UNFOLDING ISLAMOPHOBIC RACISM IN AMERICAN FICTION

HUMAIRA RIAZ

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Dedicated to
The patience of
Moeez, Sameer, and Fawad

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Preface

My aim is to understand the history of racism functioning in all the major facets of American life and its overt manifestation into Islamophobia in the twenty-first century. I focus on how racism is reworked in its full swing in the contemporary global discourse targeting Islam. Therefore, the relationship that I see operative in chapter 1 sustains through the last chapter more aggressively. Islamophobia is defined by the *Runnymede Trust Report* (1997) as "anti-Muslim racism" and is closely linked to the history of racism in America. I endeavor to redefine it as Islamophobic racism. Minus the ideology, Muslims are acceptable.

This book charts the historical development of racism to Islamophobia. The latter concept is a transitory foundation, which I use as my standpoint for the texts asserted in the narrative form. Readers may find it perplexing or irritating; however, the conclusion chapter clarifies the challenge.

The introduction looks at the sociohistorical development of racism briefly for readers' orientation to establish its link to the religion of Islam. It demonstrates how George Fredrickson's notion of "racism as scavenger ideology" positions Islam as the "other" to America (2003). It also looks at Jacque Derrida's philosophy of deconstruction (1967), emphasizing the role of the texts in shaping worldwide perspectives.

The first, second, and third chapters present a cluster of literary texts in the form of sections on how Islamophobia as an accepted form of racism appears within the course of theses narratives. Lorraine Adams, John Updike, and Don DeLillo join the list in presenting political propositions connected directly to Muslim immigrants. The third chapter explores how racism cloaked into the modern fabric of Islamophobia carries a political agenda and functions to sabotage the peaceful image of Islam. These chapters are not to be read independently. They are knitted together and may be described as the sociohistorical development of racism and literary representation of the dominant, i.e., America.

This book may appear to discuss the similar standpoint taken by Edward Said, Jahn Mohammed, Bravo Lopez, Nasar Meer, and Tariq Modood, however, I concentrate more on American literary portrayals as I attempt to probe why Muslims following Islamic ideology are excluded as "other." The Islam that we follow has some relationship with the conventional notions of racism in the form of economic, social, and cultural dominance. What I can make by deconstructing the texts remains my strength.

Introduction

Sociohistorical Development of Racism

Racism and Islamophobia are interconnected phenomena in the contemporary world discourse. In order to understand the contemporary Western—particularly American—attitude toward Islam, this book begins by acquainting the reader with the historical and social development of racism in the particular context of religion in American history. It focuses on the development of religious antagonism followed by irrational fear in the wake of specific events during the course of history such as the World Trade Center attacks, Paris terrorist attacks, and the 2015 mass shooting in San Bernardino, California.

Following the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States in November 2016, a number of proclamations with a religious slant appeared in the media:

- "The Lord did this."
- "Donald Trump: President by the Sovereign Intervention of God."
- "The people—and God—have spoken"; "believers voting for biblical principles in the voting booth."
- "The Trump victory was not really the work of man, because man chose Clinton"; "Trump's victory . . . less the work of man, and more of an act of God."

The US elections in 2016 were followed by reports of assaults on Muslims that made the contemporary ambiance in America a continuation of a broad gamut of Islamophobia. Mr. Trump's public statement—made in the wake of terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, after a mass shooting in California, and following an attack on an Orlando nightclub on June 26, 2016—to bar Muslims from entering America until he worked out "what the hell was going on" have been consistently defended by the Republicans as being made in the interest of Americans' "safety." Directed against all Muslims, the statement suggested overt resentment exclusively for their religious ideology that was reminiscent of the historical records of racism targeting Muslims in the name

of faith. Growing tension against Muslims and Islam in the West is not a new phenomenon.

The independent research and social policy agency Runnymede Trust set up the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia in 1996. It conducted an investigation by beginning with a description of the nature of anti-Muslim discrimination and illustrated a key distinction between "closed views" of Islam on one hand and "open views" on the other. Findings of the *Runnymede Trust Report* (1997) recognized the tension between Muslims and the West as Islamophobia. The *Runnymede Trust Report* (1997) strengthened the concept of Islamophobia far more in public and political spheres. Islamophobia was equated frequently with closed views portraying Islam as a monolithic religion and its followers as radical and extremists. Overall, twofold intentions were countered in the report:

1. To counter Islamophobic assumptions about Islam as a single monolithic system, without internal development, diversity, and dialogue.
2. To draw attention to the principal dangers created or exacerbated by Islamophobia for Muslim communities.

Recent reports such as PEW have shown Islamophobia becoming merely a "recurring" phenomenon "of closed views" that considers Islam as a monolithic and static religion (Pew Research Center Estimate, Pewresearch.org). Such assumptions associate Islam with terror and have given it the status of "other"—an enemy and manipulative religion that is opposed to the West. The tragic event of the 9/11 terrorist attacks strengthened these misconceptions more about Islam in the West, particularly in America. Scholars have recognized it as a new form of racism intricately wrapped in the discourse of religion (Abbas, 2019; Lauwers, 2019).

"Race" and "racism" exist in the fields of sociology and anthropology as dominant concepts. However, the contemporary world recognizes racism with religious implications toward Muslims by the name of Islamophobia. The suffix *ism* in the word *racism* denotes "notion," which pertains to a distinctive philosophy or practice generally visible in social and political ideologies. The term pertains to a generally agreed upon definition of hatred and prejudice based on the concept of belonging to a different race. Different terminologies are used by scholars due to its changing nature according to global circumstances. It is defined as "new racism" (Barker, 1981), a "plague" that contaminated human society (Garcia, 1986), and "cultural racism" (Modood, 1997). Discussed in close connection to xenophobia, racism finds a context in "religious intolerance" as well (Lopez, 2011). However, it is a constituent of hatred, discrimination, and bias positioned in the privileged

category in opposition to the socially and culturally deprived class. Racism reworks the Oriental concepts by viewing its opponents as "other."

Islamophobia, on the other hand, is defined mostly by critics as irrational fear and apprehension of Islam. *Islam* suffixed with *phobia* went through a linguistic change. As a result, the coinage gave new meaning to the notion of racism. Opposing Islam and Muslims, the selected writers amplify their preconceived notions merely to take revenge upon Islam and Muslims.

Islam has been frequently associated with fear. Fear is defined by world dictionaries as an unpleasant feeling of anxiety basically "caused by the awareness of danger or expectation of pain." Psychology tells us that when we are afraid of something, we act cautiously out of fear, but we equally want to harm or destroy the object of fear in order to restrain it from becoming dominant. We certainly try to crush it in certain circumstances. We may sometimes want to know it too well. One such fear is Islamophobia—a new form of racism in the emerging anti-religion contemporary global discourse. Used in print for the first time in 1991, it was properly defined in the *Runnymede Trust Report* as "unfolded hostility towards Muslims, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims" (1997). It is further described by scholars as "a shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam" (*Runnymede Trust Report*, 1997). Also defined as "a form of racism as well as unfounded fear of Islam" (Marranci, 2004, p. 105), scholars have described Islamophobia to the extent of being "endemic in the European psyche" (Zaki, 2011, p. 4). It is regarded as "a contrived fear or prejudice fomented by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structure" (ICLA, 2017). The ICLA defined it as follows:

> Islamophobia is a certain perception of Muslims, which may be expressed as hatred toward Muslims. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of Islamophobia are directed toward Muslim or non-Muslim individuals and/or their property, toward Muslim community institutions and religious facilities.

It is also defined as:

> A contemporary form of racism and xenophobia motivated by unfounded fear, mistrust, and hatred of Muslims and Islam. Islamophobia is also manifested through intolerance, discrimination, unequal treatment, prejudice, stereotyping, hostility, and adverse public discourse. Differentiating from classical racism and xenophobia, Islamophobia is mainly based on stigmatization of a religion and its followers, and as such, Islamophobia is an affront to the human rights and dignity of Muslims. [OIC, 2011]

The Center for Race and Gender described Islamophobia as:

> Islamophobia . . . is directed at a perceived or real Muslim threat through the maintenance and extension of existing disparities in economic, political, social and cultural relations, while rationalizing the necessity to deploy violence as a tool to achieve "civilizational rehab" of the target communities (Muslim or otherwise).

The dawn of capitalism "in the context of African slave trade in the 1500s and 1600s" further paved the ways for race and racism as dominant ideologies of American society. In addition, "the European extermination of indigenous people in America and colonialism" are ranked as dominant reasons for the rise of racism (Lance, 2002; Loewen, 1995). Discriminatory law practices relegated Africans to "the status of slaves" (Higgenbotham, 1980). Similitude of "black" with "slave" created the concept of "whiteness." Legalization of killing of slaves and prohibition of interracial marriages under law strengthened the racial differences in seventeenth-century America (Montagu, 1997). Virginia decree in 1667 declared captivity for slavery necessary because of their "heathen ancestry," thereby "changing justification for black servitude . . . from religious status to something approaching race," which is featured in the discussion about the shift in perspectives of racism in chapter 2 of this book.

Scientific race theory emphasized an indispensable unity of the human race. Darwin's *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* set the scene for the nineteenth century claiming certain extermination of the civilized race replaced with the "ravage" races throughout the world (1871). Even supporters of slavery claimed that "races constituted separate species." Nineteenth-century reforms to abolish racism intensified the situation leading to Darwin's conducive and credible scientific racism in the form of struggle for existence and "the survival of the fittest" (Fredrickson, 2002).

The contribution of "emancipation" and nationalism in the nineteenth century further developed and intensified the concept of racism in Europe and United States in particular. Following the American Civil War (1861–65), abolitionists freed millions slaves but could not abolish racism. Elevated in the beginning of sixteenth century, the legacy of racism continued in contemporary America in a subtler form.

Nationalism, particularly in Germany, encouraged "a culture-coded variant of racist thought" called "anti-Semitism," presenting Jews as antithetical to Germans; dissimilar not only in religious and cultural practices but an entirely different race. The racist ideology of Nazi Germany to its extreme further discredited the "scientific racism" (the legacy of Dr. Morton to develop science of race considering Caucasians as the most intelligent of all races) influential in the United States before World War II (Kolbert, 2018, *National Geographic*). An overt form of racism faced strong condemnation,

particularly by the new countries formed as result of decolonization. The downfall of Nazi Germany (1945) and the reunion of the American South (1960) shoved biological racism and its cultural essential equivalent into the background. The overthrow of Nazi Germany, the integration of the American South in the 1960s, and South African minority rule suggested that racism knew no "biological inequality" or overwhelming support from law and the state anymore.

Floods of immigrants around the world seeking an affluent future announced America "as a melting pot" in the nineteenth century. Muslim migration changed America's population throughout nineteenth century. "Prejudice against Catholics, Blacks, and Asians has been both widespread and violent in the history of this country" (Tobin et al., 2003, p. 7). Promulgation of Islamic philosophies by newly founded social movements in America popularized Islam as a prominent religion in America. The situation foreshadowed capitalism and generated border problems. Expansion of the US economy in the name of capitalism gave birth to "imperialist" racism victimizing Blacks and at a larger scale Asians and Middle Easterners (Lance, 2002). Social and economic differences changed the structures of the society. It forced Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants to opt for a life of "assimilation" apprehended as "a greater threat to Western civilization" (Prashad, 2006). The situation initiated open hostility of the West "to the immigrants at this time" (Winant, 2000). Afterward, racism was defined as a significant sociological theme with "changing radiological perspectives" (Winant, 2000).

Depicted as "a multifaceted and fluid pattern of social relation," racism runs through the social structure of societies in a variety of forms. Working at the macro level of society, racism represents historical evolution sustained within the fields of philosophy and culture. Much more is on record about racism than merely rage and discrimination against people of different genes and skin. Discussions go far beyond the boundaries of science. Scientific consensus rejects the notion of race existing as "a biological category," giving strong standing to the concept of racism as a phenomenon socially and culturally constructed (Lee et al., 2008; Biondi and Rickards, 2002). It can be identified as "a phenomenon as it appears to and is constructed by mind" (Kant, 1781). At root, racism is "an ideology of racial domination" used for discrimination (Wilson, 2005). History portrays a "cyclic" perspective of racism widely fluctuating and conferring to the variations in global, economic, and political situation. Unfortunately, in lieu of giving up the practice of racism, it traveled in a circular motion in the form of hide-and-seek. Going astray from scientific standpoint, we see the world through a lens that colors it white, black, Asian, and Hispanic. This is not to say it is a survey of all occurrences of racism in the existing body of literature. However, broadly speaking, it is related to its future in literature, most particularly American

literature that replaced "the blatant old-fashioned" racism with a subtler and "aversive" form (Garner, 2004).

Racism has affected the entire social construction. As a social construct, it has to be understood for its capacity to intersect and affect other facets of life and society. Investigating the world of literature, techniques are sought to dismantle racism functioning in various domains of life. Racism "shapes" the way we see ourselves and others. Researchers Takaki (1993), Frankenberg (1993), Taylor (2006), and Bonilla-Silva (2006) talked about race as a social construction and "markers" of social racism evolved analogous to this notion of race defining supremacy belonging to the socially dominant group. It leads to the thought that social "positioning" determines identity.

A significant view of racism is attained in dominant societies in the citizenship disavowal for not being White regardless of being Caucasian or vice versa. That provides answer to DuBois's question of an individual's powers by virtue of being White (1920). During he nineteenth and twenieth centuries, legal rulings recognized Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, Filipinos, Koreans, Native Americans, and mixed-race individuals as "not White." A Texas federal court ruled Mexicans legally "White" in 1897, which was questioned as an imminent example of racial discrimination.

As discussed earlier, history experienced the most paradigmatic form of overt racism against Africans in Europe. An entire group of Africans was denied access to any rights of civility thereby generating philosophies of myth of universality (Achebe, 1973), and later opposition was directed at the Middle East that resulted in the founding of "Orientalism" (Said, 1979). European history reflects racism throughout. It shows that people were sorted into "racial categories" for one reason or another to recognize the White supremacy (Forrest, 1968; Winant et al., 1986). Wilson calls racism "an ideology of racial discrimination" that justifies the superiority of a socially dominant group over the socially suppressed (inferior) group (1999, p. 14). It is also defined as "much more race-based than [merely] race-based prejudice" (Wilson, 2005). It is categorized "as [a] set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices used to justify the belief that one racial category is somehow superior or inferior to others" (Open Education Sociological Dictionary & Open Stax College, 2012).

Thus, racism took new turns with the advent of each century. It was directly woven into "the fabric of capitalism" during twentieth century (Lance, 2002). The catastrophe of 9/11 in America at a larger scale victimized Asian and Middle Eastern countries as well as Muslim immigrants in America that changed the entire definition of racism. It was associated on a larger scale with one ethnic group: Muslims.

MUSLIM MIGRATION AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF RACISM IN AMERICA

History covers Muslim migration, which changed America's population throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first wave of Muslim migration is recorded in 1924, "when the Asian Exclusion Act and the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act allowed only a trickle of 'Asians,' as Arabs were designated, to enter the nation" (Tweed, 2017). American society in the early twentieth century was greatly influenced by the establishment of the "Black Nationalist Islamic Community" in 1913. One of the movement's factions was Dr. Fard's foundation of the Nation of Islam the same year (Tweed, 2017). "Fard's unexplained disappearance in 1934" and endorsement by Elijah Muhammad led to the conversion of underprivileged "disenchanted" African Americans in Islamic faith. Elijah Muhammad's death was followed by a split in the movement that ended in the formation of another group, the American Muslim Mission. These Islamic foundations are to a larger extent familiar to most Americans. The creation of Israel in 1948 brought Palestinian refugees to America. The "McCarran-Walter Act 1952 relaxed the quota system established in 1924," which permitted more Muslim immigration (Tweed, 2017). "Muslim migrants" escaped "oppressive regimes in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria; and South Asian Muslims, as from Pakistan, sought economic opportunity. By the 1990s, Muslims had established more than six hundred mosques and centers across the United States" (Tweed, 2017).

This background reveals Muslim presence in America. Parallel to this situation, stereotypes of Arabs as "terrorists" had been a concurrent phenomenon since the Middle East tension of 1970 through 1980, long before the 9/11 disaster. However, American attitudes grew much more hostile and intolerant toward Muslims after 9/11. Contemporary political, economic, social, and religious discourses investigate reasons of hostility that caused many relative terms to racism in the field of sociology. Although "xenophobia evolved as a reflexive fear of stranger is one of the kinds" (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 6), nevertheless contemporary society is much more familiarized with Islamophobia; yet another relevant term to racism founded on religious differences. Critics have argued that Islamophobia is racism (Sayyid, 2011; Musharbash, 2014). Yet there exists a wide gap to investigate the relationship of racism and Islamophobia in the research field. Critics have also regarded it merely a response to an earlier religious intolerance. These two stances are incommensurable, and my study hopes to evolve and establish a link between the two phenomena instead of resolving the previous argument. Although researchers have attempted to establish relationship between racism and Islamophobia in electronic media, none has explicitly connected both

illustrated in literary themes, character portrayals, and settings of fiction. This study will strengthten the position of fiction writing in research.

Assimilation of racism into Islamophobia accounts for the relationship of both concepts within the contemporary situation generated by devastating events. To establish a relationship between both through enquiry of the nature of the argument is inevitable. Basically, Islamophobia stemmed from the ignorance about Islam as a religion. Islam preaches tolerance (Quran: 2, 28, 8). The very word is a derivative meaning "peace" in the Arabic language. Unfortunately, extremist incidents have portrayed it as a religion "incompatible" with human rights (Langman et al., 2003; Natana, 2004; Gilles, 2002; Huntington, 1996).

American scholar Samuel Huntington discussed not ideology, politics, or economy but culture as "the most important distinction among people" (1996). He may be right in categorizing "culture" as the harbinger of global change. However, the contemporary world is on the verge of making world order on the basis of ideologies. Religion is at the forefront. At its core is an amalgam of culture, politics, and economics. Among all religions and civilizations, Huntington holds a picture of Islam as embodiment of "the acceptance of modernity, rejection of Western culture, and the recommitment to Islam as the guide to life in the modern world" (1996, p. 110). He emphasizes religion as a primary factor distinguishing "Muslim politics and society from other countries." Huntington understands Islam as a "monolithic" religion. He gives a brief yet biased historical explanation of "the conflictual nature of Islam and Christianity" (1996, p. 110). By quoting historian Bernard Lewis, Huntington anticipates "a clash between Islam and the Judeo-Christian West" (1996).

However, such assumptions that equated 1.8 billion Muslims on earth with a race based on religion, and feeling fear of them, turned the situation quite morbid (World Muslim Population). Being skeptical of an ideology is fine, but to coagulate it as the foundation of hatred and fear is unfounded. Much has been on record to show the historical controversy of Islam and other religions. The core objection has constantly been fear of Islam as a monolithic religion. Political, social, and economic agendas work to provoke these doubts. These doubts have strengthened the recurring issues of racism and Islamophobia, and the phenomena have been discussed much in isolation in various fields such as sociology, criminology, media, and politics, but no profound study has worked out their correlation in literature. Moreover, their uncertain definitions have created a chaos and apprehension in the literary spheres. The present book focuses to seek answers to these reservations.

The history of America also reflects exploitation of religion as a cudgel to dominate the "unbelievers." It had sustained a controversy between Catholics and Protestants viewing newly independent America, which allowed only

Christians to hold any public office. In 1777 Catholics were barred from holding any position in government office. It wasn't until 1806 that they enjoyed complete civil rights. However, Jews were banned from participating freely in the public sphere despite the fact that the American constitution stipulated the legal equality of citizens belonging to any religion and declared religion of every individual a matter of personal conviction, defining it as their "inalienable right."

In 1790 George Washington wrote, "for happily the government of the United States, which gives bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens." The US government and constitution still claim America to be asylum for the persecuted, but "religious discord" remains a part of its social order. The dissension was amplified after the 9/11 attacks (Kenneth, Oct. 2010). Unspoken bigotry suddenly exploded in the form of overt hatred declaring Muslims enemies at all forums. Literature also proved a viable tool to contribute to the social propaganda against Islam as a conservative and unsociable religion.

CONCEPTUAL TERRAIN

This book attempts to consider the presence of racism and Islamophobia as interconnected phenomena in literary spheres. To ascertain their causal relationship, the study considers the 9/11 disaster as an indispensable factor that prompts both attitudes. It encounters the operation of both in all facets of human life. Western think tanks reinforce the need to change identities (Fredrickson, 2002). The "stigmatized" groups are proposed to change their identities and advance to positions of prominence to make racism "dysfunctional" (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 7). The Islam religion is not a historical construct. "Neither adaptable to changing circumstance nor antithetical to racism," it is regarded as metrical and framed in indispensable form when it becomes the functional equivalent of race (Fredrickson, 2002).

This book reworks racism as a diverse concept and its conception into Islamophobia. Though not characterized as racism, it is still related to racism constructing a new formulation of Islamophobia, i.e., "Islamophobic racism." Racism and Islamophobia basically are ideologies generated out of biased and unjust attitudes of the West predominantly toward the Muslim world mainly to assert their primeval authority. Critics such as White (1952) and King (1991) believed that people in a privileged position made themselves "comfortable in the social hierarchy." They defined the tendency of thoughts as "dysconscious" racism. However, contemporary devastating events changed the expression of racism into overt hatred of Muslims and Islam. The

"dysconscious" racism arose from an uncritical habit of mind directed toward one particular religion and its followers. "Prejudice is a great time saver. You can form opinions without having to get the facts" (White, 1952).

No doubt, American writers such as Harper Lee, Mark Twain, and Harriet Beecher Stowe raised their voices against slavery in America after the Civil War (1861). However, American claims of holding all people united irrespective of nationality and religion turned shallow with the passing years. Racism sustained as the undercurrent of American politics and societal dimensions were changed. Eminent African diaspora writer C.L.R. James called the oppressive situation of African Americans the "number one problem of racism." The variant in James's definition of racism replaced African Americans with Muslims.

A series of interlinked themes—discrimination, migration, conception of Muslims as "other," religious intolerance—became predominant in contemporary international scenarios demonstrating the ways in which racism and Islamophobia interact within the global discourse, forming anti-Islam and anti-Muslim ideology.

A noticeable gap in the contemporary discourse is the failure to examine the question of Islamophobia in relation to racism in a substantive manner. A growing body of investigative research has begun exploring the relationship of both to fill the gap. Anthropology and sociology inform the present study approach to the relevance and presence of racism and Islamophobia in American fiction. The entwined concepts spell a new life and ideology constructed in American literary texts that the present book envisages as a new form of racism embedded in religious fear.

In sketching the conceptual terrain of this book, various fields of racism and Islamophobia are discussed. Examining their relationship, the study uses a framework informed by Fredrickson's notion of "racism as scavenger ideology" to expose racism as an ideology that picks ideas and beliefs from another ideology to suit its purpose (2002). For the present work, the concept suggests that the West, including the United States, scavenged to utilize religion in order to justify their racism. They have assumed Islam as a monolithic system incompatible to modernity that has created threat to Muslim communities in the West, particularly in America. The Runnymede Trust Report (1997) countered these assumptions, and I have also manifested these in my conceptual frame for analyzing the texts. This study is not Fredricktian, yet its apprehensions are haunted by a responsiveness informed by Fredrickson (2002). When literary fiction writers scavenge these assumptions as subject matters of their writings, they formulate new ideas and beliefs, which can be unraveled by the deconstruction and interpretation of the texts. Hence, the present book utilizes Jacque Derrida's deconstruction theory that asserts the perpetual attribute of any text. Normally, a text outlives its writer and

develops into the cultural habits, worth a writer's intention (Derrida, 1967). The ideology reflected in text remains living and shapes the general belief of the masses. Derrida's theory posits a broader understanding of the text. I also want to suggest that reality is reconstructed through language.

Reinforcement of racism as a "sociopolitical" construction (Helms, 1995) and not "biologically inherent" strengthens the argument taken in this book. The study explores how religion is undermined by the notion of racism in contemporary American society. It has shifted its meaning away from antagonism toward a race; instead, it is directed to the followers of a religion and religion itself.

The growing recognition of the need for greater theoretical clarity and conceptual analysis of racism and Islamophobia prompts enquiry of their relationship. As Islamophobia is comparatively a rear subject discussed in literary terrain, primarily "a racial expression," it finds its roots in the sweeping generalizations that segregate Muslims as a race and equate them with terrorists. Therefore, the present book discusses the suffixes *phobia* and *ism* within the parameters of psychology to bring forward the irrationality associated with them. Evolutionary explanations are given to various types of phobias. Phobia in general social discourse is referred to as "an irrational fear." Psychologists agree that fear misleads people. Fear may be caused due to the dreadfulness of some agonizing incidents, historical events, and the unknown. According to the psychologists, fear is expressed at various levels—triggered by "the anticipation of being harmed in the future." At its highest level, fear compels people to make absurd choices. This book considers "terror" and "horror" synonymous to fear when people apprehend the impending danger by sensing the background of "painful events." Phobia in psychological conditions may not cause physical disturbance such as fast breathing or a racing heart. It is termed "irrational" because psychologists have defined it as a "maladaptive response" (Watts, 2014). Its "escalation" to a level of irrationality is due to genetic as well as environmental elements, however, a "specific phobia gene" has not been identified. For its environmental constituent, phobia is developed in the wake of some frightful event witnessed or suffered personally. The painful incident contributes to the intensification of phobia. Excessive and irrational fear, however, persist as the embodiment of phobia. Nevertheless, fear must cause damage at some level to be defined as phobia. A common perception of phobia is its definition as "a type of mental illness affected strongly by the environment." The suffix *phobia* attached to *Islam* in the American sociocultural context must lead to an inquiry of the causes of fear or phobia of religion, hence constructing a misconception of Islam.

Racism is not merely an ideology or concept. Its vigor as "scavenger" can turn ideological convictions into a social reality (Fredrickson, 2002). The racial formation of "Black and White" that Omi and Winant highlighted may

effectively replace the "Black" with "Islam." "White," however, is still work-ing as a binary opposition in the contemporary sense of the term. The suffix *ism* on the other hand defines a specific ideology. This book has worked through the discussion of racial formation of Muslim as a separate category by understanding the whole process that constructs Muslims "through Islamophobia" (Tyrer, 2013).

The present book unconventionally takes American literary texts as samples for a relevance of contemporary misconceptions about Muslims as a race and their religion. These texts are loaded with stereotypical presenta-tions of Islam and its followers. Elements of fiction such as setting, theme, plot, characters, and point of view allow readers to imagine living through the constructed events. A wide array of dimensions of racism and Islamophobia including their texture and control on everyday life become an "unfolding story" explored through qualitative research (Holliday, 2007). Texts like "a complex train of thoughts" (Holliday, 2007) are unfolded layer by layer to convey meaning in the reading (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005). Moreover, a qualitative research method is compatible with this study as both require a dominant voice of researcher in the entire process.

CHOICE OF WRITERS:
LORRAINE ADAMS, JOHN UPDIKE,
AND DON DELILLO

The present study discusses three American writers. Lorraine Adams, an American journalist and novelist, claims to cover international terrorism (2010). She interviewed Algerian refugees before writing her novel *Harbor*. She claims that she found many conventional formulaic ideas (2010) about extremism. Adams claims she writes "sentence to sentence" (2010). She does not move to the next thought unless she is convinced and surprised. That purportedly makes her meticulous and observant. She is a Pulitzer Prize win-ner for investigative reporting. The *Washington Post* assigned her a project: an anatomy of a terrorism investigation. She was inspired to write the story of a young Algerian that the *Post* declined to publish. The story is based on her reporting for the *Washington Post* surrounding the arrest of Abdelghani Meskini and the terrorism plot he was involved in.

John Updike (1932–2009), often labeled a "tongue-in-cheek writer," is popular for his prolific craftsmanship and denotes high productivity and reflection in his works. His most famous series, the Rabbit series (1960, 1971, and 1981), explores the subject of "the American Protestant small-town middle class." His themes revolve around the conflicts in the lives of adults, mostly loveless and shallow, attempting to escape the constraint of life. His

Rabbit series questions the background of the major events of the twentieth century. Updike claimed that "ambiguity restlessly ruled in the middles" (2010). The deliberation may have led him to choose the middle class as his target audience. Talking freely about sex and religion in his novels, he rarely offered any criticism of Christianity. It is only when he encountered Islam in his work *Terrorist* that we find Updike demonstrate the racist attitude of the West toward Islam and its followers. Updike's novels depict concern, passion, and suffrage of Americans. He is often quoted as "a wry intelligent authorial voice" by the masses (*New York Times*, *Observer*). In his own words, he intends "to give mundane its beautiful due" (2004). Hence, selecting Updike's *Terrorist* for critical analysis helps finding the objectives set for the current research.

Don DeLillo (b. 1936) is another prominent name in American literature. His themes cover diverse subjects such as television, the cold war, nuclear war, economics, and global terrorism. His fiction is concerned with living in "dangerous times" (2005). He proposes power, corporations, and the system as subjects for writers. For him one reacts to events by means of literature unraveling an individual's feelings of loss, fear, happiness, and conflict with dialogue and describes a different reality. In an interview DeLillo explained "the power of terror, changing over lives" (2007). His assertion implies the power of writing in creating new identities and ideologies. DeLillo has been labeled a man of frightening perception (Oates, 2017).

Fiction writers portray life around their societies in a particular context where various aspects arise, forming ideologies. They conceive the idea first and deduce life experience from it to be operationalized in fictional worlds. Mysteries and philosophies of life implied in fiction are unfolded in themes, characters, and events. Writers have the potential to change general mindset. Therefore, they share popularity not only in public but among intellectuals. Adams, Updike, and DeLillo are writers who have produced literary works. Their writings attract intelligentsia. Adams claimed to write novels to recount lost stories and not much but of a desire. She found many unadventurous and fixed ideas during her career as a journalist to narrate stories. Updike regarded sex and religion as a great life secret. That is why his works encounter mostly philosophical questions. DeLillo described his fiction related to "living in dangerous times." The biographies of these writers equally signify that they took writing as careers, as something investigative and well informed. It elevates their status as leading in a hierarchy of writers who change the mindset of the people. By no means do their biographies depict that writing fiction is a matter of creating narratives out of imagination. They undertook all the information required for their narratives.

My selection of two male writers and one female writer is to illustrate the consciousness of both genders having consensus on contemporary issues. The

choice of samples from the literary domain designates that issue when it goes from popular fiction to literature, implying the authenticity and legitimacy of issues, and people want to talk about it.

WORKING DEFINITION

This book uses a working definition of Islamophobia defined as "the fear of or prejudiced viewpoint toward Islam, Muslim" and other matters related to them. Definition of racism agrees upon the terms "fear" or "prejudice" against a community based on cultural and religious differences. The first step was to identify a single term that may sufficiently define both phenomena. The book uses the term "fear" to define both. *Fear* is a derogatory term in itself, denoting a critical and disrespectful attitude toward something or someone.

KEY TERMS

The book introduces some significant terms that are frequently used during the course of the entire discussion.

Phenomena

Commonly defined by world dictionaries, *phenomenon* is an object or aspect known through senses rather than by thoughts or instincts. The book uses its definition as an occurrence that needs understanding as an object "as it appears" to and is "constructed by the mind" (cited in Guyer, 1998). It is distinguished from "a noumenon" or "thing in itself" (cited in Guyer, 1998). "Construction of a concept" requires "intuition" (Vouloumanos and Waxman, 2014, p. 165). This definition is applied to understand notions of racism and Islamophobia as constructions of the West, particularly in the backdrop of the 9/11 attacks in America apprehending Islam and Muslims as terrorists. Apprehension is caused by becoming sensitive to an object, belief, or individual.

-ism and Racism

Racism refers to a distinguished practice, system, or philosophy that more often involves a dominant political ideology. It evolves in the form of artistic movements in different eras. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines it as a set of beliefs, particularly those one disapproves of. It has been given various meanings such as dogma, proposition, ideology, and construct. The *ism* in the word

racism denotes notion and construct. The term pertains to a generally agreed upon definition that is hatred and prejudice based on the concept of belonging to a different race and/or ethnicity.

Phobia and Islamophobia

Phobia refers to a psychological condition in which an individual grows "an extreme or irrational fear of or aversion to something." It is often paralleled with anxiety that propels individuals to show extreme dislike and fear to avoid a perceived danger. The perception is normally caused by some unexpected or catastrophic event or situation. Phobia is usually generated in situations when individuals start organizing their lives to avoid the objects of fear. In the present situation, the phobia of Islam and Muslims in America is under discussion. This is termed Islamophobia in the contemporary discourse. Selected American writings are organized around the false assumptions that equate Muslims and Islam with terrorism indicating a phobia of the religion of Islam.

Culture and Religion

Culture is defined as a "cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, and notions of time." Etymologically culture refers to tending to the earth and growing. Religion remains dominant on culture. It is "the belief and worship of a super controlling power, especially a personal God." This book discusses the cultural interpretation of religion and explores its association within the discourse of racism.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction's literal meaning is to take something apart. When applied to fiction, deconstruction means to break it in parts for a better understanding and interpretation. It is a method to carry out a critique of the texts to bring its various hidden meanings to light. It is a method to interpret the complexities and conflicts of the written text.

Scavenger

Scavenger is an inference drawn from the feeding behavior of animals. The present book uses this term with reference to Fredrickson's concept, which

defines racism having the ability to "scavenge" or pick out ideas and beliefs from other sets of values and ideas to "rationalize itself" (2002).

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

This book intends to form an approach that may change the perspective of American mainstream fiction readers about Islam and Muslims. This approach is analogous to Said's "Orientalism," which identified the route to understand "Orients." To hold Islam responsible for terrorism and have a racist attitude toward its followers cannot be justified. This book will provide an insight to discover critical thought in the relevant discourse. It may also inspire fiction readers to respond to discriminatory attitudes toward Islam and practicing Muslims. Interdisciplinary in nature, this study may add to instrumentally understanding fiction in evolving ideologies.

The issue of Islamophobia is better dealt with when racism's contents and relationship to Islamophobia are investigated thoroughly. Three strands of methodology comprise the present study: deducting causal relationship of racism and Islamophobia through the findings of the Runnymede Trust Report (1997); incorporating Fredrickson's concept of racism as "scavenger's ideology" (2002); and the deconstruction (Derrida, 1967) of novels functioning to see the validity of the proposed theories. It also investigates the historical complexity of racism and its relationship to Islamophobia in dismantling the complex relationship of both. Secondly, the book also unveils the perceptions creating the identity of Islam and Muslims as terrorists in the selected American literary texts. Thirdly, it discusses Islamophobia as a recognized form of racism manifested in selected American literary works.

It is a modest attempt to define Islamophobia as a contemporary form of racism, a much discussed topic in the discourse of social media, print media, psychology, cultural studies, politics, law economics, and linguistics. However, in the field of literary studies, the concepts have comparatively inadequate investigation considering interconnectedness of both phenomena. Moreover, less attention is paid to critical enquiry of Islamophobia systematically situated in the wider context of American racism history. Tracing its evolution in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, it has existed as a prototypical practice, and historical evidences confirm its articulation more in reference to religion than science. Not even *Stanford Encyclopedia* has given any explicit definition of Islamophobia. Elsewhere it is defined as unfounded hostility toward Muslims that leads to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims. The present book offers a historical record of racism through which it elaborates an inclusive account of Islamophobia. It defines Islamophobia as a historical expression of racism; a process that constitutes its meaning through history.

Therefore, racism as a manifestation of historic anti-Islam prejudice may lie as its working definition. Islamophobia is an ideological war brought forward to justify historic supremacy and racism of the West, particularly America. It is not a new concept but a fabrication of old animosity into modern garments. Minus the ideology, Muslims are acceptable. Thus, this book traces its relationship to racism, implication, exposure, and relevance in American literature by analyzing the selected texts for their point of view, themes, setting, and characters.

Deconstruction helps to work through the major themes depicted by setting, language, character depiction, and sociocultural context. Forming a theoretical framework operated "as a means to distribut[e] and co-ordinat[e] the diverse influence of [various approaches]" (Layder, 1998, p. 39).

To acquire theoretical density, various contradictions are identified within the selected novels to encounter larger global phenomena of racism cloaked in Islamophobia. Derrida's claims of "all supposedly pure mental truths" as part of "the flow of conscious experience rather than an absolute truth" supports the discussion (1967). The discussion identifies "aporias" (conflict) in written text to dismantle the meanings of the texts. Extensive discussion on "race" is avoided. Instead the book centralizes a comprehensive and detailed debate on racism as a sociocultural phenomenon generating hatred and fear of the Islam religion in contemporary American society. Fredrickson's concept of racism as "scavenger ideology" is used to situate the study arguments. This concept has viewed racism as an ideology that "gains its power from its ability to pick out and utilize ideas and values from other sets of ideas and beliefs in specific socio-historical context" (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 8). His concept of "essentialize differences" constructed as "cultural equivalence" to race supports the discussion during the course of study (2002, p. 8). By "essentialized differences," he means discrepancies with certain essential characteristics forming these differences.

As discussed earlier, the *Runnymede Trust Report* (1997) strengthened the concept of Islamophobia far more in public and political spheres. The question of how to label the antagonism against Muslims has remained problematic. Discrimination against Islam merely on the basis of religious misconception characterized it as monolithic and incompatible with modernity. Muslims are targeted in the contemporary world mainly due to their religious ideology. The construction of Islam is used as an important means through which racism is reproduced and justified, shaping itself in its modern form called Islamophobia, which overtly sponsors prejudice against Muslims.

The present book will contribute to the existing philosophies of racism and Islamophobia and highlight that fanatics exist everywhere. Blaming Islam for terrorism and having a racist attitude toward its followers cannot be justified. Becoming overtly prejudiced comes about from a self-created phobia easily

associated with any object of nature. It also argues Islamophobia is distinctly different from religiophobia as every society around the world is situated in one or another religion. Therefore, the contemporary Western world explicitly announces an irrational fear of Islam rather than any other religion. For future researchers, the study also provides an insight to uncover critical thoughts in the discourse of racism and Islamophobia—described as "Islamophobic racism" in the existing body of literature.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 evaluate selected fictional works respectively under the critical lens of Fredrickson's notion of racism as "scavenger ideology" (2002). Chapter 1 examines Lorraine Adams's *Harbor* under the heading of "Heather Among Mohammads." Chapter 2 and chapter 3 evaluate John Updike's *Terrorist* and Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* under the subheadings "Devil America" and "Turn-of-the-Century America," respectively.

To find unified meanings in the selected texts, a preliminary level of contradictions and oppositions are explored. Connotative and denotative meanings are exposed by building attachment, giving particular attention to grammar such as clarification of parts of speech qualified by one another. Everything written is locked in stone of meaning. The relationship of one word to another as well as sentences depicts the inner conflicts and beliefs of the texts. An inherent cultural bias is exposed. The process by every means indicate deconstruction. Binary oppositions clearly denote that the selected texts do not offer a single interpretation. Layers of meanings have to be unveiled. At various levels, texts contradict themselves; therefore, one unified meaning is impossible to extract. Evidences are provided to support both positions by quoting texts constantly. Binaries help visualize whether the dominant and powerful dynamics develop language to identify problems in a hierarchical system. Particularly, those passages are focused for analysis that denotes Islamophobia in one way or another. Throughout the narratives, slips of language are noted to advocate the thesis statement of the book. To illustrate whether Islamophobia is a recognized form of racism, inferences from the texts are drawn. Identity construction of Islam and Muslims in the form of phenotypes include mosque references, Arabic language, caps, beards, sexual gaze, drug trafficking, and cultural narrow-mindedness. It is one way to suggest that these descriptions of Muslim immigrants bear despise.

The approach of this book is a "believing game" (Elbow, 1973) that accepts the theories and looks for ways to strengthen the comprehension of the phenomena in question. Deconstruction as a dense procedure exposes the implied ideology of the selected narratives.

Chapter 1

"Heather Among Mohammeds"

Lorraine Adams's Harbor *(2004)*

Lorrain Adams's novel *Harbor* (2004) recounts the adventure of Algerian Muslim Aziz Arkoun, who escaped from the Algerian civil war. A soldier as well as a deserter, he soon found himself on the shores of Boston among his other Arab and non-Arab Muslim fellows who sailed to America in the hope of a respectable and prosperous life. An American white woman, Heather, shelters and develops affection for these immigrants. Here starts the saga of contradictions and differences where generalized supremacy of American Whites comes in contrast with Muslim immigrant characters.

Rafik, Aziz, Ghazi, Mourad, and Kamal are the dominant Muslim characters of the narrative. The narrative depicts strange alliances discernible by the cruel memories and broken language of these immigrant characters in continuous psychological turbulence. Aziz struggles to drive himself to Boston Harbor in the hope of survival. However, he finds America a confusing "hubbub." The narrative applies this technique to view America through Aziz's perspective. Aziz has an encounter with some Egyptians and finally reaches Rafik's apartment, his hometown fellow who beguiles him to work like a dog to bear the expense of hospital bills. From this point, Aziz goes through a series of treacherous events. Aziz's initial situation foreshadows his future problems. Rafik, on the other hand, enjoys a more settled life in America. A habitual liar, he is involved in selling stolen merchandise and bomb-making materials. Alienated by the language barrier and his new life in America, Aziz develops a friendship with Ghazi, another stowaway, who also moves into the same apartment. Ghazi's suspicion of Rafik ushers him and Aziz to a U-Store-It storage locker, bringing serious and disastrous consequences.

The narrative's account of the atrocities of militant Islamist groups in Algeria intersecting the jihadist world runs parallel to the immigrants' tale. Aziz survives the barbarities of the army and "militant Islamists," and his past life haunts him constantly. He often recalls his struggle within the

religion-dominated political scenario in Algeria. The FBI suspects him as a terrorist. Ironically, the FBI arrests Aziz, while treacherous Rafik and his accomplices slither away easily. The FBI suspects all these immigrant characters as terrorists because of their Muslim identity. The novel ends in a desperate intricacy of American ethics and culture. The novel is a chronicle of survival in "a strange" land at the expense of "the dangerous world" the immigrants desperately escape.

"HEATHER AMONG MOHAMMEDS"

Lorraine Adams's debut novel paints the darkest projection of Muslims who migrated from Algeria to America. Its subject matter of Muslims and Islam reflects terrorism in all its bifurcations. The present study aims to discover the novel's despicable anti-Muslim tone. It also shows that in Adams's work, Fredrickson's concept of "racism as scavenger ideology" serves as a benefactor to establish a close relationship between racism and Islamophobia (2002). The narrative posits a question of whether Adams knew Islam and Muslims very well. A high-profile reporter, she claims to have written her novel after she visited and interviewed alleged Algerians in their camps. However, the claims assumed that alleged terrorists might be victims of socioeconomic crises or religious exploitation that compelled them to plan and blow up the people as well as themselves. These conjectures provide provocative ideas to the present study during analysis. The issue of Algerian immigrants to America has historic significance in bringing a profound change in American social, economic, and political spheres. Over decades, racial prejudice grew into religious bias and hatred. The turning point was the 9/11 attacks, which unleashed a fear of Muslims and Islam to an extreme.

Although Muslims share a long history of crusades with Western countries, anti-Semitism lay dormant upon them. The September 11 attacks in New York changed the entire vision around the globe. Racism, with a long historical record, saw a shift from covert to overt racism. Disguised in Islamophobia, it held Muslims and Islam responsible for terrorism. A bunch of terrorists with Islamic identity created a stagnant situation for all Muslims. Nevertheless, American marginalization of Muslims as "other" after the 9/11 attacks set the scene for *Harbor* (Said, 1997). The novel constructs a biased picture in readers' minds from the very beginning. The present study intends to argue that *Harbor* creates a significant contribution to the enduring discussion of Islamophobia as a recognized form of racism in America. It expresses the overtly anti-Muslim racist attitude and portrays a predisposed image of Islam that engenders apprehensions. Such apprehensions arise from the narrative

and dialectical structure that logically impart ideas and work through the opposing forces of the text that is Islam and America.

In an interview, Adams remarked, "I have taken a little from one of the character's mind pondering at the 'strange' situation where a Heather [Christian female character of the novel] is surrounded by Mohammeds [Muslims]." The tone of the phrase constructs the situation as something "strange" where Christian and Muslim characters are living together. It appeals to the readers' curiosity and leads them to meditate over the innocent and considerate character of "Heather" constructed in contrast to "Mohammeds" (*Harbor*, 2004). Graphic misrepresentation leads to threatening consequences. It is a potent instrument to assert agenda. First, *Harbor* prefers a different, rather controversial spelling for the Prophet's name. It's written "Mohammed" instead of its recognized spelling of "Muhammad." It must be borne in mind that electronic media has recently been playing deliberate jokes to enrage Muslims. It has widened the gap between the West and the Muslim world. Misinformation associated with "Mohd" (meaning "dog with big mouth") and "mosque" (mosquitoes' breeding place) given currency on social media and chain emails finds no authenticity in the world dictionaries. It reflects an agenda to relate such derogatory terms, which through a linguistic exercise unintentionally has become part of contemporary vocabulary. Contemporary global media contains much stronger evidence in the notorious cartoon controversies of the twenty-first century. Caricatures of the Prophet depicted in media cloaked in freedom of expression provoked Muslim fury around the world (Khan, 2014). These were deliberate intentions to depict Muslim irrationality and radicalism. Global media has projected "Muhammad crises" and "the Muhammad cartoon crises" blatantly since 2006. It is the identity politics of the West strongly working against Muslims.

These controversies have their origin in a sociohistorical context (Hervik, 2012). The situation aggravates misinterpretation of Islam. Graphic as well as fictional representations have undoubtedly offended Muslims in every decade. One such example is Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (1988). Rushdie misused his writing talent to offend his own religion. Another example is Sherry Jones's *The Jewel of Medina* (2008), written to disparage the reputation of Muhammad (SAW)'s wife Hazrat Ayesha. The work still awaits publication for fear of raising global conflicts. The entire terrain portrays Islam as a force against the West. Islam as "a force in international relations" is a generalization that instigates anti-Islam dispositions commonly found in contemporary literature and media (Piscatory, 1990). Texts such as *Harbor* convey a personal and subjective judgment of the narrator. These narratives are the harbingers of ideological wars to exercise political ascendancy. What Adams observed during her investigation in Algerian camps she claimed to

have developed in the form of a novel. She established a framework that allowed her readers to read *Harbor* as a report rather than invention.

The narrator of *Harbor* is an omniscient observer. His/her identity is shadowed, yet his observation and statements identify him as an orthodox Christian American. Descriptions of the priest and the church in early chapters connote an anti-Muslim tone that further shapes the novel's perspective. The authority and knowledge of Islam on the part of the narrator remains ambiguous until the end.

The novel starts with an immigrant's tale frequently depicted as a stereotypical individual, representative of the "other" world in contrast to America (Said, 1997). The mood of the novel presents a gloomy scene. Aziz's entry into a troublesome situation surrounded by the cold of an American harbor apprehends fear in readers' minds that foreshadows the coming trials and errors. The choice of words and phrases identify the narrator's harsh and cold tone for the Muslim characters from the initial pages. Each word contains a bucket of meaning. The narrator begins the entire gamut of dramatic situations by mocking and ridiculing the Algerian Muslim immigrants and ends up highlighting them as objects of fear. Hence, it is but a well-labeled account of desperation.

Harbor opens with a labeled terrorist image of Muslim characters. On American shores, it focuses on the immigration toward America. The description of its setting employs a multitude of possibilities to interpret the novel. At first, the novel addresses the subject of immigrant issues in America, but it consequently leads to the portrayal of Islamic extremist faith.

Assumed cultural and social deficiencies of the immigrant characters serve a pivot in their containment. Biological differences are rarely discussed. The "cold shores" of America depict an ironic American reception of immigrants (Adams, 2004, p. 1). It signifies an unfriendly context set for the novel. Water suggests truth. It also denotes memories. The opening paragraph foreshadows certain truths supported by past memories encountered later in the novel. Racism in the novel as "mental truth" is a "part of the flow of conscious experience rather than an absolute truth" (Derrida, 1967). Generated through experiences in mind, it cannot be understood as an absolute truth. A mentally constructed phenomenon, it functions actively in any experience of an individual's life. From the beginning, the novel builds a negative impression of Aziz's physical appearance by vividly describing what he looks like. A decades-old stereotypical image of a Muslim's "walnut skin and beard" explains something inherently present in the Muslim body of Aziz (Joshi, 2006, p. 214). "Mental truth" exists in this novel where actually "the flow of conscious experience" in the form of action performed by various characters leads us to believe that there is a certain air of anxiety and fear of Muslims overpowering America—its businesses, politics, and values. The experiences

of Aziz, Rafik, and Ghazi make the narrative capable of building these "mental truths" (Derrida, 1967). These are purely immigrants' experiences and one cannot label these as general Muslim experiences. To say these Muslim characters are the representation of all Muslims around the world cannot be an "absolute truth" but an abstraction and generalization (Derrida, 1967). Aziz is not an enigma. He observes, absorbs, thinks, and tries to understand people. His character is a vivid depiction of ethno-cultural differences in contrast to the American White characters. He is associated with innate unchangeable characteristics that stop him from adopting American values.

Deconstruction of *Harbor* demonstrates Derrida's claim of texts carrying "necessary incompleteness." Derrida, an Algerian-born French philosopher, argues that texts contain no "absolute truth," and thus it may be asserted that the narrative in *Harbor* moves on showing Aziz quite often entrapped in confusions (1967). Being an Algerian and Muslim, Aziz finds America and its ways anomalous, the way it may appear to any foreigner. He acts in multidimensional ways. He never reacts as a staunch or radical man. He is involved in the action of the novel and we become familiar with his past life in Algeria through retrospection much later. Yet he falls into the category of a "round" character at times playing an important role in the novel. We see him developing through his experiences, and sometimes he appears complex. We try to understand the purpose of Aziz's character portrayal—is he an archetype used to develop the theme of the novel, or through his experience, will we learn any life lesson? In the initial descriptions, he is presented as a frightening object (Adams, 2004, p. 5). The narrator visualizes the city of Boston through Aziz's mind, calling it "so cold, so mean." A realistic approach interprets his situation and reaction common and normal to anyone who is lost and shattered on foreign land. Aziz's ignorance and demeanor represent him as inapt to handle the problems he faces in Boston. An instrument at the hands of Rafik, Aziz serves throughout as a stooge in the affairs of daily life. His past life, horrible experiences in Algeria, and dramatic escape to American shores emphasize supremacy. It underlies a cornucopian notion of America that promises a prosperous future to immigrants.

Aziz competes in a struggle throughout the novel. His struggle is for existence and survival, but he reckons himself a misfit in American society. The text loudly speaks against his physical appearance and innate proclivity for a white American woman that describes him as habitual to sexual dissipation and debauchery. Instead of describing Muslim characters engaged in Islamic rituals and practices, *Harbor* lays its foundation on stereotypes. Predominantly, sexuality is one of the core issues that surround Muslim characters. Heather, representative of American white women, functions as a binary to Aziz, Rafik, Mourad, and Ghazi—a white woman set against all Muslim male characters. It reworks the stereotypical notion of "men of

color" sexually predating white-skinned women. *Harbor* criticizes the religious values of Muslims, who are obliged to avoid any extramarital relations. Essentially, this religious obligation is foraged by the writer to rationalize the sexually weak impulses of these Muslim characters. The novel amplifies the sexual encounter between Kamal and Heather. Aziz, as well, constantly indulges in thoughts of Heather's body being "smooth like milk" (Adams, 2004, p. 21). Descriptions of the sexual hunting of Heather at every step demonstrate that religious imposition of sexual obligations exploits these Muslim characters. Branding all Muslim characters in *Harbor* sexually attracted to a white woman manifests the stereotypical idea of Muslims as intruders even in this aspect of life. Based on mere assumption, however, it forms the dominant discourse in *Harbor*. Showing Muslim characters sexually attracted to Heather's body seems a relentless labeling of Islamic values and Muslim moral integrity. This is reflected in the novel's account of Muslim characters as homosexuals.

Through the mind of a Muslim character, Ghazi, an image is constructed to strengthen the assumption: Dhakir "playing the Muslim bridegroom" as homosexual. "What was it like after you did that to a man and went home to your woman?" reflects the narrative (Adams, 2004, p. 174). Earlier, the assumption was reflected in the narrative calling Aziz "a feather of a man," referred to as "faggot" and "pervert" (Adams, 2004, p. 60), displaying in the narrative the bias of the Americans for Muslims. "That fella speaks like a faggot, and I won't have it" (Adams, 2004, p. 40). It is the narrative's contradiction as contemporary American society has more widely been accepting of homosexuality, although it still remains the subject of contentious legal and societal debates. Post-independence America has a rich history of the development of legal protections for homosexuality.

Gay soldiers have been recorded as having served in the US Army during the American Civil War (1861–65). In 1924 Gerber's "Society for Human Rights" organized "the first documented homosexual organization in America" (Baehr, 1995). The Supreme Court ruling of One, Inc. v. Olesen in 1958 gave the pro-gay magazine protection by invoking the First Amendment. The sexual revolution of the 1960s proved a milestone in transforming gender discourse in America, sweeping away all social areas with revolutionary ideas. Many gay liberation organizations were formed later, such as Gay Liberation Front and Gay Activist Alliance. Goodman's '*The Politics of Being Queer*' initiated the Gay Liberation Front to introduce "A Gay Manifesto" in 1969 that asserted the rights of homosexuals. The era of 1980s, which saw a rise in homophobia, also witnessed debates of the legal recognition of same-sex marriage. Works such as *Here Comes the Groom* (1989) urged the recognition of homosexual marriages. In 1993 a report released by the Evangelical

Lutheran Church invoked Lutherans to consider acceptance of same-sex marriages. Books such as *A Place at the Table* supported the stance to consider same-sex marriages legal (Bawer, 1994). Since dichotomy exists in every society, the Clinton government opposed homosexual marriages in 1996 and declared its conventional meaning as bondage between a man and a woman. In 1996 Congress reiterated the "Don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) policy that banned open proclamation of homosexuality in the US Army. Homosexuals were permitted to serve in the Army without declaring their sexual identity. The twenty-first century saw DADT repealed, and with the Supreme Court case Obergefell v. Hodges, same-sex marriages were legalized. Same-sex marriages, at present, are not only legalized in the United States but also in European countries such as Germany, Spain, and Canada.

The entire discussion reflects homosexuality dating back to post-independence America continuing until present (Hari, 2011). Nevertheless, Muslims are shown as "faggots" and "perverts." Thus, *Harbor* brings forth a contradictory philosophy signifying anti-Muslim agenda. It frequently points out Muslim transgression to assert its point of view.

The novel does not present any moral debate asking readers to search for the goodness of one religion against the other. In a narrative style, it creates an environment surrounded by fear of an apprehended danger at the hands of Muslim immigrants. It deliberately foregrounds stereotypical assumptions about Muslims.

For finding a unified meaning, the present book addresses the oppositions and contradictions in the text at a preliminary level, which provides an avenue to start an investigation. Major opposition significantly useful in exploring research inquiry and meaning within the text is the opposition between Muslim immigrant characters and American society. The foremost technique of the narrative is racial profiling. It foregrounds a stereotypical image of Aziz as "other," suspected for being Muslim. Being Algerian and a minority in America, he faces discrimination at every turn. Discriminatory language is used to mock him as a representative of a community that is inapt to follow American language and ways of life. His overlong hair "fl[ying] east" brings forth his image as an inhabitant of the "East" as the "other of West" (Adams, 2004, p. 3). In fact, on the very first page of *Harbor*, historical conflict between East and West stands out as the dominant philosophy of the novel. "'Cold' shores of Boston" welcome Aziz. The oxymoronic statement returns in a most significant way at the end of the book when the FBI suspects and arrests him.

The narrative invokes readers to consider Aziz as anti-American. There are frequent references to his long beard, such as "Bearded: the sign of Islamists" (Adams, 2004, p. 118). Such references to physical appearance articulate unyielding notions of masculinity associated with Muslims and Islamic faith.

The novel encapsulates the quintessence of racial profiling and perpetuates a religious as well as cultural fear when it refers to suspicion raised by Aziz's "beard[ed]" face (p. 3). This overused portrayal actually transmits messages into mental conceptions because representation is based on "internally generated knowledge structure that manipulates information" (*Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning*). This "iconic facial feature is the defying symbol of the dangerous other" (Culcasi et al., 2011). Considering Muslims' culture "fixed" and "immutable," physical and dress markers are emphasized to reveal their identity (Semati, 2010). Another reference, to Islamists killing those "in the leather jackets, wearing Adidas" (Adams, 2004, p. 190), is an attempt to expose abhorrence of foreign objects in Muslim characters' minds, whereas people wearing "barnous" (Adams, 2004, p. 190) were exempted. A "barnous" is a long, traditional, coarse woolen cloak with a hood that is generally white in color. It is used by Berbers. Berbers are the descendants of pre-Arab residents of North Africa who lived in Tunisia, Libya, and Algeria, among other countries. They were orthodox Muslims. The novel discusses attire as an "identity marker" to epitomize all Muslims and Americans. It once again implies a misconception that envisages all Muslims alike. Oversimplified images of Muslims shape the common perception of Americans and hold organic position in the discourse of Islamophobia multiplying bias and hatred of Muslims (Allen, 2010; Lambert et al., 2010; Meer, 2010; Moosavi, 2014). A bearded face is a significant religious "identity marker" that draws a contrast between Muslims and Americans. It is a proxy for Muslim faith and masculinity. Aziz's thoughts reflect rebellion. Constructed as a stern Muslim, Aziz finds peace by "reciting some old prayers [his] mother taught him" (p. 6). Religious beliefs are unswervingly engrossed in the narrative.

A significant binary opposition between a mosque and the elevated image of the church shows the rejection of Islam as a peaceful religion in contrast to the church and its priests. The church represents the positive aspect in binary against the mosque as its negative counterpart. Contradiction lies in Aziz's visualization of a benevolent priest and convivial church, "a church . . . [that] allows people inside. . . . A kindly and old priest with a face that beamed and was mostly a face of love" (Adams, 2004, p. 6). This description reiterates the narrative's purpose to foreground a Christian institution and its followers foreshadowing a tyrannical and dreadful description of a mosque and its radical clerics. The narrative utilizes Christian religion as a benefactor and deprecates Islam to assert the positive face of the former against the latter. Criticism of faith is reinforced to generate a moral justification. The text assumes a demonized and fearful image of mosques and the clerics in Aziz's attempt to find comfort and peace under the Christian roof. However, the situation immediately changes through intrusion of Arabic language—two men speaking Arabic to each other appear as a "marvel" (Adams, 2004, p.

6). A disparity between English and Arabic language builds another binary of the narrative. English is the language of the privileged group. The narrative invokes much curiosity about the pronunciation graphics of Arabic language. The text mirrors a fear of reversal of hierarchy that anticipates Arabic language shaking America by dominating its social and cultural structures. Replacement of "tion" with "shun" to make it easily readable (Adams, 2004, p. 198) reflects hatred and associates negative implication to Arabic language. "Shun" conveys negativity and disapproval at its literal as well as figurative level. Its association to Arabic supplements despisement and rejection to create an abrogated picture of Arabic speakers. References to "memorization from the Quran" and its comparison to English learning hold both as language practices. Frequent appalling behavior toward Arabic language in the novel offers profound evidence of discriminating Muslims from Americans. A Yemeni character's conciliation of memorizing the Quran with English language learning makes him somehow acceptable to American readers (Adams, 2004, p. 198). Through these illustrations, the narrative communicates the advancement and dominance of America to validate the ignorance of Muslims. Language barriers hinder these Muslim immigrants from communicating their thoughts and making people understand. Since Aziz lives in America, language is a barrier to explaining his situation, and it is hard for him to prove his knowledge or comprehension.

Aziz's treatment at the hands of Egyptians manifests indifference. It is identified as "aporia" in the text—an impossible situation that could be ignored or eliminated as Aziz's worthlessness is supplemented by his thoughts of his homeland (Derrida, 1967): "Yes, I know what a shower is; my father managed a hotel for European tourists and I have seen them, I have used them" (Adams, 2004, p. 7). An Egyptian couple perceives him as "a Moroccan . . . from a country of peace. A poor country, a desperately difficult country to come from," in contrast to Algeria, "where people stuck neighbors' heads on shovels beside front porches and went to their funeral crying false tears" (Adams, 2004, p. 18). *Harbor* brings forth a controversy, a conflicting situation between Algeria, Morocco, and Egypt from the time of the Algerian Civil War. Egypt backed Morocco to sustain its geographical integrity, particularly during the West Sahara dispute. Both are founding friends to consolidate trade relations with each other. Algeria's support for the "Polisario Front," i.e., the Algerian Independence Movement of Tindouf, has strained its relations with Morocco for a number of decades to the present date. As for the United States, Morocco had supported its quest for Al-Qaida. Its status as a US ally opposite to Algeria's distance from the West signifies their limited bilateral relations. France further demonstrated resentment to Muslims and Islam in the form of "traumatic evacuation of Algeria" and openly "configuring Muslim immigrants undesirable and problematic" (p. 314). Muslims and

Americans needed each other to "manufacture" and "welcome . . . a provoca-tion" (Favret-Saada, 2012). It caused "considerable . . . damage . . . together (Favret-Saada, 2012). They played "off each other" (2013). Those Muslim countries that did not suit the American agenda turned out to be its enemies.

The text allows the reader to assume that a problematic relationship exists between immigrants and Americans based on political history. The contradic-tion shown between Algerian immigrants and Egyptians holds the perspec-tive to excavate the historical relationship of Egypt and America. Pro–Soviet Union Egypt finally returned to establish diplomatic relations with America by fostering the peace process with Israel. Disengagement from the Arab-Israel conflict brought Egypt close to America. Various literary perspectives rose on the situation. Albert Camus perceived the Algerian Civil War as an initiation by Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, though he apparently supported the National Liberation Front against French rule. Camus, however, con-ceived the "Algerian war of Independence 1954" as a battle for bloodshed. The situation gave rise to his absurd philosophy "if I rebel, Islamist will take power; if I don't, dictators will stay in power" (Daoud, 2014). His novel *The Stranger* further reinforced the debate. The novel depicted Meursault (the French protagonist) killing an Arab (with no name). The narrative's focus on its French characters rather than the murder of the Arab implied indiffer-ence and insignificance of Arabs in Algeria. *Algerian Chronicle* highlights Camus's attempt to bring FLN (National Liberation Front) and French Forces to a reconciliation that failed and turned the situation against him. His "Letter to an Algerian Militant" (1962) reflects his disappointment well. Camus perceived a united Algeria, Arabs living together with "Pieds-noirs" (French-origin Algerians), but met opposition at both sides.

Therefore, the description of Egyptian characters and reference to Morocco reflects flexibility in contrast to Algerian characters. This is also an attempt to draw margins among immigrant Muslim communities with the slightest dif-ferences. Controversy among Arab nations could also be viewed as the root cause of American and European dominance over Eastern and Middle Eastern countries. The indifference of Egyptians who "did not need to question [Aziz] too closely to feel an obligation to help him" (Adams, 2004, p. 7) evidently refers to Egypt's policy to compromise conflicts with America for its sur-vival. Reading between the lines, passages about Egyptians' interaction with Aziz necessitate a long series of interpretation. The novel takes a difference stance of portraying Algerians different from Egyptians, which implies the historical record unravelling the hidden political conflicts. Algeria, already combating Islamic extremists over decades, sought a direct dialogue with UAE and KSA on matter of war in Libya. Algerian regime did not want Egypt to play a mediator role. On the other hand, Egypt was also not happy to see Algeria rising as the best counter-terrorism region.

Exploration of Egypt-US relations gives the text a new racial perspective that helps in understanding Aziz as a member of the community who does not compromise his identity and does not lose himself in mainstream American life. No opportunity is provided to him so that he can move around and think freely. His status as Muslim immigrant bars him from many actions. It denotes the assumption that he may act violently or behave irrationally. This also signifies a presumed opinion of Aziz being offensive. He looks at Americans "being soft but hard; nothing difficult, nothing easy; nothing good, nothing bad" (Adams, 2004, p. 45). It constructs him highly incapacitated to understand America and its people. It is a negation of his abilities. His incapability to utter "verbena white" portrays him as unfaithful. The flowering plant verbena, considered native to America, is a symbol of faithfulness (Adams, 2004, p. 44). It is an attempt to humiliate and mock the faith of Aziz. The text constantly attributes negative characteristics such as betrayal and treachery to Muslim characters. For instance, Kamal's arrest leads him to betray and identify Aziz as a terrorist to the FBI.

Aziz's observation of Egyptian women "not veiled—but wearing blue jeans and skirts and sweaters and jewelry and makeup" (Adams, 2004, p. 10) exposes him as an individual belonging to a conservative culture. His racial profiling continues. He is presented as an object of fear even for these who speak his language. He tries to persuade the Egyptian not to be afraid of him. Morocco's image as a desolate but comparatively peaceful country in his conversation with an Egyptian couple constructs a picture of Algeria much more brutal, "where people stuck neighbors'" heads on shovels (Adams, 2004, p. 18). The narrative falsifies the Algerian attitude by references to their attending "funerals crying false tears" (Adams, 2004, p. 18). Aziz's reception by the Egyptian couple (though Muslim) verifies the narrative's assumption that Muslims from particular Islamic states (showing moderation and tolerance toward values) show a discrepancy in beliefs. Algerians particularly form a fearful picture to Americans who recognize them as "mujahideen" with unprecedented talk about "Jihad" against America's infidelity. They are considered a menace to American life and society. Aziz identified as "Algerian" is perceived "very dangerous" and "crazy" in contrast to Egyptian and Moroccan Muslims. Interestingly, unusual appearances turn the Egyptian Muslims into considerate and welcoming human beings. This pertains to US-Egypt political relations. It further illustrates the narrative's point of view that receives assimilation with pleasure. This complies with Derrida's (1967) philosophical concern that text develops into "a set of cultural habits equal to if not surpassing the importance of authorial intent." *Harbor* tactfully points out the internal conflicts through Aziz's mind. Aziz decides later to "hide his home from other Arabs. Or stay only with Algerians" (Adams, 2004, p. 23). Racism in a religious form finds relevance in the novel's implicit conflicts

that spring out of religious controversies, particularly the Arab-Israel war that considers religion as the primary influence strengthening the other political and economic causes of war. It also draws inference and emphasizes the role of Muslim countries "at war with neighbors" (Huntington, 1996). It equally draws the readers' attention to conceive Muslims as a threat. The situation disturbs world peace in general and the Muslim world in particular. America's creation of "a religious other" in Arab countries deformed the infrastructure of many Arab countries due to economic imbalance. Placing immigrants at the lowest social structures, it defined the process of "racialization." *Harbor* reflects these discriminations and attempts to rationalize these by referring to Islam and the Quran mentoring Muslims for terrorism.

As stated earlier, the novel implies the opposition between "white and American Muslims." The idea of White American superiority depends upon the assumed inferiority of Muslims. Therefore, both are part of a vicious cycle where they reciprocate hatred and bias against each other. Creation of this opposition holds a symptom of alienation as well as ignorance of each other's cultures and religious beliefs. In such a case, the socially dominant group asserts superiority over the underprivileged group. An unfortunate happening such as the 9/11 attacks consequently builds up the image of an underprivileged group that threatens the security by challenging the authority of a privileged group. Muslim and American characters in *Harbor* are set in contrast to each other. Almost all of the male characters contrast the character of Heather, the only dominant white female character of the novel. It articulates another major contradiction in the text. Aziz is an eminent observer in contrast to Rafik, who has a volatile and flexible disposition. Likewise, Ghazi and Mourad adjust in Boston and New York by seeking American asylum for the price of legal documents they sign. Charlie fills out the documents for them. Aziz's mind is chaotic and constantly confused about his environment and the foreigners.

"Power" is the major element that shapes these thoughts of suppression. Written texts transform the realm of thoughts into opinions and further structures a specific ideology that is a record of thoughts and opinions. *Harbor* transforms readers' thoughts about Islam and Muslims and records these in the memory of readers to shape a particular ideology. America for these immigrants is a "cage," a delicately wrought cage (Frye, 1983, p. 116). Aziz and Ghazi engaged in "dish washing," work as wage laborers (p. 89). Resembling "Mexicans," they are hired for this job with a promise for further promotion. Their resemblance to Mexicans renders the racist agenda of the novel to all except "White Americans." Their working hours and situations also expose White mentality toward immigrant laborers. It denotes the "dual logic of racism—of inferiorization—subordination and exclusion" (Wieviorka, 1995). Aziz often thinks "he is not of this world" (Adams, 2004, p. 41). We find

racism functioning overtly through the narrative when it communicates about "the black dead" of Aziz's skin "to be removed" and "distinctive brick color" that "too had to be cut away and discarded" (Adams, 2004, p. 42). It articulates discriminatory talk about "black layer and white skin underneath" that denotes the process of assimilation to ensure survival to Muslim characters. The narrative denotes a fear and apprehension of the repercussion in case the social order in America is reversed. Cultural differences pose threat to hierarchy. The situation often breeds hostility and contempt. Aziz and Ghazi working at the restaurant find American food strange. Muslims are alleged to have "dystonic and opposing attitudes" and preferences for food. Labeled "dystonic," they are represented as abnormally and involuntarily moving their muscles and uncontrollable gaze (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 595). Such descriptions make them weird and open to bias in a foreign country. Bel Ghazi embodies these allegations, and his reactionary character allows him to meditate taking over John Hill's restaurant by marrying his daughter. This displays Muslims as treacherous and lustful. Hill has a very crude, aggressive, and hostile attitude toward Ghazi and Aziz. "There seemed to be nothing but [work] for them in America" (Adams, 2004, p. 106). It is perhaps because of the stowaway Algerian Muslims rapidly settled in America making their visibility more frequent in public places. Working in Hill's restaurant, Ghazi and Aziz are familiarized with different food dishes that completely vary from the ones they know. Ghazi's attempt to find a "close to a halal butcher shop" reinforces Islamic faith that emphasizes obedience to Islamic rituals of butchering animals for meat. It appears preposterous to other cultures and these differences are supplemented with despise. Normally when we do not like food, we say "ugh" to convey dislike and scorn; natural to all human cultures. Therefore, targeting Muslims for such feelings seems irrational.

Media agencies influence the perception of individuals in a society. Most people believe in preconceived images of objects and ideas. Negative portrayals of Islam and Muslims in contemporary American writing owe much to traumatic events, especially the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Conflicts in *Harbor* target Muslim characters and move toward "a religious-driven racism" considering immigrants an "external threat" (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 53). These images are frequently constructed and perpetuated for decades (Bell's *Arabian Night*, 1715; Wordsworth's Book V of *The Prelude*, 1805; Beckford's *Vathek*, 1844; Hichen's *Garden of Allah*, 1904; Foster's *A Passage to India*, 1924; Torday's *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, 2007; Jones's *The Jewel of Medina*, 2011). Literature has portrayed Muslims "as ministers of terrorism" (Al-Olaqi, 2012). Adherence to Islamic values is a perceived threat to the American lifestyle. Therefore, racism works as bondage for Americans, and Muslims want to govern. A biased point of view of the novel depicts the situations and characters from a discriminatory angle that starts

with differences and leads to fear in a systematic way. All the differences are explicable by understanding the point of view of the novel that establishes a relationship between the narrator and the text. The narrator begins and ends the story. Many points show breaks in the narration, such as Aziz's relation to Heather, Ghazi's entry and association with Heather, and Ghazi and Aziz's suspicion of Rafik. But the narrator is not a part of the action. He/she goes deep into the characters' minds to give outside as well as inside judgments. At many places, the novel portrays an incorrect interpretation of Islam and Muslims by arising doubtful questions in the characters' minds. That exposes the American "Achilles' heel" to generalize all Muslims as extremists.

As discussed earlier, it is very difficult to understand the point of view of a novel until we sort out oppositions. Confusion arises to configure the criticism if it is set against Muslim immigrant characters or the American society. The question arises if the text is critical of Aziz, Kamal, Rafik (Muslim immigrant), or Heather, her housekeeper, her house, or the environment. This directs the thoughts if Aziz and his Muslim companions live in discontentment due to their personal flaws or due to American society having created these flaws. Their derogatory situation brings them in opposition to American people and culture.

Language is a social creation, and the text exploits language to lead readers to a revelation. "White supremacy" ideology rests on the philosophy of cultural greatness that scorns people belonging to other cultures. The airport manager's advice to Mourad to "keep his nose clean" suggests the fear of Americans toward minorities, especially Muslims, who are perceived as likely to cause trouble (Adams, 2004, p. 77). Disparagement of Muslims in media and literature has reinforced their enemy image in the contemporary world. There is no denying the fact that publishing houses and writers structure an "inter locking system" (Semati, 2010, p. xviii). Placement of cultural binaries in a text is an efficient facilitator of a writer's connection with readers. Texts perform the role of gatekeeper to foster communication between reader and author. Researchers investigate and endeavor to discover the literary standards that shape the ideology of the masses. A specific social context provides setting to the learners and readers to understand the hidden agenda of the text. Oppositions in the text thus indicate that notions of racism are still a juvenile part of American society. It is actually this contrasting situation, setting, and people that do not let the differences die out. Racism disregards Muslim characters as "others" to benefit the dominant group (Appiah, 1990, p. 4). Over decades, it has shifted its meaning and the "benefit" has transformed into "fear." The disregard in the form of fear foreshadows the future renaissance anticipating dominance of an oppressed group.

Critique of the novel within the proposed theoretical framework looks at the "causal" relationship of racism and Islamophobia that is established

by the 9/11 terrorist attacks functioning as the third element. The fall of the Twin Towers in New York regenerated an overt form of racism in American social structures. Nevertheless, it must also be borne in mind that racism never died in America. As the literature review of the present study indicated, racism was present in one form or the other. Unfortunately, religion as the major constituent of racism replaced other cultural traits in the present-day antagonism. Consequently, scrutiny of Islam as an evil religion exposed American "phobia" of being displaced, robbed, or killed by its followers. The novel's representation of Aziz as unfaithful, Rafik as treacherous, and Ghazi as deceitful is to ruin and slander Islam. Chapter 28 quotes verses of Quran. "We believe in the unseen" (Adams, 2004, p. 237). Questions in Ghazi's mind about the omnipotence of God corroborate the claims of secular and Christian Americans about Islam as a cynical religion. "Deceive and believe; so many times he read those words. . . . Never made sense to him as a kid and still didn't" (Adams, 2004, p. 237). The whole passage criticizes Quran through Ghazi's perception and "staring" at "ayat" (Adams, 2004, p. 237). Referring to God as "the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful . . . the Possessor of the Day of Doom, Righteous, the Ever-knowing," the narrative brings forth its counterargument in the form of doubtful questions in Ghazi's mind. "He had it all, was it all, knew it all. Never made sense to him as a kid and still didn't" (Adams, 2004, p. 236). The situation marks an attempt to mock Muslims for their religious convictions.

The narrative mocks Ghazi's recitation of Quran verses and renders doubtful interpretations. The text ridicules Muslims for their recitation of Quran as an action without understanding its intended meaning. Speculations on Ghazi's mind portray Muslim veneration for the Quran as superficial. Far-fetched questions actually decontextualize and isolate many verses to derive a distorted meaning out of the whole. Questions such as "why did Allah need so much worshipping?" arising in Muslim characters' thoughts bear doubts in the readers' minds. These excerpts imply a fear and conflate Muslims with terrorists who are driven by religion. Wordplay illustrates Muslims under a strong influence of religious beliefs in "hellfire" that "is the real fire" when all "will find out the truth and . . . destiny" (Adams, 2004, p. 261). Use of phrases for the Quran "as guided missile" is a construction of the religious book as terror. Scavenging verses from the Quran is the narrative to signify a distinct way to consider the religious matters. The following verses are quoted by the narrative to shed light on the Muslim attitude toward the commands revealed in Quran. Based on ignorance, these are a constant source to justify the thoughts and actions of Muslim characters "And they say, 'Our Lord, why have you prescribed fighting for us?'" (Adams, 2004, pp. 262–70). However, the text does not provide the necessary context. These

verses are merely utilized to rationalize the subjective point of view of the narrative.

The text displays "markers of race" of a socioreligious nature (Werbner, 1997). The narrative's mood entirely changes in the middle and it directs argument toward religion, a foremost indicator for racism. Quran becomes a major concern in the last chapters of the novel. Out of context verses from the Quran repeat and perpetuate awkward interpretations and fallacies about Islam. It reflects the narrative's attempt to take in the actual meaning of the Quran. The narrative is implicitly critical of the Prophet, as reflected in a conversation between Ghazi and Dhakir about Ghazi's possible escape to Afghanistan. "'Mohammed—peace be upon him—may he strike me if I cannot.' Now it was Mohammed. Ghazi sighed . . ." (Adams, 2004, p. 262). The novel describes the Prophet as an enemy who threatens the lives of Americans.

Verses such as "*Then we took vengeance upon them; so look into how was the end of them who cried lies*" are used to show that Islamic texts do not encourage extremism (Adams, 2004, p. 121). It is plainly the implied prejudiced perception of the narrative that overlooks the actual interpretation of the Quran or Hadith and promulgates its own agenda by manipulating the 9/11 disaster. The narrative fails to understand the beautiful imagery of the Quran when it asks through Aziz, "so you believe this garden with a river under it? . . . You think . . . I kill kafir and get killed doing it . . . to the virgins in the garden I fly?" (Adams, 2004, p. 277). It is an intentional attempt to expose frustration of Muslims under the extreme pressure of faith. The narrative technique is to quote such verses and adjust these among well-balanced sentences to signify logics. These verses are selected by keeping forth the American criteria. Moreover, these are italicized to be distinguished from other words within the text of the novel. It is a typographical technique to give unusual effect to the text and helps the reader understand its key points. This unfavorable tone is a response to the terrorist attacks. Dhakir's advice on Ghazi's continuous confused questions illustrates the narrative's point of view more evidently. It considers "Islam inherently violent" (Lyons, 2012, p. 115). "Muslim killing Muslim" reflects intense criticism springing from these sentences against Muslims (Adams, 2004, p. 248). The Holy Quran widely teaches values and beliefs to Muslims that require understanding in appropriate context. Context is debatable. Every creed and religion has its radical and moderate deportment. To make the situation worse, extremists take the literal interpretation to justify their discriminatory actions of labeling Muslims as terrorists. For instance, Adams also sketches a description of a woman killed by "Islamists" during the Algerian war to render a brutal image of Islam. Islamist extremist Antar uses a knife for cutting the woman's "hair between her legs." The visual effect of the knife "cutting left and right, and then up,

but still she would jump" constructs how barbaric Antar is. He covers her nose by putting his boot on her mouth forcefully enough that she is stamped: "pushing the knife again, she jumped, so he played with the knife, feeling the jittering of her" (Adams, 2004, p. 121).

Descriptions of American women as "whores" running their (Muslim immigrants') "lives" maintain the novel's prejudice against Muslims' attitudes toward women. Patriarchy undeniably situates at the heart of every culture. However, Adams's novel transgresses Islam and Muslims only, which undoubtedly elucidates her prejudiced perception of Islam. It is the carefully constructed identity of Islam as "chauvinist" that maintains the text's point of view. Adams, being a female herself, ostensibly draws limits between American society and Islam and associates a stereotyped gender identity with Islam. The novel succeeds to portray that gender and religion are articulated within the context of racism.

Stereotypes as shared characteristics of racism with Islamophobia work to discriminate and persecute Muslim fictional characters in the novel. Their "caricatural" images are contrasted with Heather, an emotionally charged American white woman who holds all the Muslim immigrants together. "Heather, she loves you like a brother. In this country, that means . . . many things" (Adams, 2004, p. 257). Heather's character portrayal communicates the narrative's discriminatory attitude when her "white" and "pure" body shelters the Muslim immigrants at the cost of her life and security risks. She epitomizes harmony for all. It invokes extreme surprise in the FBI investigator. Religion and racism are yoked within the text at her presence "among Abduls and Mohammeds" (Adams, 2004, p. 254). Frequent comparison of the Muslim characters' complexion to Heather renders the Western disposition of drawing biblical references for black skin as "hewers of wood and carriers of water" (Lewis, 1990). We find "the routinized outcome of practices that create[d] . . . hierarchical social structure" (Winant, 1994) for the immigrant Muslim characters when their suppression in the form of racism is extended to Islamophobia.

Besides, the title of this novel offers more to its Muslim characters than it actually provides. A promise of shelter and nourished life in contrast to Aziz's previous life in his homeland carries the implication of America as a shelter even for those who ultimately devastate and destroy its peace. The title also promises sanctuary for immigrants. This promise is an intentional effort to show Islamic values in opposition to American society.

The narrative fictionalizes expression of "phobia" of Muslims. Aziz's retrospection gives us a glimpse into Algerian war and terrorism. Aziz's afflictions in America are followed with chapters on his life as soldier in the Algerian army. It constructs his affiliation to the extremist Islamic groups. Various militant groups represent radical fanatic interpretation of the Islamic

faith (*Harbor*, p. 18). Militants named "Islamists, Salafist, Jihadist" are described as barbaric and blood-thirsty people. Labeled as "sadist[s]" following the philosophy of Islam at an extreme and radical level, the narrative generalizes them with murderers (p. 186). Aziz's father being identified as an "Andalusian butterfly" is a reference traced from the history pages to show that history is never elapsed when referring to Muslims (Adams, 2003, p. 189). Moriscos, Muslims of Spain, were exiled on royal orders of Philip III between 1609 and 1614, and along with northern African regions such as Morocco, Algiers, and Tunis, many settled in the American region, where they were recognized as Moriscos—used to identify a racial category (Carr, 2014). Later, they were suspected as a threat to American security and peace. Chapters 14 and 15 of *Harbor* present an overview of the Islamic military situation in Algeria. These chapters explore the Algerian Civil War (1992), headed by militant Islamist groups, and its brutalities. These incidents give it a religious war perspective. At the background of the war were reasons such as poor economic and education structures, a dominant military, and radical Islamist missionaries. The situation paralleled Afghan Taliban rule. Extremism in Islam has always been its disadvantage. Messages against the Western lifestyle and values strengthened hatred and enmity between Islamists and the West.

The antagonism is foregrounded by the description of Algerian war in these chapters. It becomes evident that *Harbor* communicates a personal experience or observation of the narrator to defame Islam. The novel is well grounded in political, cultural, and social motives. In a desire to denigrate Islamic values and beliefs, the narrative creates sensation by describing the barbarity of war in Algeria. Killing was the ultimate ideology these militant groups followed in the name of Islam. It brought a ghastly reputation to a religion that lays its foundation on the very word "peace." As an anti-Muslim text, *Harbor* has the potency to establish a relationship between racism and Islamophobia as racism is "multi-targeted" and reworks its definition according to the changing global scenario (Alietti and Padovan, 2013). Through Aziz (with the band of soldiers), readers are misguided by a conversation where Islamist military leaders are mocked for their lack of knowledge to understand the difference between "vogue" and "hadith." This illustration does not bear any evidence; still it perpetuates the labeled ignorance and primitive image of Muslims branded for killing.

Islamophobia speaks loudly and forcefully in literature in a more dramatic way. This trend has created a wide gap between the Muslim world and America. Misrepresentation of Islam pertains to the ancient pages of history. The past is an excellent guide. Historical record helps one better understand the present situation. Racism and Islamophobia reveal various interpretations.

Various contexts intercept racism differently. One such technique is the understanding of the past that makes it convenient to recognize the present. Hatred between Muslims and America intensified after 9/11. Terrorism is used as a justification for Americans' biased attitude toward Muslims. However, the negative reception of Muslims is not new. Similarly, Aziz's past story is used technically to show his association with extremist radical groups. His past relationships foreshadow his ultimate tragic entrapment.

Aziz's life as a soldier in the Islamist army constructs a dominant discourse in the novel. He finally seeks refuge in America. These images bring authorial intentions to spotlight that Muslims look at America as a source of redemption. Publically condemned by Algerian political and Muslim religious groups, terrorism in the name of Islam continues to provide fuel to American writers who use the radical and fanatic face of religion to justify their means. It must not be imagined the "absolute truth." Instead, the experience constructs such doctrines. The narrative bases its experience on discussion of "the group Islamique Arme, the Front Islamique du Salut, the Front de Liberation National" as a terrorist group of Algeria in a conversation between Charlie and Ghazi (Adams, 2004, p. 107). GSCP ("The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat") is represented as "crazy." The text indirectly discusses Afghan Muslims as the cause of turmoil in many war-stricken countries that hold radical Islamic values. Aziz's silence on such matters conflates him with those Muslims who remain loyal to their homeland and its problems, while individuals such as Ghazi make a comfortable living in America. Ghazi disagrees with Aziz's suspicion of Charlie as a spy, "American or back home." Charlie claims to have this pseudonym because his Arabic name is difficult for Americans to pronounce. Handing over applications for asylum to Ghazi and Aziz presents him as a harbinger of a contented and prosperous life in America. American society offers and promises shelter to Muslim immigrants in contrast to the Muslim world.

The novel depicts the complex concept of racism and adheres to its constantly altered meaning over the years. Moreover, it interacts in multiple ways not clearly defined. Prejudice, bias, hostility, supremacy, fear, antagonism, assimilation, etc., are various characteristics that shape this narrative. Various situations stoke fear of Muslims and Islam that signifies the reworking of the notion of racism. Every Muslim character is connected with terrorism. Its cross-cultural differences indicate racism that emerged blatantly in the backdrop of the 9/11 attacks, asserting its historical century-long presence. History reveals the medieval West/America was powerless against Muslim rule, but gradually Muslim reigns failed at the hands of prevailing American power. It is the fear of reversal of power that scares contemporary America in the form of an attack that "will arise from Arab Maghreb" (p. 261). Such a fear bears prejudice that makes the notion of racism complex in the sense

that it leads us to consider it as something beyond an absolute definition. It reveals itself in the discourse of religion.

Harbor utilizes its minor characters to amplify the presence of Muslim characters. Linda, an Italian woman whom Heather helps, is contrasted with the benevolent portrayal of Heather that Linda plays off. Her suspicion of Heather living with "Rafik" not "Brad or Rick" is supplemented with the details of "Rafik" that Linda knew. Linda's perception of Muslims is "the ones who make runs out of their women" (p. 48). Here the text articulates stridently to construct Muslim identity as oppressors of women. The suspicion arising in Linda's mind about Heather's connection with Muslim men leads her to spy and report to the FBI. Rafik assigns Aziz to perform treachery to Linda that further links Muslims with debauchery and unfaithfulness (p. 49). All these traits in later chapters relate to religion. Meer thoughts of Heather's living with Muslims cause suspicion and concern in Linda's mind.

The novel encompasses racial prejudice in cultural and religious signs of "otherness" as well as physical features. Aziz's brother Mourad, winner of the lottery—an American green card—presents yet another paradox of the narrative. He is perfectly settled in America. Aziz nurtures a dislike of his own brother, who finds a social status in America by sheer luck.

The novel *begins* with a concealed fear in the discussion of civil war in Algeria and assaults Islam and Muslims explicitly in the chapters that follow. The narrative reaches its climax when Aziz develops a counterargument with Ghazi. Both are in extreme frustration. "The generals torture us for being terrorists. The terrorists kill us for not being terrorists. What are we?" (p. 277). This constitutes the leading question of the book: a stereotypical proposition of Muslims. We observe how skillfully the narrative echoes conciliation. Religious beliefs generate racist attitudes to the perceived object of fear. In such cases, Muslims as objects are assumed ethnically different and inferior.

Interpretation of Islamic philosophy through Muslim characters is a technique to make it disbelieving. Muslim characters attempt to assimilate in American life. It indicates the narrative's intention that minus their religious faith, Muslims are acceptable in America.

The narrative emphasizes "Muslims killing Muslims" in Palestine and Algeria to reinforce a cruel image of Islam (Adams, 2004, p. 249). It invokes the conflicting modern understanding of Islam that pushes the real understanding beyond the boundaries. No religious doctrine promotes killing of innocents. Politics operates within and outside social structures. Descriptions of Algerian militants brutally massacring women and men is not completely stimulated by religion. Extremists often utilize religion to meet their political ends. The refrain "Islamist" confers a religious texture to the entire situation similar to what happened in the Afghanistan war in the late twentieth century. Through language, readers get a plausible interpretation of Islam

as a fundamental and uncompromising religion. Deconstruction asks what if Islam is not "inherently violent." This question leads to a number of significant pathways to know the general attitude of Muslims. Such investigations give a different interpretation of Islam (Hashim, 1999; Sayyid, 2011).

Fredrickson associated certain attributes to racism—the power to scavenge values of other beliefs to rationalize bias. Fredrickson named "ethno-cultural differences . . . as innate" to stress racism more closely related to biological notion, the law of "nature or decree of God" (2002, pp. 5–6). Heredity causes exclusion. If we believe in such ideas, we find that in the case of *Harbor*, it is more region and religion that describe Muslim characters per Fredrickson's definition to identify Arab origin the root cause of racism. When we examine more chapters, religion interlaces Islam and Arab in the narrative. *Harbor* introduces themes such as these to question Islam directly. It strengthens the American perception of Islam as monolithic and incompatible to modernity. These suppositions control the mood of the narrative in later chapters. Suddenly criticism of Islamic beliefs replaces racial profiling of Muslim immigrants.

The novel also ridicules Islamic values and traditions with regard to Muslim women. Chapter 22 highlights Muslim female characters wearing "hijab" inside the home whereas "outside the apartment this same daughter wore hair highlighted with blue, eyes kohl and topaz" (Adams, 2004, p. 175). Another example of criticism on Islamic values in the same chapter that narrated Ghazi's childhood theft experience when he hid money in the pages of the Quran. It is a criticism to reveal superficiality of Islamic faith and ideals. Moral evils exist in the followers of every religion, and each religion has the same moral standpoint on evils such as theft, lying, debauchery, etc. The purpose of these passages is to draw the attention of a wide range of readership to conclude Muslims' neglect of teachings of their holy book. The same chapter portrays Muslim girls as "hijab temptresses" that reveal contemporary controversy of Muslim women wearing veils in Western countries (Adams, 2004, p. 176). The contemporary Western world has been wrestling with the subject of the Muslim veil in debates of religious freedom and terrorism. Ethnic minorities are required to assimilate in foreign culture for their survival. Many European countries opted for measures to ban veils to counter increasing extremism and terrorism. The veil stands in the way of an "open society," they argue. The veil is recognized as a conspicuous Muslim identity marker and is assumed as a threat to security. Another difference that the text brings forward is the girl's mother, who tends to the deformed husband and her family "by taking two jobs." Her position shames her husband (p. 176). It also criticizes the patriarchal attitude of Muslim men who consider it a matter of indignity and insolence if women go out to take job. In fact, patriarchy sustains in every culture. Associating it purely with Islam is an attempt to

isolate it. Ironically, the helpless deformed husband has no other choice but to depend on his wife. The same chapter is also significant for its conversation among Dakhir's family members. Ghazi lives with Dakhir's family members in Canada. Discussion of "Muslim sharia" in contrast to American secularism interprets the narrative's fear of Muslim dominance. Talking about a "sharia"-run government enforced by swords and killing explicitly signifies the fear of being overtaken. The situation supplements earlier brutal descriptions of the Algerian Civil War. Puns used on words and sentences indicate the extremity of the situation of "not fight[ing] to have Algerians killing Algerians" (Adams, 2004, p. 176).

The narrative condemns the laws and rules of their religion by portraying Aziz and Sellami drinking wine in frustration (p. 192). Sellami mocks the belief declaring, "Kill yes; steal no" as "insane" (p. 192). Their conversation lays emphasis on the fallacy spreading among American people who believe that Muslims' holy book directs them to despise and kill nonbelievers. The narrative quotes commands from the Quran to support this misapprehension. "Whosoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger, then surely we have readied the Blaze" (Adams 2004, p. 270). Aziz's contemplation on "kill this neck, but not that neck" communicates disdain of the Quran and brings the narrative's criticism to highlight the duality of the command. "And it is not for a believer to kill a believer" (Adams, 2004, p. 270).

The final chapters of the novel reiterate the image of "mosque" to create an aura of Muslim fear. Muslims are assumed to gather in mosques for plotting and conspiring against Americans. The FBI officers' astonishment manifests the conjecture when they learn that Lahouri, a minor Muslim immigrant character, hardly visited the mosque. They term it a "revelation" (Adams, 2004, p. 201). For Lahouri, work is important. "I work every day. There is no mosque for me" (Adams, 2004, p. 201). "Friday services" discussed earlier in the novel through Rafik's thoughts reinforce that Muslims themselves blame the "mosque" as the root cause of creating problems (Adams, 2004, p. 69). The narrative implies fear and dislike of the Muslim worship place throughout. Misconception of the mosque as a breeding place of terrorism and conspiracies has been a favorite and hot topic in contemporary American literary and political discourses. Muslims are often recognized "as a uniformly emotional and sometimes illogical race that moved as one body and spoke as one voice" (Piscatori, 1986, p. 38). There is strong evidence of Islam "conflated with a non-white religion" and Muslims are racialized in this particular context. "Britain Muslims are racialized as South Asian people, in Germany as Turks, in the United States as Arabs and in France as Maghrebians" (Moosavi, 2014, p. 14). Americans as well as Islamic extremists quote verses from the Quran and relate it to weaken Hadith to meet their own political ends. The representation of the mosque pertains to the same series of attempts. Its image is

conflated into terrorism. Contemporary researchers highlighted parliamentary discourses to ban minarets and construction of mosques in countries such as Switzerland that reveal Western intentions to project the mosque as an object of fear. Such cases are named "slippery slope fallacy" (Cheng, 2015, p. 1), often explained as a logical fallacy founded on inconsistent argument. Major speculations arise from the flawed arguments against Islam in the novel. Worship places in every religion are regarded sacred and peaceful places. *Harbor* contrasts church and mosque to elevate the role of the church as protection and peace whereas mosques are identified as places of intrigue transmitting extremism. It constructs sinister anti-Islam intentions. No doubt, mosques have occupied a significant place in the advancement of Muslim culture and religious victories. Generally, if one looks at the "spear-like minarets" of a mosque in contrast to "the church spires and tower blocks," the mosque clearly announces its dominance (Cheng, 2015). Deconstruction of these sentences demonstrates that mosques as fearful objects are "stabilized in American minds through relational, referential and shared knowledge" (Derrida, 1967). These assumptions are strengthened by referring to the 9/11 attacks and their locutions. Since the West shares a long history of antagonism toward Muslims, Americans rely on the assumptions that find "speakable" evidences dominated by crusades. Truth is founded based on pure identity. Lack of that purity falsifies the structure of a novel that clearly promotes anti-Islam and anti-Muslim postulations. "Phobia" in such cases appears in the form of racism as it changes the harbinger "of a perceived threat" into "a racialized other" (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 586). It strongly depends on the religiosity and individual attitude when the individual considers it necessary among all social exercises to look at the religious symbols and institutions to function or take decisions. The novel thus prompts Muslim characters to show flexibility in their religious thoughts. It implies an American agenda of assimilating Muslims to its ways.

It is difficult to perceive the logic to justify racism potently. The concept of racism depends on the temporal and spatial presence of hostile, discriminatory, and antagonist attitudes of Americans toward Muslims and Islam. These are mundane feelings created by worldly affairs and events. In deconstruction, binaries are mainly constructed by "opposition of writing / speech or of mind and the external technique of graphic representation upon which knowledge depends" (cited in Ryan, 2007, p. 66). It leads on to explain that language is the primary expression of an "external reality." Language, in other words, constructs a perceived reality. It depends entirely upon the writer where he/she leads the readers. "Graphic representation" is the writing mode of an individual's beliefs and ideas. He/she writes what his/her personal observation and experiences are. Nevertheless, writings further shape the ideologies of the readers. Writing is not merely a style to recall or recount details of

memory. It is a graphic way of asking questions. Reading *Harbor* raises many questions in the readers' mind. One significant question is why mosques, prayers, and Friday are a crucial part of the text. Do these references pertain to any temporal and spatial knowledge that raise differences? (Cited in Ryan, 2007, p. 66). Critique of the novel confirms the claim. These references recall and emphasize the shared knowledge about prayer's obligation as well as the importance of Friday and its significance to Muslims. The language of the text persistently mocks the rituals followed by Muslims while preparing for prayers. Aziz and Rafik describe the situation at the harbor where the Muslim boys are preparing for prayers diligently "ridiculous" (Adams, 2004, p. 70). The literal representation of Friday prayers and their preparation create an internal essence of ideas that shows skimming inside. Rafik and Aziz's conversation about the situation is to focus the inside and outside of these Muslim characters. Here the text reflects a notion that Muslims (exemplified through Aziz and Rafik) are themselves discontented with Islamic rituals and desire to incorporate themselves into the modern American world (Adams 2004, chap 10). The writer addresses religious rituals in the narrative frequently. "Believers, Rafik said, love death. I would rather wonder, my friend, than believe" (Adams, 2004, p. 71). The purpose of these conversations is to expose the perplexity in the minds of Muslim characters about their religion. Deconstruction asks here if only Islam or all religions believe in "believing." One wonders why Muslim characters are exposed for their doubts in religion, God, and believing. The writer chooses the technique to speak through the minds of these Muslim figures nurturing their own fancies. The choice to present sensitive religious issues as subject matter and present them as objects of humiliation by the believers themselves mirrors contempt and offense of Islamic ideology. Deconstruction exposes the intentions of the text that such kinds of opposition are an attempt to show how apparently valuable beliefs are a burden and source of discomfort for the believers of Islam. Actively portrayed, these acts bring forward a stereotype and shallow image of Islam. It clearly denotes the "authorial intent" to contaminate the basic Islamic ideology (Derrida, 1967). It is a living example of how racism in the form of religious antagonism works to justify its existence.

To draw a hostile image of Islam means rejection of Islamic practices that create an inflexible identity of Muslims as "racialized others" (Winant, 2000). The situation indicates that racism works in the form of phobia and assumes Muslim characters a "threat" to American security. When these characters articulate perplexity of their religious practices, it insinuates adjustment and assimilation in American ways of life that promise a better life (Adams, 2004, p. 70).

Racism in the form of Islamophobia is controlled by its power to scavenge Islamic beliefs and symbols to rationalize the hatred and fear. Islamic civilization is perceived as an "external threat" to wage wars; an assumption that creates fear in American society and is used by the great scholars as subject matter for written and oral discourse (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 586).

Harbor is deconstructed to be exposed as carrying the agenda of representing Muslims as terrorists. Muslim immigrant characters are not complete characters in the sense that they always display discontentment and alienation in New York and Boston. They represent an image of Muslims in American society devoid of worldly disposition alienated in the modern world. American double standards unequivocally exist in the FBI's and CIA's accusations of Muslim immigrant characters in the narrative. They viciously treat the Muslim immigrants alleged for plotting against American security. They are branded terrorists on mere speculations, illustrated through Linda, who consider their interaction with Heather strange. If these concerns were ignored, one would not be able to understand the blatant form of anti-Muslim attitude in contemporary American society reflected in literature. The narrative asserts "white dominance and supremacy" sustained through contemporary American social structures. Overtly situated in theological context, the narrative clearly describes its point of view toward the end, labeling both Arabs and Muslims troublesome. "Arab, Muslim—however you slice it, trouble" (Adams, 2004, p. 277).

Chapter 2

"Devil America"

John Updike's Terrorist *(2006)*

The role of fiction based on assumptions is significant in determining ideologies. The Western fear of Islamic values has been hurting Muslim moral integrity. Fear arises from hatred or anger. No doubt, America's attitude toward Islam has worsened since the 9/11 attacks. In this context, Updike's novel *Terrorist* sets a fine example to accentuate American writers' assumptions of Islam as a monolithic and dreadful religion. It is the twenty-second novel by Updike. It portrays Muslim characters in the light of negative assumptions, creating problems for Muslims living in the West and America, as discussed in the *Runnymede Trust Report* (1997).

The subject matter of the novel is risqué in the sense that it overtly targets Islam as a faith and Muslims as its radical, sexually driven, and extremist followers. The novel is set in post-9/11 New Jersey with a dismal and despondent Muslim character named Ahmad who seeks guidance from an "imam" (a Muslim religious scholar) to set himself on the "straight path" as an orthodox believer. Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy, son of an Irish American mother and Egyptian father, is an eighteen-year-old boy. The plot of the novel revolves around his character. Ahmad's father deserted him when he was three. Often viewed as "a lapsed Catholic," Ahmad's mother separated from his father and seemingly possessed a careless disposition of worldly ambitions. Ahmad turns to Islam when he is eleven years old. The local mosque's imam expounds words of the Holy Quran and Allah to him. At the feet of Sheikh Rashid, Ahmad is engaged in learning the Arabic language and the teachings of the Quran so that his spiritual aspiration could be well refined.

During the course of the novel, the materialism and hedonism of American society threatens Ahmad's faith. Multiple strings of the plot gather around him when a Lebanese immigrant family employs him in their furniture store. Relatively innocent in the contemporary wicked world, Ahmad proves a befitting student who thinks "the student's faith exceeds the master's." He is

passionate to express the vigor and strength of his devotion. Sheikh Rashid directs him to a group who takes advantage of his faith and exploits his aspirations for paradise. No one is successful in diverting Ahmad from what he called the "straight path," neither Jack Levy (counsellor at Central High School) nor Joryleen Grant (his black classmate). Jack Levy, an American practicing Jew, is the suitor of Ahmad's mother, Teresa, who tries to maneuver Ahmad's plan of choosing truck driving as a career. Sheikh Rashid initiates Ahmad's pursuit of truck driving as a good practical skill in preference to academic studies. In his opinion, academic studies work merely for the development and the advancement of a secular country (America) and weaken religious beliefs. However, truck driving implicates him in a terrorist plot to blow up the Lincoln Tunnel and Hudson River so that American "infidels" are destroyed. Ahmad's agreement to blow himself up in this scheme takes him to the meeting place, but his associates are not there. To avoid arrest by federal agents, Ahmad proceeds to undertake the mission alone. Levy gets an alert of Ahmad's planned attacks by his sister-in-law Hermione and encounters his truck laden with explosives on the road immediately before getting on the highway toward the destination. Stuck in traffic while riding into the Lincoln Tunnel, Levy attempts to convince Ahmad to forgo the bombing plan. He exposes Charlie Chehab (Ahmad's associate in the bombing plan) as a CIA agent killed by others involved in the plan. At this stage, Levy confesses to having an affair with Teresa for several months. Reaching the place of the planned explosion, Ahmad softens, greatly influenced by Levy's talk, to reconsider what Islamic belief actually asks him to do. He suspends his plan of attack and rides with Levy (his savior) through Manhattan so that he can return to New Jersey over the George Washington Bridge. Ironically, a Jew translates the true religion for him, which leaves the reader skeptical of Muslims.

"DEVIL AMERICA"

The novel reflects Fredrickson's "concept of racism as scavenger ideology" (2002). Its emphasis is on projection of provable terrorist Muslim religion. The novel begins by showing Ahmad meditating about America as the devils' abode. Deconstruction theory looks at the multiple possibilities to interpret his utterances and thoughts. It identifies contradictions in the novel that compels its readers to develop an understanding of Islam as a fundamental and radical religion. It attempts to untangle the intricate connection of Islam to terrorism. Breaking sentences into parts and looking for specific interpretation, irreconcilable information identifies unequivocal hatred of Islam. Analysis of both major and minor Muslims and non-Muslim characters discloses meanings of

the text that supplement one another. The analysis is situated in the context of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Raised Lutheran, Updike did not set his "religious faith upon scientific observations" (Benjamin, 2014). He believed in the changing nature of scientific knowledge, whereas religious beliefs had 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 the author's immersion in Christian theology contrasted with Islam later on. In one of his interviews, Updike declared, "the congregation of his home town Massachusetts church as the rock of his faith" (Cipolla, 2009). He intently studied the Scriptures and Christian theology. Although he was diffident to claim authority in religious matters, his novel reflects his attempt to assert his knowledge of 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 phobic tone overwhelms the setting of this novel from the very beginning. It opens with the introduction of Ahmad, the main Muslim character, meditating on devils that distract him. Ahmad studies at Central High School in New Jersey, where he finds himself surrounded by "infidels." Ahmad visualizes Americans as people who have "deviated from the straight path" with "shifty eyes and hollow voices betray[ing] their lack of belief" (Updike, 2006, p. 3). Further, characters' interplay defines the environment in direct relation with action. Ahmad is at a place where "girls sway and sneer and expose their soft bodies and alluring hair" (Updike, 2006, p. 3). "Their bare bellies adorned with shining naval studs and low-down purple tattoos, ask, what else is there to see?" (Updike, 2006, p. 3). This situation is more like an obstruction for him to live his life according to his own religious beliefs. He is completely troubled by his surroundings, school, students, and "weak Christian" teacher (Updike, 2006, p. 3). Thus, the first page of narrative identifies an important contradiction between American society and Islam from Ahmad's perspective. He is "excluded" and "subordinated" in many ways (Wieviorka, 1995).

Ahmad's character is set against the backdrop of American society. His position as a binary to America signifies the main conflict of the book. For him, the environment symbolizes immorality and materialism. The West and America recognizes Islam as a primitive and conservative "cultural practice" and belief. For centuries, Islam had been labeled as such. The 9/11 attacks played a crucial role in resurrecting these accusations. In this context, Islamophobia also reflected the "belief in Islam's cultural and religious

inferiority" (Rana, 2007, p. 149). 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, 2002). These characteristics shape Ahmad's extremist ideology, which is further illustrated through verses from the Quran. The concepts of race and racism are articulated more in contemporary America in the "idioms of religion" categorizing values and beliefs as major discriminatory features (Fredrickson, 2002). 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 accumulation of the things of this world" (Updike, 2006, p. 4). The whole chapter views America through Ahmad's eyes. His thoughts dwindle for a moment about the existence of the next world, "if there is a next, an inner devil murmurs," which foreshadows assimilation of his religious ideals (Updike, 2006, p. 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, 2006, p. 170):

> Who would forever stoke Hell's boilers? What infinite source of energy would forever maintain opulent Eden, feeding its dark-eyes houris, 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? (p. 5)

It is a futile attempt of the narrative to endorse an authoritative tone and question the very essence of the Quran. Moreover, it indicates the agnostic and secular philosophies of the author. 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, 2006, p. 5). However, Islam has never juxtaposed the science of physics to evolve a hierarchical relation. Revealed in the seventh century, the Quran accurately substantiates scientific theories and logics. In many places we find revelations in the Quran that validate 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, 2006, p. 5). The contrast reflects mockery of the unseen. It also points out the narrator's loss of faith. It must be kept in mind that target readers are mainstream Americans

who may have been lost in the logics illustrated by these texts. At this point, the narrative 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 states "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, 1920). Bringing this thermodynamics concept of hell, the narrative relies on physics law to prove the Quran doubtful. Firstly, hell fire is outside the physical reality, thus thermodynamics may not be applied to it. Secondly, the controversy was created by the agnostic scientists who, by highlighting such comparisons between science and religion, actually contradict their beliefs of a universe based on the idea of soul, hereafter, heaven, hell, reward and punishment. Updike's novel appears to promote such contradictions. Texts designed to create doubt sustain their claims for long, as readers grow curious to carry out investigations to the proposed questions. Frequent questions about religion instigate fears and apprehensions of the skeptical questioner. Drawing contrast between science and the Quran has been a regular technique of Western writers. Exploitation of Islamic ideas in contrast to scientific theories builds mistrust. 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, 2004, p. 38). "We believe in the Quran. All that it contains comes from God" (Gunny, 2004, p. 38). Construction of such doubts necessitates "intuition" (Vouloumanos and Waxman, 2014, p. 165). The narrative reworks the racist notions as "intuition" of an impending danger to America at the hands of Muslim terrorists. The novel also contains agnostic and secular ideas of religion that confront a different idea of the Creator, "Jewish God, a will-of God, Lord of Mary, Lord of Abraham, Lord of Joshua, Lord of King David, Lord of Bathsheba" (Updike, 2006, pp. 24–61). It is to fortify the deformity of Islam and its belief in unity and oneness of God.

Terrorist picks up those verses from the Quran that deal with direct condemnation of nonbelievers and talk about the overstretched eternal fire of hell. The speculation is exposed in the narrative's detailed picture of Ahmad as a Muslim constantly thinking of hellfire and considering American people as its "fuel." It also brings forth the generalization that equates Islam with fundamentalism as an old practice to stigmatize and propagate extreme assumptions. The narrative deplores and pronounces the bias rooted in American history. It disseminates a discriminatory image of Muslims as a threat to America. Hence, reference to the second law of thermodynamics contradicts claims of the Quran about eternal torments beyond sustenance. To

figure out the relation between text and meaning, physics and Islam construct "aporia" of the narrative as inexplicable and detached argument cloaked in logic (Derrida, 1967). It is implied in the tendency to quote incomplete verses from the Quran and ignore what follows. Logic exploits religion to create suspicion. Not only does it scavenge beliefs to justify doubts and irrational attitudes, it also criticizes the Quran for its phonemes:

> Syllables . . . the ecstatic flow of "I"s and "a"s and guttural catches in the throat, savoring of the cries and the gallantry of mounted robed warriors under the cloudless sky of Arabia Deserta. (Updike, 2006, p. 168)

Hence, the narrative depicts criticism of faith as well as Arabic language in which the religion was revealed. Unacceptability of Islam rising from the Arabian Desert persists in the heart of this narrative that well explains American resentment of Islam. Description of a "cloudless sky" in chapter 1 indicates mercilessness associated with Muslims in the context of their war history. It shows Islam as a hopeless religion. Through such phrases the novel shows a racist predisposition of the writer veiled in historical details. It does not generate new criticism but reworks racism in the form of religious apprehension and fear as its prominent constituents. Image construction of Muslims as terrorists owes to the history-long supremacy of the West that had deemed Muslims as a great "threat to Christendom" since the thirteenth century (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 19). The exiled "Morisco" population (Muslim converts to Christianity) lived in a close connection to their old culture and religion in the American territory. Hence, "the notion of infidel Muslim as a menacing figure was transferred into America" (Gomez, 2005). "Moorish in feeling" is a reference that indicates historical antagonism of Americans toward Muslims (Updike, 2006, p. 14). Movements of the 1960s such as the Nation of Islam appeared as a Muslim threat to white Christian Americans.

Another binary opposition of this novel is represented through a conflict between Islam and Christianity. The face of Islam as fanatic and radical in contrast to Christianity's benign and flexible disposition is an assault exaggeratedly made appealing and believable by supplementing false notes. The novel narrates a series of events through Ahmad's consciousness to make it more dramatic. The narrator's voice is clearly distinct from Ahmad. "A third-person narrative" conceives the entire action through Ahmad's character (Jahn, 2007, p. 95). It reinforces the Islamic idea of "unforgiving fire." False notes are scattered throughout the novel to loathe Muslims and their faith and create uncertainties in a reader's mind. "Muhammad could not proclaim the fact of eternal fire too often" (Updike, 2006, p. 7). The same passage describes "the deeds and thoughts" of human beings "written in the Prophet's consciousness in letters of gold, like the burning words of electrons that a

computer creates of pixels as we tap the keyboard" (Updike, 2006, p. 7). The narrative earlier drew analogies from physics. Now it counts on computer science to falsify Islamic beliefs. This attitude clearly emerges 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, 2006, p. 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, 2006, p. 17). 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.

Discussion of computer technology also demonstrates the influence of electronic media in American life. By "setting up a website," the technology has made it easier for tourists to travel around the country (Updike, 2006, p. 27). These statements intend to draw the reader's attention to the use of the internet and media in the 9/11 attacks. It adheres to the anti-racist scholars who sensed and expressed its concern of the "web" as a dangerous instrument for "racist activism" (Back et al., 2009). "Eastern metropolitan areas" fear attacks where "the enemies of freedom have been studying with the most sophisticated tools of reconnaissance" to explore and investigate their targets (Updike, 2006, p. 43). The portrayal of Muslims as "enemies" is overemphasized by obsession to hit the holy sites, "financial center, sports arenas, bridges, tunnels, subways" (Updike, 2006, p. 43). They are compared to "old communist archenemies" with intentions to destroy America by imposing "an ascetic and dogmatic tyranny" (Updike, 2006, p. 47). To earn profit, capitalism gives access to consume "everything." Therefore, "everything" in America is at stake. Expansion in the US economy is a major component that affected perspectives of racism. Capitalism in America established social class hierarchies when Jefferson raised the slogan of "divided we stand, united we fall" (cited in Lewis, 1990). In the contemporary era, the slogan turned against Muslims. History and structural dynamics of racism produced "perpetual social advantages of the dominant social identity group, that is, white people in America" (Wellman, 1993, p. 2). White characters in the novel represent the privileged class. The American attempt "to increase the circulation of capital" expanded consumerism that turned the economic, political, and social structures into materialism. Although Islam has its own concept of capitalism to safeguard the rights of individuals, American capitalism stands in opposition to Islamic virtues in this novel. This presents a biased and discriminatory approximation to show how Muslims may threaten the American system under the influence of their ardent Islamic beliefs. American capitalism entrapped the immigrants who are termed as "religious fanatics and computer geeks" (Updike, 2006, p. 27). The internet as a source of spreading consumerism has played a crucial role in the stereotypes of

Islam and Muslims. The text demonstrates racism "refashioned" as an eco-
nomic ideology to satisfy imperialistic needs (Lance, 2002). American media
has been portraying Muslims as enemies, "the unbelievers love this fleet-
ing life too well: that was another verse that kept coming up in the internet
chatter" (Updike, 2006, p. 48). Ahmad perceives American leaders as flag
holders to make "Americans . . . selfish and materialistic, to play their part in
consumerism." This conviction is brought in conflict to the Islamic prospect
that supports "the human spirits ask[ing] for self-denial" longing "to say no
to the physical world" (Updike, 2006, p. 72). Ahmad does not find "televi-
sion" encouraging "clean thoughts" at any point (Updike, 2006, p. 172).
Chehab, Ahmad's associate in the bombing plot, invites him to contemplate
over American commercialism that intends to turn them "into machines for
consuming-the chicken-coop society" (Updike, 2006, p. 173).

   "Man never wearies of praying for good things, says the forty-first sura . . .
there is plenty of time for [Ahmad] . . . to be forgiven for materialism"
(Updike, 2006, p. 152). Quoting verses that announce "carpets and couches
in Paradise" is a direct criticism of Islam. Islam's denouncement of worldly
comforts exposes the writer's intentions of foregrounding the irony of verses
(Updike, 2006, p. 152).

   The narrative symbolizes America reaching the heights of modernity and
flexibility. Ahmad's opinions are primitive and inflexible. Exposed to a lib-
eral and advanced environment in high school, Ahmad anticipates hellfire for
the white American girls. Picturing "her smooth body, darker than caramel
but paler than chocolate," Ahmad apprehends it "roasting in that vault of
flames . . . being scorched into blister" (Updike, 2006, p. 9). Half verses
from the Quran such as "Be ruthless to unbelievers" (Updike, 2006, p. 294)
and recitation of "Hutama, the crushing fire," is to emphasize a dreadful and
appalling image of hell for "nonbelievers" (Updike, 2006, p. 6). Citation of
surahs to convey destruction of nonbelievers who came to attack the holy
ka'aba mocks Muslim beliefs in God's omnipotence to take care of His place
of worship (Updike, 2006, p. 101). The narrative through counterargument
quotes verses from the Quran to arouse speculation in the reader's mind.
"In your wives and children you have an enemy." The novel's argument
contradicts the verse by posing a question, "But your wives and children!
What is enemy about them? Why should they need forgiveness?" (Updike,
2006, p. 108).

   The text mocks Islamic rituals, most often by cracking jokes: "What sort
of baby boys do you think we would make? Will they be born half circum-
cised?" (Updike, 2006, p. 23). It ridicules Islam for its obligation on women
when the Prophet "advise[d the women] to cover their ornaments" (Updike,
2006, p. 67). Muslim scholars have defined the ritual of circumcision as a rul-
ing of God carried out by all Muslims to show submission. Muslims believe

that God never gives a ruling without an implied wisdom that may quite often not be visible. As a "beautification enjoined by Allah," circumcision "entered into the religion Ibraheemi," which symbolized those who yielded and believed in God as the only Creator. Circumcision can also be understood as baptism (to purify a newborn) in Christianity. Religion of God is "Hanifiyyah" (pure monotheism) that manifests itself in "fitrah" (natural state of man). Muslim men's bodies are marked with "the characteristics of the fitrah." Under pseudo-Islamic philosophies, Western scholars and media have been attempting to report Islamic rituals as false. On the internet, circumcision has been reported as contrary to the teachings of the Quran. The practice is allegedly harmful and Satan's pledge to manipulate God's creations (Web source). However, the authentic Hadith books *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim* quote Abu Hurairah, the Prophet's companion, reporting "Five things are fitrah: circumcision, shaving pubic hair, trimming the mustache, paring one's nails and plucking the hair from one's armpits" (Bukhari, Book 72; Hadith, Book 779). Western medical researchers agree to document the benefits of circumcision for personal hygiene and particularly against cancer of the penis, sexually transmitted diseases, and contracting AIDS (Wright, 1970, pp. 50–53; Wisewell, 1991, pp. 424–31; Russell, 1993; Oh et al., 2002; p. 426–32; O'Farrell et al., 2005, p. 556–59; O'Farrell et al., 2008, p. 821–23). Western scholars have also associated and debated female circumcision as highly inhumane, mutating woman's reproductive abilities. However, no reference is found in the Quran or other authentic Islamic books on female circumcision. Although many African Muslim countries are found practicing female circumcision today, the practice is reported to have existed before the advent of Islam. In such countries the practice is purely cultural and Islam has no association with that. It is merely propaganda and mockery that Updike's text brings forward to reiterate Western misconceptions of Islamic rituals.

The text mentions the name of Muhammad frequently to demonstrate "violen[ce] . . . stamped in the foundation" of Islam (Huntington, 1996, p. 263):

> [Sheikh Rashid] seeks to soften the Prophet's words, to make them blend with human reason but they were not meant to blend: they invade our human softness like a sword. (Updike, 2006, p. 7)

A conversation between Ahmad and Joryleen uses the Prophet's name to contradict Christian thoughts. "Tylenol says the Lord loves a sporty woman. What does your Mr. Mohammad say?" (Updike, 2006, p. 67). This overgeneralization portrays the Prophet's personality as ancient and conservative to rationalize the monolithic image of Islam.

Chapter 2 of the novel opens with the description of the church to restate the conflict of the narrative between Christianity and Islam. Updike, instead of making this description a religious preamble, foregrounds what a Muslim might think of the church, Jesus, and congregation in such a situation. "To worship a God known to have died" (Updike, 2006, p. 49) is the subjective idea of the narrator imposed through Ahmad. Rarities are inevitable. However, these might suggest Updike's own confused conception of God. His novel at times conforms to the notion of "God's gamble."

Updike highlights the stereotypical sexual image of Muslims. Phrases such as "sexually mixed people" and "confused area" (congregation) indicate the author's careful choice of words to represent Muslim's mind (Updike, 2006, p. 49). The setting of Friday prayers in a mosque follows a description that is male-dominated whereas in church "women in their spring shimmer, their expensive soft flesh, dominate" (Updike, 2006, p. 50). Thus, extremity is translated through Ahmad's mind. It is an archetype of Islamic faith assumed to bequeath domination of men that envisions women inferior and subordinate. Although scholarship has paid attention to historical facts when Islam in Arab honored women, elevated their position, and bestowed upon them unprecedented rights. The West has frequently used women's status to develop a negative Muslim image in the form of a misconception that confuses Islam with "cultural practices." The Quran in numerous places announces women's equality to men, evenly balancing their roles and responsibilities. But this novel cites a dark patriarchal image of Islam as an oppressor of women. The narrator's description of American women through Ahmad's mind mocks the Muslim male gaze and conventions that suppress women. "Your wives are your field: go in, therefore, to your field as ye will" (Updike, 2006, p. 156). Women are referred to as "pollution" in the same passage (Updike, 2006, p. 156). The text overtly articulates its perception of Islam as oppressive and a monolithic and incompatible religion in contrast to modernity. In its opposition, Ahmad's mother represents the image of a liberal American. "I can't of course, but I have never tried to undermine his faith" (Updike, 2006, p. 85).

"A woman should serve a man, not try to own him" (Updike, 2006, p. 86). Statements such as these undermine Muslim women's status as defined by the Quran. However, the novel merely scavenges the idea. It ignores the context that suggests the situation by supplementary details. Constant references to "houris" to increase Muslims' "appetite for paradise" sarcastically deplores the abstractions in the Islamic faith (Updike, 2006, p. 107). A desire of paradise constantly invokes Ahmad (Updike, 2006, p. 108). The words "appetite" and "desire" construct his Muslim identity as gluttonous and lecherous, which are considered deadly sins in Christianity.

The practice of "sexual promiscuity" counteracts Islamic values (Esposito, 1992, p. 45). The stereotypical image of Muslims as "sexual predators"

maintains the victimization of the white women by Muslim immigrants (Bhatti-Sinclair, 2020; Cockbain and Tufail, 2020). This notion creates an important theme of the novel. It implies the idea of Islam as a religion that undermines the sexual desires of Muslim men. The appearance and beauty of white women seize Ahmad's attention, but his conscience warns him against any sexual relationship. Ahmad is prey to sexual desires for his schoolmate Joryleen Grant. Ahmad is under the strong influence of Joryleen. His "heart beats as it did that night with Joryleen" (Updike, 2006, p. 279). Muslim faith forbids me to touch a woman until wedlock. The novel exploits this obligation by projecting Ahmad with a desire to have sex with a white woman. Supplementary sentences of the narrative show a constant confusion and unrest in Ahmad's mind about Joryleen who "had made herself vulnerable" (Updike, 2006, p. 11). His encounter with Joryleen in chapter 4 indicates his inner conflict. This relationship overpowers his faith, even as the words of Imam Sheikh Rashid constantly hammer his mind, "Eden, straight path, hellfire. . . . " The situation depicts a scorn to his failing faith. The text quotes verses of the Quran in a situation like this. "Women are his fields" (Updike, 2006, p. 221). Verses of the Quran are quoted to reproach Islamic teachings. The scene follows Ahmad's repentance (Updike, 2006, p. 235). Updike quotes verses from the Quran to draw analogies between what faith asks Muslims and their terrorist dispositions. "Heaven will split asunder beneath the Western river. The light shall be admitted" (Updike, 2006, p. 259). He deliberately chooses verses that articulate destruction. "Have We not lifted up your heart and relieved you of the burden which weighed down your back?" (Updike, 2006, p. 229).

The novel conceives a conservative, aggressive, and hostile point of view of Islamic values and beliefs. White female bodies as "fire fuel" are symbolic of the major contradictions in Ahmad's mind that serve as an obstruction for Ahmad's character development. Ahmad recognizes a utopian Muslim society that ensures protection of women's bodies against American society. The narrative promotes the misconception. "The world is difficult, he thinks, because devils are busy in it, confusing things and making the straight crooked" (Updike, 2006, p. 11).

The novel does not directly refer to genealogy, skin, and color because biological or scientific racism has lost its credibility. Recently, racism evolved more closely in the form of cultural and religious differences resulting from "social paranoia pervasive in social interaction" (Jackson, 2006). The novel constructs Ahmad's identity mostly in "the idioms of religion" (Fredrickson, 2002). Joryleen criticizes his wearing a "clean white shirt every day, like some preacher" (Updike, 2006, p. 9). Ahmad "knows, vanity in his costume" (Updike, 2006, p. 10). It shows transgression of Muslims for their preference of white, though it is symbolic of peace and harmony in all religions,

particularly Christianity. For him, the situation is complex "being a devoted Muslim living in a modern society" (Mishra, 2008, p. 173). Therefore, denouncement of Americans is a contradiction that arises from the text much too emphasize values of Islam. Not hereditary but "unalterable differences" in the form of religions' discreteness impel hostility and negative attitude of the socially dominant "group to exclude or . . . eliminate other" (Fredrickson, 2002). Termed as "innate and unchangeable," however, the narrative holds these differences in a transition during the course of Ahmad's character development (Fredrickson, 2002). In these circumstances, his extremism and training appear flawed. The narrative asserts a preconceived opinion by representing Islamic beliefs as innate to Muslims, with a power to drive them easily toward fundamentalism. Modern racist discourse calls it racism in the form of apprehension before any kind of judgment is exercised (Bernstein, 1996).

The text signifies a conflict between two faiths as well as two civilizations that are at extreme polar opposites of each other by distinctive religious creeds. It is noteworthy to state that Updike must have used his experience in order to produce details regarding Islam and the Quran as an attempt to provide his novel credibility and authenticity. He paints the character of Ahmad completely under the stress of faith. Still there exists a gap between vision and reality. Class, ethnicity, caste, and tribe divide "moribund" Muslim characters, ideas supported to show them "hollow [in] nature" (Sayyid, 1997, p. 1).

European and American hegemony often conceives Islam a hazard for European countries and America that threatens the solidarity of region. Reversal of hierarchies compose the main idea of the novel (Derrida, 1967). Updike highlights the "essentialized differences" between Islam and America in the context of religion (Fredrickson, 2002). The point of view of the narrator unites various strings of the novel that cause conflicts. Ironical alienation and confusion in the mind of "born and bred" American Muslim Ahmad perpetuate his stereotypical image. 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" reflects the insanity of Ahmad's mind that views "the singe of hellfire" for Americans (Updike, 2006, p. 17). It develops Ahmad's image as a psychopath with an 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 needs 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, 2006, p. 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, 2006, p. 11).

It is undebatable that the increased courage of the media brought European concern of Jews as an "internal enemy and the Muslims external enemy" (Anidjar, 2003). However, anti-Muslim racism undermined anti-Semitism in post-9/11 America. The novel's insinuation of Jews' control of the American economy makes it plausible to avoid harsh criticism of Jewish characters. A Jewish character, Jack Levy, is chosen to unfold Ahmad's actions. Ahmad's character opposes Christians as well as Jews, not merely an opponent but under their strong influence. Though Levy's character is equally reproachful of America, he asserts dominance over Ahmad. The novel ironically portrays a Jewish American character counseling Ahmad to save America due to the fact that racism against Jews and "Black others" (Boswell, 1998) is humbled in post-9/11 America. It implies a technique to manipulate enemies through enemies so that a direct encounter is avoided. Levy envisions America as "paved solid with fat and tar, a coast-to-coast tar baby where we're all stuck." It exposes the narrative's intentions through Levy's anticipation of America falling prey to terrorism at the hands of Muslim fanatics because of the presence of various immigrant communities (Updike, 2006, p. 27). His character signifies that Muslims are the cause of every trouble. He perceives America as an army. It bespeaks of the narrative's implied and sustained notions of supremacy over Jews and Muslims. Levy's American wife, Beth (Lutheran by creed), symbolizes America, where they "all are stuck" (Updike, 2006, p. 27). He displays irritation and disgust to his wife, her size and fears. It connotes Jews' hostility toward America and its mesmerizing power to trap foreigners. It presents the contradiction of the narrative, which is a technique to assert its subjective opinion. Reference to Beth's religious faith outlines the historical anti-Judaism controversy of Europeans and Americans. Beth symbolizes American fear of terrorism. Her sister Hermione, a secretary at Homeland Security in Washington, DC, is a source of information to Levy about Ahmad's terrorist plan. Both sisters represent America suspecting all Muslims as terrorists.

Deconstruction looks at the narrative's depiction of Muslims' and Jews' hostility as an apprehension of the writer fearing American downfall. Both Levy and Ahmad manifest religious intensity. Levy depicts a mature, vibrant, and radiant faith symbolic of anti-Islam incarnation in contrast to Ahmad (Updike, 2006, p. 19–20). Levy is surprised to find Ahmad zealous in pursuing truck driving as career. Conceived as hard and tough, truck drivers refuse to mold themselves in any circumstance. This coarse and unyielding image of Ahmad represents his hard-core nature as a Muslim. Truck driving also signifies control and command of steering a huge vehicle, symbolic of America in the present case. Levy comes forth as Ahmad's savior. This is an ironical endorsement of Jews over Muslims. Jews and Christians projected as "god" figures with flexible religious beliefs undermine Ahmad's character:

Look how Christianity committed genocide on the native Americans and undermined Asia and Africa and now is coming after Islam, with everything in Washington run by the Jews to keep themselves in Palestine. (Updike, 2006, p. 38)

It also implies anti-Semitic sentiments. However, deconstruction unravels the narrative's fear of Muslim hegemony. Finding faith at eleven years old and with a desire to drive trucks amplifies Ahmad's character as a reactionary; "America wants to take away my God" (Updike, 2006, p. 39). The novel indicates "intuition" of America's subjugation (Vouloumanos and Waxman, 2014, p. 165). Ahmad's thoughts foreshadow his surrender in the last pages at the plausible arguments of Levy, "we're all Americans here. That's the idea" (Updike, 2006, p. 301).

Literary texts represent Islam and Muslims as "disproportionately fearsome" and excoriate Islam to rationalize "the Islamic threat" and prove "that militant Islam is dangerous to the West" (Said, 2000, p. 1). Assaults on Muslims articulate fear of Islam (Said, 2000, p. 1). Texts support the idea explicitly or implicitly that behind every racist attack on Muslims in America is Islamic ideology as the root cause of extremism This conforms to the idea of racism as a "moving target" changing and adapting multiple definitions according to the global scenario. Islamic ideology and the thoughts of Muslim characters are painted with aggression as inherent philosophy. Contradictions are constructed to explain the narrative's point of view in order to captivate the reader's attention.

The narrative uses racial profiling as a technique to portray Muslim stereotypes. Sheikh Rashid, the imam, has a weak disposition in comparison to his disciple Ahmad, who is 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" (Updike, 2006, p. 7). These illustrations create a desolate image of Islam. Islamic teachings need interpretation rather than to be understood literally. The narrator allegedly penetrates into the minds of characters to illustrate the point of view of the story. Criticizing the ideas and beliefs inculcated in a youngster's mind, the narrator's "politically fraught nature," set to explain how a teenage Muslim American is trained to explode oneself. The novel conceives Muslim characters into stereotypes of terrorism. It classifies Ahmad's religiosity under antagonism by two religions, Christianity and Judaism (Updike, 2006, p. 53–55). Here a historical manifestation of racism in the form of religious fear dominates the discourse of the novel. Racist ideologies rest upon religion as the main constituent of difference. The novel raises much suspicion and warning against religion among its readers. "And all the children of Islam murmured against Moses and against Aaron" (Updike, 2006, p. 55).

It is very important to understand the point of view of the novel to expose the intentions of the writer. Quite often fiction writers opt for a narrator and keep themselves detached to avoid a biased perspective. In this novel an omniscient narrator looks at the world from various perspectives to discern the feelings and thoughts of each character. The broad logic it applies is a generalized misconception of Islam as a threat to America and Europe. A skillful writer, Updike directs his readers' attention to the details and ideas he wants to establish by employing the narrative's point of view.

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)

Above-mentioned verses are quoted from the Quran to indicate an anti-Islam point of view in the novel. The novel articulates a self-assumed, inherently violent nature of Islam to safeguard America's exclusive authority over the Muslim world. Muslims are assumed to irrationally follow a creed that leads them to fanaticism. The text also supports the notion of Muslim jealousy of the West for its liberal ways of life and economic prosperity.

The enemy cannot believe that democracy and consumerism are fevers in the blood of Everyman, an outgrowth of each individual's instinctive optimism and desire for freedom. . . . They want to turn [us] into machines for consuming . . . the chicken coop—society. (Updike, 2006, p. 48–172)

The narrative refers to the conceptual conflicts between America and Islam. "It is society that fears getting old . . . infidels do not know how to die" (Updike, 2006, p. 174). No attempt was successful in eliminating the "unchanged . . . Crusader Europe" (Updike, 2006, p. 112), particularly America, which has equated Muslims with enemies based on historical grievances:

It was Islam, Sheikh Rashid had more than once explained, that had preserved
the science and simple mechanisms of the Greeks when all Christian Europe
held in its barbarism forgotten such things. (Updike, 2006, p. 142)

Deconstructing reveals the mockery aimed to prove the shallowness of
the claims of Muslims' historical achievements. It articulates a denial of the
history. Sheikh Rashid becomes the mouthpiece to define the century's long
antagonism and conflict. Moreover symbolic of Muslim and white American
structure, the text positions Americans at its privileged pole in contrast to
Muslim characters at the lowest rank of socioeconomic hierarchy. Ahmad,
positioned in the lower hierarchy of American social structure, works for
his survival. It exposes the writer's perception of others at inferior posi-
tions. "Stereotypes of a static, irrational, retrogressive anti-modern religious
tradition were to be perpetuated by scholars . . . in the twentieth century"
(Esposito, 1992, p. 46).

Islam does not have a fear of "scientific truth . . . Allah had formed the
physical world" (Updike, 2006, p. 142). The novel does not show a compre-
hensive understanding of Islam. Contrarily, it shows Muslims thinking of
America as "a base world." "Ahmad feels clean in the truck, cut off from the
base world, its streets full of dogs' filth . . . he feels clean and free" (Updike,
2006, p. 157).

The sermon of the priest in chapter 2 relates historical events. Scattered
on ten pages of the novel, it highlights Christian-Jew religious disparity.
Reference to Israelites as people who refused to submit to Moses and Joshua
is a regular reinforcement of the stereotype of Jews being strong-headed
and rebels. The sermon also evokes Muslim-Jew controversy, both descen-
dants of Ismail and Isaac, respectively. Therefore, both Arabs and Jews are
set in conflict with Christians. The priest invokes faith in the congregation
(Updike, 2006, p. 58–59) that rests finally in "The Lord of Jesus" and the
"Lord of Mary" (Updike, 2006, p. 61). The novel enacts the entire situation
to mock faith and present religion as "glory for a change" (Updike, 2006, p.
57). The presence of Ahmad among Christian Congregationalists represents
assimilation of Muslims into other faiths. The sermon attributes the historical
anguish and affliction of Christians to Jews and Muslims. Muslims exemplify
a nihilistic and fanatic image of despising the very notion of freedom and
modernity. Ahmad thinks about the priest who "in his kafir way wrestling
with devils" (Updike, 2006, p. 61).

Language interprets the situation within context. To construe ideology, it
is a source to undo the meaning and arrest the "referential" and differential
characteristics of truth (Derrida, 1967). Derrida defines truth as "a relational
property" (Derrida, 1967). Desire to arrest an "absolute truth" and claim
supremacy remains the main feature of American dominance ideology; a

pivotal concept to construct variety of meaning and develop various interpretations. It is the "metaphysics of presence"; the technique adopted to present the object the way we want to perceive it (Derrida, 1967). Using explicit sarcastic language is Updike's presentation technique to illustrate Islam as monolithic and radical, a subjective and predetermined opinion. His choice of religion as his subject matter demonstrates his sense of American supremacy. Deconstruction identifies the "origin or referent" by oppositions. In the present case, American "logocentrism" opposes the conservative and ancient face of Islam (Derrida, 1967).

Ahmad's criticism of "weak Christian and non-observant Jews" portrays him as a Muslim detesting other religions (Updike, 2006, p. 3). It is "mental" rather than "absolute truth" constructed as "a part of the flow of [Ahmad's] conscious experience" (Derrida, 1967). That "essentialized" difference is assumed a part of Islamic belief in the form of apposition and condemnation of other religions (Fredrickson, 2002). Ahmad's thoughts and actions delineate him as a foreigner and a threat to the environment. His interactions with Joryleen often highlight Christian-Muslim controversy identifying the relation within religious global conflicts. Yet it is marked with racist notions, as religion has been the contemporary tool of the modern American world to despise and reject Muslim. Looking at the "white devils," Christians in the church, Ahmad conforms to the notion brought forward by the Nation of Islam in the 1960s, which politicized Islam and was deserted by its high-profile leaders such as Malcolm X and others due to its radical approach of conflating white Americans to devils. Even the Nation of Islam and its other contemporary movements in America with political implications failed to show the true spirit of Islam to the world. Rather, these extremist movements added much to disfigure its face. Unfortunately, most Americans know these Islamic foundations as representatives of Islam today. Portrayal of Ahmad as a disciple of the Nation of Islam against white Americans is the novel's exploitation of historical details adjusted in the existing situation of America. Islam's association with "phobia," however, is not merely the result of the strenuous social scenarios and events but an enduring historical record that highlights conflicts between Islam and the West.

The narrator's perspective lends the novel an irrational fear. Normally phobia as a form of irrational fear appears as a response to horrific and painful events. Written in the backdrop of 9/11, *Terrorist* sustains phobia as a significant element establishing a relationship between religion and racism.

Its arguments supported by history reveal the conflict between Islam and the Western world in general and America in particular. With the historical animosity and horrors of present events, anti-Islam and anti-Muslim rhetoric got an enormous expansion in post-9/11 America. Muslim Americans are considered "un-American" due to their faith. Although as a "political

fabrication," racism changed its expression constantly and manifested political agenda in religious hatred (Winant, 2014). Intricately woven social, economic, cultural, and political components remain significant characteristics to foster society. Religion governs all these features in contemporary America. It is difficult to dismantle one without affecting the other. This dominance pertains to the changing global scenario that has accentuated religion as the core cause of all differences. As a supreme component of experience, ethnocultural differences decisively lead to validate racism against Muslims. Behavior and dress as ethnocultural markers are the essentials to portray Muslims as highly incapacitated and inept to adopt modern American ways of life (Fredrickson, 2002). Levy and Beth's marriage (a Jew and a Christian), "a brave mismatch, a little loving mud in history's eye" (Updike, 2006, p. 25), also represents ethnocultural differences. The narrative adheres to what Fredrickson upheld as the root cause of eliminating "other" (2002). Following authorial agenda, the narrative utilizes Islamic faith to serve a racist purpose conforming to "ethnocultural" as well as political expression of racism manifested in Islamophobia (Huntington, 1997).

Conflict between Islam and America originates from the Islamic philosophy promoting solidarity and believing in community life, contrary to the American notion of individuality, "you believe this, I believe that, we all get along—that's the American way" (Updike, 2006, p. 39). The text insinuates fear of Islam as a faith that believes in community life. The concept of "Ummah" is a considerable "aporia" of the text (Derrida, 1967). Chehab performs the role of mentor after assigning Ahmad the task of bombing America. As a mouthpiece of the writer, he represents meditative Islamic philosophy. "In America, nothing is free, everything is a fight. There is no Ummah, no shari'a" (Updike, 2006, p. 147). Sheikh Rashid and Chehab designate the "empty air [as] the perfect symbol of American freedom. There is no Ummah here" (Updike, 2006, p. 167):

> He [God] sent his Prophet, and the Prophet created a community. Without the Ummah, the knowledge and practice of belonging to a righteous group, faith is a seed that bears no fruit. (Updike, 2006, p. 231)

The above illustration elaborates the concealed philosophy of the text. American supremacy faces a threat, and constant fear of domination works throughout the novel. It also foregrounds the American image that nurtures the concept of individualism to determine the Islamic concept of Ummah. It appears the text's conscious effort to relate fundamentalism to Islam in order to mar the face of Islam in the eyes of an "average reader" who is compelled to view both as the same thing (Said, 1997).

The dominant anti-Islam discourse in the wake of 9/11 led to questions in the minds of Western, particularly American, people: "why do they hate us" (Updike, 2006, p. 48). Hermione asks the same question. Western scholars investigated its answer by assuming "Islam inherently violent, fundamentally anti-modern, unable to develop politically or economically without external intervention, and all the while disheveled in impotent, anti-Western rage" (Lewis cited in Lyons, 2012, p. 115). The novel promotes a negative consideration of Islam. It views American society through Ahmad's eyes and mind as "kafir, confused, impure, infidel, sex-obsessed," that outlines it as a conflicting narrative between believers and nonbelievers. Ahmad is a tool at the hands of his teacher at the mosque who looks at America and its "whites," as well as "black" people, as "infidels." The novel creates identity of the mosque as a terrorist training camp where adults are brainwashed to visualize America as a devil. Anti-Islamic propositions are regarded an explanation of Muslims' terrorism. The narrative takes a politically fabricated argument to lead the masses into Anti-Muslim beliefs. American history is filled with instances of dominance for economic and political reasons. Arab countries are self-sufficient in natural resources. At the same time, there exists a clash among Middle Eastern countries that politically attracts America for intervention. Americans consider it their right to go "into enemy territory . . . [that has] a good tight grip on the milk and honey" (Updike, 2006, p. 58). Deconstruction disentangles milk and honey as metaphors for oil in Arab countries. It also articulates other existing natural resources in Asian Muslim territories. America intervenes to rationalize "histories of [its] imperial conquest" (Werbner, 1997).

The novel brings forward the concept of "Jihad" perceived through Ahmad's mind (Updike, 2006, p. 183). The text scavenges verses of the Quran about Jihad frequently to construct Muslims and Islam "as a single civilizational bloc always at or near a state of all-out religious warfare with the West" (Lyons, 2012, p. 117). "Mohamed is Allah's Apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers but merciful to one another" (Updike, 2006, p. 183). Muslims believe "Western powers steal . . . oil, they take [their] land . . . They take [their] God" (Updike, 2006, p. 188). The text refers to the process of racialization of Islam and Muslims in America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Ahmad claims it is America that "take[s] from Muslims their traditions and sense of themselves, the pride in themselves that all men are entitled to" (Updike, 2006, p. 188). In his mind "the image recurs in Rashid's sermons; in illustration of the futility of America's crusade against Islam" (Updike, 2006, p. 183). Such arguments reiterate that race and religion are the major components of modern-day discourse. Racial profiling of Muslim characters in fiction lays its foundation in the close relationship of religion and "the modern configuration of racism" (Rana, 2007, p.

150). "Identity markers" such as dress, physical appearance, and language are superimposed to draw Muslim figures. Sheikh Rashid's character is the mastermind behind the terrorist plot. He is a man of cool and calm disposition. His sermons and preaching gradually alter Ahmad's mind to prepare him for a suicide bombing. He is the demigod of Islamic teaching with special skills on notions of jihad and martyrdom. The contemporary world is familiar with the stereotypical image of imam. The novel's representation of a Muslim imam emerges out of American fears of reversal of hierarchy in the global scenario (Derrida, 1967). Sheikh's preaching constantly hammers Ahmad's mind.

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 (sheikh) said the college track exposed me to corrupting influences—bad philosophy and bad literature. Western culture is Godless. (p. 38)

He (sheikh) 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, 2006, p. 91).

His authority and possession is reminiscent in the pronoun "my." Imperatives in his conversation to Ahmad such as "maintain," "read," "sweep," "remember," "proceed," "strengthen," and "stress" depict his influence on Ahmad as a master (Updike, 2006, p. 102). "Read it to me" (Updike, 2006, p. 101).

Sheikh Rashid living "twenty years among these infidels" "takes pride in his fluency in their language" (Updike, 2006, p. 168). This constructs an image to show the imam of a mosque as politically steering Muslim youth to blow up Americans. His intention is to make money. His character reflects extreme hatred of Americans; "the cockroaches that slither out from the baseboard and from beneath the sink—do you pity them" (Updike, 2006, p. 76). His character depiction is to denote the assumed Muslims' attitude beyond any sympathy and acceptance for Americans. For Ahmad's mother, Sheikh Rashid is "very smooth and proper." However, she "could feel hatred. To him [she] was a piece of unclean meat" (Updike, 2006, p. 167). His racial profiling "bearded face" is the instrument that the narrative utilizes in amplifying his personality as a Muslim fanatic. His philosophies and interpretations bespeak of Islam "as the antithesis of everything [American]" (Lyons, 2012,

p. 117). His sermons wash Ahmad's brain and prepare him for his "istish-had . . . [the] self-sacrifice . . . becoming a part of [Ahmad]" (Updike, 2006, p. 236). Sheikh's character constructs the identity of Muslims in the language of war, fear, and terror. It leads to an understanding of racial profiling of Islam and Muslims materialized in the form of Islamophobia. Rather than physical or cultural notions, racism incorporates itself in the fear of religion. The text raises questions against the practices of Muslims, particularly in Nigeria where "mullahs" (imams/clerics) tell "people not to let their children be given polio vaccine, and then the kids are brought in paralyzed to the health-aid clinic" (Updike, 2006, p. 258). This refers to American-aid programs started for underdeveloped countries. The conversation holds a capitalist tone of the novel. The discourse manipulates religion and Islamic clerics are deemed responsible for the failure of health programs.

The narrative uses the master and students' perspective to expose the meaning of jihad. "Many study the Book; few die for it. Fewer given your opportunity to prove its truth" (Updike, 2006, p. 237). Ahmad's physical condition shows his anxiety and restlessness over the plan execution. The text grows sympathetic here. "His self–sacrifice . . . becoming a part of him, a live, helpless thing like his heart, his stomach, his pancreas gnawing away with its chemicals and enzymes" (Updike, 2006, p. 236). Ahmad seems innocent and a play tool at the hand of wicked and crooked characters such as Sheikh Rashid and Chehab. "He that fights for Allah's cause, the twenty-nine sura says, fights for himself" (Updike, 2006, p. 228). Faith controls him.

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 the West" (Esposito, 1992, p. 169). It is to condition the way in which non-Muslims treat Muslims. American characters in the novel share the same opinion of Islam and Muslims. Ahmad's mother, Teresa, clearly denounces Islamic beliefs in chapter 2 of the book: "I've never believed in people being pots of clay, to be shaped" (Updike, 2006, p. 90). Islam teaches the doctrine of all human beings as products of clay shaped in various molds. Teresa is weary of the situation and behaves indifferently toward Ahmad, particularly his religious matters. "If Ahmad believes in God so much, let God take care of him" (Updike, 2006, p. 91). Her words articulate American philosophy of individualism. "Life is something to be lived, let it happen" (Updike, 2006, p. 91). Another American character, Tylenol (Ahmad's schoolfellow) reserves a partial and biased attitude toward Ahmad. He mocks Ahmad for being of Arab origin. "A flying fuck is when you do it to yourself, like all you Arabs do. You all faggots" (Updike, 2006, p. 98). Joryleen also discourages Ahmad, saying he "still" has his "head up there in Arab Neverland" (Updike, 2006, p. 219). Beth calls Muslims "Baptist fundamentalist, only worse, because they don't care if they die" (Updike, 2006,

p. 131). She even quotes the Prophet's name to reinforce her statements. She refers to mischievous high school boys who mock Muslims calling themselves "Mohammedans just to annoy their parents" (Updike, 2006, p. 131). Beth is extremely fearful of Muslims and bombing. She quite often recalls the fall of 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, 2006, p. 132). Her sister Hermione shares similar sentiments: "they're working on stopping us. Everywhere, anywhere—all it takes is a little bomb, a few guns" (Updike, 2006, p. 132). The narrative intertwines the particular concept of American supremacy with Islam. "The Americans fell back, but stood up to the British well enough to show the French they were worth supporting" (Updike, 2006, p. 182). America's image as an open and welcoming society deliberately places a primitive image of Islam spilling over differences of all kind. "An open society is so defenseless. Everything the modern free world has achieved is so fragile" (Updike, 2006, p. 132). Its defenselessness and fragility is an implicit criticism on American policy of inviting and accommodating immigrants. Chehab calls Americans "sick," "full of indigestion," "impoten[t]" (Updike, 2006, p. 174). Ahmad calls it "a society that fears getting old" (Updike, 2006, p. 174). A "fragile and misbegotten nation," he calls it (Updike, 2006, p. 177). It discloses the anxiety and fear of Muslims "rooted" in the "fear of terrorist violence or radicalization" and the "uncertainties about social marginalization, phenomena of spatial disintegration, and religion practices" (Peter and Ortega, 2014, p. 312). Contrasting an American picture with Islam asserts the writer's identity embedded in "whiteness" (Hubel et al., 2011, p. 210). Americans fear that rapid growth in the number of immigrants may decentralize them. They would be socially marginalized in the growing Muslim religious practices and lose their American Christian/secular identity. Levy well exposes the implied message of the text in the following sentences:

> Before Israel, Muslims and Jews were brothers—they belonged to the margins of Christian world, the comic other in their funny clothes, entertainment for the Christians secure in their wealth, in their paper-white skin. Even with the oil, they despised us. (Updike, 2006, p. 295)

These sentences are contradictions to reveal the "dislocation" of "brothers," Muslims and Jews. Both are conflated with enemies through mimetic language.

Fear of Islam has been ticking on American clocks since the 9/11 attacks. Growing anger steadily transformed into fear through a series 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 induce counterarguments signifies the scholarly investigation to untangle the amalgamation of racism and religion. "Causes" determine all events and human actions (Cigar, 2003). This study looks at the events of 9/11 as the root cause of Islamophobia. 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, 2003). Faith as the foundation of their personality determines and develops their attitudes. The novel mirrors these details. Further, the disaster provided rationale and justification for anti-Muslim racism. It represents religion as a "guided missile" (Adams, 2004). Because religion grasps the concept of "hell" most prominently, the text articulates that fear of eternal condemnation guides these Muslim extremists to terrorism.

The entire discussion regenerates the fears and horrors of the 9/11 disaster. It translates the racist attitude of Americans toward Muslims using 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. Toward the end, it turns out to be the story of a terrorist's character development. The climax portrays Jewish characters surpassing Muslims. Throughout there is a "fear of regression" elevated to America's possible incorporation into Islamic society (Peter and Ortega, 2014, p. 313). The fear is unfolded by the action of American and Jewish characters configuring Muslims with their ideology as "undesirable and problematic" (Peter and Ortega, 2014, p. 314). Ahmad's character "being Muslim" is "far more complicated" disclosed by Levy (Cheng, 2015, p. 2). Ahmad is perceived as a threat because of his irreconcilable faith. The narrative overturns Islamic faith to position Americans at a supreme position. Contrasting American characters blemish 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, whereas faith is regarded an "essentialized" component to recognize Muslims as "others" (Fredrickson, 2002). The implied fear in the text is not about Islam as a converting force against Christianity. It is about the fear of Islam as an overriding force rising in American social and political spheres. This formulates the text "Islamophobic"; phobia created out of religious and cultural racism. The philosophy of the text is a clear denouncement of Islam and its beliefs. "Her religion is the wrong one" (Updike, 2006, p. 15). Working as an apparatus, racism in the text implies "difference and power" in the form of religious practices and assertion of American supremacy (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 9). In its powerful shape, racism reworks in the form of Islamophobia. A voluntary compromise brings Muslim characters to acceptance (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 7).

Relational and referential techniques stabilize Muslims' Islamic beliefs as something to fear in the reader's mind (Derrida, 1967). Historical and spatial knowledge of Muslim-Christian and Muslim-Jewish conflicts set the context for differences in the novel (Derrida, 1967). Derived from these conflicts, knowledge about Muslims and Islam is transferred to the reader. Anti-Islam and anti-Muslim assumptions in the form of anti-American Muslim thoughts reveal authority and authorship. Binaries in the text reveal the text's intentions—what is said was different from what it indicated. The text exhibits an irrational fear to avoid a perceived danger. The text attempts to shape an anti-Islamic ideology through implicit prejudiced details. Racism cloaks itself in the garb of religious antagonism to uphold its intentions.

Fear of Muslims grips the narrative. The binary relationship of Islam and America appears complex particularly when the narrative sympathizes with Muslim characters "possessed" by a radical approach to their religion. It signifies assimilation as a solution for characters who have a tendency "to collapse into mouth pieces for set opinions" (Yassin-Kassab, 2006). The Christian female character Hermione also reflects the novel's ruthless philosophy founded on hatred and scorn: "They hate the light. . . . Like cockroaches. Like bats" (Updike, 2006, p. 48). The narrative's sympathetic note urges Muslim characters to adopt American ways of life. Piety in Hermione's voice asks Muslims for incorporation when she quotes the Bible: "The light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not" (Updike, 2006, p. 48). Ahmad dares to ask his teacher if "in any case, shouldn't He (God) show them mercy, not gloat over their pain?" (Updike, 2006, p. 76). America promises to those who incorporate themselves in the mainstream, "Once you run out stream, [it] does not give you much. It doesn't even let you die, what with the hospitals sucking all the money they can out of Medicare" (Updike, 2006, p. 304). Levy foregrounds the American idea of integration. Ahmad's surrender at the end of the novel denotes people of different nationalities incorporating into the "melting pot" of a single American identity.

Racism situates within the realm of social and political spheres. The target readers of *Terrorist* are Americans. Perpetuation of a threatening aspect actuates fear. The text hence seems the work of a human being "racist to the extent that [it] acts discriminately on ethnically prejudicial beliefs or attitudes based on ethnic stereotyping" (Corlett, 1998, p. 23). Characterizations of Muslims in the text provide evidence to that. It is more like "a mental state one has about another" (Corlett, 1998, p. 25). The *state* pertains to the psychological state of fear in the form of "phobia" based on grievances resulting from tragic incidents—the 9/11 attacks in this case cause a persistent fear of Muslims in America. The novel does not focus on the physicality of Muslim characters. Instead, the edifice of racism rests on Muslims' religious ideology.

Chapter 3

"Turn-of-the-Century America"

Don DeLillo's Falling Man *(2007)*

Written in the milieu of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, *Falling Man* delves into various themes such as identity, loss, silence, and estrangement. The main characters of the novel are a Manhattan family who survive and struggle "to reconcile their past lives with their post-9/11 lives." The novel opens with the main characters Keith Neudecker, thirty-nine years old, among those who escaped the World Trade Center, where he worked. After the disaster he goes to the apartment of his wife, Lianne. The couple had separated quite sometime ago. Keith had rented a separate apartment within walking distance of the World Trade Center. After resuming his family routine, Keith starts indulging in domestic life again as home and family offer him comfort in this strenuous situation. However, Lianne thinks differently.

As for their marital status, they do not reconcile their sexual relationship completely. Keith has already developed an interest in another woman, Florence, who also survived the attacks. Keith mistakenly took her briefcase among the chaos of escaping the building. Their survival proves to be the common but strong component of their developing romantic relationship. Together, they meditate on their condition and ask each other if the occurrences and survival altered their personalities or they feel the same as before the fall of the Twin Towers.

Lianne also faces the confusion of an identity crisis. She relives the past after the attacks. A psychologist, she runs a support group for Alzheimer patients. The disease results in a slow and gradual loss of memory. Patients face difficulty in recalling recent events. At its extreme, the disease ends up in disorientation, language problems, de-motivation, mood swings, and many other behavioral issues. Lianne spends her time with these patients and struggles to recover and coagulate their memories by assigning them brief writing projects. Apart from this, Lianne is constantly under the stress and trauma of the 9/11 attacks. That draws her to see images of towers all

around. She shows interest in the performance of an artist called "Falling Man," who, dressed in business clothes, jumps from a tower wearing safety tackle to imitate the rescues of the 9/11 attack. Lianne's son, Justin, and his friends search the skies for "Bill Lawton" (a mispronunciation of bin Laden) using binoculars. It is a customary habit of youngsters after 9/11. Redirected emotionally toward Keith in the hope to revive her marriage, Lianne shares a close relationship with her mother, Nina. Nina is overtly against Lianne and Keith's marriage and criticizes their relationship after the attacks. She is an artist and she has decorated her apartment like a museum. Dating Martin, an art dealer, Nina often discusses the nature of God and meaning of life. Due to a difference in opinions, they separate from each other.

Meanwhile, Keith shows frustration toward the Eastern music being played in his neighborhood. The second part of the novel shows Keith finally abdicating his domestic life with Lianne and Justin and finding a position in professional poker tournaments. He often recalls his coworker, also a poker player, who embraced death when the trade center collapsed. The novel in small sections also describes the life of a Muslim Middle Easterner, Hammad, living in Manhattan. Hammad "takes flight lessons on the Gulf Coast." Consequently, his identity as one of the hijackers who attacked the Twin Towers is disclosed. A gruesome and clear image of the crash is described at the end of the novel with Keith witnessing it all with his bare eyes. It ends by predicting another attack with a blend of previous horrific memories.

"TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY AMERICA"

DeLillo, known for a realistic depiction of twentieth- and twenty-first-century American living in fiction, is regarded as a cult writer. His works supposedly construct faith about the truths found in tragic events happening around the world. In his own words, his novels are a reflection of living in dangerous times. His conviction as a writer was to "oppose things." His novel actually begins as a resistance to the fears and horrors of the crashing Twin Towers.

The novel is set in smoke and ashes, the burning center, and its consequences. It works in a circular motion, taking readers from one end to the other and bringing them to the focal point repeatedly. Central characters, though, do not travel in a circle. Their minds are constantly engaged in thoughts of the crash. Fear is the calling card of this novel. Many passages in the novel identify a cumbersome post-9/11 apprehension of Islam and Muslims. 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, 2007)

In his earlier novel *White Noise*, 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, 2007). The September 11 attacks entirely changed inner American life. In fact, the tide of anger turned toward 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 attempts to relate the chaos to Muslim immigrants. At its heart the novel implies the writer's contempt toward the policies of America (Rich, 2007).

The novel addresses the media's portrayal of the events of September 11 that bring enormous changes in the lives of Americans. Although the novel shares common subject matter with the works of Lorraine Adams and John Updike in bringing forward Islam and Muslims as threats, DeLillo's technique is unlike Updike and Adams. This author does not portray Muslim characters as mouthpieces to expose Islamic faith and Muslims as threats. Rather he describes American characters as victims of 9/11 who are completely under stress after witnessing the horrific sights. The undercurrent of the novel is turn-of-the-century America, with the lives of the American characters constantly under the stress of a sense of loss and grief. The narrator's role dominates the course of novel. The relentless events constantly accompanied with fright and trepidation pervade the entire setting of the novel.

The novel lays its foundation on DeLillo's essay "In the Ruins of the Future" and promises a great deal to expose terrorism, however, it turns out to be a defense against Islam. The implied tone and meaning of the novel refer to a contrivance of art and terror. Media trials and representation incorporate ideologies. This claim of the novel in itself speaks to the power of media, both print and electronic, which portrays and emphasizes biased thoughts aimed to be inculcated in the minds of readers or viewers.

DeLillo's novel is based on similar assumptions that Lorraine Adams (2004) and John Updike (2006) encountered, but unlike the earlier two novels, its projection of America involves American characters; the trauma of terror they went through by visualizing and experiencing the collapse of the Twin Towers, the rescue of some, and the aftermaths of the disaster on American life. The novel majorly covers the attitudes Americans developed toward Muslims reminiscent of old Muslim-American historical grievances. At its core the text signifies the role of media "characterized by a more highly exaggerated stereotyping and belligerent hostility" toward Muslims and Islam (Said, 1997, p. xi). As discussed earlier, the text frequently articulates American ways of life, encompassing family, marriage, and separation as

common themes. It starts with a chaotic picture of America from Keith's per-
spective as one directly affected by the disaster: "It was not a street anymore
but a world, a time and space of falling ash and near night" (DeLillo, 2007,
p. 3). He is obsessed with the "roar and buckling rumble of the fall" (DeLillo,
2007, p. 3). It is an entirely changed picture of the peaceful and calm world
before the attacks. The whole scene prepares the reader's mind for looking
into a world that turned weary and terrified within seconds of time. The
introduction of Lianne, an American character, immediately evokes reference
to Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem *The Revolt of Islam* to connect the thread
of the falling of towers directly to the denouncement of Islam. Although the
narrative calls it merely a coincidence (DeLillo, 2007, p. 8), it is not actually
so simple.

As the title suggests, *The Revolt of Islam* brings war and tyranny to the
reader's mind. Although written by renowned English romantic Shelley,
this poem does not directly deal with the Islam religion. However, the
poem addresses the reign of the Ottoman Empire, which carries historical
significance. Its themes are revolutionary in dealing with "anti-religious
sentiments" and reforms, the offshoots of the French Revolution. It is to be
borne in mind that for its direct blasphemous thoughts, Shelley had to change
anti-religion statements at the publisher's request. The precariousness of his
life inspired Shelley to write the poem. Central figures of the poem visit the
"temple of the spirit" and indicate that the failure of the French Revolution
mainly was the result of personal and spiritual objectives. Politics was not
involved in that. Reference to the poem in *Falling Man* in the milieu of
the 9/11 attacks assumed revolt as a necessary component of Islam, which
has primarily spiritual and personal goals, and it manifests politics as well.
Considering Muslims "a competent nation," America is alarmed at its loss
power (Anidjar, 2003).

Attacks in the name and spirit of radical Islam disfigured the face of the
religion around the globe. The title *The Revolt of Islam* entices the reader's
concern. It also implies fear that Islam and Muslims may overtake America
and its faith. Hierarchy between Islam and America, if reversed, will create
havoc in the contemporary world. The poem's reference in this situation also
signifies the century-long European fear of Islam coming forth to America
with such a strength and power to take down the trade center of the country.
The title with the word "revolt" reinforces the assumption of assault. It also
entails the century-long suppression of Islam and African Muslims' come-
back and fight against the oppressor. Shelley's poem was set in the context of
the Ottoman regime. The empire was defeated and held captive. It was dis-
tributed between the British and French Victorious Empires. After the defeat
the caliphate went through a revolution but remained symbolic of Muslim
unity. Foreign imperial incursion demolished the caliphate in cooperation

with local modernists. However, common usage by contemporary Americans that "that's history" and "no longer important" followed the trauma of terrorism in American minds.

Referring to *The Revolt of Islam* in *Falling Man* brings history into the picture. Western powers subjugated and abolished the Muslim Ottoman Empire, and now the 9/11 attacks are visualized as the return of Muslims. It signifies imperialism as an important binary to Islam. Over the years, America has functioned in the political, economic, and social structures of the Islamic world. It earns, therefore, a negative terminology such as "devil America" and "great Satan" specifically in the language of the Iranian Revolution. 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 (DeLillo, 2007, p. 8) dovetail within the religious paradigm of white supremacy as a racial as well as cultural interpretation. The ram's head is a biblical allusion that represents the devil. Heads of goats and rams are recognized as holy in Satanism and witchcraft. The symbol of the fish is the biblical representation of Jesus Christ as Savior. Jesus was reported in the Bible as feeding five thousand people with two fishes. He called his disciples "fishers of men." The practice of baptism that emerged in the early Christian era established a parallel between fish and converts. Fish also symbolize persecution of the believers in Christianity. Greeks, Romans, and later Christians used fish as a symbol to distinguish a friend from the enemy (Coffman, 2008). The images of the ram and fish on the card thus reciprocate each other. The ram is symbolic of fundamental Islam persecuting America, which is represented by the innocent image of a fish. Hence, the text creates fear against Muslims as oppressors and assassins. The 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 et al., 2011, p. 146).

The narrative also refers to a large number of Muslim immigrants in America placed at the lower hierarchical level "because of the structure of white hegemony" (Hubel et al., 2011, p. 197). "It [was] hard to find a taxi at a time when every cabdriver in New York was named Mohammad" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 28). Muslim presence in that situation is a constantly notable and anticipated threat to America. Fear of increased immigration and rapid social changes due to globalization prompt Islamophobia. "They [Muslims] have been hating us for a long time. In a sense, they have been hating us for centuries" (Lewis, 1990). From the initial pages, the text renders a typical American mindset and directs hatred toward Muslims due to their religion in addition to their genealogy or other cultural identity markers.

Chapter 4 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 appears a mystifying image of Islam by the accusing fearful Americans. Lianne is frustrated to listen to this music in her neighborhood. The mysterious description of the scene shows her intolerance toward Islamic mystic music. The text associates here the fear of Americans from everything related to Islam.

Lianne's arguments show irrationality that the music is "located in Islamic tradition." She gets annoyed of "a certain kind of music, wailing music, lutes and tambourines and chanting voices sometimes" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 67):

> She was hearing another set of traditions, Middle Eastern, North African, Bedouin song perhaps or Sufi dances, music located in Islamic tradition, and she thought of knocking on the door and saying something. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 67)

Her attitude reflects her phobia. References to traditional Sufi music echo another discrepancy of America in relation to Islamic traditions. Sufi music derived from mystical and ascetic movements laid its foundation in "the golden age of Islam" during the ninth and tenth centuries. The golden age (dated from the eighth to thirteenth centuries) reflects the rise of Islam with a caliphate system and the highest scientific, economic, and cultural development. This period is marked with Abbasid rulers who endeavored to translate classic knowledge into Arabic. During this period the Quran and Hadith were valued and followed as the only guidance toward knowledge and development of science. It remarkably influenced the music as well. The music thus developed into a mystical philosophy that conveyed devotion accompanied with religious observation and rituals. Up to the present date, Sufi music is defined as a channel of communication between "prayers and meditation." The listeners or the performers are lost in a spiritual world. Particular reference to Sufi music and its insolence supplemented by adjectives such as "wailing" is to create a negative impact on the reader's mind about Eastern values and traditions. Here, fear of music well connects to the Western apprehensions of Islam because of its golden history. "Are they coming back?" is the question in the mind of Americans with a constant fear to be overtaken by Muslims.

The Sufi beat intensifies Lianne's anxiety to the limit of forcing her to go to Elena's flat. In her fury she combats Elena for arguing in favor of the music as peaceful and comforting. The music produces disharmony and turmoil in Lianne's mind. She is highly frightened and unable to absorb the spiritual implication of the mystical notes. Her constant effort to associate the mystical music to the 9/11 disaster demonstrates her trepidation and concern. However, it is irrational because music had nothing to do with the bombing of the Twin Towers. "Of course it is personal. Anybody would take it personally under these circumstances" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 119). Extreme psychological

panic compels her to slam "the door behind her . . . hearing the dog bark over the sound of a solo lute from Turkey or Egypt or Kurdistan" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 120). In contrast, the text illustrates jazz music to be Lianne's preference in stressful moments. This indicates the narrative's prejudice to elevate American traditions by marring Islamic ones. DeLillo also creates an aura by portraying Sufi music frightening for Americans. The novel articulates Lianne's fondness of jazz music, which is cherished in America for its historical contribution in World War II, after which America rose as a victorious superpower. It has a strong and exhilarating effect with a power to improvise. This aspect of jazz music indicates its lack of preparedness and meditation. Its changing, evolving, and expanding characteristics counter the calm and meditative spirit of Sufi music. Moreover, it passed through so many stages to evolve and distinguish itself from any other traditional music. Lianne's preference to play her jazz records shows her desire of transformation from the horror-stricken environment into a calm and new one.

Anger toward Sufi music enmeshes, perhaps unintentionally, with fear of Muslims. The text consciously draws the reader's attention to its contribution to emphasize American hegemony by depicting Lianne's irrational attitude toward Muslim traditions (DeLillo, 2007, p. 67). She feels highly offended at Elena playing "this particular music at this highly sensitive time" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 68). Her annoyance precedes the remembrance of "newspaper profiles of the dead" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 68). Her exasperation entangled with the music leads her to think about Muslims as:

> The ones who think alike, talk alike, eat the same food at the same time . . . say the same prayer, word for word, in the same prayer stance, day and night, following the arc of sun and moon. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 68)

These scattered thoughts make her restless. These signify unity of Muslims as a fierce bludgeon within and outside the narrative over the growing American fear. The text emphasizes the American ideology of locating Islam as a problem. Steadily, it moves toward categorization of Islam and Muslims as extremists. This lays emphasis on anti-Islam ideology that springs from the contradictions of the narrative. Lianne's meditation over Muslim unity posits questions on the concept of multiculturalism. In a land of various ethnic communities and groups, multiculturalism seems beyond question. The Sufi philosophy of Islam is disapproved as a secret power and it is apprehended to take "control of [American] government." A diffident notion of Islam runs parallel to it (Kundnani, 2014).

Regular media portrayals reinforce any past event. They never let people forget the past. *Falling Man* illustrates the image of a person wearing a business suit dangling upside down in a position of jumping from the burning

Twin Towers. Displayed several times in the novel "unannounced" to bring back the "stark moments in the burning towers when people fell or were forced to jump," media refers to this scene as a threat piece (DeLillo, 2007, p. 33). "Even in New York . . . [they] long for New York" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 34). Explicitly identified with terrorists, Muslims provoke highly stressed and fearful thoughts in American minds. No doubt, the narrative makes the most of September11 destructions to perpetuate a mindset that irrationally excludes all Muslims as "others." The major dichotomy of the novel lies in its depiction of character representation. American characters suffer from a constant trauma and ultimately use 9/11 as a common thread to interlace their broken relationship.

The novel refers not only to overt racism in viewing Islam and Muslims as an enemy but frequently refers to the history and "old dead wars we [America] fight" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 44). The weariness of Nina's boyfriend Martin's tone disapproves wars fought in American history. His statement reflects a contentious relationship between Muslims and America. It also shows the text's sympathy toward American characters having an anti-war and anti-terrorist disposition in contrast to their counterpart Muslim figures as terrorists.

Social injustice and inequality breeds contempt. In such a situation, social hierarchy plays a pivotal role in creating class consciousness. It positions immigrant Muslims in the lower hierarchy in comparison to white Americans. They are appropriated with aliens or "others." The narrative heralds the 9/11 disaster as a connection that strengthened the sense of social disorder to the extreme that ascribed Islam and Muslims "in themselves threatening or dangerous" (Alietti et al., 2013, p. 598). Many Americans believed they regained their lost faith after these attacks.

Racism in the current global scenario hides behind the facade of religious extremism. Excoriating Islam, the text articulates its repugnance to a collective history of wars among Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Nina, Lianne's mother, conveys her displeasure of wars, "dead wars, holy wars," in a conversation with her lover, Martin (DeLillo, 2007, p. 46). This signifies that the wars fought in the history of America in the name of Islam versus Christianity are living in the memories of Americans. Nina's conversation with Martin grows sarcastic and anticipates the dominance of Muslim and Islam in America: "'whose God would it be?' Martin said. God used to be an urban Jew. He's back in the desert now" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 46). This illustration signifies the anti-Semitic tone of the narrative. Mention of God "in the desert" chronicles Islam in Arabian countries. The minds of these American characters pronounce the terrorist attacks conducted in "sheer panic" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 46). Action exercised in panic normally indicates irrationality. American characters in the novel think these attacks do not have

any political end, but killing of the innocent was the objective. The dialogues however, announce American superiority. "They strike a blow to this country's dominance" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 46). DeLillo's use of character portrayal such as Nina and Martin highlights "white shadow[s] politically provocative" (Hubel et al., 2011, p. 154).

Making "Islamic threat disproportionately fearsome" supports the present investigation that parallels racism with Islamophobia (Miller, 2000). Martin unleashes on Nina a complete agitation of his rhetoric as a blend of social, political, historical, and religious thoughts:

> Forget God. These are matters of history. This is politics and economics. All the things that shape their lives, millions of people, dispossessed, their lives, their consciousness. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47)

His arguments, however, are countered by Nina as the spokesperson for those Americans who consider Muslims responsible for all destruction done to America. She advocates the Western assumption of the Muslim world as "a closed world, of choice, of necessity, who haven't advanced because they haven't wanted to or tried to" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). "Panic" is what drives Muslims to engage in suicide bombing (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). Muslims' identity is constructed throughout this conservation as a failed, oppressive, backward, and slumberous nation blaming the West for their failures (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). The text emphasizes Americans' attitude after 9/11 when everyday conversations held discuss the fall of the Twin Towers. It illustrates the paranoid aspect of the narrative. Nina looks at the situation through her American conviction that interprets Muslim identity in racial metaphors. The text appears very critical when it defines Muslims: "It is their own history, their mentality" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). Muslims are labeled as close-minded in contrast to open-minded American society.

DeLillo presents America and Muslims in a clash with each other. Nina's arguments denote the history-long grievances of the West toward Muslims (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). As a matter of fact, the West has never accepted Eastern countries. The history of crusades and the racialization of Islam in America are reminiscent of the fact that the West, especially America, conducted power plays and imposed their supremacy on the world.

Lianne conducts writing activities with her Alzheimer patients. One activity involves writing about the 9/11 planes (DeLillo, 2007, p. 60). Among Lianne's terror-stricken patients is Omer, whose fear is different from others.' "He was afraid to go out on the street in the days after. They were looking at him, he thought" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 61). At this point the narrative assumes the role of a considerate party toward Muslims, but it is an implied technique to enforce a weird image of Muslim in America. This also reflects the

common attitude of the Muslim community living in America after 9/11 who felt extremely insecure because they believed the American public equated their faith with terrorism.

Lianne's struggle "with the idea of God" can also be seen as a conflict of the text. It leads to many questions. "If religion makes people complain," her faith in God is strengthened because she has survived a horrible event. Moreover, her family life is restored to a certain extent. Her strengthened Christian faith brings her in opposition to Islamic faith, which she perceives as barbaric. Here we identify the causal relationship. It is the horrors of the 9/11 attacks that stimulate fear of Islam. Religion replaces other identity markers and becomes the core reason of hatred and antagonism as a manifestation of a racist attitude. Conversations among Lianne's patients are entirely concerned with faith and talk. It does not mention the "terrorist." The text probably is figuring out the role of faith in initiating an extreme action such as the fall of the Twin Towers. The terrorist is positioned in a secondary place. Lianne's persuasion seems a deliberation when she frequently mentions terrorists to the group of patients. The conversation points to loss in faith. The narrative technically develops an ideology out of these arguments that faith lingers around to control actions. Lianne wants the group to name those who attempted the assaults. It signifies the situation, which compels the victims to accuse anyone. Lianne's effort to compel the patients' group is visualized as the strength of a written text to enforce thoughts into the minds of readers. "Disbelief" is what Lianne apparently desires (DeLillo, 2007, p. 65). However, deconstruction of the argument suggests the importance of belief and religion as major discourses in a situation such as this.

Lianne's idea of God is to reinforce the power of faith that drives Muslims into madness, making them suicide bombers. "People fall into trances" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 62). It indicates one of the major contradictions of the text that is the shaken faith of Americans. "How could God let this happen? Where was God when this happened?" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 60). It specifies loss of faith in Christianity. Here we encounter the "aporia," the difference in the narrative between Christianity and Islam. The Christian world's clash with the Muslim world is rooted in a historical relationship. Muslims are not biologically a race, but they are vulnerable to any injustice and harm based on their faith. Their exploitation rests within the circle of racism. Social scientists have proved that the ancient face of politics and society has cloaked the primitive notions of racism. It reworks in the form of Islamophobia. Muslims and Americans play "off each other" (Bennoune, 2013). Here are references from the novel to the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Islamic world when Muslims ruled a major part of the world:

> He [Martin] thinks these people, these jihadists, he thinks they have something in common with the radicals of the sixties and seventies. He thinks they're all part of the same classic pattern. They have their theorists. They have their visions of the world brotherhood. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 147)

History traces Islam's contact with Protestant America during the sixteenth century, mainly with the Ottoman Empire expansion. Muslims since then were conceived as a "threat to Christendom," bringing Jews into a close relationship with Christians (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 19). The exile of Moriscos to the American territory could not turn them into staunch Christian converts. Rather they lived in close contact with the Islam religion and its tradition. Hence, the image of "infidel Muslim as a menace" was developed and sustained in contemporary America due to one reason or another. These historical details spread through American writings in various forms. The novel criticizes Muslims' failure consequently shaping individuals into terrorists. The text points at the defeat and dissolution of Ottoman at the hands of Turkey, another Islamic powerful empire of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Commenting on the Muslim failure, the narrative pertains to these facts. Moreover, the text supplements arguments in favor of the West. "It's not the history of Western interference that pulls down these [Islamic] societies" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). The early relationship of exiled Moriscos from Spain to American territory provides a logical and the closest possible interpretation of the text.

Anti-Muslim themes emerged from the history pages to thrive among Americans. Islamophobia facilitates a new and more lethal form of racism directly targeting Islamic faith. Repeated reinforcement of 9/11 is actively pursued by the narrative. The tragic event set the scene for racism to encounter a relationship between Islam and historical American animosity latent under a modern fabric, which paved the way for Americans to show "the specter of a Muslim enemy to assert its supreme agenda" (Kumar, 2012). It framed each chapter with new perspectives on Islam and Muslims. Lianne's contemplation and recollection of a Muslim celebration at the close of Ramzan bespeaks unity of the entire Muslim world. Lianne's feeling "remote from the occasion" signifies cultural differences (DeLillo, 2007, p. 181). These differences prompt bias of others as a perceived threat. Lianne's contemplation on Islamic faith and religious values evolves into an anti-Islamic ideology of the text. It emphasizes American secular ideology that forces Muslims to live "on reservations" (Peter and Ortega, 2014, p. 352). Muslim as "signifier" of threat and terrorism becomes a viable tool at the hands of literary writers to promote an anti-Islamic agenda (Tyrer, 2013). Moreover, Lianne's conversation with her mother and Martin explains that fear of Muslims "is not rooted simply in the fear of terrorist violence or radicalization." It is situated in the

"uncertainties about social marginalization, phenomena of spatial disintegra-
tion, and religious practices" (Peter et al., 2014, p. 312). Lianne meditates
about her own situation as a "privileged, detached, self-involved, white"
(DeLillo, 2007, p. 184). She has a sense of superiority when she considers
herself "a white person, white [is] her fundamental meaning, her state of
being" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 184). When she recounts her experience of Cairo
in chapter 10, she is upset and feels herself different from the Muslim crowd
who are celebrating Ramadan (DeLillo, 2007, p. 185). For her stereotype is
"the bitter truth" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 185). She could feel Muslims in Cairo at
home whereas she is alienated from all that surrounds her. Overwhelmed with
religious fervor, the crowd scares her. Lianne is exasperated by this situation,
"the ghost of one city [Cairo], the frontal thunder of the other, and she needed
to flee both crowds" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 185). Lianne's attitude reflects a fear
of "spatial disintegration" at the hands of Muslims. Their religious practices
make her fear being overpowered. At this point, the text ironically talks about
an American woman suffering from fear of dislocation. It is this "fear about
regression" that elevates Islam's possible incorporation in America (Peter and
Ortega, 2014, p. 313). Sufi music as well as Islamic rituals frustrate Lianne.

The novel reenacts the disaster of 9/11 and reinforces its impact on
Americans with an agenda to expose Islam as an insurgent force working
against Americans. Since it sheds light on the power of projection, we assume
that electronic or print media persuades to speak or draw what it wishes to
broadcast. Islamic sayings and commandments serve the "apparatus" to con-
tour an anti-Islamic philosophy (Althusser, 2001). Globalization and media
has made the task easier. Ideologies are developed dexterously by enlarging
and emphasizing stereotypes of people as well as faiths. Media establishes
"the imaginary relation to the real conditions of existence" (Althusser, 2001).
Falling Man describes the 9/11 attacks reenacted and frequently broadcasted
on TV. The image of a man jumping from a building reiterates the terror in
the viewer's mind and does not let it banish.

The text of *Falling Man* does not refer to the genealogy of Muslims or
Islam, but it victimizes Muslims with the technique of racial profiling to
construct their identity. "Bill Lawton has a long beard. He wears a long robe"
(DeLillo, 2007, p. 74). A malignant and mysterious portrayal of Osama bin
Laden is created from the American perspective. The title "Falling Man"
intentionally plays with the narrative's contradictions, creating an image of
the Muslim immigrant student transposed into a terrorist. "He has the power
to poison what we eat but only certain foods. They are working on the list"
(DeLillo, 2007, p. 74). Justin (Lianne's son) and his friends articulate frustra-
tion on their friends' killing in World Trade Center. It is out of such frustra-
tion that they draw a scary image of Bin Laden (DeLillo, 2007, p. 75). This
frustration asks for the scrutiny of Muslims. Justin and his friends are the

spokespeople for American youth who see the skewed version of Islam rather than its peaceful side. They deplore the role of the religious fundamentalism in terrorist activities. Fundamentalists in any religion exist to promote warfare and self-defense to the extreme (Armstrong, 2001). Contemporary American literature brings conflicting representation of Islam. The chapter "on Marienstrass" begins by introduction of Hammad as "a rifleman in the Shatt Al Arab . . . a soldier in Saddam's army and they were the martyrs of the Ayatollah, here to fall and die" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 77). This introduction carries in itself historical facts. Hammad is a Muslim and a warrior, a prototype of Muslims. These stereotypical representations are used to the advantage of Americans (Armstrong, 2001). After the 9/11 attacks, Iraqi president Saddam Hussain, accused of terrorism, was linked with Al-Qaida. These allegations were reinforced to change common American perceptions of anti-Iraq war. Suspected for the massacre of humanity, Saddam Hussain was trialed by the Bush government, although until his execution, Saddam denied it. Since much was on air during his trial, the Bush government was exposed largely for its biased treatment of bombing innocent Iraqis. It later changed the American viewpoint largely. The assassination of the Ayatollah by Iranian militants perpetuated clashes among Islamic groups. These clashes are highlighted by the text as weak points of Muslim as ummah. Hammad lives in a war training ground surrounded by ammunition. The narrative foreshadows the repercussions of his training. It bolsters his identity as a terrorist. His entire group had grown beards. Hammad and his companion had come to America:

> To pursue technical education but in these rooms they spoke about the struggle. Everything here was twisted, hypocrite, the West corrupt of mind and body, determined to shiver Islam down to bread crumbs for birds. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 79)

The arguments point to the conventional image of Muslim immigrants in the 9/11 attacks. Racism in contemporary America has a new understanding within the realm of religion. Racial profiling in the form of stereotypes of Muslims and Islamic faith in fiction helps us to understand that one develops out of the other. Through a Muslim character's mind, the text augments the idea of Muslim hatred of the West. Americans and Muslims reciprocate hatred. The text intends to consider Muslims participating in widespread terrorist activities. Construction of an ideological enemy best serves the purpose of Americans imperialism, which is a constituent of anti-Semitism and Muslim hatred. The narrative formulates an anti-Semitic notion through the Muslim mind. Hammad's group considers Jews stupid people. The narrative's intention is to outline Muslims as racist and anti-modernists. Amir, the group

leader and an "intense" man, announces the philosophy of Islam. He preaches the following standpoint:

> 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. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 79–80)

This scramble of Jewish, American, and Muslim characters in the novel refers to the "difference" in the text; difference between Muslims and Jews, and between Muslims and Americans. In a way the text invokes its Jewish as well as Christian readers to understand Islam and Muslims at their opposition. This is to attain the prime goals of imperialism. Setting two enemies politically opposed to each other benefits the superpower. Therefore, the novel has a manifold agenda. Its second objective appears to be the pervasive hostile attitude toward Jews, who are believed to have vanished from the global horizon in lieu of Muslims.

Muslim characters in this novel visualize America as corrupt, struggling to let down Islam. These intentions are heinous. It is a narrative technique to communicate such thoughts through Muslim characters to make the account credible. It reassures readers about reliable information. An abrogating fallout in the milieu of the 9/11 attacks in America is widely reflected through an Islamic perspective in fact emerging from American thoughts. The attacks revived estrangement and distrust of Islam. When we establish a connection between racism and Islamophobia, we observe that the 9/11 tragedies function as the third element causing racism and Islamophobia. It further reflects a reestablished notion of racism cloaked in religious fear. If we consider the definition of racism to include Islamophobia, creating social hierarchies, founded on "essentialized racial categories," we observe that the text serves as an appropriate sample (Winant 1994):

> The Beard would look better if . . . trimmed. But there were rules now and he was determined to follow them. His life had structure. Things were clearly defined. He was becoming one of them now, learning to look like them and think like them. This was inseparable from Jihad. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 83)

The focus on physiognomy may have moved to cultural differences. Nevertheless, racism remains in action. The contemporary age utilizes religion for racial profiles of Muslims, highlighting them as "an essentialized racial category" assuming that Muslims and beard binding are intrinsically linked (Fredrickson, 2002). It articulates faith as the "essence" of Muslim body (Kant, 1781). Distinguished from trimming, Islam endorses the use of beards as a symbol of faith and unity. Western and American media have

exploited this Islamic value to the extent of representing bearded men a threat to security. Here, we feel that the passage not only reiterates Muslim characters as enemies but also distinguishes them through these identity markers. The text grows more sarcastic toward beards in the pages that follow. "The beard's a nice device, the art of looking unkempt" that "helps bury the face" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 115). The text's admonishing tone throughout persecutes Muslims and symbolizes bearded Muslims as skillful and plotting to threaten American peace and solidarity.

The debate in the novel moves from racial profiling to a proper critical enquiry of Islamic customs targeted for a "closed" conception of the religion that bars its followers from many actions. Amir's voice emerges from his perspective of the American world:

> Eating all the time, pushing food in . . . face, slow to approach . . . There was more. Being with a shameless woman, dragging your body over hers. . . . What is the difference between you and all the others, outside our space?. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 83)

It is the "re-signification" of the concept of racism in the narrative, with religion as its major component (Hubel et al., 2011, p. 193). It gets a new meaning by juxtaposing American society to Islamic values. Islam denounces extramarital relationships, sloth, and gluttony. The role of the narrator cannot be easily separated from the role of the character. All characters are exposed to the omniscient narrator. He knows the life and thoughts of everyone in the novel. Through this technique, the narrative brings forth Amir's views of Americans. It is an attempt to show a conservative mentality, banning a person from the pleasure of life. Already assumed as monolithic, the novel depicts Islam as a primitive religion. It unravels the "aporia" of the text. It is the difference of opinion to marginalize Islamic faith as an obstinate and discrepant religion (Derrida, 1967). The image of American society is marked with personal freedom and liberty. "Nobody knocked down their door in the middle of the night and nobody stopped them in the street" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 83). With Muslim characters' deliberation of "Islam . . . under attack," the text configures that Muslims' minds are engrossed by anti-American apprehension, often considered as Muslim allusion by Americans (DeLillo, 2007, p. 83). The text rethinks Muslim identity as entirely confusing and inimical. Muslim characters subvert the hegemonic hierarchies of America.

Religion as a source to conceive beliefs and ideas is sheathed in the notion of racism (Rana, 2007). The novel's narrator goes into Hammad's mind. Hammad, a Muslim character, is driven to train for suicide bombing by stern religious lessons. This demonstrates the procedure of brainwashing. Radical beliefs pressurize him to adopt radical ways. These systematically inculcate

in him a desire of a spiritual world and mortality of this physical world. He is ready to fade "into dust." Worldly luxuries all around are all particles "of dust in the fire and light of the days to come" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 174).

Islamic faith holds the creation of human beings from dust. These beliefs are reinforced through Hammad's mind. His mind is used to articulate 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" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 171). The whole scene asserts Muslims as trained warriors. These statements show terrorism preceded by a systematic and organized course of action. It invokes the thoughts that these men do not attack America arbitrarily driven by emotions. They are well planned. Faith provides them reason for the massacre and bloodshed. Faith convinces them to ransack this world of bigots and infidels. Mentors inculcate these defiant thoughts in their minds. Brainwashing is a vital tool used to drag people to religious extremes.

Hammad goes through the process of "radicalization" to take excessively lethal action. When the narrative communicates his radicalization process, it fails to assert that all Muslims may fall victim to such a situation. Ironically, the text itself denies its argument. It constructs Hammad's identity as a terrorist and itself informs the reader that terrorists are not "born Muslims" but that the extreme process of reinforcing values and ideas can easily turn anyone onto this path. Islam and its mention with Afghanistan as picking "up a stone and hold[ing] it in . . . fist . . . is Islam. God's name on every tongue and wearing bomb on body, individual only then feels he is a man and suicide bombing lessens his distance to God" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 172).

Describing Islam in Afghanistan, the narrator mocks the association of the word "peaceful" with Islam and Afghanistan. Hammad's mentor, Amir, quotes Quranic verses to justify attacks on America. "Never have we destroyed a nation whose term of life was not ordained beforehand" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 173). The text signifies opposition of Islam to America. It grows ironic when it views America from a Muslim perspective as a world of "illusion" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 173).

Reassertion of Islam in American fiction has been subsumed under the term "terrorism." As a common recognition, media and literature particularize terrorism as a Muslim constituent. It elucidates many things, particularly marginalization of Muslims, based on their creed. Not just the 9/11 disaster but the American lifestyle itself heavily influences 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" (Esposito, 1992, p. 7). Amir clearly demonstrates these 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 all-enfolding will of capital markets and foreign policies. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 80)

Amir leads a group of seven students at university that represent Muslims in America discontented and uncomfortable by their surroundings, and they wish to have their own "space . . . in the mosque, in the portable prayer room at the university" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 80). Martin in his conversation with Lianne and Nina promotes the same arguments.

"They want their place in the world, their own global union, not ours. It's an old dead war. . . . But it's everywhere and it's rational" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 116). Conversation among Lianne, Nina, and Martin demonstrates a provocative discussion about Muslims and their appearances. Nina becomes offensive every time she speaks of Muslims. Her thoughts are infused with anger and fear born out of 9/11 frustration. She criticizes Islamic beliefs and accuses Muslims for their irrationality and fundamentalism. Invocation of God is seen as the oldest source of Muslims at the time of distress and happiness. It is perceived as "the thing that happens among men, the blood that happens when an idea begins to travel." Islam is unnecessarily criticized for being "a system of beliefs that justifies these feelings and these killings" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 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, if any, of Muslims. 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" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 113).

These arguments articulate the philosophy of the narrative. Deconstruction of these sentences emphasizes the pronoun "you" presented as victim. "You" is a reference to the American people, who are kind and thoughtful toward Muslims and immigrants. It highlights the text's binary opposition of "you" and "them" to outline "you" as the innocent American people who are victims of ferocious Muslims, who like "viral infection[s]" are reproducing themselves (DeLillo, 2007, p. 113). "Viral infection" is frightening as it multiplies and sickens all who surround it. The analogy of Islamic faith equated with viral infection is to supplement it with prevailing horror. Viral infections invade healthy bodies and cause symptoms of illness while using normal cells to multiply and produce similar viruses in great number. Equating Islamic faith with viral infection identifies abhorrence of the speakers, and the text mirrors subversion of American autonomy by Islam as a powerful and dominating force with the ability to excel over American society. The narrative

features a contagious potency of the faith that may overpower American society and seize the opportunity to administer its own values and manifestos. It is this fear that runs throughout the text of *Falling Man*. It manipulates faith to rationalize the hatred and fear (Fredrickson, 2002). Through Martin's voice, the text refers to "the narcissistic heart of the West" as a root cause cropping enmity in Muslims against America. It shows a deliberate effort of the narrative to keep a transparent, unbiased, and impartial stance shaken by the strident and emphatic arguments of Nina.

A reading of the novel identifies its frequent implication of contradictory existential philosophy to Islam. Lianne doubts God. She believes in Kierkegaard. "The whole of existence frightens" her (DeLillo, 2007, p. 118). A Danish philosopher, Kierkegaard—social critic, poet, and most of all a theologian—dealt with how an individual lived on his/her own and considers the concrete nature of human reality rather than abstract meditation. His philosophy emphasized the value of "personal choice and commitment" (Gardiner, 1969). This philosophy directly opposes Islamic mysticism. Hence, the text produces a major "difference" (Derrida, 1967). Existentialism and mysticism are binary oppositions supplementing each other. They contradict each other. Existentialism believes in individualism whereas mysticism speaks of losing one's self to be one with the abstract. The former deliberates the concrete aspect of human reality and is the prime philosophy followed by American society, whereas the latter forms a contrast and is thereby apprehended as a peril to the American solidarity. It constructs an alluring contradiction as individualism has broken the concept of unity in America.

The idea of racism is shifted to not only be based on physical appearance as a source of bias and discrimination but also based on class differences (Lance, 2002). Capitalism in the form of consumerism has sealed the united spirit of Americans. It has transformed the American society into a materialistic society that decides its development by determining material wealth. Here spiritual values are lost and over-dependence on labor invites more immigrants. It has long-lasting effects on human psychological health when jealousy and hatred surpass positive moral virtues. Contrarily, the novel picks Islamic mysticism as the cause of creating disorder in the Muslim mind. The cause is countered by its effect in the form of a contradictory philosophy to assert the secular and liberal approach Americans have in all facets of life.

The narrative particularly articulates Muslims' envy of American power and control. "These old men who sit in beach chairs, veined white bodies and baseball caps, they control our world" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 173). There is a "disconnect between the US and the rest of the world" (Kaplan, 2007). Cultural differences and economic supremacy have widened this gap. Moreover, President George W. Bush's perception of the 9/11 attacks within theological terms made the situation worse (Kaplan, 2007).

The concept of racism in the text also identifies a biased perspective of jihad. "The highest Jihad, which is to make blood flow, their blood and that of others" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 173). Sarcastic remarks on bloodshed of one's own as well as others bring forth an image of Muslims as bloodthirsty and murderers. It is reinforcement of the "Islamic other" (Ismael et al., 2010), "a pseudo scientific crusade in the hope of bringing Islam down once and for all" (Lopez, 2011). Shedding blood also constructs Muslims as headstrong and irrational. This portrayal persuades readers to consider "Islam as an enemy that must be fought" (Lopez, 2011). It views Muslims as an entirely different race based on their beliefs. Muslim characters are targeted and "effectively radicalized" (Lopez, 2011). Not only Muslim characters but also their faith is "radicalized." Facile use of terrorism and its application to Muslim and Islam implies a threat, "a potential threat to the West," including America (Esposito, 1992, p. 47). This is due to the history and civilization of Muslims. Stereotypical representation of Islam and Muslims seriously impedes readers' understanding and conditions their typical responses. The American perception of Muslims as anti-American finds a loud voice in the novel. Hammad's contemplation of American people displays a detrimental attitude. For him, the people around were to be blamed for their passionate "attachment to life, walking their dogs," which appear to him as having no purpose of life (DeLillo, 2007, p. 177). His thoughts convey the mortality and illusion of the physical world. Islamic faith emphasizes the quest of the spiritual world and temporariness of the physical world.

Here the novel picks Islamic ideas to demonstrate to the reader that Muslims are always clashing with the Western world. If we understand the argument from a psychological perspective, we find its shallowness and emptiness as it is impossible to read and interpret an individual's thoughts and apply it to the entire community altogether. It is so "tricky" to interpret others' thoughts (Hoffman, 2015). Viewing America through Hammad's eyes shows the distortion and confused perspective of the narrator. Stereotypical representation of Hammad creates implicit motives to defame Islam as a religion with a "closed" perspective (*Runnymede Trust Report*, 1997). Moreover, it is the narrator's bias that focuses on Islamic history as evidence to provide a firm basis to a "desired interpretation" (Hoffman, 2015). Hammad's religious practices during his training represent the ideology and faith of Muslims. "He prays and sleeps, prays and eats, these are dumb junk meals often taken in silence" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 176). Reference to prayers shows the major difference of the text. Hammad's contentment is in opposition to American practices. "This is the truth he has always looked for without knowing how to name it or where to search" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 176). In this argument, the text becomes sarcastic toward Muslims and demeans them for the superficial

understanding of their faith inculcated by their mentors. It carries a contradiction in itself. Hammad's faith is a source of contentment—otherwise he is ignorant of what he is doing or where it would end up.

The novel also raises many questions that directly indulge readers in contemplation:

> But does a man have to kill himself in order to count for something, be someone, find the way? (DeLillo, 2007, p. 175)

> What about the others, those who will die? (DeLillo, 2007, p. 176)

> But does a man have to kill himself in order to accomplish something in the world. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 174)

The narrative derives the answers from Muslim characters engrossed in their religious faith:

> The others exist only to the degree that they fill the role we have designed for them. . . . Those who will die have no claim to their lives outside the useful fact of their living. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 177)

These arguments endeavor to highlight the irrationality of Muslims portrayed as killers. Through Hammad's mind, Islamic philosophies are besieged without pertaining to their contexts.

> The end of our life is predetermined. This is not suicide in any meaning or interpretation of the word. It is only something long written. We are finding the way already chosen for us. (DeLillo, 2007, p. 175)

The narrator counts on personal interpretation to translate Hammad's mind as a terrorist. Hammad is a prototype of a calm and peaceful disposition. Under the spell of his faith, "for Hammad, emotions prove to be a game changer." Under emotional stress, "his mind succumbs to what faith interprets for him." Hammad lives in Nokomis, Florida. The chapter titled "In Nokomis" is significant in the sense that Nokomis is known for a recent controversy that a Christian church started by posting a controversial message against the Islamic faith (DeLillo, 2007, p. 171). It indicates Nokomis is largely anti-Islamic. Setting Hammad's plot in Nokomis indicates Muslims' revenge on American Christians with a tendency "to generalize from the action of few to the many" (Esposito, 1992, p. 172).

The text reconstructs Muslim identity, consistently manipulating Islamic discourse of "what gets to the next life" (Bennoune, 2013). It frames an argument against Islam. "There was the claim of being chosen, out there, in the

wind and sky of Islam" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 174). The narrative mocks these philosophies. "The end of our life is predetermined. We are carried toward that day from the minute we are born" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 175).

The novel articulates implied notions of racism as an offshoot of cultural racism that views "the other as threat" in the form of "irreconcilable cultural differences" (Cheng, 2015, p. 4). It signifies racist ideology of the text functioning as a tool to establish as well as maintain "unequal power relations through discourse" (Cheng, 2015). The narrative articulates fear of Islam not as a converting force against Christianity but "as a dominating force" foreshadowing threat to America. The text speaks of "religion-based identifiers" and reflects religion-based racism against Muslims (Abbas, 2005).

Later chapters of the novel highlight the fear Americans have when observing people in America reciting the Quran, the holy book of Muslims. "This book is not to be doubted" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 231). But Lianne "doubted things, she had her doubts" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 231). It shows overt expression of an American woman who defies Quran as a Holy book. Her secular philosophy reflects an American spirit in contrast to Islamic philosophy. Islam believes in divinity. Lianne thinks "it was crap . . . night skies and divinely inspired starts. A star makes its own light" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 232). Bringing forward scientific discussion, the text indicates Islam's incompatibility with science and advancement of the contemporary era. Lianne prefers to go to church "when others are reading Koran" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 233). Her secular ideals dwindle and shake when she enters "Rosellen's church" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 233). This shows strength and power associated with Christianity at a time when every American was mourning the 9/11 catastrophe. The pun on the words "others bring you closer" to the church indicates that the Muslims in the form of terrorists scared Lianne and she found her faith in the backdrop of the horrific attacks on the Twin Towers (DeLillo, 2007, p. 234). The text thus constructs an ideology that Muslim terrorist attacks enable America to find their lost and forgotten faith. "God would consume her. God would de-create her and she was too small and tame to resist" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 235). While Lianne faces this transformation of faith, parallel to this text, the plane crash is reenacted.

Hammad, emotionally overdriven by his faith at the time of collision, portrays compliance to Islamic commandments inculcated in his mind. These teachings give him power and strength to crush the plane against the towers. "Forget the world. Be unmindful to the thing called the world. . . . Every sin of your life is forgiven in the seconds to come" (DeLillo, 2007, pp. 238–39).

Psychological interpretation of these arguments reveals that individuals are hypnotized by a focused attention to react or produce a response. There are many ways used to brainwash or hypnotize people. The narrative foregrounds religion as a viable tool to astound their spirits. There is no doubt Muslims are

involved in terrorist activities, but to fear all for a bunch and equate them with terrorism and extremism is irrational and unjustified. It is the power of the media and globalization that is responsible for such stereotypical images that brand Muslims and Islam with extremism. "Turn-of-the-Century America" transcribes Islam as an irrational driving force (DeLillo, 2007). Assimilation into American society is the only way out for Muslim Americans. The novel ends up shaping an anti-Islam ideology that will surpass its writer.

Conclusion

The contemporary discourse of racism captures the attention of readers at first glance, particularly in the West; a region that considers itself the flag holder of human rights regardless of race, religion, and culture. In its overt form, racism exists in the United States, however, the discourse of racism from overt to covert and colorblind runs parallel in American society. It has always targeted individuals or groups in the context of some wretched events. This study postulated a causal relationship between racism and Islamophobia, viewing the September 11 attacks as a mediator to make it so. The attacks on the World Trade Center remodeled racism in a modern fabric. Targeting Islam and the entire Muslim world served its agenda. The present study understood racism and its logical dimensions through an exhaustive study of racism. Analyzed within the social context, both phenomena reflected the complexity of their nature and absolute definitions.

This chapter presents a consolidated overview of all the arguments in the preceding chapters. It concludes the thoughts leading the discussion to its final deductions. It connects the threads and emphasizes the common perspective of American writers promoting an anti-Islam ideology.

The main objective of the study was not to grasp the roots of racism and Islamophobia. It attempted to unravel racism rooted in historical manifestations. It explored a relationship between the two phenomena and identified Islamophobia as a fabrication of racism that was embedded in every action of the selected narratives. Deconstruction of the texts found a particular overgeneralization of Islam and Muslims well contrasted with America and its people. A paranoid image of Islam was projected to endorse subjective perspectives of the writers. Muslim characters went through transformations over the course of the narratives. However, the narrative techniques used for portraying these transformations embodied exaggeration and magnification. Interactions of other characters with Muslim characters in the novels indicated the prospect of fear "that something will be taken from them [Americans]" (Rasmussen, 2013, p. 56). Such arguments added to the critique an in-depth understanding of racism evolving within "the idioms of religion." Internal textual contradictions ascertained racist notions of the writers, who

held religion as a major issue. It exposed the insidious nature of racism marginalizing Muslims due to their faith.

This book focuses on the role of fiction shaping the ideology of the masses. It investigates the historical complexity of racism by tracing references to old animosity between Muslims and Americans wherever required and further established its connection to Islamophobia in contemporary American literature. Derrida's deconstruction theory (1967) and Fredrickson's concept of "racism as scavenger ideology" (2002) brought to the surface the "political relations" between Islam and the West (Greaves et al., 2005, p. 18).

Undoubtedly, the contemporary world has reached the verge of overt racism in the wake of a few unfortunate incidents such as the Gulf War, Middle Eastern controversy, the fall of the Soviet Union, and finally, the attacks of September 11, 2001, which literally put Islam behind bars and labeled it a terrorist religion. The notion of racism changed its meaning from scientific notions to sociological connotations and was directed toward Muslims in the name of religion. Anti-Muslim racism shared common patterns with anti-Semitism. Fiction equally highlights the evolution of racism into Islamophobia in a particular context in contemporary America. The position of racism has reflected "a historical confusion of the West about Muslims as an identity" (Halliday, 1999). Religion yoked with skin and color pervaded in novels, and the analysis exposed American narratives' fear of Muslims and Islam. Analysis also illustrated fear, ignorance, and shallow stereotypes as standard norms of Western and American literary circles.

Contemporary narratives showed that those Muslim characters who compromised their religious beliefs found solace and acceptance. Ahmad in *Terrorist*, for example, presented a fine example of it. Omar in *Falling Man* was treated as a trauma-stricken patient who required American sympathies. An occasional compassionate tone in the narratives for these characters encouraged assimilation. Fearsome beliefs were epitomized to make racism "a scapegoat" for rationalizing racist attitudes. Bias and discrimination as common characteristics of racism and Islamophobia dominated the themes of these novels. In fact, white American supremacy instigated a lack of trust in American society at various levels. African American history, anti-Semitism, and contemporary anti-Muslim racism worsened the situation and exposed the shallowness of the American dream.

Racism and Islamophobia are related through a series of historical events such as the Crusades, "racialization" of Islam in America, and finally the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Faith and rituals provided significant sources to reproduce and modify the notion of racism. Racism as an ingredient of American societal structure transformed into a new form and utilized religion as an instrument for discrimination. Normally, "Islamophobes" justify their fear and hatred by amplifying the radical face of religion. In the contemporary

sense, Muslims and their affiliation to Islam proved a meaningful "evocator" between fear and prejudice. Selected American fiction reflected it through "heated exaggeration and suspiciousness . . . characterized by paranoid style" (Hofstadter cited in Stein et al., 2015).

Rarities are found ubiquitously. No doubt, American literary works such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mocking Bird* brought racist attitudes to the surface and therefore can be rightly viewed as the harbinger of altering standpoints about American slave history and racism. However, the twenty-first century has observed the explicit antagonistic attitude of the West toward Muslims, nurturing racism in its contemporary form, and it is emulated in the selected narratives. Thus, literary works proved an effective medium to shape arguments into further ideological formations in these texts.

Negative perceptions impinge on individual perception and lead to develop a discriminatory and prejudiced view. Racism manifested in Islamophobia proved more dangerous and created problems for the immigrant Muslim communities (*Runnymede Trust Report*, 1997). These novels depicted the American legacy of power and control. Considering the World Trade Center "a monument to the failure of global Islam to control those who believe that the West can be bullied" further plunged East and West into conflict (Winter cited in Lumbard, 2005, p. 283). All religions stand poles apart from supporting the massacre of innocent people, and each religion has its moral constraints on extremism. So does Islam.

Deconstruction theory (1967) helped in the analysis of the selected texts, uncovering the volatility of meaning hidden in them. Words create a chain of meaning; deconstruction theory helped in understanding the archaic meanings of the words. It also identified the modern denotation and connotation of the words. The writers adopted similar narrative strategies to portray settings and characters, particularly in expressing point of view by intruding on the protagonists' minds and reproducing their thoughts.

Various philosophies were illustrated in opposition to Islamic philosophies. *Harbor* displayed a contrast between a mosque and a church through a Muslim character's mind. Church is associated with "shelter" and "peace" in these novels to promote an anti-Islam philosophy by asserting supremacy of the Christian religion. *Falling Man* and *Terrorist* detailed the process of Muslim characters' being brainwashed by their influential religious mentors, who prompted a desire of martyrdom in their hearts through reinforcement of Islamic principles and values. A contrasting picture of the physical world and the world after death led the disciples toward fanaticism. It was a direct assault on Islamic ideology. *Falling Man* juxtaposed existentialism against the abstract values of mysticism. That extricated American thoughts and discerned Islamic values. The narratives also implied agnostic beliefs

contrary to the Islamic concept of one sovereign God. These novels also contested Muslim faith by comparing it implicitly to Christianity. These situations depicted Islam as a danger with the power to overthrow America. Considering Muslims as a threat implied deliberation of Muslims "as a competent nation" that "alarmed America of its loss of power" (Anidjar, 2003).

Racism is communicated within these texts as socioeconomic, political, and religious evil. Deconstruction of these selected texts unraveled an agenda for well-rehearsed Muslim stereotypes, perception of Islam as a threat, and inferiority with additional fantastic elements evidently approving to name that attitude racist. A clear relationship between threat perception and stereotypical portrayal of Muslims and Islam appeared to govern the selected novels. A philosophy of American dominance scattered through the pages of these texts. The approach of the critique posited a challenge to the subjectivity in academia exposing an agenda against Muslims. Muslim overgeneralization as "others" simplified the entire agenda. The consciousness about what happened on 9/11 in America lent intensity to these narratives. DeLillo particularly articulated intensity of that moment through vivid descriptions. Temporal consciousness of a past disaster mounted the tension in the selected novels.

The dualism within these texts was established by binary oppositions, mainly America versus Islam. These contradictions developed a perspective that words contained meanings in relation to their binaries. Selected novels portrayed Muslims "within the idioms" of religion. Their characters, actions, and perceptions were rationalized in their relationship to Islamic faith and values. Opposition between Americans and Islamic cultures were constructed within historical constraints to illustrate their dependency on each other. These oppositions undoubtedly explained that they were not "as clear-cut or stable as would at first seem" (cited in Shukla, 2008, p. 43).

These ambiguities ascertained "that the text's meaning is fluid" (Derrida cited in Shukla, 2008, p. 43). Specific context in the present case determined an entirely different terrain of mind. Deconstruction theory established "the oppositional . . . stability . . . ultimately subvert[ed] by the text's internal logic" (cited in Shukla, 2008, p. 43). Implied logics and concepts challenged the connotation of these narratives to determine an entirely different interpretation consequently.

Derrida's logic to "supplement" enlarged the terrorist image of Muslims in these narratives. Narrators translated the minds of the protagonists. Aziz, Ahmad, and Hammad meditated on American society, but their foreign environment sealed their lips and allowed them merely to observe. Critique of the novels found a common ideology shaped by the writers confusing Islam with cultural practices. Islam is a distinguished divine religion. Although culture has affected it throughout history, its beliefs remained unchanged.

The critique found "white" supremacy positioned at the core of these novels in the form of "absolute truth" (Derrida, 1967). The "truth" was "understood" in relation to "experiences." It was context bound (Derrida, 1967). Religious "difference" therefore was "inscribed into the structure" of these narratives (Derrida, 1967). One concept dominated the other in the hierarchical position. Islamophobia thus legitimated itself in the works of contemporary writers who attempted to reduce Islam to a lower and worse status.

It should be borne in mind that in the name of Christianity's holy wars, the Crusades were waged against Muslims. In addition, fundamentalism found its root in Christian religion. Nevertheless, these writers deliberately avoided discussion of Christianity or Judaism involving extremism. Lack of knowledge owed much to the circumstances because selected writers presented what they intended to show the readers. They represented their Christian faith as humble and peacemaking in contrast to Islam. But the selected texts did not describe vivid details of Christianity versus Islam, they just emphasized the picture of Islamic values. Virulent language to expose the thoughts of Muslim characters such as Aziz (*Harbor*), Ahmad (*Terrorist*), and Hammad (*Falling Man*) was an attempt to depict America in jeopardy. Depiction of a hostile and unfavourable picture of Islam in comparison to Judiasm and Christianity implies the partiality of selected American fiction.

The selected novels reflected the preoccupation of the American intellectual class with Islamophobia. Arguments of these narratives significantly reiterated "the political logic of building the internal enemy" (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 590). Pulled by such narratives, the American racist landscape appeared under the influence of an intense "Islamophobic vision" (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 590). "Well-founded fear united Muslims and Americans" by means of these narratives. These texts sustained overgeneralized images of Muslims as "potential terrorists" (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, p. 590). These also emphasized the role played by imams of the mosques as spiritual leaders of Muslims "generat[ing] the brainwashing that turns human people into death's robots" (Allen, 2005, p. 15). A critique of the novels also identified an implied fear of Islam in these narratives, considering it an ancient civilization. Not only Muslim characters "in flesh and blood" were materialized as fear symbols but their entire civilization was seen as "a danger [with] the potential to thrive American supremacy" (Alietti and Padovan, 2013, 2013).

In the context of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the present study urged deconstruction of the selected texts not merely to counter racist attitudes toward Islam and Muslims, but it also attempted to understand the complexities Muslims faced due to their religious faith. Analysis exposed racism embedded in these texts, leading the study to conclude that the contemporary age has replaced biological and sociological components of racism with religion.

Discussion of these novels integrated racial differences within the semantics of religion. In this way, interrogating racism as a form of Islamophobia focused on historical records of American and Muslim relations. It avoided, however, the biological notions of white-American supremacy and used the "cyclic" concept of racism intended to classify Americans in the supreme category. Deconstruction also exposed American "Eurocentrism," "liberalism," individualism, and capitalism occupying a contrasting position to the ideology of Islam in these novels (Updike, 2006, p. 182; DeLillo, 2007, p. 111).

Locating the meaning of racism within the religious discourse, the study identified how Muslim identities were constructed in relation to their faith and religious values. Use of Islamic faith as a scapegoat for everything bad that happened in America as a contemporary norm was well documented through these narratives.

Drawing historical inferences at various levels, these texts substantiated the historical animosity of America toward Islam. Muslim protagonists Aziz (*Harbor*), Ahmad (*Terrorist*), and Hammad (*Falling Man*) perceived America as "archenemy, the incarnation of evil, the diabolic opponent of all that is good . . . specifically . . . Muslim" (cited in Esposito, 1992, p. 177).

The critique also highlighted that binaries and differences in these novels focused much on the identity construction of Muslims as "signifiers," and it took the readers a distance from the signified concept of terrorism. Rather than concentrating on the logics and causes of terrorism, these texts brought forth Muslims as representatives of terrorists with "essentialized" characteristics of Islamic faith. The protagonists of these novels looked at America as the devil. Their characterization was set in contrast to innocent and positive portrayals of American characters. Heather (*Harbor*), Levy (*Terrorist*), and Lianne (*Falling Man*) proved the benefactors of the terrorists. It equally articulated "religious reductionism" that perceived the Muslim-American relationship as a religious conflict (Esposito, 1992, p. 180). During that whole process, what was lost was the real identity of Muslims and Islam among religious clerics as well as academia.

Furthermore, Fredrickson's "concept of racism as scavenger ideology" (2002) helped in understanding the frequent overgeneralization of Islamic faith and its values and rituals. A common technique adopted by the writers was to rationalize their fears by decoding the instructions given in the holy Quran. Verses were utilized "without social and political context in which they were formed" to show the "aggressive" and radical face of Islam (Ahmed, 2003, p. 9). Teachings of the Quran require context for interpretation. Many Quran verses were followed with disquieting questions challenging them for their contradictions. Parallel situations were identified in *Terrorist* and *Falling Man*. It was a technique adopted to offend and jolt the reader's mind and malign Muslim identity as believers. Verses from the

Quran and descriptions of Islamic philosophy plunge the reader's attention into thoughts of Islam as a brutal religion. The novels considered Muslims "as a uniformly emotional and sometimes illogical race that moved as one body and spoke as one voice" (Piscatori, 1986, p. 38).

Misinterpretation of Islam owed much to the Muslim stereotypes in terms of "desert, Bedouin, bearded, faggots, perverts, Arabs, etc." in these narratives. The American perception of the homosexual identity of Muslim men is also echoed in these narratives (Adams, 2004, p. 60; Updike, 2006, p. 98; DeLillo, 2007). The critique also illustrated cynicism in these narratives that reduced Muslim characters to the image of terrorists and assassins. A completely cynical, confusing, and inimical mentality of Muslim characters was brought forward, be it Aziz (*Harbor*), Ahmad (*Terrorist*), or Amir and Hammad (*Falling Man*). The critique also led on to show the narratives' attempt to draw Muslim characters equally incorporated "into one box" (Harris, 2013). A disdain prevailed upon these texts about Muslim faith and "anyone who looks like he or she could conceivably be a Muslim" (Harris, 2013). Ghazi in *Harbor* and Omar in *Falling Man* exemplified that. These texts manifested a deleterious race propaganda that replaced physical proponents with religion, hence recognizing a "subtle" and "aversive" form of racism veiled in negative religious predispositions (Garner and Selod, 2014).

Written in 2003, *Harbor* brought forth immigration problems in America, implicitly referring to immigrants as the cause of terrorism. *Terrorist* (2006) asserted the power of Islamic faith to convert Muslim Americans into terrorists. However, *Falling Man* reenacted the trauma of the 9/11 disaster. *Harbor* condemned immigration of Muslims to America, which Lewis termed "the natural advantages" of "the Muslims . . . over their adversaries in ideological fervor" (cited in Lyons, 2012, p. 116). The critique encountered more trauma and fear in *Falling Man* and *Terrorist* compared to *Harbor,* which was focused more on the racial profiling of Muslims and Islam. DeLillo elevated the role of media that reenacted images and thoughts to revive the tragedy. The acute hatred of Ahmad (Updike) and Hammad (DeLillo) for America and its people defined them within the radical parameters of religious extremism. Constructing Muslim fanatic characters under a strong religious spell overwhelmed these novels, reflecting the dictatorship of America, which proved an important factor in producing hatred and rebellion in Muslims. Several strands continually connected Islam and Muslims to terrorism in these novels.

The writers fairly confined themselves within American society. *Harbor* and *Falling Man*, however, took the readers to Algeria and Egypt, respectively, for some time. *Harbor* also highlighted Muslim men's dominance represented by Dakhir's family. Updike recounted the historical antipathy by narrating events from Moses to exile of Jews. Indignant language descriptions of women killing, discussion on jihad, and quoting sword verses from

the Quran in these novels illustrated the writers' attempts to raise fear. Updike's Ahmad was violent and ready to crush Americans. DeLillo meditated over Muslims' irrationality by representing basic philosophies of Islam that promoted violence. He also wrote of Hammad contemplating over the irrationality of his surroundings and found them a place equivalent to hell.

Harbor demonstrated a critical and negative perspective of Algeria because of its support of Saddam Hussain. Saddam was the American adversary, and the American government found a reason after the 9/11 attacks to meddle in Iraqi affairs more and attacked Iraq for alleged charges of terrorism. Therefore, an analysis of *Harbor* found a brutal and conservative picture of Algerian Islamists. Adams depicted Aziz and Ghazi as prototypes who not only scared Americans but even Egyptians felt fear of them. The situation indicated US-Egypt political ties under a positive light.

Consequently, the critique found representation of Islam and Muslims in these narratives in the words of the movie *Lawrence of Arabia* "political [naives] in need of tutelage from a wiser Westerner" (Braibanti, 1995, p. 6). These American novels represented Islam and Muslims not only as they understood them but by drawing exaggerated portrayals to convince the readers that Islam was incompatible to modernity and held America as enemy.

For an understanding of the emergence of Western racism in the backdrop of religion, a clear distinction between "racism and religious intolerance" was analyzed that concluded a causal relationship between both (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 6). Further, investigations necessitated if all the religions or only Islam are the target of hostility and objectification in the West and particularly America. It consequently led to a discussion that a person of "diverse ethnic origin" was allowed to assimilate a foreign culture to the extent that his/her origin did not make a difference. Sympathy with Muslim characters built the "undecidability" of these narratives (Derrida, 1967). However, overtly racist discussion on contemporary Western media (both electronic and print) broadcasted feelings of hatred to a certain limit that re-enlivens origin within religious constraints as an inevitable factor in identity construction even if members of a stigmatized group "negotiate" their identities and "advance to positions of prominence" (Fredrickson, 2002, p. 7). Religion becomes "the functional equivalent of race when it is considered as metrical and framed in indispensable form" (Fredrickson, 2002). A religious cloak offered literary texts to vomit their racist venom against a specific group or religion as an attempt to alter mainstream ideology. As a matter of fact, Islamophobia, by and large, relishes the concept of "other." Impartiality ceases to protract in such situations.

Ignorance of Islamic faith distracted these texts to distinguish between the real face of religion and its portrayal. The word *Islam* in contemporary America has become inseparable from threat and fear. The fictional

representation of Muslims was an attempt to assert a predisposed dogma in American minds with far-reaching consequences. The selected novels attempted to defame Islam and Muslims also by using racial profiling as their leading strategy. Muslim characters performed as mouthpieces of the writers to propagate their subjectivity.

Prejudice as a primary characteristic of racism and Islamophobia united completely in the novels in a larger social context. It also wove both into a vicious circle. Threat perceptions changed prejudice into fear of Muslim characters as fear objects. Attribution of "identity markers" such as physical appearance, clothes, Arabic language, and particular reference to the Middle East brought forth notions of covert racism. Phrases such as "Heather among Abduls and Mohammeds," distrust and dread of the Muslim immigrant characters, scavenging verses from the Quran, the description of the Quran as "a guided missile," and anti-Islamic philosophies marked the climax of these novels. Narrators of the novels rationalized their arguments through contextomy, a technique used to distort intended meanings of the source.

Fear was illustrated in these novels through apprehension and the exposed customary American frame of mind. Mostly the characters are under strong American surveillance for their Islamic conventions and obligations. Selected texts submitted to Western commentators who viewed "Islam on a collision course" with the West (Esposito, 1992, p. 175). Many regarded Islam a "triple threat: political, demographic and socio-religious" (Esposito, 1992, p. 175).

It was that "historical trajectory" that created a certain "attitude" when "an ethnic stranger" was "assimilated . . . into [another] . . . culture" and his own ethnic identity did not matter anymore. It was only then that he was well accommodated in a foreign society (Fredrickson, 2002, pp. 6–7). A critique within cultural and historical constraints highlighted the agenda, sustained through the narratives' point of view, tone, setting, and particularly characterization. The "difference" in the form of "destruction between the audible and the written" was exposed as well (cited in Shukla, 2008, p. 73).

Unfortunately, the instability of the Muslim world provided fuel to the rest of the world to label Muslims uncivilized and primitive. Interpretation of the 9/11 attacks within the constraints of religious differences proved Islam much more fatal in the twenty-first century. The media's reinforcing of images of extremism and terrorism very well fed the enmity of Muslims. This barred the world from understanding and contemplating the true spirit of Islam.

Critique of the selected novels predominantly distinguished racism sharply as a concept and Islamophobia as its fabricated form in the milieu of religious bigotry. It identified those situations in the narratives where racism appeared as religious intolerance and fear, and both emerged to integrate with and reciprocate each other. The novels utilized Islamic faith as an "essentialized" attribute of Muslim characters (Fredrickson, 2002). The protagonists

were portrayed as objects comprised of certain elements (faith in the present scenario) shaping the object into what it really was. The novels thus, to a certain extent, conformed to "essence prior to existence" (Kant, 1871). Faith was regarded as the "essence" that shaped the Muslim existence. However, the narratives reflected a negative portrayal of Muslims. The study also highlighted those situations where religion was assumed as a main constituent to substitute other identities. Religion performed as a proxy for other racial differences (if any existed). Perceived with a presupposed distorted angle, the description mostly appeared bias. Description of the September 11 attacks in the background of the narratives deprived the narrator of acting in a detached manner. Racism and Islamophobia are reflected in the selected narratives, intersecting each other at multiple points of similarity such as discrimination, bias, fear, antagonism, exclusion, exteriority, hatred, patriarchy, social hierarchy, sexual notions, etc. These similarities blurred the boundaries between the two concepts and united them into one modern construction with religion as the main component.

The unfortunate but prejudiced truck massacre at the intersection in London, Ontario, Canada, the mosque massacre by Darren Osborne in London, United Kingdom, and the Orlando club shooting in Folrida, United States, are some contemporary evident examples of Islamophia and racism conforming the present study thesis.Nevertheless, the attacks worsened the situation for Muslim communities in the West. Not only hatred but direct physical assaults on Muslims exposed the fear that *Runnemede Trust Report* (1997) announced decades earlier. Not only the English but also Donald Trump's America is overly racist and shows zero tolerance for the Muslim community. This escorted media, literature, civil society, politics, and every aspect of American life to anti-Islam attitudes. Islam as aggressor was at the backdrop of each discourse. Islam was impersonated to label America as the "devil" (Updike, 2006, p. 3).

CONTRIBUTION

Distanced from biological notions, Islamophobia explicitly developed as a new form of racism. This book encountered almost all the dichotomies and contradictions, which were deliberate on part of the writers to slander the face of Islam. It, therefore, fills the gap in the existing scholarship by contemplating a relationship of racism and Islamophobia in the body of selected literary fiction and debating racism fabricated in Islamophobia. The study not only analyzed texts for racism cloaked in religion, it also attempted to unravel writers' intentions to shape anti-Islam and anti-Muslim ideologies of the masses in America through various literary techniques. Major binary

opposition between Islam and America enriched the study to conclude how assumptions are reconstructed through settings, character portrayals, and point of view in fiction to reiterate the concealed agenda discerning various cultural and religious factions. Racism picks out religious beliefs to rationalize these assumptions and reach the masses in the form of literary texts affecting mainstream ideologies. The study is also helpful in recognizing Islamophobia as an overt form of racism in the political discourse of America.

FUTURE IMPLICATION

The present study raises the question to further investigate the importance of having a complete and unbiased understanding of the Quran. There is also a dire need for interfaith community interaction that may help in decreasing religious conflicts. Religion cannot be demolished from our lives. The modern world needs to understand it. Religion contributes to peace and harmony in the world when it is exercised freely rather than marginalizing or moderating religious beliefs. Moreover, banishing stereotypes will help in foregrounding a positive picture of Islam. The study proposes a thorough discursive understanding of Islam as a code of life because most of the existing assumptions generate from ignorance. Debates by Islamic scholars can well diminish the image of Islam as an "iceberg" to minimize this strain (Sayyid, 1997, p. 157). Muslim writers can publish scholarly works to counter anti-Muslim and anti-Islam projection in literature. As a matter of fact, recent decades have witnessed Muslim scholars' attempt to bring to Western audiences the true and intellectual legacy of Islam to clear the dust that has been blurring Western imagination for so many decades. A comparative study of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism may also be conducted in the field of literature to understand the increasing American and Western apprehensions in the contemporary age. Research can be conducted to highlight the difference between Islamophobia and "Muslimphobia" and its representation in literary texts.

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About the Author

Dr. Humaira Riaz is Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the City University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar, Pakistan. As a student of Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi, she worked on Pakistani diaspora literature during her masters of philosophy study. Her doctoral thesis explored the relationship between racism and Islamophobia in American fiction. Riaz is a devoted member of all academic bodies of the university and regularly conducts seminars and workshops on faculty development and academic research writing. She is the editor of *City University*

Research Journal of Literature and Linguistics (CURJLL), which is recognized by Higher Education Pakistan. Riaz has served as an IELTS/TOFEL instructor in a British Council–recognized institute and offers academic and career counselling to individuals planning for immigration. She is the founding member of Critical Thinking Circle (CTC), CUSIT. Her articles and chapters can be followed on Researchgate, Academia, and Google Scholar. Riaz can be contacted at humairariaz@cusit.edu.pk or humaira.euroark@gmail.com.