

Abstract

This thesis sheds light on the way Islam has been covered in two novels by two American novelists: John Updike (1932-2009) and Don DeLillo (1936-). The first novel is John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006) and the other is Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007).

The western media presents Islam as a monolithic, static, and dogmatic entity. It is presented as a doctrine and a system of belief that instigates its adherents to acts of violence, terrorism, and hatred of the non-Muslims. Consequently Muslims were represented as fanatics, irrational and regressive.

The acts of violence and terrorism committed by groups of suicidal individuals and fanatics are interpreted as the core of the Islamic religion. Therefore Islam is responsible for these terrorist acts. Islam is thus perceived in the American and western media as the ideology that encourages and supports the doctrine of Jihad. Islam as a religion is thus reduced and compressed to the actions of such small bands of fanatics. The 1.2 billion Muslims are downsized to these groups.

Consequently, this thesis tries to prove that the representation of Islam and Muslim world was established on stereotyped myths and lack of authentic knowledge. There are many misperceptions that leads to misrepresentations of Islam and thus to Islamophobia. These misrepresentations spring from the fact that both writers did not cross the linguistic, cultural, political and ideological boundaries to write in an objective and unprejudiced manner about the other "Islam".

Throughout the narrative of the two novels, there was persistent ideological stand through which both writers construct certain negative

characteristics to Muslim characters and hence to Islam. These misrepresentations act as an incentive in propagating Islamophobia. The thesis concentrates on the Neo-Orientalist narrative of the two novels. This narrative proves to be biased and prejudiced against the East and Islam.