

Historizing Pre 9/11 Islamophobia in English Writings

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ABSTRACT

Islamophobia is often explained as vile attitudes towards Muslims. Yet, Muslims, in literature, media, and academic or political discourses, are still labeled as bloodthirsty terrorists, misogynists, or primitive. These stereotypes have gone a long way in carving the image of Muslims globally, resulting in their marginalization, stigmatization, or violent abuse in some countries. Contrary to the general notion that Islamophobia developed after 9/11, this study argues that Islamophobia existed long before 9/11 in the form of stereotypical representations of Muslims. The study aims to briefly locate the earlier forms of Islamophobia through historical events like pre-colonial encounters, the quests for empire expansion, unsuccessful or non-lasting colonialism, the postcolonial resistance, and Muslims' vicious reactions to anti-Islamic publications. Thus, it interrogates the amplifications of stereotypes and persistent misrepresentations of Muslims which have long existed in traditional and modern English writings as a means of discerning and curbing the growth of Islamophobia. Homi Bhabha's theory of stereotype will be used as the theoretical underpinning of this research, while situating the historical misrepresentations of Muslims in English writings within the Islamophobic implications that plague the world today.

Keywords: Muslim, Stereotype, Islamophobia, Colonialism, Rushdie affair.

ABSTRAK

Islamofobia sering dijelaskan sebagai sikap keji terhadap Muslim. Namun, Muslim masih dicap sebagai teroris haus darah, misogynis, atau primitif dalam literatur, media dan wacana akademis atau politik. Stereotip ini telah lama mengukir citra Muslim secara global, yang mengakibatkan marginalisasi, stigmatisasi atau pelecehan kekerasan di beberapa negara. Berlawanan dengan anggapan umum bahwa Islamofobia berkembang setelah 9/11, penelitian ini berpendapat bahwa Islamofobia sudah ada jauh sebelum 9/11 dalam bentuk representasi stereotip umat Islam. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menemukan secara singkat bentuk-bentuk awal Islamofobia melalui peristiwa-peristiwa sejarah seperti: pertemuan pra-kolonial, serangkaian perang dan pertempuran yang diperjuangkan untuk ekspansi kerajaan, kolonialisme yang tidak berhasil atau tidak bertahan lama, perlawanan pascakolonial dan reaksi kejam umat Islam terhadap publikasi anti-Islam. Studi ini menginterogasi amplifikasi stereotip dan misrepresentasi yang terus-menerus tentang Muslim yang telah lama ada dalam tulisan-tulisan Inggris tradisional dan modern sebagai sarana untuk membedakan dan membatasi pertumbuhan Islamofobia. Teori stereotip Homi Bhabha akan digunakan sebagai landasan teori dalam penelitian ini. Kajian ini juga melihat rangkaian peristiwa sejarah salah mengartikan Muslim dalam tulisan-tulisan bahasa Inggris dan menempatkan mereka dalam implikasi Islamofobia yang melanda dunia saat ini.

Kata Kunci: Muslim, Stereotip, Islamofobia, Kolonialisme, Urusan Rusdi.

INTRODUCTION

The global War on Terror began after 9/11, but the demonization of Islam is as old as the first contact between the Western and Muslim world. War on Terror, which prevails on the assumption of Muslims being terrorists only ushers a new form of Orientalism to justify the incarceration, invasion, persecution, criminalization, and the systematic demonization of Muslims (Kumar, 2012). The modalities of Islamophobia existed long before the unfortunate occurrence of 9/11 (T. H. Green, 2015). Through racial pedigrees and the versified differences in aspects of race, religion, class and sex or gender hierarchical roles, the long history of Islamophobia is perceived in world-historical repertoire of key events and practices. Contrary to the general notion that Islamophobia maximally started after 9/11, this paper discusses the historical roots of Islamophobia while taking a critical stance against the dominant framing of 9/11 as the starting point of Islamophobia (Passaro, 1991).

Today, the concept of Islam has been misinterpreted and misrepresented by both Muslims themselves and non-Muslims, either out of ignorance by the Muslims or out of despising and prejudice by the non-Muslims. The infiltration of the West into Islamic religion and Arab cultures results in multifarious accusations, reprehensions, stereotypes and condemnation of the religion and culture. In trying to relegate the religion, some Westerners and Muslims alike have endeavoured to misinterpret and opinionatedly project the strict Islamic rules of law over and above everything else it preaches. Thereby, disseminating their predisposed views through both fictional and non-fictional writings (Daniel, 2000).

In literature, the portrayal of Muslims and the religion of Islam is precarious. Although, literature, they say, is the mirror of society, and of course today's stereotype and prejudice that plague the world have accurately been mirrored in literary works. Muslims are portrayed as violent murderers, bloodthirsty terrorists, misogynists with submissive and oppressed women (Hashmi, 2016; Manqoush, R. A., Yusof, N. M., & Hashim, 2011; Mydin, R. M., Hashim, R. S., & Yusof, 2015; Nash, G., Kerr-Koch, K., & Hackett, 2013). Such stereotypes are perceptible in fictional works like: Sherry Jones' *The Jewel of Medina* (2008), Gorge Alec Effinger's *Budayen Nights* (2003), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) Robert Ferrignos's *Payer for the Assassin* (2006) Fadia Fariq's *My Name is Salma* (2010), William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786), Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* (2001), Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988), Deborah Rodriguez's *The Little Coffee Shop of Kabul* (2011), John Brunner's *Stand on Zanzabir* (1968), Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003), Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja* (1992), Ayaan Hirsi Ali's *Infidel: My Life* (2006), Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007), Updike's *Terrorist* (2006) and many more. Most of these novels are based more on stereotyping of Muslims, rather than on empirical research (Afsaruddin, A., & Kitts, 2018).

These stereotyping have, over time, marginalised the Muslims and given them a wrong impression and concluding misconception of the identity with which they are identified in the larger world. In English writings, a lot has been written about Muslims during the period of 'first contact' between the East and the West, similarly, the documentation that resulted from travel writing, exploration and anthropology stand the test of time and of representation which was mostly of a colonial pretext but now more of racial and stereotypical stance. In recent time, demonisation of Islam and Muslims is more common among atheist writers, reverts (x-Muslims). Similarly, think tanks, fictions, memoirs, political speeches and most importantly, the media have institutionalized the hatred of Muslims and Islam in the cause of time. This study intends to look at series of major historical events that led to the stereotypical representation of the Muslims in English writings which have fostered much of the Islamophobia that plagues the world today (Ahmad, 1994).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses an exploratory research method by taking and interpreting the data found. Homi Bhabha's article "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism" which was published in his book *The Location of Culture* (1994) discusses the subjectification of the colonized people through the use of stereotypical language which is based on ideological reproduction. That stereotype is built on the assumption that it is an ideological operation which constructs a group or individuals as "the other". This otherness is the starting point of Homi Bhabha's article where he venerates that the construction of stereotype (of a group or individuals) as "the other" is usually produced through a paradoxical strategy, i.e. Binary oppositions and is always maintained by repetition. The study will apply Bhabha's notion of stereotype as the theoretical underpinning of the analysis (Alireza, A., & Khademi, 2015). In that, through stereotyping, "the other" is represented as someone/thing very opposite to normalcy thereby reducing the stereotyped to a subject of ridicule, discrimination or of marginalization. "The stereotype, which is its major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (19) He further posits that "the processes of subjectification [is] made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse". (67). This subjectification of the colonized can be observed in countless stereotypical portrayals such as the long-lasting identification of the Blacks as "savage brutes" or Indians as "snake charmers" (Fawaz, 2014). Bhabha's assertions can be applied to the Muslims' reality today, in that, the continuous repetition of stereotypical discourse against Muslims have slowly yielded an ultimate result of "othering" the Muslims.

In this research, Bhabha's theory of stereotype would be used as a lens of looking at the deliberate stereotyping of Muslims in English writings, which transcends from olden days to modern times (Garner, S., & Selod, 2015). Bhabha's explication of the process of development of stereotype is the reason why this study chooses to employ it as a theoretical framework. It should be noted that while Bhabha's article talks about varieties of concepts like fetishism, productive ambivalence or "regime of truth" as with the colonial discourse, this study only adopts his aspect of stereotype as a form of othering. Stereotyping has closely been associated with the subject of 'difference' and its exaggeration, for Bhabha, this exaggeration of difference manifests through "othering" which has been the attitude towards Muslims in English writings (Goffman, D., & Stroop, 2004). The stereotyping of Muslims by Western writers has taken different forms till its actual manifestation in what we have as the marginalization of Muslims today, this is what Bhabha has wholly asserted in his article. Images such as warmongers, bloodthirsty terrorists, misogynists, violent murderers have been perpetuated the English narratives about the Muslims since time immemorial. According to Feroz Ahmad (1994), "the image of Islam created in the 14th century was firmly established in Europe and was incorporated into the future so powerfully as to affect many generations, even up to present" (307). Possible events that serve as reasons for this image making are discussed below.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following sections will provide an overview of historical occurrences that facilitated Islamophobic representation of Muslims. Drawing from Homi K. Bhabha's theory of stereotype, the discussion will exemplify the stereotyping of Muslims from a few literary texts.

THEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCE

The account of stereotyping the Muslims is “hardly one of unbiased examination of the sources of Islam, especially when under the influence of the bigotry of Christianity (Hashmi, 2016). This stereotyping of Muslims in the Western world can be related to the religious difference between both worlds, “its roots go back to the Christian rejection of Islam as a religion in the eighth century when Islam first arose on the historical scene and was quickly perceived to be a theological and political threat to Christendom.” (Kalin, 2004). The theological polemics the West made of the Muslims is a vital tool in creating a distinctive divide and dispersing stereotypes. Through binary opposition, the Western writers have represented Muslim men as murderous, violent and misogynist 'other', their women oppressed and defenceless and the religion of Islam preaching hate and violence as opposed to the civilized, humane and well-mannered Christian West, and such stereotypes continue to proliferate and have therefore eased the process of imaging and representation. As maintained by Homi K. Bhabha, the stereotype is a conceptual process that constructs a group or individuals as “the other” which is essentially produced paradoxically (Bhabha, 1994). Due to the difference in beliefs (despite the similarities of Islam with other Abrahamic religions), the Europeans view Islam as a threat to Christendom, and thus, regarded it as a heresy; a false religion of which its Prophet Muhammad is regarded as an imposter. (Kalin, 2004) The Christian West criticised the divinity and genuineness of the religion, termed the Quran as a false book written by Muhammad with a merger of knowledge gotten from the old and New Testament. (Daniel, 2000). Since writers in medieval Europe were strengthened and celebrated by the Church and State, anti-Islamic writers’ portrayal of Islam serves the monarchy just what it desires, so Islam was regarded as no different than “paganism or the Manicheism from which St. Augustine had his historical conversion to Christianity “ (Kalin, 2004).

What can be observed in writings on Islam in early modern Britain is a perfect example of this anxious repetition (what Bhabha terms ‘demonic repetition’), as the Muslim other (and indeed the Catholic, Jewish and various other non-British, non-Protestant ‘Others’) has to be constantly defined and attacked in comparison to the rectitude, civility and religious and cultural superiority of the home culture; indeed both duplicity and sexual licence were common accusations against Islam and Muslims (Jenkins, 2007).

Norman Daniel opines that the normal passage of ideas from one author to the next and that the constancy of the problem to be one of the reasons behind the continuity of Christian anti-Islamic polemics. It is written as Christian anti-Islamic polemic because, in writings, the misrepresentation of Muslims was started by the Christians as a consequence of the misinformation gathered about the Muslims and the horrible encounter between both worlds. Thus, the Christians preceded any other anti-Islamic writer. The Christians' total rejection of the Muslims and their doctrine resulted in different hostile attitudes towards the Muslims - what Daniel (1960) refers to as “the Christian attitude” - includes criticism of Islam as a whole, the mode of revelation and the Prophet (SAW) himself (11) (Halliday, 1999).

Although the religion of Islam, the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims in entirety were disavowed by the Westerners, with time, the change in the Westerners’ perception could be noticed in some few works of some literary figures (Hook, 2005). Dante’s *The Divine Comedy* for example, despite his damnation of Islam and Prophet Muhammad, he applauded Saladin the brave (Salahuddin - Al Ayyubi), Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Averroes most likely for their contributions to the field of knowledge (philosophy and science). This is to say that, it was not a hostile relationship all through, Dante showed interest in the Islamic civilisation, to the extent that his style of divine comedy was an inspiration of the Prophet's Mi'iraj (night journey). This and the rise of Averroesism in the West until its ban in 1277 are significant events that proved the existence of another side of the hate story, although, any attempt of inclusiveness made by

a commoner in the West was immediately discarded by the Church and State (Hourani, 1992). Also, in most cases, only the conflict part of the relationship has duly been amplified and would be pondered upon even centuries after. (Khan, 2012).

Meanwhile, the imitation of Islamic practices and allusion and adaptation of Islamic beliefs and principles in literature at this time, explains to a considerable extent, the double attitude of Renaissance Europe towards Islam: it detested Islam as a religion. However, it admired its civilisation at the same time. There is stereotyping, which inclines more towards the hatred. Just as Bhabha's psychoanalytical presentation of the phenomena of stereotyping bases on the argument that what is detested as "brutish" is at the same time strangely desired. Thus, in such stereotypical discourse, both derision and desire are seen, "phobia" and "fetish", as described in Bhabha's psychoanalytical terms (Bhabha, 1994)

The seventeenth century saw the immense criticism and condemnation of the religion, been a period of reading culture in Europe, lots of writers wrote Anti-Islamic works to satiate the Western thirst for such. The effect of Shakespeare's misrepresentation of the Turks and the Moors as violent murderers in many of his plays cannot be contemplated. A similar attitude is obvious in the works of Voltaire (1694-1778) another widely read author who projects the Prophet Muhammad as an archetype of fanaticism, deception, cruelty, and sensuality in his famous tragedy *Fanatisme ou Mahomet le Prophète*. Norman Daniel, in his book *Islam and the West*, exhaustively highlights the Westerners' orientalist portrayal of Prophet Muhammad in what he calls "the polemic biography" and how these misrepresentations are used as an instrument of judgment for the Muslims and Islam. Ian Jenkins also speak about this polemic biography of Muhammad in early modern British writing which is commonly used in the West as a template for misrepresenting Islam. She observed that: "the distorted representations of the figure of Muhammad contained in these biographies functioned as a prototype for the production of a series of essentialising views of Muslim identity which were then replicated throughout the textual production on Islam during the period." (Jenkins, 2007)

POLITICAL CONFRONTATIONS

The series of conflicts that occurred as a result of empire expansion promulgated a staunch opposition and antagonism between the two worlds. After the demise of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his successors spread Islam to the rest of the world through trade and interactions, but most significantly through empire expansion. In the history of Islamic civilisation, Muslims have owned, conquered, and lost empires in the cause of time. Starting from Makkah and Madina (the centre of Islam), to the entire Middle-East and subsequently Eastern Europe, most parts of Asia, North Africa and successively most parts of the world (Khan, 2012).

The Umayyad dynasty (661-750 AD) which sprang at the end of the Rashidun Caliphate took over the Sassanid Empire, the Greeks' Byzantine Empire, expanded to North Africa, Central Asia and some parts of India. In Europe, the Muslim led empire conquered Spain, defeated the Visigoths and reached Narbonne in France by 713. The Umayyad's conquer of the Christian Byzantine Empire instigated opposition among the two faiths until it was reconquered by the Byzantine emperor Leo III (Afsaruddin, 2018). The animosity continued to grow even more, as the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire took over Byzantine again from the Orthodox Greeks. Then came the crusade against the Muslims. The rise of the Seljuk Empire, which necessitated the first crusade in 1096-1099 which was at first successful but later a failure. The rivalry and hostility thus grew stronger with two significant failures; England's failure to reconquer the holy land (Jerusalem) which was conquered by Salahuddin of Egypt and the Greeks' failure of Constantinople. The old and ancestral antagonism between the Greeks and the Turks is one of the roots of

what we have today, as it further became complicated when the Greeks took to Christianity, and the Turks became Muslims (Khan, 2012). This, however, explains the reason for a long-lasting antagonism that is built on political reasons, an antagonism which reflects in Western literature; English writings, and has always constructed the Muslim “other” as an enemy that always has to be defeated (Majed, 2012).

Thus, the impact of the series of wars and battles between the Muslim forces and the Roman Empire is a feeling of hate and hostility towards one another. The Muslims were therefore perceived and commonly represented as violent murderers. It also fosters the tendency for historians to exaggerate the centrality of the Muslims’ conflict with the Western world in Islamic history, despite all other relations (Nayak, 2006). Although at the end of the crusade there was a shift in perception of the Muslims by the Westerners, the Crusade broke boundaries and gave room for a better understanding of the Muslims; their religion was/is rejected and criticised, but their civilisation admired. It was only during the crusade against Muslims that the West was able to fully observe the Muslims, at the end of the crusade, the Crusaders took along with them the stories of the East; of Muslims, stories of their civilization, their promiscuity (polygamy), their luxury, philosophy, art and science, commodities like paper, perfume, and incense among few others. It was at that time much literature about the Muslims flourished in the West, yet all these admirations for the Muslims did not expunge the hate and hostility, neither did it change the Muslims’ image as violent murderers. These stereotypes were mostly manufactured and spread through literature. Goffman (2004) argues that (Goffman, D., & Stroop, 2004):

The representations of the Turks in the early modern plays assume a tone which is different from the representations of the other eastern races. The Turks, unlike other “inferior” races, are represented in the early modern writings as the “grand evil” whose infidelity and apparent power are such a great threat to the Christian world that they must be stopped and destroyed. (5)

Norman Daniel describes how the West formulated its earliest view of Islam through second or third-hand information. From the Christian East (Byzantium) which the Arabs defeated in 634, from the Mozarabs (Arabized Christians) of Spain conquered by the Arabs in 711, from Sicily which was occupied by the Arabs in 825 and from the crusades; an encounter which lasted for about two centuries 1096- 1099 and 1147-1149 (Daniel, 2000; Smith, 1977). All these informants about Islam gave a prejudiced and negative impression about Islam due to their positions as imperial subjects or as war-front enemies (especially with the crusaders who would dress the Muslims as the worst of demons only to justify their crusade as a religious mission). This misinformation gained more credence with the translation of the Quran and the Arabic Risala into Latin, which was full of annotations to invalidate Islam as a religion (Smith xvii). Therefore, the outcome of such misinformation was a misrepresentation of Muslims and Islam in Western literature which was the primary source of knowledge in Middle and Early Modern period. England however, the primary focus of this study, got its materials about Islam mostly through the churches in the twelfth century (xviii) which were translations from Latin (Rameez, 2018; Southern, 1962; Squires, n.d.).

Peter the Venerable (1084-1156) “translated” the Qur’an which was used throughout the Middle Ages and included nine additional chapters. Sale’s infamously distorted translation followed that trend, and his, along with the likes of Rodwell, Muir and a multitude of others attacked the character and personality of Muhammed. Often they employed invented stories, or narration’s which the Muslims themselves considered fabricated or weak, or else they distorted the facts by claiming Muslims held a position which they did not, or using the habits practised out of ignorance among the Muslims as the accurate portrayal of Islam (A. Green, 1996).

This is to say, misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims in English literature started from the dissemination of gathered information about Muslims in England and then to the onset of the contact between the East and West and reflected in works of literary writers from the time of Chaucer till date. (Jenkins, 2007; Kalin, 2004; Smith, 1977). Smith, in his study of Islam in English literature from Chaucer to early Victorian Age, submits that the literature of Chaucer, Sir John Mandeville, Lydgate, Shakespeare and other later writers reveal the extent of prejudice and ignorance the West has for Islam, most of whose information about Islam was gotten from a second hand. He further argues that even for the positive representation of Islam in their works shows that Islam was represented as a culture, civilization or social system but not as a religion; Muhammad as a model of sound character but not as a prophet until the lecture of Thomas Carlyle, "Hero as a Prophet", which changed the norm. This, for Smith, points towards the long-lasting enmity between the two worlds, which reflects the injustice that the West inflicted on Islam through literature. To this argument, this study agrees that Islam has negatively been represented in literature throughout this period, and this deliberate misrepresentation extends into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Through misrepresentation, the Islamic beliefs were distortedly passed on to other foreign societies by the Christians who lived among the Muslims or under the Muslim rule, such doctrines after being interpreted with prejudice and facts deliberately modified to suit their interpretations, an image is created and believed of the Muslims about their belief. Norman Daniel (2000) concurs: "A 'real truth' is identified: this is something that contrasts with what the enemy says they believe; they must not be allowed to speak for themselves" (213). These polemics were after that confirmed by repetition in both written and spoken works of literature. This study agrees with the argument of a good number of scholars who agree that the stereotypical representation of Islam and Muslims that prevails in the English literature today is a result of the historical socio-political conflicts and hostility that existed between the West and Muslim world. (Daniel, 2000; T. H. Green, 2015; Hashmi, 2016; Kalin, 2004; Khan, 2012).

COLONIALISM

The eighteenth-century saw the translation of the Quran into Latin and then English language, in Europe and then America, which multiplied the availability of a condemnable piece. Throughout the century until the early nineteenth century, criticism of Islam was based on haphazard knowledge of Muhammad gotten from secondary sources, the Muslims and then later from the translated Qur'an. At this era, Europeans began to travel to the world for the colonial expedition, of which the Middle East was part of their colonies, with this, they got to know much more about the religion and its people. This gave rise to travel writings which developed oriental stereotyping in full force. Apart from the historical conflict or clash in a confrontation that contributed to the polar relationship between the two worlds. As significant as orientalism was (and still is), the Muslim 'other' was represented in the Western world through writing throughout the Middle and Modern ages – till today. One important literature for this is Edward Said's most influential book *Orientalism* (1978), which is a rigorous examination of how the West perceives the Islamic world. For Said, the Westerners have excelled in damning the Easterners (Orients) with many negative connotations that cannot be truly identified. The criticism of Islam and Muslims in the 17th century is just like the preceding centuries, condemning the religion as a whole as heresy and the Prophet of Islam as an impostor and fraudulent Prophet. Pascal (1623-1662), is one of (if not the most passionate) defenders of the Christian faith in the 17th century.

[He] was as harsh and uncompromising as his predecessors in condemning the Prophet of Islam as an impostor and fraudulent Prophet. The "fifteenth movement" of his *Les Pensées*, called "Contre

Mahomet,” voices an important sentiment of Pascal and his coreligionists on Islam and the Prophet Muhammad: Muhammad is in no way comparable to Jesus; Muhammad speaks with no Divine authority; he brought no miracles; his coming has not been foretold; and what he did could be done by anyone whereas what Jesus did is supra-human and supra-historical. (Kalin, 2004)

Although, the criticism of Islam in travel documents can be traced as far back to George Sandys (1578-1644) in his work *Relation of a Journey Begun* (1610) which brings to the light description of the Turkish Empire, Egypt, the Holy Land, and few other places which serve as an Islamic dictionary to the Europeans. It was one of the earliest travel accounts of the Islamic world to reach Europe. A few mentions of such early stereotypical works are: *Tamerlane* (1702), *The Christian Hero* (1735), *Irene* (1749), *Mustapha* (1739), *The Siege of Rhode* (1656), *Osman* (1757), *The Sultan* (1770), *Bajazet* (1672), *The Sultanness* (1717), *The Conspiracy* (1680), *Fake Count* (1682), *A Peep into Seraglio* (1775), *Abduction from the Seraglio* (1782), *The Russian Slaves :A Day in turkey* (1792). Therefore, oriental stereotyping of Islam and Muslims is seen to have existed during (and long before) the translation of the Quran into Western languages.

Anyone in the West who has acquired a deep knowledge of Islam knows just to what extent its history, dogma and aims have been distorted. One must also take into account that fact that documents published in European languages on this subject (leaving aside highly specialised studies) do not make the work of a person willing to learn any easier (Bucaille, 2012).

Since European colonialism was the most widespread and British empire was largest in land mass, they disseminated their anti-Muslim stories to their non-Muslim colonial subjects by demonizing the Muslim other, either in the quest to spread Christianity or to vilify the Arab Muslims against the non-Arab Muslims or non-Muslim others; the divide-and-rule colonial technique (Kumar, 2012). Colonial documentation, travel writing, and anthropology were all used in “othering” the Muslims. The relationship between Muslims and the West is similar to that which has long existed between all colonisers and the colonised. Postcolonial theorists have laid the foundation for this exposition especially Edward 2003 and his theoretical criticism of the stereotypical representation of Islam and Muslims in the West.

After the decline of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 and World War I (1914-1918), the Middle East and North Africa became European colonies either partially or fully (subject to various interpretations). The British extensively colonised Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine, the French colonised Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Syria and Lebanon, whereas, Italy colonised Libya only. Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia were never colonised due to their political, military and economic power. Other countries like Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and UAE were newly formed states, formerly part of other British colonies so was also not colonised until the discovery of oil in those regions which necessitated an indirect colonialism. The emergence of liberal and Islamist opposition to this European colonialism in these Muslim regions resulted in resentment and aggravated hostility which took to academic and political discourses, media and literature to justify wars and violence against the rebellious savages. (Cleveland, 2016; Khan, 2012; Lewis, 1958, 1995).

This historical and colonial hitch could be ascribed to the success of Islam, partial success of the European imposed economic and socio-political agendas, the failure of secularism and re-emergence of Islam in the Arab world. Most colonial powers successfully imposed their language, culture and ideas to the subjects, but the story is slightly different from the Muslim as colonial subjects. According to Ibrahim Kalin, “the demonisation of Muslims is the result of deeper philosophical and historical issues” (2004) the aftermath of colonialism in the middle east gave rise to a new identity formation for Muslims, an extension

of 'violent murderers'; the Muslims are bloodthirsty terrorists. Reasons for this assertion always inclined towards their fight or resistance against colonial domination.

One is forced also to concede that oriental studies in the West have not always been inspired by the purest spirit of scholarly impartiality, and it is hard to deny that some Islamicists and Arabists have worked with the clear intention of belittling Islam and its adherents. This tendency was particularly marked for obvious reasons in the heyday of the colonial empires, but it would be an exaggeration to claim that it has vanished without trace. (Du Pasquier, 1992).

Key figures and colonial events leading towards the image-making and (mis)representation of Muslims as terrorists include Afghan Mujahidin. They rose against the Soviet occupation of Afganistan, Alqaida networks against the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and Palestine, the Arab spring revolution where pro-United States dictators were overthrown and driven out of their seats/countries or killed and few more instances. These events and their disastrous consequences are repeatedly written and referred to either in fictions or non-fiction as violent characteristics of Muslims, whereas, they could also be seen as active defending of self-worth and nation. Saussure's structuralism argument that 'language constitutes the world' is very much relevant in this respect. For Saussure, the meaning is not contained within an object but attributed to it in the human mind, such as the above-described alternatives of a "terrorist" and a "freedom-fighter" (Barry, 2002).

THE RUSHDIE AFFAIR

In recent time, one very significant event in history that also intensified the anti-Islamic positions in Western discourse is the incident that arose from the publication of *The Satanic Verses* (1988), by Indian-British author Salman Rushdie. Though it has been a trend that the colonised get to assimilate with the colonisers so much so that they give up their identities; religion and culture for fame and Western acceptance.

With Rushdie's affair, lots of Muslims and Muslim authorities denounced the novel as blasphemous for its humorous representation of Islam. Its sale and distribution were forbidden in Iran, India, South Africa, and Pakistan, whereas, dramatic reactions started in early 1989 when Muslims in Britain burned copies of the novel in protest of its publication and also catastrophic demonstrations in Pakistan which ended in injuries and killings. On February 14, 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini, the ruler of Iran, issued a fatwa placing a death sentence on Salman Rushdie and his publishers for blasphemy against Islam, his fatwa called on Muslims everywhere in the world to execute those associated with the novel. Though, the death sentence has never been carried out till date. The fatwa was revoked under the Khatami regime, succeeding Ayatollah's, in the late 1990s. Islam became synonymous with violence in the West as a result of Muslims' reaction to Rushdie's publication, "the pattern that has come to characterise the Muslim attitude to conflict worldwide" (Phillips, 2007). Freedom of expression and the postcolonial struggle now comes into play with some postcolonial critics criticising Rushdie's efforts while other notable postcolonial activists support him under the banner of freedom of speech. After this event, along with other similar events like the controversy surrounding Taslima Nasrin's publications, there was a multiplicity in the stereotypical portrayal of Muslims in English writings, in that, most of the works published after the Rushdie saga aimed towards affirming Rushdie's claims of the absurdity of Islam, how it oppresses women and how incompatible it is with modern civilisation. (Nash, G., Kerr-Koch, K., & Hackett, 2013) This became the trending discourse for decades until the September 11 event.

In the wake of Salman Rushdie's controversy, Julia Kristeva referenced Islam as violent because it is extremely "persecutory" (Almond, 2007). Similarly, in the same period, DeLillo, as one of the prominent

American authors, staunchly expressed his support for Rushdie's freedom of expression against the hate speech argument posed by the Muslims. While sympathizing with Rushdie's situation (of fear and solitude), DeLillo challenged the American government to protect Rushdie and help regain his freedom even if it has to "exert due pressure" against Islamic Iran. (DeLillo, D. and Auster, 1994). This feeling would be the theme of his very next novel; *Mao II* (1991). In a retrospective fictionalization of the struggle between arts and reality, Don DeLillo, in his novel *Mao II* (1991) illustrates the challenges of a novelist in the face of terrorism perpetrated by religious fundamentalists. *Mao II* examines the close link between Christian fundamentalism and fascism (operating in Japan) as well as the severity of Islamic fundamentalism. In an interview with Bruce Passaro, DeLillo affirms that his novel *Mao II* was about the events surrounding the Rushdie affair of 1989 – the death fatwa, the constant fear Rushdie must live with and the support DeLillo can give him as an author. He states,

I don't know how deep it is ... but it's there. It's the connection between the writer as the champion of the self, and those forces that are threatened by this. Such totalitarian movements can be seen in miniature in the very kind of situation Rushdie is in. He's a hostage." (Passaro, 1991).

After the Rushdie affair, Muslims came to be synonymous with violence. DeLillo's response in an example of one of the significant ways in which the Rushdie affair triggered Islamophobia. Salman Rushdie since then became "a key culprit in fomenting that hatred against Islam and Muslims" as he leads renowned liberal imperialists in the course of Islamophobia (Dabashi, 2019)

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that stereotyping of Muslims which has long existed in English writings has a significant contribution to the development of much of the Islamophobia that exists today. The 9/11 event, which is popularly believed to fuel the War on Terror is the most recent justification for fear of Muslim, though, the same models of representing the Muslims existed much earlier. However, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, the misrepresentation of Muslims in literature works has taken a more relaxed form. Although with the same stereotypical outpour, these works appear to sympathize with the victims of terrorist attacks and the harsh Islamic principles on women than blaming Islam as a whole.

Since the stereotypical representation of Muslims in writings inflates Islamophobia, to curb the rapidly growing islamophobia, this study recommends that writers (Western/non-Western, Muslims/non-Muslims) should desist from carving negative images that have the tendencies of "othering" a particular group of people. Moreover, both readers and writers should be cognizant that Muslims, like Christians, Jews or adherents to any religious or cultural group for that matter, are not a monolithic group. There are intra-group differences within Islamic countries. Without this understanding, the view of Muslim customs may become distorted. Although Islam is the shared religious base, not all Muslim countries are identical regarding gender relations and conventions.

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