

**ISLAMIC POSTCOLONIALISM:
REPRESENTATION OF ISLAM AND THE
MUSLIMS OF DAGESTAN IN ALISA
GANIEVA'S SELECTED WORKS**

BY

SHEHLA RAHMAN



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**Islamic Postcolonialism: Representation of Islam and the
Muslims of Dagestan in Alisa Ganieva's Selected Works**

By

SHEHLA RAHMAN

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Submitted by: Shehla Rahman

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English Literature

Name of Discipline

Dr. Yasir Arafat

Name of Research Supervisor

Signature of Research Supervisor

Dr. Muhammad Uzair

Name of Dean (FAH)

Signature of Dean (FAH)

Brig. Syed Nadir Ali

Name of DG

Signature of DG

Date

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I Shehla Rahman

Daughter of Gohar Rahman

Registration # 1744-Mphil/Lit/S19

Discipline English Literature

Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Islamic Postcolonialism: Representation of Islam and the Muslims of Dagestan in Alisa Ganieva's Selected Works** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Islamic Postcolonialism: Representation of Islam and the Muslims of Dagestan in Alisa Ganieva's Selected Works

Orientalist representations have not ended; rather they have metamorphosed in the form of neo-Orientalism which delineates representation of Islam and Muslims. The present study investigates the representation of the Muslims of Dagestan and Islam in Alisa Ganieva's selected works: *Mountain and the Wall* (2012, translated in 2015) and *Bride and Groom* (2015, translated in 2018). Dagestan, one of the Russian Republics, has often been portrayed as a region afflicted with turbulence and unrest owing to Islamic fundamentalism. Through the lens of Islamic postcolonialism, the researcher has analyzed and compared the selected novels with the Anglo-American and other neo-Orientalists portrayals. The result of examination of different aspects of representation reveals that Ganieva draws upon neo-Orientalist binaries and stereotypes; utilizing both the western and indigenous writers' fixations and categories in representation of Islam and Muslims in her selected novels, she dexterously applies the neo-Orientalist framework of "good Muslim" and "Bad Muslim" to demonstrate observant Muslims as extremists, primitive, and intolerant brutes, whereas, non-observant Muslims as progressive, modern and civilized. These novels are essentially continuation of neo-Orientalist representation of Islam and the Muslims, chiefly employed to legitimize these depictions and thus justify ideological as well as physical war against these observant Muslims. This thesis sheds light on the extensive impact of neo-Orientalist stereotypes that reinforce negative portrayals. In addition to that, it analyzes that how not only the west and native informers from the East utilize it, but Russia and its native informers have also benefitted from it in their endeavor to erase the Islamic identity of Muslim majority Dagestan by feeding Islamophobia.

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DEDICATION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Representation, as the term signifies, entails affording a new meaning to a phenomenon. This may include giving meaning in written, visual, or oral form. Therefore, it is not neutral owing to the fact it carries an ideology of a group which formulates it. The process of representation of Islam and the Muslims, through stereotypes, was unearthed by Edward Said in the late 1970s, regarded as influential postcolonial critic who has examined representation of formerly colonized people not only during the colonization period, but also in the postcolonial period with focus mainly on media and fiction. The western media and the government have been representing Islam and the Muslims as intolerant, radical, primitive, and everything opposed to the ‘civilized west’. In addition to that, the western academia employs native informers in order to depict their stereotypes as objective (Behdad and Williams 285). Nevertheless, this representation is “monolithic, totalizing, reliant on a binary logic, and based on an assumption of moral and cultural superiority over the Oriental Other” (284). This demonstrates that these stereotypes are produced and distributed in order to otherize the Muslims; hence, this is a continuation of Orientalism and has been entitled neo-Orientalism.

In addition to America and other European countries, this representation has also been prevalent in Russia since 19th century when Imam Shamil from the North Caucasus organized a resistance against Russian imperialist forces. The people of the North Caucasus have often been represented in the Russian literature as exotic and barbaric who are in desperate need to be tamed. Dagestan is one of the Muslim-majority republics situated in the North Caucasus where the Muslims account for 83 percent of the population (Dagestan). Russia has been attempting to secularize the region through invasion, forced exiles, promotion of a particular school of thought, and Othering of Muslims. A Russian writer, A. Marlinski, writes that the Caucasus will be a splendid place without “plague, cholera, and Mohammedanism” (Halbach 5). Owing to this idea, Russia has been attempting to enclose the region from the rest of the world owing to influence of Islam. Recently, Islamic revival has commenced

which has been named as Islamic terrorism and Wahabism (a movement that commenced in the 18th century). It is a movement which aims at the revival and reformation of Islam; However, it has been accused of diffusing extremism. After the collapse of USSR, people from Dagestan travelled to the Middle East and got inspired by the Wahabi movement. They returned to Dagestan and began demanding their Muslim identity. Russia feared that the overwhelming majority of the Muslims would create Islamic identity of the Caucasus which was against Russia's secularized identity. Owing to this, numerous stereotypical representations have been generated in order to stifle the Islamic revival and these representations have been disseminated by not only Russian intellectuals but also native informers through their writings. In order to study and expose these representations, Majed has introduced the theoretical framework of "Islamic Postcolonialism" that analyzes the neo-Orientalist representations (stereotypical representations focused entirely upon Islam and Muslims).

He contends that postcolonialism without Islam "will not be able to unmask the contemporary anti-Islamic colonial discourse due to its central belief in secularism" (70). This perspective aims at identifying and analyzing the distorted images of Islam and the Muslims disseminated by western secular model. Norman Daniel in his book *Islam, Europe, and Empire (1966)* writes that Muslims have been tolerant towards Christianity (3). On the contrary, Europe and its secular materialism treat Islam not only as other, but also distort it through various representational practices which have been termed as neo-Orientalism. The aim of Islamic postcolonialism is to utilize methods of postcolonialism to identify neo-Orientalist stereotyping of Islam and the Muslims. Behdad and Williams detail some other aspects of neo-Orientalism: (1) neo-Orientalists are employed to lend authority to bigoted account of Islam and Muslims by the West, (2) they distort historical figures and events of Muslim majority countries, and (3) they depict various Islamic traditions and articles of clothing as extremist or oppressive (283-284). This demonstrates that Islamic postcolonialism is a larger framework and neo-Orientalism is its one aspect.

Dagestan, the Muslim-majority republic, has been endeavouring to create Islamic identity for itself. Nevertheless, Russian is thwarting this endeavour by inventing and distributing the discourse of 'good Islam', 'fundamentalist Islam', and

‘good Muslim’ and ‘bad Muslim’ in order to formulate a secularized identity of the region and thereby, erasing the history of Islamic Identity. Ganieva, similar to Russian thought, is of the opinion that Islam in Dagestan is a replacement and erasure of the past, the region should remain under the influence of Russia, otherwise, Islam will take hold of it and it will fall into disarray. Her first piece of fiction, *Salam, TebeDalgat!* (2010), Portrays a dystopian image of Muslims Majority Dagestan which basically confirms that Islam and Muslims are dangerous for the history, culture, and tradition of the region. This study explores the representation of Islam and the Muslims in Alisa Ganieva’s selected works.

1.1 The History of Dagestan

Little is known about Dagestan situated in the North Caucasus outside Russia. At present, it is one of the republics of Russia; however, the situation was not similar to this in the past. Russian imperialists have always been trying to subdue the region but it witnessed prolonged resistance in the past. Edward Beliaev and Oksana Burbanbaeva record in their book *Cultures of World: Dagestan* (2006) that the people of the North Caucasus and Russian imperialists fought forty-year war (5). People from the Caucasus region include Dagestanis, Chechens, and Circassians.

The republic witnessed invasions of various empires which influenced its culture; hence, its people are from ethnically diverse milieu which also makes its culture vibrant.

As mentioned earlier, its 3000 years history is marred with invasions of Persians, Arabs, Mongols, Timurs, Ottomans, and Russians. In addition to that, there has also been war among local tribes. Beliaev writes that the Dagestan came to be known as Dagestan owing to the fact that it came to exist as the republic of the Soviet Union. Previously, it had no definite borders and due to this, its history is the history of the North Caucasus (15).

Regarding Islam, numerous historians, for instance Beliaev, Burbanbaeva, Elimra Akhmetova, and Robert Bruce Ware, believe that Islam came to the region in the early seventh century. Akhmetova also quotes an eminent Russian historian in her article who corroborates that before the introduction of Russian Christianity, People had started listening to Quran (2). Last Caliph of Umayyad dynasty named Marwan II

conquered the region and eventually Islam was introduced to the region. Bruce Ware notes that although Arabs were defeated by Dagestanis in 652, they came back strongly and sealed their victory in 686. In this manner, people of the region were introduced to Islam and they willingly converted to Islam after being inspired by Sufism (5-6). Thus, Islam became the official religion of the region. Nevertheless, the political importance or status of Islam was altered radically by nascent Russian state in the sixteenth century. Under the leadership of Ivan IV, the Russian Imperial state continued to expand its territory to the Northern Caucasus during the coming centuries.

The Russian imperialism was resisted by Caucasus Imamate under the leadership of Ghazi Muhammad. However, he was killed by the Russians and Imam Shamil became the leader in 1834. Rebecca Gould in her article "Imam Shamil" states that Imam Shamil was a not only a great fighter but a nation builder for he succeeded in uniting dispersed tribes under his leadership (119). He was considered to be the last hope for the autonomous Dagestan owing to his strength and ferocity and left a potent imprint on Russian imagination. Nevertheless, Russians became Victorians in 1871 which had a devastating impact on the lives of Muslims for according to Akhmetova, they were deported from their native land (Akhmetova 3). It was also followed by intensive Russianization (names were converted to Russian names), and Christianization which were considered to be central to integration of newly colonized territories.

In addition to that, myriads of Muslims were evicted from fertile lands. Russian Imperialists established their castles in the areas that were strategically consequential. Furthermore, in order to erase Islam, mosques were destroyed and Muslims were not allowed to lay the foundation of new ones. These brutal actions and policies aimed at repressing Muslims, according to Akhmetova, lead to unification of Caucasians under the Banner of Islam (Akhmetova, *Islam in Russia: Past, Present, and Future* 4). Nevertheless, the conditions improved during the reign of Catherine the Great (close to the end of 18th century). She partially lifted the restrictions placed on the Muslims and introduced a new system to incorporate the Muslims into the government. She also permitted them to build new mosques and actively took part in politics. They established a political party named Union of Muslims in order to communicate their grievances and Muslims sighed a sigh of relief during this period.

Nonetheless, Islam and the Muslims received a setback to political achievements and their religious lives when the Tsarists came to power. Finally, attack on twin towers exacerbated the situation and consequent global war on terror was effectively utilized by the Russians in order to oppress the Muslims. In the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, Russian enforced the extremist law which targeted Muslims: firstly, Wahabism was equated with terrorism and then, observant Muslims were labelled as Wahabists. The report by Human Rights Watch clearly records that Muslims, especially observant Muslims, sustained torture and abduction-styled detention (27). Basically, what they fear was global Islam which led them to label Wahabism as foreign influence and observant Muslims as foreigners who disrupted the peace of the region when actually they were the natives. The state actors like media and cinema industry also played an instrumental role in stereotyping the Muslims and Islam. Akhmetova states that in the beginning incidents like Moscow bombings were regarded as a consequence of 1999 Chechen war and separatist ideology. However, in the aftermath of global war on terror, the Russian government effectively utilized this narrative to target Islam and Muslims (Akhmetova 25). Observant Muslims are targeted on the pretext of combating against religious extremism; women wearing hijab and bearded men are considered to be potential threat which legitimizes their arrest or detention.

1.2 Thesis Statement

The stereotypical representations of Islam and the Muslims are not only prevalent in the literature of the western hemisphere, they are also profoundly entrenched in the Russian literary representational practices. Ganieva, in her selected novels *Mountain and the Wall* (2015) and *Bride and Groom* (2018), reinforces and naturalizes essentialist stereotyping of Islam and the Muslims in order to ascribe turbulence and instability in Dagestan to rising Islamic revivalist movement in the region.

1.3 Research Questions

- What are the discursive tools Ganieva employs in order to represent Muslims and Islam?
- How does Ganieva represent identity of the Muslims in her selected works?

- In what ways are Ganieva's depiction of Islam and Muslims of Dagestan similar to Anglo-American depictions of Islam and Muslims?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Literary representations of Islam and the Muslims in the West have been disseminating stereotypes: for instance, they are represented as primitive, demonic, violent, barbarians, and intolerant. This kind of representation is basically the continuation of Orientalist binaries; however, the focus is on Islam and the Muslims and thus, has been named as neo-Orientalism. Neo-Orientalists produce and distribute misinformed and incorrect assumptions regarding Islam and the Muslims. Their representation is premised upon their erroneous native subjectivity which has been exposed by numerous researchers. Nevertheless, there is scarcity of research works when it comes to the analysis of representation of Islam and Muslims in the Russian Literature. In order to ascertain and tackle the extensive impact of above-mentioned stereotypes, it is imperative to analyze how the Russian literature depicts Islam and the Muslims. To the knowledge of the researcher, there is no adequate study that analyzes the portrayal and the extent of erroneous assumptions regarding Islam and the Muslims in the Russian literature, the country that has several Muslim-majority republics. The researcher therefore concluded that it is necessary to fill this gap.

In order to fill the gap, the researcher selected two novels written by Moscow based Dagestani writer. It uncovers the Russian attitude towards the Muslim majority republic Dagestan by analyzing portrayal of its citizens and dominant religion Islam. This study, thus, endeavors to fill the gap by contributing additional information to already existing studies with regards to representation of Islam and Muslims.

1.5 Delimitation

The study is delimited to the two works of Alisa Ganieva: *Mountain and the Wall*, and *Bride and Groom*, published in English translation in 2015 and 2018 respectively. These novels have been selected owing to manifestation of representation of Islam and Muslims.

1.6 Chapter Breakdown

The thesis is comprised of five chapters. The first chapter is titled as introduction. It entails background of the study, research questions, research

objectives, delimitation, and significance of the study. The second chapter provides review of existing literature on notion of representation and its development in post colonialism and Islamic postcolonialism. In addition to that, it gives an introduction of the author and her works. Theoretical framework and method of research are delineated in the third chapter. The fourth chapter contains an elaborate analysis of selected texts and conclusion has been drawn in the fifth chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study focuses on construction of identities through representation of the marginalized groups. The ensuing section, firstly, delineates the very inception of the process of Othering in the form of Orientalism. Secondly, the researcher highlights the transition from Orientalism to neo-Orientalism. In addition to that, the researcher reviews and analyzes selected studies that have been conducted by different critics. Finally, after the critical discussion of various studies, gaps have been highlighted linking it to rationale of the present study.

2.1 Orientalism

The desire to extend one's power has always been at the heart of colonial expeditions; however, these acts require intricate and systematic design. Firstly, they create a negative image of the nation they wish to occupy by representing them as inferior and deficient in some ways. These images and representations are then disseminated and approved by the colonizers which demonstrates that the imperialist ideology operates in the representations of the colonized. Imperialism “means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others” (E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* 7). This strategy has been always utilized to subjugate, oppress, and control the colonized people.

This systematic and organized ideology is one of the cardinal aspects of colonization. Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) also sheds light on how the imperialist countries firstly organize their authoritative role over another society with the help of representational strategies; basically, these techniques are employed to dominate the culture of the colonized. Said, one of the most eminent post-colonialists, refers to this representational strategy as Orientalism.

Orientalism is essential, rather one of the cardinal foundations of postcolonial studies for one of objectives of the postcolonial critics is to expose how imperialist ideologies operated in the textual representations of the colonized. The publication of

Orientalism (1979) has been regarded as one of the momentous and consequential achievements. The book entails how imperial forces dominate by utilizing representational techniques in literature. In addition to this, he also exposes that how colonizers wishing to create an empire firstly create dominant theory which will later define the relationship between them and their Other. The Other is the term employed to describe the colonized, which Said maintains, reinforces inferior status of the colonized (9). This demonstrates that colonial representations are dependent on the multifaceted relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. The colonized have power to control literature which facilitates the consolidation of empire.

Language plays an integral role in this process. In order to create dark images of the colonized, the colonizer needs dexterous utilization of language thus making it paramount to Orientalism. According to Said, it is premised upon ontological and epistemological division made between the Orient and the Occident (E. Said, *Orientalism* 2-3). It was the construction of European imagination, he analyzes, in which Orient has been a place of romantic and mysterious beings, evocative scenery, and unforgettable experiences since ancient times. These kinds of representation prevailed upon the European minds so as to make them think of their superiority over the colonized.

The above review establishes that the notion of Orientalism did not emerge out of nothing; rather, it has organized history and lexicon to support its reality and existence. There was a proper institutional support for this project. Said, the pioneer of Orientalism is of opinion that it became institutionalized in the Eighteenth century; it became a proper department and the Orient became a specimen on which the Orientalists could give their verdict and thus, restructured the notion of authority premised upon imagination (3). This is demonstrative of the nature of authority which is invented and plays an instrumental role in establishing truths. In other words, people with authority are able to disseminate their version of truths. In the case of Orientalism, the colonizers invented representations which were authorized by the colonizers themselves and thus the canon was created. Firstly, the colonial discourse constructed binary opposition in which the colonizer occupied the dominant position and the colonized occupied deferential position (McLeod 39). The Orient is represented as opposite to the occident; it occupies the periphery and the latter is present at the centre. The colonizer is the possessor of universal knowledge and its

Other is ignorant and stupid. In this manner, East and West are positioned through the formulation of dichotomy which is unequal; the West is exalted to higher status and the East is relegated to subordinate position. Basically, as David Richards, in correspondence with Said's view, reveals that when one represents the culture of other people, one has the propensity to obscure the vision of its people (39). The representor affords his own understanding to people he is representing. In the above case, the European colonizer did not allow the colonized to have voice.

Secondly, this representation was premised upon the western fantasies and perceptions rather than valid information; essentially, fantasies were utilized as a representational strategy. Said also argues that the Orientalism was fundamentally images produced by the colonizers; nonetheless, they were represented as concrete reality. These representations are radically different from what may actually exist. They are fraudulent that shape the attitude of the colonizers towards the colonized. According to Said, it should be regarded as fabricated images that become the reality for the colonizers. The project of Orientalism is a false vision of the Orient; it is not the real picture, it does not convey facts; rather, it is tailored by those who support imperialist ideologies (40). One of the ways to disseminate the colonial representation, as mentioned earlier, has been literature. Numerous colonial writers produced works in which the colonized land and people have been represented as the other and history of European literature is splattered with stereotypical representations. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* written in 1899 and published in 1902 is the quintessence of colonial discourse. Numerous critics have criticized it for representing Africa as a dark continent and its people as bestial; for instance, they are represented as cannibals (Guyen 82). In his book *Culture and Imperialism*, Said analyzes that Conrad in the novel wishes us to marvel at the imperial deeds performed by the European colonizers (24). Marlow, a European colonizer, narrates his experience and alternative view of the Africans has been simply eliminated. It is the quintessential example of how the colonized is incapable of representing themselves and hence, they must be represented by the colonizer. Conrad could not imagine Africa without the Europeans for they were incapable of independence. Nourin binte Saeed in her dissertation analyzes that it is the story of "geographical exploitation" (28). The European colonizers consider Africa a dark continent as suggested by the title of the novel that was in desperate need of enlightenment; this discourse paved the

way for African colonization in order to seize control of ivory and slave trade. Furthermore, Guven analyzes that the landscape of Africa is delineated as bleak and denuded of life and light. The journey through river Congo is portrayed as journey into prehistoric times and the African people are described as mere shadows of disease who eat unfamiliar food and incapable of talking (80). This is expressive of Marlow's opinion that Africa should be ruled by the imperialists, but they should treat the natives humanely. Chinua Achebe, an eminent postcolonial writer, has also criticized this inhuman representation of the colonized people and calls him a racist.

Another Orientalist who successfully managed to manipulate language in order to represent imperialists as savior and natives as ignorant and in need of enlightenment was E.M. Forster. He visited India 1921 and utilized this experience to pen down *Passage to India* (1924). His visit to India gave his novel validity. Apart from Africa, the Indian subcontinent was also one of the European colonies and their representation was employed in order to consolidate the imperial power; for instance, Forster disseminates Orientalist discourse by stereotyping India and its people. According to Saeed, he basically establishes the necessity of the British presence in India who, according to him, was there to promote peace and education (44). As Said states that a writer is a part of society and cannot be separated from it, Forster was a part of British imperialist society and hence, imbibed their political ideology. It is a political representation of people, culture and geography of India. He does not represent individuals but entire India.

In the beginning of the novel, Chandrapur is depicted as a wild forest which conveys the idea of emptiness of India. He also perpetuates colonial stereotypes by depicting Indians as sentimental rather than rational; Dr. Aziz and Godbole are emotional and lack intellect and understanding, whereas, Fielding as a European is a symbol of intelligence that is sympathetic towards everyone but superior. This depiction demonstrates that the Indians require European leadership in order to progress. Bradbury puts it, "Indians that too can be judged here only on a priori grounds. Although the Indians are conceived with these emotions alone, and although all of them have charm, none of them has dignity; they touch our hearts but they never impress us" (80). At the end of the novel, the Othering is reinforced through separation between Aziz and Fielding. The Orientals will always exist as the Other to

the colonizers and this demarcation can never be effaced due to the fact that it is natural.

All these representations demonstrate that “Orientalism is literary and creative” and entire academia contributed to make it appear as objective truth (McLeod 40). In other words, the western fantasies and imagination created an entire academia where these corrupt representations were fashioned and disseminated as valid knowledge that had palpable impact. Rana Kabbani, in her book *Imperial Fiction: Europe's Myths of Orient (1994)*, endorses an idea similar to Said's idea that all the disciplines were utilized in order to formulate these fictional truths that was to serve imperial ideologies (6). As a result, orientalism became a proper subject to be studied by those who wish to become expert at representing Orientals. The experts or rather the Orientalists who emerged in these studies were considered authorities. The imperialists relied upon them in the matters of colonialism. These orientalist made career out of it. They invented a new history and new culture in which the colonizer was a supreme being and the colonized was the one to be dominated for their own good.

These themes of Orientalism remain the same even in different eras. They may have changed their form; however, the underlying structures remained similar. Writers colour their work with their individual style and their societal norms. Said has employed the terms “latent” and “manifest” Orientalism in order to demonstrate the “imaginative assumption of Orientalism and its specific examples and effects” (McLeod 41). According to him, Latent Orientalism explicates the imaginations and dreams regarding the Orient which remains perpetual over centuries; whereas, manifest Orientalism analyses various examples regarding Orientalist representations that were constructed during different eras (E. Said, *Orientalism* 206). Basically, Orientalism may seem to change during various eras, for instance, works of E.M Forster and Joseph Conrad may seem entirely divergent, however, their presumptions regarding East and West, and the Orient are connected to century's old tradition of Orientalism. McLeod elaborates this by saying that latent Orientalism is similar to a ‘blue print’ from which variegated versions arise. If different authors depict the Orient, they get inspiration from a specific set of assumptions irrespective of styles they select. The latent Orientalism comprised stereotypes of the Orient and the Orientals and the manifest orientalism referred to the application of those fantasies to

the page. Said has elaborated six stereotypes in his book *Orientalism* (1979). Firstly, the Orient will remain constant. The Orientals are remote from process of evolution and they will never change (McLeod 41). In other words, they will remain engulfed in the primitiveness. This means that if a westerner pays a visit to oriental land that person will go back to medieval age. Secondly, the Orientals are entirely different and thus strange. Hence, if the West stands for civilization and scientific advancement, then the East is a place that is remote from this development and will remain stuck in antiquity. Oriental people do not belong to one race, ethnicity, nation, and religion; they come from diverse backgrounds. Owing to this, various insulting stereotypes have been generated which include assumptions regarding innate features and attitudes. For instance, an Arab is represented as vicious and brutal, Indian is portrayed as indolent, African is addicted to sex, and Chinese are represented as indecipherable. Basically, in this entire process, individuality of a person is discarded and the Orient is judged on the basis of race, nation, etc. These stereotypes, propagated through the project of Orientalism, are demonstrative of its essentializing propensity. In addition to these stereotypes, gendered stereotypes were also constructed that propagated Oriental's drastic strangeness, and its want of decency; for instance, McLeod studies that "effeminate Oriental male or the sexually lascivious exotic Oriental female" (42). The Oriental male is represented as less of a male which renders him a ludicrous parody of opposite sex. Oriental female, on the other hand, is depicted as entirely or partially naked so as to reveal her immodesty, and sexually corrupt nature. In both above-mentioned instances, the Orient does not meet the standard of western gender codes; men are considered to be energetic, strong, and gallant, whereas, female must be docile, moral, uncorrupted and innocent. These gendered stereotypes make essentializing nature of Orientalism conspicuous.

In the post-colonial era, the critics have been deconstructing the colonial canon to demonstrate how textual representation conveyed latent Orientalism. Large number of the novels has been analyzed to expose the Orientalist representation. Jane Austen's novels are also political according to Said. Her novel *Mansfield Park* demonstrates how the colonial money sustains lifestyle of the Bertram's (E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* 62). Camu, a French-Algerian writer, in his work *The Stranger* (1942) propagates colonialist ideology; on the surface the novel is about the meaningless that engulfs the world after WWII. Nevertheless, with the inception of

post colonialism the novel has come under scrutiny. In course of entire novel, male native Algiers are essentialized and delineated as “Group of Arabs” (Camus 40). They are basically divested of their individuality and are denied their identity; for instance, Karagic notes that a reader never discovers the name of the Arab who is murdered by Meursault (9). This representation is dehumanizing where the French colonialists have proper names and personal traits whereas, natives are just collectively called Arab (10). Just as men are essentialized, native women are also essentialized when they are described as Moorish. Hence, native male is represented as hostile and native female is represented as exotic. Furthermore, he always sides with the French colonialist; for instance, he kills Arab who is the brother of Moorish mistress of Raymond. According to Azar, he sides with Raymond for no reason and this is interpreted as his loyalty to the French colonialist (13). These stereotypical representations reveal that the novel which up till now has been read as existentialist novel is rather perpetuating colonial discourse.

The above texts give only a glimpse into how the colonized were represented by the colonizers as they are written mainly by the English writers. Apart from them, Russian imperialists have also Othered the North Caucasus of Russia. Nevertheless, their stereotypical representations have not been afforded as much attention as English or American representations. Russian writers Othered the people of Caucasus by representing them as savages. Pushkin’s poem “The Prisoner of the Caucasus” demonstrates that how Russian literature Orientalized the region. In the poem, a wounded Russian officer, imprisoned by Caucasian people, is left unattended which has been represented as demonstration of their savageness. In addition to that, feminized image of the region is reinforced when a maiden falls in love with the officer. This has been a major trend in colonial discourse where a woman falls in love with the colonizer which represents that the colonized are inherently inferior and the colonizer is superior and owing to this, the colonized is attracted to the dominant colonizer.

Another prominent Russian writer who visited Caucasus and wrote about it was Tolstoy. He was sent as a cadet to fight in Caucasus in 1817’s war. Though he was not against Caucasians; however, his want of knowledge made him write Orientalist remarks (Al Hooti 4). His novel Hadji Murad is about Hadji Murad who is an outcast from his own people of Caucasus. He seeks help of Russia in order to save

his family. Reinforcing Caucasian stereotypes, he represents Caucasians as savages who cut off thieves' hands and believe in blood vengeance (4). In addition to the Caucasian men, Tolstoy has stereotypically represented the women of the region; for instance, they have been depicted as "stupid, unreliable, weak, and untrustworthy" (6). The analysis shows that Tolstoy, the Russian writer, fails to extricate himself from the Orientalist discourse which corresponds to Said's view that the writer cannot detach himself from the society. The traditions of Orientalism and their manifestations in western writings have a mutual relationship. Tolstoy images basically evoke fear in the readers. In this manner, he contributes to the construction of the Orient. Furthermore, this also demonstrates that the Russian representation of its other follow in the footsteps of other imperialists as explicated in *Orientalism* (1979).

2.2 Critique of Orientalism

The publication of *Orientalism* (1979) was a momentous occasion in the history of postcolonialism for it exposes the colonial discourse with its powerful argument. Nevertheless, it has been criticized by numerous critics for various reasons. Firstly, critics contend that it makes a uniform assumption regarding representation of the colonized which have been different in different periods. This reservation is expressed by Dennis Porter in his essay "Orientalism and its problems" (2013) Said postulates that although the forms of Orientalism have been diverse, they share similar underlying structure that east is the threat (152). Said analyzes various Oriental writings from fourteenth century Dante up to Twentieth century writers. His essay, basically, urges the reader to ask following questions: Is it possible that all Oriental writings contain similar latent assumptions? Is it possible to homogenise this enormous archive? Has nothing altered? Said work fails to take into account singular historical moments. Robert J. C. Young, in his book *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (2001), summarizes the entire argument by saying that Said's statements about colonial discourse is totalizing and it fails to afford explanation of wide range of differences that exist (391). This critique is also corroborated by John MacKenzie who points out in *Orientalism: History, Theory, and Arts* (1995) that Said neglects diverse conditions of regions (11). From this analysis, one may infer that Said is staunch believer of unchanging nature of latent Orientalism which he privileges. Nevertheless, MacKenzie contends that there have been plentiful writers who have been respectful and everybody have not disparaged the Orient. Aijaz Ahmad also

voices that Said fails to take into account the colonized who withstood and rejected the colonial discourse and its representation of the colonized (qtd. in Mcleod 44). Furthermore, Said is of opinion that process of stereotyped representation has been passively accepted by the East. This demonstrates that he has neglected the dissident voices that arose among the colonized people. Said does not examine the ways in which the colonized responded to the colonial discourse. This want of attention to various forms of resistance is the major failing of Said's argument. Similar issue is discussed by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman who say that the presence of the colonized as an agent of resistance has little existence in Said's book (6). Critics accuse Said of discarding the voices of the colonized as insignificant. In addition to ignoring the resistance of the colonized, Said fails to consider the fact that some of the members of the western institutions categorically rejected colonialism. They stood against the atrocities of the colonizers advocated the end of oppressive and brutal colonization. Dennis Porter in his essay "Orientalism and its Problems" and Bart Moore-Gilbert claim that Said makes an essentialized and over generalized statement when he says that all of the Europe has Eurocentric and imperialistic perspective (Moore-Gilbert 50). In Said's defense, he may not have acclaimed those resistant writings for their works had not created any difference.

2.3 Neo-Orientalism

The representation of Islam and the Muslims was a part of European Orientalist discourse owing to Crusades. In the early modern England, Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) was represented as warmongering and violent (Jenkins 2). This representation of him, according to Daniel Norman, Constitutes polemic biography (100). This reveals that misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims is not a new phenomenon; rather, it has been occupying the consciousness of the west since crusades. However, its analysis has acquired paramount importance after the surge of post-colonialism.

Ian Jenkins elaborately examines the controversial accounts of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and Islam within initial modern writings. These representations were vital constituent in the rejection of the principles of Muslims. The polemic account in the *chanson de geste* (dating from 12th to 15th century) stereotypically represents Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) as a pagan idol, and thus establishes the two

chief tropes of misrepresenting the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) in medieval and early modern literature. In course of entire era according to Jenkins, these stereotypes about him existed and comprised of quoting, redacting, rephrasing and reorienting them in order to attain hegemony (4). The religion of Islam was represented as a threat to the European world and the last Prophet as deceptive. In one of the polemic accounts the representation of Prophet Muhammad as a manipulator of religion for political purpose is evident; Giles Fletcher in *The Policy of the Turkish* (1597) describes the political ambitions of Prophet Muhammad (SA.W); during his conversation with Serguis, Muhammad privately talks of coining a new religion (190). This account describes Prophet Muhammad as irreverent and corrupt person. In yet another Text *On the War with Turks*, Published in 1529, writer talks about dangerous bewitching effect of Islam and Muslims; Islam is so deceptive and treacherous that no cleric, monk, or priest will be able to remain Christian if they spend time with Turks (Jenkins 58). In almost all of the plays, besides above-mentioned constructions of Islam, there were themes of women oppression, polygamy, and Islamic paradise. The perception of Islam as seductive religion was propagated in order to foster the anxiety regarding conversion. The veil was regarded as restraint and suppression of liberty by the European writers. The above review illustrate that these representations changed little over the centuries rather, they have been repeated.

Although these negative images regarding Islam had been employed throughout European colonial period, the phenomenon took a new dimension when America became a superpower. Contrary to the first type of Orientalist discourse that was principally produced by the European writers, the second type, according to Kerboua, developed in the United States of America (16). According to him, this new kind of Orientalism became visible after the culmination of the Second World War. The officials and academia that were responsible for formulating foreign policy began to consider Islamic world as a territory of paramount consequence: financial interests, security reasons, etc. In course of initial moments of cold war, a geographical shift occurred with regards to the source of production of Orientalism. The United States imported the European Orientalist ideas into their country in order to effectively control Arabian land and its oil. Therefore, a new kind of Orientalism commenced that was effectively utilized in the cold war. In 1946, the foundations of Middle East

Institute were laid down in order to focus on USA's interest in the Middle East. It primarily focused on politics around the globe and interests of America in the region. In order to achieve these goals, it launched *Middle East Journal*; its function was to publish analysis regarding consequence of the region. Basically, it tackled questions of power and assessed factors affecting this area. It must be noted at this point that the Islamic world was not the only concern; rather, the Islamic world was a small part of much broader framework of America's role around the globe; as it emerged as a superpower and the status necessitated that its officials and academia display concern about people of other nations. In this context, the onerous task to provide the information about Islamic world became the task of people who belonged to the informal grid of connoisseurs who travelled to America after serving their European masters. According to Jacobs these experts were transnationals whose opinions, interests, ideology and knowledge about Islamic world were similar (5). They basically had similar political interests in Islamic countries and hence, they united with each other and thus, emerged as influential and respected voices on the Islamic countries. Jacobs, in his book *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of American Foreign Policy, 1918-1967 (2011)*, refers to distinguished European professionals; for instance, Hamilton, Gibb, and Bernard Lewis. Gibb and Lewis rendered services to the new superpower; Gibb attained a prominent position at Harvard and Lewis at Princeton. They organized a systemic network in order to convey their knowledge to the public and policy makers. They presented America as demolisher of tyranny, the role which was previously afforded to European imperialists. This time the burden is on the shoulders of America which has to fulfill new responsibilities around the globe.

After the incident of 9/11, the neo-Orientalism became enormously consequential in order to promote the framework of Islam versus the West which has been termed as "clash of civilization". Critics like Bernard Lewis openly declared their prejudice against Islam and Muslims by depicting the Islamic world as a menace to the west. He states "Either we bring them freedom, or they destroy us" (Martin). This kind of representation has shrewdly connected extremism to Islam and the Muslims and consequently, have Othered them. Critics like Lewis professed to wage the "war on terror" that was perpetrated by the Muslims and it paved way for Islamophobia which is "a feeling of apprehension, discomfort, and to some extent fear and hatred about all that deals with Islam and the Muslims" (Karboua 23). These neo-

Orientalists completely re-constructed Islam and Muslim identities in order to dominate them. In the contemporary era, neo-Orientalism comprises knowledge, information, examinations, and remarks that are constructed and propagated by union of scholars, academics, influencers, and political personnel who has robust relationship with the establishment. In this manner, it is ideological. Wajahat et al. and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR, 2013) has documented how esteemed organizations and scholars are funded to invent and propagate stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims (Wajahat, Clifton and Duss 2). It is consequential to observe that these representations aim at dominating Islam and Muslims.

The image of America as the harbinger of liberty and demolisher of Islamic tyranny has also been endorsed by Hollywood. McAlister contends that Hollywood, from 1950 to 1980, played an instrumental role in the dissemination of positive image of America (43-83). The incorporation of biblical epics into the movies conveyed the magnanimous role of the USA around the globe. Moreover, the binaries of democracy/totalitarianism, liberty/slavery, were perpetuated and were cardinal to the foreign policy of America. Another critic Peter Morey also discusses these misrepresentations in his book *Framing Muslim: Stereotyping and representation after 9/11 (2011)* that how various Hollywood films and series, like *Nest of Angels* and *Dirty War*, disseminate the image of Muslims as potential suicide Bombers. The Imam at the mosques quotes the Quran in order to kindle terrorism among the Muslim youth (Morey and Yaqin 160-161). Films, in the contemporary era, are accessible to all the people around the globe. With such large audience, they are susceptible of molding and shaping masses' perception. They have essentially become a useful instrument to promote American imperialism and Islamophobia.

Shaheen, another critic in his book *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies People (2001)* discusses twentieth century American movie representations of the United States and the Orient. Through an organized and meticulous examination of more than a thousand American films, Shaheen illustrates how Arabs and Muslims are stereotypically portrayed. These fictional representations, according to him, have the power to alter the reality and the American orientalist are doing it by naturalizing these depictions (6-10).

In addition to critics and Hollywood, the western writers have also contributed to neo-Orientalist agenda through their writings; for instance, John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006) is the perfect example of subjective representation of Islam and Muslims. In the novel, he constructs a binary between modernity and Islamic fundamentalism. It represents Islam as an extremist religion which persuades people to commit act of violence (Arif and Ahmad 560). Dr. Awan is of the view that this trend of misrepresentation in fiction and other forms of art is not a mere coincidence (527). Rather, these stereotypes employed in the portrayal of Islam and Muslims performs an ideological function which is to dominate their territory. Updike, in his novel, misquotes verses from the Quran. Numerous verses are about the God's fury at the non-Muslims and thus, contribute to the reinforcing opinions that Islam is an alien religion. For example, he employs one hundred and four Surah which is regarding crushing fire for the infidels (528). In quoting these verses, he does not provide evidence for he is obsessed with caricaturing Islam and linking Islamic symbols with the cause of trouble. He shows that intolerance, terrorism, and extremism are due to Islamic commands. Likewise, Maqbool Ahmed in his study reveals that the novel represents lopsided view of the west about Islam and the Muslims. Muslims, with few exceptions, are represented as intolerant, despotic, and belligerent to the west and its democratic values (557). Updike stereotyped them as fanatics, fundamentalists, and against the modernity. They are like puppets whose strings are moved by him. He puts those words in their mouth which belongs to the neo-Orientalist discourse. In a nutshell, this novel is the epitome of Dag tuastad's theses of barbarism in which religion and culture is the cause of extremism.

Edward Said also notices this new wave of neo-Orientalism and pens down his observations in the book entitled *Covering Islam* (1997). He states that self-proclaimed experts on Islamic countries have suddenly acquired prominent positions in the academia, politics, etc. for, during the crisis, they are called to preach the standard neo-Orientalist notions regarding Islam and Muslims (E. Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* xi). This demonstrates the world is witnessing the extraordinary revival of canonical neo-Orientalist ideas at a time when the perpetuation of stereotypes about a certain racial or cultural group receives severe backlash. Nevertheless, Islam and Muslims are exceptions which means that one may propagate deprecating stereotypes about them

without repercussions. Without proper research, people make contemptible statements against Islam and Muslims and they are further exaggerated by media. Owing to this, the word fundamentalism has become synonymous with Islam; basically, it has acquired such close association with Islam that every person sees Islam and fundamentalism as similar words. This association is ensured by stereotypical representations of the religion and its people. Islam and Muslims are being essentialized and are being reduced to few negative characteristics; violent, primitive, women oppressors, blood thirsty, etc (xvi). Said illustrates by giving the example of former National Security Council member Peter Rodman who states that today the West is challenged by primitive force and this primitive force is filled with hatred of the western values and Christendom. He, further, argues that the Islamic world is riddled with societal divisions, exasperated by the fact that it is militarily inferior to the west, and feels resentment at the global influence of the western culture. However, Rodman fails to support his argument with evidence which in any case is not imperative for Islam and Muslims are already convicted in the court of the western media and literature. Pipes also contends that the menace in the form of Islam and Muslims are hanging like the sword of Damocles over the west; they are aggressive, absurd, families are repressive, leaders are psychopathological and unbending. These neo-Orientalist stereotypes are far from truth. It, as mentioned earlier and corroborated by Said, endeavors to portray Muslims as one frighteningly collective person infuriated at the west that has distressed its primitive tranquil rule (xxxii). These kinds of representations all prevalent not because they are true; rather, prominent departments wish it to depict it like this. Moreover, as these kinds of allegations do not require any evidence, numerous people from all walks of life find it profitable industry. It is owing to the fact that it emanates excitement and hence, may be utilized for both political and entertainment purposes. After thorough analysis Said infers that this kind of representation runs through the veins of the west. It has attained authority in all walks of life. Anyone who wishes to talk about Islam and Muslims draws from the established neo-Orientalist canon.

Fakhar Alam studies this representation in Harold Bergsma's trilogy: *One Way to Pakistan* (2007), *An Oath of Vengeance* (2008), and *The Opium Eaters* (2009). His trilogy has been hailed as great masterpiece in the west for revealing abductions, rapes, raucously voluptuous images of men, corruption, violence, and oppression of

women in Pakistan. *On the Way to Pakistan* (2007) delineates ubiquitous corruption in Pakistani society. It is portrayed as a primitive Islamic society that is in complete disagreement with the modern world. This country is not acquainted with basic human rights, for Alam notes that, women are represented as being suppressed under the reign of sex-starved and barbaric men (2). His second novel *An Oath of Vengeance* (2008) further elaborates the struggle of women named Maria and Chamuk. Maria is a wife of an American doctor in Pakistan; whereas, Chamuk is a tribal girl. Both of them are represented as struggling against barbaric patriarchal society. His third novel *The Opium Eaters* (2009) gives an insight into how opium facilitates Taliban and religious extremists in war against America. It also reveals the endeavour of Americans to decimate this network while Pakistani and Afghani governments show disinclination to do so. Robert McMahon categorizes *On Way to Pakistan* as an artistic piece and extols Bergsma's effort to provide an insight into real Pakistani society. He maintains that Bergsma has represented a genuine, intense, and inclusive image of the country where corruption, rape, terrorism, and violation of human rights are ubiquitous (24). McMahon, moreover, exalts his profound knowledge of Pakistan and its cultural practices as the novel contains characters from all walks of life and therefore is an insightful novel. Tom Stoup pens down a similar review. Another western critic writes about *An Oath of Vengeance* that the novel paints a real picture of Pakistan on the canvas (Alam 26). Although the trilogy has been adulated by the western critics, Alam applies the neo-Orientalist lens to analyze the novel. He concludes that Bergsma has followed in the footsteps of other neo-Orientalists (95). Though, he stereotypically represents Islamic law, culture and teachings, he seems to be mostly preoccupied with Muslim women and their clothes. He demonizes the veil by representing it as a prison in which women languish and also claims that women are compelled by men to wear it. This is manifestly a demonstration of neo-Orientalist discourse in which Muslim women are portrayed as oppressed in need of help. This is one of the most common themes in neo-Orientalist discourse and Bergsma has cleverly utilized it. In addition to this theme, Alam states that the trilogy plays an instrumental role in the dissemination of a distorted image of Islam and Muslims; for instance, he misrepresents Islam as a demonic religion and condemns the Islamic law along with every facet of Islamic society and attributes excessive sexuality of men to the religion. The entire trilogy depicts "a provocative and volatile analysis of an entire religion and its followers" (96). It clearly supports

unappeasable abhorrence towards the Muslims. Alam describes it as a sinister of all snags that utilizes sloppy statistics in order to assist in prolonged existence of neo-orientalist discourse.

Driss Ridouani, in her article “The Representation of Arab and Muslims in Western Media” (2011), reports that in the present era Islam has become traumatic news. During the recent years, they have represented, characterized, scrutinized and have drawn erroneous conclusion regarding Islam and the Muslims (2). Arabs and Muslims are relentlessly misrepresented. Contrary to these inaccurate views, Islam stands for peace and it is cardinal in maintaining the harmony. Nevertheless, when peace is not respected, then Muslims are allowed to conduct jihad against the oppressors, the notion which has also been distorted by the western media. It has been utilized to perpetuate already existing stereotypes about Muslims; barbaric, violent, and bloodthirsty. Thus, Jihad is connected with the act of terrorism.

Apart from Western scholars and intellectuals, native writers have also been constructing defamatory statements against Islam and the Muslim world. They have endorsed the agenda of the Western imperialists and thus attained authenticity. Behdad and Williams maintain that these self-proclaimed native scholars represent Islam and Muslims in a way which is similar to neo-Orientalist discourse in order to become eminent (286). According to Dabashi, they feign authority over the politics of their native land. In the contemporary world which is against Islam and Muslims, they adroitly accept and deny their origins (16). They inform on their countries in the name of defending human rights and they blatantly demonize their own culture in order to earn space in the foreign land. Native informers are presented to the Western audience as the voices of dissent against the Oppressive Islam.

Ibn Warraq published a series of essays with provocative titles, for instance, “Why I am not a Muslim” (1995), “The Quest for Historical Muhammad” (2000), etc. In these essays he launches attack on Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), and the Quran with utmost zeal. Dabashi states that this anti-Muslim rhetoric is of great consequence in the context of clash of civilizations (43). It is owing to these ardent claims the Muslims and Islam are otherized. By depicting them anti-modern and violent, an entire new civilization is constructed as a target only to be subdued by modern and civilized west. Another neo-Orientalist, Azar Nafisi’s *Reading Lolita in*

Tehran (2003) draws on similar neo-Orientalist framework. In the book she recalls that how she protected seven students in Tehran by teaching them canonical texts of western literature. The novel comprises an uncomplicated plot. The narrator of the story belongs to an affluent family who has acquired education at western universities. She returns to Iran and becomes a professor of Literature at an Iranian University; nevertheless, she soon grows weary of restriction in the Islamic state and therefore, resigns from her post. After resignation, she invites seven intelligent women to her house in order to teach them western literature. In the process, she and the seven students connect the incidents of novel to their own daily predicaments. Nafisi used to live in Tehran, but later on she migrated to America where she discovered new opportunities in the department of Orientalism. According to Dabashi, in the aftermath of 9/11, she got recruited by the U.S militant ideologues to perpetuate their neo-Orientalist agenda (72). At present, she teaches at an American university. He notes that her novel was published just before the invasion of Iraq which demonstrates that the publication and promotion of novel had an ideological purpose. By proclaiming to having raised legitimate concerns regarding predicament of Muslim women in the Islamic world, she validates America's fight against Islamic terrorism in order to save the nation and Muslim women. This validates that the novel played an instrumental role in legitimizing the invasion on Islamic country. Thus according to Dabashi, with the publication one single novel, Nafisi has achieved three treacherous outcomes; Firstly, she denigrates the entire culture of revolution, secondly, she helps the advancement of American empire and thirdly, she creates the consent to imperialist domination within America.

Critics like Hamid Dabashi, Amin Malak, and Anour Majed scrutinize the neo-Orientalist dimension in Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (1988). Although critically acclaimed in the west, it angered not the Muslim masses but also academia. Rushdie was born in India but became an Englishman by his residence, education, and affiliations. When he was a boy, he would dream of living in England. However, after dwelling for so many years in England, he believes that India is his home. His religious identity is even more convoluted. He was born to Muslim parents; however, he proclaims that he was never raised as a Muslim but as a secular. At present, he is a secular Muslim. He reveals that at the age of fifteen he suddenly lost his faith and

embraced wonderful traditions of secularism (Majed 12). By traditions of secularism, he means unlimited freedom in his writings.

The Satanic Verses (1988) is regarded as Rushdie's most provocative novel. Before this novel, he was considered as a secular Asian Englishman who was inspired by Bombay and was pleased to write about his homeland in *Midnight's Children*. Before the publication of *Satanic Verses*, he was the Indian immigrant writer in England who endeavoured to adapt to the new cultural environment. He represented himself as an ally to Indians, Muslims and Asians who were being subjected to prejudice and discrimination. Nevertheless, after the publication of *Satanic Verses*, according to Amin Malak, he is not the voice of those people anymore rather, he is relishing a celebrity lifestyle (109). Another critic Ali Mazrui reviews that Rushdie is now considered as cultural traitor after the publication of *Satanic Verses* for all Muslims believe that he has abused Islam in his novel (118). In addition to that, numerous critics believe that Rushdie has employed neo-Orientalist discourse in the novel; for instance, deprecating names; Mahound for the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H), jahilia for Mecca. Majed says that the novel is an attempt to glorify secularism and belittle Islam for negative stereotypes are utilized in order to represent Islam (18); for instance, the two characters of the novel, Salman the Persian and Baal, leave their faith and embrace atheism and secularism. Secularism is sturdily connected with atheism in the novel when another character Gibreel Farishta resolves to leave Islam, he fills his plate with pork, bacon, and ham which are considered to be steaks of atheism and secularism. Likewise, when Salahuddin accepts atheism, he feels there is something inside him which will efface his memories of worship and now, he will do his best without any god. This, according to Majed, demonstrates that the binary between Islam and secularism is the foundation of novel which is evident in the characterization of Salahuddin Chamcha (19). Chamcha thinks that secularism stands for modernity, reason, self-discipline, and quintessence of beauty and that is why he leaves that old idea of God behind. Basically, it is implied that secularism appreciates reason, modernity, and beauty; whereas, Islam does not.

According to Yacoubi, Rushdie's attitude towards Islam and Conrad's attitude towards Africa bear resemblance (202). Both of them are immigrants and proficient in English language. Chinua Achebe's essay "An image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is quintessence of postcolonial analysis which could be

applied to Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (1988). Achebe scrutinizes the novel impartially and acclaims Conrad's writing skills. Nevertheless, Achebe uses the African eyes, which Yacoubi call the eyes of the colonized, in order to analyze the novel from the perspective of postcolonialism. Similarly, Rushdie's novel could be scrutinized by following this model.

In addition to above mentioned critics, Amin Malak argues that Rushdie's affair proves that a text cannot be separated from its context (108). Consequently, by writing a book for consumption of the westerners, he has qualified himself for the position of privileged native informer.

Another critic Anour Majid states that Rushdie's novel, which is being acclaimed as a great postmodern novel, is actually speeding up the process of secularism (38).

Another study conducted by Sadaf Mehmood and Fauzia Janjua examines neo-Orientalism in Pakistani fiction and the analysis reveals that the numerous works strengthen the discourse of neo-Orientalism through stereotypical representations. They analyze Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke* (2000), Uzma Aslam's *Thinner than Skin* (2012) and *Trespassing* (2003), Bina Shah's *Slum Child* (2010), Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004), and *The Holy Woman* (2001) by Qaisra Shahraz. Their analysis demonstrates that the writers in order to attain international acclaim draws on stereotypes constructed by the west. Pakistan society and its people are misrepresented as uncivilized, barbaric, violent, irrational, fundamentalists, and exotic. They maintain that both male and female characters are portrayed as despicable, Machiavellian, venal, and immoral that lead to somber and grim end of the plots (16). This kind of depiction demonstrates their alliance to neo-orientalist discourse for the writers adulate the western culture and this is demonstrative of the fact that their representation is stereotypical. They have in fact sold their ethnicity for international acclaim.

Egypt is another country which is under the attack of neo-Orientalists who believe that religion must be left behind in order to make the country modern and democratic. Zahed in his thesis *Internalized Islamophobia: The Discursive Construction of "Islam" and "Observant Muslims" in the Egyptian Public Discourse* (2019) reports that elite class of Egypt have been inclined to create a consensus that

religion should be left behind so as to make it modern Egypt. They connect Islam with violence, irrationality, misogyny and thereby disseminate neo-Orientalist discourse. He concludes after thorough analysis that media has created the discourse of nationality that excludes observant Muslims (31). They entirely eliminate and refuse to accept the constitutive role that Islam plays in the lives of majority of Egyptians by misrepresenting Islam as the cause of deterioration of the society and observant Muslims as the Other. Islam is represented to have created difficulties and foster terrorism. He reports that secularist intelligentsia and media have combined forces in order to naturalize the neo-orientalist discourse in the country (161). Through this discourse, they endeavor to legitimize the exclusion of Islam from the society and normalize and naturalize neo-Orientalist discourse.

Although, enormous analysis and studies have been conducted on the western attitude towards Islam and the Muslims, Russian attitude has not been given much deservedly space on the pages. The above-mentioned stereotypes are also prevalent in Russia and in the recent years, it has been effectively utilized in the rhetoric of “war on terror” to commit genocide of Chechans and Dagestani Muslims in the North Caucasus as corroborated by Human Rights Watch. The region and its people have been portrayed as primitive and brutes by writers such as Pushkin and Tolstoy. Anon, in the article “Islamic Identities in Post-Soviet Russia: Realities and Representations, Russia’s” (2010) literature has been portraying Islam and the Muslims as extremists and fundamentalist. Thrillers like *Gospodin Geksogen* (2002), *Dzhakhannam* (2006), and *The Mosque of Parisian NotreDame* (2005) represent Islam and the Muslims stereotypically (9). *Gospodin Geksogen* (2002), and *Dzhakhannam* (2006) are about Islamic extremists who are attempting to obtain nuclear weapons. The novels were instant best sellers and placed next to *Harry potter*. They also target Wahabism as the source of terrorism. Anon concludes that the Russian writers represents essentialized view of Muslims; they are misrepresented as violent and barbaric. The writer Elena Chudinova openly demonstrates her hatred for Islam; in one of the interviews, she said the Russia is for the Christ lovers (9). Owing to its strategic position, Dagestan and regions of the North Caucasus were invaded by the Russian imperialists with the desire to construct a secularized identity of the region. Nevertheless, Imam Shamil led a resistance against the Russian empire in order to demonstrate that the Muslim-majority region wished to have Islamic identity. This resistance was subdued. Since

then, the region has been witnessing various resistance movements which are labeled as Wahhabism and Islamists movements. This notion is also propagated through literature by neo-Orientalist and native informers. Hence, it may be inferred that Russia has neo-Orientalist attitude towards the North Caucasus.

2.4 Alisa Ganieva

Alisa Arkadyevna Ganieva (1985) was born in an Avar family in Moscow. However, her family returned to Dagestan where she received her early education in Makhachkala. In the year 2002, she enrolled at Maxim Gorky Literature Institute and presently, she is engaged as a literary critic. She was awarded for her debut novel *Salaam, Dalgat!* (2010) that portrays the difficult relation of people with Islam. In addition to that, she has also penned down numerous stories and fairy tales. The Guardian has critically acclaimed her style.

Ganieva's selected works have recently emerged on the literary scene; therefore, large number of critique does not exist. The researcher has hence, studied the available reviews.

Ganieva's Novel *Mountain and the Wall*, published in 2015, has been acclaimed as a remarkable novel for it represents religious violence and intolerance among the lives of Dagestani people who are compelled to choose between evils (deepvellum). Basically, Ganieva narrates the story of a society which is torn apart owing to extremism. It is a story of a young reporter Shamil whose life is entirely transformed when he hears about Russia's decision to build a wall to separate Dagestan owing to religious extremism.

Nadia Beard adulates the dystopian novel for accurate portrayal of the condition of Dagestan where religious extremism is erasing its tradition and customs (Ganieva, Alisa Ganieva: meet the visionary author pulling back the curtain on Dagestan and beyond). Women freedom has been restricted and they have to endure honour killings if they protest against it. In addition to that, she extols the novel critically due to incorporation of postmodern element: magical realism. Rokhel-Meer is an alluring and enchanted village on the mountain which has been represented as a dream. On this mountain, wedding celebration occurs and all people, whether dead or alive, attend these festivities. The fascinating mountain is basically a yearning for

glorious past which is erased by religious extremists who has divided the people of Dagestan.

Lastly, postcolonial dystopian and utopian discourses in the novel have also been analyzed. According to Lappela, Dagestan is dystopian society owing to the fact that it is tightly controlled by religious authorities (105). This religious authoritarianism destroys Dagestan and plunged it in chaos. Basically, Ganieva problematizes the theme of dystopia in the context of postcolonialism. This postcolonial standpoint is also constructed through intertextuality and female characters. Marzahana and Asya both reject dystopian society and sees Russian rule as liberation (114). Furthermore, Ganieva has employed quotations from various texts; for instance, “stylistic parodies of Soviet socialist realism, a parodic romantic poem, a quotation from a 1980s’ diary, a romantic national song, and a tabloid text from the Emirate” (Lappela 114). The inclusion of these texts emphasizes the multidimensional nature of the novel and it also reveals the Russian’s depiction of Dagestan. Lappela concludes that there exists a dialogic relationship between dystopian and utopian discourses for there is transition from one to other throughout the novel. In a nutshell, the rise of fundamentalism is the main theme in the novel in which Ganieva delineates rise of Islam and its sects and how their rifts have destroyed the peace in the region. Basically, it portrays a dystopian society which comes in to being as result of dictatorship of religious authorities. However, the characters of the novel, Marzahan and Asya, reject this dystopia; Marzahana flees to the plains and Asya wishes to migrate to other country.

Another selected novel *Bride and Groom (2018)* revolves around the wedding of Marat and Patya who returns to Dagestan in order to get married according to their parent’s desire. However, they fall in love with each other and somehow persuade their parents; nevertheless, on the day of wedding, Marat is arrested for being supporter of salafists who are considered as terrorists. Throughout the novel their “courtship unfolds against the social and political tensions around them, which form the backbone of the story and ultimately determine its outcome” (Furman). Dagestani literature, until now, has been non-existent when it comes to Dagestani literature. Ganieva’s novel represent heritage of Dagestan which is being threatened by political-religious tensions.

This is Ganieva's second novel which continues to explore Dagestani region; however, the centre of plot is occupied by theme of marriage. The novel has all the "fixings of a modern-day Dagestani comedy of manners, rife with the mishaps of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* and the providential air of a Pushkinian tale (think "The Snowstorm"), where chance, more than love, serves as the arbiter of fate" (Kapp). In addition to that, Metaphorical dreams, a drunken boy, and a strange encounter between Patya and a potential suitor foreshadow deeper spiritual dimensions. According to Ganieva, there exists an element of Sufism in the novel: wine. Hannah reviews this element by saying that Sufism is wide spread in the novel; for instance, Khalilbek, one of the characters, has been portrayed as Sufi and has been compared with Khidr. He is simultaneously depicted as villain and saint. There is a story in which Moses condemned Khidr for killing a child; however, Khidr responded that child had been destined to become a brutal murderer. Similarly, Khalilbek serves to represent that numerous ostensibly heinous actions are merciful. This, according to Weber, demonstrates the presence of Sufism in his character (Weber). Another critic Pickard also corroborates that Sufism and wine are interconnected and that is throughout the novel this connection is emphasized (Pickard). From above review, one may infer that Ganieva, like other neo-Orientalists, deliberately links wine with Sufism in order to represent secularized view of the religion; the religion which is compatible with imperialist Russian culture.

The novel also delineates how the clash between oppositional mosques, violence at the hand of Muslims gradually leads towards a dystopian society where religious feuds results in a bleak future for Marat and Patya.

Above critical review of literature divulges that a large number of studies has not been conducted on Ganieva's works and the critics and the reviewers who have analyzed her works infer that she exposes the religious extremism and fundamentalism of the Muslim-majority society. This demonstrates that not only the critics and the reviewers have explicitly approved that Islam is primitive and intolerant religion but also have failed to conduct a profound analysis of the works in relation to the time of production of novels and history of Islamic identity of the region. Basically, those studies manifestly neglect the centrality of Islam to the region and its depiction in the selected works. Owing to this, the present study utilizes the theoretical framework of Islamic Postcolonialism to analyze Ganieva's selected

works. It is imperative to shed light on the representational practices of neo-Orientalists to give a voice to those at the margins and furthermore, to counter the distorted images of Islam and the Muslims.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An elaborate research methodology is imperative in order to conduct systematic and dispassionate research. It guides the researcher in the process of analysis and interpretation. This qualitative study follows advocacy approach emerged in 1980s and it states that marginalized people of a society should be given voice. In addition to that, it assists marginalized or suppressed groups in attaining freedom from shackles of media, and other relationships of power (Creswell 10). This demonstrates that this approach is political. The study in hand conducts a textual analysis of the selected texts in order to investigate the representation of the Muslims of the Dagestan and Islam and therefore, it is political.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The present research project focuses on the works of Hasan Majed, Hamid Dabashi and William and Behdad with the view of comprehending various representational practices and its impact on perception of Islam and Muslims. However, in order to attain insight into the phenomenon, it is imperative to gain the related knowledge about the term representation.

The term representation has been defined in the numerous ways. The first definition states that it is the reproduction of something; it may include pictures, tangible productions, and performances. It has also been elaborated as formulation of statements or discourse in order to influence decisions, actions and opinions, giving political tinge to the meaning of word and allures theorists from the various fields. They are interested in visual, aural, and textual representation of an event, an individual, or a group. Theorists, in addition to visual or aural forms, are more intrigued by textual representation: academic texts, novels, etc. as this form of representation is believed to have the power to shape or mold the opinions and actions of the masses. This opinion is corroborated by Beltran when she contends that images and words influence attitude of people (97). Another theorists Mitchell says: “representation is an extremely elastic notion, which extends all the way from a stone

representing a man to a novel representing the day in the life of several Dubliners” (13). Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences of learning explicates this notion by stating that it is knowledge generated to form and manipulate information (170). All these definitions converge on one conclusion that all forms of representation, expected to divulge reality, are constructed in order to communicate an ideology.

Contemporary world is regarded as a global village where meaning produced and distributed through representational process is not confined to one culture; rather it is exchanged between large numbers of culture. This increases the significance of representation manifolds especially in the field of postcolonialism which conducts the scrutiny of representation by the colonizers. Representational practices, as mentioned above, are ubiquitous in literature which employs various discursive techniques in order to inculcate a particular ideology in its reader. From above analysis one may infer that Language is a systematic representational system which uses signs and symbols in order to represent something ---- people, feelings, events, etc. Hence, the notion, with the help of language, is fundamental to the processes by which meaning is constructed thereby divulging that power and representation are interconnected; power produces representation and likewise, representation generates and authorizes power (Hall 6). After attaining liberation, the critics and writers of the formerly colonized states realized that they must dispel this inculcated sense of inferiority by examining their representation in the literature of their colonizers and its impact on the previously colonized people. This stimulated the birth of postcolonialism which regards these representations as Eurocentric and aims at scrutinizing the literature of the colonizers in order to investigate that how the systematic representation of the colonized played an instrumental role in the establishment and consolidation of the empire.

Said’s monumental work also focuses on the notion of representational practices, for instance stereotyping; “‘Stereotyped’ means ‘reduced to a few essentials. fixed in Nature by a few, simplified characteristics’” (Hall 249). Its function is thus to create binary oppositions whose function is to divide normal and abnormal through the process of naturalization. It is important representational strategy in order to breathe permanence in binaries for it obstructs the modification of meaning. Hall describes it as ideological framework. He explicates how slavery was naturalized during the 18th century; the representations of slaves and the colonized inculcated in

the people that white man should domineer over the black. Hall then further elaborates the difference between good slave and bad slave, good slave was represented as obedient to the master; whereas, the bad slave was represented as disobedient (245). In this manner, it not only maintains domination of the colonizers through fixed stereotypes, but also demonstrates the power of the colonizers over the Other. It represents that the colonizers are enlightened and hence, capable of portraying the colonized.

Although postcolonialism and its foundation Orientalism are regarded as a momentous achievement, it has been criticized by various Muslim critics for they contend postcolonialism is secular and therefore cannot take into account the priorities of Muslims. It is true that Said, in his book, *Covering Islam: How the Media and Experts Determine How We See the Rest of this World* (1997) Published by Vintage Books in 1997 elaborates how the western media portrays Islam and the Muslims; nevertheless, his support for Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* published in 1988 earned him criticism. In addition to that, in an interview compiled by Gauri Viswanathan, he has categorically declared that he is not a champion of Islam which he has been considered by numerous Muslims owing to his books *Covering Islam* and *Orientalism* (220). Religion, Said maintains, hinders absolute freedom which is necessary for criticism (382). Contrary to this, Islam places emphasis on freedom with responsibility. Said's view has disappointed large number of Muslim critics and they now believe that postcolonialism, if taken in isolation, is incapable of fulfilling the requirements of the Muslims.

Amin Malak delineates the oddness that exists in the relationship between Islam and postcolonialism. His book *Muslims Narratives and the Discourse of English* (2005) is replete with explications how the theory, owing to its secular stance sidelines religion - especially Islam. It fails to provide profound insight into activism of Islam. Basically, it entails "marginalization of religion as a force or factor with its own complex dynamics [which] reflects privileging a secular, Europe-American stance that seems to shape the parameters of postcolonial discourses" (17). Furthermore, in the aforementioned book he expresses his disillusionment with critics and writers who malign Islam under the façade of imagination and authorial distance (405). This exhibits that he raises extremely consequential debate in the book.

Anour Majid, in his article “Can the Postcolonial Critic Speak?” (1995) illustrates another flaw in the postcolonial theory, it is the limited knowledge of postcolonial critics regarding Islam; For example, Spivak, who guards Islam against intolerance and racism, does not possess understanding of Quran which is the cardinal text of Islam (9). Therefore, their limited knowledge of Islam along with their expertise in the western academia makes their interpretation susceptible. Majid firmly believes “postcolonial theory transforms itself into a discursive gesture that is simultaneously informed and co-opted by the very assumptions of western humanism it questions in the beginning” (11). Consequential to this, postcolonial critics are not considered to be reliable by many Muslims.

Similar to abovementioned critics, Wali Hassan, in his article “Postcolonial Theory and Modern Arabic Literature: Horizons of Application” (2002), explains the western limitations of the postcolonial theory and calls for its theorization. He is of opinion that postcolonial theory has evolved from four European schools of thought: Marxism, psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, and feminism” (47). This demonstrates that it is a European theory and consequently, verges on being neo-colonial and Eurocentric. Taking into account neocolonialism, Hassan believes that postcolonial theory subscribes to colonial hegemony by giving privilege to colonial languages. He continues to argue that it is often worse than colonial discourse for it hegemonises the east in a subtle manner and becomes Eurocentric. In this article, Hassan argues that postcolonial theory fails to deal with Islam and the Arab insightfully, “in its narrativizing of the ‘postcolonial world’, postcolonial theory - derived as it is from western secular antihumanism - is in no better position to offer any deeper insights into the Arab world’s ‘cultural wars’ than the western media, since those wars are fought over the interpretation of Islam, not its decentralization or its deconstruction” (56). In conclusions, he demands the theorization of the horizons of postcolonial theory for Hassan believes that, modified postcolonial theory is needed in order to challenge the incorrect assumptions regarding Islam and the Muslims.

Lastly, David Thurfjell, in his article “Is the Islamist Voice Subaltern?” (2008), maintains that Islam has successfully provided Muslims with substitute which facilitates them to challenge “western modernity and its secular hegemonic discourse” (160). He basically criticizes it for failing to take into consideration the perspective of Muslims due to his inclination towards postmodernism; therefore, Muslim critics

should focus on Islamic postcolonialism in order to make space for themselves. The criticism of above-mentioned critics depicts the failure of postcolonial theory in relation to Islam and the Muslims owing to its secular perspective. Nevertheless, Majed contends that this criticism should not dissuade us from merging Islamic perspective and postcolonial theory for postcolonialism is a literary theory and is open to development.

Benedict Robinson also endorses this by saying that although postcolonial theory fails to deal with Islam insightfully, Muslim critics must modify this position of the theory (5). Thus, the aim of incorporating Islam into postcolonial theory has become indispensable for the identity and native cultures of numerous nations in the non-western world. Basically, Majed urges Muslim critics to practice Islamic Postcolonialism, which places emphasis on centrality of Islam, instead of lamenting secularism of postcolonial theory. In this manner, Islamic Postcolonialism could become a new horizon with the help of which Muslims could employ in order to critique western colonialism which is present even today. The aim of Islamic Postcolonialism is to explore how Islam is depicted and Muslim identities are constructed. According to him, it is a theoretical framework which unites two components: Islam and postcolonial theory, Islamic, it basically employs methodology of anti-colonial resistance in order to explore writings regarding Islam and Muslims (1). Besides, Islam has been a cardinal part of struggle against colonialism in numerous countries. In the contemporary era, Islam is still integral part of independence movements; for instance, Algeria, Palestine, etc. Majed argues that majority of the colonized people have been Muslims and before considering Islamic postcolonialism, two significant facts should be comprehended. Firstly, the clash between Islam and the west goes back centuries before the colonization of the land. Basically, the west endeavoured to “colonise” the religion before colonizing the land. Secondly, Muslims belong to different races and therefore, the colonial period of Islam is long.

The present study utilizes the theory of Islamic Postcolonialism by Hasan Majed, and in addition to that, it also takes help from William and Behdad’ s neo-Orientalism. Neo-Orientalism is one of the cardinal parts of Islamic postcolonialism for it refers to essentialist and stereotypical images of Islam and the Muslims. As mentioned above, the selected theoretical framework is an amalgamation of Islam and

postcolonial theory in order to identify and challenge the misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims. This amalgamation would provide aid to Islam to liberate itself from the western stereotypes by exposing the representations. In addition to examining representation of Islam and the Muslims, it includes multifarious issues such as slavery, racism and Islamophobia, Islamic article of clothing, and traditions. The intricate relationship between Islam and the West and the imperative function that Islam has in the lives of many contemporary Muslims contribute to making this theoretical framework. Contentious issues like the sacred, the Quran, the veil, and fundamentalism demonstrate the necessity of an Islamic postcolonial discourse to explicate Muslim perspectives and to counter these stereotypes.

The above-mentioned stereotypical representations of Islam and the Muslims have been termed as neo-Orientalism by William and Behdad, and the writers who disseminate these stereotypes are called neo-Orientalists. They include people from both east and west (Nair-Venugopal 236). This practice is basically the continuation of Orientalism that stimulates a new form of othering. It is “monolithic, totalizing, reliant on a binary logic, and based on an assumption of moral and cultural superiority over the Oriental other. To put the point more aphoristically, neo-Orientalism should be understood not as *sui generis* but rather as a supplement to enduring modes of Orientalist representation” (Behdad and Williams 284). Islamic postcolonialism firstly investigates that how neo-Orientalists are engaged in politics of Islamic states. They unremorsefully criticize their governments for stifling modernity and freedom; for instance, women veil has become a symbol of Islamic oppression. Basically, shallow personal experiences are utilized to construct erroneous political statements which ostensibly aim at emancipating the people from the oppression of Islamic government. In a nutshell, personal observations are utilized in order to present them as objective and dispassionate. Secondly, historical events are misconstrued by entirely neglecting its complexities and presented as truth about a society. Moreover, Islamic society is portrayed as primitive, violent, illiterate, and a threat. Cohen’s concept of folk devils and moral panics perfectly suits this situation. Folk devils are people who are considered deviants and hence a threat to the society (Cohen 2). Different symbols and narrations are manufactured in order to foster to create panic in the society and label These folk devils as potential threat. Similarly, Islam and Muslims are represented as potential terrorists and these are propagated to create panic and hatred

for Islam and Muslims. Consequently, this leads to secularization of Islam and Muslims and erasure of political Islam. All these representations are disseminated by not only the western critics but also by native informers, Dabashi calls them. He apprises the reader that these native informers, working in western institutions, render services to the western empire by depicting their atrocities as service to the people of their native countries (16). They profess to have authority and authenticity and owing to this, the west utilizes their view in order to demonstrate their libelous representation as objective and dispassionate. In a nutshell, personal observations are utilized in order to present them as objective and dispassionate. Historical events are misconstrued by entirely neglecting its complexities and presented as truth about a society. Moreover, Islamic society is portrayed as primitive.

In conclusion, prejudice against Islam and Muslims allows the neo-Orientalist to get to the heart of Middle Eastern societies, grasp their essential characteristics according to their perception, and finally produce a generalized and generalizable theory.

3.2 Research Method

Textual analysis has been utilized as a research method for this study and its aim “is to provide expert tools such as literary criticism, philology, or content analysis to decode the texts which would otherwise be inaccessible for a simple reader; textual analysis aims to observe and discover the attitudes, behaviours, concerns, motivations and culture of the text producer from an expert point of view” (Bauer et al. 1). Reading process involves interpretation in which an analyst enters into the world of text and is guided towards the truth. This demonstrates that textual analysis is a reflective and its objective is to explore the world within which the text is entrenched. In addition to that, it divulges the standpoint of the author which is constructed by his/her social or cultural patterns. Likewise, Alan Mckee, in his book *A Beginners Guide to Textual Analysis (2003)*, states that this method allows the researcher to collect data regarding “how other human beings make sense of the world” (1). Textual analysis signifies that one establishes a well-informed and sophisticated conjecture regarding meaning of a particular text. In order to apply method of textual analysis, one is required to comprehend the meaning of ‘text’; a text comprises everything from which one extracts meaning (4). In other words, one reads and interprets a text.

Nevertheless, a text can be interpreted from various perspectives; hence, one can have myriads of interpretation of a text which leads to a question, how can one identify single correct interpretation of a text. The answer to this question is that one is required to discover the context in order to identify the interpretation correctly. Therefore, context is taken into consideration in order to conduct textual analysis. In addition to above mentioned critics, Catherine Belsey has also analyzed this method. She maintains in order to conduct a textual analysis one is required to understand representation of characters for text always addresses something to someone (164). Basically, it endorses agenda. In order to comprehend this, it is important to study the context which helps a researcher in the process of analysis. Hence, textual analysis is an objective method in order to comprehend the text by understanding the historical background which helps in ascertaining agenda set forth in the text.

In addition to that, the study utilizes the historiographic method by Elieen Ka-May Cheng who maintains that “historical writing is as much a product of its time as any other historical development, and can therefore serve as a lens into major trends and developments in the history of Western Civilization...[And] historiography can illuminate an integral aspect of historical analysis—its subjective and interpretive character—and in so doing demonstrate to readers what makes history such an interesting and complex subject” (1-3). In other words, it is essentially the study of writings of history.

In the contemporary era, fiction is an influential instrument to shape the attitude and perspective of people towards other people or some other phenomenon. The said instrument has also been utilized to paint a stereotypical and essentialist picture of Islam and the Muslims by reiterating above mentioned stereotypes to depict Muslims as perpetrator of extremist and terrorist acts. Hence, the replication of these neo-Orientalist images has stimulated Islamophobia and has also legitimized clamp down on the Muslims and Islam has become synonymous with terrorism and Muslims with terrorists. Owing to this, a counter study is imperative to dismantle these portrayals that serve few and help marginalize Islam and the Muslims. Taking into consideration the argument of inadequacy of postcolonialism with regards to representation of Islam and the Muslims, the present research work, contesting the prevalent stereotypical images, follows Majed’s theoretical framework Islamic postcolonialism and one of its aspects entitled neo-Orientalism to investigate the

representation of Islam and the Muslims of Dagestan in *Mountain and the Wall* (2015) and *Bride and groom* (2018) by Alisa Ganieva.

CHAPTER 4

REPRESENTATION OF ISLAM AND THE MUSLIMS OF DAGESTAN IN ALISA GANIEVA'S SELECTED WORKS

This chapter contains the main argument of the thesis. It scrutinizes the selected novels through the framework of Islamic postcolonialism in order to reach a conclusion. The analysis is centered upon the misrepresentations of Islam and Muslims that have been disseminated for centuries, it discusses that how centuries old and inaccurate generalizations are utilized in order to malign Islam and Muslims but also deflates the distorted image of Dagestan and its Muslim majority population painted by Ganieva in her selected novels in the pursuit of imperialist resolutions. It examines whether her malicious depiction of the Muslim majority society contradicts reality or not.

Neo-Orientalist portrayals manifestly reveal that there is want of accurate knowledge regarding Islam and Muslim society in the west which may develop their understanding that these stereotypical representations are fabricated in order to disseminate hatred against Muslims and dominate the Muslim majority countries. The acceptance of these depictions by the western masses facilitates the development of contempt against Islam and Muslims declaring them as enemies of the west. In addition to that, these malicious representations play an instrumental role in the consolidation of western power.

Although, numerous departments are utilized in order to perpetuate these stereotypes, for instance, films, neo-Orientalist writers, literature, journalism, nevertheless, native neo-orientalists play cardinal role for they feign authority and utilize this self-proclaimed authority in order to present their works as accurate and objective.

Although born in Dagestani Avar family, Ganieva claims that she was raised in Russian culture. Owing to this, she migrated to Moscow for higher studies and at present she lives there. In her article "To what Do I Belong", She rejects her Dagestani Identity for in her opinion its traditions have been effaced by Islam (20).

She reports that Islam is only superficial in the region but is another way of erasing the secular and pagan history of Dagestan. Actually, it seeped in through Dagestani borders in consequence of Chechenia's war; in the aftermath of this war, Dagestan became the victim of Islamic fundamentalism and it has led to corruption and lawlessness (Ganieva, Alisa Ganieva Explores Complexities Of Culture And Marriage In Dagestan). Having been influenced by Middle Eastern missionaries, People of the country think that independent Islamic state is the solution to the problem that is why people have become extremists.

Ganieva in interviews mentions that Islam is synonymous with erasure of history of Dagestan. People have become conservative and aggressive. In an interview she reports that if one traces the history of region, one will find out that it once was a democratic region where people formed free alliances and the head was elected by the union of villages (Ganieva). In consequence, Ganieva implies that the Islamic history is not the real history of Dagestan. In another interview to Rebecca Cruise, she states that the people of region do not understand their history and their perception of Islamic history is erroneous; basically, they have substituted their ancestors with imaginary forefathers. Contrary to Ganieva's argument, numerous researchers believe that Islam reached this region in seventh century. Elmira Akhmetova in her article "Islam in Russia: Past, Present, Future" (2016) reports that Islam was already present in the region during the eighth century. In the same vein, Charles King, in his book, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus* (2008), also states that the history of Islam in the Caucasus is as old as the religion itself when Umayyads brought it under the reign of caliphate (65). Islam then spread through the preaching of Sufis and saints. Another study by Marya and Akhmet also reiterates that the region has long Islamic history (24). Likewise, Robert Bruce Ware and Enver Kisriev view on arrival of Islam corresponds with other researchers. In their book *Dagestan: Russian Hegemony and Islamic Resistance in the North Caucasus* (2010), they infer that Islam entered the Caucasus region at the end of seventh century (4). These reports from various researchers divulge that Islam is certainly the part of history of Caucasus and facilitated the unity of otherwise ethnically diverse culture.

In another interview, Ganieva states that *Mountain and the Wall* (2015) basically is the indication that the future will be dark if Russia builds wall thereby separating Caucasus from itself (Ganieva, Alisa Ganieva: Meet the visionary author

pulling back the curtain on Dagestan and Beyond). Moreover, the novel suggests that Islam/Islamic fundamentalism will overwhelm the region in the aftermath of this separation. Ganieva disdains the idea that Sharia is the only way out from corruption, unemployment, nepotism, and extremism; rather, she believes that all these problems are owing to Islamization which has caused the spread of negative image of the region.

Women and Islam have always appeared as incompatible in the neo-Orientalist representations. Ganieva also reiterates it by stating that before Islam, women enjoyed freedom, they were the head of their families, property was inherited by daughters and they would choose their husbands. Whereas, men were forbidden from going in to fields (Ganieva, *Alisa Ganieva and The Chronicles of Dagestan*). Nevertheless, the rise of Islam has restricted their freedom. In an interview with Olivia Cappozola, she states that women have now become passive creatures and people now have condescending attitude towards women for they are considered as sexual objects who have to endure forced marriages and honour killings. Ganieva also expresses her exasperation that large numbers of women have started wearing hijab and it is one of erasure of Dagestani history. Moreover, women writers are not welcomed and are frowned upon that is why she disclosed the Islamic extremism in her works.

Lastly, large numbers of people are refraining from alcohol in the name of Islam which is an integral part of the tradition. Moreover, Wahhabis are at war with traditional Sufi Muslims who represent mild form of Islam. Ganieva, similar to Hanif Kurieshi and other neo-Orientalist, divides Islam into different categories; nominal Muslims and observant Muslims. Nominal Muslims, who have only Islamic names and have nothing to do with religion, are regarded by Ganieva as people belonging to Sufi category. However, observant Muslims are Wahhabis and are threat to the tradition and customs of Dagestani society. She, like other neo-Orientalists, regards Wahhabism as terrorist organization.

Basically, she believes that Islam is the problem in Dagestan, a menace to its tolerant society. The fight among different Muslims has paved way for Islamic fundamentalism and owing to this she cannot identify with Dagestan and voices her ambivalence towards her communal identity in her essay.

4.1 Reading *Mountain and the Wall* from the Islamic Postcolonial Perspective

The novel is set in Dagestan which is depicted to be afflicted with upsurge of Islamic fundamentalism. Shamil, the protagonist of the novel, hears the grimmest news that owing to rise in Islamic extremism Russia has decided to build a wall in order to separate itself from the republic. Although as per Ganieva's portrayal Dagestanis' reaction is expressive of their disapproval of demarcation, nevertheless, extremists from the forest seize control of Dagestan and lead the region towards chaos and crisis.

Majed contends that observant Muslims are often depicted as a threat who have no sense of home and they do not respect the traditions of country they live in. In the same vein, Ganieva, at the very outset of the novel, depicts the Muslims as the "Other" who are threatening the traditions of secular Dagestan. Ganieva represents rise in the number of people who offer prayer, abstain from wine, perform hajj, fast and wear Islamic clothing as portent of a disaster. In the prologue of the novel Zamrud and Gulya reveals their apprehension over the rise of Islamism in Dagestan as evident by the increasing number of hijabi young girls. Zamrud in surprising tone says to Gulya that a girl, whom she has known for twenty years, has become religious; they are startled because this aforementioned girl once left her husband when he "turned religious", however, at present she has not only become religious, but also "went on hajj" (Ganieva, *Mountain and the wall* 10). Zamrud is not happy with young girls becoming religious and "covering themselves up like that..." (11). Similarly, Gulya also voices her concerns regarding her daughter Patya who starts observing Ramadan owing to sermons of a "shady character". She manifestly expresses her disapproval by declaring that she will never let Ptaya wear hijab. She then signals the approach of presumed menace by saying "Where are they getting it all?" (11). In these lines of the novel, Islam is represented as a threat to the youth of Dagestan. The line "where they are getting it all?" implies that hijab or veil is not customary of Dagestani girl. Islamic articles of clothing are being targeted in these lines which have also been criticized by numerous western scholars and writers as a symbol of extremism. In above mentioned conversation, Ganieva represents not only hijab as a threat, but also all religious practices and observant Muslims as menace to secular Dagestani society. In addition to that, this conversation divides Muslims into two

types. Firstly, there are nominal Muslims who are Muslims in name only: secular Muslims who present no threat for they do not practice Islam, they drink wine and eat pork. Similar type of identity is promoted in Kureshi's *Black Album* (1995), Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003), and Faqir's *My Name is Salma* (2007). For these writers Islam is impractical and backward and therefore, Muslims should not follow it. For instance, *Black Album* (1995) depicts Islam as a menace for the peaceful coexistence of the society.

Ganieva's Second category includes observant Muslims, who unlike secular Muslims are menace to a country for they offer prayers, observe Ramadan, and women wear hijab. Ganieva lashes out on veil/hijab and Ramadan and this consequently corroborates the neo-Orientalist agenda. There have been two types of attitudes towards the veil or hijab. Firstly, they have been regarded as a symbol of oppression. Secondly, it represents Islamism which for the neo-Orientalists signals threat and intolerance. In these lines, as mentioned earlier, hijab is being associated with threat for she is called "shady character" (11). Ganieva, drawing on neo-Orientalist categories, dexterously creates connection between the religious youth and liberal elders in order to show that the real identity of Dagestan is secular.

On another occasion, the binary of secularism and Islam is again constructed only to demonstrate that Islam is menace to the customs and conventions of Dagestani society thus following agenda according to which secularism is the only modern philosophy and everything against is primitive and anti-modern. Essentially, the Other, Islam and the Muslims, is stereotyped to glorify secularism (Majed 55). For instance, Yusup pours wine into two glasses and offers one glass to Dibir, who refuses saying that it is haram; however, Yusup evades the issue that it is not wine rather it is song which they have been listening to since their childhood. In these lines, Ganieva adroitly demarcates between secular and observant Muslim. Yusup, the secular one, is holding onto the tradition of Dagestan; nevertheless, Dibir, an observant Muslim, is rejecting the tradition by saying that it is haram. Through this representation, Ganieva demonstrates that Islam is incompatible with Dagestani region; rather, the cause of its erasure. It also suggests that Islam is unchanging and fixed and is intolerant of traditions. Dibir is represented as an observant Muslim who does nothing but collects funds and sermonizes people regarding seerah. Kerim criticizes his actions by saying that while he goes out to earn, Dibir does nothing but pray. Extending the binary of

secular and observant Muslim, Ganieva represents Dibir as indolent and lazy. She, through the character of Dibir, endeavor to reveal that Islam is the backward religion which leads to indolence of mind and body, Seerah of the last prophet (S.A.W) is the reason for Dibir's distance from practical work. Similar neo-Orientalist trope has also been discussed by Zahed in his thesis that western/secular model advocates practicality, rationality, and modernity; on the contrary, the Islamic model suggests irrationality, indolence of mind and body (130). The character of Kerim is similar to the Kureshi's character Hasan in the *Black Album* (1995), Hasan believes that Islam as a religion causes problem and "when asked about his faith, 'Yes I have a belief. It's called working until my arse aches'" (86). Both Kerim and Hasan believes that Islam is restricts freedom which is their right; for instance, drinking alcohol. This comparison between the two characters reveals that neo-Orientalist themes are similar across globe, there is fixed repertoire of stereotypes from which writers choose in order to represent Islam and Muslims. Therefore, these fixed images nullify the argument of fixity and irrationality of Islam and Muslims; rather, neo-Orientalism is fixed and irrational for it is not only unchanging as the above similarities demonstrates, but also illogical owing to the fact that it considers all Muslims similar to each other.

Islam as a restrictive religion is also evident in its relationship with women. Majed argues that Islam is depicted as oppressive to women; neo-Orientalists depict Islam as the cause of suffering and therefore it should be removed (184). In concordance with neo-Orientalist view, Ganieva depict Islam as a religion that confines women to their homes and give authority to men. For instance, Dibir suggests that "a women herself should understand that it's not something Allah is forcing upon her- her calling is to take care of her family, so let her stay home and do the right thing of her own free will" (Ganieva, *Mountain and the wall* 17). This is another example that depicts Islam as restrictive for women as it confines women to their homes and stifle their aspirations. According to the secular intellectual framework, Islamic model has entirely failed in providing justice for in the Muslim world, women are humiliated and oppressed by men who treat them like slaves, lock them in homes and cut them off from the world. Following this model of representation, Harold Bergsma, one of the neo-Orientalist, draws on the above model in depicting women in Islamic country; for instance, in his novel *On Way to Pakistan*

(2007) he depicts a well-educated police officer as backward who believes that women should be kept inside home and guarded against the world. These misrepresentations are employed to construct Islam as a primitive and sexist religion. Ganieva through these depictions endeavor to make an argument that Islam countries are sexist and patriarchal that confines women to their homes. Hence, for Ganieva Islam, is restrictive and its followers are against women freedom.

Majed also discusses how in the contemporary world Islam is synonymous with violence and violent behaviour with Islam and Muslims. Throughout the history, the west has been representing Islam as the religion of violence which promotes war among its followers. These stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims are propagated through fiction as Ganieva depicts the observant Muslims as violent and aggressive; for instance, Abdul Malik, a police officer, visits Kerim and tell him that they are jackal who shoot people, flog cars, blow vehicles, violate laws, and force people to deposit money for Jihad. Owing to this, they are waiting for troops from Moscow to subdue them. These lines highlight the necessity of Russian presence in the region; Russian government is imperative to curb rise of Islam which according to Ganieva is fundamentalism. This is yet another stereotype about Islam and Muslims and it is often employed by neo-Orientalists in their writings; for instance, in Kurieshi's *Black Album* (1995), Zulma a secular character regards observant Muslims as dangerous reiterating that if a Muslim prays then he is violent and commits crimes. In the entire novel, Kurieshi depicts that Muslims assault other people physically and verbally and fight with everybody. The depiction of Islam and Muslims as violent and belligerent is not new; rather, this is a recycled stereotypes which is being employed by contemporary neo-Orientalists. They are basically repeating these stereotypes in order to lend them authenticity and increase Islamophobia as discussed by Majed, Williams and Behdad. In this type of representation, Ganieva is once again relying upon the binary of us vs them; violent Muslims vs endangered people. In this manner, she is justifying Moscow's occupation of Dagestan by linking Islamic identity to threat, if one's identity is Islam then then it will threaten the world for they kill other people thus, they are the source of destruction and other problems.

Endeavouring to demonstrate Islam as the cause of problems in Dagestan, Ganieva depicts all Muslims stereotypically. She represents secular Muslims as corrupt who give bribe in order to earn seat in the assembly; in the novel, Abdul

Malik requests Yusup to utilize his connections with powerful people and give his son a seat in the assembly. Ganieva through these lines demonstrates that all Muslims are threat to the Dagestani society in one way or another. If observant Muslims are terrorizing the region, then other Muslims are destabilizing them through their corruptive nature. Thus, Islam as a religion is unacceptable and must be eradicated for it completely fails to eliminate terrorism and corruption.

The religious symbols are also demonized by the neo-Orientalists in their writings. Koran, the cardinal religious book of Islam, has often been represented as a book that impedes the progress, innovation, and creativity, a book entirely opposite to modernity and scientific advancement. They are basically inclined to downplay the role of Muslims in the scientific evolution of the society. This, according to Majed, is another strategy to Other Muslims in the society by portraying them as simpletons, illiterate and ignorant of modern science. Ganieva in the novel affords the similar representations; for instance, Kerim switches on the Television to discover that Khalid Gamidovich's book *The Scientific potential of Quran* proves Einstein's theory regarding gravitation and space erroneous with the help of Quran. He confidently states that the space is not "emptiness but a primeval field that exerts pressure on a body, which is agitated by this imposition, and seeks to original state of rest. Nevertheless, he laments the fact that his discovery is not considered scientific for people do not consider Koran as evidence. Disappointed with Khalid being considered as worthy of television appearance, he asks his friends "Why do you listen to this stuff?" and declares that he prefers Einstein over Allah. This firstly demonstrates that the Islamic trend on the television is the portent of something catastrophic: the Islamic revolution which will not only hinder the scientific advancement but will also thrust the society in to dark ages as it will not get acceptance in the world. Khaled Montaser, a neo-Orientalist, has similar standpoint as he states:

This (Qur'an's scientific miraculous nature) is a human construct for those who feel inferior and feel the huge gap that exists between them and the West. What is the solution? Can we become like the West? They ask themselves. However, it requires a very long time and effort, and they are lazy – lazy in mind, lazy in body, and lazy in all aspects. Therefore, the solution is to say that every existing or newly invented thing in the West has already existed in the Qur'an and the Hadith (qtd. in Zahed 129).

This signals that Islam must be left in order to construct a society congenial to scientific and technological advancement. Likewise, Ganieva disparages the contribution of Muslim scientists throughout the history and numerous contributions of Quran to modern day science corroborated by the western scientists. Kerim preference of Einstein over Islam reinforces neo-Orientalist theme that associates scientific advancement with the West. Rationality, logic, and modernity belong to the west for they rely on science which promotes questioning in order to reach a truth. Whereas, Muslims rely on Koran that completely controls their lives by promoting silent submission and consequently is irrational and illogical. Ganieva is, thus, questioning the credibility of Islamic model by portraying a Muslim researcher who studies Quran and utilizes it for the confirmation of theory as backward and primitive.

Ganieva also makes adroit use of humour in order to depict Muslims stupid and simpletons and humiliate them; the people soliciting various questions from religious leader demonstrate that Muslims have backward mindset and are entangled in primitive practices.

The younger man on the screen was looking down at a piece of paper.

“Here’s a Khasavyurt: Alzhana asks, ‘Can you pray with your eyes closed?’ No, Alzhana, that is not recommended. Muzalipat from Kaspiisk writes: ‘I have been married several times. Which of my husbands will I be with in Paradise?’ Here’s your answer, Muzalipat. If you’re married when you die, then you will be in Paradise with your last husband. If your last husband dies and you do not remarry, then you will also end up in Paradise with your last husband. If all of your husbands divorced you, then on Judgment Day you will have the right to choose any one of them, and according to the hadiths, you will choose the one with the best character. And may the Almighty Allah aid you! And now we have a call in the studio. Hello, you’re on the air.” “Hello, my name is Eldar, I’m from Babayurt.” The voice on the line sounded uneven. “Here’s my question: I got some of my baby’s urine on my clothes. How should I wash it out?” “What is your advice for Eldar?” ...” Anvar couldn’t take any more, and clicked the TV off (Ganieva, *Mountain and the wall* 28).

Hasan Majed maintains that humour has two functions in the postcolonial context. Firstly, it is employed to challenge colonial discourse and hence, to serve the

former colonial subjects. Secondly, it is utilized to strengthen stereotypes of Islam and Muslims (52). Essentially, neo-Orientalist images are not challenged rather reinforced in Islamic context. Ganieva also utilizes the second function of humour in order to depict Muslims stereotypically, she creates this humorous situation where people ask questions that seems ludicrous to Kerim and his friends and they switch off the television. It also reinforces that the Muslim mind is unchanging and they still live in antiquity and thus are irrational and anti-modern. Hence, postcolonialism which was supposed to give voice to the voiceless and decimate their negative image is not performing its rudimentary function. Basically, it indicates the inadequacy of postcolonialism regarding Islam and the Muslims.

In the first chapter of the novel under scrutiny Shamil, a journalist, visits Kubachi village in order to interview people for an article. He has lost his job and upon his uncle's insistence, he agrees to contribute to a Dagestani newspaper. During his visit to the village, he discovers armours and other intricate craft, eventually, he becomes so mesmerized by the artistic work that he decides to write that Dagestani culture is powerful enough to withstand and defeat the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. In this paragraph Islam is represented intolerant and brutal religion that erases the local cultures. Islam is basically depicted as a threat to the culture of Dagestan. Ganieva in these lines utilizes neo-Orientalist trope that is similar to that of Kureshi's in *Black Album* (1995) when he portrays Islam as a threat to the British culture. This demonstrates, as William and Behdad argue, that the neo-Orientalists often depict Islam as a religion that erases the local culture. Nevertheless, Contradicting Ganieva's claims, Marya S. Rozanova & Akhmet A. Yarlykapov in their article "The Islamic Religion and Cultural Diversity in Contemporary Russia: Case Study of North Caucasus Region" states that Islam has long history in Dagestan and the reason for this is that Islam has been able to mix with local customs. They further argue that Islam allows the existence of the local culture if they are not against the Sharia and that is Why Dagestani people still retain numerous local customs (24). Therefore, Ganieva's depiction of Islam as a threat to Dagestani culture is invalid.

As the title suggests, the entire novel is built around the event that Russia is building a wall in order to separate itself from the extremists Dagestan, but the majority of Dagestanis are represented as unwilling to be separated from it. When the rumour is being bruited about, Dagestani people convene a meeting in order to discuss

the gravity and magnitude of the situation. One man expresses his opinion that it is the fault of Dagestani people as they do not object to the import of Salafi literature into Dagestan which is responsible for terrorism and extremism. In the above excerpt of the text, Salafism/Wahhabism is being connected to terrorism which has also been done by other Western countries. Observant Muslims are labelled as Wahabists and thus terrorists. When analyzed from the Islamic perspective, Ganieva uses her erroneous native subjectivity in order to twist history that is in keeping with her neo-Orientalist claims. The Wahabi movement was initiated by Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab in order to purge Islam of impurities. Wahab, born in Saudi Arabia, received his education in his country and then also visited Iraq and Iran to widen his horizon. After profound study, he declared that certain innovations are against the spirit of Islam and decided to wage war against them. His views were received ardently by certain clans of Arabia. However, Jawaid remarks that under the influence of British colonizers it became derogatory term in India (34). Another writer in his article “Don’t Blame ‘Wahabism’ for Terrorism” (2021) negates the connection of Wahabism with extremism by calling it an intellectual slip and contends that it is employed to arouse anti-Saudian sentiments (Alyahya). Linking this single term to terrorism is misleading for it completely eclipses the fact that it has been apolitical in nature. In contrast, the extremism surges when government fails to meet people’s expectation. In Dagestani context, Russian government has been attempting to suppress the Islamic identity of the region since 19th century by vigilantly controlling the information about the religion. Saykhul-Islam Haji Allahshukur Pashazade, Baku’s Bakinskiyrabochiy, corroborates this by saying that the Russian government meticulously fabricated the link between Wahabism and terrorism to completely eliminate Islam from the region (Goble). Similarly, H. J. Oliver is of opinion that the term is being used liberally by the Russian press as pejorative for the Muslim campaigners in Caucasus and Central Asia (7). This demonstrates that the term has become an instrument against Muslims. Wahhabism is frequently represented as foreign, fallacious doctrine that is premised upon illogical principles. One is led to believe that Wahhabism is an erroneous dogma that is synonymous to extremism and terrorism. People are inculcated with the belief that it is different and hence not genuine. Contrary to this ubiquitous belief, Edward Walker Jr., president of a Washington based think-tank, expresses his view as quoted by Oliver:

There has been a tendency to blame Wahhabism, but it is a mistake. Just because they are fundamentalists, does not mean that they are prone to...terrorism.” There is much talk about the word “Islamic fundamentalism.” What people usually intend by this expression is an inference to violence, but the correct meaning of fundamentalism is, “The strict following of the basic teaching(s) of any religion.” In particular, Salafism is not a way of extremism, but is in fact the middle way which avoids all of the faults of secularism and religious extremism. Furthermore, it is not possible to separate Islam and *Salafīyyah* (Salafism) as if they were two unrelated entities (90).

Ganieva, through this stereotypical representation, endeavours to accomplish numerous objectives. Firstly, she reinforces western neo-Orientalist ideology by linking Wahhabism to terrorism and extremism. In this manner, she proves herself to be the native informer of Russian government. Following Russian designs, she represents that Wahhabism has deteriorated the situation in Dagestan. She does not seem to be acquainted with the reformist movement and is simply reiterating and propagating the western agenda, anyone who comes from the Middle East or Saudi Arabia is a Wahhabi and hence, a terrorist. Secondly, she represents what French President Macron has declared that Islam is in crisis and they will work to free Islam from the foreign influences by vowing to protect their values of secularism against Islamic separatism. Interestingly as a news article reports that, after attacking Islam in general, he makes a framework of “moderate Islam” in order to establish it in the country (What explains Macron’s obsession with Islam and Muslims?). He believes that veil, headscarves, prayer, abstinence from pork and alcohol makes Islam separate from the French secular ideologies and hence, under his regime veil and headscarves have been banned. This behavior is due to French imperialist history in the Middle East which was premised upon anti-Islamic rhetoric. Similarly, Russia colonized Dagestan through the use of force and attempted to forge secular identity for the country during Soviet Period. Eventually, when people rose against the Russian imperialism, Russia, utilizing western neo-Orientalism, labelled them Wahhabi terrorist. The term has also extended to the observant Muslims. The above passage from the text manifestly demonstrates that Dagestan is under the foreign Islamic influence. Owing to this, people have become observant and women don veil. Ganieva, similar to Macron, is representing it as an Islamic separatism which is

against the secular spirit of Dagestan, when Muslims constitutes the majority of the population. Veiled Muslims are represented as problematic, just like they have been targeted in the France. The passage from the novel basically demonstrates the Wahhabism is synonymous to terrorism which has entered Dagestan through foreign (Saudi Arabia and Middle East) influence and it is imperative to eradicate it for it has disrupted the norms and culture of Dagestan.

There is a sub-plot in the novel and it is a story of Marzahana who is a vivid and lively girl; however, she seems to be psychologically disturbed after meeting Kalimet who was compelled to marry at very young age. It grieves Marzahana to see her veiled and confined to domestic roles. Majed maintains that veil and head scarves have always been represented as oppressive and anti-feminist. In the same vein, Anour Majeed states that Islam has always been represented as anti-feminist and veil is believed to be the symbol of oppression and subjugation that hides femininity and denies its existence (157). Marzhana, mourning the condition of her friend, is completely unaware that on her return to home she will meet the similar fate. She becomes dismayed at the news that she is to be married against her will for she wishes to marry someone else. At this crucial juncture, she is aided by secular Raisa Petrovna. This is similar to a situation that happens in the Faqir's novel *My Name is Salma* (2007) when the main character of novel Salma is helped by a Christian nun who comes to the prison to smuggle her out from the prison and save her from her own people. Petrovna plays similar role that helps Marzhana run from mountains to the plains in order to make her life better. She is depicted as kind lady who assures Marzhana that she will be saved if she stands up against the cruel men of the mountains. Marzhana escapes to plains with the help of Petrovna where she marries her beloved Mukhtar. On the day of marriage, she is elated for they will be joined by Lenin who is dear to them more than any mullah. This further reinforces the idea that mullah, an Islamic religious leader, failed to facilitate her in desperate times while secularism brought her out of darkness. Hence, Islam is represented as anti-feminist, a religion that does not give freedom of choice to women. In addition to that, she thinks that she will prove to everyone that happiness does not come in "old ways, but in the new and joyous morning of freedom" (Ganieva, Mountain and the wall 84). In these lines, Islam "old ways" is source of sorrow and imprisonment; whereas, the secular life divulges promises of happiness and emancipation. Islam is represented as

sexist religion which seeks to subjugate women, they are treated as slaves, confined to homes and are not allowed to attain education for they fear that they will become aware of their rights.

Wael B. Hallaq in his book *Sharia: Theory, Practice, Transformations* (2009) maintains that “Popular narratives and a staggering array of quasi-scholarly accounts have distorted Shari'a beyond recognition” (Hallaq vii). It has been depicted as oppressive especially towards women. When observant Muslims establish their rule in Dagestan women are compelled to wear veil, “Women who do not cover their avrat will be, inshallah, killed! Many girls, terrified, began wearing hijab” (Ganieva, *Mountain and the wall* 182). Women singers are executed; for instance, singer Sabina Gadzhieva is killed by the mujahedeen. Najiba, another girl, is shot down by her cousin for not covering hair and Marina is sealed in the drum. In all these images, Veil has been represented as a symbol of oppression as Ganieva is perpetuating the neo-Orientalist ideology in the novel. In addition to that, “women are forbidden to go out to work” and acquire knowledge (Ganieva, *Mountain and the wall* 186). After seizing control of the region, extremists confine women to their home and deny them their right to work; for instance, they lock the shop of Amina who sells baked goods. Some women defy these constraints and venture outside, but they are pursued by “fanatical Arab public-morals militiamen” (199). In one of her interviews, she argues that if Russia leaves Dagestan, Sharia will take over the land which has enchanted large number of people and they believe that Russia and secularism is the cause of all troubles. However, if rule of Sharia is established then blood will be shed profusely and “that’s the dark point of ideology, she said to Lucy Morris in an interview (Ganieva, *Technical Dystopias: An Interview with Russian Author Alisa Ganieva*). In a nutshell, this representation demonstrates that as Sharia is based on Koran, a primitive book inciting people to violence and subjugation of women, hence, it is perpetrating similar misogynistic laws. Ganieva has created a link between oppression and Islam adroitly in order to establish incompatibility of sharia law to modern Dagestan thereby furthering the neo-orientalist ideology.

Observant Muslims have often been portrayed as primitive, and irrational people. For instance, Marzhana’s father takes part in the procession that offers prayers to Allah to end the severe draught but is reprimanded by the chairman of the village as irrational people. He further declares that it is madness which must end. Marzhana

also attempts to persuade her parents to not take part in prayers and they will be ashamed of it later:

First you say I have to marry Nasyr, then you bring shame upon the entire village with your prayers. Papa is out walking around waving some rag in the air, the men are planning to spend the whole night chanting prayers..... That's not what the Soviet regime had in mind when they liberated you (Ganieva, Mountain and the wall 77).

Ganieva dexterously represents Islam and Muslims as backward and in this manner reinforces Soviet regime's attitude towards the Muslim majority republic. During the Soviet period, Yemelianova notes that Islam was labelled as primitive and as a result of this attitude numerous mosques and madrasas were destroyed, and imams were executed. This period of oppression is called 'Great Terror' (Yemelianova 5). Throughout the Soviet Period, the imperialists launched anti-Islamic policies to secularize the region. Hence, Soviet did not liberate the Muslims of Caucasus; rather, they endeavor to secularize them with the help of repressive policies.

Amid the tumultuous times, when Russia resolves to build the wall and the Wahabis (who are represented as terrorists in the novel) start consolidating their position in Dagestan, Shamil the protagonist of the novel decides to meet his girlfriend named Madina but is startled to see her wearing baggy clothes with long sleeves and a hijab. His astonishment augments manifolds when she accuses him of being collaborating with Russia and betraying the Ummah. Consequently, he decides to visit her parents to tell them about her transformation, however, by that time she has already had a "religious marriage" to a "zealot and murderer" (Ganieva, Mountain and the wall 150). Her parents endeavour to stop her from leaving, but to no avail. They tell Shamil that it is their fault that she has become religious and has married to a Wahhabi, "it's a great dishonor for our family..... It happened so fast- before we knew what was going on, they had stuffed her head with all kinds of khapur- chapur, The boy is one of ours, you know, he was in her class, then dropped out they say his brother is one of those men hiding out in the woods..." (Ganieva, Mountain and the wall 151). This representation is reinforcing another stereotype that Muslims are not fond of study and in the name of religion commit murders to elevate their status.

Madina leaves to join her husband. Nevertheless, in the camp she is confounded to discover that one's status is elevated only when he kills somebody. The ideology persuades her to join the battle. The story of Madina reinforces that veiled or hijabi women are dangerous as she is represented as dangerous extremist who is brainwashed by the Wahhabis. Hence, Ganieva, in accordance with neo-Orientalist's essentialist stereotypes, endeavours to portray that not only men, but Muslim women are also extremists for all of the women in the camp are called Muslim women collectively (239). In order to depict them as an angry and irrational mob, Ganieva evacuate them of their individuality. In this manner, she draws on much widespread stereotype that Islam engenders angry mob of extremists, both male and female. These mobs are remote from rationality as they have imbibed the bewitching Islamic ideology of primitiveness and barbarity.

Muslim leaders also fail to evade the stereotypical representations. Majed states that they are depicted as violent, radical, intolerant, and dangerous for societies. In the novel under scrutiny, Imam Shamil, the third imam of the Caucasus, has been made a controversial figure. When a person in the crowd speaks in favour of Imam Shamil, the entire crowd reprimand that person and pronounce Imam Shamil as a murderer who destroyed villages and killed numerous people who had refused to bow down to him. The crowd accused him of fragmentation among people and indiscriminate murder. He is described as a violent person who imposed sharia law on the people and tormented them. A character in the novel named Makhmud Tagirovich narrates his miraculous escape from the clutches of Imam Shamil to his children. These polemical representations strengthen the ideology that Muslim leaders are aggressive and oppressive tyrants. For instance, El Zahed in his thesis *Internalized Islamophobia: The Discursive Construction of "Islam" and "Muslims" in the Egyptian Public Discourse* divulges the misrepresentations of the first elected president Muhammad Morsi; he is portrayed as irrational and primitive who will derive back the country into antiquity (106). In contrast to Ganieva's representations, Imam Shamil spearheaded the resistance of Chechnya and Dagestan against the Russian imperialism. He was born to an Avar family and was strong, valiant, learned. According to historians, he was esteemed in the east for his jihad against the colonizers. Gould in her article "Imam Shamil" (2012) acclaims him of purging the society of religious corruption and becoming a symbol of hope to the people of

Caucasus (121). During his reign, Shamil endeavor to reach a compromise by showing willingness to consent to Russian rule on the condition that Sharia is accepted as a legal system of the Caucasus. Nevertheless, the Russian imperialism considered them savages and refused to come to negotiating table. Frederick Engels compares the Russian civilizational mission to the process of colonization that utilized this rhetoric in order to legitimize colonization (Souleimanov). The views of various researchers demonstrates that Imam Shamil was not a murderer as represented by Ganieva. Making Imam Shamil controversial, Ganieva basically legitimizes Russian rule who represented themselves as the saviour of people. In addition to that, all Muslim leaders are depicted as dangerous, radical, and greedy; for instance, another leader, in order to establish his rule, declares himself Mahdi and saviour of all people of Dagestan and Caucasus. Likewise the supporters of the observant Muslims are depicted as primitive and irrational mob who blindly follow their leader. They are as dangerous as their leaders. Muslims start believing that he is infact true Mahdi:

Many who were already in the habit of believing fervently in the stories they'd heard of children born with the name of Allah inscribed on their backs, and of beehives on which citations from the Koran appeared spontaneously, put their faith in this one true Mahdi, and began to organized processions in honour of new Messiah, and to sing hymns to him. His uncle's house in New Kurush became a destination for pilgrimages, and was adorned with flowers and green cloth, and a gleaming half-moon appeared on the roof (Ganieva, Mountain and the wall 188).

This representation follows on the trope of angry mob and paints the picture of Muslim leaders as irrational, and aggressive. Likewise, their followers are similar to mob who are stupid and equally dangerous.

Neo-Orientalism claims that Islam is not only threat to the world but also to the its adherents for it divides people into variuos sects and incite them to violence. Ganieva portrays a mosque where people are discussing importance of Namaz, twitching of index finger during Shahada, and opinions of religious leaders on various problems. One group says that the person who does not perform it is kafir, another person oppose this view by quoting some other religious leader. Soon tempers ignite when the energy of discussions is deviated to celebration of Prophet's birthday and

twitching of index finger. Some individuals favour it while others opposed it. One group accused the other of polytheism and getting money from the Russians seculars to further their agenda which further exacerbate the situation and a young person is killed. This incident again portrays that Islam is inherently violent and consequently its followers are aggressive and murderers. They are irrational mob who frequently resort to violence. Ganieva, through this subtle indication, endeavours to prove that Islam is incapable of uniting people; rather, it is a threat to the stability of the region for it makes people violent and incites them to commit heinous crimes. It further reinforces that terrorism is exclusive to Islam and Muslims.

Another stereotype associated with the Muslims is that they do not like to study. In the novel, Usman does not like to study and gets expelled from the school and after that he becomes a holy man to whom people come for "barakat" (12). Muslims who are not competent become holy men. Another character Dibir, who is a Sufi, is also depicted as a person who collects chanda for mosque and quotes hadiths to justify it. He does not do any work to earn his living; whereas, Kerim who is an atheist works for his family. This contrasting image demarcates between a Muslim and knowledge. They abstain from enrolling into school or college on the pretext of religious duties. For instance, Majed states that in order to become a Muslim would "be at the expense of knowledge. To pair Islam and knowledge is like trying to juggle two balls in one hand; one would fall down" (95). Basically, remove Islam from the region and it will progress by leaps and bounds.

As mentioned earlier, Muslims especially observant Muslims are represented as violent, irrational, backward, and having mob mentality. The religion of Islam is represented as against modernity and oppressive towards women. All these stereotypes are depicted to be embodied by Muslims when they assume power in Dagestan. They burn all wine stores in the region which according to Ganieva is a part of Dagestani tradition and hence, is the integral part of the culture of Dagestan (Ganieva, Alisa Ganieva: Meet the visionary author pulling back the curtain on Dagestan and Beyond). When President Morsi assumed the office, misrepresentations of Islam and the Muslims reached its zenith. This is elaborated by Zahed in his dissertation *Construction of Observant Muslims* (2019); he delineates that the president and his followers were depicted as irrational, primitive, and aggressive (113). Neo-Orientalists claimed that this is the era of darkness and intellectual

garbage; Adeeb, one of the neo-Orientalists, said that soon women would not be allowed outside their homes (114). They, basically, represented a dark image of Egypt's future under the rule of observant Muslims and Sharia.

Ganieva in *Mountain and the Wall* breathes life into this stereotypical image. Chaos, darkness, and violence settle in Dagestan when observant Muslims come to power. Observant Muslims or mujahedeen kill police, government officials, and prostitutes. At night, dark shapes declaring monotheism/Tawhid set fire to theatres, wine shops, and hotel. They also demolish museums and monuments; for instance, Arip witnesses the destruction of museum for according to observant Muslims it was idolatry "he looked at the fragments of antique plates, ceramic flasks and lanterns, and grain storage jugs" (Ganieva, *Mountain and the wall* 196). These "lunatics" and "murderers" hoist black flags and declare Jihad. Mujahedeen are represented as aggressive and violent who destroy libraries in the name of Jihad. Statements like "the east taking over", "it is the end of democracy! We are going backward, degenerating!" (199) further reinforces the stereotypes that Islam is violent, primitive and backward. Neo-Orientalists profess that Islam propagates violence through Jihad; it is stated in the novel:

Praise to be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, Who created us Muslims and who blessed us with jihad, giving us the opportunity to earn Paradise. . . . Alhamdulillah, now we see our Umma is coming together, is becoming firm; now the munafiqs and kafirs face retribution; they will be hunted like rats. But that does not mean that we can lay down our weapons or can loll about in the palaces confiscated from the thieves! Gazavat will continue so long as we face an external and internal threat. . . . If your brother, friend, or dear one does not believe in Allah as he should, if he indulges his nafs and refuses to accept your teaching, let nothing and no one hinder your way forward on the correct path... (232).

These lines present the quintessence of neo-Orientalism. Firstly, these lines reinforce that Islam as the religion encourages extremism and violence by offering heavens to those who perpetrates it. Secondly, Islam is intolerant religion which permits its followers to compel non-Muslims to accept the religion.

In addition to that, Ganieva portrays that the existence of mosques are breaking families apart. Women in the salon narrate how the bearded men set the wine van on fire demonstrating that all Muslims resort to violence and Islam and peace cannot coexist. In the beginning of the novel, when Shamil sees monuments and sculptures, he is deeply affected by the culture of Dagestan. Nevertheless, at the end of novel, the destruction of monuments and sculptures foster that Islam is opposed to the culture of Dagestan; basically, it is the erasure of Dagestani culture. It is a threat to the society.

Dagestani nationalism is also represented as threatened by the rise of Islam and proliferation of Muslims from other countries like Arabs, Palestinians, and Jordanians. Dagestani nation is at the risk of being erased as seculars voice their concern that these foreigners will introduce Arabic language and madrassas in the republic and their concerns become reality when Islamic extremists seize the control of the region. First announcement they made is that “we have no nations, we have Allah!. . .Chechens and Kabardins, Balkhars and Ingushes, Karachaves and Dagestani will forget their borders” (186). In order to resist it Dagestani nationalists decide to use fire power against fundamentalists called Wahabis. This represents Anderson’s popular nationalism against official nationalism propounded in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2006). Official nationalism is bruited about by colonizers who say that that although different, colonizers and the subjects are the same; nevertheless, this gives rise to popular nationalism that topples official nationalism (110-111). Ganieva represents establishment of Islamic government as alien official nationalism that commands people to renounce their nationalism; whereas, Dagestani people who resist them are represented as popular nationalism attempting to overthrow foreign power. She refuses to accept the Islamic community which is far bigger than Dagestani nationalism for its own people identify with the former community. Anderson is of opinion that religion is one of the ingredients to imagine a community that transcends border, Islamic Ummah being on such imagined community (36). These imagined communities may not share borders or know each other, but they feel strong affinity with each other. It is this imagined community amplified by technology that is considered to be threat nationalism of secularists. Owing to their strong sense of imagined community, observant Muslims are represented disloyal to Dagestan.

Basically, Muslims are Othered as they appear to erase Dagestaniness from the region.

In the Epilogue of novel, there is festivity at the mountain of celebrations, people are celebrating wedding of Shamil and Asya. This is the alternative ending which would have come to life in case of secular Dagestan. Mountain of celebrations has been special place in the plot of the novel for it is the place of pagan Gods and reminds its readers of its pagan past. Ganieva, through this mountain, endeavors to once again demonstrates that secularism will bring joy and unite Dagestanis. Shamil is happy at the mountain. He is the namesake of Imam Shamil who was a devout Muslim leader who united Dagestanis under the banner of Islam and implemented Sharia during his reign and fought against Russians. Whereas, Shamil, the protagonist of the novel, is nationalist as evident from ringtone of his mobile that is Dagestani national anthem. He is a secular and against sharia law and calls it insanity. Ganieva, through this characterization, endeavors to suggest that secularism and rule of Russia is beneficial for the existence of Dagestan and time has come to move towards modernity which can only be acquired by adopting secularism.

The analysis of the *Mountain and Wall* from the perspective of Islamic postcolonialism reveals that Ganieva has perpetuated neo-orientalist images in the novel. By drawing profusely on neo-Orientalist repertoire, for instance, disseminating belligerent, primitive, misogynistic images of Islam and the Muslims, Ganieva accomplishes to demonstrate not only authenticate Islam as erasure of Dagestani secular culture, but also emphasize and legitimize the need of the Russian presence in order to eradicate Islamic fundamentalism.

4.2 Reading *Bride and Groom* from the Islamic Postcolonial Perspective

Bride and Groom is the tragic love story of Marat and Patya whose failure to become married couple demonstrates Ganieva's dystopian vision of the region due to perennial presence of Islamic extremism.

The division of Muslims' identity into different categories by the neo-Orientalist is crucial to study according to the Islamic Postcolonialism. Ganieva, in accordance with neo-Orientalist model, divides the Muslims in to three categories;

nominal Muslims, conservative Muslims and semi-practicing Muslims. The category of nominal Muslim is represented by Marat, Patya, and Rusik. Firstly, Marat and Rusik are secular atheists who neither practice religion nor favour its implementation; for instance, Marat tells his mother that he will not marry observant Muslim and Rusik, an agnostic, does not go to the mosque for prayer. Likewise, Patya, is also a secular atheist who drinks and does not pray, she herself reveals that “I do not observe such prohibition” (Ganieva, *Bride and Groom* 2). Moreover, Considering Timur to be fundamentalist, she leaves him for Marat. Ganieva, through this category, demonstrates that Muslims can be secular.

The second category includes conservative Muslims: Sabrina, Mukhtar’s family, Adik, husband of Magomadov’s daughter, Zaripat’s husband, and Timur. Majed argues that it is this category that poses threat to the western secularism for they strictly observe all tenets of Islam. In the novel, Sabrina is an observant Muslim who wears scarf against her parent’s wishes and defends observant Muslims before her parents; his father declares furiously, “We raised our daughter, gave her everything she needed, and she sits right here in the room and declares that these idiots in niqab are right . . . And then she can put on her niqab and go off into the forest to her friends” (72). In another incident, Magomadov’s daughter leaves her husband for he becoming religious. Ganieva depicts observant Muslims averse to every everything that Dagestanians cherish and value; for instance, Zaripat’s husband, who is arrested on the charges of murder afterwards, is represented as an extremist who forbids Zaripat from singing. Furthermore, Timur is depicted as a fundamentalist who wishes to control Patya and on the day of concert, Patya reveals that he leads her as if she were goat. Being portrayed as a sexist endorsing the idea of controlling women, he remarks that it is easy for a beautiful girl like Patya to stray from the right path. He commands her to grow hair and cover her body thus restricting her liberty. Owing to this, Patya leaves him and is met with his threats, “you will be mine, come what may” (120). Lastly, Adik, though in the beginning a non-observant Muslims, when joins Wahabis is represented as a terrorist who provides safe heaven to other terrorists. In the beginning, he is a timid boy who is bullied by other boys; nonetheless, after becoming an observant Muslims, he is represented as a terrorist. This kind of portrayal depicts that all conservative Muslims are fundamentalists, extremists, and potential terrorists.

Lastly, there is the category of semi-practicing Muslims who although believe in God, do not practice their religion entirely and follow selected injunctions. Marat's parents, although there is not a single incident in the novel which depicts them praying, intend to perform Hajj and his mother takes Marat to dervish so that they may find about his marriage. Marat's parents are also against Rusik who is secular; when Marat informs his father that Rusik does not give any attention to religion, his father replies "That's a problem in and of itself" (36). Likewise, Patya's parents are also selective when it comes to religion; her father does not abstain from drinking alcohol, for instance, when guests arrive, her father and her uncle "immediately lit into the cognac" (154). In addition to that, there is not a single occasion where they pray. Her father does not visit mosque, however, for Patya's marriage he visits imam of the mosque. Lastly, another character Rinat a drunkard utilizes sufism to lure Patya. He fabricates a story that he saw a portentous dream in which he wished to see Patya, seeing this as a sign from God, he says that he has arranged the party to meet her.

You know the fable about the poet who began to cry out in ecstasy, 'I am God! I am God!' His students decided that the poet had been possessed by Satan, and attacked with him with their knives. . . . Because the poet had lost his individuality. . . . Your hair is covering your face. Get rid of it. Get rid of the hair. . . . Hair is multitude. Multitude hides the face of the one (17).

He eventually succeeds in gaining Patya's trust and they walk in the garden. This demonstrates that most of the characters are either nominal or semi-practicing Muslims and they follow those injunctions that they think do not restrict them. Through this representation, Ganieva endeavours to reinforce another neo-Orientalist stereotype that Islam is not strong to unite the people of Dagestan and there exists a weak relationship between Islam and Muslims. Hence, Islam is not a practical religion.

Furthering the trope of Muslims' belligerence and hostility, Ganieva's has speckled the entire novel with violence by Muslims. While on a train to Dagestan, Marat finds out that different mosques are at war with each other which has destroyed the peace of their home country; "What's all this trouble in town between the mosques? Some kind of brawl?" Marat scratched himself lazily and settled down on

his bunk. ‘Brawls you mean.’ (27). He also witnesses death of Rusik who is secular atheist and he himself ends up in jail on the accusation of helping terrorists. His tragic end signifies that observant Muslims are threat to everyone as they are destroying the peace of the place. Likewise, Patya’s return to her native country proves to be disastrous and eventually, she leaves her town to find peace which is absent over there.

Patya and Marat view prayer and abstinence from alcohol as indicators of conservativeness for they are non-practicing nominal Muslims who think that religion is a personal issue and everyone should have freedom to practice it in their own manner and it is not significant that it should be rational. This view or idea is promulgated by postmodernism; Akbar S. Ahmed, in his book *Postmodernism and Islam predicament and Promise* (1992), scrutinizes the acrimonious relationship between Islam/Muslims and the western postmodernism. It is a secular framework and whoever refuses to fit into this framework is considered as fundamentalists. According to Ahmed, contrary to the western postmodernist framework, Islamic postmodernism signifies return to religion Islam and awareness of stereotypical representation of the western media (32). The notion of returning to glorious past, the aspiration to live in accordance to the Quran and the *Sunnah* is the indication of entrance of Muslims into “self-consciously Islamic phase” (35). However, this does not bode well for the secular west and therefore, their framework represents Muslims as fundamentalists and menace to cultural, social, personal, and political peace. He further analyzes that in order to construct this representation native neo-Orientalists are employed. Hence, postmodernism which claims to voice the concerns of the Other, basically depicts what the dominant western system propagates. The book *Islam, Postmodernism and Other Futures* (2003), concludes that Postmodernism is partial in regards with non-western cultures. On the one hand, it professes to celebrate multiplicity, endeavors to unshackle the Other from the representation that is not conditioned by dominant system; whereas on the other hand, this framework, as Andrew Ross maintains that, creates another system of inequality (204). Essentially, it is an ideology that propagates western secularism narrative under the guise of liberation from inequality. It becomes manifestly clear that Ganieva is propagating similar postmodern view by portraying Islam and Muslims, especially observant Muslims, as terrorists and fundamentalists.

In the neo-Orientalist discourse, veil has been represented in two ways that performs entirely different functions. Firstly, it has been represented as suppressive and oppressive, a punishing practice imposed by men on Muslim women to restrain them. Young is of opinion that numerous westerners consider it as an indicator of Islamic patriarchal society which denies women their rights (80). Veil functions to make them invisible. Secondly, it is considered as a threat and Muslim women who wear it are labelled as potential terrorists. Nonetheless, numerous Muslim women believe that it is integral part of their society. Emma Tarlo, in her book *Visibly Muslim: Fashion Politics, Faith* (2008), endeavors to delineate the intricate nature of veil. She advocates that these practices cannot be reduced to plain notions of religious community or politics, rather, it entails convoluted choices completed in the milieu of international framework that offer variegated choices (qtd. in Majed 155). Her analysis entirely negates that veil is threatening and contends that the image of veil as a threat is basically continuation of Orientalist representation. Moreover, the revival of tradition of hijab is reactionary for it is against movements that attempt to suppress it. From this perspective veil may be seen as a cardinal part of the Muslim women identity which they choose as part of their primary identity, notwithstanding their diverse cultural and national backgrounds. Likewise, they believe it to be part of their religion. In keeping with above view, Majed concludes that if veiling was related to intricate issue, it could be debate; nevertheless, if it is a part of Islam, then it is an order to be followed like salat and roza. Granted this is the situation, one is required to accept the significance of veil from the standpoint of the Muslim veiled women themselves who consider it as a part of their religion (157). This demonstrates that all the issues regarding veiling are marginal in comparison to significance of Islamic practice.

There are numerous other instances which correspond with Ganieva viewpoint that hijab has never been part of Dagestani and young women wear them and it is the foreign influence. From this perspective, she represents hijab both as threatening and a symbol of oppression in *Bride and Groom*. Basically, she Otherize the veil/hijab in Dagestani context. Similar representation of observant Muslim, according to Zahed, is present in Egyptian media. According to him, they media create us (Egyptian) vs them (Muslims/observant Muslims) in which observant Muslims are depicted as other people who are not part of Egyptian culture (135). Ganieva follows in the footsteps of

neo-Orientalists and depict observant Muslim women as other in the novel; For instance, when Marat's mother shows him pictures of girls he rejects some of them for wearing veil/scarf.

Anyway, here, you know this next one: Zaira". "Cross her off immediately." "What do you mean, 'Cross her off?' She's one of us, from right here in town, a sensible girl." "She wears a headscarf." "Not a hijab though! I myself can't stand the ones who cover up, but what's wrong with a scarf ?it's cute." " And she prays. Don't make me think about it (40-41).

Marat, one of the protagonists of the novel, refuses to even consider a girl who wears a scarf and prays. In this manner, she is Otherized, and shunned by the society of Dagestani to which she belongs.

Ganieva also portrays veil/scarf as threatening. When, together with her mother, visits Sabrina's house, they discuss a family who was murdered by police for being religious. The family approve of her murder; whereas, Sabrina condemns this act. Nevertheless, her father believes otherwise:

Hey, was that the same colonel from your town who climbed in through to that woman who was a terrorist?" "What are you talking about, Papa? She was just a woman in a niqab," Sabrina corrected him. "There's no such thing a 'just' a girl in a niqab around here. . . . They are all future terrorists (70).

Sabrina's futile protests against her rape and brutal murder for being observant Muslim does not waver her father who declares that these women are "worse than streetwalkers" (70). In addition to that, he criticizes her daughter who wears scarf and his only concern is that one day she will go to the forest to join other terrorists. This reinforces that Ganieva endeavors to other the scarf/veil practice in Dagestan. She basically attempts to represent two identities; parents/elders as liberal, and young generation as conservative owing to foreign influence thus erasing the liberal culture of Dagestan.

Besides veil/hijab, Muslim women are considered to be subjugated, oppressed, and voiceless in the Muslim majority country. Neo-Orientalists assert that Islam discriminates against women and confines them to domestic roles; whereas, men are unchanging, brutal, and sexist. Ganieva demonizes Dagestani Muslim majority

society by representing it as stifling for women. Amishka, a friend of Patya, finds her reputation blighted when Karim leaves her after inviting her to his home and making her consume drugs. Instead of punishing Kerim, people label her “dishonourable” which devastates Amishka (57). Her parents, completely ignoring her trauma, are angry with her and everybody believes that she will never get married again. Another woman Zaripat is married off to an extremist who forbids her from singing and wearing clothes of her choice and with the passage of time she is entirely confined to domestic chores. After some time, her husband is arrested on the charges of extremism and receives long sentence. Only after his arrest that she is able to perform for the public. Ganieva represents that in Muslim majority society, women are considered to be property of men who consider them objects and wish to control them. Men are not questioned over their actions, only women suffer. Men stifle the women’s dream in the name of religion. In addition to these incidents, Patya’s friend Timur is also represented as sexist who believes that “it is particularly easy, you know, for a beautiful girl to stay from the true path. We observe the vice of the west, and we stumble. Especially girls, with their weaker minds” (90). The analysis of these lines from the perspective of Islamic postcolonialism demonstrates that Islam is sexist and Islamic society is a patriarchal society where men are awarded superiority; whereas, women are considered to be irrational, frail, and, vulnerable. Hence, men try to guard them by controlling them; for instance, Patya feels that Timur believes she is to be lead like he would lead a goat. Realizing this ill treatment, Patya leaves Timur and experiences harassment for numerous days. She has to hide in her house in order not to be seen by him since she is frightened to think that Timur will abduct her and throw her in a drum. Ganieva basically attempts to validate that Muslim men do not allow women to choose for themselves for they are considered inferior and incapable of choosing. Hence, the argument that Islam is discriminatory and Muslim men are oppressive is propagated in these depictions. She reiterates neo-Orientalists stereotypes in her novel by representing Muslim women voiceless and subjugated. In short, Ganieva depicts the neo-orientalist’s stereotypes of Muslim men and Islam in order to reveal them as sexist and oppressive towards women. Islam, actually, forbids the exploitation of women rights, Deepa Kumar responds to these accusations in her book *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire* (2012): “In reality the great liberal western tradition is not only mired in sexism but even has played a part in curtailing

woman's rights in the East" (48). Islam is neither sexist nor misogynistic. It grants the same rights to woman as to men.

Polygamy is another notion which is ferociously criticized although few comprehend it. Polygamy is defined as the practice of having more than one wife at the same time. Islam permits man to have four wives at a time under certain conditions; husband ought to be just in regards to his wives. However, it is rarely practiced in the cotemporary world; not every man has four wives. The custom has been in existence in almost all religions, for instance, there existed no restriction when it came to number of wives in Judaism, and Christianity; from this one may conclude that Islam did not introduce this practice. Nevertheless, neo-Orientalists have been demonizing the institution of marriage in Islam by attributing unrestrained sexuality of Muslims to polygamy. In contrast, Ganieva stereotype another dimension of the practice: veiled women as seductress. As Shakov insists that "they'll throw themselves at anyone and everyone" (20). This dimension is relatively new as up until now, Muslim men have been stereotyped as sexually indulgent. As Ganieva is against the practice of veil or hijab, she seizes every opportunity to denigrate it. She selects Angela, a Muslim convert, to personify this dimension. Angela is a second or "kept wife" of a man who abstains from publicly announcing her as a wife and giving her rights, nevertheless, she is comfortable as she is the second wife of a wealthy man and satisfies her sexual desire through man like Shakh and Marat. She offers Marat to remove her scarf for him and when Marat rejects her advance, she becomes desperate and "ran her hands across his body like an animal" (151). This relatively new stereotype permits Ganieva to accomplish two task; Firstly, she gives a glimpse of practice of polygamy in Dagestan, secondly, by depicting veiled/hijabi women as seductress, she endeavours to establish another neo-Orientalist trope that both observant Muslim men and hijabi/veiled women are sexually indulgent. In his manner, she has distorted the purpose and essence of practice and represents Islam as a religion that induces people through sexual indulgence.

Another neo-Orientalist trope explored is the Muslims' aversion to working and studying. It has been investigated by numerous critics, for instance, Hasan Majed reports on representation of Muslims in Kureishi's *The Black Album* (1995) and concludes that that the Muslims are portrayed as people who do not spend time on studying and working, rather, they spend time with other fundamentalists. He reveals

that “It seems there is a distinction between being a Muslim and acquiring knowledge. They do not go to college or study, because they have an Islamic meeting, an Islamic role that should be played. Being a Muslim, then, would be at the expense of knowledge. To pair Islam and knowledge is like trying to juggle two balls in one hand; one would fall down” (95). Similarly, in Ganieva’s novel *Bride and Groom* (2018), Magomadov’s daughter’s leave her husband for, instead of taking care of her, he spends time in halal café jabbering regarding hadiths. According to Magomadov’s daughter, she had to feed him for three years “morning in the store, evenings I’d knit things to order” and when she confronted him with the question “ Le, Yusup, what about how a man is supposed to take care of his wife, and if he doesn’t, she has the right to declare a divorce, is there something in your books about that? So he starts screaming and yelling” (52). When she forced him to find work, he disdained and retorted that he would not do haram work. In these lines, Ganieva depicts that Muslims in order to run away from responsibilities find solace in religion. Religion is an impediment to fulfilling their obligations since it makes them lazy and away from obligations towards relations. Ganieva again adopts approach of over-generalization and endeavor to represent Islam stimulating indolence and extremism and hence a hindrance to Dagestan’s advancement.

Islamic symbols such as Quran, Mosques and Imams are also represented negatively. They are depicted as inciting violence and disrupting peace. They do not seem to play substantial role in the establishment of peace. People shout Allahu Akbar before attacking each other (Ganieva, *Bride and Groom* 28). It demonstrates that Muslims begin violence with the recitation of Quran thereby, functioning as a testimony to neo-Orientalist representation that Islam and Quran provoke violence. This issue has been discussed by Khaled Beydoun in his article “The perils of saying ‘Allahu Akbar’ in public” (2018) elaborately. He was regarded suspiciously when he finished telephone conversation with Allahu Akbar and suddenly he became a potential terrorist. The phrase is an integral part of approximately every Muslim’s vernacular. Its literal meaning is ‘God is Greatest’; a declaration of complete submission and dedication to God. Nevertheless, this phrase has also been included to the stereotypes that represent Islam and Muslims (Beydoun). He goes further and elaborates that numerous Muslims have been expelled from airports for saying Quranic phrases like Allahu Akbar, Inshallah, etc. He accuses Hollywood movies of

diffusing this stereotypical representation where these words have become synonymous to potential threat. These frequent and overwhelming stereotypical representations has evacuated the phrase of its religious and spiritual meanings, and displaced it with an erroneous understanding that “Allahu Akbar” indicates a bomb, an attack or domestic extremism. It is true that some extremists use this phrase in order to justify their attack which has tarnished it. Nonetheless, associating it with terrorism is reductionist approach premised upon erroneous speculations. These negative depictions signify that the term has been monopolized by neo-Orientalists who associate it with extremism; for instance, Hollywood movies *Executive Decision* (1996) and *American Sniper* (2014) propagate these stereotypes. The analysis demonstrates that Ganieva in her novel is promoting misrepresentation of Quranic phrase by portraying it as a symbol of violence.

As mentioned above, mosques are also stereotypically represented by Ganieva, tearing families apart. They are represented as source of violence and conflict in Dagestan. Various Mosques propagates oppositional ideologies which creates disruption and animosity among people, “ ‘What’s all this trouble in town between the mosques? Some kind of brawl?’ . . . ‘Brawls you mean.’ ” (Ganieva, *Bride and Groom* 27). There are brawls outside mosques which demonstrate that it is not the symbol of peace rather, a sanctuary to radicals who spread extremism in the region.

The third symbol related to Islam is Imam who is depicted as extremist and hypocrite by Ganieva. Imams are religious leaders who impart religious education to people. They are considered to be influential figures in the region, therefore, their duty is to dedicate themselves to establishing peace in the society. Nevertheless, Ganieva expresses that they are not fulfilling their obligations towards the society; rather, they are responsible for spreading violence in the region. Ganieva’s Imams are not even well versed in the religion, for instance, the question regarding predestination could not be answered by imam. One imam states that Allah knows everything before it is committed by humans, another imam from oppositional mosque expresses entirely different view that Allah comes to know about actions only after they are committed by humans and this creates conflict between the followers provoking them to fight on regular basis. These oppositional perspectives regarding the religious figures indicate that they are only increasing the number of their

followers in order that they might rule them. Hence, Imams are corrupt who only cause conflict among people.

Rusik, a secular agnostic, is also condemned by imams causing his gruesome death at the hands of fundamentalists, thereby indicating that imams are promoting intolerance among the people which in consequence leads to extremist actions. In addition to that, religious leaders are depicted as hypocritical; for instance, Abdullaevs who is related to mullahs rapes a girl, instead of facing punishment and atoning for mistakes, proceeds to marry another girl (122). Basically, Islam is weak to protect girls as silence of imams over the appalling condition of women demonstrates that Islam gives no protection to women. They are suppressed by Islam. The paramount question here arises that if imam or mullahs have influence on the society then why does he remains silent over the misdeed of his relative? Why does he not distribute pamphlets condemning people like Abdullaevs, Karim, etc.? Why does act as a silent observer when it is duty to eradicate all the evils in the region? It seems that his silence is approval of these acts. The religious leader supports suppression of the women.

Superstition is another trait of Muslims living in antiquity. In the novel, bearded men take defiant people to the mosque for exorcism, over there, they torture these people in the name of religion. Ganieva terms them “intoning spells in some alien tongue” (205); that alien tongue is Arabic. On other occasion, a girl is dragged to a mosque on the suspicion of being possessed by djinn. Imam of the mosque exorcised her by reciting Quran until she confesses that she is a djinn. These lines are susceptible of two interpretations. Firstly, religious leaders crush down dissent by torturing dissenters. They are only consolidating their position and power and thus, are fraudulent and dishonest. Second interpretation could be that Muslims live in antiquity and are superstitious. Owing to their belief, they are irrational and far from modernity. Instead of taking the girl to the hospital, they take him to the imam for treatment. In this manner, Ganieva stereotypes not only Muslims, but also Quran and its language. She endeavours to draw a boundary between Dagestan and Arabic language by represented Arabic as alien spell thus linking Islam to foreign influence for the core text, Quran, is in Arabic language.

Ganieva, in the novel, portrays observant Muslims as people who disrupt peace of the region. She connects this behaviour with Islam; since Islam is primitive and therefore, it fosters irrationality, intolerance, and, violence. In the novel, police officer eloquently distinguishes between ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’ Muslims. The Muslims who are secular are normal; whereas, the Muslims who are devout to religion are threat to peace and potential terrorists (177). In the entire novel, they are depicted as attacking people verbally and physically, they regularly fight with each other which spread across entire families and consequently tear families apart. In the second chapter of the novel, observant Muslims are depicted to be fighting over matter of predestination. Various families have contradictory views about the notion and they start hurling stones at each other and shooting their guns. According to Rusik, this has become prevalent due to religious intolerance. One day, he holds a placard saying that he is agnostic. Seeing this as an act of heresy, observant Muslims kill him:

That devil, that Rusik asshole, goes and makes a placard saying that there’s no Allah, and he’s out strutting around with it on the Avenue. Our guys spot him out there. They go over to, like scope it out. Not to make a real dent or nothing. But Rusik loses it. . . . It was just a stupid accident. Dude brought it on himself (142).

All Muslims endeavor to protect the murderer Alishka by presenting it as an accident. This further reinforces the idea that Islam is intolerant and primitive and consequently, Muslims are intolerant and violent. They cannot tolerate any ideology that opposes Islam. This event also attempts to demonstrate that Muslims are backward and they require a secular system which will instill toleration and eradicate extremism among them. Timur, who is also a fundamentalist, supports Rusik’s murder stating that he was killed in an accident “Alishka just gave him a little nudge, that’s all. . . . It was his own fault, it was a total accident. . . . It was Allah who struck him down, for not believing in him” (143-144). Timur, a hypocrite and belligerent, in the guise of public activist is rather a fundamentalist; for instance, when he starts giving speech, it is revealed that he himself is a fundamentalist who is against modernity. In his address, he says that dinosaur bones were created by Kafirs and it is a plot against believers. He even harasses Patya and attempts to force her into marrying him. He believes that beautiful girls are weak and liable to stray from the

right path. Therefore, they require guidance from men like him. During his interaction with Patya, he is represented as domineering; he commands Patya to grow her hair and wear some long clothes. Timur, under the façade of youth activist, is rather a fundamentalist who wish to control women and is intolerant towards people with different views.

In the novel, almost all of the Muslims are stereotypically portrayed. Nevertheless, Wahabis are particularly targeted as extremists and potential terrorists. Numerous observant Muslims are also labelled as Salafis or Wahabis and depicted as extremists. Wahabism is an Islamic school of thought that commenced in the 18th century and it united warring tribes of Saudi Arabia. According to Haneef James Oliver, Wahhabism aimed at bringing people to Tawheed and Sunnah. Nevertheless, the term has become an intimidating notion and the movement has been identified as extremists by so called expert on Islam which H.J. Oliver vehemently rejects in his book *The Wahabi Myth: Dispelling the Prevalent Fallacies and the Fictitious link with Bin Laden* (2002); Wahabi scholars vigorously condemn terrorism (87). Ganieva represents Wahabis as terrorists in her novel. Alishka, who kills Rusik, is portrayed as belonging to a Wahabi family. Another couple Gagarin and Supia, who settles in the neighborhood, are also Wahabis for their daughters wear burkas which is against tradition of Dagestan. Owing to their observance of Islam, Dagestanis criticize and treat them as outcast and perpetrators of conflict. Salafis are represented as not following the rules of Dagestan; for instance, Wahabis threaten a lecturer who did not allow veiled girls to enter the class room, “ the parents of the veiled girls were upset, brought suit, and threatened the director with reprisal” (Ganieva 105). Observant Muslims are being stereotyped as anti-modern who are against enlightenment. Veil is against modernity and tradition that must be abandoned. This demonstrates that Wahabis defies the law of Dagestan. They refuse to esteem the rules in general and follow their religion only. Consequently, Islam’s and Dagestan’s codes are in conflict which disrupts peace. Furthermore, they impose their religion on other people; for instance, Gamid is another Wahabi who does not drink and dance. Owing to this, his father and other guests “started sneaking outside to gather in little groups in their cars and drink secretly from plastic glasses. . . . When Gamid found out about it, he went berserk.” (Ganieva, *Bride and Groom* 111). demonstrates that Wahabis are intolerant and strict and compel people to follow them. Ganieva depicts that Wahabism is a

foreign ideology which is not only erasing the traditions of Dagestan but also jeopardizing its peace as they force other people to relinquish their tight grip on Dagestani traditions.

The concept of Sufism in Islam is equivalent to striving for ultimate truth that is Allah. A Sufi recognizes the God which is the ultimate truth by repudiating the world. In Sufi tradition, they are described as seeker of God and in order to find God one must follow path of God (Ahmad 37). Numerous Sufis employ wine in their poetry which has been intentionally or unintentionally misconstrued by large number of people. Large number of secularists interprets it literally and disseminate that wine takes one to the truth. However, this is an attempt to evacuate the faith from Sufism. Wine and drunkenness are symbols employed in order to describe intoxication stimulated owing to love for God. This explanation is afforded by Jawid Mojaddedi who has rendered Rumi's *Masnavi* into English (246). In addition to that, Mohamed Ghilan, in his article "What was Rumi talking about?: Sufi poetry has been largely misunderstood by modern pop culture", maintains that wine in Sufism is not literal. He laments "It is quite a depressing realisation to witness great Sufis such as Rumi become reduced to drunkards raving about their current love partners or unable to get over losing their past ones. This is precisely what modern pop culture's misappropriation of Sufi poetry about love has done" (Ghilan). Sufi poets and saints warn that their poetry commences at the allegorical level to specify literal meanings other than what first comes to mind, all of which revolve around the Divine. Basically, Ghilan is reiterating the viewpoint of Al-Ghazali's. Speaking of metaphors, Dr. Amna Saeed and Madad Sabrial in the article "Metaphors of Wine, Cup and Tavern in Poetry of Rumi and Hafiz" (2018) contend that Sufis employ worldly symbols in order to describe inexplicable spiritual realm so that people may comprehend it (78). Ganieva affords the similar literal interpretation of wine and Sufism. In the afterword of the novel, she briefly informs the reader that Sufism consolidated its place in Dagestan during the middle ages and she wishes to structure this novel as a journey of Sufi towards the 'Absolute' owing to this she claims to have employed several symbols of Sufism, for instance wine. Wine, according to her, reveals truth to the Sufis. Although it is forbidden to Muslims, intoxication brings Sufis close to the God. She compares this to the encounter of drunkard Marat and Kalilbek; in the twelfth chapter of the novel, Marat meets a drunkard who offers him

wine, after drinking wine offered by drunkard Khalilbek, Marat feels warmth. Khalilbek or the drunkard is represented as mysterious figure who ostensibly foresees future; for instance, Khalilbek built a casino which was later converted into children's art center, if he had not built casino, there would not have been center. When Marat enquires how he knows that, he simply replies that he knows due to wine. At the end of conversation, he also cast shadow of doubt on Marat's wedding which surprisingly does not happen. Ganieva maintains that Khalilbek is the embodiment of Sufism owing to the fact he is associated to Khidr by people in the novel. Khidr was the teacher of Hazrat Musa (A.S). He is principally eminent for three deeds, which at first glance appeared heinous, but were proved to be wise. Likewise, Khalilbek commits action whose consequences only he knows while people are oblivious to it. Throughout novel, he is depicted as a drunkard so that he could be considered as a Sufi. Ganieva wrongly compares a drunkard to Hazrat Khidr (A.S) who followed the path of God. As discussed above, Sufi, journeying towards God, follows the path divulged by the Almighty. Therefore, the people who seek ultimate truth reject things that God forbids. Numerous critics and researches as quoted above contend this aspect of Sufism which has been misconstrued by pop culture and in this case by neo-Orientalist, in order to evacuate it of spirituality. Wine is but only a symbol employed by Sufis in their poetry in order to make people understand intoxication inspired by love of God. This analysis demonstrates that Ganieva has afforded the erroneous interpretation of Sufism in her novel by reducing it to the representation of drunkard.

Lastly, Ganieva has incorporated stories from ancient times when paganism existed in the region. These stories are told by Patya's grandmother, "she had not reached decrepit old age, the world in which she dwelt had absolutely nothing in common with ours" (Ganieva, *Bride and Groom* 44). Her grandmother recounts the time when the peace that prevailed Dagestan. People followed strict code of conduct for the stability of the region. They would dance at the wedding and bride and groom would play and dance jovially. Basically, people were held together by strict code of conduct and people who would commit crime were punished. There was peace and people felt secured. These stories from ancient past serve as a foil for present volatile situation in the region. People are constantly living in fear of being assailed by extremists. Ganieva draws comparison that in the contemporary Dagestan people cannot dance and partake in revelries for fear of being assailed by extremists. There

exists instability in the region owing to religious extremism. In a nutshell, observant Muslims with their religion has destroyed the peace and devoured the culture of Dagestan.

As mentioned earlier in this study that fiction has profound impact on the people's cognition and it is thus utilized to do so. The above analysis uncovers that how Ganieva employs various neo-Orientalist strategies as a discursive tool in order to represent distorted image of Islam and the Muslims in her selected works. The study also compares her stereotypes with that of Anglo-American's in order to discern the pattern and extensive impact of stereotypical representational practices. The comparison demonstrates that Ganieva has followed in the footsteps of western proponents of neo-Orientalism thus, bringing into the light that these stereotypes and binaries are pervasive and thus contributing to the spread of Islamophobia.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A former Russian Minister and native of Dagestan, Ramazan Abdulatipov, addressed people in Moscow by maintaining that anti-Islamic sentiment is entrenched in the Russian society owing to aggravating situation in the North Caucasus. His belief is evident in Putin's statement, "If extremist forces manage to get a hold in the Caucasus, this infection may spread up the Volga River, spread to other republics, and we either face the full Islamization of Russia, or we will have to agree to Russia's division into several independent states." (Giuliano 195). Revival of Islam is compared with the virus that is spreading rapidly and therefore, must be eliminated. This demonstrates the quintessential stereotypical Islamophobic view which has manifestly inspired representation of Islam and Muslims in Russia. Although, Putin stated it in 2000, it still reverberates in the Russia as the novels analyzed in this thesis corroborate it.

The notion of representation has long been used as an instrumental tool to construct and define the "Other" for Said's *Orientalism* (1979) is littered with illustrations. This study centered its focus on the representation of Islam and the Muslims (specifically Russian Muslims). The portrayal of Muslims by the West has often been stereotypical; they have been represented as extremists, primitive, misogynists, and everything that is opposite to modern civilization. Gradually, these stereotypes slipped into not only literary but also scholarly works thereby naturalizing them. Entire repertoire created and naturalized by the West is now being utilized by whoever is engaged in writing against Muslims and Islam. This not only includes the foreigners, but also native informers who reside in the West. They exalt Western democracy and liberalism as liberating, whereas, the government and traditions of their native land as stifling. This has led to construction of different Muslim identities premised upon adoption of the Western values; liberal who adopted western liberalism, and extremist or conservative who is the opposite of liberal Muslim. This division has contributed to the institute of Orientalism in form of neo-Orientalism; it includes not only foreign writers, but also those who reproach their country and its

people, specifically observant Muslims. Through this framework, Islamic teachings and practices have been reproached and condemned as primitive, barbaric, and extremists, misogynists. They have been depicted as belligerents who wish to derive the world back to antiquity.

Islamic Postcolonialism, propounded by Hasan Majed, has the capacity to counter these negative portrayals by uncovering them. The function of this theoretical framework is to highlight neo-Orientalist images of Islam and Muslims by analyzing how neo-Orientalists construct various identities of Muslims in accordance with their religiousness. Moreover, it aims at revealing how neo-Orientalists in addition to labelling Islam and its injunctions primitive, extremist, and deviant, twist narratives of history and historical figures by feigning authority and authenticity.

Similarly, reading Alisa Ganieva's selected novels from the perspective of Islamic postcolonialism demonstrates that she derives her novels from the repertoire of above-mentioned stereotypes; she associates Islam with everything that is antithesis of peace, representing it as the cause of conflict which leads to chaos at the end. It is equated with extremism and its followers, observant Muslims, as extremists. She carves out different identities of Muslims in order to draw conclusion that observant Muslims are brute disrupters of peace who hate modernization. They are, fundamentally, primitive who have been unable to keep up with the pace of progression and innovation. Women who wear hijab are attacked on the pretext of violating old traditions. Having depicted it as synonymous with primitivism, and extremism, Ganieva's hijabi women become extremists in the end.

Caucasus has been a difficult area to control and dominate owing to resistance movements and therefore Russia has been employing brutal strategies in order to subdue Muslims of the Republic. People, especially Muslims of Dagestan have acrimonious memories of mass deportation, oppression, suppression of their religious identity under the Russian imperialists. Not only that, in a bid to erase Islamic identity of the region altogether, Russia with the passage of time, resorted to neo-Orientalist repertoire to legitimize brutal suppression of Muslims of the region.

Ganieva's selected novels are continuation of anti-Islamic and anti-Muslims propaganda as she endeavours to prove that secularism brings peace and stability by presenting the distorted image of Islam. She represents Islam as extremist and violent

religion propel towards terrorism; in her selected works she compares pagan past with life under Sharia. The outcome of this comparison divulges to the reader that under Sharia, chaos and suppression reign. She represents Islamic teachings as opposed to modern era. Sharia law has become an instrument to oppress people, especially women, in her selected novels. In essence, the selected novels explicitly support Islamophobia and stereotypes of Muslim which only contribute to the prolonged existence of these stereotypes and Islamophobia. Therefore, the analysis demonstrates that Ganieva, strengthening the binaries of the neo-Orientalist framework regarding her Muslim majority republic, is a neo-Orientalist and a native informer.

This study has attempted to answer three research questions. First research question is related to discursive tools that Ganieva employs in her selected novels in order to represent Islam and Muslims. In consequence of analysis, it is proved that Ganieva heavily relies upon neo-Orientalist binaries and stereotypes to authenticate, legitimize, and disseminate Islamophobia. Firstly, she depicts Islam and its symbols, like, mosque, Koran, and Imam, as the root cause of conflict and chaos in Dagestan that result in deaths. Secondly, its teachings are demonized as oppressive, extremist, and anti-modern which leads to creation of similar personalities. For instance, Observant Muslims kill people who proclaim to have different perspective. Situation becomes chaotic when extremists seize the control of Dagestan as one character declares that it is the end of enlightenment. In addition to that, Ganieva stereotypes Islamic article of clothing in her works; she accomplishes it in two ways. Firstly, as already mentioned, it oppresses women and curtail their liberty, secondly, it renders women liable to becoming extremists which is evident in case of Madina and Sabrina; Madina ends up becoming extremist and Sabrina is depicted as sympathetic towards extremists (observant Muslims). Lastly, different identities of Muslims, in accordance with the neo-Orientalist's framework, are constructed in order to reinforce that secular Muslims who are Muslims in name only and do not abide by the rules and teachings of Islam are modern and therefore, other Muslims should accept this identity if they desire to be accepted by the world.

The second research question focused on as to how Muslim Identities are represented by Ganieva. She has adroitly employed the framework of "Good Muslim" and "Bad Muslim" in order to strengthen that observant Muslims are extremists, lazy and oppressive; whereas, secular Muslims are basically modern and have practical

approach towards life. Illustrating this framework, she represents Magomadov's daughter's religious as someone who is averse to hard work in order to provide for family. In the same vein, on another occasion in the selected novel, Usman, following his expulsion from school on account of indolence, sits in the mosque and feigns to be holy man. Thus, Muslims comprises indolent people who abstain from work and refrain from accepting modernism. Apart from this, She also connects observant Muslims with Wahabism, a movement which has been connected with extremism by the West. She reinforces this connection between Wahabism and observant Muslims by demonstrating at the end of *Mountain and the Wall* the chaos, oppression and anarchy under the reign of observant Muslims. In a nutshell, Wahabis are extremists. People of Dagestan somehow have been enthralled by it and therefore, have become observant Muslims (extremists). Only those Muslims are "Good" who do not follow the religion and demand for their religious rights; in other words, completely submissive and docile to secular regime.

Finally, the third question endeavoured to discover the correspondence or resemblance between Ganieva's and Anglo-American's depiction of Muslims of Dagestan and Islam. The study frequently compares Ganieva's representation with not only Western representations, for instance Harold Bergsma's, John Updike's, etc, but also with writers who criticizes their own countries and Islam, for example, Rushdie's, Fadia Faqir's, Hanif Qurieshi's, Monica Ali's, and Egyptian liberals', etc. In addition to review of their representations in literature review section, frequent comparisons are also drawn in the analysis section. These evaluations and comparisons establish that Ganieva has relied heavily upon stereotypes, which according to Said has become a cultural currency, in order to legitimize her selected works. These similar patterns of stereotypes also demonstrate the extensive prevalence of neo-Orientalism which is ceaselessly feeding Islamophobia by maligning Islam and the Muslims to reinforce the western framework that Islam is the cause of instability and extremism.

Keeping in view the importance of analysis of prevalence of neo-Orientalist representation, the prospective researchers could utilize Islamic postcolonialism in order to study literature of Chechnya; the republic that took the brunt of war on terror. In addition to that, they may also explore fiction produced by the writers of Asia.

The Guardian, the UK-based newspaper, published an article entitled “Anything goes’: how 9/11 led to a global security clampdown” (2021); it scrutinizes how the vague terms terrorism and war on terror has been utilized by various regimes to subdue and crush their opposition (Safi). Though, it alluded to numerous countries like Belarus, China, India, nevertheless, it failed to mention how Russia utilized these terms in order to clampdown on Muslims in Dagestan and Chechnya and attempted to efface not only the Islamic identity of its people but also of the region. Although the latest operation against the Muslims of the region was carried out between 2013-2015, its reverberations can still be heard in Ganieva’s representations in her selected works.

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