Chapter II

Projection of Arab Terrorism and Nationalism in the White American Novel

_The West is the spectator, the judge and the jury, of every facet of Oriental behaviour._

---Edward Said

2.1 Islamic Terrorism and Nationalism

Today’s most talked about and represented subject inside the United States is “terrorism,” described as the greatest threat to the peace-loving world and humanity. In post 9/11 United States, literary writers are busy with vigorous efforts to examine and evaluate both Arabs and Islam in the light of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In the analysis of American literary discourse on Arabs, Islam cannot be taken in isolation from the political environment that is shaped after the attacks because the current war on terrorism is fought on military, political, social, economic and literary fronts. Therefore, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 remain the most significant event affecting the relationship between the United States and the Islamic world. Though terrorism is a threat to all societies as well as faiths, the proactive campaign to combat this phenomenon by the United States of America in particular and the West in general has created some misunderstandings between the faiths and given an opportunity to some to widen the gulf of misunderstanding and distrust between civilizations.

This chapter examines representations of Islam, Arab Muslims and Arab nationalism and looks at competing uses of concepts of Islamic terrorism, Arab terrorism, anti-Americanism and Jihad in post 9/11 American fiction. These are among the major concepts that the American public happens to hear and read about on an almost daily basis after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. What makes the American
public’s encounter with jihad even more interesting is the fact that the relationship between Islam and the United States is no longer one between two distinct parties, but rather a complex relationship between two conflicting identities. The study in this chapter evaluates the connection between terrorism and Arab Muslims in selected novels written by John Updike, Tom Clancy, John Elray and Richard A. Clarke.

In the United States, the terms like “Islamo-fascism,” “Islamo-fascists,” “Islamic fascism” and “Islamic fascists” are used for the first time by President George W. Bush in 2005 to describe Islam and Muslims in general. Historically, terrorism has not been associated with any particular religion or culture. Hence, associating terrorism with a particular religion or culture may not be a fair sort of judgment. According to various sources, terrorism is a sin in Islam as it is in all the religions of the world. In the sixth century, Prophet Muhammad orders his followers in times of adversity to behave with the maximum degree of patience and tolerance with the Arab Pagans and Jews who mistreated the Muslims. The Prophet warns his fellow Muslims to avoid extremism that has been the cause of the evanescence of earlier communities. Thus, terrorism is not religious and the terrorists are common enemies of humanity and need to be trapped and fought because terrorists, who usually constitute a small fraction of a certain nation or ethnic group, never think of the basic tenets of their religion and this can be applied to Arab Muslim terrorists too.

Published in 2006, Updike’s *Terrorist* is a more frontal response to 9/11. *Terrorist* is about an Arab American teenager, Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy, and his high Jewish school counselor, Jack Levy. The novel explores the world view and motivations of Islamic fundamentalism. The novel begins with a monologue by
Ahmad about the condition of faith in America. Ahmad views America as a decadent society and the Americans as a morally impure nation. He quits his classes and joins the Mosque where he gets very close to the Yemeni Imam of New Jersey mosque, Shaikh Rashid, who is linked with a Jihadi organization. Jack Levy, who thinks that Ahmad has a great academic future and that he should go to University, is puzzled by Ahmad’s desire to drive trucks. Though Levy’s view of America is that it is materialistic and greedy but his criticism of the country is different from Ahmad’s condemnation which is fired by Jihadi enthusiasm. Ahmad drives the truck as he wants to but soon he is sucked into a Jihadi plot. Levy gets to know this and hops on to the truck which is loaded with explosives meant to blow up a subway in New Jersey. Levy manages to take Ahmad out of his mad adventure. The novel is in the third person narrative mode and the shifting narrative voice allows the reader to get a glimpse of the reflections and psychological anxieties of Ahmad, the Islamic fundamentalist on the one hand and the American Jews on the other.

This antagonism between Islam and Judeo-Christian traditions reaches its peak after the 9/11 events. Since that terrible day, on many occasions George W. Bush states that he is inspired by God to attack Iraq and Afghanistan: “I was praying for strength to do the Lord’s will…in my case I pray that I be as good a messenger of His will as possible. And then, of course, I pray for personal strength.”

Updike brings the Judeo-Christian coalition and Islam into clash and thus he positions himself very close to the notions of Orientalists of Huntington’s and Bernard Lewis’ on Islam as an “ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian” and “the West versus the rest” which are an integral part of the clash of civilizations thesis.
When *Terrorist* begins, Ahmad, the protagonist, converts himself to Islam and his anti-Americanism emerges eventually. Ahmad, who is exposed to Islam at the age of eleven, is inspired by the Quran and the teachings of the mosque’s Imam to explode Lincoln Tunnel in order to cause a considerable number of deaths among the “enemies.” Ahmad considers this work to be holy and in Allah’s Cause because the Americans are unbelievers. At the mosque, which becomes a center for terrorist planning, Ahmad learns that “all unbelievers are our enemies. The Prophet said that eventually all unbelievers must be destroyed.” Ahmad, as a new student of Islam, still has doubts whether this work of killing the innocents will be rewarded by God. He asks himself: “Shouldn’t God’s purpose, as enunciated by the Prophet, be to convert the infidels? In any case, shouldn’t He show them mercy, not gloat over their pain?” But Ahmad is more obsessed with paradise than any rational thought. His irresolution is solved by the Imam’s assurance: “With this glorious act, you will become my superior. You will leap ahead of me on the golden rolls kept in Heaven.” Ahmad’s regular talk with his religious guide does not produce a very determined terrorist. Though he receives many assurances regarding the reward of Paradise, Ahmad still has doubts: “What evidence beyond the Prophet’s blazing and divinely inspired words proves that *diere* is a next? Where would it be hidden? Who would forever stoke Hell’s boilers? What infinite source of energy would maintain opulent Eden?...What of die second law of thermodynamics?”

The mosque’s Imam positions himself as a defender of God against the unbelieving Americans whom he perceives as “cockroaches that slither out from the baseboard and from beneath the sink-do you pity them? The flies that buzz around the food on the table, walking on it with the dirty feet that have just danced on feces and carrion—do you pity them?” He convinces Ahmad that killing of such
cockroaches and flies is not the same as killing human beings: “The deaths of insects and worms, their bodies so quickly absorbed by eardi and weeds and road tar.”

In order to convince Ahmad to carry out a terrorist attack on Lincoln Tunnel, Sheikh Rashid introduces America as a materialistic civilization and a threat to Islam and Muslims. Accordingly, Ahmad grows with the fear of the devilish American attitude toward Islam: “America wants to take away my God.” On many occasions in the novel, Ahmad expresses detestation of American life: “College track exposed me to corrupting influences—bad philosophy and bad literature. Western culture is Godless...And because it has no God, it is obsessed with sex and luxury goods.” Rather, Ahmad wants to be God's servant even at the cost of American citizens’ lives. Before, carrying out his attack he reads from the Quran: “Are We wearied out with the first creation? Yet are they in doubt with regard to a new creation? We created man: and We know what his soul whispereth to him, and We are closer to him than his neck-vein”, a verse that “has always borne a special, personal meaning for Ahmad.”

Spirituality is a major concern that urges Ahmad to confront the American materialism and secularism. Ahmad leaves the American college and turns to the mosque because “[m]ore education, he feared, might weaken his faith. Doubts he had held off in high school might become irresistible in college. The Straight Path was taking him in another, purer direction.” He learns that Prophet Muhammad was a materialist but with certain limits: “The Prophet himself was a merchant. Man never wearies of praying for good things, says the forty-first sura.” Unlike the Islamic civilization, Ahmad describes America as materially rich but spiritually poor since the “human spirit asks for self-denial. It longs to say ‘No’ to the physical
world.” In an interview with Louis Witt, Updike describes Ahmad as “a boy who is trying to be good and trying to make sense of his life in an American environment, which doesn’t make much sense to him. He sees the rather hedonistic, materialistic, pleasure-now side of America, which strikes him as worthy of condemnation, and is certainly evil in his mind.” Ahmad’s language gives hints as if he has learnt at the hand of a professional Al-Qaeda terrorist: “I of course do not hate all Americans. But the American way is the way of infidels.” He narrates: “It makes no difference which President is in. They all want Americans to be selfish and materialistic, to play their part in consumerism.”

The protagonist, Ahmad, is a half American and half Arab, whose father, Omar Ashmawy, abandons the family and leaves for Egypt when Ahmad is three years. Updike introduces Ahmad’s life before joining the mosque at the age of eleven as a normal American life free from all prejudices and hatred. This loose life provides the Imam with the opportunity to mislead Ahmad easily: “The lack of fathers, the failure of paternity to keep men loyal to their homes, is one of the marks of this decadent and rootless society.” Evaluating the American life in the light of the Islamic standard becomes a priority in Ahmad’s thought after joining the mosque. He begins to think of Christian American life in the light of Islam and finds that the secular Americans appear to him as devils who seek to take away his God.

Ahmad develops a big concern for Americans who do not know what he believes to be the right path of God: “And who shall teach thee what the Crushing Fire is? It is God’s kindled fire, Which shall mount above the hearts of the damned; …It shall verily rise over them like a vault, On outstretched columns.” His language reflects the identity dilemma of an Arab teenager brought up in a Western
environment, neglected by his parents and exposed to radical groups at a very early age. These factors make it difficult for Ahmad to identify himself with American cultural and political contexts; rather, it becomes easy for him to imagine himself as being from somewhere else in the Middle East as a critical or oppositional stance.

Islam, as represented through Ahmad’s character, is an intolerant and segregationist religion. When Ahmad becomes a devoted Muslim, he rejects the American way of life including dress, sexuality and material bodies. For Ahmad, faith in the transcendence of Allah leads him to disparage the immanent world, a world he sees as ruled by unrestrained sexuality and empty materialism. In his point of view, the words of the Quran invade his body and true spirit entails the destruction of the flesh and the denial of sexual desire. Even though he finds the exposure of women’s bodies generally to be sinful, he enjoys the exposure of female’s parts: “Their bare bellies, adorned with shining navel studs and low-down purple tattoos, ask, What else is there to see?” Ahmad, as a devoted Muslim, cannot discipline himself according to what he believes. At school, he fantasizes about his classmates girls’ bodies while simultaneously imagining their punishment in hell, a means of expressing his sexuality and desire. He envisions the “smooth body” of Joryleen, an African-American girl with whom he timidly flirts as “darker than caramel but paler than chocolate, roasting in that vault of flames and being scorched into blisters.” It becomes clear that Ahmad’s devotion to Islam is in large part a means of negotiating the difficulties of adolescence by addressing issues like sexuality and other complexities in different cultures. However, religion is not simply a means of repressing one’s own sexuality, as is clear when he responds to Joryleen’s assertion:
The way I feel it, the spirit is what comes out of the body, like flowers come out of the earth. Hating your body is like hating yourself, the bones and blood and skin and shit that make you...He thinks of sinking himself into her body and knows from its richness and ease that this is a devil’s thought. “Not hate your body,” he corrects her, “but not be a slave to it either. You have a good heart, Joryleen, but you’re heading straight for Hell, the lazy way you think.”

Islam in Terrorist produces a totally opposite code of life from the American one. Ahmad’s Islam is a religious code that clashes with the American economic and social life. Ahmad feels that “all America wants of its citizens, your President has said, is for us to buy-to spend money we cannot afford and thus propel the economy forward for himself and other rich men.” And thus Ahmad comes to the conclusion that Islam is superior to the Christian American code because the mosque and its teachers offer the Muslims what the Christian America takes. Similarly, Ahmad disagrees with the American sexual mores and introduces his view on them, a view that reflects a strong inclination to terrorism and a masculinity crisis: “He arouses curiosity in her. She wants to get close to smell him better, even though she already has a boyfriend...Ahmad has been warned by Shaikh Rashid, and he can see for himself that the high school and the world beyond it are full of nuzzling-blind animals.”

Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad have a strong presence in the novel which provides a better understanding of Arab characters. The mention of Prophet Muhammad in a terrorist context is a reductive one as the novel draws similarities between the spiritual journey of Prophet Muhammad to Heaven and the
terrorist journey of a misled young, Ahmad, whose main purpose is to murder a huge number of civilians. A common feature between the two is that in both Journeys God is “closer than the vein in his neck” to both Prophet Muhammad and Ahmad who are surely in “the Straight Path.” Before he sets out, Ahmad wonders whether he will be flying to heaven after killing Americans. He arrives at the conclusion that his flight will be as holy as the Prophet’s:

So where did that body fly to? Perhaps it was snatched up by God and taken straight to Heaven…according to the sacred tradition of the Hadith such things happen: the Messenger, riding the winged white horse Buraq, was guided through the seven heavens by the angel Gabriel to a certain place, where he prayed with Jesus, Moses, and Abraham before returning to Earth, to become the last of the prophets, the ultimate one.

Updike shows an attitude towards Islam by establishing Christianity as a basis for judgment and as a ground against which he balances what he describes. Following the footsteps of earlier Orientalists, Updike refers to Islam with the Orientalist term “Mohammedanism”. Updike’s use of the term “Mohammedanism” indicates two things: firstly, this term is a misnomer because it suggests that Muslims worship Muhammad rather than God. When Ahmad’s mother tells him: “I don’t know how much credit to give your Mohammedanism” he replies, “We don’t call it Mohammedanism, Mother. That sounds as if we worshipped Mohammad. He never claimed to be God; he was just God’s prophet.” Secondly, it is an intentional misrepresentation resulting from having in mind Christianity, the religion of Christ, as the basis for representing any other religion in the world. Besides, the name Mohammedanism is a vulgar use, deriving from the Prophet’s
name Muhammad and Muslims do not speak of Islam as Mahometanism or Mohammedanism because Muhammad is regarded as the Prophet of God and the principal legislator in the Islamic law. He is not perceived by the Muslims as the inventor of religion. Thus, the religion of Islam takes its name from its basic requirement, namely submission to God, rather than from the name of its prophet.

Portraying Islam as a religion of violence and terrorism is an important issue in *Terrorist*. It appears to the reader that the problem of Ahmad is his belief in Islamic religion that leads him to hate the whole of American life. Because of this belief, Ahmad thinks of people of other faiths as weak Christians and nonobservant Jews. Christians and Jews, in Ahmad’s belief, lack the true faith because they do not follow the “Straight Path” and therefore, they are unclean people. Though, Updike highlights the role played by the radical Yemeni Imam, Sheikh Rashid, in brainwashing Ahmad’s mind, the major focus in the novel is given to certain quotations from the Quran. In his portraying of Ahmad’s shift to radicalism, Updike puts the blame on the Quran as he quotes it: “Mohammed is Allah’s apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers but merciful to one another.”27 This Orientalist viewpoint of Islam and the Islamic view on it are examined by Said in *Covering Islam*: “To Westerners and Americas, “Islam” represents a resurgent atavism, which suggests not only the threat of a return to the Middle ages but the destruction of what is regularly referred to as the democratic order.”28

Updike creates characters from different ethnic and religious affiliations in order to show how religions and believers differ from each other. In addition to Muslim characters, there are Jewish characters like Jack Levy whose religion “meant nothing to him”, Beth, Levy’s wife, who is a Lutheran, a hearty Christian denomination; her sister Hermione, Tylenol and Joryleen are African Americans.
Terry, Ahmad’s mother, who is of Irish and Catholic descent, is not a devout Christian. She tells Levy: “If Ahmad believes in God so much, let God take care of him.” These Jewish and Christian characters represent the ethics of American multi-cultural society. These characters are fairly presented to the reader. For example, Levy does not have a problem in marrying a Lutheran woman, Beth. Religion is not a barrier in their life. In this marriage, no one converts. No one discusses theology. No one insults one’s own gods, or anyone else’s. Interfaith marriages are not the key to world unification under the banner of Judeo-Christian; neither do they have to follow the cataclysmic struggle between good and evil.

Geography is assumed to have relevance to the representation of characters. Omar’s marriage to the Christian Teresa is ended by Omar simply because she is a “trashy and immoral” Arab. Unlike Levy, Omar Ashmawy is an opportunistic Arab Muslim figure who marries her during his studies in America and suddenly abandons his wife and son without having them informed. Though Omar is not a dedicated Muslim and never went to a mosque, he is doomed to be inferior because of his Arab Muslim identity. Later, his wife observes the impossibility of a successful marriage to an “exotic” man: “I was young and in love—in love mostly with him being, you know, exotic, third-world put-upon, and my marrying him showing how liberal and liberated I was.”

Good versus evil is present between the two opposite forces of Judeo-Christianity and Islam and represented by the Jewish teacher Jack Levy and the Muslim Sheik Rashid. Each of these forces tries to manipulate Ahmad in its own direction. Throughout the novel, Sheikh Rashid tries to distance Ahmad from all the people he knows and confine him to only one purpose “istishhdd” or suicidal attack. He introduces a verse from the Quran to convince him: “In your wives and children
you have an enemy. Beware of them. But if you, uh, forgive and pardon and are lenient, God is forgiving and merciful.”^31 The Imam advises Ahmad that these people “distract you from jihdd, from the struggle to become holy and closer to God.” “Perfect! What a beautiful tutee you are, Ahmad!”^32 The reader can easily realize who is good and who is evil. Contrary to the Imam, Jack is working hard for a good future for Ahmad while Shaikh Rashid is working to destroy that future by making Ahmad carry explosives. Levy represents the peace-loving world. He convinces Ahmad to quit the mosque classes and reveals his own personal history of his refusal to kill civilians in Vietnam: “I was in the Army, you know, though they never sent me to Vietnam. That bothered me. I didn’t want to go, but I wanted to prove myself. You can understand that.”^33

In *Terrorist*, good always prevails over evil and accordingly the Occident is always superior. Levy’s efforts succeed in alienating Ahmad from the mosque and its Imam. Levy has been knocking himself to get this boy out of the grip of his mosque that leads him to abandon his future. At the end, the good force overcomes the evil ones. On the explosive truck that Ahmad drives, Levy, but not Sheikh Rashid, insists on dying with Ahmad. Levy manages to catch Ahmad on the way to Lincoln Tunnel and jumps over the truck. Further, he assures Ahmad that he will use his influence to help him if he aborts the bloody plan and surrenders to the police: “Let’s get this truck back to Jersey. They’ll be happy to see it. And happy to see you, I regret to say. But you committed no crime, I’ll be the first to point out…they’ll probably lift your license, but that’s O.K. delivering furniture wasn’t your future anyway.”^34 So Levy’s efforts are more fruitful at the end that he not only saves Ahmad but also the city of New Jersey from a horrible attack. Here, the
novel helps the reader appreciate the superiority and prevalence of the Western Jack over the Eastern Arab Muslim fundamentalist.

In his portrayal of good and bad Arabs, Updike does not offer a balanced perspective. Almost all Updike’s Muslim characters are evil ones. Bad Arabs are seen as terrorists and good Arabs as escapists. Charlie, a good Arab, who has been raised in pure America and looks at America as an “honest and friendly country”, is perceived by Levy as “a loose cannon” though he is the only one who reports to the CIA about Ahmad’s terrorist plan. Levy accuses him of involvement in the plan. Therefore, an Arab can never be as good and friendly as the American.

The post 9/11 American literary tradition accepts myths about the Muslims and their religion, in the wide range of works, that they are intolerant towards other faiths. In Terrorist, Muslims’ intolerance towards other people inside America is defined in religious terms. This intolerance is demonstrated through Ahmad’s attitude toward Joryleen, a Christian girl. Ahmad, who sometimes is invited to Church parties by his Christian classmate Joryleen, wonders how he is, as a Muslim, allowed to enter the church. He is shocked to find how the Christians are more tolerant than the Muslims. Joryleen: “I am not of your faith,” he reminds her solemnly. Her response is airy, careless. “Oh, I don’t take that all that seriously.” Later, when Joryleen wants to visit the mosque with Ahmad, he informs her that the mosque is a sacred place for Muslims and Christians are not allowed to get in because they are unclean people.

In Terrorist, the Muslims’ tendency to violence is a part of their belief that positions its followers as opposite to the Christians and other believers. Ahmad differentiates himself from Joryleen and other Christians: “I still hold to the Straight Path…Islam is still my comfort and guide.” He contrasts Islam from the Christian
“devils” and refers to how the Muslims contributed to science. This radicalism of Arab Muslim characters in *Terrorist* is generalized on all Arabs and Muslims. In the interview with Jeffrey Goldberg, Updike states: “Certainly the standard, as I understand it, critique from our Islamic critics are that we are godless, but in addition to that, racist and sex-obsessed...we are against God, we are not on the right side.” He goes on to describe Ahmad as a member of a community that believes in fighting on God’s side against the West. This radicalism in *Terrorist* is one of the terrorist forces shared by all Muslims: “True believers believe in jihad...they believe in action. They believe that something can be done.”

Representation of Arab Muslims in *Terrorist* does not provide an explanation of how and from where people like Ahmad are coming. Updike, rather, seems to be writing from the victims’ point of view providing a sense that if this description represents a terrorist, it also happens to represent all the Muslims including those who reject terrorism. Further, Updike does not make a single quotation from a Muslim source; rather he goes on quoting several verses from the Quran, a distorted version translated by nineteenth century European Orientalists to build his narrative on terrorism. This copy of the Quran is full of omission, distortion and mistranslation introduced by European Orientalists to subvert the message and meaning of the Quran. In an interview with Louise Witt after publishing his *Terrorist*, Updike describes Islam as a “static religion” and contrasts it with Christianity and Judaism: “It’s fairly absolutist, as you know, and you’re either in or not.” Arab Muslims in *Terrorist* are anti-American while all other characters from the Judeo-Christian tradition represent the peace-loving world. Similarly, Islam is portrayed as an intolerant religion that fosters violence and terror.
Tom Clancy’s *The Teeth of the Tiger* was published in 2003. The novel is a counterterrorism discourse. It revolves around the incident of murdering an Israeli Mossad agent working at his station in Rome by a Saudi Muslim character, Mohammed Hassan al-Din. While the Mossad agent is waiting for a pickup of information from Hassan al-Din, who has ties to the PFLP militant organization, however, the agent is deceived and killed in a restaurant bathroom by his Saudi friend. Hassan al-Din is a central terrorist who leads a terrorist organization which is plotting attacks against American targets. With the help of the Columbian drug cartel and its contacts in Latin America, sixteen Arab terrorists are smuggled over the Mexican border and into the US. They carry out simultaneous massacres of civilians in four American shopping malls around the country, inflicting fear on the population, and they all die in the end as armed forces arrive at the scenes.

The first half of the book introduces a detailed role of an unofficial organization called Hendley Associates established by a former Senator with the support of a former President Jack Ryan. The organization works with a cover of a trading and arbitrage business. In reality, the organization is a privately-financed intelligence service which gathers information on terrorists in the world. “The Campus”, as it is called, recruits three young men to help it fight against Muslims terrorists. At first the team is not convinced of the morality of the secret counterterrorist organization. After the four terrorist attacks on the shopping malls, the team has no more problems to kill terrorists and become eager to partake in their first missions. The rest of the novel follows the movements of individual members of the terrorist organization across Europe with the team eliminating them one by one. The novel ends when Jack Junior, a member of the team, is killing Hassan al-Din, the murderer of the Israeli agent.
Clancy’s counterterrorism discourse tends to spotlight not only the irrationality but also the efficacy of terrorism, focusing on issues related to individual, group, the role of religious motives and religious indoctrination. In *The Teeth of the Tiger*, one reads of dreadful statistics on innocent victims who get killed in God’s name by Arab fanatics who hope to “meet Allah and enter Paradise at the time written by God’s Own Hand in God’s Own Book.” Critical analysis of counterterrorism discourse in post 9/11 American novel does also involve the conflicts on Arab oil, post-Holocaust guilt or the establishment of Israel in the Middle East on Palestinian soil that displaces Arabs and Muslims and creates anger and loathing among the Arabs at America. Yet, the 9/11 remains the main gate of knowledge for Americans about the Arabs because American consumers want literature that gives them information on what has just happened as Clancy’s novel provides.

Narration in *The Teeth* follows Arabs’ hatred for both America and Israel. In their hatred and enmity toward the Jews, Arabs resemble the Neo-Nazis who are trying to finish the job the Germans had started. The danger posed by Arabs is not limited to Israel; rather America is a target too because of the American unlimited support for Israel against the Arabs. To understand Clancy’s structural forces that play an important role in representing Arab Muslims, it is helpful to recall Lewis’ notion of the Clash of Civilizations as a background for illustrating the Islamic-Judeo-Christian relationship. Bernard Lewis, as the first writer to use the term Clash of Civilizations, observes that Islam is an old enemy for both Christianity and Judaism. This enmity, according to Lewis, should be met with a unified reaction against this rival. In *The Teeth*, Arabs are enraged at Judeo-Christian tradition and
wish to destroy this Western coalition. Fa’ad has the same feelings toward the Judeo-Christian alliance:

America was his primary target because its power, whether held to its own use or parceled out for others to use in America’s own imperial interests. America threatened everything he held dear. America was an infidel country, patron and protector of the Jews. America had invaded his own country and stationed troops and weapons there. 

Arabs believe in the holiness of their act of terror that targets women and children in the American malls where “blood on the floor could have been rain in a thunderstorm.” In their attack on civilians, Arab terrorists do not differentiate between combatants and noncombatants because they perceive all Americans as infidels and therefore, all of them are targets. Arab terrorists are irrational and irresponsible humans who believe in the holiness of terrorizing the non-Muslims: “To them it wasn’t a crime at all…it was the illusion that they were doing God’s work.”

A few hours before the attacks on the four shopping malls “they all unrolled their prayer rugs and, as one man, said their morning Salat for what they all expected to be the last time. It took a few minutes and then they all washed, to purify themselves for the task.” By using religious motives to attack America, Arab Muslims display a ferocity which gives them extra energy that amazes the Americans. In the shopping mall shooting, Mustafa is shot five times in the chest without him feeling it: “Mustafa felt his legs weaken. The blow in the face did hurt, even though the five bullets had not. He tried to turn again, but his left leg would bear no weight…He tried to sit up, even to roll, but as his legs had failed him.”
The result of the attack on the malls is not satisfactory for the Arab terrorist leaders in Europe because they hope to kill thousands. Even though the nature of the attack is so gruesome that it has resulted in more than eighty three dead and hundreds of injured including women and children. Muhammad feels “the mission had not gone all that well” because “he hoped for hundreds of dead Americans, instead of several dozens.”

In the portrayal of Arab characters and Islam, the novel shows a strong correlation between Islam and terrorism: “Religion is the centre of their culture. When a guy converts and lives by Islamic rules, it validates their world.” In their fight against unbelievers, Arab Muslim fanatics “hoped to meet Allah soon, and to garner the rewards that would come for fighting in their Holy Cause.” The novel also makes a mention of Prophet Muhammad as a man who was involved in acts of terror and believed in virgins as reward for those who died in the Holy Cause. Furthermore, for the sake of generalization, the novel insists that all the terrorists of the world pray to Mecca, the native place of the Prophet.

The existence of Prophet Muhammad in the novel is not a passing mention; on many occasions narration highlights Prophet Muhammad’s aggression and violence: “Muhammad had been the most honorable of men, and had fought a good and honorable fight against pagan idolaters…Was he, then, an honorable man? A difficult question…Did Allah desire His Faithful to be prisoners of the seventh century? Certainly not.” In addition to the fight for the holy cause, Arabs carry out terrorist attacks against both Christian America and Jewish Israel for two other reasons; firstly to avenge the Palestinians against the Judeo-Evangelical cooperation and secondly to give the Shi’a Muslims a lesson that the Sunni Muslims are more nationalist and closer to Allah than the Shi’a Muslims. Sunni Muslims pose more
danger to the United States than the Soviet Union did. These new fanatics have “willingness to trade their own lives for those of their perceived enemies.”

Mustafa’s loathing of America is interpreted by the American support for Israel. He is obsessed with the American policy that exploits Arab huge reserves of oil and gas and in return it gives its strategic weapons to Israel: “They were such ungrateful bastards, the Americans. Islamic countries sold them oil, and what did America give in return? Weapons to the Israelis to kill Arabs with, damned little else.” Fa’ad, one of the leaders in the group, knows that any act against Israel will anger the Americans because “they love the Jews more than their own children. Mark my words on this. And they will lash out at us.” Clancy’s portrayal of anti-Israeli terrorist acts and the American response to it reflects a major fact about American-Israeli relationship. As a counterterrorism fiction, The Teeth shows that the role of the Jewish minority inside America determines the American policy in the Middle East. And defending Israel against Arab threat is an American priority and is considered by the Americans as a work of the highest national importance.

The Teeth, further, draws a distinction between the Sunni and Shia Muslims in terms of terrorism. In this distinction, Sunni Muslims are more prone to terrorist acts against the United States and Israel than the Shia Muslims. Further, Sunni Muslims believe in the oneness of the whole world that should be brought under the umbrella of Islam even at the cost of human life. In the background of the whole terrorist network in the novel, all the members are Sunni Muslims from different Arab countries who work under a conservative Imam called the Emir who wants to bring humanity under Islam. The Emir believes in a single Sunni leader for the world, a Pope interpreting and applying views of the religious laws of Islam, ending the differences between Islamic sects and all religions of the world.
The Teeth shows an attitude towards Islam by establishing Christianity as a basis for judgment and as the ground against which it balances what the Americans confront. The American war against fanatic Arabs is based on the American characters’ Christian belief too. Religion is a powerful motivator in the American fight against Arab fundamentalists. In the fight against Arabs fanatics who kill in God’s name, Americans have fallen into the same trap. He describes war on terrorism as a holy Christian war against non-Christians: “We’re not after people who sing too loud in church.”

Against this background, Imam Warith Deen Mohammed, an American Muslim leader, observes that the ongoing conflict between America and terrorists should not have a religious colour because each of these faiths is complementary to each other:

> When we read the Quran and Bible with proper understanding, we can clearly see that these great religious leaders were not divided one against the other. Jesus not only supported the scripture that Moses taught, but he interpreted it and explained it so that the people could get more light on what Moses had taught them. When Prophet Muhammad of Arabia came behind Jesus, he did the same thing.

Killing in God’s name has become a component of the image of Arabs in the West after the 9/11 events. The Teeth introduces the reader to four teams containing four terrorists each but the narration follows the events created by one of the teams led by Mustafa that entered a shopping mall called ‘Victoria’s Secret Store’ in Colorado while the other three teams spread in other malls in Provo, Utah and Iowa. All the members of this terrorist network kill in God’s name. Though, they have killed large numbers of innocent women and children, they feel the result of the act is not satisfactory because it was not a busy shopping day. Mustafa, a leader of the
team, is the only terrorist who is satisfied with the result of the action because he has done his duty to his faith and to his Allah. What is worthy of note here is the way Arab Muslims are portrayed and how religion is pushed to the centre. Terrorism is given religious color and supported by quotes from the Quran without providing the original context of the verse.

Arab terrorists are beyond redemption and belong to a society that is “not a civilized one”. Though most of Clancy’s Arab characters get their education in Europe, they turn against the West. Terrorism is a holy mission that resembles Prophet Muhammad’s Journey from Mecca to Medina. The connection between a terrorist mission and Prophet Muhammad’s mission from Mecca to Medina is an Islamophobic context because the two missions carry two opposite purposes. While the Prophet leaves Mecca to Medina for his safety as the Arab Pagans threaten to kill him, Arabs’ mission from Europe to the United States is a terrorist one. This mission is meant to terrorize innocents and disturb the public.

Arab Muslims have no dignity and chastity when it comes to issues related to sexuality and women. Arab characters’ sexual thoughts come up when they encounter Western women. The scene when the sixteen attackers meet French females who prostitute themselves for a fee reveals the lecherous nature of Arab Muslims who are: “horny buggers and good at paying a girl.” They are also sexualized in the religious context. Zuhayr feels that the woman with “whorish red pants” he is killing will have sex with him in Paradise as a reward by God. While killing her, he assures her that the other life is the eternal life in which he will marry her. He tells his colleagues that “he’d had only a few women in his life, and surely he’d killed more women here today than he’d ever fucked.” At the end of the novel, Fa’ad in Vienna has cybersex on the internet as he locates a willing partner in
a chat-room and carries out a fantasy of being a German commandant taking out his desires on a Jewess in a concentration camp. The hidden irony in this perverse narration is that Fa’ad’s partner is not the twenty three-year old female he thinks she is, but a fifty year old man, half drunk and quite lonely.

Arab Muslims in The Teeth are hypocrites. They indulge in prostitution, alcoholism, drugs and other acts against Islamic beliefs. For example, during Muhammad’s trip to Colombia to make the deal with drug cartels he drinks beer and wine though it is contrary to his religious beliefs. He justifies his indulgence in alcohol as the only way to fit in the new environment. Even the Emir, the most religious character in the group, who believes that his enemies are “Allah’s Own Enemies” drinks wine in every hotel he enters. Similarly, Uda bin Sali, the financial supporter in the network and a son of Saudi prince, spends most of his time and money with London prostitutes whom he believes to be his girlfriends, such as Rosalie Parker and Mandy. After his assassination by CIA, none of his girlfriends shows sorrow. According to Rosalie, Uda has been only a business client and a source of income as other customers.

The Teeth draws a binary opposition between the Muslims in terms of threat and divides them into “Arab Muslims” and “non-Arab Muslims”. Accordingly, Arab Muslims are projected as barbaric, savage and blood-thirsty. An Arab Muslim is an irresponsible human being. His act of terror reveals that an Arab is not even a human being but an animal “holding a weapon”. Mustafa is a typical example of Arab savagery. In the shopping mall he meets six women and empties his magazine into them. He kills them all and feels “the momentary satisfaction” as they fall. Unlike Arab Muslims, non-Arab Muslims are more peaceful. Brian Caruso, a US Marine Captain, is introduced in an interview with a general discussion of his recent
experiences in Afghanistan and seems to have very good knowledge about both Arab Muslims and Afghan Muslims. In the confrontations with the Arabs, he finds that Arabs are fanatics who do not fear death while Afghans are not: “The Afghans were brave enough, but they weren’t madmen-or, more precisely, they chose martyrdom only on their own terms…they [Arabs] were barbarians, sure, but even barbarians were supposed to have limits…while Afghans hadn’t made any overt attempts to kill women and kids.”

Caruso has no qualms or nightmares about the many Arabs he kills because he fights terrorists back. Killing terrorist, according to him, is a business and not personal due to the simple fact that “those people were making war on my country.” He does also observe that Afghans have a higher level of morals than “bastard Arabs” that “Afghans don’t rob.” Similarly, Turkish Muslims are not hypocrites like Arab terrorists who indulge in all kinds of taboos like prostitution, alcoholism and drugs: “They [Turks] are also Mohammadans. They will not eat the sauerbraten or drink the beer.”

Binarism drawn between Islam and Christianity shows an unbiased attitude towards Islam. Jack, a Christian character, tries to analyze the lifestyle of those connected to terrorism, what motivates them and the way they think. This leads him to study the religion of Islam and its practices through its religious scriptures. Jack comes to the conclusion that all men are fundamentally the same. He hears the same from his father that bad people exist everywhere in the world regardless of religion and ethnic affiliation. Most of Jack’s narrations follow this pattern that there are bad people in Islam and bad people Christianity as well. Jack assures his fellow Americans that Islam is not faulty. He proves his assumption by mentioning an event where Catholic terrorists try to kill his mother when he is in her womb.
Therefore, Jack’s understanding of terror is not tied to any religion because fanatics are fanatics in all religions of the world.

Jack, further, draws similarities between Islam and Christianity for the purpose of defining the mentality of terrorists. According to Jack, both religions have the same origin, the Ibrahamic tradition, and the same basic message, belief in God: “Islam is not a belief system for psychopaths, but it can be perverted to the use of such people, just like Christianity can.” Thus, if Islam is not at fault, it remains difficult to interpret other American characters’ generalization about the Muslims.

One important thing which critical theory teaches us today is to make connections and unravel hidden issues that earlier researchers think do not exist in novel. Postcolonial criticism, in particular, which became a major force in literature studies in the 1990s, helps us move from the margins of a literary work into the center of analysis. In such theoretical readings, victims and dehumanized characters take over the role of important and serious characters. For the sake of clarity, a reader can notice how Defoe’s Crusoe ceases to be a survivor; and instead, becomes a colonizer and how Friday’s character looms larger, and so on. The same is true in post 9/11 American novels that Arabs are no longer traditional terrorists; rather, they become more sophisticated and are able to form international alliances with other non-Islamic powers in order to organize attacks inside America.

*The Teeth* introduces one of the most dangerous conspiracies in which Arab terrorists work together with the Hispanic drug Cartels in Latin America and smuggle sixteen Arab terrorists into America through the Mexican borders. The plan is sophisticated enough that it starts from Lebanon through France and Mexico using Qatari passports and Bahraini visa cards. According to the terror-drug deal, Arab terrorists in Europe will help the Hispanic Cartels export their drug cargo to
the huge European market in return. The main purpose behind this deal is to carry out simultaneous massacres of civilians in four American shopping malls around the country and inflict fear in the population.

Behind this terrorist organization is a figure called the Emir, a rich Saudi living in Riyadh. He has plans to gain a position of power and influence through a radical movement in the religion of Islam. He supports and leads the fight against what he considers Western offenders. In the negotiation with the Colombian drug Cartels, Muhammad, the Emir’s envoy, assures the Cartels that Arab Muslim have conducted several operations in Europe for a long time through a highly secure network. Therefore, it is easy for this network to transport drugs to the European market if the Latinos “transport weapons and people” to the United States.

This connection seems to be drawn between two seemingly unconnected poles, extreme rightist Muslims and extreme leftist Latinos. Though, this alliance between radical Arab Muslims and Hispanic drug Cartels looks odd, yet it helps develop a conspiracy theory through Muslim and Latino Machiavellian characters. Muhammad feels that Hispanic Americans are enemies too because they are “Infidels” whose main aim is to make a great deal of money. In his negotiations with them, Muhammad maintains certain limits because he knows that these Cartels could be as dangerous as himself: “He was no fool…The Arab was not going to underestimate these men or their capabilities…Nor would he mistake them for friends.”61 This is because he believes that the Latinos deny Allah and could be very dangerous as those who “worked in His Name”. Further, they are grandsons of Spain, an ancient enemy of Islam. But Muhammad does not mind being allied even with infidels in order to achieve his end. The only common thing he shares with the Latinos is that both parties loathe America.
In this situation Muhammad has to consider these old enemies as allies: “The enemy of your enemy is your friend” and his meeting with them as “a cordial business meeting.” The cocaine-terror deal finds a common ground for both sides whose basic aim is: “mutual interests to cause unrest and chaos within America.”

For Colombian Cartels, a state of disorder created by Arab terrorists will help them smuggle drugs easily into the American states because: “They [Americans] are putting ever-greater pressure on my friends” and therefore they “wish to retaliate, and to deflect their pressure in other directions” so that America “would become less interested in Colombia, and shift her focus of intelligence operations elsewhere.”

Unlike Arab characters, Hispanic characters turn out to gain a more humane portrayal in the novel than their fellow Arabs. Ricardo, a Mexican Cartel member who is mentioned to have a family, feels that the Arabs are “morose” people, and do not have families to go back to. Ernesto, a senior Cartel man, speaks of Mohammed as the “towel-headed thug” and wonders why Arab fanatics seek after death. Ernesto is surprised to hear about the Arab terrorist attack that resulted in the death of eighty-three women and children. He feels sorry to see the blood of the innocent women and children. Pablo, a Cartel contact man, feels guilty because he is involved in facilitating those operations. He considers killing women and children a cowardly job but he understands that the attackers belong to a savage culture. He comes to a conclusion about Arabs: “That is why they are called terrorists…They kill without warning and attack people unable to defend themselves.”

Conspiracy theories in narrative forms in Western literature have first emerged in American literature with a primary function to maintain hegemony over the world. Conspiracy theories to solve the puzzle of 9/11 events continue till today
as both Americans and Islamist Arabs fail to disprove each other’s allegations. In a recent interview with Iran’s Press TV, leading American intellectual and political dissident Noam Chomsky states that the wars launched in response to the 9/11 attacks are “criminal”. He adds that the US government provides no evidence that Bin Laden and other Arab Muslims are responsible for the attacks:

The Taliban requested evidence which is of course natural…and the Bush administration refused to provide any….We later discovered one of the reasons why they did not bring evidence: they did not have any… Eight months later, the head of FBI informed the press that the FBI believed that the plot may have been hatched in Afghanistan, but was probably implemented in the United Arab Emirates and Germany… So they had no evidence.”

There is a history, Emerson argues, for every word. To this effect he says “as we go back in history, language becomes more picturesque.” Clancy and Updike are not the first to write about terrorist conspiracies woven by Arabs against the West and the United States in particular; rather they are following a formidable Orientalist tradition. If readers go back to the Clash of Civilizations published in 1993, for instance, they will notice that its author, Huntington, points to a very dangerous connection between two civilizations; Islamic and Confucian. Huntington assumes that the Confucian-Islamic military connection is growing and designed to promote acquisition of the weapons and weapons technologies needed to counter the military powers of the West. This growing cooperation between the two civilizations poses a threat to the West. Huntington’s thesis of Clash of Civilizations can be used as a test to examine the nature of Arab terrorist
conspiracies in the post 9/11 American novel and as a link to the American Orientalist discourse.

2.2 Representation of Prophet Muhammad’s successors

The American novel of the post 9/11 does also include an investigation of the origin of Islam and Arab Muslim identity of the seventh century A.D. John Elray’s Khalifah describes the Muslims’ aggression and intolerance towards the unbelievers of the seventh century around Arabia when Muhammad’s successors take the responsibility of spreading the Islamic message to humanity. The novel describes the brutality of the Orientals towards Orientals and Islam toward other faiths. Analysis of this novel will examine whether Elray is following a tradition of misrepresentation by departing from a point where his Orientalist predecessors leave Islam or giving his own personal judgment.

At the outset, Elray makes a reference to the Arabs, the community of his interpretation: “In a desolate land of barren hills and shifting windswept sand, a cloud of dust spiraled high into the air” referring to the Orient as harsh as his land. The first incident in the novel gives a brief yet deep reference to the brutality of Arabs. The incident takes place as an Arab is holding a crying baby girl and placing it into the tomb while the others push in sand to entomb the infant. This incident reveals the brutality of Arab tradition in which female infants are buried alive in order to avoid a possible shame in future.

John Elray’s Khalifah (2002) is a historical novel about the rise of the first Khalifahs, Prophet Muhammad’s successors, to power at the dawn of Islam in the seventh century, a highly strange and exotic setting to Western readers. The story is about the earliest Khalifahs who attempt to unify Arabs and try to expand their power to neighboring territories. The story describes how Islam becomes in turmoil
when the Muslims begin to fight one another for gaining personal power. The novel includes details of the violence that was common during that time period especially the fight between the two cousin clans of Mu’awiya and Prophet Muhammad. The story line is filled with intrigue and treachery as various factions of the Arab groups vie for power. Elray’s focus is on the bloody wars and eventual rise of Mu’awiya who spends much of his time in the face of great dangers between rival families and tribes. Most of the main characters are depicted as unpleasant, touchy, and unsympathetic egoists, bloodthirsty, opportunist and quick to kill or rape. The novel ends with the victory of Mu’awiya over the Prophet’s grandsons who get killed at the hands of Mu’awiya’s army.

Orientalism, suggests Said, is an ultimate cultural doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient becomes inferior to the West; this doctrine forced a difference between the familiar West and the strange Orient. Further, the Orientalist makes the Orient speak, using a generality of labels like “the Arabs,” “the Muslims” versus “the Westerner,” “the Christians”. In Khalifah, Elray does not distance his subjects from these binaries; rather he reduces them to the animal status: “The Bedouin live like animals” who use “the foul odor of fresh dung…to be used later as fuel” and “wash in camel piss every day” because “It kills parasites.” The imbalance between the Muslim East and the Christian West remains obviously a function of changing cultural and historical patterns that facilitate reproducing representations accordingly.

Khalifahs or Califates is a title given to Prophet Muhammad’s successors. In Khalifah, Islam is, from the outset, a bloody religion that spreads by force. The novel opens when Islam is getting disintegrated soon after Muhammad’s death. The Islamic empire falls apart and people who are brought to Islam by force leave it:
“Fewer than four moons had passed since the death of the Prophet and already the
unifying influence he had exerted on the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula was
disintegrating. Rebellion was rampant.” Muhammad’s force that has brought
people to Islam is weakened and unable to maintain the Islamic community from
falling apart after the Prophet’s death. The novel concludes as it opens that Islam
fell into two opponent sects Sunni Muslims who follow Mu’awiyah and Shia
Muslims who follow Ali.

While it spreads by the sword, Islam does teach that fighting in the name of
God is worthwhile since its aim is “to enforce the will of Allah”. Here is the
description of Prophet Muhammad’s divine and extraordinary sword that has fallen
from heaven:

…a star fall from the heavens one night and heard a tremendous
explosion nearby his village as it hit the earth…In his infinite
wisdom, he positioned his camel over the blackened saddle-sized
rock and stimulated the animal so that its urine flowed over the gift
from above. The rock hissed and sputtered before bursting into
several smaller pieces…One of these pieces he took and had a sword
fashioned from the metal extracted from it.”

In Khalifah, Arabs are aggressive and violent people. Mu’awiyah narrates
bloody events that took place between clans in his tribe before the emergence of the
religion of Islam: “A blood feud existed for ages between my family and that of the
Prophet Muhammad…after Mecca fell to Muhammad, our families reconciled. To
bind the pact, my sister was given to the Prophet as wife.” Though, Khalifah’s
main focus is the aggression and barbarism of the Muslims, the novel makes
references to the barbarism of Arabs before in pre-Islamic era. ‘The Sword of
Allah’ is a title that Muhammad gives to Khalid whose duty is to bring people to Islam by force. Khalid describes the task given to him by Muhammad: “By the right bestowed upon me by Allah, through his messenger Muhammad, who instructs me to spread the faith, a faith which you must accept, and pay tribute to, or die.” Therefore ‘The Sword of Allah’ is known for his bloody mood towards the people who reject Islam. His justice is always meant to be death by beheading.

Evidence of substituting the power of God with that of Khalid does not stop at any point throughout the novel. When the reader finds that Khalid is called the ‘Sword of Allah’ in the very beginning of the novel, he believes that Khalid is a human being bestowed with God’s superpower along with certain divine qualities such as mercy, love and pity. Surprisingly, such assessment is a faulty one because Khalid is a person who never thinks of Islam as anything other than the sword. As the reader proceeds, the Sword of Allah is turning into a beast, or at least a wild man and the reader’s attitude towards him grows unfavorable. People, like those of Museilima, who choose a faith other than Islam, are crushed by Khalid’s sword. People who reject Muhammad’s religion receive divine killings that Allah orders. Mu’awiya narrates Khalid’s treatment of Beni Yerbu, a tribe that chooses not to believe in Islam:

"In the midst of Khalid’s caravan I could see some fifty Beni Yerbu prisoners, their hands bound together in front of them. They staggered from exhaustion like a band of drunkards…Between them, sprawled on the ground, lay the motionless bodies of many Yerbu prisoners, their garments covered with blood, their exposed flesh displaying deep gashes."
Islam is depicted as a religion of terror and violence in *Khalifah*. The violence against non-Muslims that accompanied the spread of Islam is encouraged by Muhammad himself. In the eighth year after the *Hijrah*, Prophet Muhammad orders Khalid to invade the Christian tribes surrounding Arabia. This Islamic attitude towards the non-Muslims is found in Amr, a commander in Khalifah Omar’s army who conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the churches and built mosques instead. Therefore, by extension, all men from the East who share that “common religion” and “ethnic origin” are expected to share in violence, barbarism and terror.

Jihad or Islamic Conquest is one of the few Islamic concepts that the American public happens to hear or read about on a daily basis after the 9/11 attacks. Further, the concept of Jihad and the debates surrounding it emerge as key to exploring the representation of Islam in the aftermath of 9/11. *Khalifah*, confirms the aggressive nature of Jihad and embellishes the picture of this aggression by making the Muslims narrate their own experience of terror. Narration comes from Mu’awiyah, a prominent Islamic figure who narrates the barbarism of the Muslims. This barbarism is highlighted further in the Islamic fight on the non-Muslims that is based on the principle ‘submit to Islam or suffer the consequences.’ Mu’awiyah narrates his experience during Khalid’s invasion of the Pagan tribe of Beni Yerbu: “Malik’s men offered little resistance and after a mere half-day of fighting, chose instead to embrace Islam…We are all Believers now.”

The dialogues built between the conqueror and the prisoners in the novel demonstrate the Islamic aggression.

Man’s relation to God has a major focus in the novel and the name of Allah is present in every action the Muslims perform. Thus, the belief in God’s mercy and
compassion may bestow these attributes to the Muslims since Islam means submission to God. In fact, Elray is correct in a certain way, because mercy in Islam is a fundamental feature, as it is in all religions. But Elray’s approach in describing events is quite different, especially his representation of Islam, Prophet Muhammad and his companions. For example, while describing Khalid’s punishment to those who reject Islam, Elray, however, makes sure that the reader’s judgment will render Muslims irrational, barbaric and merciless: “Those charged with committing crimes against Islam were huddled together...Twenty perished by the sword. Seven of those were beheaded.” Similarly, women receive the same punishment: “One was thrown off a nearby cliff, and two were drowned in the well – suspended by their ankles and lowered in until the water reached their knees.”

Singing is also punishable in Khalid’s laws. Songstresses are considered apostates and receive death penalty.

Post 9/11 monolithic representation of the Muslims is not a new phenomenon; rather it is a consequential movement of history, a movement which established this monolithic relationship between Islam and the West in the eighteenth century. In Khalifah, representation of Islam reduces the religious to the mundane. Omar, the second Successor of the Prophet, is a wicked man who loses all moral standards while dealing with his captives. He does not differ much from Khalid. Though Elray makes a passing mention of Omar, Omar’s image is clear that he is as wicked as Khalid who occupies a good space in the novel. Omar always kills the non-Muslims in order to enforce the will of Allah. His brutality is vivid when he punishes Mutemmam, a pagan captive after an attempt of escape. Though, Mutemmam has been unconscious due to severe beatings, Omar is showing a barbaric personality as he produces his sizable penis and urinates into the captive’s mouth.
Khalifah Omar is an embodiment of Islamic fanaticism and intolerance towards other faiths. Omar wishes to eradicate all religions and confine humanity to Islam. He warns the Christian Patriarch of Jerusalem after his triumph on the Pagans of Arabia: “We have just recently taken Al-Medain from the Persians…Today, the fire worshippers hold nothing...Islam has triumphed over the two most powerful empires in the world and we shall go on to take their very homelands.”

Christianity, too, is not tolerated by Omar: “Surely you are misguided to think that my men have no right to be here. This is the place where the prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, made his ascent into heaven.” Further, he confiscated Christian worship places and built mosques in their places. Chances of co-existence should be subject to Omar’s terms produced for the Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem:

I have brought with me an agreement that I’ve drawn up myself;”…“It stipulates the terms and conditions under which we will accept your surrender, and grants to your people certain privileges and freedoms…able-bodied men must pay a tax of thirty dirhams each year as well as providing a specified amount of food and oil to sustain the Arab population which will reside here.

The seventh century’s confrontation between Muslims and Christians is introduced as a fight between the backward and the civilized. Though there is no clash of civilizations in the sense that Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington employ in their arguments, Elray represents the Islamic fight against the Christians as a fight of savages, barbaric and uncivilized people against the civilized people. Further, the Muslims’ fight against the Christians differs from their attacks on Arabs Pagan because Muslims know how civilized and powerful the Christians are
and therefore Muslims attack them with more brutality: “This engagement with the Christians won’t be like fighting the Beni Kelb or the Beni Kodaa…These people call themselves civilized but they are more barbarous than the worst you’ve ever seen.”

The binarism between Arab Christians and Western Christians is also highlighted in *Khalifah*. This kind of binarism insists on the inferiority of the Orient including Arab Christians. Arab Christians of Gaza are projected as less civilized and powerful than their Western Christian counterparts simply because Christians of Gaza are parts of the Orient. Mu’awiya is aware of this inferiority. He narrates that conquering Christian Gaza poses less threat to the Muslims than conquering Christian Byzantines. This is because of the fact that Western “mind does not think in the same way as the Arab mind. You must learn the differences.” Further, Western Christians of Byzantine “are logical and organized. They operate like a machine, like a catapult, for example. Everything works well when all the steps take place as they should.” The worst of all are the Arab Muslims who “lack control” and are “undisciplined”. Although Christianity and Islam have many similarities, they are doomed to be on a collision course. Both Christianity and Islam start a mission to enlighten the world. According to this view, Christianity comes as a fulfillment and reformation to a previous religion, Judaism, and so does Islam. Using power to enforce the right to spread the Word of God has made both faiths meet on unfavourable grounds.

Indeed Islam spread in a relatively short period of time and the Muslims conquered nations in the cause of God. Along with this military expansion, the religion had a power of faith and enthusiasm for the Cause: “Combat is in my blood. I must be at the battlefront, not at a seat of administration.” And once in the
battlefield, the Muslims, though “undisciplined” but “have unity of Cause” and believe that the Cause of God is well worth fighting for. This Cause, Elray suggests, is more important than the Christian organizational control; and therefore Christendom, unlike Islam, has less faith and fewer fanatics.

Muslims’ aggression against the non-Muslims is not the only focus of Elray in *Khalifah*. The novel does also focus on aggression of the Muslims against the Muslims during Khalifahs’ era. Muslims are also victims of religious aggression. Therefore, aggression among the Muslims is one of the reasons behind the disintegration of the early Islamic State after Prophet Muhammad’s death. Soon after the death of Abi Bakr, the first Khalifah, some Muslims become discontent with the appointment of Omar who is not from the same lineage of the Prophet. Ali, Muhammad’s cousin, feels he is ignored because he is not consulted in the decision. Othman, the fourth Khalifah, shares Ali’s fear and tries to calm him down: “I too believe Omar to be the best choice...Although Omar sometimes shows not the goodness...he has learned to temper his severity...He is also the most experienced in running the affairs of the state, and a devout Believer. Be not concerned. Omar will be a good Khalifah...And besides, it’s too late to bellyache now.”

Distrust among the Muslim family members in issues related to power is an example of evil Muslims. The struggle for power between the two cousin clans of Prophet Muhammad, Hashim, and his cousins’ clan, Omia, continues for generation. As soon as Muhammad begins preaching to the people about Islam, Mu’awiya’s father tries to kill Muhammad in order to maintain his position as the most powerful man in the two clans. This competition for power continues even after the death of the Prophet and reaches its peak when Omar, who belongs to Omia clan, becomes Khalifah. Othman comments on Ali’s attitude: “The house of
Hashim is losing its influence, and I am certain he harbors ill feelings towards you because of your father. I am telling you this because I have been informed that he has met with Khalid, another one who has reason to be disgruntled now that Omar is Khalifah. They both see you as a threat.”

This ambition for power continues for centuries and results in the disintegration of the Islamic society into the Sunni sect which follows Omia Clan and the Shia sect which follows Hashim’s clan. The evil of Muslims’ ambition for power serves as the climax of the novel when Mu’awiya, a member of Omia clan, kills the remaining members of Prophet Muhammad grandsons Al-Hasan and Al-Hosein. By killing the Prophet’s grandsons, Mu’awiya has put an end to the struggle for succession, a struggle which has caused the death of many lives.

Prophet Muhammad’s companions have no dignity when it comes to issues related to sexuality and women. They are torn between their mission as Khalifahs and their worldly interests; thus Islam is characterized by bloodshed. Sexuality is seen as one of Muslims’ pursuits that comes closer to power. Khalid’s sexuality is accompanied by savagery and use of power. On many occasions in the novel Khalid uses his powerful position to have sex with women he conquers. Mu’awiya narrates his and Khalid’s sexual interest in captive Leila whose husband is killed by Khalid: “The combination of her brazen complexion, dark elongated eyes, and raven black hair against…I sensed, by his tone of voice, that Khalid was becoming aroused…as was I. I felt the stirrings of lust beneath my robe.” By extension, all Muhammad’s companions who share a “common religion” and “ethnic origin” are sexually loose.

Woman, who is so highly dignified and protected in Islamic law, is reduced to an animal-like status during Khalifah’s rule. Instead of listening to her suffering and calls for mercy in captivity, Khalid thinks of having sex with her: “I will free
your people soon...Come to my tent tomorrow morning.” Oleiyah Majaa is another victim of Khalid’s sexuality who kills herself when Khalid marries her against her desire. She is a victim of the generosity of her father who invites Khalid to his house in the presence of his daughter. She does not know that serving the guest will turn into a calamity upon her. Soon after she serves Khalid’s food, Khalid threatens to kill her father if he does not allow him to marry her: “Give her to me or I will hand her over to my garrison as a plaything, after which no one will want her.” “Find her and send her to me at once.” Oleiyah’s father has no way to save his daughter from the overwhelming sexuality of Khalid. The only way to avoid Khalid’s brutality and save her father’s life is to sacrifice her own life. She stabs Khalid and kills herself the moment she enters Khalid’s hut.

On numerous occasions, the text shows that trustworthiness is an essentialist impossibility for Arab Muslims in issues related to women. Like Khalid’s betrayal of his host, Mu’awiya, who from the beginning of the novel distinguishes himself as a devoted Muslim, feels sexually attracted to Omar’s wife when he enters Omar’s house. He cannot hide his lust when he looks at Koreiba’s “enormous breasts” and develops “an erection from looking at her”. Though, Mu’awiya knows that it is a sin to covet another’s wife especially that of a friend and such an important figure as Omar, he is doomed to be a hypocritical figure.

This type of assessment continues to include the sexuality of non-Muslim Arab women. Elray demonstrates that through the Arab woman, Sajah, “the false Prophetess”, who lives in a society in which sexual rituals are commonplace and on many occasions Sajah pleasures herself with several men and women simultaneously. ELray, further, introduces us to a very important episode that
illustrates lechery of the Orientals in which “the false Prophet” Al-Ashtar and Sajah are having sex in front of their people:

She dropped her garment onto the sand and laid on it with the Bedouin sheikh following on top of her. They began to copulate to the rhythmic sounds of the ceremony...Sajah began to experience orgasm after orgasm, her body writhing, her legs raised and shaking. The Beni Hanifa cheered as their leader delivered the final few thrusts and then fell limp on the prophetess.\(^8^9\)

The narrator, Mu’awiya, is speaking in the discourse of the culture portrayed and therefore, it is looked at as an authentic representation. In this representation, all Muslim figures including the narrator are stereotyped. All are empty from humanitarian sense towards the Muslims and non-Muslims. Mu’awiya, who is described as a moderate Muslim, is involved in subjugating the non-Muslims. On many occasions, Mu’awiya shows an attitude that is very similar to Khalid’s and Omar’s. When his wife mentions that the Muslims have killed her brother, he informs her “I slew him myself” and justifies his murder in a very rude manner “he reminded me of a pig”. The fact that Elray is acting with notable bias in representing the Orientals is illustrated by his overgeneralization. Arab woman, in Elray’s point of view, is nothing more than an object of sex. Edward Said notes that this paradigm set up a special role for woman who is no more than a machine, referring to her sexuality.

2.3 Arab Nationalism Vs American Imperial Ambition

Nationalism is a key concept in understanding Arab-America relationship in the twenty-first century. Many Arab nationalist leaders observe that establishing independent Arab states free from the hegemonic policy of the United States should
be first priority. This basic Arab-view is well represented in a 1981 speech by the Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad: “The United States wants us to be puppets so it can manipulate us the way it wants. It wants us to be slaves so it can exploit us the way it wants. It wants to occupy our territory and exploit our masses…It wants us to be parrots repeating what is said to us.” This view has a heavy weight on Arab nationalist characters’ thought.

9/11 terrorist attacks have inspired a voluminous White literature on Arab nationalism in the United States in which demonizing Arab nationalism resembles the racist Nazi demonizing of the Jews in the twentieth century. This focus on Arab nationalism serves two major themes; first is to produce Arab nationalism as a terrorist form of nationalism and the second is to fuel the fire of the neo-conservatives and their liberal neo-imperialist allies to get accession into the Middle East’s rich region. From an American point of view, both secular Arab nationalism and Islamic nationalism are seen as ideological allies based on a broad ideological construct. In Updike’s portrayal of Arab Muslims in *Terrorist*, terrorism forms the core of Arab nationalism. *Terrorist* quotes verses from the Quran that define Arab Islamic nationalism: “Mohammed is Allah’s apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers but merciful to one another.” Arab nationalism is a part of their barbarism that violently denounces the United States and struggles for the obliteration of Israel.

The mindset of Arab terrorist in Updike’s *Terrorist* stands as a metaphor for all the Muslim Arabs of the Middle East; a representation that makes the nexus between terrorism and Arab nationalism even more dangerous to the United States than that between nationalism and communism. Ahmad’s nationalism is the force that pushes him to avenge his fellow Palestinians by bombing America “whose
Christian-Jewish God is a decrepit idol, a mere mask concealing the despair of adieists.” Further, Ahmad views his own act of terror as one of nationalism for which all the Muslims of the Middle East will be overjoyed as he contemplates: “It’ll do a ton of damage, minimum. It'll deliver a statement. It’ll make headlines all over the world. They’ll be dancing in the streets of Damascus and Karachi.” This generalization helps propagating the myth that Arab nationalism equals terrorism. Updike’s generalization aims at demonizing Islam and Muslims as the blame is put on the entire Muslims for the deeds of a small group.

Post 9/11 American literary writing is impacted by the hegemonic policies of the US in the Middle East. In Terrorist, Arabs characters define themselves as opposite to American political hegemony. Ahmad, who is half Arabian and half American, is more attracted to the Arab world, tradition and culture. From an early age, when he starts frequenting the mosque, Ahmad develops very strong hatred to America that “wants to take away my God” and begins to replace his American identity with the Arabic one.

The Palestinian issue occupies a good space in Ahmad who feels enraged at the American policy that encourages Israel to occupy the Palestinian lands: “Look at the history the school teaches, pure colonialist. Look how Christianity committed genocide on the Native Americans and undermined Asia and Africa and now is coming after Islam, with everything in Washington is run by the Jews to keep themselves in Palestine.” There is an obvious enhancement of the love and respect for the Palestinians inside Ahmad’s heart who believes in actions against Israel and America as the empire that sustains Israel and inflicts death every day on Palestinians. Ahmad’s determination emanates from his nationalist thought against what he believes to be “the Great Satan” referring to America that builds its power
from Arabian oil. As far as the American-Israeli relation is concerned, Ahmad believes that the American support for Israel has been both direct and unconditional for two reasons. Firstly, the US insistence on the survival of Israel is due to the fact that everything in Washington is run by the Jews. Secondly, the American support for Israel is a pure American hegemonic policy that aims at controlling oil supply to the United States.

The mosque plays an important role in conducting Ahmad and attaching him to his Arabic background. It inspires him to believe that he belongs to the exotic environment of the Arab world. Accordingly, the first nationalist act Ahmad thinks about is to change his name: “My [American] mother attached her name to me, on my Social Security and driver's license, and her apartment is where I can be reached. But when I am out of school and independent I will become [an Arab] Ahmad Ashmawy.” Ahmad’s nationalism rejects Americanizing his personality. Ahmad’s love for his Arab heritage persuades him to reject the service in the American army that fights in Arabia against his brothers: “The Army would send me to fight my brothers.” Nationalism reflected through Ahmad’s character resembles the Pan-Arab nationalist movement led by Jamal Abdul Nasser in the 1950s. Like Nasser, Ahmad detests the American policy that creates a Jewish state on part of his motherland of Palestine:

Everything is war, right? Look at America abroad—war. They forced a country of Jews into Palestine, right into the throat of the Middle East, and now they've forced their way into Iraq, to make it a little U.S. and have the oil…Those people worked in finance, furthering the interests of the American empire, the empire that sustains Israel and inflicts death every day on Palestinians.
Richard Clarke’s *The Scorpion’s Gate* (2005) is a manifestation of the reemergence of Arab nationalism in the modern time. *The Scorpion's Gate* is a geopolitical fiction written by the counterterrorism official Richard A. Clarke who has been advisor for four presidents. The novel highlights the tense relationship between Arab Muslims and the United States in the twenty-first century and shows how American interests can be tremendously threatened in the Gulf region. This time the danger that looms comes from nationalist Arab governments and not from networks of individuals. Ideological fanatics abound in *The Scorpion's Gate* but they do not pose any great threat to U.S. interests until they have a state behind them. In this geopolitical novel, Clarke takes readers five years into the future when government of Saudi Arabia and the United States are to launch another Gulf war. But this time it could be nuclear and spread to Asia and beyond.

In *The Scorpion’s* a coup has toppled the sheiks of Saudi Arabia and put a determined Islamic government in its place. The coup is led by two brothers Abdullah and Ahmed, nationalist figures. The first half of the novel describes a state of disorder in the Republic of Islamyah, the former Saudi Arabia, and its role in destabilizing Bahrain through bombing Diplomat Hotel and terrifying the Westerners. The coup’s leaders manage to depose the Saudi family and end the American influence in this part of Arabia. The second half of the novel describes the Chinese role in arming and training Arabs to gain control over their oil. Being a new government suffering disorder the scent of oil starts attracting the world powers. The US falls in deadly competition with China over the oil and enters a cold war. Iran is a nuclear power and threatens to support the Shia’a Muslims of the country. Secretary of Defense Henry Conrad thinks the time is ripe to invade Islamyah and seize its oil. The leaders of the new government reach the conclusion
that the American, Iranian, and Chinese forces are now all very close to invade their country for its oil. The novel ends in the assertion that the oil infrastructure is an Arab national issue.

The American interest in the huge Arab oil and gas resources is central in Clarke’s *The Scorpion’s Gate*. The novel’s title refers to the oil reserves in the Arab region that attracts the world imperial powers, particularly the USA, to the area. The novel represents a clash between Arab nationalists who overthrow the pro-American government in Saudi Arabia and imperial powers of America and China that compete to win accession to Saudi oil. Richard A. Clarke, an American counterterrorism official in the Clinton and Bush administrations, writes the novel from an American political point of view. In this novel, Arab nationalism conflicts with American interests in the Arab region: “The Americans won’t abandon this place…The Yanks are like sandwich meat spread thin onto the Gulfies.” The novel shows fear of Arab nationalists from American imperialism that perceives Arab nationalist movement as a part of Arab terrorism.

While examining the American imperial interest, highlighting some factors that determine Arabs’ relationship with America creates better understanding. A part of these factors is the Arab oil embargo imposed on America that lasts from October 1973 till March 1974 during the Arab-Israeli war when America declared its ultimate support for Israel. This embargo on America had worse effects on the American economy and the public who declares their interest in oil instead of Israel. This Arab reaction to the American policy shows how the American economy can be threatened by Arabs. According to Chomsky, since the October embargo, the USA has prepared itself for the worst scenarios, including war, to secure its interests in the Gulf: “This possibility has been discussed, not only on the lunatic
fringe, and the Pentagon has been taking no pains to conceal its military exercises in desert regions.”  

Robert Baer, a former CIA officer assigned to the Middle East, notes:

Americans have long considered Saudi Arabia the one constant in the Arab Middle East. The Saudis banked our oil under their sand, and losing Saudi Arabia would be like losing the Federal Reserve. Even if the Saudi rulers one day did turn anti-American, the argument went, they would never stop pumping oil, because that would mean cutting their own throats.

Ensuring oil supply to the United States is a part of the American hegemony on Arabia. For this purpose, democracy and enhancing human rights are used as a cover for American military existence in the region. Rusty MacIntyre, a major character who is the first Deputy of the American Intelligence Analysis Center in Bahrain assures Abdullah, one of the movement leaders, that the United States insists on establishing democracy in the region: “We tried to rebuild Iraq and give it democracy. We are not the satanic force that you seem to have convinced yourself we are.”

The use of democracy and human rights by high rank American officials resembles those found in the novel. Donald Rumsfeld, a former American Defense Secretary, states: “The Iraq war has nothing to do with oil, literally nothing to do.” Rumsfeld’s statement is contradicted by his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, a few months later in 2003 as he states: “Let’s look at it simply. The most important difference between North Korea and Iraq is that economically, we just had no choice in Iraq. The country swims on a sea of oil.”

Rusty is highly obsessed with imposing American values on Arab society. He assures Ahmed, an agent of the new Arab Republic in Bahrain, that the
American interference in the region has nothing to do with oil: “You must know that the reason we sent forces to Japan and Germany…We gave them money and democracy. We went to Korea at their request…We also sent American boys to fight and die trying to help Muslims in Bosnia, in Somalia, in Kuwait. We tried to rebuild Iraq and give it democracy.”

Though MacIntyre confesses that America has huge oil reserves in Alaska, his support for his country’s imperialism indicates the imperial obsession with exploiting Arabs’ resources and belief in the superiority of the American interest at the cost of the livelihood of others.

Losing Arab oil for China would bring an end for American interest in the region and may create a second Cold War: “We may have to confront them, block them from getting their troop ships into the Gulf” because “the Middle East is a powder keg, the Chinese are stealing our lunch.”

Therefore, the United States will never permit Arab nationalist leaders to harm the Saudi allies because the American interests are above any other concern even if it involves accusing Arabs of terrorism as Abdullah, the nationalist leader, who reveals his own history: “I was learning to kill them. I personally slew al Saudis last year… I attacked their American masters. I am not going to hand our nation back to those swine, or anyone else. Allah, the merciful and compassionate, has given us the mission to create Islamyah from the fetid carcass that was Saudi Arabia.”

The representation of Arab revolt against Saudi royal family in The Scorpion’s Gate is an anti-American movement. This revolution takes place due to the awareness of Arabs to their weakness and the American exploitation of their natural resources. This realization emerges as a result of nostalgia in Arab intellectuals for an Arab powerful nation of the past that prevailed from the seventh to the sixteenth centuries: “Things that Islamic scholars created and promoted
centuries ago at the height of our power…We also need to lead the Arab world back to the leadership it once had in the arts, sciences, medicine, mathematics…We have lost all that. We have closed the minds of our people.”\textsuperscript{107} Ahmed, one of the main revolutionists who received his education in Canada and who is a brother of the new Islamyah Leader Abdullah, dreams of establishing a powerful Arab state and defines it in terms of a relationship with the United States: “We could instead use our wealth to join the twenty-first century, to revive the time of greatness when Arabs invented mathematics, astronomy, pharmacy.”\textsuperscript{108} He goes on hitting the point behind the revolution: “We are not a country, we are an oil deposit! And if that is all we are, others will come, the scorpions will come for their food, their precious black liquid. They will keep us enslaved; buying everything we need from them.”\textsuperscript{109}

The decline of Arab nationalism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is attributed to two main factors: firstly, the Arabs’ defeats in the struggle against Israel and secondly, the internal political dynamics in the Arab world. In \textit{The Scorpion}, the reader is informed that Arabs’ realization of their failure is part of the nationalist revival in the Arab world as Ahmed tells his brother:

Two percent of our people have Internet access, compared with ninety-eight percent in Korea. Five books are translated into Arabic a year per million people, compared with nine hundred translated into Spanish…we publish only one percent of the world’s books. One out of five books published in Arabic is on religion. We spend less than one-third of one percent of our GNP on research…We do not create knowledge…This is not the way of the modern world, which is leaving us in the dust.\textsuperscript{110}
The re-emergence of Islamic nationalism in the twenty-first century can be attributed to many factors embedded in the ‘Theory of the New Middle East’ and its assumptions such as exporting American democracy and women’s rights to the Arab world. Clarke highlights the Arab anger at imposing these American values: “Then they [Americans] think they are so superior that they must reshape the Arab world in their ghastly image. How? By bombing our cities, killing our women and children? Locking up our people forever? Raping them?”

So in order to prevent American imperialism, Arab revolutions believe in the necessity of shutting the doors in front of these alien values: “It is not about our becoming like the Americans…It is about what was promised to our people: more freedom, more progress, more opportunity, participation, ownership of their country.”

China plays a major role in the displacement of America through supporting Arab nationalist movements: “…the movement is to be protected by a Chinese navy expeditionary force, including two of the new aircraft carriers, accompanied by their cruisers with their new antiship missile, and their subs.” On this Orientalist framework, the novel repeats Huntington’s concerns about on the American fear from the Arab-Chinese relationship that may tender nuclear technology to Arabs.

The choice of China as a strategic partner for the Arab Muslims is partly justified in the novel. Clarke is correct in a certain way that China’s interest in the region is an indication of its rapid economic growth which is accompanied by need of huge oil imports from Arabia. The American anxiety is twofold. Firstly, China will have a larger share of the Arab oil that has long been under American control: “China is now a close second to the United States in oil and gas imports…They are bucking up this I-Salamie regime when it is new and weak, just to get long-term
access to all the oil they got there.” Secondly, the Chinese attachment to Arabs will help Arabs to get nuclear weapons in return:

...they carry nuclear weapons, three per missile. Intelligence indicates that there are twenty-three hundred Chinese personnel at the main base, in the middle of the Empty Quarter. We estimate twenty-four missiles on launchers, probably some reloads...the Chinese have a much closer relationship with the revolutionary regime in Riyadh than we had earlier estimated.

Arab nationalist leaders who try to change the political regime in Saudi Arabia do not only pose a threat to the American interest in Saudi Arabia but to the whole region of the Gulf itself: “This al Qaeda regime in Riyadh is sending a message to King Hamad in Bahrain to kick the Americans out...These people are not satisfied with just their fanatical caliphate in Saudi Arabia; they want to export their revolution throughout the Gulf.” Arab revolutionaries are agents of terror and anti-Americanism. The narration excessively highlights the Islamic-Confucian connection: “Bigger problem may be Islamyah-China connection.” The novel does not assert the Imperialist nature of American interest in the area. Its narration sways between two major ideas: firstly defending the American allies in Saudi against the nationalist movement that “[t]he United States of America will never permit them to harm our allies and will work for the restoration of the rule of law and order on the Saudi peninsula.” Secondly, it highlights defending the American interests against the Chinese who plan to dominate on oil and gas resources.

The novel shares Huntington’s fear of the Islamic-Confucian connection that may result in the transfer of nuclear weapons to the Arabs undermining the
American national security. On many occasions Clarke highlights the American anxiety from the possibility of nuclear weapons falling at the hands of the Arabs either from China, Korea or Pakistan. Abdullah, the nationalist leader in Saudi Arabia, is very concerned about nuclear weapons: “Without the Chinese weapons, we will lie naked before our enemies...We may need those weapons...We must have weapons to deter our enemies...we need our own bomb...What about the Pakistanis? The al Sauds gave them the money for a bomb...The Pakistanis will defend us.”

This image of Arab Muslims swaying between terrorists and oil possessors is central to Said’s examination of the Islam-West relationship. In Covering Islam, Said observes that the tendency of depicting Arabs as terrorists and wealthy Sheikhs is very common among the modern Imperial American writers. Said refers to a strong connection between misrepresentation of Islam and oil high prices that followed the 1974 embargo and results in “scarcely figured” Islam. This American dilemma is heard from Henry Alfred Kissinger, an American Secretary of State in the administrations of Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, who states: “Oil is much too important a commodity to be left in the hands of the Arabs.” Clarke echoes the same in The Scorpion’s Gate that cultural, political and even military domination over the region becomes a necessity for the United States to secure the American interests. A part of this strategy is to quench any nationalist movement in the region under claims of terrorism or Islamism.

War for oil does not produce a reliable ally for America in Iraq. Though the American administration believes that liberating the Iraqis from Saddam’s tyranny to be its moral responsibility, this war results in loathing America by both Sunni and Shi’a Muslims: “The Iraq War did not result in the people there loving us.”
Therefore, building trust with revolutionaries is not fruitful because revolutionaries are terrorists. This American attitude toward Arabs is revealed by the most intellectual Islamic leader, Ahmed, who got his education in Canada: “Some people are trying to sow fear in the minds of Americans, Ms. Delmarco...We have replaced a corrupt, undemocratic government with one more in line with our traditions and beliefs as a people. We still sell oil on the world market. We do not attack Americans.”

The fact that the novel is presented as a counterterrorism discourse justifies the manner in which Americans and Arab revolutionaries are introduced to the reader. The novel displays a total absence of trust between Arabs and Americans. Though, Arab revolutionaries introduce many guarantees to the Americans regarding the peaceful nature and goals of the revolution, they are received with much doubt and skepticism by the Americans. Ahmad assures his American fellows: “The Prophet never taught that we should convert or kill the Christians and Jews. And if we tried, even if we took centuries, we would only devastate this little planet in the process. Does Allah want that? The nuclears, if we get them, will cause the ruin of our country.” Such guarantees are met with American assertions: “We won’t abandon this place...I’m telling you that these al Qaeda murderers in Riyadh are out to get nuclear capability...they can get it from the nuts in North Korea or their al Qaeda East buddies in Pakistan.”

There is a history, Emerson argues, for every word. To this effect he says, “as we go back in history, language becomes more picturesque.” Post 9/11 American novelists are not the first to write about terrorist conspiracies woven by Arabs against the West and the United States in particular; rather they are following a formidable Orientalist tradition. If readers go back to the Clash of Civilizations
published in 1993, for instance, they will notice that its author, Huntington, points to a very dangerous connection between two civilizations; Islamic and Confucian. And this growing cooperation between the two civilizations poses a threat to the West.

The examination of post 9/11 American novel finds that Arab Muslims and Islam are presented in a traditional manner in post 9/11 American novel. The 9/11 events play a strategic role in reproducing, refashioning and strengthening the old Orientalist discourse in which representation of Arabs and Islam are the centre. American writers follow in the footsteps of the traditional Orientalist writings that prevailed in Europe since the eighteenth century in which Arab Muslims were represented as violent, irrational, backward and sexist. These writers use the same clichés to represent the Orient. Therefore, post 9/11 American representation of Arab Muslims is a continuation process and a part of the whole organization of the Orientalist discourse that is based on reconstruction, repetition and confirmation of the old prejudices and misconceptions in which Arab Muslims are presented as the “Other” of the Westerner.

In the post 9/11 American novel, Islam is presented as a violent and barbaric religion and Arab Muslims as lecherous, deceitful, murderous, irrational, larcenous and utterly reprehensible subhuman beings. Unlike the old Orientalist discourse, Islam and Arab Muslims become exposed to a massive amount of representations in a very short period. To a Western reader, who probably has no real knowledge of the Orient, this representation is authentic. This is because Islam is “a lasting trauma” that symbolizes terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. This focus on ‘Other’ Arabs aims at creating an American identity by relating to other people, strengthening their own ideas and beliefs and giving
themselves security against the threat of those “Others”. These exoticising and racist representations produce a fictional Orient for Americans, a concept which becomes central to the strengthening of American self-representation and the construction of identity. Arab Muslims are savages who are beyond enlightenment in *Terrorist*. They are doomed to backwardness and darkness. Though they live in the American society, they are incapable of appreciating the American values.

Based on the traumatic day of 9/11, Arab characters in American literary writing are divided into bad guys or terrorists as a majority and good guys or moderate Muslims as a minority of the total Arab Muslim adherents. This division of the Arab Muslims into “Good Muslims” and “Bad Muslims” becomes broadly accepted in the West and particularly in the United States. The binary opposition created between good Muslims and bad Muslims does not exempt the good Muslims from negative representations in the White American novel since all Muslims share common beliefs and cultural practices.

Edward Said makes a distinction between “unconscious positivity” which he calls “latent Orientalism” and the various stated and contradicted views about Islam and Oriental Muslims which he calls “manifest Orientalism”. He explains: “whatever change occurs in knowledge of the Orient is found almost exclusively in manifest Orientalism; the unanimity, stability, and durability of latent Orientalism are more or less constant.” Later on, Said asserts that Orientalist depiction of Islam is always full of contradictions and post 9/11 novels are not an exception. Their truths are the kind of truths on the manifest level of Orientalism, but when it comes to latent Orientalism, they join the Orientalist consensus on Islam, latent inferiority. At this point one can imagine that if a critic like Chinua Achebe or Frantz Fanon comments on post 9/11 fiction, his words might be: I cannot consider
it to be as entertaining and interesting as others think of it; rather, I think it is a “bloody Orientalist” and cannot be called a work of art, for it generalizes terrorism on all Arabs and Islam.

Providing a new generation of heroes, largely terrorists, is an important feature in most of post 9/11 American novels. This tendency aims at producing counterterrorism fiction as constructionist discourse in which all Arab Muslims are terrorists and anti-America, while characters from the Judeo-Christian tradition represent the peace-loving world. This generalization seems to be from the victims’ point of view, providing a sense that if this description represents a terrorist, it also happens to represent all the Muslims including those who reject terrorism. In an interview with Louise Witt, Updike argues that Islam is a “static religion” and contrasts it with Christianity and Judaism: “It’s fairly absolutist, as you know, and you’re either in or not.” Further, he describes the aim behind writing his *Terrorist* is to give models of living human beings with the American way of life. Further, American writers do not make a single quotation from a Muslim source; rather they go on quoting several verses from the Quran, a distorted version translated by nineteenth century European Orientalists to build their views on terrorism. This polemical representation of Islam as a religion of terror and intolerance is common in post 9/11 American fiction.
Notes


3 Updike 42.

4 Updike 154.

5 Updike 3.

6 Updike 42.

7 Updike 3.

8 Updike 22.

9 Updike 21.

10 Updike 157.

11 Updike 123.

12 Updike 85.

13 Updike 40.


15 John Updike, Terrorist 22.

16 Updike 40.

17 Updike 82.

18 Updike 3-4.

19 Updike 2.

20 Updike 9.
21 Updike 40-41.

22 Updike 40.

23 Updike 5.

24 Updike 144.

25 Updike 3.

26 Updike 137.

27 Updike 103.


29 Updike, *Terrorist* 51.

30 Updike 48.

31 Updike 61.

32 Updike 61.

33 Updike 165.

34 Updike 176.

35 Updike 6.

36 Updike 128.

37 Updike, Interview by Louise Witt.

38 Updike, *Terrorist* 111.

39 Updike, Interview by Louise Witt.


41 Clancy 369.

42 Clancy 248.


68 Elray 4.

69 Elray 1.

70 Elray 125.

71 Elray 8.

72 Elray 113.

73 Elray 20.

74 Elray 19-20.

75 Elray 33.

76 Elray 208.

77 Elray 208.


79 Elray 127.

80 Elray 127.

81 Elray 127.

82 Elray 215.

83 Elray 147.

84 Elray 156.

85 Elray 45.
86 Elray 42.
87 Elray 156.
88 Elray 93.
89 Elray 90.
92 Updike 111.
93 Updike 142.
94 Updike 21.
95 Updike 20.
96 Updike 22.
97 Updike 83.
101 Clarke 262.

127 Updike, Interview by Louise Witt.