Locating Muslim Female's Agency in Post-9/11 Fiction: A Reading of *Once in a Promised Land* and *Saffron Dreams*

Muhammad Tufail Chandio, Muhammad Khan Sangi

Abstract

This paper critically analyses the female agency of Muslim protagonists living in the USA as immigrants or diasporans depicted in "Once in a Promised Land" (OIAPL) and "Saffron Dreams" (SD) authored by Muslim female post-9/11 fiction writers. The Orientalist, neo-Orientalist and postcolonial writers portrayed Muslim women as veiled, segregated, oppressed, devoid of power and rights, subjugated by men, subservient to patriarchal norms and religious injunctions. The colonizers employed the notion of rescuing the Muslim woman and civilizing the uncouth Orient to justify their colonial rule. After the 9/11 attacks, the War on Terrorism also re-attempted the salvation of the burqa-clad Muslim female in the midst of post-9/11 power discourse and Islamophobic social rhetoric. This study critically analyses how Muslim female protagonists negotiate their female agency in the third space of hostland in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. The qualitative data reviewed from the text of selected novels is textually analysed with the help of close reading technique from the vantage point of Bhabha's (1994) postcolonial third space and post-9/11 power discourse. Contrary to the reductive tropes, it has been found that the Muslim females actively execute their agency to emerge as independent, self-reliant, motivated, decisive, confident and responsible individuals in the third space of the US.

Keywords: Muslim Female Agency, Third Space, Post-9/11 Fiction, *Once in a Promised Land*, *Saffron Dreams*.

Introduction

The place and position of the Muslim woman has remained a subject of continuous contention and reformulation. A varied scholarship has attempted to deconstruct it from various perspectives and epistemological theoretical stands. The two main sources of text (*The Holy Quran*) and tradition (*hadith*) followed by legal reasoning (*ijtihad*) and collective consensus (*ijma*) constitute basic sources of Islamic laws. The rights of polygamy, double share in inheritance to property and superiority of male over female have been contested in an array of scholarship and these studies have attempted to reformulate the place and position of a Muslim female in the modern contemporary world (Göçek, 2001). "Muhammad Abduh and Ahmad Khan did indeed identify the plight of

women as the cause of the decay of the Islamic family and society, and attempted to reason that the Koran contained social practices of its time that needed to be reformulated in the modern period to overcome the biases against women" (Göçek, 2001, p7914). Before Islam, the religious scriptures of Judaism and Christianity had also established the superiority of male over female (Genesis 3:16,1; Timothy 2:11). Cook reflects on the status of woman with reference to the historical period these scriptures were written (Cook, 2000, p.38). Western colonial powers justified the colonization of the Middle East to emancipate burqa-clad Muslim female. The secular westerners grunted at the inadequacy of attempts made for woman salvation, whereas the conservatives and fundamentalists glared at its inappropriateness. In addition, studies conducted from the vantage point of feminism proposed the rereading of sources of Islamic laws and envisaged Aisha and Khadija not submissive Fatima to be the embodiment and role model for the modern Muslim woman (Ahmed, 1986, 1992; Göçek, 2001; Smith, 1985). The image of the veiled woman was also exploited by the colonizers to justify the invasion and subsequent rule in the name of white man's burden to civilize the uncouth and uncultured natives and emancipate oppressed Muslim women. This narrative got academically challenged in the postcolonial critique. Edward Said rebutted colonial and Eurocentric historical construct narrative with the publication of his seminal work *Orientalism* (1978), which challenged the biased interpretation and portrayal of Islam and Muslim as monolithic, conservative, immutable and uncouth (Said, 1978). The other non-western studies also deconstructed the European gaze at Islam and gender (Mohanty, 1984; Ong, 1988; Spivak, 1990). The colonial binary of the colonizers and the colonized – the west and the rest – just got renewed after the 9/11 attacks. In addition to hitting the terrorist in their very epicentre, the emancipation of burqa-clad woman in Afghanistan also provided rationale and justification for the War on Terrorism. The popular reductive tropes developed by the West and the USA with reference to the burqa-clad woman of Afghanistan (Kanwal, 2015) was also authenticated by some female Muslim writers who stereotyped females as passive, degenerated, exploited, disenfranchised and dependent with no active role to play (Zubair, 2012). However the women, who produced this reductive trope of literature, carved a niche for themselves as independent and individual writers in the West. Besides, some Muslim male writers also endorsed this narrative by portraying passive, disenfranchised and apolitical woman characters in their creative works. Contrary to the canon, some Muslim writers negated and dispelled this popular assumption in their creative works by portraying active and veiled female characters who played their agency comfortably in both private and public spaces (Al-Sudeary, 2012).

Like Rudyard Kipling's verse: "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet", the relationship between the East and the West is transformative in its nature and has various crises and crossroads such as the Crusades Wars between 1096 to 1291, Iran Revolution (1979), bombing, kidnapping, and hostage taking in the Middle East during (1980-1990), Salman Rushdie affairs (1989), Gulf Wars, Oklahoma City bombing (1995), the 9/11 attacks in the USA and the 7/7 attacks in London. During this critical period, the image of Muslims has exacerbated from erotic, primitive, barbaric,

ignorant, close-minded and semi-citizen to maddened, fundamentalist, blood-thirsty and terrorist after the attacks (Abbas, 2004; Ahmed, 2003; Esposito, 2002; Ridouani, 2011). Whereas, the Muslim women have been referred to as double yoked: subjected to patriarchal male-dominated society and religious bindings constraining her agency to negotiate her identity. The western comprador intellectuals also endorsed the notion and emphasized the liberation, emancipation and salvation of Muslim women. "Gayatri Spivak's famous phrase about westerners' need to save brown women from brown men" contextualizes the debate and also invokes rebuttal (Khan, 2002, p.ix).

The studies conducted in the backdrop of pre-9/11 attacks establish that the western media perpetuated the negative image of Islam by portraying Muslim males as sexist, violent and evil-doer and Muslim females as oppressed, belly dancers and harem. An empirical analysis of one hundred American and Canadian TV shows between 1975-76 and 1983-84 maintains that image of Islam and Muslims was excessively tarnished by the popular media (Bahdi, 2003). Likewise, the critical analysis of 900 Hollywood movies also establishes the portrayal of Arabs as evil, offensive and monolithic (Shaheen, 2001). After the 9/11 attacks, the stereotyping of Muslims and Islam continued (Harb & Ehab, 2006); along with sensational hype, uncritical speculations, inaccurate Anti-Muslim discrimination and hate crimes (Ahmad, 2006). A large number studies confirm stereotyping of Muslim by media (Korteweg, 2008; Nagra, 2011; Ridouani, 2011; Schonemann, 2013), and discrimination against the Muslim in the USA (El-Halawany, 2003; Gupta, 2004; Peek, 2003, 2005), in Canada (Downie, 2013; Nagra, 2011) and in the UK (Ahmad, 2006; Ansari, 2004; Basit, 2009; Blackwood, Hopkins, & Reicher, 2013; Gillespie, 2006; N. Hopkins, 2011; N. Hopkins & Kahani-Hopkins, 2004; P. E. Hopkins, 2004; Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2010) after the 9/11 attacks. The War on Terrorism (WoT) not only essentialized the eradication of terrorism but it also emphasized the emancipation of the burqa-clad woman from brute clutches of the Taliban and Muslims in Afghanistan and across the Muslim world. A discourse was developed that Muslim women are deprived of their personal liberty and basic rights because of Islamic injunctions.

The backlash ensued after the 9/11 attacks expanded to all fronts of politics, economy, religion, identity, culture and literature as well. Muslims were othered, profiled, discriminated, abused physically and verbally everywhere in the West. In addition to the general xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim public discourse, post-9/11 fiction produced by American and European writers also stigmatized and demonized Islam and Muslims. A wide array of fiction comprising John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006), Martin Amis' *The Last Days of Muhammad Atta* (2006), Frédéric Beigbeder's *Window on the World* (2003), Ian McEvan's *Saturday* (2005), Jonathan Safaran Foer's novel *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* (2005), Ken Kalfus' *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2006), Don Delillo's *Falling Man* (2007) and Joseph O' Neill's *Netherland* (2008) constructed and represented white man's point of view. This body of literature maligned and manipulated Islam and Muslims in general, but it is important to note that no potential Muslim female character had ever been delineated in these works just only to

assert and construct the image that the Muslim woman is completely dependent, deprived, disfranchised and hapless, hence her "non-existent" state is not worth the portrayal. It developed a notion that the Muslim woman had no agency to play her role in the public space. To rebut and dispel these popular misconceptions and Islamophobic power discourse, the Muslim writers presented another side of the coin in which Muslim men and women were presented as moderate, educated, independent, enlightened and peace-loving individuals. This study critically analyses the question of Muslim female agency negotiated in private and public spaces with reference to Laila Halaby's *Once in a Promised Land (OIAPL)* (2007) and Shiala Abdullah's *Saffron Dreams (SD)* (2009). The authors belong to the Muslim world, but they have the first-hand experience of living in the West as well.

Research Question

- How do Muslim female protagonists portrayed in *OIAPL* and *SD* negotiate their female agency while living as diasporans in the third space of the USA?

Representation of Muslim Female in Orientalist, neo-Orientalist and Post-colonial Literature

The image and agency of the Muslim woman has been tarnished and distorted in the early classical Orientalist texts such as *The Captive's Tale* in Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605-1615), *Tales of Harem* of Jeannette Pickersgill (1827), *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* of Edward William Lane (1836), *The Romance of the Harem* of Julia S.H. Pardoe (1839), *A Tale of the Harem* of Thomas Hood (1871), the translation of already tempered and interpolated contents of *Arabian Nights* by Richard Francis Burton (1885-88), *Romance of a Harem* (1901) of anonymous authorship, *Alixis* and *A Tale of the Harem* of Johan W. Costello (1913) and *The Conventional Saracen of the Songs of Geste* of C. Meredith Jones (1942). These texts not only demonized Muslims in general but also shadowed the agency of Muslim females and presented them as mere objects of physical pleasure without any freedom, power and priority. It established a stereotyped image of Islam, Muslims and Muslim females in the imagination of European readers. It prevailed until Said challenged the biased representation of Islam, Arabs and Islamic culture as rigid, monolithic and stagnant (Said, 1978).

Khalil Gibran's *The Broken Wings* (1912) depicts the plight of Arab women living in Beirut, Lebanon of the 20th century. It narrates the story of Selma Karamy, a young girl, who sacrifices her love and desires at the altar of patriarchal responsibilities and familial duties. She understands that her father is helpless and cannot refuse giving her hand in marriage to the Bishop who "has prepared a cage for this bird with broken wings" (p.45). She considers herself as a "slave" with no agency to negotiate her place in the public and private domains. The one she loves, she cannot marry, and the one she is married to, she does not even know him: "I neither know nor love him, but I shall learn to love him, I shall obey him, serve him and make him happy. I shall give all that a weak woman can give to a strong man" (p. 45). She has been so pathetically conditioned with

the patriarchal norms that she has been engulfed by existential dilemma: "I am not worthy of a new life of love and peace; I am not strong enough for life's pleasure and sweetness, because a bird with broken wings cannot fly in the spacious sky (p.97). She has completely lost hope in her life and does not want to opt and avail any chance or choice for living a better, meaningful and wilful life. Though it is the story of a Christian family, it revolves around the agency of an Arab woman (Gibran, 2018).

When Muslims emigrated to Europe in the post-colonial period, the temporal and spatial context of Muslim men and women also got expanded; however, their representation in literary works remained greatly influenced by the Orientalist tendencies. The neo-Orientalist writers borrowed the same stock ideas and their representation of the Muslim woman is fallacious, biased and interpolated. For instance, *Price of Honor: Muslim Women Lift the Veil of Silence on the Islamic World* of Jan Goodwin portrays that Muslim societies regiment female fixity, deprivation and domesticity; in case transgression and violation of patriarchal norms, they are brutally killed and eliminated (Goodwin, 1994). *Sold into Marriage: One Girl's Living Nightmare* of Sean Boyne portrays a sixteen year young Irish Muslim girl, who undergoes unbearable physical domestic violence at the hands of her own father, but her already deplorable state worsens when the father sells her to a four-time older man in a wedlock, where she withers being the victim of continual marital rape without consent (Boyne, 1998). *A True Story of Life behind the Veil in Saudi Arabia* of Jean Sasson portrays the plight of women in Saudi Arabia who despite their familial opulence live under the burden of miserable existence (Sasson, 1992). The best seller *Honor Lost: Love and Death in Modern-Day Jordan* of Norma Khouri presents Arab women bearing the burden of miserable existence as the religious injunctions cripple their agency (Khouri, 2003).

There is an array of authorship by Muslim writers in which western white writers collaborate as co-authors consequently controlling, dominating, influencing or directing the course of narration. Souad's *Burned Alive: A Survivor of an "Honor Killing" Speaks* is co-authored by Marie-Therese Cuny. It is based on the real account of an honour-killing survivor, who has been rescued by a white European aid worker. Nujood's *I Am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced* Ali is co-authored by Delphine Minoui. Sulima and Hala's *Behind the Burqa: Our Life in Afghanistan and How We Escaped to Freedom* is likely to be influenced by its writer-translator, Batya Swift Yasgur. It portrays the plight of two Afghan women who suffer in a patriarchal society. In this body of fiction, the authenticity of narration remains compromised. "The actual authorial source of such narratives is questionable even though they are attributed to Muslim women" (Hasan, 2015, p. 90).

Even Muslim writers living in the West also conformed and continued the Orientalist point of view in their creative works. *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World* (1980) and *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* (1988) of Nawal el Saadawi depict the plight of Muslim women living in the patriarchal society. *Beyond the Veil: Male-female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society* (1987) of Fatima Mernissi contends the compromised position of the Muslim woman because of misogynist Islamic injunctions, where her existence is problematized as *fitna* (bone of contention or evil per se). *Sold:*

Story of Modern-day Slavery (1994) of Zana Muhsen portrays the misery and plight of the Muslim household domestic life and it narrates the story of a Muslim woman who escapes a forced wedding. *My Forbidden Face: Growing up under the Taliban: A Young Woman's Story* (2002) of Latifa manifests perils of inhabiting the Muslim society where oppression and exploitation of women are social rampant. *Infidel* (2007) of Ayann Hiris Ali demonizes Islam and labels it responsible for the oppression of women and the tragedy of the 9/11 attacks (Hasan, 2015).

In addition, the postcolonial writers such as Salman Rushdie (1947–), Hanif Kureishi (1954–), Fadia Faqir (1956–), Monica Ali (1967–), who had first-hand experience of living in the West, followed the same cliched and outmoded Orientalist and noe-Orientalist narrative. Hasan maintains that they make a "desperate attempt to revive the outmoded literary orientalism in the neocolonialist world order" (Hasan, 2005, p. 668). Female characters in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* remain marginalized so for the public participation is concerned. Jamila Singer, otherwise cherished and eulogized as "a daughter of nation", "the Nation voice" and "Bulbul-edin", is not allowed to show her face or body in the public arena and even in the private space she has to remain in "a gold -and-white burqa" (Rushdie, 1981, p. 436-37). She performs being covered with curtains along with her burqa-clad attendants "veiled from head to foot", as a result, the audience can only listen to her voice, but they cannot determine their sex and public demeanour (p. 437). Thus, their agency is muted to passivity and inaction, which eliminates imminent threat to the values of religious and hegemonic patriarchal society. They, being complete veiled, are made to stand in front of "religious calligraphy,", hence their camouflaged presence does not pose any threat to the dominant male hegemony (p. 435). It bears a great deal of similitude and parallelism with Iranian women who pose in front of Farsi calligraphy as an embodiment of passivity and patriarchal conformity (Dabashi, 2010). Another female character Naseem, wife of Aadam Aziz, becomes a non-identity persona with deep-rooted feelings of shame and guilt when her husband takes off her "purdah" in order to make her forget "being a good Kashmiri girl" so that she could live like "a modern Indian woman" (Rushdie, 1981, p.39). When her husband sets her purdah on fire, she feels devoid of identity and becomes hesitant to play her agency actively in private and public spaces lest anyone should see her "deep-deep shame!" (p.38). She feels herself empty, unfit and "adrift in the universe" (p. 49).

Azar Nafisi (2003), in her novel *Reading Lolita in Tehran* comments on two pictures of female students with and without black scarves and cloaks in their private class: the former is the state they are made to assimilate into, whereas the latter is the imagined state of a woman freely playing her agency in the private and public spaces, but the fact is that "In neither could we feel completely at home" (Nafisi, 2003, p. 24). She maintains that in Islamic Republic of Iran every private space for a woman is "invaded", and the way she has been constructed and moulded has blurred "the lines and boundaries between the personal and political, thereby destroying both" (p. 273). Under such coercion, duress and influence, they are shaped as "timid", "figments" and "fragile" (p. 24-25). If they ever happen to transgress the imagined and assigned roles by the regime,

they are executed with no regard to their designations and contributions. The execution of Mrs. Parsa, the minister of education bear testimony to it. As a result, they become so accustomed with the veil that they feel "awkward" if they drop it even in a private space: Nassrin, after unveiling, feels baffled and keeps attempting to cover something and while walking she feels "as if at any moment she would fall down" (p. 296). Finding no way out, females eventually leave for abroad: Manna says: "Nassrin has gotten the message from Dr. Nafisi . . . That we should all leave" (p. 324). Nafsi believes that only exist from the East to the West can save and emancipate Muslim women and it will prove to be a safe haven for them.

A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007) of Khalid Hosseini, written in the backdrop of the War on Terrorism in Afghanistan, narrates the story of two Muslim women, Mariam and Laila, who suffer because of patriarchal norms, physical abuse, involuntarily marriages and imposed identity (Hosseini, 2007).

Some Muslim writers abandon the tradition of following the stock or cliched ideas, what Bhabha calls "forked models" and were repeatedly asserted by the Orientalist, neo-Orientalist and postcolonial writers from the West and the East as well. They portray Muslim women as individuals, negotiating their public and private spaces with independent personas. They are not presented as a passive agents of patriarchal norms or religious injunctions, but they rather question them to reconsider and ascertain their place and position in the society.

The Spirit of Rebellious (1908) of Khalil Jibran depicts the story of a mismatched couple, Rashid 40 and Rose Hanie 18. He renders every comfort, riches and opulence to win her love, but she fail to reciprocate because of the age difference. Eventually, she deserts him and marries a person "she loves by the will of God".

The Bride (1985) of Bapsi Sidhwa portrays the plight of a young girl, Zaitoon, from Lahore, Pakistan. Despite the moderate education and urban upbringing, her fostered father gets her married to a Pathan from the northern tribal parts of Pakistan. She revolts against tribal norms and patriarchal practices of the mountainous culture. Eventually, she leaves the house of her husband and undergoes physical and sexual abuses before she is rescued by army soldiers.

Dreams of Trespass, a memoir by Mernissi, opens in Morocco and refers to the historical period between 1940 to 1950. Females belonging to the older generation are happy with their private space like harem where they feel protected, whereas the young are dissatisfied and feel like "choked" within the veil, gates and "qai'da" (rules), and they want to carve their niche in a private space. However, the fact dawns upon them that it is not the private space which defines a woman, but in fact it is their attitude and interpretation of such space, which determine their place and position. Initially, Fatima strives for the power to formulate her identity but later on she realizes that even the powerful may also feel captivated and limited to exercise their agency such as the French colonizers who, like women, are prisoners and cannot move freely in the colonized land of the Ville Nouvelle (Mernissi, 1994, p. 23). *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2006) of Elif Shafak from Turkey portrays the plight of Turkish women represented by the four sisters

of Kazanci family, who are passive agents of their fate and patriarchal norms. However, there is a nineteen-year young girl, Asya, who abhors everything her culture imposes or expects from her.

Hasan (2015) maintains "Muslim women have often been portrayed as disempowered, oppressed and belittled by Muslim men, subservient to their husbands with no equal rights, utterly neglected by parents and mistreated as daughters-in-laws, and most notably always kept under the veil of ignorance and at home" (p. 90). However, some Muslim writers parted their ways with this Orientalist, neo-Orientalist and postcolonial practices of representing Muslim woman. After the 9/11 attacks, feelings of Islamophobia intensified, as a result, Muslims were subjected to othering, profiling, discrimination and physical and verbal abuses. The post-911 public power discourse and Islamophobic social rhetoric followed by the War on Terrorism established a narrative of eradicating terrorism, implementing democracy and rescuing burqa-clad Muslim women from brute clutches of patriarchal and religious norms. Post-9/11 fiction produced by western writers stereotyped the negative image of Islam and Muslims. This portrayal deliberately lacked the presence of any potential Muslim female character, which established and endorsed the non-entity persona of the Muslim women with little place, position and role in the public space hence no worth portraying. Conversely, Muslim writers rebutted this popular misperception and stereotyping of Muslims and Islam and presented the other side of the coin. This study contextualizes the representation of the Muslim woman in the post-9/11 fiction with specific spotlight on Laila Halaby's *Once in a Promised Land (OIAPL)* (2007) and Shiala Abdullah's *Saffron Dreams (SD)* (2009).

Agency of the Muslim Female: A Theoretical Framework

In a patriarchal society, the agency of a woman remains compromised, limited and passive one. Ahmed (1992) asserts that Islam is "innately and immutably oppressive to women" and through "the veil" and "segregation" such oppression is customized (152). This segregation, by default, deprives women to negotiate and assert their agency in public spaces. Derrida, in Spurs, establishes that when a woman is deprived of playing her role in public and private spaces, she becomes non-existent and thus turns to become a "non-identity" figure and "out-distancing of distance" (Derrida, 1978, p. 49). He terms such state as "the veiled movement" where a woman's status is likely of "non-figure", "a simulacrum" (p.49), and thus her "determinable identity" is compromised and she remains concealed behind "golden-embroidered veil" (P. 51).

Irigaray contends that the woman being conditioned in a masculine society imbibes to "the shame that demands vicious conformity", and the notion gets constructed in deep recesses of her consciousness that "usefulness" of a "woman's body" lies only being covered and once it is removed she feels "empty" because her deficiency as a non-male gets exposed, as a result, she becomes untruth being devoid of cover (Irigaray, 1985, p. 115). She further establishes "woman weaves in order to veil herself, mask the faults of Nature, and restore her in her wholeness. By wrapping her up" (p. 115). It means both religion and patriarchy construct the notion in the very consciousness of a woman that her innate natural deficiency could only be covered with the veil and segregation.

Any attempt made to unveil the woman remains in vein because without it she feels incomplete. Meyda Yegenoglu establishes that forced unveiling of a woman is tantamount to "peeling her skin off," moreover painful even if made with the least intrusion (Yegenoglu, 1998, p. 118). Whereas, Spivak maintains that in the state of being unveiled a woman feels herself as an "other", and "she does not really exist, yet her name remains one of the important names for displacement, the special mark of deconstruction" (Spivak, 1999, p. 184). Fanon, in *Algeria Unveiled* contends, "Without the veil she has an impression of her body being cut into bits, put adrift; the limbs seem to lengthen indefinitely .... The unveiled body seems to escape, to dissolve. She has an impression of being improperly dressed, even of being naked. She experiences a sense of incompleteness with great intensity. She has an anxious feeling that something is unfinished, and along with this a frightful sense of disintegrating" (Fanon, 1965, p. 59).

Bhabha propounds that the passive agency of an individual becomes active after having an encounter with a third space, which offers an opportunity to reconsider and re-evaluate the agency, role and choice of the individual. He calls it "insider's outsidedness" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 20). It was very relevant to the postcolonial context when the cultures of the colonizers and the colonized paved the way for hybridity and third space.

Research Methodology

This study attempts to analyse how Muslim female protagonists negotiate their female agency in private and public domains while living as diasporans in the third space of the USA. The qualitative data has been reviewed from the text of selected novels, which has been textually analysed with the help of close-reading technique (Johnson, 2004; Kain, 1998). The close reading technique is used to construct an understanding of any phenomenon by analysing words, syntax, textual context, structures, narrative voice, sounds, rhetorical devices, history, gender and themes interwoven in the web of the given text (McClennen, 2001). The text of both novels is reviewed to ascertain the stance of Muslim female protagonists while negotiating their agency. Epistemologically, this study belongs to the domain of constructivism, hence interpretivism has been employed as a theoretical perspective to understand it (Gray, 2004). Agency of the Muslim female is a phenomenon which gets constructed in the third space of the USA, but how it gets constructed needs an interpretation. The interpretivist pursuit is guided by the postcolonial third space of Bhabha (1994) and post-9/11 power discourse. It is inquired if the Muslim women are religiously oppressed (Ahmed, 1992), and have "determinable identity" to play independent role or they are mere objects enshrouded in "golden-embroidered veil" (Derrida, 1978, p. 49). If they are conditioned to passivity and consider the veil as a cover to hide their natural deficiency (Irigaray, 1985); moreover, without the veil they feel naked and disintegrated (Fanon, 1965). It is investigated whether they are independent in their choices and actions or are under the duress and coercion of the brown men and, in Spivak's words, need to be rescued by the westerners. How they carve a niche for themselves in the private and public spaces of the hostland (America), if they

are just types and passive victims of patriarchal and religious injunctions or they are free individuals and actively play their agency, ascertain their positions, choose their roles and live a meaningful life. The text of both novels is reviewed to answer above aspects of the research question systematically.

Negotiating Female Agency in Post-9/11 Fiction

Post-9/11 power discourse and Islamophobic social rhetoric, ensued after the attacks, not only demeaned the Muslim males, but they also developed the public perception that Muslims subjugated, oppressed, disenfranchised, marginalized and confined their females without allowing them to play their agency or role in private and public space. After equating Islam and Muslims with terrorism, the image of burqa-clad females was propagated to justify the War on Terrorism for the elimination of terrorism and emancipation of Muslim females from Muslim males – in Spivak's term westerns "need to save brown women from brown men" (Khan, 2002, p.ix). The USA, following the tradition, employed the narrative which was asserted by the Orientalist and neo-Orientalist writers and later on exploited by the colonizers to justify their colonial rule. Although some Muslim writers, as reviewed above, remained consistent with this confessional tell-a-tale approach of demonizing the agency of Muslim women, yet the selected post-9/11 fiction by the Muslim female writers dispels this perception and portrays Muslim females as more responsible, independent, active and decisive ones.

Muslim Female's Agency in *Once in A Promised Land (OIAPL)*

OIAPL presents the active, bold and vigorous role of Muslim female members, who actively paly their agency in both private and public spaces. It has been shown that as compared to the men, they suffer a lot in the wake of the attacks. Salwa, born in America but brought up in Palestine and Jordan, immigrates to the USA after her marriage to a hydrologist, Jassim. She actively assimilates into the hostland identity and lives an independent life of responsibility, confidence and character. Her shy, reserved and retiring outlook turns to be bold and open, and her formal dressing code becomes less formal, tighter and more exposed one. Her personal and professional demeanour transforms with linearity and she discharges her official responsibility with effective productivity. In addition to a bank job, she undertakes an enterprise of the part-time estate business: the former job relating to finance demands responsibility, whereas the latter requires public interaction and dealings. In accordance with the practices and tenants of the culture and society she is brought up, such attributions and qualities are usually expected and associated with a male partner, but she discharges such important undertakings with a great deal of responsibility, positivity and productivity.

After the attacks, when a female client after knowing Salwa's "Palestinian" nationality, refuses to carry on banking transaction with her, she demonstrates great constraints, prudence and professional composure. She smiles "her sweetest smile, the one that would force her to believe that this woman was only asking out of curiosity" (Halaby, 2007, p. 115). Salwa counters the chauvinistic high-handedness,

xenophobic hatred and Islamophobic feelings of the American lady with forbearance, compassion and tolerance. Muslim females do not isolate themselves after the attacks, but they openly face and cope with the discrimination and othering and continue to survive in the charged hostland. Jassim and his American girlfriend, Penny, meet an Arabic woman in Wal-Mart and Penny comments, "I bet people give her a lot of grief these days" (p. 279). Salwa also has same conviction that Americans have become "*Stupid and macho*" and they mistreat Muslims indiscriminately (p. 21). She not only employs her agency actively in the private space, but she also considers her personal domain as political. After the attacks, she develops concerns for her would-be child, "*It is different now, she thought. If I am pregnant, I cannot raise my child here"* (p. 54). In addition, she also questions her husband's excessive commitment and attention to the work at the cost of his attention towards her: "Jassim's enthusiasm for his work and in his offer of the life she wanted, he had somehow neglected her" (p. 99). It shows despite predicaments and challenges, Muslim women exist individually and strive to carve a niche for themselves in every personal, public, professional and political realm.

Salwa gets pregnant without the consent of her husband, because the latter has not been willing to beget children even after nine years of their marriage (p. 10). In a patriarchal society, giving birth to children is a masculine mandate, but she expands her agency to solicit such critical decision individually without masculine authoritative permission; moreover with "inaction" of not taking pills for four days (p. 10). When her pregnancy is confirmed in a hospital, she keeps sobbing and moaning in her car, "wishing Jassim were next to her" and "tears she released had been blocking tiny crevices that held bubbles of anger and resentment, packed tight so as not to surface, but now it all spilled out" (p. 60). However, after the conception she feels her "emptiness" has been filled and she sleeps "in peace" (p. 11). Unfortunately, the pregnancy ends in miscarriage and she becomes "mother of bucket of blood", but she neither shares it with her husband nor does ask for any help (p. 160). In such arduous situation, she rather seeks help of another woman, Randa, whose "fingers pushed and prodded, held on tight when the cramping was painful, and wiped away the tears with gentleness" (p. 91). Negotiating and dealing with such critical issues without male intervention manifests confident execution of feminine agency and independence. After the miscarriage, Salwa lies on a bed, all grieved and torn. She re-evaluates, reviews and revisits her future plans under the blanket of truth: "this was the life she had chosen, but it was not the life she wanted" (p. 91). She analyses her choice, its subsequent repercussions and failure, which enables her to explore new horizons of life.

After recuperative phase, she resumes her professional affairs yet with heavy heart, because the wish of becoming a mother in the third space of the hostland without masculine consent has left her deeply wounded. Her "Head filled with loathing" she readies "for the morning, for the day, for the American workweek, with no energy, no interest" (p. 265). Being melancholic and grief-stricken, she meets Jake Peralta, a co-worker in the bank, and tries to find momentary peace in his company, but limits get surpassed unintentionally and they physically consummate the relationship. It is obvious

that she is not a promiscuous woman by nature, because when Jack enquires of her belief in the Quranic proclamation: "when a man and a woman are alone, the Devil makes the third party" she concedes and terms their meeting "*Like this one*." (p. 208). Very soon she is chocked with the rude awakening of her complete existential obliteration after losing celibacy. She feels physically devastated, nationally uprooted and spiritually polluted, manipulated and maligned in the hostland, but she does not want to surrender. For revival and resuscitation, she wishes to visit the homeland she is brought up. When she decides to temporarily leave the USA, she goes to bid farewell to Jake, but he attacks her and leaves her gravely injured. She is groaning in a hospital to record her last statement after coming to consciousness. Sitting beside her bed in the hospital, Jassim realizes that American ignorance and soil have tainted Salwa's innocence. However, her character negates the popular belief upheld by westerners that Muslim females are subjugated, dependent and marginalized. Salwa is an independent, self-motivated and decisive woman. She makes choices in her life, and given to her hamartia, she meets to a tragic end; however, she is a full-fledged character. After the attacks and miscarriage of her child, she becomes heart-broken; as a result, she hinges on the hostland to maintain balance, but she is left morally exploited, physically assaulted and spiritually devastated. *OIAPL* also dispels the myth of white man rescuing the brown woman from brown male. Here the white man is the inflictor, not the rescuer. It also deconstructs the claim of American President, "Americans were bringing democracy to places that knew only tyranny and terror, that didn't have the freedom to choose" (p. 280). Halaby negates the popular assumption of Nafisi (2003) that the West is the place where Muslim women can find safe haven.

Muslim Female's Agency in *Saffron Dreams* (*SD)*

Arissa, the protagonist of *SD*, is a simple, retiring and diffident girl from Karachi, Pakistan. After her marriage to Faizan, she immigrates to the USA. She lives there as a housewife, but she becomes shattered after the death of her husband in the 9/11 attacks. Being an Eastern woman, she takes time to find balance and maintain her demeanour for undertaking new plans, accepting glaring challenges and encountering the charged and changed hostland. She has the very rude awakening in the West after the attacks: her husband is dead, she has to give birth to a disabled child and subsequently look after it, find a job for herself, learn driving, face the Islamophobic public outside and cope with discrimination, hatred, profiling, physical and verbal abuses. Besides, she has to complete the book, Faizan has left unfished. Although she has not been trained to cope with such challenges, she evolve her character to play her agency in the private and public spaces.

Arissa's female agency gradually develops in the third space of the USA. Since she is born and brought up in the East, she receives a cultural shock and objects Faizan's serving as a waiter at "Window on the World"; moreover, she terms it as inappropriate and below the standard (Abdullah, 2009, p. 147). However, Faizan suggests to "broaden" her viewpoint (p. 148). In her initial days in the USA, she feels shy and "awkwardly clenched" in the embrace of her husband "still not used to the idea of being affectionate

in public" (p. 89), but later on she becomes comfortable when he plants a kiss at a public place. Once Faizan suggests of going back to Pakistan as his old parents need his help and support. She differs and condemns his decision of uprooting her from the USA, because she considers the USA as the befitting place for their would-be child "especially if the child turns out to be a girl" (p. 113). Thus, she dispels the popular assumption that the Eastern do not prefer bringing up their daughters in the West.

It is the first time Arissa appears in the public without wearing hijab moreover with a pair of jeans and a red shirt, when she comes to know about the attacks on the World Trade Centre where Faizan works. She cares a little about her "modesty" (p. 52). She has been wearing the veil since the age of ten, but after arriving in the USA, she wishes to lose her "hijab" in order "to assimilate into the new culture as much as possible", but Faizan disagrees (p. 58). However, her role gets changed after the attacks and in order to play her agency actively at both private and public spaces, she drops the veil.

Arissa fights and faces at every front of private and public space even though being a "*baywah* [widow] and pregnant" (p. 117). She completes the religious obligation of 40-day bereavement period (*Iddat*) after the death of her husband (p. 58). She does not relinquish in the state of self-pity, but rather comes out on the very first day of completion of the bereavement period. However, her first interaction with the charged hostland is appallingly harsh, she is s attacked publicly. Some diehard and conservative teenager members of the hostland attack her on a subway, she faces them boldly and argues and asserts the loss of her husband. She categorically mentions that she is not the inflictor but rather a victim of the attacks. Even then they attack her and leave her wounded on the ground; however, being pregnant, she is very much decisive and bold to save the baby at every cost: "I can't lose this baby. I have to get to a hospital" (p. 64). She wants to save the child because after the death of her husband, she symbolically strives for the survival and prevalence of their next generation in the hostland. The fact remains that it is also a primordial instinct, urge and deep-rooted wish to live, prevail and survive through the generational chain. Besides, she polemically counters the prevailing social rhetoric against Muslims and Islam. While responding to the media, she categorically detaches Islam and Muslims from terrorism and terrorists: "They were not my people, those few whose beliefs don't even reflect the religion" (p. 60). Thus, she fulfills her cultural and religious obligations along with her public responsibilities.

The sense of insecurity is inextricably associated with the possession of some valuables such as persons, things or objects; however, the loss of such valuables makes human bold and bereft of fear and consequences. After losing Faizan, Arissa also becomes bold: "When horror comes face-to-face with you and causes a loved one's death, fear leaves your heart" (p. 57). She does not want to be pitied on as *bewah* and *Bechari* – the widow and hapless. She does not like when her parents, relatives and friends try to sympathize with her. Arissa wants "to take this journey" herself, though "unseen" and "unchallenged" (p.1). She accepts the challenge of giving birth to a disabled child, Raian and bringing him up alone, what they both had made. Although she is "widowed, wronged, yet free from the pull of vengeance" (p. 128). In order to earn a

respectable life, she decides to join a job and stops wearing scarf. She does not shed the veil in disgust but shifts it from head to heart because she is cognizant of the fact: "Our mothers took pains tying our scarves down with bobby pins on both sides of our heads. After a while, they did feel like nails burrowed into our skulls" (p. 108). Moreover, she takes time to materialize this decision, because "It isn't easy for" her (p. 108), as Faizan held the veil at great reverence and "to him it defined a woman" so she always felt a "twinge of guilt" (p. 10). When she walks without the veil and the breeze invades her body, she feels herself "naked like a prostitute", but she realizes that the outer world is too busy to look at her (p.116). She feels that after shedding the veil, she can easily cross "the cultural barrier to accept another man in my arms" (p. 203). She develops an extra-marital relationship with Zaki, which continues for six years, but she refuses to marry him. Thus, she gets transformed after coping with the challenges of private and public spaces. This bold and independent demeanour of her personality again dispels the popular reductive trope of segregated, isolated, confined and crippled burqa-clad Muslim women. She sets goals and priorities in her life and discharges every role and responsibility with profound independence, effectiveness and dare.

SD represents challenges and problems Muslim women face at the third space after they shift from the East to the West. Arissa does not want to depend on diasporic Muslim community, whereas the majority Americans always discriminate and other her; despite challenges, she struggles to prevail. At one point in time, she becomes the victim of both identity and existential crises. She joins an anti-war rally but questions the representation: "I don't know what or whom I represented. A deceased husband? A wanted pregnancy now challenged? Or a child doomed in-utero with a damaged existence? I heard the tut-tut of sympathetic relatives in my mind. '*Bechari*'" (pp. 116-17). She questions her role, duty, obligation and representativeness. Being a Muslim in the West, she is struggling for the maintenance of the positive image of Muslims, but at the same time she is a woman, and her eastern counterparts have dubbed her as "*Bechari"* (the helpless) on the sudden demise of her husband; however, she does not like to be referred with such terms. Once she points out at the picture of her husband present in a flyer including all deceased of the 9/11 attacks, but people in her surroundings doubt her with the conviction that the brown can only be inflictor but not the inflicted one. She is heart-broken at this exclusion: "My scab had been scratched again and I was too busy bleeding" (p. 87). In the very epicentre of doubt and pity, othering on the part of Americans and sheer sympathy by her counterparts, her role becomes more demanding with a nightmarish awakening of bringing up a child whom the circumstances have dubbed as an "orphan" beforehand (p. 78). But she does not quit and surrender.

Post-9/11 fiction visualizes the better part and contribution of the Muslim woman who has remained a victim of the eastern patriarchal and male-dominated society and the western myth-oriented sweeping generalization based on reductive tropes of marginalization, suppression, subjugation and disenfranchisement (Kanwal, 2015). Arissa's character dispels the biased and cliched image of the Muslim woman. She lives

an independent life, assumes the role of a father, brings up a disabled child and completes the book her husband left unfished. In doing so, she shifts veil from head to heart, yet some constituent saliences of her Muslim identity such as religious and moral obligations remain intact. When she asks the consent of her mother-in-law with respect to shedding the veil, she says, "Times have changed. We have all changed. I am no one's judge. There are things I am not proud of. There are things I am sure you regret as well" (p. 108). Even the first generation, which is likely to be more conservative, is ready to assimilate into the hostland for the sake of forthcoming generations, which bears profound testimony to the transformation of female agency. The mothers are sad, desperate and alone, yet they are hopeful, sanguine and optimistic. Ma says, "What I am saying is that, Arissa, it's your life. I know why you're making this decision, and I am not the one to stand in your way. It's always been a tradition in the family, but the tradition also was to live back home. We have modified our lives, and we do what we can do for those to come" (p. 108). These female characters are embodiment of wonderful transformation of the eastern Muslim woman. They have become bold, active, independent, self-reliant and responsible. While exercising her wish and will, Arissa even crosses "cultural barrier", and allows Zaki to physically consummate their relationship (p. 203). To her, the extramarital relationship falls in the domain of culture rather than religion. She completes the book – an incomplete legacy left by her husband. When the book is complete, she realizes that a significant part of her life has ended: "A relationship that was dead and a legacy that was almost complete. That left just Raian" (p.225). But she immediately undertakes another responsibility of looking after her disabled son, who is unable to speak but confirms through the language of signs with a trusting and shining face: "*My mother is my guardian. I am safe when I am with her. She cocoons me in the palm of her hand."* (p. 178). This is the most innocent, ingenious and soul-touching testimony on her role transformation. She transcends beyond the limitations and bounds of a woman from the subcontinent and undertakes the projects which a male has left incomplete. The transcending female agency in the third space profoundly enables her to play a significant role in the multicultural and transnational global society. The transformative trajectory of Arissa's female agency can better be summed up in her own words:

> "My journey spans half a decade, from the biggest loss of my life to where I am now. It is a tale of grief and happiness, of control and losing control, of barriers and openings, of prejudices and acceptance. Of holding on and letting go. It is about turning my heart inside out, mending it, and putting it right back in as it is about looking at life from the perspective of someone trapped in time. Finally, it's about filling shoes bigger than mine – and filling two with only one leg to stand on. This is the leg that over and over again will weaken with the weight it's expected to carry, falter, but eventually mend and march over the terrains of time." (p. 6)

Arissa has bought her own home and planted moghras, Arabian and night-blooming jasmines. She lives with her challenging disabled child who signs, "You're

shining, Mama" (p.232) and this is like a dying declaration about the transcendence of her female agency at the third space.

Conclusion

The selected post-9/11 fiction produced by Muslim female writers dispels Islamophobic notion and stereotyping of Islam and Muslim and it delineates the woman characters as independent individuals and equally assimilative into the hostland culture and society. They do not conform to the image of burqa-clad woman stereotyped and propagated in reductive tropes by western Orientalist, neo-Orientalist, postcolonial writers and followed by some Muslim intellectual compradors. Edward Said negated this reductive trope with the publication of *Orientalism* (1978). Later on some Muslim writer parted their way and tried to portray Muslim woman as an individual with considerable power to play her agency in the private and public realms. Thus, the selected post-9/11 fiction does not follow clichéd and stereotyped narratives of Orientalist, neo-Orientalist and post-colonial writers. Transcending beyond these "forked models" or tell-a-tale formula, known and established in the mind of western readers and English literary canon, *OIAPL* and *SD* portray Muslim females as independent and individual, which is not an "ironic compromise" to sacrifice the authenticity of narration and to produce the truth which may be "human and not wholly human" (Bhabha, 1994, 122). Going with the already established literary canon or image fixed in the mind of readers adds prompt acceptance at the cost of distortion and interpolation of reality and truth. Liao (2013) has rightly said, "I believe that a rich and critical 9/11 literature should begin where the Euro-American narcissism ends" (p.19). The selected fiction neither tarnishes images of Muslim women nor does boast them subjectively. They are presented as individuals with all flaws and strength. The USA offers them a third space to reconsider their roles and revisit their agency, they grow mature and responsible. They face many challenges while assimilating because of their upbringing in the patriarchal and male-dominated society where power and authority are always relegated to the man. Sometimes, they also face same restrictions and predicaments in the hostland, but they develop their own personality and emerge as an individual with their own conviction. They are found as independent, decisive and free. They make independent decisions, strive to carve a niche for themselves in the hostland.

Both Salwa of *OIAPL* and Arissa of *SD* are brought up in an Islamic and patriarchal society, but they are not oppressed through "the veil" and "segregation" (Ahmed, 1992, p.152) . They both play their role in the third space of the West independently, effectively and productively. They take critical decisions like Salwa's conceiving a baby and having extra-marital relationship with Jake and Arissa's giving birth to a disabled child, doing job, developing extra-marital relationship with Zaki and refusing marrying him. Contrary to Derridean assumption, they transcend beyond the "non-identity" persona and their dealing and interaction with the outer world is more promising and practical rather than sheer frivolous and gossipy one. They are not living

the life of "the veiled movement" (Derrida, 1978, p. 49), but they have an identity with explicit power and choice.

Spivak's urge of saving "brown women from brown men" (Khan, 2002, p.ix) and hollow claims of waging the War on Terrorism for rescuing the burqa-clad Muslim women fall flat, when both Salwa and Arissa get injured in the very centre of the land of the white man. Despite persecution, othering and physical assaults, they emerge and paly their agency as individual, independent and decisive beings. They defend their culture and religion, abide by religious obligations such as *iddat*, shed the veil when inevitable, opt and refute extra-marital relationship and earn a respectable life in the very charged and changed hostland without male intervention or dependence.

For time being, Arissa feels "naked like a prostitute" when she drops the veil (Abdullah, 2009, p. 116), but she does not feel that her body has lost its "usefulness" and she has become "empty" (Irigaray, 1985, p. 115). On the contrary, she emerges in the public place to earn their livelihood – to fulfil an assignment which her culture associates and expects from a male partner. Moreover, the third space brings "insider's outsidedness" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 20), which offers an opportunity to the Muslim woman to reconsider and re-evaluate her agency, role and choice for living as a meaningful individual in the multicultural, transnational and global society.

References

- **Abbas, T. (2004).** After 9/11: British South Asian Muslims, Islamophobia, Multiculturalism, and the State. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, *21*(3), 26–38.
- **Abdullah, S. (2009).** *Saffron Dreams*. Modern History Press.
- **Ahmad, F. (2006).** British Muslim Perceptions and Opinions on News Coverage of September 11. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *32*(6), 961–982.
- **Ahmed, A. S. (2003).** *(2003). Islam under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World*. Cambridge: Polity.
- **Ahmed, L. (1986).** Women and the Advent of Islam. *Signs*, *11*(4), 665–691.
- **Ahmed, L. (1992).** *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.
- **Al-Sudeary, A. M. (2012).** Rethinking Muslim women's agency in modern literature. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *2*(21), 69–81.
- **Ansari, H. (2004).** *The infidel within: Muslims in Britain since 1800*. C. Hurst & Co. Publishers.

- **Bahdi, R. (2003).** No Exit: Racial Profiling and Canada's War Against Terrorism. *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, *41*(2&3), 293–317.
- **Basit, T. N. (2009).** White British; dual heritage; British Muslim: young Britons' conceptualisation of identity and citizenship. *British Educational Research Journal*, *35*(5), 723–743.
- **Bhabha, H. (1994).** *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge Classics.
- **Blackwood, L., Hopkins, N., & Reicher, S. (2013).** I know who I am, but who do they think I am? Muslim perspectives on encounters with airport authorities. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *36*(6), 1090–1108. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870.2011.645845
- **Boyne, S. (1998).** *Sold into Marriage: One Girl's Living Nightmare*. Dublin: O'Brien Press.
- **Cook, M. (2000).** *The Koran: a Very Short Introduction*., New York: Oxford University Press.
- **Dabashi, H. (2010).** Foreword. In *Shirin Neshat*. New York: Rizzoli.
- **Derrida, J. (1978).** *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- **Downie, C. (2013).** *Negotiating Perceptions and Constructing Identities: Muslim Strategies in St. John's, Newfoundland*. Université d'Ottawa/University of Ottawa. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/openview/b418cf4e167cfffff83f081ffe61f52c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y
- **El-Halawany, H. S. E.-D. (2003).** *Highly educated Egyptian women's responses to gender role challenges in post 9-11 America*. University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Retrieved from http://www.africabib.org/rec.php?RID=W00073347
- **Esposito, J. (2002).** *Unholy war: Terror in the name of Islam*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Gwe5HYoHUZ0C&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=Esposito,+J.+L.+(2002).+Unholy+war:+Terror+in+the+name+of+Islam.+Oxford+University+Press.&ots=csQ_dA-BZj&sig=gQwspfCdk4PvnFR2xGVowLqbOwI
- **Fanon, F. (1965).** *"Algeria Unveiled," A Dying Colonialism*. New York: Grove Press.
- **Gibran, K. (2018).** *The broken wings*. Books on Demand.
- **Gillespie, M. (2006).** Transnational Television Audiences after September 11. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *32*(6), 903–921.
- **Göçek, F. M. (2001).** Islam and Gender. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences (Vol. 12)* (pp. 7913–7916). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- **Goodwin, J. (1994).** *Price of Honor: Muslim Women Lift the Veil of Silence on the Islamic World*. Boston: Little Brown.
- **Gray, D. E. (2004).** *Doing research in the real world*. SAGE.

- **Gupta, M. Das. (2004).** A view of post□9/11 justice from below. *Peace Review*, *16* (2), 141–148. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1040265042000237671
- **Halaby, L. (2007).** *Once in a Promised Land*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- **Harb, Z., & Ehab, B. (2006).** British Arab Muslim audiences and television after September 11. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *32*(6), 1063–1076.
- **Hasan, M. M. (2005).** Review of Monica Ali's Brick Lane",. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, *50*(1–2), 667–6672.
- **Hasan, M. M. (2015).** Seeking freedom in the "Third Space" of diaspora: Muslim women's identity in Aboulela's Minaret and Janmohamed's Love in a Headscarf. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *35*(1), 89–105.
- **Hopkins, N. (2011).** Dual Identities and Their Recognition: Minority Group Members' Perspectives. *Political Psychology*, *32*(2), 251–270. Retrieved from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00804.x/full
- **Hopkins, N., & Kahani-Hopkins, V. (2004).** The antecedents of identification: a rhetorical analysis of British Muslim activists' constructions of community and identity. *The British Journal of Social Psychology/the British Psychological Society*, *43*(1), 41–57. Retrieved from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1348/014466604322915971/full
- **Hopkins, P. E. (2004).** Young muslim men in Scotland: inclusions and exclusions. *Children's Geographies*, *2*(2), 257–272. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14733280410001720548
- **Hosseini, K. (2007).** *A thousand splendid suns*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- **Irigaray, L. (1985).** *Speculum of the Other Woman*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- **Jaspal, R., & Cinnirella, M. (2010).** Media representations of British Muslims and hybridised threats to identity. *Contemporary Islam*, *4*(3), 289–310. Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11562-010-0126-7
- **Johnson, R. (2004).** *What is Close Reading?* Mantex.
- **Kain, P. (1998).** *How to Do a Close Reading.* Writing Center at Harvard University.
- **Kanwal, A. (2015).** *Rethinking Identities in Contemporary Pakistani Fiction: Beyond 9/11*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- **Khan, S. (2002).** Preface: The Space Beneath My Feet. In *Aversion and desire: Negotiating Muslim female identity in the diaspora*. Women's Press.
- **Khouri, N. (2003).** *Honor Lost: Love and Death in Modern-Day Jordan*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- **Korteweg, A. C. (2008).** The Sharia Debate in Ontario Gender, Islam, and Representations of Muslim Women's Agency. *Gender & Society*, *22*(4), 434–454.
- **Liao, P.-C. (2013).** *'Post'-9/11 South Asian Diasporic Fiction: Uncanny Terror*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- **McClennen, S. A. (2001).** *How to Do a Close Reading. Dr. McClennen's Close Reading Guide*. The Pennsylvania State University.
- **Mohanty, C. T. (1984).** Under western eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. *Boundary*, *12*(13), 333–358.
- **Nafisi, A. (2003).** *Reading Lolita in Tehran*. London: Fourth Estate.
- **Nagra, B. (2011).** "Our Faith Was Also Hijacked by Those People": Reclaiming Muslim Identity in Canada in a Post-9/11 Era. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *37*(3), 425–441. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1369183X.2011.526781
- **Ong, A. (1988).** Colonialism and modernity: feminist re-presentations of women in on-western societies. *Inscriptions*, *3*(4), 79–93.
- **Peek, L. A. (2003).** Reactions and response: Muslim students' experiences on New York city campuses post 9/11. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *23*(2), 271–283. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1360200032000139910
- **Peek, L. A. (2005).** *The identity of crisis: Muslim Americans after September 11*. Diss. University of Colorado.
- **Ridouani, D. (2011).** The Representation of Arabs and Muslims in Western Media. *RUTA: Revista Universitària de Treballs Acadèmics*, ((3),), 7–15. Retrieved from https://ddd.uab.cat/pub/ruta/20130740n3/20130740n3a7.pdf
- **Rushdie, S. (1981).** *Midnight's Children*. London: Vintage Books.
- **Said, E. (1978).** *Orientalism*. New York: Random House.
- **Sasson, J. (1992).** *Princess: A True Story of Life Behind the Veil in Saudi Arabia*. New York: William Morrow.
- **Schonemann, J. (2013).** *The Stereotyping of Muslims: an analysis of The New York Times' and The Washington Times' coverage of Veiling and the muhammad cartoon controversy*. Retrieved from https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/37081
- **Shaheen, J. G. (2001).** *Reel bad Arabs : how Hollywood vilifies a people*. Olive Branch Press.
- **Smith, J. (1985).** Women, religion and social change in early Islam. In Y. Haddad & E. Findly (Eds.), *Women, Religion and Social Change* (pp. 19–35). Albany: SUNY Press.
- **Spivak, G. (1999).** *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*. London: Harvard University Press.
- **Spivak, G. C. (1990).** *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interview, Strategies, Dialogues*. New York: Routledge.
- **Yegenoglu, M. (1998).** *Colonial Fantasies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- **Zubair, S. (2012).** Crossing Borders, Reinventing Identity (ies): Hybridity in Pakistani English Fiction. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS)*, *32*(1), 65–75.