

## Islam West Conflict in Post 9/11 Fiction: A Case Study of Falling Man by Don DeLillo

### Gulali Khan

Lecturer English, Quetta Institute of Medical Sciences, Quetta, Balochistan.

Email: [gulalikhaan@gmail.com](mailto:gulalikhaan@gmail.com)

(Corresponding Author)

- p-ISSN: 2663-3299
- e-ISSN: 2663-3841
- L-ISSN: 2663-3299

**Abstract:** *This study focuses on the clash between two civilizations, i.e., Islam and the West in works of fiction that were produced after the September 11 attacks and that deal with the attacks. The novel selected for this study is Falling Man (2007) by Don DeLillo. Through critical engagement by Samuel P. Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations", this study tries to discover how the clash has been presented in the novel. The conflict portrayed in the novel has been analyzed qualitatively through Miles et al. 'Noting Patterns and Themes' and by using archival methods. Islamist terrorism, Religion Islam, Financial opportunities, and Western Imperialism are depicted as the bone of contention between the two civilizations. The writer tries to resist the notion that Western civilization is imperialistic and portrays Islam as a religion advocating terrorism.*

**Key Words:** The Clash of Civilizations, Western Imperialism, Islamist Terrorism

### Introduction

The tragedy of September 11 initiated a new world order. It promoted a discussion about terrorism and counter terrorism. It altered the way people think (Shah, 2013, p.1). The symbolic value which this incident provided became a powerful tool for proving historical conflicts and differences, arousing fears and anxieties, and justifying the use of force against an enemy that had brought this day on the United States (Shah, 2013, p. 1). Instances of terrorism, of which 9/11 became the most significant, committed by Muslim radicals are seen as proofs of the perceived historical rivalry between Muslims and the West (Shah, 2013, p. 1). This rivalry is depicted by painting the Muslim as the "other" that

opposes the West (Shah, 2013, p. 1). Shah notes that after the attack, political discourse, governmental rhetoric, the media, and conspiracy theories re-emphasized the division of the world into dichotomies of "them" versus "us" and "evil" versus "good" (Shah, 2013, p.2).

Even before the 9/11 attacks, major discourses in the Western world highlighted the oppositional tendencies of the Islamic world. After the Cold War, the 1990s witnessed an upsurge in the West-Islam rivalry. Samuel Huntington's hypothesis predicted Islam as the opponent of the West in world affairs after the end of the Cold War (Shah, 2013, p. 2). Huntington's thesis tried to explain the cleavages between various

societies. However, he focused on the tussle unfolding between the western civilization and the Islamic world predicting a major cultural war between the two after the Cold War (Shah, 2013, p. 2). Events in the 1990s seemingly remained consistent with the predictions of the Islam and West rivalry thesis. These years saw the First Gulf War (9 August 1990- 28th February 1991), the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre, Al-Qaeda's birth, and its commitment to attack Western interests across the globe, the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the recrudescence of the Middle East crisis after a thaw in the wake of the Oslo Accords. The conflict thesis supporters appeared eager to link contemporary conflicts as the latest episode in the saga that started in the medieval Crusades. Furthermore, after 9/11, many writers depicted the clash of civilizations involving Islam and the West. In their writings, Muslims have been presented as terrorists. They are seen with suspicion. Similarly, the Americans representing Western civilization are presented as imperialists ready to colonize the Islamic world. Therefore, a need is felt to highlight clash of civilizations, portrayed in literature. In the proposed research, the researcher will try to explore and analyze "The Clash of Civilizations" in the selected novel.

Shah, in his study "Orientalism, Occidentalism and the Language of Conciliation: Political Discourses in the 9/11 Novel", notes that the Novel as a work of literature is an effective way to explore Edward Said's ideas in a post 9/11 milieu (2013, p.5). It can provide an appropriate narrative about how 9/11 has become the central ambiguity around the world (2013, p.5). Novels like Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2006) and to some degree *Falling Man* (2007) by Don DeLillo deal with closely related issues regarding themes of trauma, family, the desecration of the private and the domestic, media, and the conflict between Islam and the West (Shah,

2013, p.6). However, he notes that as the decade progressed, and because 9/11 was an ongoing phenomenon as an initiator of further conflicts, responses from America and around the world looked at the issue in a broadened international context (Shah, 2013, p.6). Responses on a global scale have engaged other cultures and nations, thus empowering people about issues affecting their lives (Shah, 2013, p.6). The focus has shifted to the Islam-West conflict, and that trend has become international (Shah, 2013, p.6).

Shah divides post-9/11 novel into three groups. According to him, the first group has a predominantly Western or American voice as the narrator and characters are sympathetic towards the West (Shah, 2013, p.6). These novels, in keeping with the Orientalist discourse, create binaries of the Islamic and the Western (Shah, 2013, p.6). According to him, such writings adhere to "The Clash of Civilizations" idea (Shah, 2013, p.6). This group includes novels like Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007), John Updike's *Terrorist* (2007) and Martin Amis's short story "The Last days of Mohammad Ata" (2006). Novels that have a Third World viewpoint regarding 9/11 and Terrorism comprise a second group (Shah, 2013, p.6). The protagonist in Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) likes to believe in the idea of assimilation into the Western (Shah, 2013, p.7). However, it morphs into a visceral hatred of the United States as the protagonist experiences othering and discrimination after 9/11 (Shah, 2013, p.7). The third group of novels has a typical European standpoint that supports and searches for a moderate ground. Novels like Ian McEwan *Saturday* (2005) and Joseph O' Neill's *Netherland* (2008) can be seen as representative of this third group. (Shah, 2013, p.7).

The present study focuses to probe the questions listed below.

1. How has Huntington's theory been

presented in the novel?

2. What are the ways through which the writer uses culture as defined by Huntington as the main source of dispute between Muslims and the (Christian) West?
3. What stereotypes the members from each civilization adhere to as reflected in the novel selected for the present study in light of Huntington's Theory?

The objective of the present investigation is to probe "The Clash of Civilizations" in the selected novel and to examine the cultural and religious differences between Islam and the West. The study aims to explore the Islamic Terrorism and American Imperialism as exhibited in the post-9/11 novel. The study also aims to investigate the impact of political events and their influence on literature. This novel is written from a 'post 9/11 perspective' embedding the politics of cultural clash in times of security panic and is seen in this study from the same perspective.

### Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Huntington's now famous article elaborating his Clash of Civilization thesis first appeared in the reputed *Foreign Affairs* in 1993 (Huntington, 1997, p.11). Written in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dramatic demise and the consequent abatement in the ideological Cold War, Huntington's piece is often viewed as representing one stream of argument in the great debate over the question as to what sort of world was to emerge after the Cold War. Another stream in the debate was typified by Fukuyama's thesis of an imminent termination of the historical progression, especially when history meant a great struggle between competing ideologies centered around economic and political models (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xi). Contrary to Huntington, Fukuyama held that Western liberal democracy and Western capitalism were the

acme of human political and economic thought and action, thereby ending history as a process of progressive forward march (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xi). There had been other systems of government and economic order, but they had all been defeated emphatically in the developed West. It was only a matter of time before the whole world adopted these Western models, testifying in the process to the universality inherent in these fundamental Western values. The idea, in Fukuyama's exposition, that history had ended became controversial. To justify his argument, he quoted G.W.F Hegel and Karl Marx. According to him, both these philosophers believed that evolution of human societies would end when mankind had achieved a form of society that satisfied its deepest and most fundamental longings (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xii). Both thinkers thus pointed to an end of history-for Hegel it was to come in the form of a Liberal State, and for Marx, in a Communist Society. For Fukuyama, the collapse of Communism served as a testimony for the triumph of liberal democracy as a form of government. He argued in the favor of this assertion by pointing out that countries with established democratic orders domestically were also the countries most prosperous and developed (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xv). This made Fukuyama argue that by settling the big questions of governance and economy, manifested in the triumph of liberal democracy and capitalism against communism, the Western countries could sit back and take pleasure while the rest of the world took their path to development, which traced the one trodden by the developed West previously. Huntington took issue with these assertions, explicating his own vision of emerging world politics. For him, the world was going to be a dangerous place, inhabited by groups harboring essentially different civilizational/cultural identities. More importantly, Huntington saw these identities as serving as cause for conflictual inter-

cultural relations and interactions (Huntington, 1997, p.11). Later, Huntington went on to transform his Foreign Affairs essay into a book which further elaborated on his clash idea. He called his book as being less of a work of social science and more of an effort to explain the post-Cold War world (Huntington, 1997, p.12). Huntington, reviewing the trends in the aftermath of Communism's demise, asserts that the symbolism inherent in cultural identity has gained significance. He points to the sense of belonging that people tend to exhibit, and often profess, for cultural symbols. These symbols tend to elicit emotional responses from members of various cultures (Huntington, 1997, p.15). Hence at the broadest level, for Huntington, there is a civilizational identity that people adhere to, and this identity assumes the role of, coincides with, and defines the most glaring and persisting cultural fault lines between human societies (Huntington, 1997, p.16). Furthermore, the trajectories that non-Western cultural entities have followed a present challenge to the assumptions about the meaning of modernization in such non-Western contexts. Unlike in the past, when modernization was assumed to be a feat achieved through following the example of the West, today, modernization is different from Westernization. Non-Western societies do not aspire to adopt the values of the West, looking back on their own native cultures as a source of guidance and salvation. For Huntington, it is this current of a nativistic resurgence in non-Western cultures, facing the old Western pretensions of the West being the torch bearer of a universal civilization that will serve as the ground for a type of West against the rest tussle (Huntington, 1997, p.17). The modernization projects in non-Western contexts today entail a partial rejection of the West. There is a tacit acknowledgment that the idea of humanity progressing toward a universal civilization (thought to be based on Western

values) under the leadership of the West has proved to be, at best, an illusion. In Huntington's vision, the end of the Cold War means a most foundational transformation of world politics. During the years following the Second World War, the world saw itself divided into two competing camps, harboring fundamentally different ideologies for the ordering of their respective domestic societies, signifying what has come to be known as a "bipolar" world (Huntington, 1997, p.17). The Western bloc, led by the United States, and consisting of the rather rich and democratic nations of Western Europe, was involved in a primordial struggle against their arch-nemesis in the Soviet Union and its relatively poorer allies in Eastern Europe. The result was that their rivalry was mainly carried out in those parts of the world which came to be known as the Third World. This third world consisted of countries that were almost invariably poor, did not have stable political institutions, had come out of formal European colonial control only recently, and came to describe themselves as "non-aligned" (Huntington, 1997, p.17). This bipolar ordering collapsed with the demise of the Soviet Union, and what came out from the ashes of this order, as Huntington posits, is a world divided in cultures, instead of ideologies (Huntington, 1997, p.19). For Huntington, politics, among other things, is also a matter of defining a people's identity. In other words, people tend to see who they are in contrast with those who they think they are not, and who they are against (Huntington, 1997, p.20). Resultantly, the world has now become divided, not in the two blocs of the bipolar order and a third serving as the battleground for the other two, but in seven to eight blocs based on the broadest level of cultural differences which, for Huntington, define civilizations. These new world divisions correspond to a transformation in world politics into one based on broad civilizational identities. Contemporary conflict zones in

regions like Kashmir, Bosnia, Caucasus, etc. are symptomatic of the fault lines defining the geographical boundaries of civilizational entities. And within these geographical entities, instances of political and economic cooperation among various countries (nation-states) abound- indicative of the natural and organic cultural connections rooted in common civilizational identities (Huntington, 1997, p.21). The success of the European Union is a case in point. Religion in Huntingtonian civilizations is the most basic and fundamental defining attribute of identity. His categorization explicitly invokes various 'world religions' as foundational to respective civilizations. Furthermore, although the threat of communism has receded, the relative power of the West has also declined in the wake of the economic rise of other regions. In the context of this trend, as the West engages with other civilizations in pursuit of its interests, mostly coinciding and often couched in terms of Western values, it is bound to clash with those other non-Western societies which harbor their own ambitions and pursue expansion of their own economic and military power (Huntington, 1997, p.22). Huntington traces the etymology of civilization and finds the roots in eighth century France where the idea of civilization was contrasted with that of barbarism (Huntington, 1997, p.41). A civilized society was marked by its being literate and hence superior to the primitive society. In the wake of the so-called Hundred Year wars of religions, nation-states took hold and an idea of an international society of civilized states emerged exclusively in the European context got roots. Later still, during the nineteenth century, a discourse emerged in Europe aimed at outlining the criterion under which non-European peoples could join in the club of the 'civilized international society'. However, as the idea of this exclusively European club remained at the heart of many debates during the expansion of European

colonialism, there also emerged a contrary discourse centered on the idea of multiple civilizations, each moving on its own path, mainly defined by indigenous history and culture. Although the concept of civilization is central to the overall scheme of things in Huntington's thesis, it is in turn dependent on religion. In what he describes as distinct civilizations, the objectively distinguishing element is nothing other than religion adhered to by people in each (Huntington, 1997, p.44). Moreover, considerations of religion in civilizational identity are so central that they take precedence even over factors like language or ethnicity. An interesting statistic is featured in Huntington's work: in the hundred years from 1820 to 1920, he tells us, literally every other war has involved a Muslim and a Christian belligerent pitted against each other (Huntington, 1997, p.303). This, for him, defines the recent interaction between Islam and the West. Moreover, in a manner that some would perhaps call "excessive essentialization", Huntington asserts there is a fundamental discord between the religious values of Islam and the Christian West. This perceived religious incompatibility explains the adversarial relationship between the two. This essentialization however does not preclude the theorist from attributing the resentment against the West felt in Muslim countries to the West's penchant to promote its values and institutions and touting the same as engendering universal applicability and to the consistent pattern of interventions in Muslim lands in pursuit of their own interests (Huntington, 1997, p.305). Another significant fact is the vanishing of the communist threat itself, which was inimical to Islam as well as to the West. Its absence has meant that the two remaining can focus on each other and perceive each as the only remaining viable threat to the other. Increased communications and migrations across civilizations have only worsened the alienation as members of the one living



under the sway or control of the other are often discriminated (Huntington, 1997, p.305). The employed Huntington's theory posits a kind of renewed Cold War, this time between Islam and the West. He notes that Muslims think that it was Western colonialism that tried to defame all the cultural traditions of Islam. The anti-Western thinking could be credited to the colonial era. In Muslim societies, the West has long been immoral and decadent civilization. The animosity entails opposition to Western values like secularism, and irreligiosity. This makes Islam a problem for the West as the former purports to gain power and influence commensurate with its perceived superiority of high morality. Similarly, the West also is harboring a sense of their cultural superiority and sees its values as universally applicable. This provides for the permissive grounds to a conflict at the civilizational level.

The present study opts qualitative research method. According to Hancock et al. qualitative research is one that cannot be expressed in numbers (Hancock et al., 2001, p. 6). Within qualitative research, Textual Analysis is used here. According to Bainbridge, it is an analysis which focuses on the ability of human beings in understanding the world (Bainbridge, 2011, p.224). These techniques are used to do effectively apply theory on literature by interpreting and evaluating textual materials. Moreover, the model that is used to analyze the data would be *Noting Patterns and Themes* by Miles et al. According to them reading a text one observes themes that join some pieces of data together (Miles et al., 2014, p.243). This model helps in conducting an in-depth analysis of novels in the context of "The Clash of Civilizations". The research data is collected from books, articles, and journals.

### Data Analysis

The novel selected for the present study is a story of a family struggling to cope with the

trauma associated with the tragedy of 9/11. It focuses on how ordinary people suffered after the incident. The novel is significant as it gives voice to the narrative of terrorists who committed the attacks. It sheds light on the activities that went on in the "Hamburg Cell". It explains how the terrorists prepared for the act. Through its title, the novel brings back into focus the falling man, an image banned in America after the tragedy because it was thought to be contradicting and hence weakening the dominant narrative of a brave American nation facing the tragedy with zeal. The themes the researcher observed in the novel are as follows.

### Unemployment

The theory used in the study identifies the factors that will lead to the conflict. Huntington states the violent conflict between Muslims and Christians is due to the decline of economic development in the Muslim world, technological changes, and the power of religious commitment (Huntington, 1997, p.304). Muslims migrate to the West because the population in their countries is increasing, but enough job opportunities are not there (Huntington, 1997, p.305). These Muslim populations migrate to the West to acquire higher education so that they may in turn get good jobs. The possibility of achieving financial growth, and higher standards of living in the West has attracted Muslim youth. Let us see how the issue of unemployment has been tackled in the novel.

In *Falling Man* (2007), Don DeLillo highlights the lower financial status of Muslims, arguing, in similar vein as Huntington, that their precarious financial situation forces them to migrate to the West. When Keith is trying to cope with the trauma caused by 9/11 and is in the process of rehabilitation, his interior thinking is explored. At one stage, he is trying to find a taxi that can drop him to home. He thinks to himself, "it might be hard to find a taxi at a

time when every cabdriver in New York was named Muhammad" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 29). Two things can be gleaned from here; Muslims in America found themselves in a dangerous situation after 9/11 and the insecurity forced them to withdraw from the public space. The second important observation is their low financial status. According to Keith, most taxi drivers were Muslims. The situation presented here echoes Huntington's assertion that Muslims are poor and migrate to the West to raise their standard of living. This also shows that Americans consider themselves superior to Muslims because they are generally richer than the latter. In the novel the writer has given voice to the terrorist trying to bring out the motives they had behind for the deadly act of 9/11. Hammad's, one of the terrorist planning and getting training to commit 9/11, thinking has been explored by using the technique of interior monologue which is one of the techniques of stream of consciousness. He thinks he will write a letter to his family and in that letter, he will say that he works for an engineering firm and is soon going to be promoted (DeLillo, 2007, p. 163). This also shows that the man planning to attack the USA was abroad in Europe for employment purpose. He wanted to inform his parents that he had a good job and would soon be promoted. This makes a person think as to why Muslims wanted to go abroad to study and get good job and at the same time planning to commit terrorism against the West. It can be said that Muslims are not happy with the interference of America in the internal matters of their respective countries. They are not happy over America's imperialistic designs. But the economic prospects that are present in the West attract them. So, one can sense ambivalence of Muslims towards the West. Hammad a well-educated person is planning to attack America because of the situation of his home country.

## Cultural Identity

---

The theory selected for the present study asserts that civilization is culture because both refer to how people live their daily life (Huntington, 1997, p.42). Huntington is of the view that most important objective element in defining a civilization is usually religion (Huntington, 1997, p.44). He notes that a person's identity is considered analogous to one's religious beliefs. Religion differentiates one person from another person. Post 9/11 fiction depicts how people were being identified based on their religion only.

In *Falling Man* (2007), the writer has portrayed the activities going on in the "Hamburg Cell". The Hamburg Cell, according to the intelligence agencies of USA and Germany, was a terror cell. This cell included extremist Muslims from different countries of the Islamic World who carried out the 9/11 attacks ("Hamburg Cell"). While describing the activities of terrorists in the cell, the writer, as omniscient narrator, which is one of the techniques of stream of consciousness, presents his own ideas and says, "They were all growing beards" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 77). He tries to identify all the terrorists as Muslims; beard is used by him as synonymous with being Muslim. This also proves Huntington's argument that religion will become the most dominant thing for the description of a person. When the terrorists are going for the hijacking of planes, the writer again uses the technique of stream of consciousness and, as an omniscient narrator, explains the interior thinking of terrorists. He says, "they were clean shaven now" (DeLillo, 2007, p.161). Now, they shaved their beard to hide their identity as terrorists and particularly as Muslims. Growing beard, which is one of the important instructions in Islam, is linked with identity of terrorists, all terrorists are Muslims and beard represents this. Furthermore, the writer explains this point himself when he says, "The idea is to go unseen" (DeLillo, 2007, p.161). The writer

considers religion as an important part of the identity of a person and beard is associated with the identity of Muslims. Therefore, a bearded Muslim becomes a potential terrorist.

In one discussion, Lianne, the protagonist of the novel, defends his mother Nina's lover Martin Ridnour, whose real name was Ernst Hechinger. He was once an extremist and a separatist in Germany. Despite her negative opinion about terrorists, her mother seems comfortable to have him as her boyfriend. Even Lianne has accepted her. Her interior thinking is portrayed by the writer as "Maybe he was a terrorist, but he was one of ours" (DeLillo, 2007, P.182). This shows the extent of clash that exists between Islam and the West. She is ready to accept terrorist in her life because he belongs to the same civilization to which she belongs. Furthermore, she says, "one of ours, which meant godless, western, white" (DeLillo, 2007, p.182). This further proves Huntington's point that one of the reasons of the clash in post-Cold War era is religion. Another of Huntington's assertions that Islam and the West were going to have a conflict is also echoed in Lianne's statement. It proves the point that she is against Islam and Muslims as she is ready to accept a Christian terrorist, but not a Muslim terrorist. Lianne considers herself a Christian. This proves the point that religion would be the most important thing in defining a person.

### Western Imperialism

Edward Said emphasizes that novel is a form of culture because novel is important in studying about people's life experiences and about the question as to how they develop imperial attitudes towards others (Said, 2012, p. xii). He further explains that novel is an aesthetic object, which connects to expand societies of imperial states like Britain and France and is interesting to study (Said, 2012,

p. xii)

In *Falling Man* (2007) there is a conversation going between Lianne, her mother and her mother's boyfriend. Nina comments, "They strike a blow to this country's dominance" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 47). The comment shows that Americans consider themselves superior to the Islamic world. They cherish their dominance which also implies that they consider their imperialism justifiable. Further in the conversation Nina comments, "It's not the history of Western that pulls down these societies. It's their own history, their mentality. They live in a closed world, of choice, of necessity. They haven't advanced because they haven't wanted or tried to." (DeLillo, 2007, p. 48). Nina thinks that terrorism against America could not be justified by the claim that it interferes in the affairs of Muslim countries. She seems to be suggesting that it is the primitiveness of the societies which produce terrorism that comes into clash with the advancing West. The claim of terrorists that Americans have stopped them from prospering is wrong. Another aspect to be noted here is that Americans think they must solve the matters of Muslim world because they themselves cannot solve them and endanger world peace. So, it is better that Americans solve those problems and ensure peace in the world. Nina also feels that Islamic civilization lags the Western Civilization because of their own mind set. They do not have the capacity to achieve development. Their view that their development in the twentieth century was not possible due to American imperialism is totally baseless. On the other hand, Hammad, who is a voice of the terrorists, thinks that West want to destroy Islamic countries. He thinks to himself, "The West corrupt of mind and body, determined to shiver Islam down to breadcrumbs for birds" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 77). This indicates that the aim of conducting terrorism by Islamic terrorists is that they think the West would destroy them.



## Islamist Terrorism

---

Huntington identified in “The Clash of Civilizations” that the conflict between Islam and the West in the twentieth century and onward would be fueled by Islamic Terrorism (Huntington, 1997, p. 306). According to Al Ibia, Terrorism is one of the most challenging concepts that is not easy to define (2013, P.19). But he agrees that after 9/11, terrorism discourse has been used to frame Muslims as potential suspects of dreadful crimes (Al Ibia, 2013, p.19). Post 9/11 fiction also represents this. Muslims are considered as terrorists, and this causes a conflict between Islamic and Western Civilizations. The literature produced after the tragic incident also proves Huntington’s claim that terrorism acts as a major source of problem. It is not easy to define this concept, but it relates to the act of terrorism committed by the Muslim terrorists against West.

In the novel, Islamic terrorism is seen as a threat to the survival of America. In the start of the novel, when Keith comes back to live with his wife Lianne and son Justin, there is a conversation between Lianne and Nina (Lianne’s mother). Nina comments, “Eight years ago they planted a bomb in one of the towers. Nobody said what’s next. This was next. The time to be afraid is when there’s no reason to be afraid, too late now.” (DeLillo, 2007, p.14). In another instance, when Lianne and her mother Nina are having a conversation, Nina says, “There are no goals they can hope to achieve. They are not liberating a people or casting out a dictator. Kill the innocent, only that.” (DeLillo, 2007, P.47). Nina sees Muslims as mass murderers and that is how she defines a Muslim—somebody who kills innocent people. Terrorism is a major concern for America. While describing the activities going on in the “Hamburg Cell” the writer identifies Muslims as somebody doing the struggle to achieve a higher aim. He (as an omniscient narrator which is one of the techniques of

stream of consciousness) says, “Islam is the struggle against the enemies” (DeLillo, 2007, p. 78). Through this we can penetrate the American mind and understand their overall psyches. The writer feels that Islam is the struggle against its enemies. But its enemies are Americans, the people of a different faith. Islam is against the West because of its values, the most prominent of which are democracy, women rights, and civil liberty. Both civilizations consider themselves as distinct but, according to the writer, Islam focuses to fight a war against its enemies. Islam believes in eliminating everything that resists, negates, criticizes, or challenges it. The West believes that Islam teaches as a religious practice the concept of “Jihad” which it believes is to eliminate the enemies with force. From the West’s perspective, Islam is inherently violent.

## Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

---

Although many people believe the epic debate over unavailability of a confrontation between Islam and the West was initiated by Samuel Huntington’s essay in the journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1993, this is not accurate. The idea has been there for a long time. It was not only expressed by the Western thinkers and scholars, but it also found traction among many Muslim scholars. They may differ in their approach and views but both sides agree on the fact that both have contradicting tendencies. The first reference about the rift between Islam and the West was made by Oswald Spengler in his book *The Decline of West* (Bhutto, 2014, p. 233). His book was published after the end of the First World War. Bhutto notes that “he made civilizations a term of reference for historical study” (Bhutto, 2014, p. 234). Arnold Toynbee’s book *A Study of History* was completed in 1961 and his work also pointed to the same phenomenon as Spengler’s (Bhutto, 2014, p. 234). Bhutto observes that Toynbee developed the theory of civilization

based on history. His work had a massive popular following and thus his theories became similarly popularized (Bhutto, 2014, p. 235). Bhutto further identifies that the academic who shaped the Clash school directly was Bernard Lewis (Bhutto, 2014, p. 235). Dealing with the issues of Islam the term “Clash of Civilizations” was coined by him in his essay titled “The Roots of Muslim Rage”. He believed that unlike the case in the Western world, Muslims had failed to set up an effective governmental system, resulting in the chaos that one sees in their countries (Bhutto, 2014, p. 235). He argued that Muslims do not like Western Secularism and consider it against their faith (Bhutto, 2014, p. 235). After this, Samuel Huntington presented his theory that hinged on this conception of a “Clash of Civilizations”. Several prominent thinkers agree with Huntington that Western and Islamic Civilization are in battle and that “The Clash of Civilizations” that Lewis first conceptualized, and Huntington predicted, either is imminent or has already begun. There are several scholars who support Huntington’s idea of “Clash of Civilizations”, and they are present on both sides. Patrick Buchanan, a politician, seems to argue that a clash of civilizations is coming and that it is imperative that the West win the battle (Bhutto, 2014, p. 245). In his view, the only way the West can beat Islam is to regain religious faith (Bhutto, 2014, p. 245). According to him, to defeat a faith one needs a faith. He thinks with values like individualism, democracy and pluralism, West cannot defeat an Islamic Civilization which is fighting with faith, and which is fourteen centuries old (Bhutto, 2014, p. 245). Robert Spencer also supports this idea (Bhutto, 2014, p. 245). He has presence on the social media and has a website by the name of Jihad Watch (Bhutto, 2014, p. 245). He uses social media to spread propaganda against Islam. His strategy is that he takes the verses from the Quran that direct Muslims to fight

Jihad. Granted the presence of such verses in the Quran, his exclusive focus seems quite out of proportion. It looks like his sole effort is to spread the message that Islam teaches its believers to be violent (Bhutto, 2014, p. 245). Bhutto has argued in her book that he does not present the verses from Quran that focus on love, tolerance, and respect (Bhutto, 2014, p.245). He propagates the message of rift between the two civilizations. This point also highlights the use of social media which has gained tremendous importance in the twenty-first century. Huntington highlighted that Christians are ahead of Muslims in the use and development of technology. This point also proves that they are using the social media to spread propaganda against Islam. The intellectual radicals in the clasher divide are not all Western. Maulana Maudoodi, a big name in the Islamic world, and the founder of the religio-political party Jamaat-i-Islami, believed in the rule of Sharia and thought that the West was the main hurdle in the way of imposing Sharia in the Islamic world (Bhutto, 2014, p. 246). He believed in the rivalry of the two camps, and even went on to say that the West should deal with force if they try to stop Muslims from developing their own form of government (Bhutto, 2014, p. 246). He believed that the West is a purely materialistic civilization. Sayyid Qutb provided the intellectual foundation of the Muslim brotherhood in Egypt in the 1960s. This brotherhood is considered by many to be the ideological progenitor of Islamic Jihad, Al Qaeda, and many other modern terrorist organizations (Bhutto, 2014, p. 247). He was seen as a threat to the Egyptian government which had to be eliminated; therefore, he was hanged for his views. Bhutto observes that Qutb was the advocate of civilizational argument but came at it from the opposite ideological pole as Huntington. To him, the West is a dying civilization that needs to be replaced (Bhutto, 2014, p., 2014, p. 247). Khurshid Ahmad, a prominent Pakistani

professor, and scholar viewed the rift happening because of the effort to implement democratic form of the government in the Muslim world because it benefits the West (Bhutto, [2014](#), p. 247). According to him the tensions between the two are there because the West tries to impose its form of government forcefully on the Muslim world and this is not acceptable to most Muslims. So, they retaliate (Bhutto, [2014](#), p. 247). Thus “The Clash of Civilizations” is a theory that has found many supporters. Above listed debate indicates that the clash thesis finds support in scholars from both sides of the civilizational divide. This study is based on this assumption. Post-9/11 fiction presents the clash between Muslims and Christians. I selected the novel *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo. I deduce that “The Clash of Civilizations” is depicted in post-9/11 novel. In my findings, I concluded that religion acts as a major symbol of

identification of a civilization. In the novel, Lianne is ready to accept a Western terrorist but not a Muslim one. Martin is acceptable because he belongs to Europe; she responds that he is from our side. The major difference between the two civilizations is economic growth. The West dominates the world through its economic prowess. The opportunities available in America were not available to him in his own country, and this was the only thing that was stopping him from going back to his own country.

The present study focused on *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo. He is an American writer and can be interpreted as someone belonging to the western civilization. I propose similar research be conducted on novels written by Muslim writers such as Mohsin Hamid and H. M. Naqvi that can elaborate how Muslim writers have responded to Islam and West clash.

## References

- Bainbridge, J., Goc, N., & Tynan, L. (2008). *Media and journalism: New approaches to theory and practice*. Oxford University Press.
- Bhutto, B. (2014). *Reconciliation: Islam, democracy and the West*. Simon and Schuster.
- Chan, S. (2010). The bitterness of the Islamic hero in three recent western works of fiction. *Third World Quarterly*, 31(5), 829-832.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2010.502697>
- Chiozza, G. (2004). *Love and hate: Anti-Americanism in the Islamic world*. Presentation in the Department of Politics, New York University, 1-58.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- DeLillo, D. (2007). *Falling man*. Simon and Schuster.
- Fukuyama. (1992). *Introduction. By way of An Introduction. The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Maxwell Macmillan International, 1992.xi-xv. Print.
- Huntington, S. P. (1997). *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*. Penguin Books India.
- Said, E. W. (2002). *The Myth of the "clash of Civilizations"*. Media Education Foundation.
- Gheasi, M., & Nijkamp, P. (2017). A brief overview of international migration motives and impacts, with specific reference to FDI. *Economies*, 5(3), 31.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/economies5030031>
- Gray, R. (2011). *After the fall: American literature since 9/11* (Vol. 58). John Wiley & Sons.
- Hancock, B., Ockleford, E., & Windridge, K. (2001). *An introduction to qualitative research*. Trent focus group.
- Keeble, A. (2011). Marriage, Relationships, and 9/11: The Seismographic Narratives of Falling Man, the Good Life, and the Emperor's Children. *Modern Language Review*, 106(2), 355-373.  
<https://doi.org/10.5699/modelangrevi.106.2.0355>
- Leech, G. (2016). *Islamic extremism is a product of Western imperialism*. Counterpunch.
- Marshall, A. (2013). From This Point on It's All about Loss: Attachment to Loss in the Novels of Don DeLillo, from Underworld to Falling Man. *Journal of American Studies*, 47(3), 621-636.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24485832>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*.
- Mustafa, S. (2009). Defending the faith: Islam in post 9/11 anglophone fiction. *Religion & literature*, 41(2), 281-288.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/25676913>
- Neumayer, E., & Plümpner, T. (2009). International terrorism and the clash of civilizations. *British journal of political science*, 39(4), 711-734.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123409000751>
- Powell, K. A. (2018). Framing Islam/creating fear: An analysis of US media coverage of terrorism from 2011-2016. *Religions*, 9(9), 257.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9090257>
- Verheul, J., & Rubin, D. (2009). *American multiculturalism after 9/11: Transatlantic perspectives* (224). Amsterdam University Press.
- Said, E. W. (2012). *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage.
- Said, E. W. (2014). *The clash of ignorance*. In *Geopolitics (191-194)*. Routledge.
- Shah, B. (2013). *Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Language of Conciliation: Political Discourses in the 9/11 Novel*.