

Pre- and Post-9/11 Cultural Ennui in John Updike's *Terrorist*, Richard Flanagan's *The Unknown Terrorist* and Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*



By

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Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis titled, “Pre- and Post-9/11 Cultural Ennui in John Updike’s *Terrorist*, Richard Flanagan’s *the Unknown Terrorist* and Sylvia Plath’s *the Bell Jar*” has been carried out by me in the department of Area Study Centre for Africa, North and South America Quaid-e-Azam, University, Islamabad. All the sources used in this research have been dully acknowledged and given due credits through citation and references. No part of this research was previously presented for any degree program at any institute.

Noreen

Dedicated to the Post-911 Sufferers

DRSML QAU

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Abstract

This research explores Cultural Ennui in the characters of Ahmad, Doll and Esther, the protagonists. Ahmed hails from John Updike's *Terrorist*, who is a US born Egyptian-American. His hyphenated or double identity and consumer culture of America becomes the cause of Ahmad's cultural ennui which makes him feel alienated and isolated in the consumerist America and he becomes morally ill. The orientalized depiction of Ahmad in the text is seen through Edward Said's Orientalism, which shows Ahmad as uncivilized, erotic, sensual and death loving. A stereotypical representation of Muslims as terrorists is shown through the character of Ahmad; these orientalized qualities of Ahmad are unfit to live in American consumer culture, modernism and technologically advanced America. The post- 9/11 Orientalism further amplifies cultural ennui that creates strong feelings of hatred and repugnance between Americans and Muslims. Likewise, Doll from Richard Flanagan's *the Unknown Terrorist* is occupied with cultural ennui on the soil of Australia in Sydney, where she is attached to a false label of terrorist on the basis of her affiliations with Tariq who is linked with radicalism and terrorism. This label of terrorist turns her life to swing between multiple identities and she becomes the victim of cultural ennui, which complicates her life and profession of pole dancing. Her survival becomes difficult and her yearning to get expensive brands, and sumptuous living is shattered .She is alienated and fed up of her job as a pole dancer with the false label of terrorist. The orientalization of Doll due to her attachment with Tariq becomes an excruciating gesture towards orientalizing her on the basis of racism and ethnicity. Similarly, Esther Greenwood from Plath's *The Bell Jar* equally feels alienated and isolated in pre-9/11 American consumer culture and dual identity dilemma.

Keywords: Cultural Ennui, American Consumer culture, Double Identity, Split personality, Religious fanaticism, Technological advancements, Orientalism.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The word ennui is a French word that is literally translated into English language as boredom, weariness, lassitude, uneasiness and lack of interest (*Cambridge Dictionary*). It got its prominence in the early 18th century and later entered into English language in the mid of 18th century England, as boredom, which got new definition in Baudelaire as ennui or fatigue. Baudelaire's poem, "the Flowers of Evil" (1875) explains ennui as decay and decadence, that is the root of all the human evils. Further, Baudelaire explains ennui as Infatuation Sadism, Lust, Avarice and Murder of moment's rest. A person experiences both simple and existential ennui. Existential ennui refers to the boredom from the culture where one lives, have relationships, status, profession, entertainment, whereas situational ennui refers to the temporary boredom that happens in a classroom, during a lecture or using gadgets etc.

According to Baudelaire, Leopardi and Rosenthal's *Theory and Poetry of Ennui* (1976) ennui is pervaded to every facet of human life. The closer to the truth, life is unhappier and idler. It is evident from today's artificial world of technology which entices people to spend their lives on smart phones, etc. Similarly, people are more informed and aware about the realities and truths due to easy access to modern knowledge and resources such as web, etc. People feel themselves near to reality. Ultimately, lives become boring and dull. The past memories of people are replaced with new world of modern technology. Antiquity is replaced with modernity and modernity brings with it the cultural ennui. The forerunners were happy and did not have ennui, because they were close to natural world than the technological world. The more human being is closer to technology, the more he or she feels boredom. Sigmund Freud theory of *Repressed Feelings* explain ennui as suppressed feeling, as a product of unconscious mind, the Id. The pleasure principle drives the ennui which leads to moral collapse in the form of cultural ennui.

Cultural ennui is the amalgamation of both existential and situational ennui that springs out of an antagonist, hedonist and materialist culture. Such culture brings agony, repugnance and hatred in a person which makes an individual unfit into an environment, where he/she cannot cope with the culture or surrounding. Ultimately such people seclude themselves and feel alienated and rejected from the mainstream. Eventually, seclusion and alienation lead to moral collapse which becomes evident from an antagonist behavior or villain of that particular culture. It was witnessed during French Revolution when people experienced weariness from the world where people were left with unfulfilled dreams and promises of revolution to get more jobs and labor did not come true. People became more lethargic and worked less. They couldn't find the jobs of their dreams and fit themselves into the new world of revolution. The same happened with the industrial revolution when people didn't find their promises fulfilled. Human existence became hollow and empty. There was lack of belongingness. Alienation replaced the lives of people. People found themselves caged in the mechanical life. Hence ennui entered all the facets of human life. The *Bleak House* (1852) by Charles Dickens explicitly depicts such emptiness and hollowness of life.

Sean Desmond Healy's *Boredom, Self and Culture* (1986) gives an explicit insight into cultural ennui. He says that it is the culture that is responsible for creating boredom. According to him, a culture is disintegrated. For instance, people do not have integrated interests, jobs, life standards, work place etc. People stop to believe in their capacities or tendencies to create an integrated culture, where they can achieve their desired goals or accomplishments to live in harmony. Even they stop thinking about their goals. Consequently, their thinking power stops with the disintegration of culture. This disintegration or lack of harmony brings with it cultural ennui.

Further, he says that culture shapes our life and structures our experiences. It leads our life, gives meanings to it. If culture fails to lead and give meaning then ultimately an air of ennui slips in, which injects itself into the flesh of society. Resultantly, cultural ennui disseminates everywhere. Moreover, he says that if boredom is increasing, it is the culture that is fallible, not the people. A culture is responsible for the faults, not the people, who show resistance to that particular culture. For instance, consumer culture is responsible for creating fuss among the consumers to get the super expensive branded dress, eat out at a luxurious restaurant or live in a sumptuous apartment. He calls this type of cultural ennui as hyper boredom, that is very prevalent across the cultures whether it is American culture or European culture, still cultural ennui in the form of hyper boredom exists everywhere that engulfs every individual with its overwhelming dominance. Whenever, a person buys a new thing such as a car or an expensive watch he/she gradually lose their interest in it. They feel these things are not enough to fulfill their consumerist thirst. They feel a lack and deficiency which takes them towards hyper boredom from the existing culture.

Furthermore, Healy says that the western countries are experiencing this cultural ennui due to metaphysical void at the center. These societies are normless, having no historical memories; they have more apprehensions, living in superficial expressions, in alienation, in violence, vandalism and self-destruction by drugs. These deviances lead them towards cultural ennui. Further he says that an individual self is the cultural product, the rejection or fracturing of culture leads to an ultimate disavowal of the individual self and leads to self-doubt and autonomy which brings a complete distortion to the individual self or personality or identity. Eventually, cultural ennui dominates and sieges the whole society. In addition, Healy says that the western schools are bringing tedium and frustration. The absence of teachers and parents make the children feel tedious and frustrated. The schools are not providing education in its true sense; rather schools are providing abstract notions

which are not based on the lived experiences. This lack of connection with real life experiences makes the children feel tedious and frustrated because they cannot create a harmony between the real world and the world created in the school with abstract notions and opinions. They are torn between two worlds and cannot cope with it. Hence, they become the victim of cultural ennui.

Michael Howard in *the Invention of Peace* (2009) also explains cultural ennui by focusing a bourgeois society. He says that in a bourgeois society perpetual peace is not possible. If peace prevails then life becomes irritating and frustrating. Daily humdrum existence is not good for the young, energetic youth. The peace in society makes them feel bored. They want something adventurous in the form of war or calamity in order to relieve the boredom. So, war relieves boredom and war needs to outbreak so perpetual peace in a society is not possible. Moreover, he says that boredom is modern invention and people in previous times and places were not bored. People in modern times are expected to be engaged and entertained, and when these expectations are disappointed, boredom overcomes them. Further, he says that boredom is a socio-cultural factor that is connected to capitalism and imperialism. Capitalist and imperialist culture creates boredom or ennui. He says that modern society is anomic that is without norms; capitalist mode of production that is alienating oneself from his or her own self. This specific alienation or estrangement can happen to the most powerful CEO and most powerless laborer. Moreover, boredom is the consequence of powerlessness when a person doesn't have religious-cultural autonomy.

George Ritzer's *MacDonaldization of Society* (1993) says that the modern society has become like fast food with an availability of huge variety of products and its expansion in individual's lives. People are addicted to buy consumer products at a fast pace. They measure their lives through these products. Everything is available at their door step. They do not do the laborious work and ultimately their lives are occupied with an overwhelming ennui that they feel themselves

occupied and obsessed with this unrestrained boredom. Eventually, they indulge in the fast-food chain like life and from this chain they cannot come out and stay revolving around this chain and keep living their lives in restlessness. Hence, this fast food or MacDonald life creates cultural ennui which leads to a dormant and passive life. Every individual and country are facing this life which has destroyed human labor and replaced it with an efficient life that literally seems comfortable and easy for a short span of time, but the propensity of its negative effects stay there on every individual who stumble into its cage and cannot stop his or her dependency on it. People fail to overcome this huge trend of consumerism in different forms and shapes, which is affecting the society with its uncontrollable blow that hits to the core and pinches hard that people face ennui from their redundant dependency on consumer culture.

Further, he says that this fast food like society is so volatile and fragile that it becomes the victim of any calamity and disaster that is seen through the outburst of crimes which erupt on daily basis around the globe. The efficiency and availability of consumer products is appreciating but the imminent danger that it spreads across the countries is challenging because people are tired of this fast pace life and they stay isolated and alienated, which results in some heinous activities like killing or suicide attack and bomb blast in order to evade their ennui or boredom that occupies their minds and they feel restless.

Going two decades back into the 9/11 catastrophic scenario, where people were tired of news channels and media outlets. The recurring news about twin towers' collapse and terrorism multiplied ennui. Americans and people around the globe got terrorized. A huge loss of American economy with destruction of the world trade center put an unending scar on Americans. They lost the peace and fear was injected in the veins of American society. Families became more vulnerable and fearful of other ethnicities and nationalities. Particularly Islam became the target. Westerners got fearful of

Muslims and Islam's phobia took place. Americans and West in general considered Islam as their enemy which is against west, particularly America. Muslims were targeted as the threat to American way of life. They hated Muslims and Muslim practices and rituals. The head scarf and veil became threat to American way of life. They observed wearing veil a threat to Americans and linked these practices to radicalism and terrorism.

Muslims were targeted and faced immigration problems. The ban on visas and repatriation and expulsion alarmed them. An immense feeling of repugnance and hatred was created between Muslims and Americans. Many writers came forward in order to break the stereotypes regarding Muslims and Islam. Many western writers wrote on post-9/11 scenario and 9/11 incident and its impact. For instance, John Updike, Mohsin Hamid, Ali Sethi, DonDeLillo, Richard Flanagan, and many more, contributed a lot in elaborating the post -9/11 America with multiplicity of themes.

The current study focuses on three main novels: *The Terrorist* (2006), *The Unknown Terrorist* (2008) through the lens of orientalism, and *The Bell Jar* through existential suffering. The former two novels shed light on post -9/11 cultural ennui and the later novel on pre-9/11 cultural ennui. The main characters undergo cultural ennui that springs out of an opposing culture, where they do not fit in. All three characters are shown tired of modern technology, consumerism, multiple identities, media, skyscraper, markets, suburban areas, and metropolis cities. Whether it is Doll from Sydney or Ahmad from New Jersey, or Esther from New York all three-encounter cultural ennui in their respective cities in pre- and post-9/11 scenario. In John Updike's *Terrorist*, Ahmad encounters cultural ennui, who hates American consumer culture; its tall buildings, city lights, clothing, drugs culture, sex etc. The double identity holders such as Ahmad or expatriates and immigrants experience cultural ennui because they can't cope with the mainstream. One of the students at McGill University says:

When I Moved To Montreal From Mumbai, I Was Stunned By The Novelty Of Living Abroad. For The First Time, I Could Spend My Evening Walking Down Promenades, Switching Sides Of Fries For Routine, Or Riding A Jixi To Class. I Was Mesmerized By the Architecture Of The City, The Bustling Energy On Campus, And The Variety Of Accents And Languages I'd Hear In A Day. However, As I Detached From My Life In Mumbai, I Had To Ground Myself In Montreal. Once The Honeymoon Period Ended, I Realized That Finding A Sense Of Belonging Here Was Much Harder Than I Had Imagined. I Soon Became Irrationally Angry At Myself For Not Adapting To My New Environment As Fast As I Thought I Would. In My Residence, I Was Surrounded By Predominantly North Americans, And It Was Difficult For Me To Keep Up With Their Cultural Expectations. (McGill University, Canada)

It is explicit that people cannot accustom themselves amongst bustling cities, novel buildings, different culture on campuses, food etc. They get surprised to see the persistent and consistent hard work of consumerist societies. One cannot withstand the diversity, dynamic culture and different ethnicities. Due to problem in assimilation and advance industrial inventions and technological development, people suffer from cultural ennui. In Richard Flanagan's *The Unknown Terrorist*, Doll encounters cultural ennui when she becomes bored of her post-9/11 Australian culture where she lives in depravity and isolation. She is unable to accommodate in the mainstream Sydney culture, because her personality is shattered and divided into many labels and names. She yearns to get a sumptuous living with modern luxuries. She saves dollars to buy an apartment and live a life, which is compatible with the mainstream consumer culture.

Similarly, in pre-9/11 America, where cultural ennui is very dominant in the novel of Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. Plath depicts Esther Greenwood, a young lady, who works for a magazine in New York City. Esther is amazed to see the novelty of its buildings and lights. She is unable to accommodate in her new environment and becomes the victim of ennui. She loses her identity and splits her personality. She cannot cope and sees her personality in others. She keeps on changing her identity and names and places. She is from Boston and pretends that she is from Chicago. Moreover, she keeps on changing her names and says that she is "Elly" not Esther. So, changing places and names make her feel uneasy with the strange city of New York where she feels alienated and secluded in the crowd.

Furthermore, the contemporary depiction of ennui refers to the boredom from any activity or routine that becomes redundant or repetitive. People feel bored and cannot fit in where they live. Ennui breaks out from home to community, wraps the whole society in its cage. People, nations and societies become victim of ennui. These days the outbreak of corona virus has created ennui amongst people. They are quarantined and live in isolation. This novel disease has put lives in utter disturbance and frustration. They observe social distancing and alienation. Their life has become so confined and limited that they have nothing to do. They are victim of ennui by using gadgets and newest technological devices. These electronic devices create ennui, which is the ennui from the consumer culture. The more people use modern technology, the more they become tired. They are tired of sitting in homes and using mobile phones, tablets, I Phone etc. Life has become so tedious and boring that existence seems meaningless and people are turning towards spiritual life from this material life. (*Dawn News Column*, 2020)

The capitalist societies are alleged for repenting for their alienation from divinity and now they are turning back towards it. The consumer culture is locked down, such as industries and factories

are closed. Markets and restaurants are sealed down. There is no movement of consumer products from countries. Many international brands are shut down and stopped cargo. Import and export is shrunken. Consequently, consumer culture has turned silent. A new enemy has arisen in the form of corona virus that has shattered the economies and nations. The recession is out breaking day by day. Human loss is increasing and human talent has failed in producing a treatment to this pandemic. Eventually, people have become panic and are fearful of their survival. Hence, ennui finds its place in their lives. People face this new catastrophe after 9/11 incident. The fear of terrorism shattered the whole world. An alternate enemy has caused cultures to experience cultural ennui along with the technological boom in the form of corona virus that has engulfed the nation with the fear of deaths and down trodden economies. This biological weapon is more destructive than nuclear weapon. It is killing indiscriminately hundreds of people worldwide without any prejudice of race, religion and cast. It has no mercy on poor or rich. All are equally its prey. No one is safe from this super-fast transmission of corona virus.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This research aims to unravel pre- and post-9/11 cultural ennui that occurs in different environments, places, time and events in different forms. It will explore how double and hyphenated identity or split personality holders suffer from ennui; how immigrants suffer in America, how westerners suffer in other English countries such as Australia and how an American suffers within America, due to American consumer culture, technological advancement and modernism etc. Through different events and happenings, the protagonists undergo culture ennui that is very dominant in these three novels. The main character Ahmad in John Updike's *Terrorist* suffers from cultural ennui, or cultural fatigue. He is an Egyptian-American, a US born person. He experiences cultural ennui in the form of resisting the pleasures of American consumer culture, as a young

teenage student at Central High school. His double identity dilemma takes him towards religious fanaticism and shows repugnance towards American identity. The alienation and rejection from the mainstream make him unfit in an environment and becomes the victim of cultural fatigue or ennui. Not only the character suffers, but every modern and postmodern-man is the victim of cultural ennui. The double identity holders or immigrants and expatriates suffer the most in America. The plurality of culture and the prodigious infrastructure and skyscrapers make them feel bored or culturally fatigued. Likewise, Doll in Richard Flanagan's *the Unknown Terrorist* in Sydney, represents the dilemma of modern man in post 9/11 catastrophe. People around the globe are obsessed with the fear of terrorism and racism which results in cultural ennui. Doll is labeled as a terrorist for her affiliation with an Arab. The racist and anti-Muslim or Arab sentiment after 9/11 troubled the innocents like Doll who got the label of other as an outsider that means East, Arab or fundamentalist. Her obsession with consumer culture makes her the victim of cultural ennui in her own country. Similarly, Esther in Plath's *the Bell Jar* represents the pre-9/11 America that is obsessed with consumer culture and technological development. Esther is unable to accommodate herself in the busiest city of New York. She is tired of her surroundings and the culture of consumerism. She is swinging between multiple identities in order to adjust herself in the novel city. She becomes unfit and incompatible with the mainstream culture. Ultimately, she becomes alienated and secluded.

Hence, it was found that cultural ennui does not only occur in post-9/11 American culture/society, but also existed in pre-9/11 American culture/society.

1.3 Research Objectives/ Aims

- To bring forward the existential sufferings of modern and post- modern individual through main characters from three different novels, who encounter cultural ennui
- To explain the impact of double identity and split personality in creating cultural ennui.
- To uncover cultural ennui, due to technological advancements or opulent inventions.

1.4 Research Questions

- How do the protagonists encounter cultural ennui or become the victim of it?
- How consumer culture and technological advancements lead to cultural ennui?
- How does double identity and split personality plays its role in creating cultural ennui?

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CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Baudelaire, Leopardi and Rosenthal's work of *Theory and Poetry of Ennui* (1976) explains ennui as a detachment from natural world to an artificial world, that is not his or hers, but an alienation from the natural world to an artificial world, that is absurd, alien, strange, incompatible to live unlike natural world. Moreover, it explains about the transition from antiquity to modernity. When antiquity is replaced with modernity or technology, then the person becomes the victim of cultural ennui. Modernity brings chaos, restlessness. Antiquity is filled with simplicity and peace. Fewer resources were there. Technology replaced simplicity with complexity. People cannot walk few miles on foot. Human Walk is replaced with modern cars. Life has become complicated with modernity. It further complicates human survival due to artificial labor with the help of machines. Hence, life seems boring and tedious in the culture of machine.

Ian McEwen's *Saturday* (2006) explains ennui as restlessness and anxiety. It is described as a murder of moment's rest. The protagonist Perowne is bored of his existence and relationships. He gives no time to his children and wife. He is bored of the clichéd news in aftermath of the 9/11 incident. The repetitive news and his reliance on such news make him the victim of ennui in the form of restlessness and anxiety. The post-9/11 atmosphere makes him the victim of cultural ennui. Perowne wants seclusion from his family due to overwhelming influence of media around him. He thinks media creates fuss to make his life more tedious and restless. Perowne represents an ordinary American in post-9/11 scenario, where life becomes more restless due to repetitive news of twin towers collapse. People wanted to escape such news and take a breath of peace in order to overcome the restlessness.

Ken Kalfus's *a Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2006) depicts the pre-9/11 and post-9/11 cultural ennui that springs out from an unhappy marital life. Joyce and Marshall are at war with each other. Their daily skirmish takes them to separation and finally divorce. An extreme hatred and repugnance build for each other. They are extremely bored from their co-existence. In post-9/11 scenario the gulf between them gets worse. Joyce's sexual intimacy with Marshall's friend shows coldness of relations. This coldness in relationship brings alienation between the couple. They are alienated from each other. Relationship is replaced with deception. Consequently, their life becomes the victim of cultural ennui.

Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road* (1961) depicts the suburban life of a couple who are the victim of self-deception. Their married life is full of complete delusion and mistrust. Frank and April Wheeler are considering themselves different from their neighbor and want to stay away from them in order to consider themselves very well off and rich. They want to move to Paris and stay there. Frank is tired of his office work and considers it very boring and dull. He becomes the victim of ennui and hates his surrounding and relations. He has extra marital relation with Maureen and April too has a relationship with another person. April conceives and Frank wants to abort the baby, but she denies. Finally, she aborts and bleeds to death and dies. Frank is left with hollow emptiness. He regrets and lives a hollow stagnant life.

Marilyn French's *the Women's Room* (1977) novel depicts the ordeals of a woman known as Mira, who encounters gang rape by her boyfriend and later she marries a man known as Norman. Mira finds this marriage life boring and she thinks that she is imprisoned into household work. The world outside her house is considered for men. It is shown that she is an object, a commodity or a property. She is divorced then and she gets admission in Harvard and does her graduation from there. She enjoys the new life, but again falls into alienation and seclusion. She is not happy and satisfied. She is bored with her life and existence. Her surroundings and the crowd make her feel alienated and she becomes the victim of ennui.

Anne Tyler's *Earthly Possession* (1977) explains the woman who is trapped in a family, first by her parents then to the wedlock where she experiences a graver life that is more caged and domesticated. The main character Charlotte experiences ennui and wants a different life where she can be free and live her own life according to her own will. In order to leave her husband and the matrimonial life she goes to the bank for money withdrawal. She encounters a robbery and the person known as Jack takes her to his car on gun point as a hostage. She entered a new phase of life which she had planned, but entered in a wrong way. Her life changes abruptly and she accepts this change.

This is how people suffer in indirect or direct ways in encountering the ennui that arises from the surrounding in which a person lives.

Douglas Copland's *Eleanor Rigby* (2004) amazingly describes the modern America that is replete with alcohol consumption and drugs abuse and sex. Liz, the protagonist in a trip to Europe, encounters sex with an unknown person in Italy and loses her virginity and conceives. She is in utter state of confusion and she gives her child to foster families for adoption. Her son Jeremy without father's identity is being abused by these families and he becomes the victim of ennui and stays alienated. He abuses drugs and finally meets his mother when he is an adult.

This alienation of son and mother make their lives meaningless and boring. Lack of identity of his father leads him towards cultural ennui and he finds his mother to escape this boredom, seclusion and isolation. Finally, they meet and take a trip to Italy to find his father. It shows American dilemma in the wake of modernity. People are more into sex and drugs in take.

Eventually, drugs and sex bring more boredom and exhaustion. Drug and sex culture makes youngsters more impulsive.

Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano* (2005) was originally published in (1952). It magnificently explores the era of scientific advancements and technology that are molding the world in their fist. Human is replaced with machine. Human labor is devalued and automated and turned mechanical. This drastic change of human to machine is the overwhelming technology that has made life more materialistic and engulfed by its consumerism. The main character Paul is going through this huge transformation of human to machines. Life seems monotonous and meaningless because machines are doing the work of a man. Human is controlled by machines such as computer, mobile, smart phones and other gadgets, which tilt a person towards meaninglessness and boredom. Hence, man surrenders to these machines or technology in order to survive.

Tao Lin's *Taipei* (2013) represents the dilemma of modern man through the character of Paul who is shown as a dedicated author, always engaged in touring and reading. His inclination towards drugs is alarming. He spends his time while taking drugs. Eventually, he ends up with deteriorating his relationships and stays in isolation. His life is disconnected from people. He always stays forsaken. His alienation from the outside world makes him unfit for the society where he lives. The over consumption of drugs and disconnection from the world make his life boring. He denies attending parties when Michelle his girlfriend asks him. He feels alone in the crowd and leaves immediately. Paul meets Erin to stabilize his life but again he repeats his drugs abuse and deteriorates the relation. Consequently, he loses everyone and stays alone, disconnected, alienated.

Ben Stiller's *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (2013 film) in which the protagonist day dreams while spending a monotonous life, that is dull and boring. He wants to avail his dreams to escape his boring life. His day dreaming to go to the unknown places and discover new things become possible when he meets Cheryl, a newly hired employee. Initially Walter is very shy to propose to her, but gradually he overcomes his weirdness and shyness. His job at Life magazine New York, as a Negative manager, brings no colors to his life. Walter was given a task to find the missing photograph that played a pivotal role to bring change in his monotonous life and save the magazine from downsizing. Walter begins the adventure in order to get the negative and reaches different places. He becomes more energetic and

adventurous. The tedium in his life recedes and he becomes livelier and more active. His fear and shyness vanish and finally he proposes to Cheryl. It is evident that taking risks and adventures in life bring change to a stagnant life. New experiences bring colors to boring life.

Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy* (2001) deals with Jay, the protagonist who leaves his children and wife in order to enjoy the free life which he thinks is better than the marital life. He thinks marriage is a hindrance in his way of success, progress and endeavors. He thinks that changing a partner, house, and family can remove the boredom and bring a super new life that would not bound him to fidelity or chastity rather he will enjoy infidelity. Jay is torn between his old life and new wanderings. He compares himself with his friend Victor, who is independent, unmarried and having multiple relationships. Jay doesn't love his wife Susan and scorns her for her ugliness and red face. He is tired of his relation. Though Jay is free, but feels himself nowhere. As he claims, "Naturally, to move on is an infidelity – to others, to the past, to old notions of oneself. Perhaps everyday should contain at least one essential infidelity or necessary betrayal. It would be an optimistic, hopeful act, guaranteeing belief in the future declaration that things can be not different but better." (5). Despite his claim of switching to free and independent life Jay is not happy and satisfied. His restlessness and unease continue. During all this wandering, Jay loses his true identity who he really is and what he really wants.

Saul Bellow's *Dangling Man* (1944), explains the type of boredom that Joseph the main character experiences for not having any job. He has nothing to do. His life is futile and seems superfluous. He lives a monotonous life without any engagements. His ennui or boredom becomes extremely intensified that he joins army regiment in order to appease his boredom.

Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1955) depicts the conformity of a couple to the society, Tom and his wife Betsy. They are doing the same things repeatedly and are tired of their conformity. Tom wears the same gray suit for work like the other workers. He finds no difference. This sameness and repetition of work and suit make him bored. He wants to come out from the ordinary life but fears to take risks. His living style is very simple and hand to mouth earning like the other people of that society. They have small house, and children but are not happy with their life.

They want change to come out of the conformity which the society offers them. Tom has an illegitimate child who becomes a harbinger of change. Initially he fears to disclose to Betsy, but finally he tells her and she accepts him. They are negating the conformity of society by accepting the illegitimate child of Tom. This change in perspective brings happiness and the couple comes out of boredom and monotony.

Don DeLillo's *Cosmopolis* (2003) superbly explores the capitalist and consumerist America that is busy in accumulating wealth and producing billionaires like the protagonist Eric Packer who keeps an eye on Yen's drop. This strategy of keeping an eye on Yen implicitly shows the American-China economic rivalry in broader terms. Eric counts his success with the falling Yen. The economic competitor of America is Yen that is China's currency. So, Eric is having a luxurious apartment, a limousine and personal secretaries and assistants and doctors. He has two wives and enjoys his good relationship. Despite prodigious wealth, he encounters ennui in the form of insomnia and restlessness. Eric's restlessness is representation of American restlessness. Each individual is like Eric. He or she wants more capital. So, Eric is representing today's capitalist society that yearns for more capital and wealth or material possession.

Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* (2018) is an exploration of ennui that sprinkles out of the unnamed protagonist. The protagonist shows a unique sort of ennui. She goes into hibernation or sleep in order to gain a new identity after the break from worldly connections. She thinks that after a break from one's own life and outside world will make a person new and things will change. She is bored of her own existence and the world. Though she has achieved a great education, wealth and all the comfort, still she is not happy with her existence. She finds her existence boring. Her negative thoughts and her obsession with her parent's death make her feel losing her own self. She thinks that once she awakens, she will forget everything and a new being will come into existence. This character shows today's dilemma of mankind that every person wants some rest or a break in order to feel something different and an atmosphere of new beginnings. It is evident that the post-9/11 scenario made people yearn to go into trance and wake up with a new place of safety and security, without any horrific incident. Worldwide, people are yearning to have a deep sleep and wake up into a new world.

Otessa's protagonist conveys her reader a message of new beginnings and new world with new identities. Sleep is used metaphorically to avoid any calamity and feel the peace and comfort. The recurring fear and discomfort vanish and solace sets in. This is very true that people who lost their beloved ones in the mind-boggling catastrophe of 9/11 were obsessed with this imperceptible incident that became a nightmare for people. Many people migrated to other places for a break in order to switch off their minds and forget the incident and emerge with a new identity and being to deescalate restlessness and unease.

Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov* was originally published in Russian language in (1959), later translated into English by many writers. The translation of Marian Schwartz (2008) depicts the slothful life of the main character Oblomov, who confines himself to his room, where he is lying on his bed all the time. He shows disinterest towards his responsibility as he owns an estate. His manager sends him a letter, detailing about the bitter economic condition of his land. His estate goes into bankruptcy and poor generation of money. Oblomov's habit of delaying things continue and he doesn't visit his estate. His superfluous life makes him indecisive. He changes his plans and scold others for his own faults as he scolds his servant Zakhar for not cleaning the room, ceiling, curtains, shelf etc. He complains about everything to overcome his ennui. His boring life is not letting Oblomov to move ahead in life in a healthy way. He falls in love with Olga, but this relation doesn't remain long. Olga is tired of Oblomov's life and his boredom. He delays his wedding and Olga ends the relation. She is fed up of his monotonous life. Hence, Oblomov shows the early Russian gentry and feuds that had not a significant role to play, thus relying on the peasantry and their hard work, while the lords lived a life of boredom in confinement in their big houses and rooms. Similarly, this is the tragedy with today's world where majority of people work in factories and lands to entertain and please few capitalists. These capitalists live in skyscrapers and villas in boredom are tired of its walls, but still enjoying it to stay tall and powerful at the expense of others.

Francis Blessington (2008) argues about Ahmad from John Updike's *the Terrorist*. Blessington says, "Ahmad is obviously a hyphenated person, his Muslim father has long disappeared, and his Irish mother has little time for him. He has a confidant and father substitute Sheikh Rashid, who initiates him in the ways of radical Islam and cultivates anger against the sordid New Jersey town. The world that surrounds Ahmad is cheap, boring, spiritless and hypersexual." Francis Blessington's depiction of Ahmad is vivid clear that Ahmad is swinging between his Muslim identity and American Identity. This double identity is taking Ahmad towards repugnance and hatred towards American culture that is "sordid", "cheap" and "boring" for Ahmad. So, it is evident from Francis's argument that Ahmad is detached from the American way of life and pleasures and tilted towards radical Islam. Further, Francis argues that Ahmad's mother has multiple love affairs, that show American's degeneration and moral collapse which creates cultural ennui. Ahmad detests this hyper sexuality of American people and becomes the victim of cultural ennui.

Anna Hartnell (2011) depicts Ahmad as an outsider in his own community that is Arab – American. He finds no place there. He feels alienated and detached from the main stream American people and his own Arab community in New Prospect. This alienation and estrangement create cultural ennui. Anna argues, "Ahmad himself feels out of place in Arab- American living spaces. He thus occupies a peculiarly double position." It reinforces the duality of Ahmad's identity. The duality of identity makes Ahmad swing between American identity and Arabic identity. Neither he belongs to his Arabic roots, nor does he declare himself fully American. This dilemma of identity makes Ahmad's identity challenging that he feels displaced.

Peter C Herman (2015) opines about the religious inclination of Ahmad. He says, "The crazy Arab is right, hedonism, nihilism that's all we offer". This hedonism and nihilism take Ahmad towards religious fanaticism and rejection of American culture. He becomes alienated and secluded from the mainstream American culture, thus becomes the victim of cultural ennui. Peter, further argues, "Uncontrolled consumerism of American culture" responsible for Ahmad's cultural ennui. It is very true that consumer culture becomes loathsome for Ahmad at Central High School. He hates the clothing of

girls; the tattoos on arms, bellies, the piercing of chin and eye brows. Ahmad feels disgusted to see half naked girls. He detests the consumer culture that has taken away the morality and his faith.

Richard Carr (2007) critiques on Doll and says, “She tries to vanish into the cityscape, as police, local media and urban Australians turn her into public enemy number one”. It shows how Doll was unfit to the mainstream Australian way of life. She had become an enemy of Australian people. She was marginalized by them and she feared to face them. Her incompatibility with the society made her to hide and stay away from the mainstream and disappear from it. Countering this huge vacuum of connectivity and proximity, she stays alienated and secluded. She stayed at a war with an internal conflict with her own self and the people outside. The wrestling between her multiple selves and the outside world makes her the victim of cultural ennui. The media image of Doll is horrific and frightening as Richard Carr says, “media image of the Doll as dangerous woman and violent citizen grow darker, more unrelenting.”

Theodore. Shekels (2010)’s critique about Doll says that people at large accept what police, government and media tell them about the terrorists. These people vituperate them and voice ugly comments about them who are ethnically “other”. Gina Davies is not a terrorist but a person who is like them. Her sexual affiliation is projected in a negative way and she became the victim, because these people think ugly or “un thinking” which results in racism and sexism and eventually they think other as violent or terrorist.

Further, Tony Smith, (2008), says that racism in post 9/11 became very prevalent. Racism itself is an evil. The innocent people like Doll got the label of terrorist without knowing the truth behind her. Only a photograph with an Arabic attired Tariq and the supposition that he must be of an ethnic group, who are causing terrorism put Doll into trouble. Her innocence couldn’t be proven and the dominating widespread racism of post-9 /11 failed to reach the actual culprit. Only assumptions and suppositions added much more masks and mummeries to the heinous dissemination of terrorism. Terrorism got covered under the shade of racism. Eventually different races, ethnic groups got targeted and the true terrorists couldn’t come to the surface. Terrorists do not have any one race or ethnic group. They are anyone from anywhere. So, the label of race should be removed from the face of a terrorist.

Sarah Schoomer (2008) has written on the psychological leanings of *The Bell Jar*. She opines, “Esther prefers to be the passive rather than the active one because she thinks she learns many things by observing people who are doing something instead of doing anything by her own self”. By this Schoomer means that the passive characters are not strongly built from within, rather they try to associate themselves with others. They fancy and imitate the lifestyles of others, and when it does not befit their nature, they get weary of their surroundings. This is true about Esther that she imitates others and tries to be like them. Consequently, she becomes the victim of cultural ennui.

Another critic, Lauren (2003), in her existential take on Esther’s character, writes, “Esther feels a disconnection between the way other people view her life and the way she experiences life. By all external measures, Esther should feel happy, and excited, because she has overcome her middle-class small town background. Esther feels uncertain about her own abilities and about the reward that their abilities have earned her. Eventually the gap between societal expectations and her own feelings and experiences become so large that she feels she can no longer survive”. Lauren argues that Esther should feel satisfied for what she has, but she is terribly pessimistic in her view of the world and does not care as to what world has to offer. This irresponsiveness is another symptom that suggests that protagonist is at the degree of distances from her very self. A girl, hailing from suburban area, gets chance for an internship in New York, but her sense of achievement is overcome by her fear of maladjustment, that causes ennui.

Diane S. Bonds (1990) is one of those many researchers and critics, who have worked on the existentialist crisis that is split personality which becomes the cause of cultural ennui presented in *The Bell Jar*. Bonds argues, “Esther embraces most of the relations in the novel, only to cast them off, as if they constituted a foreign presence within the purity of her own identity, some threat to her integrity”.

Bonds sketch of Esther, reminds us that the protagonist of the novel is somewhere losing her own self and trying to become someone else, only to end up as losing her own very self. She develops affection for her co-worker Doreen in New York, and even participates in her debauchery, and admires her bold stances but soon grows weary of her and thinks that Betsy is close to her heart. This assumption too vanishes into thin air, and Betsy delights her no more. Her wandering from one person to other person is what Bond has defined as a defense against the “threat to integrity”. This is largely the case with many people, who, out of the sense of alienation, try to associate themselves with people of different approaches and tastes around them in order to fit in an alien environment, but fail drastically.

It is concluded from the literature that cultural ennui has different facet and forms, such as facing cultural ennui due to opulent life style and luxuries, failed relationship, monotonous life, hustle and bustle, technology and superfast life routine.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The research is based on Orientalism, which mainly focuses Edward Said's *Orientalism* and other literary works revolving around the theme of Orientalism and post-9/11 orientalism that results into cultural ennui through the main characters such as Ahmad from Updike's *Terrorist* and Doll from Richard Flanagan's *Unknown Terrorist*. Also, Esther from Plath's *the Bell Jar* shows existential sufferings, leading to cultural ennui in pre-9/11 America. Literally, she feels Orientalized within America, due to her alienation and seclusion from the mainstream American culture.

3.2 Research Design

The study is narrative research and follows descriptive plus explanatory method. The textual references are given as evidence for strengthening the argument of this research. The main points of orientalism orient, orientalist and oriental are investigated through the character analysis of Doll and Ahmad is put under the microscope for complete comprehension of the developmental phases of the protagonists. Similarly, Esther's character is analyzed through textual analysis and discussion. The pertinent quotes and extracts are taken from the reviews of the novel, critical articles and books.

3.3 Research Methodology

A qualitative method is applied which is defined as the collection, analysis and interpretation of narrative data which is non-numerical. The basic purpose of such research is to gain understanding of a particular area of interest with the help of deep and detailed descriptive analysis. The analysis is done with the help of primary sources that is the original text and the secondary sources that is critical and bibliographical evidences to support the point of views and arguments.

3.4 Orientalism

Orientalism got its manifestation through the work of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and (2003), which unraveled the mask and mummeries of orientalists and their imaginary constructions about east or orient. Orient simply referred to the exotic other of colonial mindset and labeling the Europeans or West as Us and East as Them. The occident and orient were the terminologies which came to the surface when colonialism or imperialism touched the boundaries of globe. Edward Said's Orientalism is unanimously acknowledged as a literary canon to remove the stereotype and clichés constructed by the western orientalism that considers east as orient and west as occident.

The western ambiguity and distortion of reality without understanding the diverse and plural cultures and races cannot divide or the world into two realms of self or west as dominant, civilized and other or east as uncivilized or barbaric. These binaries of occident and orient are disguised in the attire of western claim of being secular and modern, liberal and safe world while eastern as radicals and fundamentalist or primitive, who create violence and terror that is shown through the destruction of twin towers as a testimony to strengthen the orientalist approach to dehumanize the East for violence and aggressiveness.

The European's hegemony or imperialism got shifted to the United States after World War II, which treated the orient as an entity to rule and change and shape its dynamics and outlook in order to democratize, civilize and liberalize it. The wars and interventions in Middle Eastern countries and Far East and Afghanistan are gimmick situations to treat these countries as uncivilized and barbaric. The term orient in reality does not exist rather it has multiple manifestations. In practicality orient does not exist rather its different manifestations do exist such as radicals and extremists which the West has constructed in order to extract all the wealth and resources out of it and use its land and treasures for its personal gain. The trade of oil and the dependency of West on oil rich countries

treats them like a weak and submissive country which needs US or West to utilize these resources and create a mammoth treasury and strong hold for itself to strengthen its imperial power and stay dominant and treat the people as orientals or uncivilized and undemocratic.

The United States called immigrants to settle them on its land from Asia or East in order to make its own roots firmer, stronger and powerful. The massive immigration to the United States from Asian countries took place through an influx of immigrants covering 6 percent of the total population, with US born children. It was just 1 percent in 1970s and very less if we go back to early 1900s and late 1800s, when the Asians were called as 'yellow peril caricature' that were uneducated, undesirable and inassimilable (Lee and Zhou 2014, 8). In 1917, congress also banned the immigration of Asians. An anti-Asian sentiment grew more. During World War II, more than one hundred thousand Japanese immigrants forcibly from Pacific Coast moved to internment camps. Similarly, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, that singled out Chinese ineligible to become US citizens. The hyper selective immigration of 2000s further declined the immigrants to come and live in the United States with hyphenated identities, such as Asian- American or Pakistani-American or Indian-American.

This dual or hyphenated identity showed heterogeneity, distinctiveness and ethnic diversity. Beginning with the dilemma of dual identity amongst first and second generation, Asian-American gives an explicit image of dual identity that leads to war between first generation and second. When Asians enter the United States, they do carry with them their strong ethno-centric identity. The new land demands a homogeneous American identity by assimilating their ethnic identity into the melting pot. They settle and get permanent residency, welcome intermarriages with other ethnic groups, particularly natives or Americans. Everything goes smooth unless children are born. The question of identity arises and brings rivalry and antagonism, that begins from home, under one roof and

expounds out through windows gradually and slowly that wraps all the surrounding in its cage. It puzzles whether children are Asians or Americans or Asian- American. In Coping with such dual identity creates an aggressive behavior among children; hence they cannot represent themselves fully in dual identity. They feel hesitant in schools, universities and public places. One of the winning essays, "Growing up a Muslim in America" explicitly highlights the experience of US born Pakistani boy who undergoes through the dilemma of dual identity. He confesses that neither he is fully Pakistani like the native Pakistani, nor he is fully American. So, representing themselves as Asian or Pakistani becomes problematic for them. Likewise, calling themselves American again shows an underestimation of ethnic identity, and when they call themselves Asian-Americans, again it shows a divisive attitude, neither American nor Asian. They are swinging between two identities, which are far apart from each other. These children neither resist the American values and ideals nor accept and reject Pakistani culture. When parents are both Asians, then again, the war of identity breaks out in the form of strong ethnic inclination towards grandparents and their strong commitment and belonging to their ethnic identity. Thus, second generation is confused about its identity, whether to align with grandparent's ethnicity or live in a multiracial American society and enjoy the diversity. The first generation pushes them towards distinct, ethnic group that is inassimilable. They find their roots in their ethnic identity and stay anchored to their traditions and values unaltered. "Our grandparents were ethnic, not us" (Campbell and Kean 51). This explanation by the second generation is assimilating the ethnic, first generation into the main stream homogeneous American identity. Many immigrants feel alienation and seclusion in their adopted country which makes them confused and alienated. The dual identity is not just confined to nationality as Pakistani-American rather it is linked to Muslim Pakistani- American identity. The post 9/11 orientalism complicated the orient's interpretation with multiplied and intensified negative image of Muslims. The Muslims

got suspected and labeled as radicals and threat to the US way of life. Ultimately, Muslims got the aloofness and isolation from the mainstream. The orientalist depiction of Tariq and Ahmad show the typical stereotyping of Muslims as dangerous and loving death and ready to commit suicide and having the propensity to commit crimes readily.

Indians encounter similar identity crisis, but they are more flexible than Pakistanis, in terms of religious openness. Shalini Thonival an Indian girl living in US shares her experience. She says that the first-generation Indians are called as “American Born Confused Desi” because they are more tempted towards their Indian language, dress, and food. On the other hand, the second generation is free of such confusion and she admits that she is not confused at all as to her identity. She confesses to American identity and equally respects her Indian background. (Shalini Thonival, *India Abroad* 2017, 6)

An alarming identity crisis appeared in US in 1990s that the people from India got mixed and confused with native Indians of century's old ethnic group. The Americans assumed that they were speaking Spanish. So, the Indians had to fight with three identities which were constructed by American society; Indian and native Indian or Indian- American or native Indian-American (Serena Vora, *Brown Girl Magazine* 2018). She, further shares her own experience that when she returned to India after 21 years, she got confused about her identity. She says that living in US, she was not confused about her identity and she remained Indian-American, but when she came to India, she got the label of “American” by the locals. It reflects the misperception of her society about the immigrants that they do not know about the culture of their native land. Hence, identity splits in the eyes of society. She further says, “It's time we stop judging people for being too “Americanized” or too “Indian-ized” and just let people balance their identity, however they feel comfortable. I will always think of myself as an Indian-American.”

So, it justifies that second generation accepts the dual identity which is created by American society and their ethnic background.

One of the famous writers, Madison Grunt in *the Passing of the Race* (1916) says that the immigrants wear American clothes; they steal their names and beginning to take American woman, but seldom adopt American religion or ideals. It is very justifiable that the Pakistani- Americans enjoy the dresses, they marry Americans and give American names to their US born children, but they never align their children towards American religious outlook. A Pakistani muslim parent would always ask his or her children to offer Namaz, go to mosque, but he would never allow his children to go to church or get Christianized. The hyphen is intact in its place, and does not lose its place. Hyphen ironically signifies connection, but in reality, it diverges the identities. The two identities are always opposite in their outlook and apart from each other. When hyphen is removed, it means there is fusion of two identities and the result would be assimilation and assimilation lead to death of ethnic identity and consequently identity becomes adrift, in motion, changing and not fixed. A very postmodern identity comes to existence, where identity is not territorial, rather it is universal and it has no fix hyphens or boundaries, it is rootless. (Handlin 67)

The new policy of Trump begins with the ban on legal and illegal immigration of Muslims particularly. His approach is very “xenophobic and racist” (NBC, News). Mexicans are equally suffering under this new immigration law of Trump. The construction of Mexican wall and separating the young children from their parents show a division within America. Trump Says, “Make America Great Again”. This remark clearly revives the bi racial American society that shows white supremacy and power by negating multiracial identities. Trump says that those who do not accept this white superiority and power should go back to their ancestor countries. If they are here in the United States, they should be grateful. This high nativism and nationalism of Trump openly gives

a threatening call to leave the country. He says, “If they don’t like it here, they can leave.” This paraphrases the classic insult “love it or leave it”. It targets the three members of Congress who do not belong to the United States, even though two of them are US born, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, came from Somalia and became citizens of the United States.

Moreover, it brings an immense divergence of identities and refuses to accept their adopted identity. Many Asians are frequently questioned as “Where are you from?” “No, where are you *really* from?” though they know and have intimacy but still they ask and reinforce such questions in order to make them confused and realize their nonwhite existence or identity and make them feel inferior. Trump expands the divergence of identities and revives the binaries of self as superior and them as inferior. Nobody asks Robert Mueller’s ancestry, because he is white and American but Asians, particularly muslims are questioned daily about their Identity. Eventually Asians become neither ethnic nor Americans. (*The Washington Post*, 2019).

The identity bifurcation amongst Asian- American shows the post 9/11 orientalism which got its intensity in the era of Trump administration. The diversity and immigration are a threat to white American identity, which doesn’t want an infiltration of America as they call it, “laundered world”. (Yeziarska68). That is clean without any impurity of ethnic minorities, who live in the United States. The Asian- Americans neither belong to their ethnic identity of their first generation or native land, nor are they accepted by the Americans as fully Americans. They keep on swinging between ethnic identity and American main stream identity. Hence, their life becomes a tug of war between dual identities. They are treated as other in America and other as Asians, other as Muslims, other as Eastern etc., which means orient, is very vivid and apparent in America and American’s policy to extend its hands to the territories outside its reign and intervene into farther lands.

Similarly, the orientalist or West's hatred is shown in the character of Tariq who is exploding Sydney with his bomb and Ahmad with his bomb to destroy New Jersey. The former is from Richard Flanagan's *Unknown Terrorist* and the later from Updike's *Terrorist*, both are having Arab origins and the former's affiliations with Doll a westerner, representing the west in the novel of Richard Flanagan's *The Unknown Terrorist*, is demonized and victimized for her relation with Tariq on false accusations and construction of reality, that is not true, rather it is fabricated and distorted. She is judged on her relation with a man that is attired in Arabic dress. The racist approach label Doll as a terrorist and seclude her from the mainstream Australian culture ultimately, she becomes the victim of cultural ennui and kills herself. The post 9/11 arena shows the dichotomy of cultures resulting in mistrust and phobia, particularly Islam phobia and ethnic diversion and repugnance.

Further the post-9/11 orientalism represents the western construction of other as a threat, in the form of radicalism and terrorism despite the cultural diversity and plurality, the binary exists. The 9/11 incident once again dissects or divides the world into self and other through western construction in the form of West as secular world and east as a radical world. The orient got the shape of eastern radicalism and occident as a western secularism.

The western construction of self and other is dividing the world. The binaries, which they have created about other as a threat or a terror and self as secular and liberal is responsible for dividing the world into two extremes; the western secularism and eastern radicalism rather than looking at it through multiculturalism and plurality of faiths. It is a setback to the orientalist to see the world through the lens of orient and occident rather they should see the world through multiculturalism and versatile identities and cultures and accept each other's eccentricities and sensibilities as Said says that the world is a world of interdependence and the reality is that one has to accept the dependence, unlike dividing the world into binaries on false production of realities.

Location of Culture (1979) by Homi Bhabha explains that the binaries are western construction which are looking at the world in dichotomy of the self and the other rather than looking at it as a world of diverse, plural, dynamic culture. He talks about hybrid culture that is unlike the self and other as two antagonist entities, rather he talks about multiplicity of identities and liberates one from the constrain of self and other's cage and prison. The orientalist perception of reductive identities is strongly condemned with new identities which are not restrained to the domain of us and them rather the identities are dynamic and beyond the territories.

The essay *Shooting an Elephant* (1936) and the novel *Burmese Days* (1934) by George Orwell explain self as the British Raj, the west, the dominant, ruler, trustworthy, reliable and civilized and Other as the natives of Burma, uncivilized, poor, filthy, who are not reliable and trustworthy, suppressed and the dominated and ruled people. Flory, the main character in *Burmese days* is showing sympathy towards the indigenous people and is against the imperial power. He is in a state of dilemma to see the indifferent attitude of ruling power towards the poor Burmese. Elizabeth is showing the imperial self that sees the other as beast and is appalled by the kindness of Flory towards the locals or the other. She appreciates the virtues of self or west's rich culture.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist (2007) a novel by Mohsin Hamid talks about the sophisticated self and the other in terms of America or west as an imperial dominance, the self, that sees the rest of the world through the lens of orientalism, the other as an uncivilized East, that needs good civilization and order. In order to civilize them America provides scholarship for colonizing them mentally and making them their slaves by controlling their minds and offering them scholarships in order to civilize them and extract the talent out of them, as the Europeans extracted the natural resources of East at the time of physical dominion by making colonies. The Underwood Samson company in the novel is representing the imperial apparatus that hires the people, who have best skill and they are paid well.

The fundamentals of the company are to make the employees their slaves and maintain a master/ slave relation. They face the prejudices and discrimination so the self is Underwood Samson Company, that is the west, the dominant, the powerful and Changhez is the ruled, the east and the suppressed. The Princeton University also shows the hegemony of west that offers world's best education system and offers education to the brilliant. Here the stereotypical representation of other as less intelligent is challenged in the form of Changez, studying at Princeton on scholarship. The western construction of self as intelligent and other as less intelligent and ignorant is challenged and is not true, rather a western distortion of reality and an imaginary understanding.

The Heart of Darkness (1902) by Joseph Conrad explains self and other as two distinct entities of self as dominant Kurtz and other as the Congo people who are savage, uncivilized, and barbaric. The imperial power is busy in ivory business in order to extract more and more wealth from the natural resources of the Congo. The self is White race and the other is Black. Marlowe is amazed to see the power of Kurtz, but he cannot speak against the dominant Kurtz and his cruelty towards local. Kurtz is the giant, who engulfs all the wealth. So, the Self is very dominating and powerful.

A passage to India (1924) by E.M Foster depicts the East or the other that is India in terms of savage and barbaric through the incident of rape attempt by doctor Aziz on the English lady in Malabar caves, Ms. Adela that shows the Eastern instinct of savagery and barbarism, but this construction is challenged when it got revealed that doctor Aziz was innocent, he didn't do the attempt to rape Ms. Adela, rather it was her hallucination. So, the western construction is challenged here that is not true according to Edward Said, it is just a western construction and distortion of reality.

It was found that Orientalism has uncovered the underlying theme of cultural ennui that occurred to the three protagonists; who lived in different places, and different time, but faced the seclusion from the main stream society, be it Doll, Ahmad or Esther, all three faced the Orientalizing treatment from the main stream culture or society.

CHAPTER FOUR

Content Analysis and Discussion

John Updike's *Terrorist*

Radicalism is not specific to any religion or any ethnicity; rather it is disseminated everywhere and takes any form. It gives birth to any sort of violence and produces terrorist, nihilist, jingoist, fanatic and fundamentalist. When a Muslim becomes radical and turns into a terrorist, it is called Islamic radicalism, but when a non-Muslim commits the same crime, there is not any terminology and the religion is not linked or attached; Christianity or Judaism or any other religion is not targeted, but Islam is labeled as radical. The driving force that is responsible for creating radicalism is the otherness in the western society. People with other ethnicities are not in the mainstream. They feel alienation and rejection. There is lack of belonging and identity. Hence, they take the assistance of their religion and use it as a persecuting religion and become radicals. How radicalism grows? What are the factors which become the stimuli for radical thought and outlook in a diversified western society, particularly in America, where one can practice and cherish his life according to his will in an autonomous way? One can go to church or cathedral or mosque and can practice his faith openly. Why does radicalism take place then? These are few questions, which can be answered through the analysis of John Updike's novel *Terrorist* through the character of Ahmad.

If we analyze the character of Ahmad, a dual national, an American Muslim, son of an Irish American lady and Muslim father. His brought up in a liberal society in a diverse culture couldn't prevent him becoming a radical Islamist. What made him radical? One of the answers is his father's absence; a child without father is more prone to violence. A great variety of behavioral problems are associated with growing up without father, including the development of a "swaggering, intimidating persona in an attempt to disguise their underlying fears, resentments, anxieties and unhappiness"

(Kruk). According to Kruk eighty five percent of youth in prison are fatherless. So, one of the reasons being radical is father's absence in the form of death or separation. Here Ahmad's father is gone disappeared and he is living with his mother Terry, a working woman, who believes in freedom and gives Ahmad free hand to choose and accept or reject, the way he wants to live his life.

Ahmad encounters fatherly figures in the form of the radical Sheikh Rashid and his Jewish counterpart Jack, who is equally radical and nihilist in his approach. These both figures mold Ahmad's personality into a radical being. Ahmad spends his time with Rashid at mosque and the religious extremity grows and intensifies. He breaks the relation with Joryleen, as she is a prostitute. Consequently, he hates all the American girls for their obscenity and nudity. He asks his mother to wear a headscarf on the day of his graduation, which is also a sign of Islamic radicalism in the western perspective. So, wearing a headscarf and veil is directly linked to the Islamic radicalism or fundamentalism.

After his high school, Ahmad tells his mother that he wants to become a truck driver. The truck is symbolically linked to explosion and carrying explosives in it. Ahmad is passing through the tunnel and about to attack America with the explosives in his truck. In short, that's how Ahmad becomes a homegrown terrorist, who is threat to the place, where he is born and lives. An aboriginal, a native, but dilution of identity, ethnicity, and otherness turns him radical. All these circumstances make him feel tired and bored from mainstream American culture.

Cultural ennui is very evident in the character of Ahmad who is living in the United States with his independent American mother Terry and his father an Egyptian exchange student, disappears and Ahmad's brought up takes place in absence of his father. Ahmad is detached from his mother and considers her the product of American consumer culture and he doesn't like her. Ahmad says, "we have never communicated well, my father's absence stood between us and then my faith which I adopted before my teen years" (Updike 212)

This detachment from parents leads Ahmad towards a religious person Sheikh Rashid, a Yemeni from Yemen, who guides Ahmad to do Jihad for God by killing the Godless American people who according to Ahmad are godless, devilish, “these devils Ahmad thinks. These devils seek to take away my God” (Updike 3). So, this Godlessness and devilish way of life which Ahmad thinks cause repugnance towards America. He leaves his school and drives a truck which carries explosives and other heavy loads. Ahmad’s school advisor Jack Levy shows concern for Ahmad for his religious orientation and leaving high school and driving a truck and following Sheikh Rashid. He says, “Imam helped you to waste your high school years” (40). It reflects that Ahmad is tired of his school, the environment, the students, and teachers and overall, the government which thinks is “satanic”. Hence, Sheikh Rashid becomes an inspiration for him in this evil consumerist culture. He turns to Sheikh Rashid.

Moreover, it is very evident that Ahmad hates the opulent consumer culture which is filled with luxuries and pleasures; the culture of drugs and drinks is very common, students use sharp perfumes and focus bodily ornaments at high school. This culture irritates Ahmad and he is tired of it. “I look around me and I see slaves- slaves to drugs, slaves to fads, slaves to sports, slaves to unholy meaningless opinions” (73). The central high school is filled with “bare bellies and adorned with shining navel studs and low-down purple tattoos” (4) this reflects his demeaning attitude towards the girls who are obsessed with consumer culture that is shown through their bearings and nudity. “The halls of high school smell of perfume and bodily exaltations, of chewing gums and impure cafeteria food” (Updike 7). This opulent consumer culture at school evokes cultural ennui in Ahmad and he inclines towards Islamic culture that he finds as a relief from this consumer culture. Eventually, this culture of nudity and vulgarity creates hatred in Ahmad and he secludes himself and shifts from mundane pleasures which Central high school provides through the character of Joryleen who is shown as a friend of Ahmad. She is seducing Ahmad and wants to have sex with him, but Ahmad persistently avoids this sexual pleasure throughout the novel that is an immoral, sinful act, derailing his faith. He calls west as “it is typical of the sex obsessed west” (Updike 71) Joryleen later becomes a prostitute.

In addition, Ahmad's vociferous claim of America as a materialist society that lacks morality is revolving around Occidentalism or Eastern discourse that represents America as dehumanizing devilish country which lacks faith and is godless. "Western culture is Godless" (Updike 38) Ahmad thinks that this country should be destroyed that is evident in the following lines, "my teacher at the mosque says that all the unbelievers are our enemies, all unbelievers must be destroyed" (Updike 68). This is very prevalent in the novel that Ahmad finds his only option to destroy the sinful country and explode it with bomb and bring it to ashes. Ahmed quotes Quran and says, "Be ruthless to unbelievers, burn them, crush them, because they have forgotten God" (294). This is a very strong explanation that brings forward Occidentalism or Eastern discourse which considers America as a rival of God. The skyscrapers are challenging the supremacy of God. So, 9/11 is a justification, which Occidentalism clearly explains as a war against evil empire or America. The perpetrators justify 9/11 attack as a religious responsibility to destroy an unholy nation. Ahmad's discourse depicts his outrage towards America which is obsessed with technological advancement and has forgotten God. He further justifies his contention and says that the presidents of America never work for religious elevation or sublimity rather they are indulged in their material desires or material wealth, which as a traditional American value is appreciated and attached to godliness of wealth. "They all want Americans to be selfish and materialist, to play their part in consumerism" (Updike 72) they exclaim that those who are hardworking people are blessed by God for their hard work and they are blessed with wealth.

Hence, the wealth which they gain is holly or godly. The traditional American concept of "rags to riches" makes America a materialist country where every individual has an equal opportunity to participate in the race of success or competition to gain wealth. So, Ahmad's cultural ennui is multiplying when he sees and experiences this epidemic consumer culture and desires to go back to Egypt, "still the people had no faith. "They wanted to go back to Egypt" (Updike 56). It reflects to the post 9/11 America which still is a faithless, self-indulgent country despite the giant catastrophe which hit the two skyscrapers. "Their lives are disorderly, wanton, and self-indulgent" (Updike 4). Ahmad's grievances get intensity when he sees indifference behavior of American people in post 9/11 where people are

disordered physically, psychologically and socially, but still, they are keeping the consumerist, materialist culture intact that is evident in high school and New Prospect, New Jersey. Consequently, Ahmad hates America and its way of life that is evident in the following lines when Jack Levy asks Ahmad his view regarding America and American people. Jack Levy asks, “You hate it?” Ahmad responds, “I of course do not hate all American people, but the American way is the way of infidels. It is headed for a terrible doom” (Updike39). It reflects American way of life that is capitalist, money grubbing, materialist and highly consumerist culture that is opposite to Ahmad’s Islamic culture which he thinks make him aloof from such mundane and frivolous pleasure. “His religion keeps him from drugs and vice, though it also holds him rather aloof from his classmates. (Updike 8)

Furthermore, America’s culture of openness, plurality and multiplicity of genders make Ahmad alienated and rejected from the main stream American culture. Hence, he feels cultural ennui that is evident in the following lines, “foul smelling lairs for drugs, homosexual contacts, acts of prostitution and occasional muggings” (Updike11-12). The homosexual contact that is openly accepted in American culture is completely opposite to Ahmad’s religious sanctity that is threatening the Islamic values of Ahmad and he is persistently saying throughout the novel that these people of America are taking away his God that means he is vulnerable and fearful to become part of American culture and assimilate in the consumerist way of life. In order to remain secluded and untouched by the consumerist or capitalist society, he wants to explode himself and the consumerist America in order to make it clean and livable according to Ahmad’s religious outlook. He says in the end of novel, “these devils have taken away my God” (310) these lines are reflecting multiple interpretations in order to understand the cultural ennui of Ahmad. From the beginning of the novel Ahmad has a fear of losing his religion by the dominant American consumer culture. He is trying to overcome this fear by attaching himself towards Sheikh Rashid, a religious fanatic, who evokes Ahmad and prepares him for suicide bomb blast in order to retain his Islamic identity intact and firm, otherwise Ahmad is going to lose it. This sense of explosion is a way to overcome the cultural ennui which finally ends with a give up and Ahmad confesses consumer culture by not exploding the bomb. It shows his inseparable attachment of American consumer culture that is

completely injected in Ahmad's life. His dilemma of cultural ennui continues and he keeps on swinging in between consumer culture of America and his religious Islamic culture or background.

Shaikh Rashid is provoking Ahmad and intensifying Ahmad's ennui to abhor America through his sermons and speeches, where he says that America is uselessly crusading against Islam. (325) It is true of America that it is crusading against Islam that is through wars around the world in post-9/11 in order to kill the terrorists which America thinks are the products of Islam and Islam is spreading violence. It is evident through war on terror that began in the aftermath of twin tower collapse and all the eyes of nations look at the Muslim countries to react and stop such heinous attacks. The waging of war in Iraq, to curb AL-Qaeda network and any militant group brooded and switched to Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern countries. The longest war in Afghan kills civilians and many innocent lives which America cannot compensate for the loss that is more than the collapse of twin towers. The killings of people through surgical strikes and drone attacks in Pakistan's tribal areas to curb any militancy and other network made the flawless people die. This crusade of America to establish peace around the world by its wars on the name of curbing terrorism from Muslim countries is an irony. America doesn't see the way people are killed in these regions on the name of terrorism. The tagline of terrorists to Muslims is an Orientalizing gesture of imperial America which sees its own benefit and mission. The countless killings of people on Afghan soil are not seen, the daily bomb blasts are not realized. The only thing they consider pivotal is their own interest to be safeguarded and protected on the expense of others.

Besides, Shaikh Rashid's sermons and didactic approach, there are Quranic verses which are shown to Orientalize Islam and Muslims in particular as cruel and brutal towards other people. It is quoted that the holy book of Muslim says that a Muslim has to be ruthless to the non-believer and merciful to the believers; an Orientalizing gesture of America is shown through the Quranic verse. It is used to justify the hatred of Ahmad towards the non-believers, which according to Ahmad are devilish and infidel. The terrorist tendencies are strengthened and the propensity extends through such verses from Koran which is used to justify the orient as terror prone to America or west. The Orientalizing of this verse is giving opportunity to Ahmad to detest America and turn aggressive to its people and culture. Which says, "Those

who follow Mohammad are ruthless to non-believers, but merciful to one another” (326)

Consequently, Ahmad says that these people of America or West are taking Muslim values and traditions away from them and make them swing in their new traditions and identities which are not belonging to them that is the case with Ahmad. It is true that Ahmad is like a swing moving between two identities and traditions which are at animosity. It is common to every Muslim whether he or she Ahmad or anyone else living in today’s world of American hegemony which has brought with it its own color and taste that is through democratization or liberal democracy or the open market all these hegemonic stances of America has changed the outlook of people. The Americanization of things, products, dress and food are expanding and replacing the regional and local tastes. The American brands have replaced the local products. Hence it is replacing new culture of consumerism and capitalism that is disliked and liked as the same time. The resistance to avoid its expansion is there like Ahmad who avoids, but at the same time he wants. He abhors America for its expansionist attitude that is touching every individual and a threat to Muslim culture, tradition and identity. Hence, Ahmad and any Muslim around the world malign the Americanization. “They take from Muslims their traditions, a sense of themselves, the pride in themselves” (188)

Ahmad’s hatred is multiplied when he says that these American are corrupted and their soul and eyes are poisoned by the world of entertainment in the form of Holly wood, which is poisonous and spewing poison with its movies. The entertainment world has nurtured poison and its economic expansion in the world is damning and corrupt. The expansion of American economy and its supremacy in trade and staying tall on international ground is as a result of its corruption and manipulation. Ahmad further vituperates America and says that the Christian-Jews God is also corrupt and idol that shows an extreme hatred towards America where Ahmad make a dissection between Muslim God and Christian-Jews God. This division of God is an orientaling attitude that further escalates and exacerbates Ahmad. This binary of two God as Christian-Jews God and Muslim God is an orientalizing which becomes a line of division and difference. (352)

Further, the writer has Orientalized the way Ahmad believes in Islam and its practices. It is shown in the text that when Terry asks Jack Levy about Ahmad, he says that he is not alone and he is with his God and further he says that the God is himself alone is the ultimate solitude. It shows a mockery on the face of Islam by bringing and attaching God to Ahmad's company every time. This amplifies the solitude of Ahmad and his alienation from the mainstream. It reflects that if God is alone then Ahmad the believer of God should be alone and in solitude. The isolation is linked to the God's solitude and his oneness is brought forward by saying the ultimate solitude that means God has no companion except him himself. "God is with him, but God is Himself alone and is the ultimate of solitude. Ahmad loves his lonely God". (211)

In addition, during a chat between Habib Chehab and Ahmad, Chehab is amazed to see Ahmad driving the truck in his young age unlike the other boys who go to school, college and universities. Chehab says to Ahmad that the boys of his age are bright, obedient and attain more education. The orientalizing of Ahmad as a religious, radical Muslim who denies formal education or higher education is evident when Ahmad says that he doesn't get more education in order to stay on the right path. He fears that more education can derail him from his faith and he doesn't want to get his faith away from him. His strong attachment to his faith is superior to his education. The typical madressa type mentality is shown through these words of Ahmad, which are orientalized. He thinks education as a distraction of faith. An orientalizing depiction of Ahmad is shown through these words. He says that he wants to remain pure and his purity can be threatened if he gets more education. It shows the binary of westerners as educated and civilized, while Muslims as uneducated, ignorant and uncivilized, the resistance of Ahmad and his lack of interest in education shows the orientalizing gesture of orientalist who again and again stereotype Muslims. It is not true for the whole Muslims to deny education and drive a truck or any labor in order to retain the religious roots strong and firm. Religion and education are two different domains and education is chosen on the will of people. The educational institutes are not made to derail the people from straight path or make them impure rather education uncovers the religious understanding and it

gives more knowledge and perceptions. The interpretation of religion is done through education. If education is thought as a hindrance to religion, then societies will be in dungeons and will stay in darkness. Education enlightens the society and Muslims accept this reality of education which is important for everyone. Ahmad's disregard for education is due to the nudity of people on the campus and around him in the central high school.

"More education he feared might weaken his faith" (216) derail his faith and make him impure and distracted. The post-9/11 orientalism takes Muslims toward ignorance and rigidity that are rigid and not flexible to education and educational institutions. That is not true and anywhere an egalitarian society is not possible. Everywhere there are adults who are truck drivers and stop education and do the labour. There are many Ahmads around the world, not all Ahmad are Muslims or all Muslims are Ahmads.

Ahmad is orientalized for being sensual and sexual that is evident when Joryleen appears on the furniture shop where he works. Joryleen wears a miniskirt and her body seems very seductive and sensual that Ahmad is looking at her protruding thighs when she sits on a mattress in the shop. Ahmad is shown as thinking of her underpants and his throat parches out of his sensuality by looking and thinking about her underpants. The underpants signify the inner part or the genitalia where Ahmad wants to see and have pleasure from it. These lines show the orientalist gesture towards Muslims as they think that Muslims love sex and are more sensual. It is general perception about them that a woman is an object of sex for man or Muslims, who enjoy the nudity of the woman's body and the erotic feelings, intensify when they see a partly and partially naked woman. They are erotic than the other ethnicities. It shows the dilemma of double identity holders who neither leave the pleasure nor enjoy it. They live in duality which leads them towards existential suffering and become the victim of ennui and start hating their identity and survival, which lacks of excitement and enjoyment.

“He thinks of her underpants coming between her bare bottom” (219) it is further mentioned that Joryleen is asking Ahmad to unclothe and become more intimate to her and do whatever he wants to do, but Ahmad brings his faith and God’s wrath if he does any evil deed or break his virginity. He fears God and avoids the pleasure. Joryleen lays on bed with Ahmad and uncovers her body and appears naked, but Ahmad wants to talk only though he feels his veins tight and messy. His denial is to retain virginity for the head scarf girl and he needs not to be worried for it and a head scarf or hijab bride is there to be with him and enjoy his virginity. (226) “you are still virgin for that bride of yours, with the head scarf. The use of these words shows stereotyping of Muslims for covering their head or wearing a hijab. Hijab is linked to Muslims that is contradictory at times because many people in west wear Hijab in catholic churches or any other denomination where it represents a way of respect and modesty. Likewise, woman in Victorian society covered their head so head scarf is not only linked to Muslims but also to Europeans or other ethnicities around the globe.

It is noted in the novel that Ahmad is manipulated by the people around him, his teenage and crisis stage of life comes under the influence of wrong people like Shaikh and Charlie who are playing the game of taking revenge from America to break its supremacy, consumer culture, hegemony. The religious firmness of Ahmad is utilized by these two planners who play the game by keeping gun on innocent Ahmad shoulders who doesn’t know what a martyrdom means and what really Jihad is and how to detonate the white ugly truck with explosives. Ahmad feels strange and does not understand his feelings. He hates the truck plan and calls the plan as ugly. While Charlie glorifies the plan and says that Muslims around the globe will be dancing to know this news on television everywhere.

The people of Syria, Karachi, Cairo everyone will celebrate the bombings with joys. It shows an anti-American sentiment among the Arabs who do every plan to bring America to its knees and see it broken and collapsed like the incident of 9/11. The ever-green hatred for America by living on its soil is the extreme duality of identities which are not ready to assimilate and co-exist. This highly Orientalized text shows the animosity of Arabs whether it's innocent Ahmad or main gamer Shaikh and Charlie all are show to be the adversaries of America and its popularity of culture and dominance. (249)

The word "madman" which is repeatedly used by Charlie for Ahmad shows a kind of hypocrisy. It is understood as Ahmad is religious and faithful insanely. His religious seriousness is insanity or nonsense and stupid that is being used by people such as Charlie. The word madman means Ahmad is mad and a normal person is not faithful, religious and ethnic and Islamic. Only mad people believe in God. Their belief in God is madness that is not sensible or logical or sane. It gives duplicity of faith and belief system of Muslims. The people who blindly believe in God and are ready to sacrifice their life in the way of God like Ahmad are insane and mad. If the act of Ahmad is madness, then people like Charlie and Shaikh should stop Ahmad from doing any madness, but these people are influencing him and provoking his religiosity in order to lessen their own frustration and inferiority in American consumer culture. It is vivid clear that Ahmad is having numb feelings in this plan he is hesitating and his sentiments are numb, that is shown in these words, "freezing sensation". All this makes Ahmad feel alienated from the world which he is going through and the American way at large. Charlie further provokes Ahmad by saying to him, "the faithful son of Islam" (250). When Charlie says these words to Ahmad, he feels irritation and uncomfortable.

It shows that Ahmad is lacking the true guidance that makes him fall into the wrong hands which are Arabs and Muslims, but more harmful to Ahmad than the American people or its nudity or hyper sexuality.

His wrong companions and wicked teacher like Shaikh manipulates young people like Ahmad who obey his teachings and think him as a true representative of Islam, who wrongly provokes innocent people and turn them violent in their own country whether it is America or any other land, Mullah like Shaikh exist everywhere who take hyphenated identity for manipulation and self-interests and produce people like Ahmad to expand their individual world outlook and mission that is extremist and radical to the mainstream culture and fill the diversity with animosity and create the feelings of repugnance. Such people divide the world into radical's verses liberal. Ahmad like double identity holders is already in the dilemma of their duality come under the umbrella of Shaikh Rashid's ideology and ruin their lives to shreds and avoid the beauty of pluralist society of freedom and choice.

It was found that Ahmad was shown as an orient who was unfit for the American society. He was shown as the religious fanatic and radical Muslim, who wanted to harm American culture and infiltrate it. The dual identity of Ahmad was shown as the root cause of cultural ennui which made him displaced and alienated. Ahmad lacked the belongingness to the main stream American life style and culture. Ultimately Ahmad was the victim of cultural ennui who was alienated from the American culture.

CHAPTER FIVE

Content Analysis and Discussion

Richard Flanagan's *the Unknown Terrorist*

The Unknown Terrorist sheds light upon the subtle theme of ennui or boredom through the character of Doll, the protagonist, who according to Baudelaire's words the victim of decay and decadence, Doll a pole dancer, a prostitute that is the decay through which she undergoes. The people who come to see the dance and are attending the private shows and pay the money are also part of the decadence. According to Sigmund Freud's sexual principles which are in the unconscious mind activate the sexual desires, thus they become the victim of ennui in the form of decay. It is not only woman ennui, but males also suffer.

The character of Doll is represented as a delicate and fragile being, which is tarred and broken physically and psychologically. The word doll is a connotation for a toy that is lifeless and soulless and is molded and shaped by the person who makes it. Similarly, the character of Doll is shaken and moved by the media, the cops, and the clients at Chairman Lounge. Labeling Doll with a title of terrorist and black widow breaks her innocence and purity. She encounters the tragedy when she meets Tariq, who is shown as an Islamic fundamentalist and has connections with Al-Qaida.

The rays of light dim and darkness prevails all around, the sizzling dance is buried and corpse walks out in white coffin. The dollars, Gucci, Prada Versace and Armani are dead. The private shows of Chairman Lounge are collapsed and ferries of demon's wade in the city. The dreams are smoldered. The filth of impurity drains in and engulfs the flesh and takes away the sanctity of soul. Doll is vituperated by Richard Cody, the anchor of Undercurrent, as a woman of low dignity, a pole dancer or lap dancer becoming a terrorist. He derogates her by spreading Doll's photo with Tariq. The grainy hugging picture becomes viral and it reaches every eye and ear. Doll's existence is threatened and she is a threat to Sydney.

The cops raid her apartment, take away her money that she saves to cherish her dreams and live a decent life. She wanders in bewilderment and finds no shelter. The city betrays her, the relations betray her, and there is coldness and numbness of sentiments. “Her face smiles, but that smile is not hers”. The pain is disguised in smile. The smile doesn’t belong to her. She is the dungeon of chaos. The pain is so intense that she wants to have a smile, but that smile is not from her soul. Her legs are trembled, heart is pounded and lips are parched. Life rushes and procrastinates at the same time. She loses her true self and becomes the victim of existential crisis. Her personality splits and she is in conflict with her identity. She is addressed as Doll, Krystal and Gina Davies. The doll is innocent, Krystal is pole or lap dancer and Gina Davies is the terrorist, the black widow.

The innocence of Doll turns violent and revengeful in the form of Gina Davies, when she kills Richard Cody who deteriorates her dignity, her survival and unaccomplished desires. The fabrication of truth ruins the life and desires. Hence Gina Davies is subjugated by the media, finds no heed and eventually kills herself. The fragile Doll becomes strong, brazened, audacious murderous Gina Davies

So, Doll is a dense, a versatile and a dynamic character, that is a victim as well as a triumph. She undergoes the tragedy of losing dignity, earning, name, love, and desires through the manipulation of media by Richard Cody the main propagandist. She turns triumphant when she kills the main voice of media, Richard Cody and herself. The killing opens the new air of tranquility and drains away herself and lying next to Liam her son and Tariq. She finds the solace.

Doll’s infatuation to an unknown person Tariq presumed as radical Islamite and has links with Al-Qaida a terrorist haven. She is infatuated and sleeps with Tariq without any prior acquaintances. This is what Baudelaire calls ennui as Infatuation. She undergoes through this ennui. As Sigmund Freud puts ennui as a “Repressed Feeling” that is sex oriented and driven by pleasure

principles. So, Doll is undergoing through this ennui in the form of Infatuation or ephemeral attraction or fascination that fades away once a person is disillusioned.

With further elaboration of the discussion and analysis of the text, Doll is shown as a woman who, is roaming and wandering like an alien person in her own country where she stumbles and finds a poor luck and passes through multiple impediments that she is detached from her natural environment as an ordinary girl of simplicity and innocence and enters into a new world of pole dancing, that is artificial, consumerism oriented, money business and greed for grandiloquent life that is not hers, but all artificial and pomp. The ennui engulfs her as according to Baudelaire and Leopardi in “the Theory and Poetry of Ennui” that cultural ennui is injected with the detachment from natural world to artificial world or when modernity replaces antiquity. Sydney is a place that is the hub of modernity and Doll cannot withstand this artificiality and modernity of Sydney’s world. She becomes the victim of ennui and involves in the vicious cycle of pole dancing, nudity and sex. Her origins and background are not known. She is not disclosed which suburban area she belonged to. It is evident in the following lines, “Perhaps doll was most successful at keeping up a mystery” (13). She is swept with a wave of artificiality and consumer culture that she has no idea about her suburban life from which particular suburb she came. She is lacking the identity crisis by not disclosing her suburban life. It shows her existential identity crisis that she is confused about her identity and her parent’s origin too. She says that she doesn’t know from where her father and mother came, but they both were from different places. It is evident in the text that is shown in the following lines, “From which particular suburb no one knew” (3).

When Doll finds herself as a terrorist in overnight, she doesn’t believe the propaganda of media to victimize an ordinary person like Doll. This label of terrorist intensifies her rejection of her connectivity and identity from the mainstream Australian society. She is already having an excluded

and secluded identity as a pole dancer and having the label of terrorist further weakened and deteriorated her existence. She got derogatory names like, “the terrorist”, “black widow” etc. The complication of her identities made her confused and she became the victim of cultural ennui that she stayed in isolation and evaded the mainstream.

She measured the whole world like a façade of lies and illusions. The existence of every human seemed to her fallible and gloomy. Life and existence seemed meaningless and futile. She desired for nothing and felt the life that is humiliating and frivolous and detestable. She felt the world like a place of absurdity and insanity. (40)

Her dismay reached an extreme position when she encountered the public opinion that she is not an Australian and she is a threat to Australia and its people because of the false label that got stamped on her forehead. It is very clearly shown in the text that justifies the public remarks about Doll, “Terrorists are not Australian. Australian is decent people”. (Flanagan 47) She lost her identity and got shattered it with a false identity of terrorist. Her decency as a citizen got damaged and she was not acceptable as a citizen of Sydney anymore.

Doll, was taking the label of terrorist as unbelievable and imperceptible that she discusses the matter with her friend Wilder, to whom Doll tells about her intimacy with Tariq that was just for sex, nothing more than that, without knowing Tariq’s background and thinking about the repercussions of having sex with an unknown or stranger led Doll to the label of terrorist. Doll says, “Gina the terrorist it’s funny though” (37). It reflects from these lines that Doll is taking the label of terrorist as unbelievable because she knows that she was not involved in any terrorist attack or plan. She knew that she was innocent. She thought the label is ridiculous and funny.

She was the victim of media, which planted the plan to make the news more interesting to label a pole dancer as a terrorist. The rating and money business of consumerism played by focal media person Richard Cody, entertained and shocked the audience to watch his news and produce something new and thrilling episode on his news channel.

The news said that a woman was also involved in the terrorist cell that had placed three bombs in the Olympic stadium.

The channel further amplified the news by calling the pole dancer wrapping the explosive's belt around her naked waist and dancing in the pole club touched millions of views and humiliated Doll furthermore that she lost her compatibility with the society and remained alienated. Though she desired always for a decent living like rest of the people by earning through pole dancing and wanted to live in an apartment with sumptuous brands like Louis Vuiton, Bulgary, Prada etc, and get her education and do a job that people should admire. It is evident in the text, where it is said, "she imagined a life in which she had an apartment, an education and a job that people admired." (71)

Furthermore, Baudelaire says that ennui is lust and Sadism. The protagonist, Doll is shown as a woman who has lust for material things as well as sexual interest. She chooses the profession of prostitution, that's where she can earn more money and fulfill her material desires as well as sexual satisfaction. She yearns for expensive brands such as Prada, Versace, Gucci, Armani etc. These desires are attainable for her through lust in the form of prostitution. It is evident in the text, "Doll expects the clubs to be exotic and erotic. Only woman's body is of note and interest" (Flanagan 12). She thinks that the body of woman is a commodity that is used and reproduced and fed with money, and money is the interest of woman to fulfill her desires. The lust and sadism synchronize and reinforce the idea of satisfaction in order to fulfill the mundane desires, in terms of material and sexual desires. So, ennui in the form of lust and sadism corrupts the morality of Doll and falls into decay and decadence.

Further, ennui is shown that injects the filth into Doll's personality. She yearns for more and more money. She has avarice to make a big house with expensive branded interior and exterior. This avarice leads her to pole dancing and the profession of prostitution.

There is another character, an antagonist in the novel that is Richard Cody, who manipulates Media for avarice, for more money and fame. So, ennui in the form of Avarice leads to moral collapse.

Going further, it is very evident that western society is filled with cultural ennui with an overwhelming culture of consumer goods. There is a great fuss among the consumers which traps them in its vicious cycle. People cannot come out of this trap and continue indulging in it. Eventually, it creates a big dissection line and bifurcation. Those people who afford and those who cannot afford these ravishing, expensive products. Consequently, a smooth society shackles and becomes the victim of turbulence and there creates a vacuum in it that is filled by the prejudices and differences between the citizen. This creates the concept of “Other” within a society. People become the victim of identity crisis. They cannot cope with the society. They feel unease and restlessness. They cannot place themselves in a society and their identity or existence is threatened. It is dominant in the character of Doll, where she feels alienated and secluded in her own society due to her incompatibility with her consumer culture. She says, “Yet the more clothes the Doll bought, the more she was reminded of who she was, where she lived, how she made her money. Every Bulgary, each Versace, D&G, Prada shoes reminded the Doll of one thing that she was less” (p. 19). So, it is very true that Doll belongs to a society that is not in the mainstream. She is the other in her own society. She is a pole dancer and a prostitute which is making her feel less and not part of the mainstream society. Her earning makes her feel less because she brings it through lap dancing and prostitution. She is a “westie” which she proclaims, yet secluded and alienated and her identity is questioned and humiliated. She yearns to buy the same products which a normal consumer society yearns to buy, but her class and social identity is not acceptable in the mainstream. She is woman, a citizen, an empowered girl, still she feels pettiness and hollowness within because she is a pole dancer and her identity is reduced to only as a commodity or an object of sex or pleasure.

“Doll looked she knew people daily endured humiliation and pettiness they willingly chose and live their life as a lie” (40) it is very evident about the choices people take in their life. They are responsible for the hardships and the threats or torments which they face in overcoming their humdrums. They take responsibility of their actions. It is true of Doll and modern individual that he or she takes whatever decision for them. A very strong existential theme is explained in these lines which truly justify the mask and mummeries of life that is underneath the lie like life which is self-deceptive and illusion. People make palaces, live wonderful lives build castles and skyscrapers but are not satisfied. They feel like hollowness from inside and everything seems petty and humiliating. That is very evident in the culture of the United States or any western country like Australia or Europe, which is facing the threat or consumer culture or its capitalist society fires back on its face. People are repugnant to live their lives at peace and in tranquility.

In addition to the above evidence, the post-9/11 orientalism describes every Muslim as a terrorist and a threat to the western life and culture. The face masking or facial masking which they call for veil or niqab is a derogatory term along with head scarf or hijab. They link these two as the symbol of terrorism or some hidden threat. This huge stereotypical construction is well explained in the novel where the owner of the pole club states that for Americans, these pole dancers are like black widows, wearing black knickers and black bra underneath their burkah. They are looking ugly from inside as well as from outside. This black widow is a metaphorical representation for Abaya or Burkah wearing woman, which a Muslim woman prefers to wear as ordinary attire, but not as an entity or symbol of shame or terrorism or radicalism. This mockery at the attire is vivid clear when Ferdy the owner of the club brings in the Holly Book, which he refers to as swirling on the naked bodies of these black widows when they strip and these letters of Holly book will be shown on their naked bodies and would cover them. (13)

From these events in the novel, it is very clear that Americans or western discourse about the East or Muslims particularly Arab Muslims and their attire became the symbol of shame and terror. The Americans largely hated anything that is related to Muslims whether that is veil or headscarf. They didn't spare the Holly book. When a woman wears veil or headscarf, it is her own choice or will. She is not representing anything that is religious or in Islam. Many Muslims in the world do not wear abaya or burkah but they are Muslims. For instance, we can take the example of Turkey where woman wear skirts and are half naked. The linkage of attire to any sort of extremism does not make any sane outlook. Those Muslims who wear hijab or niqab are not terrorists at all. It is the stereotype and misconception that got the intensity after 9/11 catastrophe. It shows an immense gulf between west and East or lack of harmony between diverse cultures. The 9/11 catastrophe created more repugnance and repulsive attitude between ethnicities and racial groups.

Doll is the representation of West as well as East or "Other" ethnicity that is innocent yet the symbol of terrorism, facing the post/911 phobia of terrorism, which hauls Sydney or whole world in its cage. Doll is the amalgamation of two rival ethnicities. Her torment and bereavement represent both West and East. Both East and West suffered as a result of 9/11 incident. Equally people got threatened by terrorism and fear. As an oppressed being she is falsely having the label of terrorist that is generally widespread for many Muslims who got the label of terrorists in post 9/11 incident. Many lives were ruined because of this labeling. Doll represents those Muslims who got the wrong label and are undergoing through the atrocities of west. The ideal concept of man deteriorated. The ideal way of living in peace and safety came to an end. People's construction of ideal society got shattered and the harsh truth of reality and existence dominated them. Existence of people got threatened and people started to live in their existential thoughts.

It is evident in the character of Doll that how her ideal world is shattered within few moments. Her dreams collapsed to shreds and debris. She had yearned to live a perfect life with an apartment and a decent life, but the label of terrorist crushed and crumpled her dreams. This is very true about today's individual, that the alarming terrorism and its fears have taken away the peace from an ideal society. People are not safe anywhere. Anything can happen to their beautiful world. Few moments of violence could take away the smoothness of life and place the roller coaster of life in gigantic dungeon, from where one cannot see the revamping of the dark place.

By encountering the daily humdrums, Doll is secluded as an alien in her own country, who is linked with Tariq, for his connection with Al-Qaeda an Arabic militant group. Tariq's attire of Arabic culture becomes the ruining gesture which made innocent Doll a terrorist. Doll's intimacy with Tariq, a night stay became an excruciating identity that took her towards the torment of terrorism. She tilts between her terrorist identity and her identity as a pole dancer and a western. She has many labels and names that show her multiplicity of identities and existential crisis. She is Gina, Doll, Krystal and a westie, black widow, the terrorist, pole dancer, stripper etc.

Doll's character is very versatile. At times she is shown as a typical western, who hates other nationalities or ethnicities. She is the maligning west, who is maligning other ethnicity as dangerous and threatening when she hears about the Olympic Bush stadium bombs by some Middle Eastern terrorists. She is having the same threat and fear as other westerns felt after 9/11. She shows her hatred towards other ethnicities like rest of the westerns. It shows Doll's western representation that she is maligning the other ethnicities for the terror attack globally and particularly the news of bombs which were placed in the stadium made her feel extremely poignant towards other ethnicities.

Her prejudices about other nationalities is very evident when she encounters a woman in Black “burkah” outside Tariq’s flat in the morning she saw. Doll thought of the woman as something terrifying and evil. (28). Doll shows her extreme anger at the woman and utters these lines, “just fuckoff back to wherever you are from”. (28). It shows the general hatred of post 9/11 westerners or the intensity of post 9/11 orientalism that sparks the rage towards burkah wearing woman and Muslims around the globe got the label of terrorist and evils that destroyed the peace of westerners. Many Muslims faced the immigration issues and sent back to their native places and expelled from many offices on the suspicion of terrorism. The visa strictness to western countries became challenging and got scrutinized at airports became more heart throbbing. Muslims were interrogated and questioned and detained at many places and their movement got restricted. Many Muslims were asked to leave the western countries like Doll utters her anger to the woman in burkah to leave and go to the place from where the woman in burkah came. It shows an extreme notion of prejudice about other ethnicities without knowing the truth or reality. Only imaginary construction of Muslims as evil and terrorists is not a sane idea or way to look at other nationalities.

It is expressed in the novel that Doll feels extremely disgusting to see the woman in burkah and she feels pity on her that how the woman wears the burkah in hot summers and comments that why “they” are not like the west or “us”. Here they refer to Muslims, “us “refers to west. She feels proud to be a western and shows disgust to burkah and thinks it is humiliating and bad. (28) And she declares herself as a racist that is shown in the following line from the text “I’m equally racist about everybody”, the Doll claims (4)

In words of Baudelaire, ennui as a Murder of moment’s rest that is shown through Doll and her persistent struggle without a moment’s rest. She keeps on wandering and hiding from the cops and media. She becomes the attention of every channel, and is exploited by naming her the unknown terrorist, that takes away the peace and a moment’s rest from her life.

Doll kills herself and the main propagandist, Richard Cody, in order to take a moment's rest and find relief and tranquility. That's how ennui returns to its very definition of killing or suicide, not only the body but also the soul. It is very prevalent in the novel that Doll is very much concerned about her way of life. She is struggling to get money from Chairman Lounge and entertain the clients through fifteen minutes private shows where she becomes more intimate and nude in order to get more money. She earns the dollars more than other girls and Doll proudly confesses that everything is money and hated those girls working with her who pretend to say anything like her. (13)

It highlights the dilemma of modern and post-modern man where he or she runs after money and money is everything for them. The capitalist society has engulfed the people in its web and people like Doll are working anywhere and doing any type of job in order to settle their worldly dreams and wishes. Whether it is Chairman Lounge or any other place, the sole purpose is money. Doll says that she does such kind of pole dancing in order to pay her university fee and fulfill her consumer culture demands where she feels secluded and lesser than the mainstreamers who enjoy their lives by wearing Louis Vuiton and D&G, Bulgary, etc. Likewise, many American and other people of capitalist societies are under the influence of stupendous consumer culture where everyone goes after designer clothes. People are measured in products and wealth. The significance of a product is more important than the person who is making it that is true of Marx's opine. Ultimately people choose different professions which are morally unfit and pernicious as the profession of Doll, where she has no legal rights and opportunities like the people of mainstream. She feels alienated in her rights and existence and becomes the victim of ennui that she sees her life as useless and unaccomplished which is hollow and empty and only money fulfills the vacuum and bring peace in her life. She has no option, but to dance and attend the clients through her obscenity and nudity by lowering her knickers and swaying her arse.

She keeps on swaying and twirling her arse to entertain and attract the tycoons to shower the dollars on her. It is evident in the text that she sways too much and her knees bleed and pain so much, but despite the bruises and pain she keeps on swaying by imaging the consumer culture and to get the expensive products. "She swayed, her knees throbbled, her feet burnt and still she kept swaying". (15) It reflects her pain and misery that she bears in order to get the money and become compatible with the pompous world of consumerism. It is common to every westerner that they are indulged in materialism and consider the wealth something divine and godly. The rush towards getting more wealth is equivalent to get blessed by God and think that it is the blessing of God to become rich and attain worldly benefits or luxuries. The American value of rags to riches is applicable to any society of west, whether it is Sydney of Doll or any other place; still people follow it and at times ruin their lives like Doll in order to enrich themselves with notes and money. Like West other nations too suffer from this huge menace of wealth and materiality of things. An identity of a person is identified or recognized through wealth. The opulence and affluent culture of consumerism has spread its gigantic net around every person and nation that they are unable to stop or hinder its propagation and dissemination. It is rampant and stampedes like a tsunami or a tornado that hears no pleads and continues its motion and speed without any discrimination and difference.

It is further noted that people forget who they are and which type of work they are doing whether it is Doll or any customer at the Chairman Lounge. Everyone behaves in dual personality. They deceive each other and never disclose their true identities. Doll says that these men coming to this club go homes and never tell their wives and girlfriends about their arousal which they felt in the club. It reflects the duality of modern man and the deception he or she carries with him or her in encountering the mundane pleasure of consumerism. People are not what they look, rather a different world exists within a person.

The illusion of this world in the game of material gain is shown through Doll's experience. She says, "Would any of these men go home tonight and tell their wives and girlfriends where they had been." (15) It is very true of an individual that he or she never reveal their hypocrisy and behave like they are open and truthful. The courage of modern man to speak the truth is gone and diplomacy and deception works in order to anchor the roots of material gains stronger and wealthier. Hence, material gains and money make a person take the path of duality and deception.

Doll says that once she has enough money, she would leave pole dancing that is the time when she becomes a normal person like a mainstreamer and enjoys her life accordance with the demands of consumerist society. She shows her reluctance to the job as she thinks the job as redundant and illegal. Her lack of bank account and money checks on her friend's Wilder name, her flat was chaotic and crappy and shaggy. She gets fed up of this life. Once the notes are attained, she would quit all this and the money is "purpose, justification and future" for her. (18) It is true of any profession that a person does seem boring over a time and he or she thinks to quit the job as he/she feels no interest and excitement in it. The repetition of activities seems over burden to them and struggle to find the way out. It is also noted that in doing so the people lose their work and do not get any to meet the challenges of capitalist society. Consequently, the ennui springs out and surrounds the person. Ultimately, existence seems useless and devilish thoughts appear which become even more dangerous than the job which a person wants to leave.

It is evident through Doll's character that money covers one's nudity and it uncovers at the same time. Money has the power to manipulate modern man to fulfill his daily yearns. It makes people naked like Doll and at the same time it covers her body with dollar notes. She opens the silk batik bag from the ceiling and shower hundred-dollar notes on her nude body to feel the essence and taste of money that she wants to gain.

Every night she does the same and counts the money. She says that the touch of money is more interesting than the touch of a man. It shows the intensity of making money and acquiring all the needs. The tremendous culture of making money is very common to every individual of modern world which has taken all the norms away from the globe and has left the norms of getting wealthy and recognize the existence of an individual with notes of dollars.

It is also common with the people how they cope with the glamorous, ostentatious society. People in anyway feel their roots that who they are and how they are earning the money and the sources of their income or the money notes which they bring home. They question themselves and at times feel embarrassment and shame and a kind of guilt and restlessness. It is evident through Doll that she earns dollars and every time she realizes and questions herself that who she really is and how she gets the money. This feeling makes her the victim of ennui and she feels the guilt and turns uncomfortable. "She was reminded of who she was, where she lived and how she made her money." (19) Whenever Doll feels the sources of her income that she feels depressed and less and hates her existence, but the imagination of dandy Prada shoes regains her interest and she continues to work and earn.

It is very obvious that people keep on working for achieving a milestone which they at any cost want to get through their profession or work. It can be a Prada shoe or a Vuitton bag or an apartment like Doll's or a magnificent house or a villa or anything that motivates a person to keep on working. At times they work for basic needs or to get their kids into schools or universities etc. They keep an agenda and in order to reach and avail that agenda the modern man rushes to any kind of job or work. Either he or she rushes to brothels or a club or any place but the milestones are to be achieved in any way. These are the benedictions or maledictions of modern society that makes a person go after money and live up to its standards and criteria. Otherwise, survival becomes difficult and people lose their lives and jobs.

It is evident in the minor character that is Loukakis a detective sergeant who has an affair with Doll's friend Wilder. His wife and he are living under one roof but didn't live like husband and wife. His wife knew about his affair and she had not touched him or got intimate with him for ten years. She is accounts manager at a medical center and both are earning for their two sons. Their co-existence and working for their sons which would fulfill their son's dreams and be the fittest to survive in the consumer culture. They are living together and cannot divorce each other because they cannot leave their sons. The cold relations have made them physically and sexually fall apart. Though they love each other but do not show and express because of his affair with Wilder. "She had not let him kiss her for over ten years." (22) It shows the postmodern dilemma where husbands and wives live together but do not share the warmth of feelings, joy, joke, fun etc., but live like two bodies which are filled with only penetration. Loukakis shows this dilemma and says that when he makes love to his wife it seems like he has raped her because she doesn't show any response. "She made no response. It felt like rape." (22)

This shows the other side of the picture which Richard Flanagan has tried to show that is submissiveness of woman in order to bring in the orientalist approach towards women where they are treated as object of sex with no sentiments and feelings. They are only objectified and used for sex and bodily needs. The sexual pleasure and entertainment they give to their husbands despite their husband's betrayal or deception. They accept the dishonesty of their husbands, but they are silent to it and retain their lives in their husband's umbrella. They are domesticated like the Victorian woman with chastity, fidelity and obedient to their husbands. On the other hand, Doll is shown as the rebellion that is out in the world and uses her empowerment to sex and work. She has multiple affairs and does not fall in the category of domesticated woman.

She is having sex and enjoys it and earns money. She is not bounded to single relation. It shows postmodern woman who is set free in the world that she is free to roam and choose anything for her whether it is her need or compulsion but still he roams around and gets her dream fulfill through legal or illegal way. Doll represents the postmodern individual which has no center to follow in the form of matrimony or a marital status. She is free of this matrimonial center or a husband or a boyfriend and finds no center to abide by. Her otherness is significant for becoming an independent woman who can decide for her own life. It is she who can pave her way to a doom or heaven that is seen through her intimate relation with Tariq. Doll decides to visit Tariq at his apartment, to sleep with him, to have sex with him and spend a night with him. She chooses all this in order to accomplish the desires of her materialist world. She admires Tariq's apartment that seems very well refurbished and decorated with expensive walls and European appliances. It reflects the materialist dimension of Doll's personality. It also illustrates the orientalist expression of the writer by using "Euroapplianced" (23) that shows the European as superior that the walls are of European quality, which refers to the binaries of European as superior and non-European as inferior, whether it is a man or an object or an appliance.

In addition to Doll's consumer outlook, she is shown as a woman who is isolated within her own people. She walks through the shopping center, but cannot buy the things which other people buy. She gazes at them and moves from one shop to the next. It is very true about modern society where majority of women like Doll roam here and there in different shopping center to buy the things they want, but come homes empty handed and think of doing work that seems morally corrupt but gives benefits to buy anything they want and desire. Despite possession of basic needs and sources people want to exceed their limits and attain more and more. Resultantly, they fall into the wrong or humiliating profession which according to the text through the words of a media person, that is Richard Cody from the text, who refers to Doll by saying pole dancing as a humiliating job. She ignores his words but again and again it echoes in her ears. (28)

Whenever, Doll becomes biased about any other person or a profession, she remembers his words. Once she encounters the burkah woman and Doll vituperates her way of carrying burkah in the hot sunny day by saying that why cannot the woman live just like the other people in normal dress instead of wearing that burkah. Suddenly Doll remembers her own profession that she cannot leave and live like others. (28)

It shows the orientalist approach towards looking at other's culture and appearances that is shown through the words of Doll, who is shown at this moment as a civilized West who is commenting on the barbaric East or Islam for covering the woman in burkah in the hot summer and violating the rights of women to wear a free style dress that she should wear. It is a distortion about the reality that the burkah woman is not the victim of any manipulation or forced to wear burkah but it's her choice and her way to adopt that style for herself. Islam has nothing to do with one's selection of dress

The dress code is cultural, regional and local. Any person can wear any dress and the stereotyping of dress in the form of burkah that is symbol of suppression or subjugation is completely wrong and distorted reality. A burkah woman is very open and liberal in her outlook and she enjoys the freedom and empowerment. The dress is just a dress it has nothing to do with one's mentality and outlook. There are extremists like Richard Cody who enjoys pole dancing and licking the arse, but thinks pole dancing as a humiliation and something derogatory. Such people are extremists and radicals who enjoy and vituperate pole dancing.

Richard Cody type of people are weird not the woman in Burkah. The orientalist mentality of linking burkah with barbarism, primitiveness, uncivilized, radicalized is amplified when Doll got the target of this burkah conspiracy that ruined her life and she was vituperated by the same person Richard Cody who is shown as the malevolent orientalist who thinks Doll as a terrorist and the other who is threat to the peace of Sydney.

His manipulation got successful when he linked her to Tariq by highlighting her exit from Tariq's apartment. He begins his plan by spreading the news to every ear. His manipulation of other ethnicity that is Islam and Muslim through the stereotypical outlook builds the strong evidence for Othering. His narrative shows the overall media's role in post-9/11 world, where international media highlighted Islam and Muslims as threat to World peace and islamophobia got the intensity due to different media outlets across the world and the stereotyping of Muslims and linking beard, Arabic dress, burkah, hijab to radicalism and terrorism. The two binaries of Us as West and them as Muslims divided the world into two rivalries which two opposing ideologies set by the orientalist outlook which through their misconception and false construction built the notion that all Muslims are terrorists who are wearing hijab, burkah and Arabic dress.

It is evident in the text when Ferdy the owner of Chairman Lounge imagines Doll as the black widow and uncovering her black dress that is burkah and uncovering her black knickers and the black bra and dancing and twirling and covering her body with the letter of Koran. It shows an extreme gesture of orientaling Muslims and Islam without knowing the grass root reality and truth. It shows post-9/11 cultural ennui that people started accusing Muslims for their anxiety and restlessness. Whether it's Doll's ennui or Westerners, the anxiety prevailed and injected its filth into the veins of everyone that they see the other ethnicity with hatred and disgust. Doll, becomes an unfortunate one who gets the label of black widow for her attachment with Tariq. It is not clear and apparent that doll has any link to any underground world or terrorists. Only a picture of Arabic dress man a woman with him labeled both these as terrorists and Doll's innocence get hidden under the label of terrorist.

It was found that cultural ennui occurred to Doll, who was treated as the other due to her affiliation with a bearded man and stereotyping of burkah and veil as the symbol of terror. She was secluded and alienated from the main culture. She couldn't cope the consumer culture.

CHAPTER SIX

Content Analysis and Discussion

Sylvia Plath's the Bell Jar

This is the story of a young girl named as Esther Greenwood. Esther is working for a magazine in New York city with other young girls of her age, mainly Doreen. Esther is fascinated by the city and its lights, high rise buildings and materialistic culture. She is unhappy with her routine life, and her background. She is unable to cope the new city and its environment. Due to alienation from the main culture of New York city, she finds her survival very difficult. Ultimately, she attempts suicide.

The very first encounter to the city life makes Esther lose her interest. She lacks the excitement to see the new city. She enters new place that is New York. "I didn't know what I was doing in New York". (1). She is questioning, because she has some feelings of disorientation and unease. It becomes very difficult for her to cope with the new place. She is feeling completely dumb and deaf that she does not know where she is and what she is doing.

Moreover, it shows her lack of confidence and trust on her own self. She has the influence of outside world which suppresses her own very self and makes her feel inferiority complex. Esther represents the modern man who is struggling to have a perfect life and wants to make it free of any restriction. The struggle leads to lack of excitement and life becomes boring. The ideals which the modern man creates make him alienated and undergo cultural ennui. In the next line, it is more evident that Esther undergoes through cultural ennui. "I felt very still and very empty, the way the eye of a tornado must feel, moving dully along in the middle of the surrounding hullabaloo." (2)

In these lines, it is very evident that Esther is feeling detachment from the mainstream within America in its core city that is New York, which is always inundated with people and activities, but Esther finds no attraction and she is alienated and secluded. She feels empty that shows her life is lacking the interest to be part of mainstream American culture. She is the orient in America, within her own culture. She is Orientalizing herself. She feels stagnant and her life seems hollow or empty. It reflects her life has no charms and glamour though she is in the crowd but still she is alone. She feels much suppressed

in the crowd of girls, who belong to the rich families and they are dandy fashionable girls wearing expensive clothes and studying on their own money.

Esther has the hollowness and emptiness from inside she thinks that the girls would make fun of her status as she gets her study and everything on scholarship. These thoughts make her split into two personalities and she becomes more vulnerable about her identity.

As Esther represents the contemporary individual's trauma, it is observed that one who dresses not good according to the fashion and up to date style and wears rough and dull dress is looked upon as unfashionable. This cladding makes a person ignorant or blow standard by the outsiders and make a person feel inferiority complex.

Consequently, the person becomes victim of ennui and starts copying others and adopts others personality by losing his own interest or charm of existence. This intensifies the decline and death of his own self and ultimately, he becomes unfit in that new environment and it leads to psychological disorders and the person becomes restless and depressed.

He/she does not find the same charm and glamour in the new place where he or she lives. He or she struggles back to regain his own interest, but fails and becomes the victim of cultural ennui that he neither copes in a new place nor brings back his or her own comfort zone. Eventually, she hates the people around her and finds no solace in their company.

Further, it is clear from the following lines that show her dilemma. "Girls like that make me sick. I'm so jealous I can't speak." (4). The anger and hate for other girls are shown that she is envious of them. She compares her existence with them for not having the same pompous life like them. She is in a state of confusion where she cannot cope with the new place and people. It shows her lack of confidence to face those who are around her. Instead of facing them with courage and confidence, she feels a kind of jealousy and keeps grudges for them, because she is not able to keep herself to the same position like the other girls. It reflects her swinging personality which swings from her own area of comfort and her unease by comparing herself with other girls.

Moreover, she compares herself with Doreen. The comparing nature of Esther shows her faithless attitude on her own self and her comfort zone. A person compares himself with others at that time when he is not happy and satisfied to current status and identity. The comparison is required when the person judges himself through the eyes of others. It shows the unjust attitude of the person towards his own pure and authentic identity which he possesses. The new created identity can never make a person satisfied.

So, Esther compares herself to Doreen that creates ennui in her and finds no interest in her own identity or existence. "I guess one of my troubles was Doreen. I'd never known a girl like Doreen before. Her college was so fashion conscious. It suggested a whole life of marvelous, elaborate decadence that attracted me like a magnet". (4)

As Doreen belongs to an elite family and she has luxurious life style. She is very witty and gives very sarcastic remarks about people. Sometimes jokes at them and mocks them. She is fashion conscious and a very dandy girl; wears expensive clothes and having matching pocketbook, which shows her richness.

On the other hand, Esther belongs to a poor family; studies on full bright scholarship and comes from suburbia, countryside. She is attracted to the life style of Doreen. She wants to adopt the life style of Doreen and wants to lose her existence and her very self to cope with such a life style.

Greenwood represents the modern man, who among the competitors loses his own very self and becomes the victim of cultural ennui. Sometimes copying with others life style and sometimes inferiority complex. He loses his own very self and his identity when he gets impressed by others or inspiration brings a shift in one's identity.

As this is the case with Greenwood. The identity crisis becomes further complicated by changing the whole personality into a new distorted personality which is not able to fit into the new identity which she creates.

Further, it becomes clearer that Esther is not able to adjust herself in the city. She is blaming the city for her changed temperament. It makes her identity fade away and she compare herself to that of a Chinaman, whose color is yellow. So, the yellow color of face again shows the fear. It symbolizes the fear of Esther that she has lost the color of her face that has become yellow.

The following lines justify her twist in identity. She is feeling nervous and worried regarding her dress. She becomes worried about her face looks which are losing their odor and charm. She thinks of her color as “odd” which shows her discomfort with her complexion. So, it is very clear that she is losing her sense of who she is and what features she has. She wants to lose her own very features which show the transition of her identity to a new identity, which makes her feel uneasy, lack of interest in herself, terrified and worried. “The city had faded my tan, though. I looked yellow as a Chinaman. I would have been nervous about my dress and my odd color”. (7)

In addition, Esther is hesitant to reveal her real identity. It shows the severe split personality. The following lines show this: “My name's Elly Higginbottom," I said. "I come from Chicago." After that I felt safer. I didn't want anything I said or did that night to be associated with me and my real name and coming from Boston”. (10).

These lines show the fear of Esther to reveal her real identity, because of fear of rejection, she hides her identity. She is a girl from poor family and country side and studies on scholarship and the people may ridicule her. To hide her inferiority complex she gives a fake name and hides her own name to cope with the new existence in New York with new people. So, through the character of Esther the modern man's dilemma is being represented. As the man of modern times lie and make fake identities to fool other people or to adjust in a new place.

The duality of identity is very much common in the personality of contemporary man to deceive others and to misuse the resources, finally the man becomes the victim of identity dilemma. It is observed that a person changes his name for travelling purposes.

If the name is not suitable according to the context, he changes his name and makes a new name for himself and emerges as a new personality. The contemporary man uses dual identity cards for nationality in different countries. The passport is made dual. Sometimes for good purposes they create dual identities, and sometimes for any hidden agenda the contemporary man creates double identity. In either case, he is playing with his own real identity and misuses it to fit himself in the society. But he fails in his duality and becomes more fearful and peaceless. He always worries that his true identity may not be disclosed. Hence, he becomes the victim of anxiety, depression. So, Esther truly represents the contemporary man through her character. She hides her identity by calling herself as “Elly” from “Chicago”.

As the novel develops Esther undergoes through much more through the depression. The comparison which she makes with Doreen makes her more irritating and she dislikes Doreen. Doreen’s behavior makes Esther very different from Doreen and she is amazed to see the vulgar frankness of hers to an unknown person ‘Lenny’ at single meeting. She starts disliking her. It shows the perplexity of Esther that she is unable to fit herself with anyone. She cannot withstand the identities and shifts from one to another. She is shy, unlike Doreen. Her shyness makes her feel tired of herself and others. “Doreen was spooning up the hunks of fruit at the bottom of her glass with a spindly silver spoon, and Lenny was grunting each time she lifted the spoon to her mouth, and snapping and pretending to be a dog or something, and trying to get the fruit off the spoon. Doreen giggled and kept spooning up the fruit”. (11)

Esther is weary of Doreen’s behavior and starts to dislike her. Esther then starts liking Betsy and wants to be good with her. The following lines show: “I made a decision about Doreen that night. I decided I would watch her and listen to what she said, but deep down I would have nothing at all to do with her. Deep down, I would be loyal to Betsy and her innocent friends. It was Betsy I resembled at heart”. (20, 21)

These lines show the strong identity dilemma of Esther; sometimes she compares her existence with Doreen and sometimes with Betsy. She is torn between Doreen and Betsy in losing her identity. She is not satisfied with the identity which she creates while comparing herself with Doreen and soon she dislikes and starts comparing herself with Betsy. She is shifting from one identity to others. She is in a state of scattered and confused mind which makes her unable to fit herself in the society. She is unable to retain the identities; finds faults and then switches from one to another. She is like pendulum moving back and forth. Her mind has become the pendulum which makes her to stay in the inconsistent and changing identities. It's the dilemma of modern girls that they do compare themselves with other girls and imitate them. The imitation becomes heavy for them that they do not bear the burden of its load and finally lose the position and balance and fall down.

In short, they find the new shelter and in that new shelter of identity they do not accommodate themselves and want the window to escape from that. The doors shut and they escape from the window in search of identities but face the stones on the way and hit the stones and get injuries. So, this is the problem with the modern girls who cannot cope with modernity and lose their identities like Esther Greenwood; through her character she depicts the trauma, anxiety depression of modern people. These are the very common existential sufferings in the modern era. Hence Esther is the representative of modern man. We see the modern man and his complications in the costume of Esther. She unveils the hidden traumas of modern man.

In the following text the protagonist Esther severely becomes the victim of psychological trauma of identity crisis which she herself confesses in these lines: "Elly, Elly, Elly," the first voice mumbled, while the other voice went on hissing, "Miss Greenwood, Miss Greenwood, Miss Greenwood," as if I had a split personality or something". (19) These lines show her severe trauma. The voice echoes in her ears and she feels a distorted personality; divided into two complete separate identities "Ely" and Greenwood".

How badly is she suffering through this trauma? The voice makes her restless. She is unsure about her true identity. At this moment she is swinging between two separate identities. The sense of losing her identity is clear here. It is very evident in these lines that she is severely the victim of split personalities. This shows the contemporary man who disguises his real identity to meet the challenges of modern world. At times the immigrants in any country change their names for survival in the new land and to prevent themselves from the pride and prejudice of the society where they want to fit themselves. But they never get the peace and tranquility in the new identity like Esther. The echo of true identity keeps on echoing from inside and it wants to push the person and comes out from the hideouts. The new identity cannot compensate the true identity. The conscience always pricks the man like a needle and he becomes finally upset and a traumatic person. He becomes unfit to retain the new identity and at the same time he cannot forget his true identity. So, Esther's character symbolizes this traumatic situation of modern man. The ideals which she creates for herself by making new identity make him the victim of identity crisis.

Furthermore, Esther shows repugnance to everything. "I said to myself: "Doreen is dissolving, Lenny Shepherd is dissolving, Frankie is dissolving, New York is dissolving, and they are all dissolving away. I don't know them; I have never known them and I am very pure". (18). This vociferous tone of Esther in the above text shows her strong condemnation for all of them. The term dissolving shows losing the purity of something and it means the melting of your purity into something not acceptable. Here Esther shows disinterestedness towards all of them. She eludes herself away from that impurity. Shows very cold feelings towards them and dislikes all of them. When she faces Lenny and Doreen's kisses and obscene action, she shows the contempt and disdain for them. It becomes unbearable for Esther. She is kind of shocked and astonished for seeing them with such obscenity.

After facing this Esther declares she is very pure and creates a new identity for herself. She is pure like a child without any fault and defect. She makes her identity that of a child, who is without any flaw. She thinks the flaw is gone away from her and she is having no any dirt of any kind. She is free of such deeds, she is pure. The identity of purity makes her go to seclusion and isolation. She confines herself to her own identity of purity and shows an indifferent relation to them. She wants to stay under her own 'Bell Jar' that is alone and secluded.

It was found that Esther underwent through cultural ennui due to pre-911 consumer culture. She was unable to fit herself into the main stream consumer culture of New York city. She was hiding her identity and background. She was secluded and marginalized from the main stream consumer culture.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

The research thoroughly discussed about cultural ennui in pre- and post-9/11 novels of John Updike's *Terrorist*, Richard Flanagan's *The Unknown Terrorist* and Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* through textual analysis as a primary source of getting the data and other literary works of different writers and critic's critical articles as a secondary source for getting the data in order to justify the argument or research hypothesis or objectives and research questions. The study explored that ennui had its roots in the early French language that later got its prominence in English language as boredom or fatigue, which took the form of multiple manifestations through the definition of Baudelaire as infatuation, lust, sadism, killing of moment's rest etc.

The researcher found that cultural ennui was the amalgamation of both existential ennui and situational ennui. The former referred to the boredom that sprang out from existence, life, surrounding, professions, events or culture. The later referred to the boredom that happened to any one at any time, which was temporary in nature. The main argument of the research, found that cultural ennui was the product of American consumer culture, double identity, split personality and different ethnic background and technological advancements, which were antagonistic to Ahmad, Doll and Esther Greenwood. Hence, they were unable to align themselves into the mainstream. Eventually these three characters became isolated and alienated.

It was also found that pre- and post-9/11 cultural ennui occurred at different events and time or places which were different, but the three characters suffered or encountered the same cultural ennui that took place due to unfit in an environment, consumer culture, identity crisis or split personality. It was confirmed that cultural ennui could erupt anywhere at any time in any place to different people with different context and places. Whether a person lived a century ago in America or in any other part of the world, underwent through similar complications in dealing with the cultural ennui.

Whether it was Ester Greenwood of Plath or Ahmad of Updike or Doll of Richard Flanagan, these people became the victim of cultural ennui, due to consumer culture, different ethnicity, and double identity, difference in environment, or alienation, incompatibility with the mainstream culture.

The main protagonists or main characters saw their lives through the lens of orientalism and existentialism. They felt themselves as other and the otherness made their life as useless, superfluous and lethargic. As a result, they attempted to harm or kill themselves in any way. It was evident from Esther Greenwood's attempt to commit suicide in order to escape from the alienation or cultural ennui that made her life incompatible with the main city of New York and the people around her in the pre-9/11 America. Being a native and aboriginal of America she felt secluded and alienated that she felt her existence as useless and unwanted. She wanted to kill herself as a result of the overwhelming consumer culture and unfit environment which she couldn't cope with. She was the "other" in her own country. She was marginalized in the mainstream. Her unfit existence among the girls made her less and divided personality that she saw and measured or compared herself through the personalities of others, such as her friends Doreen and Sally. She couldn't disclose her true identity to the girls and pretended to be "Elly" at times, though it was her fake identity or name. She kept on changing her suburban location and never disclosed her true background. She was always in a state of dual identity that made her life feel socially isolated and became the victim of cultural ennui that her own American culture, the metropolis city of New York seemed bizarre and strange to her and she felt boredom from her existence or identity.

Similarly, Updike's protagonist Ahmed represented the post- 9/11 American society, which was filled with orientalism, consumer culture and technological advancement that Ahmed turned himself towards religious fanaticism and practiced extreme outlook towards life or human existence.

He felt his Islamic identity or ethnicity was threatened by the American consumer culture that demanded nudity plus infidelity and mundane world filled with materialism, which according to Ahmed took away his religious roots as a virtuous Muslim who wanted to preserve his religious affiliations as strong and firm. He never wanted to disrupt his roots though he wanted to enjoy the American luxuries, but his double identity took him towards a great confusion that he couldn't balance his life and turned violent and felt isolated and bored from the mundanity of Americans and its consumerism. He felt himself as the other not from the mainstream. This otherness intensified his worldly outlook and he secluded himself from the fascinations and restrained himself to religious practices and teachings, ultimately, he became the victim of cultural ennui.

Likewise, his temptations to the consumer culture and his avoidance to it made his life like a pendulum swinging between two identities as an Arab Muslim and a modern, secular, liberal American. His dual identity and wanting towards two antagonist or rival cultures or identities made him the victim of cultural ennui that he detested the American way of life and wanted to have a suicide attack to overcome his boredom or cultural ennui. His violent planning of suicide bomb attack made him resembled the violent action or attempt which Ester of Plath's *Bell Jar* protagonist wanted to commit. Either a singular act of violence in the form of Esther's suicide attempt or a collective harm of Ahmad's suicide attack, still the characters showed the violent behavior due to cultural ennui that was vividly clear in these characters.

Likewise, Doll from Richard's *Unknown Terrorist*, showed dual identities with multiple names such as Gina, Doll, Krystal etc. and labels such as black widow, terrorist, pole dancer or stripper etc. these titles and names titled Doll towards cultural ennui that she took a violent decision and killed herself. She got the false label of terrorist due to her intimacy with Tariq, who was shown as an AL-Qaida's focal person in Arabic attire.

AL-Qaida was the defamed Arabic militant group, which came to the surface soon after 9/11 catastrophe, that claimed its responsibility for attacking the world trade center in order to take the revenge from America for its prodigious technological advancement and development in the shape of sky touching skyscrapers and material indulgence, which were thought as a competition with the divinity or God. A revengeful Occidentalism, which labeled America as evil and satanic empire that must be destroyed was shown through the violent act of Ahmed and his hatred for America.

So, the web of militant group was scattered around the globe and disseminated the fear across the countries and many innocent people around the world got the false label of terrorists in different countries other than the United States, such as Australia where an ordinary person like Doll, a pole dancer got the label of terrorist due to her intimacy with an Arabic attired man who was named as Al-Tariq. His Arabic attire became the symbol of terrorism, which the post/9 11 orientalism made a key factor of radicalism and terrorism. The over amplified western discourse of stereotyping Muslims in head scarf and veil and Arabic attire became the central manifestations and linkage to describe a terrorist and a militant group.

Hence, Doll, got alienation in her city of Sydney and faced the rejection from the mainstream society and culture. She detested the culture, the people and those people who were in power and at the peak of consumer culture or grabbing money such as media which propagandized her existence and her profession and ruined her life that as a result Doll took a violent decision and killed herself. She was tired of the surrounding and her existence. Her dreams got shattered and she couldn't accomplish her expensive brands which like an ordinary person she had desired and planned to buy and live a decent life that would be admired and appreciated by the society.

Doll, became the victim of post-9/11 orientalism which showed an extreme anger towards Muslims and their attires. They wanted to call these people as subhuman filth that corrupted the peace of west and made west an unlivable dungeon with their presence and terror.

The racist outlook of west or western discourse stopped or weakened the western people from getting into the true havens of terrorists and extremists. The racist approach blamed and suspected the innocents like Doll and left the true terrorists roaming free to attack the country with their new explosives or missions. It was observed that stereotyping led to killing of innocent people who got the label of terrorists and couldn't take the burden of the false label and destroyed themselves to evade themselves from the wrong representation like Doll.

So, it was found that the characters suffered cultural ennui due to their incompatibility with the culture, where they lived such as the consumer culture, identity crises and split personalities which made them threatened of their whole survival and existence. Most importantly the post-9/11 orientalism further intensified the cultural ennui not in America, but across the globe such as Australia that is evident through the character of Doll. It was showed that how an air of terrorism after 9/11 debilitated the people on the basis of racism and ethnicity. Doll suffered in her attachment to an Orientalized Muslim who was terrorizing the people of Sydney with his bomb like the way other Muslims hit the twin towers. The racist approach destroyed the life of Doll and made her kill herself in order to overcome the repetitive screening of her image on every platform, corner and place. The technology made her feel the cultural ennui with the blame of terrorist on her shoulders which played its poisonous role to dumbfound her and she changed her appearances, places and hideouts, but couldn't stay safe anywhere from the cops and media. Ultimately, killed physically forever and existence removed. Her killing showed the ultimate way to evade the blame and stereotyping about Muslims that pervaded in post-9/11 which didn't let any Muslim from stereotyping and scrutinizing.

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