs in the United States, offered the first "Muslim Alternative Spring Break." A group of 12 Muslim undergraduate students led by their campus Imam built a home with Habitat for Humanity in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Working side-by-side with community members, students spent their entire Spring Break in service. In recent years, Islam or Muslims have had little to no direct exposure in Parkersburg. Following the service, the Georgetown group baked cookies for the congregation in solidarity with the local community. They are working to maintain strong ties and possibly return to Parkersburg the following year after breaking bread with the Muslim students. Newspapers and television stations reported that these students offered their services without preconditions and instead chose to spend their Spring Break in snowy Parkersburg (Houser 96).

They will also contribute to Islamic scholarship and the training of Imams as they define Islam in America. Hamza Yusuf, Zaid Shakir, and Hatem Bezian founded the Zaytuna Institute in Berkeley, California in 1996. An integrated curriculum of Islamic studies, Arabic language, and liberal arts is offered at the college. Its motto is "Where America meets Islam," and it wants to be accredited by the University of California system. It compares itself to private religiously based universities founded by Jews and Christians in the U.S. Historically; the question of the future of Islam in America is tied to our understanding of the history of Muslims in America before and after 9/11.

In this study we have attempted to demonstrate the utter complexity and irreducible polyvocality of this large and diverse population. In regard to the question of whether Islamophobia will ever loosen its grip on the minds of millions of Americans who have lived through 9/11 and have witnessed 20 years of sporadic attacks on American soil and cannot help but associate Islam and Muslims with terrorism and violence, there are no easy answers. The identity of the Muslim community in the United States has undergone changes as well as the notion of what constitutes Islamic values and practices in America.

Through art, media, film, writing, scholarship, partnerships, and institution-building, American Muslims are moving away from the familiar grievance narratives about Islamophobia and responding to fear, ignorance, hate, and even violence in a positive, meaningful, and culturally substantive way. There is no doubt that future research should be conducted on the everyday lives of Muslim Americans struggling to reconcile their identities. The review of the status of Muslims and Islam in the United States over the last 20 years reveals some of the multilateral and quixotic ways people and communities are reclaiming their identities in relation to changing views of

religion and Islam. No one major trend has emerged to document the multifaceted nature of "an American Muslim community" per se. Instead, a greater appreciation of liberal- and less- or even anti-liberal leanings and trends in a vast plurality of American Muslim communities is evident.

In other words, these individuals and groups are neither shaped by 9/11 nor influenced by Islamophobia. In their worldview, terrorism does not figure prominently. American Muslim identities and emerging forms of American Islam have never been constrained by terrorism narratives, and they continue to defy and subvert preconceptions about Islam and Muslim identity today.

The American Muslim community makes decisions on a regular basis that challenge prototypical idealizations and stereotypes of Islam. They choose whether to reform, or not to reform, and they are increasingly engaged in American society and aware of their choices. Those who follow different paths of practice, spirituality, and epistemology also operate on informed rationalities. There is a common struggle and hope for acceptance and integration into American culture, religion, politics, and society which these tides in American Islam share.

Non-Muslim Americans must now decide how they want to perceive, categorize, interact with, interpret, and engage with both American Muslims and American Islam as well as Muslims and Islam in America. These are not always the same, particularly among immigrant Muslim communities. Although the United States is a relatively young country, it has already experienced major societal changes to accommodate people who were previously marginalized, demonized, or otherwise subjugated and discriminated. Is it possible that the next sea change in American society will be to end the othering of Muslims and Islam? Do the nearly 50% of Americans who believe

Muslims pose a threat to national security re-examine their assumptions about nationalism, patriotism, American exceptionalism, and Islam or 'Islamism' to create a safe space for American Muslims?

Muslim Americans used to boast about their Islamic exceptionalism and isolate themselves from American culture. Pew Research Center surveyed American Muslims in 2007 and found that 47% of respondents placed their primary loyalty to Islam over nation and citizenship. Islam provided a special dispensation for its adherents, allowing them to live outside society while simultaneously living within it. Before 9/11, Muslims in America seemed content to live on the fringes of society. The American Muslim community is engaging and striving to enter the mainstream of American society today, many years after 9/11.

American Muslims and the U.S. government have both worked toward integrating American Muslims into American society since 9/11 under the Bush, Obama, Trump and now under the administration of president Baiden. Yet, persistent fear, widespread misconceptions, and a lack of cultural literacy about Islam and Muslims led many conservatives and undoubtedly, opportunists in the United States to become anti-Muslim. There is a long way to go before American Muslims have a place in American society that is either safe or less contested. However, through their ongoing and ever-more diverse efforts, it is becoming increasingly and likely that Islam will become widely accepted as a religion in the United States.

The narrative of Islam as part of American religions is becoming more defined and recognizable. Obama continued the tradition of annual White House Ramadan dinners started by his predecessor, George W. Bush, by attending the 2011 White House Ramadan breaking fast dinner.

Obama pointed out that "Islam has always been part of America," and that "America and Islam don't have to be in competition." The two share common principles of justice, progress, tolerance, and human dignity (Wilkie 39). President Obama's acknowledgment of American Muslims may support their efforts to gain broad, cultural acceptance of Islam in the United States, but for many individuals involved in Islamic literacy work, speeches are not enough.

Islam places a high value on education, yet many teachers and school staff misunderstand Muslim students as having a lower regard for education. In spite of their academic achievement, Muslim students often report being discouraged from applying to collegiate-level classes due to this misunderstanding (Bonet, 50). It is especially troubling for young Muslim women, who have reported feeling that their teachers don't challenge them as much as other students do.

Additionally, they claim that their advisers do not provide them with information regarding post-secondary education, because they believe Islam discourages women from pursuing careers and higher education. Despite having a superb academic record, Bonet's interviewee expressed frustration because, despite her academic success, her counselor discouraged her from taking math and science courses and she couldn't graduate from high school in three years instead of four. He encouraged her to pursue general, nonacademic tracks instead (Bonet, 50). Muslim students have reported ESL (English as Second Language) placements despite their mastery and knowledge of English. Aside from being a form of discrimination, ESL classroom time also interferes with other courses, such as math and science, potentially affecting their success in the future. Despite being born in North America, a Pakistani boy was placed in the ESL program. When the boy's mother confronted his teacher, he was told that his failure to keep up in class was the reason for the decision (Bonet, 50).

While attention and awareness are important in classroom settings, an ESL class is by no means a viable alternative. In addition to the way Muslim students interact with their peers, the attacks have affected Muslim American parents' involvement in schools as well. Reza examines "The Effects of the September 11 Terrorist Attacks on Pakistani-American Parental Involvement in U.S Schools" in her book. According to her, the primary cause of the problem lies with the relationship between parent and teacher, as both feel distrust and hostility toward each other.

It is common for Pakistani parents to feel stereotyped by their children's educators because of their cultural background and religious beliefs. Thus, many choose to remain silent in order to spare themselves and their families unnecessary embarrassment (Reza, 39). Minority parents may be less involved in their children's education than other parents, for fear that their opinions won't be valued. In addition to language barriers, some parents and educators have difficulty working together (Reza, 38). Islamophobia has also affected educational curriculum, with Muslim parents complaining that teachers minimize the accomplishments of their children. As an example, many Pakistani parents complain that educators discriminate against the nationality because Laden was a Pakistani. According to Reza, educators do this subconsciously to send a message to students regarding what accomplishments are valued and whose accomplishments can be disregarded (Reza 39).

Arab American youth are discriminated against by not just their peers, educators, and school staff, but also by government agencies. After the September 11th attacks, the USA Patriot Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) became law for the purpose of enhancing national security by expanding the "powers of federal agencies to conduct searches,

use electronic surveillance to intercept communication both nationally and internationally, and detain suspected terrorists" (Bonet, 47).

Many people have considered this political policy to be an infringement on civil liberties; however, at the time, many citizens saw the act as a compromise in the interest of national safety. In 2004 Bonet found that the abrogation of individual freedoms for national security was approved by only 49% of Americans (Bonet, 48). In "Educating Muslim American Youth in a Post 9/11 Era: A Critical Review of Policy and Practice," Sally Wesley Bonet explores how the USA Patriot Act affects both young and old Middle Eastern Americans. These groups were disproportionately targeted by the act, particularly when thousands of Middle Eastern Americans and Muslims were held for months in solitary confinement against their will, under the protection of the act. A measure of security has been used to encroach on the privacy of these minorities under the act (Bonet, 48). The violation of privacy affects both adults and youth. As a result of the law, the federal government also obtains the private records of Arab, Arab American and Muslim students as a way to allegedly maintain national security, says Bonet.

As a result of this research, it can be found a significant shift from an American-based identity politics based on disassociating from American cultural trappings to a more tolerant and assimilationist approach. It is not to say that Muslims have abandoned their customs to conform to an Anglo-American fantasy, but rather that many has redoubled efforts to retell the story of Islam in America, sometimes claiming it has a 12th-century origin. The Muslim community in the United States has also been writing about Islam as an authentically American religion in the last 20 years; since 9/11 there have been a number of publications both online and in print advocating the notion that Islam is an American religion and that Muslims are just as American as

Jews and Christians. Since 9/11, American Muslims have taken part in various projects and movements. All together, these endeavors illustrate a certain set of social shifts taking place within Muslim communities in the U.S. Those changes reflect an increasingly deeply rooted immigrant population, along with the effects of 9/11 on America's most diverse and vulnerable religious community, as it tries to integrate different forms of American Islam into mainstream American society.

5.4. Future Scope: We cannot eliminate religion from our life. The modern world must comprehend it. When religion is practiced freely, as opposed to being marginalized or moderated, it contributes to world peace and harmony. Additionally, eliminating stereotypes would support highlighting a positive image of Islam. Because most presumptions result from ignorance, the study suggests a complete discursive understanding of Islam as a code of conduct.To lessen this tension, discussions by Islamic scholars may likely change how Islam is perceived as a "iceberg" (Sayyid 1997, p.157). Muslim authors can publish academic works to counteract anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic literary projection. In fact, during the past two / three decades, Muslim scholars have made an effort to educate western audiences about Islam's actual intellectual legacy in an effort to dispel the haze that has clouded their perception for so long. To comprehend the growing anxieties in the West and in the United States in the modern era, a comparative study of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia may also be done in the subject of literature. It is possible to undertake research to distinguish between 'Muslimophobia' and 'Islamophobia' as well. The future of multiculturalism in a global village is another field that can also be explored. Another thing to keep in mind is that there will always be scope for more analysis. Moreover keeping in mind the present scenario of the USA while encountering the Muslim World the fictions seem to represent the challenging phase

and phenomena in its best possible flavour. However, there may be some aspects that

remain untouched which shall be taken up for further research.

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