

**The Adaptation of the Western Perspective (Don
DeLillo) on Terrorism in Fadia Faqir's
*Willow Trees Don't Weep***

تكييف نظرة الغرب (دون ديليلو) للإرهاب في رواية
أشجار الصفصاف لا تبكي لفادية فقير

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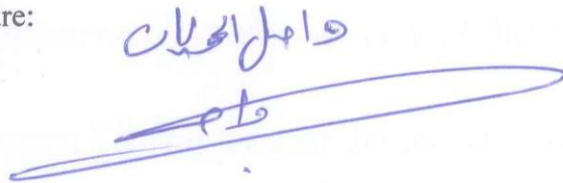
Authorization

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Committee Decision

This Thesis entitled, “The Adaptation of the Western Perspective (Don DeLillo) on Terrorism in Fadia Faqir’s *Willow Trees Don’t Weep*” was successfully defended and approved on 28/5/2022.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father who is the most wonderful mentor and best friend, who a person could ever have. I appreciate you more than words can ever say. Thank you Dad!

It is also dedicated to my mom, who carries great meanings, the meaning of love, tenderness, and purity. Great meanings that express everything wonderful and great in life. I also dedicate my thesis to my sisters and my brother, Wa'el.

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Abstract

The study aims to identify how Don DeLillo represents Arab Muslims in his novel, *Falling Man*. In the same way, the study also aims to explore how Fadia Faqir represents Arab Muslims in her novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep* by adapting the Western perspective. Additionally, the study attempts to compare and contrast between the two writers' representations of Arab Muslims in their novels. To achieve the objectives of the study, the theory of Postcolonialism is used, and specifically the views of Edward Said on Orientalism are applied to both novels. The study concludes with how both authors, Don DeLillo, as a Westerner and Fadia Faqir, as an Arab represent their Arab Muslim characters in their works, *Falling Man* and *Willow Trees Don't Weep*, as terrorists. The study also concludes with a set of issues that have affected diasporic Arab writers, such as identity crisis, hybridity, and secularism that have influenced their cultural values. These representations are also considered negative.

Keywords: Western Perspective, Terrorism, Willow Trees.

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تبكي لفادية فقير

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الملخص

هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على كيفية تمثيل دون ديليلو للعرب المسلمين في روايته "الرجل الساقط". وبالطريقة نفسها، كيف تمثل فادية فقير العرب المسلمين في روايتها "أشجار الصفصاف لا تبكي" من خلال التكيف مع المنظور الغربي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، هدفت الدراسة للمقارنة بين تمثيل الكاتبين للعرب المسلمين في رواياتيهما. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تم استخدام نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار، وعلى وجه التحديد تم تطبيق آراء إدوارد سعيد حول الاستشراق على كلتا الروايتين. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة ان كلا المؤلفين، دون ديليلو وفاديا فقير، يمثلان الشخصيات العربية الإسلامية في أعمالهما كإرهابيين. تتضمن الدراسة مجموعة من المفاهيم التي أثرت على الكتاب العرب في الشتات، مثل أزمة الهوية والتهمين، والعلمانية، التي أثرت على قيمهم الثقافية. وتعتبر هذه التمثيلات سلبية أيضاً.

الكلمات المفتاحية: نظرة الغرب، الإرهاب، أشجار الصفصاف.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The last several decades have seen an interesting surge in the number of literary works written by Arab diasporic writers in English and other foreign languages. Diasporic Arab writers are writers who moved to the United Kingdom or the United States for different reasons and chose to write in English. As a result of what these Arab diasporic writers, the Arabs in general, and the Muslims in particular, have been exposed to, many Arab diasporic writers, especially Arab Muslim ones, have focused on changing the image of Islam and countering the stereotypes that are used by many Westerners in their writings. Unfortunately, some Arab Muslim writers have not followed this trend; instead, they have written against Islam and Muslims, trying to promote these stereotypical images in their writings. The main reason for this may be to increase the number of Western readers and to gain popularity. In this case, these Arab Muslim writers adopt the Westerners' views on Muslims and Islam.

Westerners formed an image of Arabs and Muslims from their first contact, and based on what happened at the time, they created certain perspectives on and about Arabs and Muslims that have been exaggerated and enlarged as a result of the aftermaths of 9/11 and 7/7 to view Arab Muslims as terrorists and link Islam to wars, violence, and terrorism. Harb (2012) states that the attacks of 9/11 are considered "a turning point" in the lives of Westerners and how they started looking at Arab Muslims (p. 14). Harb (2012) continues by claiming that stereotypes of Arab Muslims in the West refer to them as being against modernity, violent, patriarchal, and terrorists. Until recently, Westerners took this image of Arab Muslims for granted.

Edward Said (1978) discusses the relationship between the East and the West in his book entitled *Orientalism*. Orientalism, according to Said, is an ideology that supports a “West-and-Islam” duality and the belief that “others are less human” (p. 10). Said also adds that it is a way of thinking based on a distinction between “the Orient” and (most of the time) “the Occident,” which only exists in the minds of Westerners (p. 10). Akram (2000) presents the aspects of Orientalism, saying that the first aspect, which leads to the second, is the Western attitude, which revolves around the idea that there is a profound difference between the mindset of people from Arab Islamic cultures and those from the West, which leads to the image formed of the Islamic world by westerners. In his book, *Orientalism*, Said (1978) also explores the conventional views of Arabs and Muslims and how these stereotypical images were first generated by the West in his book, *Orientalism*. He claims that the East, as it is also known in the West, only exists inside the ideology of the West (Said, 1978). Said (1978) believes that when Western scholars wrote about the East or when Western governors and diplomats gave speeches about the East, they obliquely portrayed the East to achieve a practical political goal.

Westerners, according to Said (1978), create the Orient through their writing. In the process, they contribute to the creation of a series of stereotypical images in which Europe (the Self) is seen as essentially rational, developed, humane, superior, virtuous, normal, and masculine, whereas the Orient (the Other) is seen as “irrational, backward, despotic, inferior, depraved, aberrant, and feminine sexually” (Macfie, 2002, p. 8). Ahmad (2011) declares that the Western Orientals, according to Said, split the universe into two contradicting origins: our world (the West) and their world (the East).

In his book, *Covering Islam*, Said (1997) continues his investigation of Islamic cultural iconography, which he began in his more general *Orientalism* (1978) and more

specific *The Question of Palestine* (1979). He analyzes how the media shapes common perceptions of Islam. He argues how Western colonialism has been helped by a centuries-old, academically manufactured image of Islam. He also explains how such negative imagery is used to support US control over Arab lands, as seen in news, drama, and advertising. He also shows how to learn more about the motivations behind the media's coverage of Islam in Western society, notably in the United States.

After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, many Western writers used these attacks to enhance the stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims and relate them to terrorism in the Western mind. In 2007, Don DeLillo, an American writer, published a novel called *Falling Man*. It is a novel about the aftermath of 9/11 and its impact of it on Westerners and Americans specifically. The author represents Arab Muslims through the stereotypical images that already exist in Westerners' minds; he shows the wrong aspect of Islam and Muslims, portraying them as terrorists. On the same track, instead of being against the Westerners' views and defying the stereotypical images, some Arab diasporic writers adopted the Westerners' views on Arab Muslims and the stereotypes of Arab Muslims, such as Faqir in her writings. She is a Jordanian British writer who writes fiction and poetry. She adopts the stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims created by the West in her novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep* (2014). This novel is told from two points of view. The first is from the point of view of Najwa, the daughter of Omar Rahman, who is searching for her father after the death of her mother. The second is from the perspective of Omar Rahman, Najwa's father, who joins his friend Hani to go and fight in Afghanistan. There, Omar is manipulated to commit suicide by wearing an explosive belt in the West.

Fadia Faqir's most recent novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep*, which was initially entitled *The Terrorist's Daughter*, has left a mark on Arab Anglophone writing and

international writing by imagining a voyage that is considered a threat to the Western world. Writing a novel about a man who quits his home to join al Qaeda may be one of the riskiest literary acts ever undertaken by an Arab Muslim female author writing in English for a predominantly Western audience. Faqir adopts the views of Westerners on Islam and Muslims. Don DeLillo is one of these Western writers who perceive Islam and Muslims as terrorists. This thesis explores how Faqir has adopted these views regardless of her background as an Arab and Muslim woman because she is probably impressed by Western culture. Majed (2012) comments on this by saying that Faqir negatively represents Islam in her writing. She may be seen as impressed by the Westerners and considers herself part of the Western secular feminists who claim that Islam is the reason behind the backward status of Arab Muslim females in their societies.

Arab Muslim writers, who resemble the way Faqir represents Islam and Muslims, were affected by the new Western host culture. Allani (2017) states that these Arab American women are considered “the product” of a bicultural heritage: “the original homeland culture and their new home culture” (p. 33). In other words, they are called by Homi Bhabha (1994) as “hybrids,” which means mixing Eastern and Western culture. Allani (2017) adds that at the end, and after living a while on the west side, such Arab Muslims will have merged, or even lost their identity.

Nonetheless, diasporic Arab Muslim writers portray features of current Islamic culture in their literary works in a variety of ways, with diasporic Arab Muslim women writers portraying Islam even more variably. Some Arab Muslim writers represent Islam as it is, as a religion of love, equality, and justice, as well as the proper portrayal of it, which creates a conflict for the Western audience who constantly write to conform to a

conventional picture of Islam and Muslims and to promote incorrect beliefs about Islam and Muslims.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The current study attempts to show that Fadia Faqir adopts the stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims in relation to terrorism. It also attempts to show how Faqir represents Muslims as terrorists in her novel, through using the same image of Western writers such as Don DeLillo's.

1.3 The Significance of the Study

There have been some studies conducted on both novels, *Willow Trees Don't Weep* and *Falling Man*, that tackle terrorism. The contribution of the study lies in linking the two novels together and exploring how both have the same perception of Arab Muslims, although the first writer is a Westerner and the other is an Arab diasporic writer.

1.4 Questions of the Study

The current study answers the following questions:

1. How does Don DeLillo represent Arab Muslims in his novel, *Falling Man*?
2. How does Fadia Faqir represent Arab Muslims in her novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep*?
3. How different/similar are the representations of both writers in the fore mentioned works?

1.5 Objectives of the Study:

The study:

1. Explores Don DeLillo's representation of Arab Muslims in his novel, *Falling Man*.

2. Explores Fadia Faqir's representation of Arab Muslims in her novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep*.
3. Compares and contrasts the representation of Arab Muslims by both writers in their fore mentioned works.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are four key terms in the paper as the following:

1. **Postcolonialism:** is a “neologism that evolved from older elements to capture a seemingly unique moment in world history, a confluence of experiences and insights, hopes and dreams arising from a previously silenced part of the world, taking advantage of new conditions to seek alternatives to colonial discourses, and creating an entirely new vantage point from which to review the past and the future” (Mishra & Hodge 2005, p. 10).
2. **Third Space:** It is the “international culture based not on the exorcisms of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity” (Bhabha, 1994 p. 56).
3. **Orientalism:** Orientalism is a way of thinking that is based on a dichotomy created between “the Orient” and (most of the time) “the Occident” on an ontological and epistemological level (Said 1978, p. 10).
4. **Terrorism:** Title 22 of the United States Code defines terrorism as politically motivated violence committed against noncombatants in a covert way. The act is conducted in order to generate a frightening state of mind in an audience other than the victims, according to experts on terrorism (Roby 2002).

1.7 Limitations of the Study:

The study is limited to the time it has been written in. The study is also limited to the mentioned authors, Fadia Faqir and Don DeLillo and their mentioned literary works, *Willow Trees Don't Weep* and *Falling Man*. The study and what it concludes with cannot be generalized to the other authors' literary works.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

This chapter is a survey of prior research and studies on Fadia Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep* and Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*'s equivocal portrayal of Arabs. The studies that analyze how the two writers deal with Islam and terrorism in their literary works are presented first in this chapter. The chapter proceeds to give research that demonstrates how both writers' representations of Muslims in the assigned novels differ.

2.1 Theoretical Studies: The Representation of Islam and Terrorism by Fadia Faqir and Don DeLillo in their Literary Works

The current section presents the studies that analyze how the two writers, Faqir and DeLillo, deal with Islam and terrorism in their literary works. It starts with DeLillo, then proceeds with Faqir.

To start with Whelan (2011), who examines in his thesis "For the Future: An Examination of Conspiracy and Terror in the Works of Don DeLillo" *Libra*, DeLillo's previous work. He explores the premise that we live in a civilization, where our need for coherence and order is so powerful, that we have evolved a paranoia. This permits us to consider conspiracy theories in an attempt to rationalise or regulate our chaotic, fragmented environment. Over time, DeLillo's focus on conspiracy switches to terrorism as the primary cultural issue. Hantke (2003) asserts in his piece "God rescue us from bourgeois adventure" that there has been a shift from conspiracy to horror, not just in DeLillo's books, but also in politics. As a result, the primary focus of conspiracy theories has turned to internal rather than foreign security concerns.

Marandi and Tari (2012) in the study “Muslim Representations in Two Post-September 2001 American Novels: *A Contrapuntal Reading of Terrorist* by John Updike and *Falling Man*: A Novel by Don DeLillo (2012)” state that Don DeLillo uses a narrative style to pursue the same approach; he talks authoritatively and harshly about the Orient in essentialist terms. He also represents Muslim “Oriental” women, including their mindsets, goals, aspirations, and worries. This approach allows the writer to portray Muslims’ ideas, values, and ideological orientations, as well as their attitudes toward people, events, and things, in whatever way he wants. As a result, the story’s narrative is built and generated as a result of the writer’s tastes and within the prevailing discourse.

In his study, “Collapsing Identities: The Representation and Imagination of the Terrorist in *Falling Man*”, Pöhlmann (2010) discusses Terrorism, the media, and the ethics of fiction. He states “that *Falling Man* does not use an unambiguous binary opposition” (p. 53). Instead, it employs dichotomies that are not exactly deconstructed but are “laced with cross-links and inversions” to the point where readers are unable to fully recognize “the problematic construction of American victim versus Islamist terrorist” that they have come to recognize from “mainstream media reports” since 9/11 (Pöhlmann, p. 53). DeLillo does deal with binary oppositions, and while *Falling Man* raises some questions about their validity, its depiction of terrorists ultimately follows Orientalist patterns.

Moreover, Scanlan (2010) observes in her study “Migrating from Terror: The Postcolonial Novel after September 11” that, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, violent revolutionaries have produced public panic that politicians, the press, and literary authors may utilize and multiply. He claims that phrases like “Islamic terrorism” and “Islamic fascism” were purposefully coined and widely used in the mainstream media to legitimize

a wide range of prejudices against Muslims. This violent image of Islam is perpetuated not just by popular films and television shows, but also by post-9/11 books produced by well-known American authors such as Don DeLillo.

Moving to the studies that show how Muslims are represented by Fadia Faqir, Bouteraa's (2002) "Language and Style in Fadia Faqir's *Pillars of Salt*" demonstrates how the Arab World has long struggled for freedom from foreign conquerors, civil tyrants, and tyrannical hands. This battle is exacerbated for Arab women, who face additional societal and cultural obstacles. This influence has pervaded the brains of many Arab female authors, and Faqir's work exemplifies the breadth of this impact. Each novel's political and historical circumstances are immensely telling. This study examines how Faqir portrays Muslims in *Pillars of Salt*, which is set in the early 20s in Jordan, and has the oldest setting, and is one of the most violent narratives. Maha's battle for survival and independence is the subject of the narrative.

Maha is shown as a tough character throughout the story, and she comes across as angry when someone she loves is wounded. It's crucial to note that Maha's husband, Harb, is a fierce opponent of the English. They are both fighters in their own right; Maha is fighting for her society's freedom, while Harb is fighting to maintain his society's independence. Aside from the various instances of political and military violence shown in the novel, there are other times in which society appears to have some pretty aggressive ways of dealing with women and their difficulties. Gender-based violence is clearly a common means of keeping women in check. The use of violence to keep women under control has been recommended. Domestic violence is a result of the military battle between Bedouin forces and English troops in this circumstance. Faqir represents Muslim men as terrorists instead of the English troops because of the way they treat women. For

the ladies in these novels (and most likely their authors), the tragic and continuous bloodshed in the Middle East is inextricably linked to personal experience. We cannot claim to have done a thorough examination of the literature if we ignore the unstable political environment.

Sarnou's (2017) study, "Re-thinking the Veil, Jihad and Home in Fadia Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep* (2014)" shows how Faqir has established herself as a prominent character in Anglophone Arab literature. Following the publication of her fifth novel, Faqir's works have seen a boost in popularity in the West, owing to a growing interest in comprehending the Other, who is seen as a danger to the West.

Gayatri (2015) discusses in her study, "The Body and Beyond: Representation of Body Politics in *My Name Is Salma* by Fadia Faqir", that Faqir works to combat male repression. The narrative demonstrates that Salma has a feeling of agency. Despite the tyranny she endures as a result of physical abuse, humiliation, and cultural customs, Salma finally defies conventional depictions of Muslim women as docile. The fact that Salma asserts her agency through politicizing her body, an act that is frequently used against her, is particularly significant in the postcolonial feminist perspective. It is critical, however, to emphasize that her endeavor to fight repression fails because of the current system. While Salma's major difficulty in her own nation is patriarchal Arab culture, the story indicates that in the postcolonial English setting, Salma's quest to demolish male tyranny is hampered by the imperialist and capitalist patriarchal environment. The politicization of her body is accentuated by her alienation as a displaced, veiled, and colored immigrant, leaving her with no area to take sanctuary.

In addition, in "Islamic Postcolonialism: Islam and Muslim Identities in Four Contemporary British Novels", Majed (2015) states that the focus of Faqir moves to

Anglo-Arab writing. She uses many themes that are related to Arab diaspora, but in this novel, she tries to integrate new themes that have affected diasporic writing, such as terrorism and Islam.

2.2 Empirical Studies: The Representation of Islam and Terrorism in Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep* and DeLillo's *Falling Man*

This section contains research that demonstrates the two writers' portrayals of Islam and terrorism in their mentioned works.

A study by Marandi and Tari (2012) shows how DeLillo represents his characters. In *Falling Man*, the majority of the characters are Americans of various ethnic and religious backgrounds. There are characters of all ethnicities, in addition to Muslim characters that are presented as violent terrorists, some are from different nationalities. This multinationalism indicates that Americans are innocent receivers of people of all nations, and that Muslims are interrupters of peace and humanity, for the Americans, and for the whole white world. With this approach, DeLillo draws a clear line between the Muslim and non-Muslim characters in the novel, implying that Americans are capable of accepting people of all races and nationalities as members of their society, with the exception of Muslims. The strangeness and otherness of Muslims has reached to the point that it's impossible to come up with a fitting term for them.

Aldalala'a (2013) in her study, "Contesting the Story: Plotting the Terrorist in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*," states that *Falling Man* represents Muslims in Hammad's life, mission, and death as a type of signature to the assaults on America on September 11, 2001. It also reinforces the traditional propensity of Muslim terrorists to welcome death. However, he does not limit the examination of Hammad to the issue of terrorism and its

topicality in fiction after 9/11; rather, he is interested in how the plot of death and the terrorist's readiness to die impact the form and creation of post-9/11 literature. Keith Neudecker's experience of the World Trade Center attacks, as well as his aimless floating within the bounds of time and space, are central to *Falling Man*. Despite the fact that it is essential to the reality of events and understanding of their portrayal, Hammad's role is to highlight the conflicts between the West and the geopolitical Islam, the infusion of this into common American sensibilities is arguably a more troubling presence.

Stamenkovi (2020) discusses in his book "The Transnational Memory of Violence: Terrorism and Identity in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*" aspects of transnationality in American literature and American English demonstrate that the relationship between individuality and collective spirit is significant for *Falling Man*, especially for its depiction of terrorism. The terrorist group here is in stark contrast with American unity as a nation. Hardack writes that even xenophobia in *Falling Man* represents "a foreign threat to American individuality" (Hardack 2004, p. 375). The same can be said of terrorist units. It is not just a war between nations or even religions; it is a war between life philosophies. Hervik defines xenophobia as "[t]he double sense of 'fear of the stranger' and 'hatred of strangers.'" Although the stranger whom one fears can be welcomed as a guest, the stranger whom one hates cannot" (Hervik 2015, p. 796).

In her study, "The Peculiarities of Chronotope in Don DeLillo's Novel *Falling Man*," Asatryan (2012) discusses how DeLillo transforms all temporal and spatial visions, breaking down all frontiers and bringing time and space together. Terrorism is defined by this oneness. Terrorism appears to be on the same level as time and space. As a result, literature becomes a tool for demonstrating how 9/11 has become a dividing line between life before the events and life after the events. In the hereafter, individuals attempt to

revalue their lives, reclaim their lost egos, and comprehend their place and function in the distorted world, a world filled with terror and sorrow. This is the universe in which DeLillo's heroes reside. They symbolize the model of American society, every one of whose members is a potential carrier of terroristic events that do not rule out the potential for a repeat of 9/11 anywhere on the globe and at any moment.

Moving to the studies that tackle terrorism in Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep*, in the study "Interrogating the Native's Otherness in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* (2014) by Fadia Faqir", Djafri (2021) discusses how Faqir tells the story of two characters, Omar Rahman, the father, and Najwa, the daughter, both Jordanians who feel compelled to escape their nation in search of the truth and their true selves. Since she herself has experienced comparable situations, Faqir is acutely aware of the difficulties and dynamics of true connections and coexistence between the Western and Islamic cultures. As a result, she portrays her characters' lives as intricate journeys towards self-discovery via other Muslim nations such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, where Islam's image has been damaged by wars and terrorism, before eventually arriving in Western secular England and settling there for good. As a result, it is hypothesized that Faqir, an Anglophone Muslim fiction writer, fosters a disrupting neo-Orientalist discourse in her fiction, in which she supports a new agenda of non-Westerners, particularly Muslim Arabs, who question the legitimacy of their own religion, first at home as natives and then as migrants in the host Western country. Also, the hazards of the reductionist vision, which divides the world into two separate entities—the West and Islam—cause constant pain and discontent among the people of Muslim Arab countries.

Faqir's representation of terrorism in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* is mentioned in Sarnou's (2017) study, "Re-thinking the Veil, Jihad and Home in Faqir's *Willow Trees*

Don't Weep (2014)". Sarnou discusses how Faqir overcomes restrictions in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* and chooses to write about the life of a terrorist and his forsaken family. The story shows the current world's chaos; while some individuals believe they are fighting for humanity's sake; they end up terrifying people. This is the case with the protagonist's father, who sets off on a mission "to redeem the Islamic world but ends up becoming a terrorist" (p. 156). When Najwa discovers her father, she chooses to embark on a quest to re-locate herself, but she finally ends up as a displaced immigrant in Durham. *Willow Trees Don't Weep* is "a story about hatred and love, freedom and oppression, matriarchy and patriarchy, forgiveness and accusation, and father and daughter" (p. 156). It takes "the reader on an epic journey with the protagonist" to learn more about Jihad and Islam and to discover the mysterious country of Afghanistan. In addition, the story presents a distinct perspective on both religious fanaticism and secular extremism. Faqir's work, *Willow Trees Don't Weep* (2014), originally entitled, *The Terrorist's Daughter*, "has made a difference in both Anglophone Arab and international literature" (p. 156) by fictionalizing a voyage that the Western world views as a danger. Faqir is daring to write about a man who leaves home to join al Qaeda as an Arab woman author writing in English—and primarily for a Western audience (p. 156).

Paul and Rai (2020) are mentioned in the book review of *Willow Trees Don't Weep* that Faqir represents authority over women and their bodies and how they are connected with subordination. She tries to give the voice for females to overcome the obstacles and patriarchal societies. She encourages taking the veil and the burqas off. Moreover, Alenezi (2019) states in his thesis, "Shifting Paradigms of Postcolonial Theory: Internal Concerns of Post-2000 Anglophone Arab Fiction," that in the framework of Faqir's narrative, Islam is portrayed in discourse and action as an "ideology that is not tied to a

nation with limited and definite physical limits, but rather as a spiritual and abstract vision that may connect people of all races and backgrounds” (p.10). Islam is presented as a religion which causes its people’s manipulation and abuse.

From reviewing the previous literature review, there are some studies that link the two works, *Willow Trees Don’t Weep* and *Falling Man* in terms of presenting Arab Muslims and their relationship with terrorism, although there have been various studies done on both novels separately. Here lies the study’s contribution in connecting the two novels and investigating how they both share the same image of Arab Muslims, despite the fact that the first writer is a Westerner and the second is an Arab diasporic writer.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology and Procedures

3.1 Method

The researcher will approach the two novels, Fadia Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep* and Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, using literary theory as a technique of analysis. Postcolonial theory will be used in order to read the two works. The researcher will draw on Edward Said's opinions on Orientalism and how he examines stereotypical notions of the Orient and the East in particular.

A form of cultural and critical theory that has been applied to literary studies is postcolonial theory. It is concerned with the reading and writing of literature from previously colonised countries. Postcolonial theory may also be defined as literature created in colonizing countries that deal with colonialism or the colonised people. Furthermore, the theory considers how colonizers' literature distorts the colonised's experiences and realities and inscribes the colonised's inferiority while defending the colonizer's dominance. The colonised people are regaining their past, which has been lost or distorted as a result of colonialism's othering (Mapara 2009).

Young (2016) added that examination of expansionism's and the government's social heritages make up the postcolonial hypothesis. Postcolonialism refers to the relationship between Europeans and the places they colonised and ruled. Notwithstanding, postcolonial ideas can be found everywhere nowadays.

3.2 Samples

3.2.1 Summary of Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep*

Willow Trees Don't Weep is about Najwa, a Jordanian young lady who lives in an Islamic region. Najwa lives in Amman, Jordan, where strict convictions in Jordan are overwhelmingly Muslim, with a rich and strict history of ceremonial practices and sacred spots.

Najwa's mother, Raneen and Zaenap, her grandmother, reside with her. When Najwa was three years old, her father, Omar, departed to join the jihad, leaving behind his daughter, wife, and grandmother. Her mother then changed and took her away from her father's memory and Islam-related topics. Najwa had no relationships or chemistry with her surroundings because she came from a family that had little contact with their surrounding neighbors.

Furthermore, because of the patriarchal structure in this country, where males have crucial roles and dominance over women via certain laws that exist and impact women's looks and performances, especially in public, the absence of her father becomes a significant difficulty for Najwa. Based on information from her father's clues, she embarks on a journey to various Middle Eastern countries, including Jordan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and England in Western Europe, based on information from her father's clues about her father's direction after he leaves Jordan, particularly his family in Amman.

3.2.2 Summary of DeLillo's *Falling Man*

Keith works in the World Trade Center and was present at the time of the attack, but he manages to escape. Keith could sense the north tower collapsing at the time it does. Keith's anguish is emphasized by hinting that the tower's fall is a metaphor for his own.

Keith returns to his broken family after the terrorist attacks and sleeps with his wife to try to bridge the gap between them, but fails. Keith connects this gap with the various events he has been through, and this idea leads him to go to his girlfriend, Florence, another survivor, with him.

Keith's trauma is not made any less by his friendship with Florence. Keith's anguish is compounded by the loss of his best friend, Rumsey. Keith's nights of poker with his friends provided him with a sense of security and belonging, and because Rumsey was a large part of those nights, his death lets Keith understand how deeply the assaults had impacted his life and daily routine. Keith's quest to reclaim the sense of stability and belonging he lost with Rumsey drives him to develop a poker addiction.

3.3 Procedures

1. The researcher tackled the previous literature to decide on the title and to make sure of the shortage that the study will fill.
2. The researcher read the two novels through the lens of Postcolonialism, specifically applying the views of Edward Said.
3. The researcher went through the previous studies the tackled the ambivalent representation of Arab Muslims by both writers.
4. The researcher wrote the proposal.
5. The researcher provided specific evidence from both works on how terrorism is represented in both authors' works, and specifically the assigned works.
6. The researcher integrated these evidences with scholars' arguments.
7. The researcher reached to certain statements to conclude with.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis

The chapter discusses and explores the representation of Islam and Arab Muslims in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* and Fadia Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep*.

4.1. Don DeLillo's Representation of Islam and Arab Muslims in his Novel, *Falling Man*.

DeLillo has a huge role in modern American literature of the twenty-first century, especially in the post-9/11 period, because it centers on the theme of terrorism and the experiences of some of the survivors of the 9/11 incidents, as well as the impact of Islam and Muslims on American culture and their relationship to those incidents. DeLillo characterized his authenticity and reputation among his audience and readers, which increased the credibility of his work.

Falling Man revolves around four characters, namely, Hammad, Amir, Elena, and Omar. All of them, except Omar, are considered terrorists in the novel. The novel depicts the September 11 attacks that took place in New York City, in the United States of America. This has affected and interrupted the reconstruction of Arabs and Muslims' identity in the West. Identity is the most contentious question in postcolonial literature and history, and it is also the most pressing because of the crisis that exists in all postcolonial cultures. The crisis arose as a result of the postcolonial era's circumstances and the difficult conditions that newly liberated nations and countries encountered in their search for and construction of self-identity (Dizayi 2015, p. 43). According to Mear, "identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent, and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty" (p. 43).

At the beginning of the novel, Hammad is presented as listening to an older man's story before going to pray when a girl passes by. However, Hammad does not pay attention to her. As indicated, "a woman on a bike went past, pedaling hard. He crossed his arms on his chest now, hands buried in armpits, and he listened to the older man's story." (DeLillo 2007, P. 39). A thorough reading of the novel reveals how Hammad thinks of the girl and how he wishes she would pass by. Hammad starts to admire the girl on the bike; "He did a little lusting after the roommate when he saw her ride her bike, but tried not to bring this craving into the house" (DeLillo 2007, p. 40).

It is clear that Hammad is torn between two worlds: The Islamic world that does not allow him to look at other women and the Western world that allows him to do whatever he wants. Obviously, Hammad suffers from an identity crisis due to his accommodation in a Western liberated country, which is completely different from Eastern Islamic countries. In this regard, Abu-Samara (2016) has defined an identity crisis as a dissatisfaction and bewilderment created by not knowing what sort of person one is or what the genuine purpose of one's life is. It is a psychological state or condition, as well as role confusion, that occurs mostly during adolescence as a result of contradictory internal and external experiences, demands, and expectations, frequently resulting in extreme anxiety. We can see here, how DeLillo from the beginning shows the characters' conflict with Islam and how it oppresses their desires. Islam is represented as an oppressive religion.

To clarify, Hammad is told by Amir, a strict clergyman, that the beard growth is necessary, and is considered mandatory for all devoted Muslim men. However, Hammad is perplexed by his statement because he is well aware that growing a beard is frowned upon in Western countries because it reveals his identity as a Muslim. He does not know

which one of them has told his father to grow a beard, “Tell your father to grow a beard. This is not normally recommended” (DeLillo 2007, p.40). As indicated in the above-mentioned quotation, Hammad does not like to grow his beard because it reveals his identity as a Muslim, and he seeks to hide it from Westerners, because of the prejudice over Muslims. In this respect, Shadid and van Koningsveld (2002) point out that the negative attitudes of Westerners towards Easterners are primarily relied on stereotypes and prejudice, which intensify the differentiation between the Westerners and the Easterners leading to a vicious circle in the relationship between them. Therefore, he struggles with a religious identity crisis. This also shows how the author represents Islam as strict when it comes to appearance and looks.

On the same line, Hammad suffers from an identity crisis when Amir blames him for hanging out with the girl, who he sees on the bike, as indicated by Amir. “being with a shameless woman, dragging your body over hers,” and he continues “What is the difference between you and all the others, outside of our space?” (DeLillo 2007, p. 41). It is clear that Amir blames Hammad for his bad deeds regarding spending time with a girl and cuddling her. Amir is against Hammad’s behavior with the Westerners. More importantly, Hammad feels that Islamic boundaries suffocate him when it is stated that, “He had to struggle against himself, first, and then against the injustice that haunted their lives” (DeLillo 2007, p.41). Hammad believes that following the orders of Amir and other clergymen regarding what is allowed and/or is not allowed in Islam haunts him. The identity crisis of Hammad is manifested in his desire to stop making sins and his desire to be responsible for his own actions as well.

Amir succeeds in strengthening his faith by reading the verses of the Qoran that boost his sense of belonging by focusing on the purpose that he seeks to achieve, which is *Jihad*.

He does not trim his beard because he wants to follow Islam's rules. He changes his ideas because he feels remorse for his actions. Therefore, he decides to follow Islamic conventions and orders. Amir here is portrayed as religious and a practitioner of Islam by DeLillo. This is to lead the reader that the one who becomes a terrorist is an Islam practitioner.

It can be seen that Hammad suffers from identity loss when he drifts into Western life by having a girlfriend and criticizing the beard growth order in Islam. However, Amir raises his awareness by blaming him for hanging out with the girl and reminding him of the importance of following Islamic conventions. Then, Hammad is portrayed as having sense of belonging towards his religion and identity.

In respect to the second section of the novel, entitled "In Nokomis", it shows how Hammad changes and Amir becomes a terrorist by planning and pledging to fulfill the Muslim's, as presented in the novel, duty by killing America; "They sat around a table on day one and pledged to accept their duty, which was for each of them, in blood trust, to kill Americans" (DeLillo 2007, p. 76). Both Amir and Hammad carry out terrorist attacks against America in order to get closer to God. The terrorist preparation is determined. The terrorist act only affected Amir: "Only Amir burned now Amir was electric, dripping fire from the eyes" (DeLillo 2007, p. 77).

More importantly, Hammad feels that he is getting closer to God after participating in terrorism operations. To clarify, he starts to feel that he is more satisfied with himself when he wears a bomb vest and feels that he has become a man. This feeling is described in the following quote, "There was no feeling like this ever in his life. He wore a bomb vest and knew he was a man now, finally, ready to close the distance to God" (DeLillo 2007, p. 77).

The author attempts to distort the image of Arab Muslims by conveying foreigners' misconceptions about Islam by accusing Muslims of terrorism, who are inclined to use violence and intimidation against others. To clarify, the author describes Hammad's reaction when he sees inappropriate behavior, which contradicts Islamic beliefs. Hammad sees a group of girls and boys hanging out with each other in a car, smoking and drinking. He gets annoyed. Therefore, he plans to kill them by getting into their car and then attacking them. His intentions for killing them here, is also to get closer to God. As a result, Hammad's actions indicate that he is a terrorist, or, as the author wishes to convey to Westerners in order to distort the Islamic image. According to Said (1978), Orientalism is "the generic term that I have been employing to describe the Western approach to the Orient; Orientalism is the discipline by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice" (p. 73). Hammad here is portrayed as a terrorist who assassinates other people without any convincing reasons. Such negative image of Muslims is wrongly fabricated by the author in order to warn Westerners from the threat of the Muslim. In this respect, Shadid & van Koningsveld (2002) indicate that "warning against the threat of the Muslim enemy is not new in the Western world" (p. 174).

The author reflects the misrepresentation of Eastern people that is created by the West. This finding lends tremendous support to the study of Marandi and Tari (2012) that talks authoritatively and harshly about the Orient in essentialist terms. The author depicts how both Hammad and Amir feel satisfied by killing innocent people. He deliberately has written this novel in order to distort the image of Islam and alienate people from embracing it, "They fired weapons and set off explosives. They received instruction in the highest jihad, which is to make blood flow, their blood and that of others" (DeLillo

2012, p. 77). Both Hammad and Amir are depicted as terrorists who seek to set off explosives in order to make blood flow of disbelievers. Moreover, it depicts Jihad in Islam as war. According to Kretsch (2016) the concept of jihad has been twisted in America, due to poor public awareness of the topic and the September 11 attacks, so these misconceptions have affected how the world view the Arab Muslims and will still affect this view possibly centuries, to come (p. 3).

Based on the above-mentioned quotation, the author depicts how both Hammad and Amir are terrorists who are inclined towards using explosives in order to destroy other people until they see blood under the name of jihad, which completely contradicts the Islamic conventions. Possibly, the author aims to convey that Muslims use intentional violence against non-Muslims, i.e., disbelievers, in order to get closer to God. Both Hammad and Amir are mistakenly portrayed as terrorists who are inclined towards assassinating others without any compelling reasons. DeLillo seeks to convey that after September 11th attacks, Islam and Muslims constitute a threat to the American society. In this respect, Kretsch (2016) points out that “due to the terrorist attacks on September 11th, the generalized American public entertains the misconception that all aspects of Islam and Muslim culture are harmful and jihad is synonymous to war” (p. 1).

To continue, the author portrays how other Muslims train Hammad on the method of using force against enemies. In the camp, he is trained to slaughter a camel. The author shows the excitement and happiness that Hammad feels when all the blood is drained from the camel; “Hammad, arms spread wide, kissed the bloody knife and raised it to the ones who were watching, the robed and turbaned men, showing his respect and gratitude” (DeLillo 2012, p. 77). Hammad as a Muslim character is depicted as a terrorist, who feels an intense happiness by slaughtering, killing, and seeing blood, which reflects the

prejudice of Westerners against Islam and Muslims. In this regard, Sultan (2016) indicates that “anti-Muslim prejudice is extensive in the West” (p. 5). From the quotation above, Hammad is satisfied after seeing the camel’s blood to the extent that it drove him to kiss the bloody knife in order to express his gratitude and respect. Obviously, the author attempts to convey the misconception about Muslims as being terrorists. According to Yusof *et al.* (2014), Islam is linked with terrorism and Muslims are depicted in Western media as terrorists.

However, Hammad sometimes doubts the aim of jihad, in which he says, “But does a man have to kill himself in order to count for something, be someone, find the way?” (DeLillo 2012, p. 78). It is clear that Hammad does not like to be engaged in disruptive activities. Amir replies to him, “There is no sacred law against what we are going to do. This is not suicide in any sense or interpretation of the word. It is only something long-written. We are finding the way already chosen for us” (DeLillo 2012, p. 78). The author negatively portrays how Muslims, like Amir in the novel, encourage each other in order to destroy America and Western people to convey that Arab Muslims tend to carry out subversive activities. Such negative image is an illusion created by westerners in order to distort Islam. It is in line with Halliday (1995) who indicates that the Islamic threat to the West is an illusion created by westerners.

Obviously, Amir’s response denotes his desire to assassinate and destroy the world because he incited Hammad to perform the acts of sabotage. Such misconceptions that are reflected in this novel about Arab Muslims seek to convey to the entire world that Muslims are terrorists because they justify the use of suicide as a legitimate act of martyrdom in the name of faith. Hammad disagrees with Amir, “Never mind the man who takes his own life in this situation. What about the lives of the others he takes with

him?” (DeLillo 2012, p.78). DeLillo aims to distort the image of Arab Muslims by depicting them as terrorists and anti-American. According to Butt (2001) Muslims in the Western eyes are considered as militant, terrorists, and anti-American. Hammad is convinced that jihad and terrorist attacks hurt and kill innocent people. Amir tells Hammad that “[t]he others exist only to the degree that they fill the role we have designed for them” (DeLillo 2012, p.78). This means that killing others is legitimate because he is the one who determines their role. These misconceptions imply that Arab Muslims promote terrorism and violence, but these misconceptions are erroneous. The author manipulates the image of Islam to yield particularistic purposes. According to bin Othman *et al.* (2021,) the Muslims are “misconceived, deliberately manipulated to serve particularistic purposes, especially power and material” (p. 119).

Both Hammad and Amir claim that they commit suicide bombings in order to get closer to God, but actually they disobey Allah’s orders. DeLillo (2012) aims to distort the image of Islam by stating that Muslims are terrorists who kill innocent people in order to force non-Muslims to embrace Islam by force. In this regard, El-Aswad (2013) propounds that Muslims’ image as threatening others is fabricated by the western community. He adds that the misconception of Arabs by Western people reflects the attitudes of anti-Muslims that are adopted and accepted by westerners who regard themselves as open-minded.

The author shifts to describing the planned terrorist plot by indicating that “men spent years organizing secretly this work” (DeLillo, 2012, p. 78). Such a terrorist plan is organized years ago, which undergoes through three processes: thinking, talking, and doing. When the terrorists talk with each other, Hammad imagines the feeling of intense pleasure because of his intention to explode the disbelievers; “Hammad thinks of the

rapture of live explosives pressed against his chest and waist” (DeLillo 2012, p. 78). The author depicts Hammad as a terrorist, who not only destroys the world but also feels intense happiness when thinking of destroying others in general and disbelievers in particular. Obviously, the author seeks to create a misleading image of Eastern culture.

According to Said (1978), knowledge is a form of power, i.e., anybody who creates or publishes knowledge about the “orient” has the power to rule it. From the perspective of Westerners, the production of Western writers and scholars is the only valid one, which always portrays Westerners as “rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, and capable of holding real values,” while the Easterners are the exact opposite (p. 49). According to Said (1978), this form of knowledge is a weapon of imperialism because it is created to justify the political policies of Western governments against the Orient.

Hammad does not think about the purpose of their mission; he only thinks of shock and death; “When he walks down the bright aisle, he thinks a thousand times in one second about what is coming” (DeLillo 2012, p. 78). Hammad feels satisfied because he will finally reach his calling. Therefore, he is only thinking of the consequences that might happen after such a terrorist operation. “He looks past the mud-brick huts toward the mountains, bomb vest and a black hood. We are willing to die, but they are not. This is our strength, to love death, to feel the claim of armed martyrdom” (DeLillo 2012, p. 78). As shown from the quotation above, Western writers construct images of Easterners according to their own conventions and perspectives by depicting that Muslims are willing to die and destroy others in order to die as martyrs for the sake of Islam. This finding of the present study lends tremendous support to the study of Aldalala’a (2013) that *Falling Man* represents Muslims in Hammad’s life, mission, and death as a type of

signature to the assaults on America on September 11, 2001. It further enhances the traditional propensity of Muslim terrorists to welcome death.

In this respect, Elayan (2005) points out that “... when one perceives an individual as a member of a particular stereotyped group, the perceiver’s mind activates the group-relevant cognitive structure and processes judgments and attitudes within the framework of that particular stereotype” (p.8). Generally speaking, creating misleading images of Islam by generalizing that all Muslims are terrorists is deeply ingrained and might influence other people by rendering negative views about Muslims by being viewed as terrorists.

Hammad sits with other men in an Afghan camp wearing a blue vest and is planning for a suicide attack, “There were canisters of high explosive wired into the belt. This was not the method he and his brothers would one day employ, but it was the same vision of heaven and hell, revenge and devastation” (DeLillo, 2007, p. 79). This is a misleading image of Muslims because the author clarifies Hammad’s aim in detonating the explosives in order to inflict the greatest possible damage. The author links terrorism with Islam. According to Noreen *et al.* (2020, Arab Muslims are perceived as “either a terrorist or simply a villain of another kind” (p. 687).

In this respect, Said (1978) points out that Americans and Europeans have been receiving information about Islam from the media and not by studying the religion itself. He believes that this “power concentration of the mass media can be said to constitute a communal core of interpretations, providing a certain picture of Islam and, of course, reflecting powerful interests in the society served by the media” (p. 47).

According to Said's book (1997), *Covering Islam*, after the end of the Cold War, "Islam" became the main enemy to American society. They consider Islam and its followers to be supporters of terrorism. This book creates unwillingness to look beyond the theaters, as people lose interest in seeking the truth. They are rather satisfied with what they gain from the book itself and take it as it is. It has also limited the ability to establish knowledge about Islam and Muslim societies (Porter, 2016). The interesting point here is that Arab misrepresentation is not limited to Arabs. The misconception between Arabs and Muslims has placed both Arabs and Muslims in the same boat. The West believes, and portrays, "all Arabs as Muslims and all Muslims as Arabs" (Elayan 2005, p. 16).

However, Arabs are people whose mother tongue is the Arabic language, which is spoken in 26 countries. Arabs can be Muslims, Christians, or Jews. In fact, the country with the largest Muslim population is not an Arab country. Moreover, just like Christianity, Islam is also split into different branches and sects. Therefore, it can be said that whether the misrepresentation is aimed towards Arabs or Muslims, many people of different nationalities and religions are also affected by the misconception that does not distinguish between different people and religions.

The novel then moves on to describe how Hammad is confused as the day of suicide bombing approached; "He is thinking again, looking past the face in the mirror, which is not his, and waiting for the day to come, clear skies, light winds, when there is nothing left to think about" (DeLillo 2007, p. 79). DeLillo shows that Arab Muslims are torn between the feelings of happiness with the approach of the suicide bombing and the feelings of confusion with the consequences of the suicide attack.

In *the Hudson corridor*, DeLillo, in this section of the novel, portrays the suicide attack and how Hammad's blood is draining "through the cuff of his long-sleeved shirt" (DeLillo 2007, p. 104). The aircraft is heading towards the Hudson Corridor. Hammad starts to feel that his life would be over now and his wish to die with his brothers would come true. When Hammad is accidentally cut in the struggle by one of his brothers, he was unable to handle the pain. More importantly, the author describes Hammad as content to watch his blood; "he welcomed the blood but not the pain" (DeLillo 2007, p. 104). The author seeks to convey that Muslims are terrorists and incite violence. In this regard, Said (1997) points out that the misrepresentations of Arabs exist through the "contributions from pro-Israeli journals and books in the hope that more Americans and Europeans will see Israel as a victim of Islamic violence" (p. xxi). On the contrary, Islam rejects every form of terrorism.

To pull himself together, Hammad recalls the Shia boys on the battlefield in the Shatt al Arab, who come out of the trenches and run across the mudflats towards the enemy's positions. Hammad takes strength from them when he observes their ability to handle the pain. When the time draws near, Hammad convinces himself that his sins will be erased, and his eternal life and his wish to die with his brothers will come true. When the aircraft hits the tower, Hammad hears sounds from everywhere in the cabin; voices and excited cries. While the items on the aircraft are moving; Hammad sees a bottle of empty water rolling backwards, spinning more quickly and slipping on the floor before the aircraft struck the tower, and then a blast wave, heat, fire, and fuel penetrates the structure. DeLillo misrepresents the image of Islam by conveying that Muslims only seek to fulfill one objective to destroy America and Westerners. Such misleading image of Islam is intensified after the terrorist attack in September 11. In this respect, Kretsch (2016)

maintains that “[t]here has been a rise in hate crime toward Muslims in America since the terrorist attacks”(p.7).

In fact, English books and novels almost always link any violence to Muslims or Arabs, but fail to link any violence to Christians or Jews, even though their actions could be equally linked to their religion. However, blaming Arabs and Muslims serves the objectives of the U.S., which is to gain the consent of the people to justify their actions towards Arab countries and to gain power to conquer by declaring wars, which are called wars against terrorism. DeLillo attempts to portray how September 11 attacks, according to Shaheen (1980), are related to Islam, who are perceived in Western eyes as “terrorism, hijack, intractability, sullenous, perverseness, cruelty, oil, sand, embargo, boycott, greed, bungling, comedic disunity, primitive torture, family feuds, and white slavery” (n.p). With regard to the third character in the novel, Elena, she is considered as an ambiguous woman who plays obnoxiously loud Middle Eastern music in Lianne’s apartment, who is the ex-wife of Keith. She wants to knock on the door and say something to Elena (DeLillo, 2007).

Lianne feels upset by hearing the loud songs in Elena’s room because Elena is an Arab Muslim woman. Elena tells her not to take it personally, but Lianne believes that Elena is a terrorist woman, and she is constantly thinking about the terrorist attack that occurred on 9/11. Therefore, she tells Elena, “Of course it’s personal. Anybody would take it personally. Under these circumstances, there are circumstances. You acknowledge this, don’t you?”(DeLillo 2007, p. 57). Elena tells her that there is no relation between hearing music and the current situation. Lianne replies, “You must be ultrasensitive, which I would never think from hearing the language you use” (DeLillo 2007, p. 57). From the above quotation, it is clear that Lianne is extremely affected by the terrorist

attack that occurred on 9/11. Therefore, she holds the common belief that all Arabs are terrorists without any convincing reason, just because Elena is an Arab woman and the music gives her peace in the current situation. DeLillo seeks to convey to the whole world that Muslims are terrorists. In this respect, Inbaraj (2002) indicates that all Arab Muslims are considered as terrorists without any compelling reason.

Along similar lines, there is another situation in which Elena is portrayed as a terrorist because of her Arab roots. To elaborate, Elena goes to the basement in order to wash her clothes, and there is another woman who avoids looking at Elena or speaking to her. As indicated in the following quotation, “the room was like a monk’s cell with a pair of giant prayer wheels beating out a litany. The question was whether a look would lead to words and then what?” (DeLillo 2007, p. 69). As shown in the quotation above, the woman avoids looking at Elena because she knows that such a look might lead to questions that are related to the September 11 attack. DeLillo shows that Arab Muslims are considered as terrorists, particularly after September 11 attack. As stated in Harb (2007), the attacks of 9/11 are considered “a turning point” in the lives of Westerners and how they started looking at Arab Muslims (p. 14) According to Scanlan (2010), Islamic terrorism is commonly used in the media to legitimize a wide range of prejudices against Muslims.

In respect of the fourth narrator character, Omar, he works at a support group helping heal early Alzheimer’s patients. He interacts successfully with the Western society in order to gain their social approval. After the 9/11 attack, the members play a card game to express their feelings after the towers fell. They write for twenty minutes before reading their feelings aloud to the other members. More importantly, Omar is not interested in participating in the game. After they insist on him to play with them, he changes his mind. His participation indicates that he is not a terrorist, but rather sympathizes with the

innocent people who are killed after the attack and their family members who suffered after their death. DeLillo seeks to convey that Arab Muslims in America, particularly after the 9/11 attack, hide their identity in order to gain social approval. According to Manning (2003) the majority of Arab Muslims are considered as terrorists after September 11 attack.

A thorough reading of the novel shows that Omar is the only character in the novel who does not appear as a terrorist. Omar intends to change the persistent misconceptions among Western people that Arab Muslims are considered terrorists because they are peace-loving people and do not invent terrorism as described in DeLillo's novel. DeLillo distorts the image of Arab Muslims by depicting them as terrorists in which he blames Muslims for 9/11 attack. In this respect, Alghamdi (2015) maintains that Western media use implication, modal expression, and word choice to put the blame of 9/11 attack on Arab Muslims.

Owing to the fact that Omar is a Muslim, he does not have the courage to go outside and interact with Westerners; "Omar was afraid to go out on the street in the days after. They were looking at him" (DeLillo 2007, p. 33). Possibly, he fears his Arab Muslim identity might put him in trouble, particularly after the 9/11 attack in which Westerners start to look differently at Easterners and consider them terrorists. DeLillo reflects how postcolonialism is grounded in the misrepresentation of Eastern people that is created by western people. In this respect, Moreover, DeLillo's perspective on the terrorist Muslims is shown through Martin's viewpoint in the story. In the seventh chapter of the novel, DeLillo shows in the conversation between Nina and Martin, this time focusing on the terrorists' intentions for the September attacks and the confused feelings between faith and politics. Nina remembers Martin's words in the previous argument and says, "You

tell us to forget God. The argument had been here all this time, in the air and on the skin, but the shift in tone was abrupt” (DeLillo 2007, p.54). Here, Nina tries to emphasize that the terrorists’ motives are neither political nor economic, and they have nothing to do with the people of the third world or colonial countries, and stresses that Islam and belonging to Islam are the basis. DeLillo holds a mistaken belief about Arab Muslims by depicting them as terrorists. It is in keeping with Said (1978), who indicates that westerners consider Arab Muslims dangerous, uncivilized, and exotic.

In the revived argument between Nina and Martin, DeLillo attempts to provide a picture of the American community that associates Islam with terrorism to explain the new US policies against Arabs and Muslims following 9/11. DeLillo’s viewpoint appears to be the external, or outside, perspective of American writers who feel that Islam and terrorism are inextricably linked. In his article "In the Ruins of the Future", DeLillo focuses on the aims of terrorists, who seek the eradication of American modernity under the guise of *Jihad*, Islam, or American imperialism. Also, what DeLillo depicts in his essay is linked to American dominance, which arouses the rage of terrorists from the third world and the Islamic faith, or the Middle East. As a result, DeLillo uses the dispute between Martin and Nina to deliver a message to the American people and future generations regarding terrorist ideology and perspectives on modernity in America. As Said (1978) state, Westerners create the Orient through their writings. It is in keeping with Stamenkovi (2020) that DeLillo attempts to convey in his novel *Falling Man* that Arab Muslims are terrorists, who constitute a threat to America.

It should be noted that the term, jihadists is mentioned by Martin when commenting on the terrorist attack. Martin uses the terms “them” or “the others” to refer to terrorists or jihadists who ostensibly represent the Middle East, Arabs, and Muslims. In this way,

DeLillo seeks to emphasize the American superiority as well as how the rest of the world sees America. Through Nina and Martin's discourse, DeLillo is attempting to resurrect historical Orientalism through his characters and convey a message to the American population to contemplate the history of radicals. According to Said (1978), "the web of racism, cultural stereotypes, political imperialism, and dehumanizing ideology holding on to the Arab or the Muslim is very strong" (p. 35). Extremism and terrorism are ingrained in Arab and Muslim mindsets in the 1960s and 1970s, and the United States of America had nothing to do with establishing terrorist intentions.

To conclude, the analysis of *Falling Man* shows the misconception of Arab Muslims that is created by Western people in order to distort their image and to convey to the whole world that Muslims are terrorists. The novel touches upon September 11, 2001, suicide bombing that is coordinated by four Islamic terrorist groups to hijack a tower in New York City, America. The novel, according to DeLillo, shows how Hammad suffers from an identity crisis, a sense of belonging, and regret and loyalty to his religion and culture. As for Amir, he is a strict clergyman who incites Hammad to get closer to God by making a suicide bombing to eliminate the disbelievers and apply Islamic religion.

On the other hand, Omar does not participate in the suicide attack, but he is ashamed of his identity. Therefore, he avoids going outside and shows affiliation with Western people in order to convince them that he is not a terrorist. As for Elena, she is accused by her roommate Lianna that she is a terrorist because of the postures in her room, the Arabic songs that she listens to, and her Arabic language. Moreover, the Westerners after 9/11 avoid looking at her in the eyes because she is an Arab Muslim and they have a common belief that all Muslims are terrorists. DeLillo seeks to convey that all Arab Muslims are terrorists, who seek to destroy America.

4.2. Fadia Faqir's Representation of Islam and Arab Muslims in her novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep*

Faqir in this novel adopts the stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims created by the West. This novel presents the tenets of misrepresentation of Arab Muslims and Eastern society by rendering the importance of patriarchal power in eastern society, the conversion into secularism due to the erroneous image of Islam, the loss of identity owing to the absence of patriarchal power in Eastern society.

The story begins with Najwa's mother, Raneen, who is a secular woman. Upon her death, her religious neighbor washes her and performs Islamic rituals, and says, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful" (Faqir 2014, p. 3). Najwa points out that if her mother is alive and hears her neighbor pronouncing Allah's name she might gouge out her eyes. Faqir presumes that some of Arab Muslims hate their religion because it is a strict religion that alienates their beloved people from them. According to Shaheen (2001), Arab Muslims are depicted as offensive and hateful in their presentation and orientation.

A thorough reading of the novel shows that her husband's leave changes her dramatically in which she converts from a Muslim to a secular woman; "my mother changed, she took off her veil, cut her hair" (Faqir 2014, p.7). As the case of Najwa's mother, who leaves her Islamic religion and prefers to be secular. Faqir portrays Islam as a strict religion; thus, Muslims become secular to find their freedom. Ismail and Tekke (2016) define secularism as the individual's freedom to choose his/her religion according to their choice and will.

Raneen pretends that she does not care about her husband's leave, but one day she inspects her husband's belongings, such as his prayer beads, perfume, and more importantly his religious books, namely, "The Islamic Caliphate, The Glorious Othman Empire, Overcoming the Fear of Death, Islamic Jihad, The Ideal Muslim Father and Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan" (Faqir, 2014, p. 9). She throws and burns his books. Faqir seeks to convey that Arabic Muslims think of Jihad as fighting and killing innocent people. Faqir renders the stereotypical image of Islam and Muslims created by the West. According to Said (1978), Westerners hold the common belief that Muslims are less human. Said (1978) adds that "Arabs, for example, are thought of as camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers whose undeserved wealth is an affront to real civilization" (p. 108).

A close examination of the novel shows that Omar Rahman, leaves his family to fight for God's sake i.e. to fight disbelievers. When Raneen is ill and gets worse, Najwa and her grandmother are used to put the radio on with an imam reciting holy Quran before the noon prayer. When her mother hears the Qur'anic verses, she thinks of Omar, Najwa's father, "she flung the transistor against the wall and mentioned Omar's name for the first time" saying, "Omar, loved Allah, that's all" (Faqir 2014, p. 16). Faqir depicts how Omar Rahman turns into a terrorist and his conversion affects his beloved people. In other words, Omar Rahman becomes a terrorist, while Raneen becomes a secular. The image that is portrayed of Arab Muslims by the author does not necessarily reflect her attitudes towards Arab Muslims, but rather it reflects Westerners' attitudes and misperceptions of Arab Muslims. Faqir here fabricates and misrepresents the image of Arab Muslims by adapting the perspective of the West towards Arab Muslims and Muslims in general (Akram 2000).

As mentioned previously, Raneen is affected by her husband's leave and wants her daughter to be secular like her. Therefore, she wants her to study French because it is considered the language of the most secular country in the world, and to be able to work in one of the Dead Sea hotels in Jordan, which is considered "the most cosmopolitan and secular of environments" (Faqir 2014, p. 10). Possibly, for Raneen, the absence of her husband i.e. patriarchal power, drives her to find her freedom. Faqir tries to show that Arab Muslims become secular in order to violate the boundaries that restrict them from finding their freedom. Accordingly, Faqir reflects the stereotypical image of Arab Muslim women among the West, who are restricted by patriarchal power, unlike Westerners. In this regard, Mohanty (1998) considers Western women independent and without any patriarchal violent restrictions, neither in their rights, nor in their freedom because of Islam. She argues that "third-world woman" is an image...arbitrarily constructed, but carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse" (pp. 334-335).

Faqir mentions that the 'veil' is compulsory in Islam and Muslim women in the Arab world and in the world are forced to wear it. But, here we find an opposite case, where Najwa is forced not to wear hijab. This is a result of how she herself is forced to wear it. Faqir reflects the stereotypical images of Arab Muslim women who adhere to Islamic rules although the conventions of Islamic religion hinder women from having their rights as their men counterparts. According to Bamia (1991), "Muslim women argues that Islam guaranteed women's rights of which they have been deprived because of customs and traditions are imposed in the name of religion" (p. xvi).

A thorough reading of the novel shows that Najwa's father leaves them twenty-four years ago and goes to Afghanistan to join Al-Qaeda; "Omar Rahman joined the training camp in Afghanistan. The camp trained him how to fight 'Grip the rifle! Lift it! Lie

down! get ready! Aim! fire!” (Faqir 2014, p. 96). They train him to fire at the target “Photos of an American G.I. armed” (Faqir 2014, p. 96). He is further trained to make explosions and use machine guns. The majority of the topics in their training camp revolves around killing, *kafir*, and the honor of the woman.

To elaborate, Omar and his Muslim friends in the training camp have gathered one day and watched a video that contains the following statement “Muslims, wherever they are in the world are targeted by kafirs” (Faqir, 2014, p. 97). Another video is about Muslim women and children being attacked and abused by Westerners. By the end of the video, a serene voice of an imam calls all Muslims and encourages them to safeguard women and vulnerable people because they need their assistance. (Faqir 2014, p. 98). Faqir depicts the negative stereotypical image of Muslims by portraying them as terrorists. According to Said (1997), Westerners misrepresent the image of Arab Muslims by creating an unfair, hateful, and negative image of Muslims by depicting them as terrorists and fundamentalists. Said adds that terrorism is presented within the misconceptions of Westerners that Arab Muslims are perceived as “absolutist”, “patriarchal”, “unreasoning”, and “punitive” (Said 1997).

More importantly, Najwa does not know her father’s place. After her mother’s death, her grandmother tells her that she has to look for her father “now your mother is dead, you have to go look for your father” (Faqir 2014, p. 5). Faqir attempts to convey that Arab Muslim women do not have much freedom to do whatever they want because of the boundaries that are imposed on them by their society. In this regard, Mohanty (1998) indicates that the majority of Western feminist scholars believe that an average third woman appears to be restricted by her family, gender, traditions, conventions, unaware of her subjugation, victimized, completely domesticated, and uneducated.

Najwa's grandmother tells her that she will not live for a long time and Najwa will end up alone. Najwa tells her grandmother that she has a job and she can survive, but her grandmother tells her that "tongues will wag, you will be ostracized, Habibti, and you have no relatives" (Faqir 2014, p. 5). Her father's absence affects her in which she has an identity crisis because her father's absence undermines her self-esteem. Therefore, she wants to find her father to discover her place in the world and her identity. Faqir articulates the differences between Eastern culture and Western culture by showing women's rights and freedom are restricted in Eastern country unlike Western country. So the reason behind Najwa going after her father is only because she is not able to live in a society, which does not accept her without having a father. Mohanty (1988) considers Western women independent and no patriarchal violence restricts neither their rights nor their freedom. Mohanty (1988) argues that "third-world woman" an image...arbitrarily constructed, but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse" (pp. 334-335). Najwa lives in a world that does not give a woman the liberty and much freedom to live alone because she needs a man to support and protect her. Therefore, Najwa has an identity crisis. In this regard, Erikson (1980) defines identity crisis as a psychological conflict that suggests a sense of detachment, loss of oneself, and social confusion. Najwa is obliged to search for her father although she does not love him because he abandons her. The reason that prompts Najwa to search for her father is attributed to the fact that she lives in a conservative and patriarchal society that does not accept the woman to live alone unlike the Western culture. Faqir portrays Arab women as domesticated, restricted, and do not have much freedom to do whatever they want without a patriarchal power. Moreover, Harb (2012) indicates that the patriarchal power is considered one of the stereotypes of Arab Muslims in the West.

Moreover, her grandmother's condition gets worse in which the doctor tells Najwa that she has to look after her and to make her as comfortable as possible. Therefore, Najwa is afraid of ending up living alone in this conservative society that does not give the woman her freedom and considers her as a harlot without a man or a family. Furthermore, she has experiences a situation in which she feels that she is an easy prey. To counteract this misconception of Arab Muslims and Islam, Ahmed (1992) fights the stereotypical image of Islam by Western feminists that Arab are ignorant, irrational, backward, uncivilized this is clear on their imposition of wearing Al-Hajab and *veil*.

According to Mohanty (1988), women in Western feminist discourse are depicted "as a homogenous 'powerless' group often located as implicit victims of particular cultural and socio-economic systems" (p. 66). A close examination of the novel narrates how Omar Rahman and his friend Hani are diverted from Islam i.e. non-religious before turning into religious men. To clarify, they used to drink when they go out, but they tend to be out of sight from their neighborhood because they do not want to be "pariahs" (Faqir 2014, p. 30). Hani gives Omar Rahman a beer; "gave me a brown bag. It had a beer bottle in it" (Faqir 2014, p. 30). However, Omar Rahman tells him "we can't drink here in our neighborhood. If we got spotted, we will become pariahs" (Faqir 2014, p. 30).

Hani admits that he has a nice feeling when he starts drinking, however, Omar Rahaman feels the opposite. To put it differently, he feels that he is being watched. Another situation that reflects their non-compliance with Islamic conventions is manifested when Hani confessed to Omar about his desire to get married to American women because they are "lean, toasted like whole meal bread, legs long, and up to their ears" (Faqir 2014, p. 30).

Faqir reflects how Hani follows his desires and whims, whereas Omar Rahman is always hesitant to follow his desires. Faqir reflects such contradiction to distort the image of Arab Muslims and Islam. As Hamada (2001) puts it forward, “image as a 'mental package' in which a collection of stereotypes or characteristics are combined to identify a nation, a group or a member of that group without reference to particular differences or complexities” (p. 12). Moreover, Hani indicates that Western women can be easily found in nightclubs. Omar does not hang out with girls and has not listened to the loud music in the club, but rather he sits on the sofa and a girl has asked him to dance with her. However, he is hesitant because he does not want to do anything that contradicts with Islamic conventions. Possibly, his marriage and the Islamic rules restrict him from doing matters that violate Islamic conventions. Regardless of his hesitation, he dances with her.

Faqir misrepresents the image of Arab Muslims by indicating that Muslims claim that they fear God, but they do things that contradict with Islamic rules and teachings. Faqir reflects the hatred of Westerners towards Muslims and their common negative image of Muslims are manifested in “presenting Islam as a threat to the Western World” (Shadid and van Koningsveld 2002 p. 177). In other words, they wrongly misrepresent the image of Arab Muslims by indicating that they only think of making terrorist operations to harm the Western world. In other words, Faqir seeks to convey that Muslims’ terrorist acts are related to jihad and the teachings of the Qur’an, but rather due to their hatred of the Westerners.

As a consequence, Faqir shows that Hani does not comply with Islamic rules and Eastern conventions, but rather he is more inclined towards the Western life by drinking, flirting with girls, and going to nightclubs. Therefore, he reflects the typical stereotype of Islamic youth who rebels against the common beliefs in Islamic and conservative

communities. As for Omar Rahman, the novel shows that he listens to Hani and follows him by going to the nightclub and dancing with a girl, but Omar Rahman blames himself by saying, “I wanted to say no, that I was married” (Faqr 2014, p.30).

Moreover, Faqr depicts how a religious man has proposed to Najwa, but her mother refuses because he is a clergyman in which she says, “I lost my husband to religion, and I have no intention of offering my daughter on the plate to the nasty sheiks. My name would not be Raneen if I allowed that” (Faqr 2014, pp. 23-24). As indicated earlier, Omar’s absence affects the family to the extent that they blame their religion and Islamic rules that cause the father to leave his family for the sake of God. His wife after his leaving has loathed Islam and has become a secular woman. Faqr misrepresents Islam in her writing by revealing how Islamic conventions have affected the family negatively. Faqr portrays Islam affected the wife of Omar Rahman by turning her into a secular woman because he left them for obeying Allah’s orders. In this respect, Majed (2012) indicates that “Faqr” renders the negative image of Islam in her writing.

Furthermore, Najwa believes that her Islamic costume makes people believe that she is harlot woman who disguises her identity. To clarify, while Najwa is walking in the street, a man stops her and asks her to come in, “he thought I was a prostitute in disguise. Some wore the Islamic dress to hide their identity” (Faqr 2014, p. 26). Faqr seeks to convey that even wearing Islamic conservative clothes in Eastern society without a patriarchal power might be mistaken by Arab people in Eastern society due to the obstacles they confront in their society. On the same point, Bouterra (2004) states that Arab Muslims face societal and cultural obstacles.

The absence of Najwa’s father has led people to intervene in her life because he is not with her to protect her, “people thought that I belonged to everybody because my

father was not around to protect me” (Faqir 2014, p. 26). Faqir portrays the common beliefs in Eastern communities that a Muslim woman in Eastern community needs a patriarchal power to protect her. In their analysis of Faqir’s work, Paul & Rai (2020) “raise a voice under one’s roof against patriarchal Islam authenticates subjugation in a roundabout way. They added that a woman has to get out of the limitations that primarily define her body” (p. 12).

Her father’s leave had a significant impact to the extent that she has blamed her religion saying, “why did he abandon us like this, fending for ourselves? it's this ugly thing called religion? Allah is more important to him than us” (Faqir 2014, p. 10). From the quotation above, it is clear that Najwa blames the Islam that drove her father to leave her. To emphasize, Faqir misrepresents Islam by rendering how Islam ruins Muslims’ lives. Faqir shows how Islamic rules ruin Najwa’s life. Such fabricated misrepresentation of Arab Muslims seeks to distort Islam. In this regard, Ridouani (2011) declares that “Western media reports maintain a constant distorted image of Arabs and Muslims. Fabricated stereotypes of Islam are omnipresent in Western media through all means of communication” (p.1).

As a result, Najwa begins her journey in searching for her father. Najwa knows that she will suffer a lot of difficulties in her journey because she lives in an Islamic patriarchal society in which a woman, according to how Faqir represent it, is not allowed to live without a male relative. Faqir misrepresents Islam by indicating that Islamic rules and Eastern societies do not give women their freedom. According to El-gousi (2010), “the repulsive process of controlling women’s lives results in loss of any sense of individuality, dignity, or ability to be independent” (p. 18).

Najwa has received a post from her father Sheikh Omar Rahman indicating that he has agreed to see her. Najwa is accused of killing Elizabeth by Andy. Possibly, he accuses her because her father is a terrorist “For a few seconds, I became a killer” (Faqir2014, p. 272). Najwa visits her father in prison and has a conversation with him. Her father tells her about his memories with Hani. She asks her father about the reasons that changed him to a terrorist, “What changed you from a westernized man who loved jazz, to a? Life, death, other people” (Faqir 2014, 273). Faqir misrepresents the image of Islam by indicating that all Arab Muslims are terrorists. In this regard, Ridouani (2011) adds that “Muslim women are thus equated to masqueraded terrorists and evil-doers” (p. 10). She adds that Arabs are “portrayed as being terrorists, fanatics, dirty, irrational, violent and above all disposable” (p. 10).

Faqir’s distortion of the image of Islam reflects the hatred and the conflict between the East and the West. In this respect, “Muslims’ negative stereotypes of the West were positively predicted by the perceived conflict between Islam and the West, and this perceived intergroup conflict in turn mediated the role of Islamic fundamentalism in predicting the negative stereotypes” (Mashur & Zaduqisti, 2019, p.56). According to Ridouani (2011), “Western image-makers, including religious authorities, political establishments, and corporate-media conglomerates, conceptualize for their consumer's images of Muslims and/or Arabs in sometimes amusing and other times cruel or tragic ways” (p.10).

Omar shocks Najwa by telling her that what motivated him to leave her and follow the path he has followed is his friend Hani (Faqir 2014, p. 269). Faqir fabricates and renders the negative image of Arab Muslims who leave their families and sacrifice their lives for killing westerners because they are terrorists. According to Yousef (2013),

Western media uses the following phrases to depict Islam such as ‘Islam caused violence’ and ‘Muslims are terrorists’.

From the previous discussion and the integration of evidence from previous studies, it could be noticed how Faqir adopts the perspective of the Westerners on Islam and Muslims and she represents Muslims as Terrorists. She adopts the same views of DeLillo, which he presents in *Falling Man* and presents Muslims as terrorists.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter presents the results of the study and answers the questions that are listed in chapter one of this study. It also presents some recommendations that may reveal other issues of Arabs represented in DeLillo's *Falling Man* and Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep* for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

1. How does Don DeLillo represent Arab Muslims in his novel, *Falling Man* (2007)?

After analyzing DeLillo's *Falling Man* through the lens of Postcolonialism, many insights into the novel's diverse characteristics could be reached. It embodies the terrorist attack that occurred on September 11. The novel revolves around four Arab Muslims, namely, Hammad, Amir, Elena, and Omar. In his book, *Falling Man*, DeLillo depicts Arab Muslims as terrorists, which resembles the Western views on Arabs. Hammad and Amir go to America to make a terrorist operation. However, the misrepresentation of Arab Muslims is manifested in depicting them as terrorists. The misrepresentation of Arab Muslims is manifested in the fact that Islam deprives Muslims of doing whatever they want such as hanging out with girls and growing a beard. DeLillo fabricates the image of Islam to distort Islam and to convey a negative image of Islam.

The writer depicts the negative image of Islam by showing how both Hammad and Amir turned into terrorists and how they planned to make a suicide bomb to destroy America and to kill disbelievers. The misrepresentation of Islam was obvious when DeLillo shows that both Hammad and Amir feel that carrying out a terrorist act will make get them closer to God. Such fabricated image contradicts Islamic rules.

DeLillo seeks to render that Muslims consider killing others as a means for getting closer to God. Such a Fabricated image conveys a misconception of Islam in Western eyes because the readers of this novel might feel that Muslims justify killing other innocent people who did nothing. Accordingly, the readers in general and Western readers, in particular, will feel that Muslims constitute a threat to the whole world. Furthermore, the author associates terrorism with Islam. The novel reveals how Muslims incite violence and how they are terrorists, which is considered as incorrect and misleading information that seeks to distort Islam and Arab Muslims.

To summarize, Arab Muslims are presented in DeLillo's novel as terrorists and aggressive people who tend to destroy and kill the Westerners i.e. the disbelievers. More importantly, such misrepresentation of Arab Muslims aims to distort Islam and to alienate people from communicating with Easterners because Arab Muslims in DeLillo's perspective are terrorists.

2. How does Fadia Faqir represent Arab Muslims in her novel, *Willow Trees Don't Weep*?

After analyzing Faqir's *Willow Trees Don't Weep* through the lens of Postcolonialism, many insights into the novel's diverse characteristics could be reached. First, Faqir shows how Islamic rules and pillars such as Jihad affected Omar Rahman and his family.

Faqir misrepresents the image of Islam by showing how Omar Rahman leaves his family to obey Allah's order i.e. to fight Westerners for the sake of God. Moreover, Faqir misrepresents Islam by showing how Raneen, who is a Muslim woman, loathes Islam because of her husband's leave. Faqir by rendering Raneen's secularism and her hatred towards Islam distorts the image of Islam particularly for Western readers who feel after

reading this novel that Islam incites hatred and terrorism, which is completely a negative misrepresentation of Islam that completely contradicts Islamic rules. Faqir also misrepresents Islam by rendering Najwa's journey in looking for her father and she feels that her father ruins her life in her homeland which does not give her liberty and considers her as easy prey because of the absence of her father.

To conclude, the novel misrepresents Islam by showing the negative impacts of Islam upon Najwa's family. Omar Rahman left his family for Jihad he is depicted as a terrorist in the novel. Raneen turns into a secular woman because of her husband's leave and her hatred towards Islam. Najwa has an identity crisis because of the lack of patriarchal power in her conservative country and she is portrayed as a terrorist's daughter among westerners. All of these misconceptions about Islam and Arab Muslims are completely misleading and aim to distort Islam.

3. How different/similar are the representations of both writers in the fore mentioned works?

Both DeLillo and Faqir are similar in their misrepresentation of Islam. To clarify, both novels depict Muslims as terrorists. As for *Falling Man*, it shows how four terrorist Arab Muslims planned to make a suicide bombing in America to kill the Westerners. Similarly, *Willow Trees Don't Weep* shows how an Arab Muslim father leaves his family and goes to Afghanistan to fight for jihad, assuming that it is for God's sake.

The two novels are similar in their representation of identity crisis as Muslim Arabs, and a sense of belonging. To illustrate, Hammad in *Falling Man* admires a girl, but Amir raises his awareness by reminding him of the purpose that he came for, which they both believe is jihad. Moreover, Hammad does not want to follow the rules of Islam, but in the

same time is willing to participate in the attack, which he thinks it is for Islam and the sake of God.

Likewise, Najwa in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* has an identity crisis as an Arab Muslim in her homeland because of her father's leave. She only goes away after her father because she is not able to live in a Muslim patriarchal society, as Faqir represents it, without her father, a male relative. Both novels show how Hammad in *Falling Man* as well as Omar Rahman and Hani in *Willow Trees Don't Weep* are diverted from Islam before turning into terrorists. For instance, Hammad tends to hang out and cuddle the girl on the bike and he is not convinced about growing his beard because it will reveal his identity. Besides, Omar Rahman and Hani used to make sins in terms of drinking alcohol, hanging out with girls, and going to the night clubs and then they go to fight in Afghanistan to atone for their sins.

However, Faqir's novel is different from DeLillo's novel in addressing secularism. For instance, Raneen, Najaw's mother, turns into a secular woman because her husband, Omar Rahman, leaves them and goes to Afghanistan to obey Allah's order. Therefore, Raneen decides to become a secular woman and to render her secular ideas in her daughter by forcing her to study French at the University and to work in one of Amman's hotels. Moreover, Raneen does not allow her daughter to marry a strict clergyman. Furthermore, Faqir's novel touches upon the patriarchal power in the Eastern community and how women are marginalized and mistreated in the Eastern community without patriarchal power. For instance, Najwa is subject to harassment because of the absence of her father. Although when she wears a veil, she is considered as a harlot who tends to wear a veil to disguise her identity.

In conclusion, both literary works misrepresent the image of Islam and their representations resemble the West's perspective of the Arabs/ East. Both novels touch upon terrorism, the misrepresentation of Arab Muslims, and the identity crisis. However, Faqir's novel differs from DeLillo's novel in addressing two topics, namely, patriarchy and secularism. Faqir could have presented a better image of Islam and Muslims, especially that she is addressing the Western reader. This is due to the fact that the role of diasporic writers currently is to present the real image of Islam and Muslims rather than to distort this image or even enhance put more stress on it.

5.2 Recommendations

1. More studies should be done on how DeLillo represents Arab Muslims as terrorists.
2. More studies should be done on Faqir's representation of females' issues and patriarchy in the East.
3. More studies should be done on how DeLillo represents the identity crisis and sense of belonging among Arab Muslims.
4. More studies should be done on how Faqir represents Arab Muslims as terrorists.
5. More contrastive studies should be done on the misconceptions of Arab Muslims in the Western eyes in diasporic writings.

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