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Muslim Character Representation in Modern Literature:

The Case of S.K. Ali's *Love from A to Z*

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Dedication

This research paper is lovingly dedicated to myself, the source of inspiration and strength to me. She went through a lot of challenges and among all of those who given up on me, she never did. I dedicate this work to my loving family, specially to my parents Hayat Boulifa and Belkhir Aouichat, and my siblings, Houssem, Ziad and Oumaima for supporting me psychologically and financially, for their endless and unconditional support, for being the light that illuminates the darkness of my journey and guides me to the right path. To my grandmother Nina, May Almighty Allah dwell her in Jannatul Firdaus.

Without their love and support this research would not have been made possible.

Thank you for being in my life…Thank for believing in me.

Amani

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to point out the picture of Muslim character in Modern Literature. The scope of the study will be primarily limited to the novel *Love from A to Z* by S.K. Ali, a Muslim writer who portrays Muslim characters in her works. Therefore, the structure of this case study focuses mainly on two chapters. The first chapter, which is the theoretical part, is about the theory of character and characterization in general terms, including the kinds of character and characterization techniques. Followed by a brief overview about Muslim character representation in Modern Literature. The second chapter is an analytical examination of the literary text characters from the previously proposed theory perspectives.

Key words Character and Characterization, Muslim Character, Muslim Identity, Modern Literature, Islam.

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General Introduction

Background of the Study

Literature can be defined as the mirror that reflects society; it creates a safe space for people to feel represented and seen, far away from the false judgments that could be found in real life. In the long term of its glorious eras, Britain has always been at the centre of literary trends that are reflected in its literary works, from the various literary forms and styles to the variety of characters used in terms of culture, ethnicity, and religion. However, the war forced Britain to make several changes in different areas, and these noticeable transformations in society, culture, and political viewpoints resulted in Britain gaining diversity in such areas as Literature (Steinbach, 2023).

This diversification has been remarked in modern British Literature. The term "Modern Literature" refers to all literary works written after the Second World War that had a serious impact on various domains such as social, political, and cultural changes that also had a profound impact on Literature in all genres (Steinbach, 2023).

As a result, writers were more concerned with human mind states and psychology, believing that it was their responsibility to project reality onto their products. The diversity of writers from various backgrounds gaining the power to express society's concerns in British Modern Literature resulted in a diversity of characters and the portrayal of multiple backgrounds in the hands of the reader (Steinbach, 2023).

Modern British Literature encouraged writers from different backgrounds to produce literary works that sought to reflect society's contradictions and problems through realistic characters. Therefore, various characters have different social, political, and religious choices; for instance, the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in Literature. Said declared in 1978 about Muslims in general:

> In newsreels or news- photos, the Arab is always shown in large numbers. no individuality, no personal characteristics or experiences. Most of the pictures represent mass rage and misery, or irrational (hence hopelessly eccentric) gestures. Lurking behind all of these images is the menace of jihad. Consequence: a fear that the Muslims (or Arabs) will take over the world. (p. 287)

In addition, producing literary works containing a Muslim character or a picture of Islam is a challenge in and of itself, especially in modern British Literature, while avoiding falling into the stereotyping and the prejudices. Trying to apply aforementioned aspects, the writers sought to focus on the characters of their works, applying characterization to echo particular information about the characters' thoughts, feelings, and dreams without drifting away from the action of the story. As a case study, examining the portrayal of Muslim character in modern British Literature, particularly these tackled in Sajidah Ali's story *Love from A to Z.*

The novel *Love from A to Z* is a diary-style story about two Muslim teenagers, Adam and Zayneb, whose paths crossed at London Airport on their way to Doha, Qatar. The novel follows the pair as they begin to fall in love with each other while struggling with their personal issues that they share with the reader through a book that both Adam and Zayneb have and is called "The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence." Bringing to the reader topics such as self-development, grieving, friendship, uncertain futures, struggle, family, religion, and love (Heram, 2021).

Sajidah Kutty, known by her famous name S.K Ali, aims to improve the living conditions of the Muslims in the society through her writings, in which she attempts to illustrate the Muslim people situation with Islamophobia, Muslim identity and Romance in Islam, and also examine how her characters portray the representation of Islam through the eyes of Muslims and non-Muslims, respecting the values of religion and culture. In the *Love from A to Z* author's note, Sajidah revealed that "The Islamophobia described in this book is based on true incidents. Zayneb's scenes on the flight, at the swimming pool, and online were written calling upon memories of painful personal experiences—ones that will resonate with many" (2019, p. 338).

The study tackles uncounted topics such as Islamophobia, Muslim identity, prejudice and Romance in Islam. And it highlights questions about the appropriate ways to consider any literary work a good representation of Muslim people. It appears that learning about Islam and Muslim people, as well as the reason behind how they act or behave in their life, is required in order to gain a deeper understanding of the story. Because Halal Romance is a major theme in the book, it is important to address issues

like Muslim identity, prejudice and Islamophobia brought on by the prevailing society. As a result, it occurs that addressing issues of irrational hostility towards Islam, Muslims, and Islamic culture and active discrimination against Muslim people, especially women wearing hijab, is not only good but also required in order to understand deeply the circumstances of the characters and avoid the meaningless trap of being touched by them but not moved. The use of the character and characterization approach is needed to have a deeper understanding of the Muslim characters and their actions presented within the novel.

Motivation

Our choice to study the novel *"Love from A to Z"* is due to some reasons:

First, it is the most appropriate for our aim of analysing Muslim character representation in modern British Literature, since it is a fictional novel about two Muslim protagonists.

Second, the novel is expected to provide a perspective for understanding the ways in which Muslim characters should be represented in Literature since the author is a Muslim woman who comes from a Muslim background and society; thus, her representation of her characters was accurate and did not have the void that some non-Muslim authors had in their writings.

Finally, the researcher expects that this study can help the students of the English Department at Ouargla University, recognize the supreme choice of portraying Muslim character in Literature and develop the students' analytical skills in reading Literature.

Aim of the study

This research aims to study the representation of Muslim character in modern British literature from the angle of characterization used by the author S.K Ali. The data for this study will focus on S.K. Ali's *"Love from A to Z"*. The selection of the topic was guided by three reasons: first, the fact that *"Love from A to Z"* deals with Muslim people struggles in society, therefore, represents S.K. Ali's insights into the Muslim experience in a society where they are judged. The other reason is that the story takes on controversial

issues like Islamophobia, prejudice, and the struggle with discrimination Therefore, the study will focus on how S.K. Ali explored issues of identity, romance in Islam, and Islamophobia in her work *"Love from A to Z"* by using "character and characterization" in her novel to reveal the characters personalities or their development throughout the story. Furthermore, this research attempts to investigate the extent to which Muslim characters in Modern Literature embody the aspects of the true representation of Islam and Muslims.

Statement of the problem

This study is expected to identify the aspects of Muslim representation that S.K. Ali expressed through her novel *"Love from A to Z"*. Moreover, in this study, we will examine this story by applying character and characterization theory.

Research Questions

To reach this paper's objective, this dissertation attempts to answer the following questions:
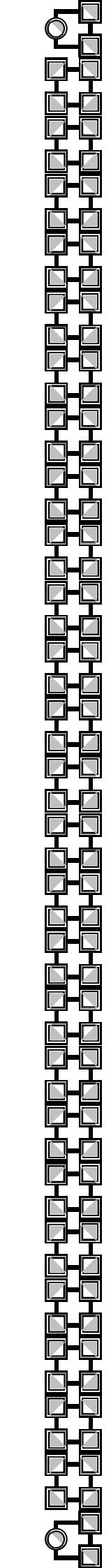
- What are the characterization techniques that S.K. Ali used to portray Muslim characters throughout the novel *"Love from A to Z"*?
- To what extent did the characters change throughout the novel *"Love from A to Z"*?

Research Methodology

In order to answer the proposed questions and reach the set aims, the theory of character and characterization is used to study the representation of Muslim people in the novel *"Love from A to Z"*. There are several steps in analysing data in this study.

The Thematic analysis Method was used in organising and analysing the data. Throughout extracts and passages from the novel, the author's attitude towards Muslims in society is interpreted and analysed. Primary data are collected from the novel *"Love from A to Z"* by S.K. Ali, while secondary data are collected from interviews, books and articles that are related to the topic.

The dissertation is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is the theoretical part, the chapter dealt with the overview of the theory of character and characterization and a literary context of Muslim character representation in Modern Literature. Providing different definitions of the proposed theory by different scholars. Also an overview of Islamophobia and Muslim Identity for supporting the context of Muslim character representation in Modern Literature. While the second chapter examined the use of character and characterization techniques in the novel *Love from A to Z.*

Chapter One: Theory of Character and Characterization: Literary Context of Muslim Character Representation in Modern Literature

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Introduction

The following chapter will examine the theory of character and characterization with an overview of Muslim character representation in Modern Literature.

Literature is the form of human creativity consisting of idiom, feeling, idea, spirit and experience using the language as the medium and having positive impact on life (Warren & Wellek, 1986, p. 107). And According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, literature is any writing that is regarded as a work of art, particularly fiction, drama, and poetry (1995, p. 427).

In any literature work it is a must to have a character that present the ideas behind the work, a character is presumably an imagined person, animal or a thing, who inhabits a story, character is one important aspect because characters are built by the writer that has a function as a medium to introduce the reader to various characteristics of human beings, including negative characteristics as well (Kenney, 1983, p. 54).

1.Theory of Character and Characterization

Characterization is the method used by which a writer reveals a character's personality or the way in which that character is developed in the text, as contrasted to the phrase "character," which refers to a person or animal in a story.

1.1.1 Aristotle's Theory of Character

Aristotle defined the theory of character into three levels. In Aristotle's Poetics, it is possible to identify three distinct theories of character:

the first is the mimesis theory of character; the second is the theory of character levels; the third is the theory of character as theatrical mask.

The mimetic view of character suggests that a play such as Sophocles' Oedipus Rex achieves its power because the character of Oedipus is a representation of a real figure

from the annals of Greek history. As Aristotle says, "not many families provide subjects for tragedies" (Murphy, 2015, p. 13).

The second theory is the theory of character levels, Aristotle notes that characters may be better than are found in the world, or worse, or just the same. By extension, Aristotle contrasts the higher intellectual qualities of tragedy with the lower ones of comedy. The characters of tragedy tend to be better than are found in the world, motivated by higher claims of morality and action. As an example, the fact that Oedipus puts out his eyes when he is finally confronted with the terribleness of what he has done might be said to represent the action of a man of very high character (Murphy, 2015, p. 14).

While the third theory of character is called the character mask. The theoretical justification for this view of character may also be traced to the school of Aristotle. In Aristotle's work, there is a strong emphasis placed on the role of a general human nature to which everyone is subject (Murphy, 2015, p. 14).

Moreover, Aristotle defines tragedy and character by simply saying that the essence of tragedy does not consist in the portrayal of character by stating:

> A representation of a serious, complete action which has magnitude, in embellished speech, with each of its elements [used] separately in the [various] parts [of the play];[represented] by people acting and not by narration", In addition Aristotle defines character as :"the character" I mean that according to which we say that the people in action are of a certain sort. (Fergusson, p. 27)

Besides, Aristotle divides tragedy into six parts. He divided tragedy into plot, characters , diction , reasoning , spectacle and song. He said:

> so tragedy as a whole necessarily has six parts, according to which tragedy is of a certain sort. these are plot, characters , diction , reasoning , spectacle and song … consequently, the incidents, i.e. the plot, are the end of tragedy, and the end is most important of all(ii)…Again ,without action a tragedy cannot exist ,but without characters it may. So plot is the origin and at it were the soul of tragedy, and the characters are secondary. (Fergusson, p. 27)

In other words, we can assert that Aristotle promoted the primacy of plot over character in a plot-driven, this viewpoint narrative was reversed in the nineteenth century,

when the primacy of the character was established, resulting in a character-driven narrative.

According to Aristotle, "plot" and "the structure of the incidents" are considered the main part of tragedy:

> But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality. Now character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character; character comes in as subsidiary to the actions. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all... Besides which, the most powerful elements of emotional interest in tragedy--peripeteia or reversal of the situation, and recognition scenes--are parts of the plot. (Aristotle, 1961, p. 9)

Here Aristotle is not disparaging the importance of character development; he is asserting that the principle and the essence of tragedy does not require the depiction of character. For instance, epigram, a "lower" form than tragedy, can depict character but does not show character in motion. The portrayal of an action is linked with the essence of tragic situations, which an epigram could not require. That ability is what emphasize a tragedy as a tragedy; It is appropriate that the development of good plots is more difficult than the portrayal of good characters because it belongs to a higher level of the teleological development of literature. According to Aristotle, evidence for this can be found in both the accomplishments of early poets and the difficulty of building good plots. "The plot, then, is the first principle and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: character holds the second place" (Aristotle, 1961, p. 14).

In fact, there are other reasons why it is considered for plot to be more important than character, apart from purely literary. In Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics it is explained that, in real life, not just in literature, character is subordinated to action because it is the product of action; from our earliest days character is developed in specific directions by the nature of our actions, and a person's bent of character can be manifested only through his/her actions. Similarly, in drama, "character" in its full sense can only be manifested through action and must thus play a secondary role to plot. The superiority of

tragedy over other genres is undoubtedly due in part to this parallel between action and character in real life and in dramatic genres.

Aristotle compares the lack of a structuring action in character portrayal to the difference in painting between patches of colour and random and the superior organization of a sketch that represents something, even if it is colourless. "Thus, tragedy is the imitation of an action, and of the agents mainly with a view to the action" (Aristotle, 1961, p. 15).

Aristotle refers to the subjects of the action as "agents," not characters, a distinction that is maintained in narratological models up to Bal. The Poetics does not clearly define character, but at one-point Aristotle stated that "By character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents" (Aristotle, 1961, p. 6).

Character, then, is to be understood as "personality", "disposition" rather than "human being" (*personaje*) (*caracter*). It is not the entire personality, instead it is the behaviour to act virtuously or otherwise, as demonstrated by deliberate ethical intention (*proairesis*) (Aristotle, 1961, p. 9).

This is portrayed through both action and speech: thence the importance of "thought". In Aristotle's theory there is no place for an unconscious revelation of character. Only moral choice proves it. Aristotle had a place in his theory for bad characters and not-so-bad characters have a place in his theory expressing that "In respect of character there are four things to be aimed at. First, and most important, it must be good." Furthermore, he does not link virtue and happiness, as Socrates and Plato did. Aristotle defines tragedy as the vulnerability of external conditions of happiness, such as fortune and prosperity, rather than virtue. In any case, he does not mean absolute moral goodness, but rather the realization of each character's potential:

> This rule is relative to each class. Even a woman may be good, and also a slave; though the woman may be said to be an inferior being, and the slave quite worthless. The second thing to aim at is propriety…. Thirdly, character must be true to life…. The fourth point is consistency: for though the subject of the imitation, who suggested the type, be inconsistent, still he must be consistently inconsistent. (Aristotle, 1961, p. 1-4)

With these rules, Aristotle establishes the doctrine of decorum in characterization, as well as its ambiguous requirement that characters in literary works are required to be both like characters in life and in other literary works.

The final of the four requirements leads to a regress in infinitum, but it becomes clear from what follows that Aristotle is demanding a certain idealization of character, in the sense of simplifying how a character would act "according to the laws of necessity or probability, Aristotle said in the matter that "So too, the poet, in representing men who are irascible or indolent, or have other defects of character, should preserve the type and yet ennoble it. In this way Achilles is portrayed by Agathon and Homer" (Aristotle, 1961, p. 8).

Considering "character" in its modern sense (*personaje*) to be a requirement for tragedy. In this regard, Aristotle speaks not of "characters," but of actors. Being linked to many of the Greek tragedies, the name has a connotation of activities that does not accommodate with passivity and suffer. According to Aristotle, tragedy must centre on an active figure, the hero. He also believes that the chorus is subject to this rule and must be considered one of the actors. Therefore, the chorus must get involved in the action.

In addition to the general requirements of character, we've already mentioned some specific indications on tragedy actors. They must be men who are superior to the average. They must also be friends or relatives. Aristotle acknowledge that their belonging to a small group of mythical families is convenient, but it is not a necessary condition. As long as the poet meet the basic requirements, they are free to create and invent their characters.

According to Aristotle, the best way to generate pity and fear is through complex action, one that includes recognition, reversal, or both; in which a man who is not exceptionally good or simply falls into misfortune due to some error or frailty (hamartia). The character cannot be too bad therefore, the character downfall would not elicit terror or pity, nor can he be too good causing disgust rather than pity. So, hamartia does not necessarily mean "sin", but rather "error" or "unskillfulness" in current Greek usage. It may include sin and crime in Aristotle's Ethics, but the main sense is something like "rash

and culpable negligence". Aristotle appears to favour man's blundering against the supernatural, as seen in Oedipus Tyrannus.

However, it is more surprising that Aristotle ignores tragedy's religious significance. Insisting on the characters' conscious action leaves little room for them to be victims of fate, which Aristotle would consider an irrational element, alien to the plot itself. This attitude explains the connection between his poetic theory and the rest of his philosophy, in which traditional beliefs have no place. The stories about the gods are important to him only insofar as they show what men think about the gods. Neglecting his theory for understanding Greek tragedy, despite its originality as a purposeful and ideological theory. "At the center of the Poetics." according to Stephen Halliwell, "we see the results of a confrontation between a confident rationalism and the tragic vision of the poets." (p. 237).

The Aristotelian concepts remain to this day on the centre of the narrative analysis. Besides, Aristotle also anticipated, in more or less intuitive ways, many other analytical distinctions such as: the notion of a basic sequence of narrative functions, the comparative analysis of time between the fabula and the story, the reader's construction of narrative, and so on.

Finally, traits are irrelevant, and they can only be seen when they are derived from action or events, i.e. people can change in response to certain actions. Briefly the entire work is controlled and composed by actions. Moreover, one of the most important principles is consistency, which means that the character is unchangeable from beginning to end. While it only presents one sort of character, the flat or static one, other types exist and contribute to the shifting narrative structure, taking into consideration that such a principle is not a certain rule or a general trend in Modern Literature. "The traits revealed by the speeches at the end of the play should be the same sort as those revealed by the speeches at the beginning" (Aristotle, p. 30).

In general, Aristotle's theory could not be used in our case, since the aim of the study is exploring the utilization and the development of character and characterization in S.K. Ali's *"Love from A to Z."*

2.1.2. Formalist and Structuralist View of Character

Aristotle defines tragedy as:

A representation of a serious, complete action which has magnitude, in embellished speech, with each of its elements [used] separately in the [various] parts [of the play];[represented] by people acting and not by narration", In addition Aristotle defines character as :"the character" I mean that according to which we say that the people in action are of a certain sort. (Fergusson, p. 27)

Surprisingly the perspectives of the Formalists and (some) structuralists in a striking way is similar to Aristotle's. They, too, argue that characters are plot products, explains this by saying: "...their status is functional, that they are in short participants or actants rather than personages, that it is erroneous to consider them as real beings" (Chatman, 1978, p. 111).

Moreover, the Formalists viewed the character excluding certain factors such as external psychology or moral standard, explains this by claiming that: "…they want to look at what characters do in a story, not what they are—that is, "are" by some external psychological or moral standard." (Chatman, 1978, p. 111).

Formalists ignored the inner reaction, feelings and morals and gave the analysis of the character a simple and superficial aspect by making the character influenced solely by external psychology and moral factors. The character is passive, a by-product of what happens, and has nothing to do with the plot. Vladimir Propp affirms his support for the aforementioned viewpoint, He claimed that stories are character driven, and that plots emerge from character decisions and actions, as well as the way they function in a story (1968).

Once again, it is clear that the literary genre can influence the focus. Propp (1968) is influenced by fairy tale narratives, which can contain similar elements to legends and tragedies, where plot is priority in such works. Figuratively speaking, for Tomashevsky (1955), the character serves as a connecting thread, assisting us in orienting ourselves to the details. He contends that because the narrative appeals to the emotions and moral sense, the audience are required to share some type of interests and antagonisms towards

the characters. As a result, the story situation with its tensions, conflicts, and resolutions emerges. All of this represents the character's secondary position.

Propp stated that "Function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action" (Chatman, 1978, p. 114). Claiming that the function of the story is what leads to a simple and easy story analysis.

Moreover, Kenan Hence character functions serve as stable, consistent elements in a story. Henry James advocates for a balance between character and event:

> What is the Character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of Character?" He continues explaining that "Both character and event are logically necessary to narrative; the contemplation of character is the predominant pleasure in modern art narrative. (Chatman, 1978, p. 113)

Characters are given more interest and importance by Tordorov and Barthes. By 1966, Barthes has introduced the terms trait and personality, as well as the process of naming the character. He supports this idea, and he even believes that character and plot are cooperatively defining.

2.3. Chatman's Theory

Chatman (1978) offers a theoretical framework of character in which he considers character to be a single entity. He appears to support the modernist writer's method of creating lifelike and whole characters who remain in our memories. Chatman separates the plot (or event) into two components: character and setting (or existents).

Furthermore, Chatman perspective on character differed from the previous theories. He advocates an open theory of character. He recognizes characters as not "living people" and cannot be equated with words. Chatman's open theory of character sees characters as separate and independent beings, not as simple plot devices.

So, if we must view characters apart from the plot, what do we do when we come across a character in the story? Chatman claims that we create a character by assembling personal qualities that can be extracted from the story's external features such as the

character's name, family, actions, thoughts and speech, and what is said about him by the narrator and other characters.

In this way, we begin to form an image of the character, which can be described as "a paradigm of traits", according to Chatman's perspective, a trait is considered "relatively stable or binding personal quality" (Chatman, 1978, p. 126).

Some traits may exist at the start of the story and then vanish and be replaced by others.

Chatman (1978) elaborates on traits, claiming that they are psychologically distinct because they are derived from feelings, moods, thoughts, motives, attitudes, and the like.

According to Phelan (1989), Character is a literary element that consists of three components:

> The mimetic, synthetic and thematic. The mimetic means the image of the character as a real person. The synthetic component refers to the fact that a character is artificially constructed. While the thematic component concerns the way, the character can be used to represent an idea, a class, and a principle within the general meaning of the literary work. In fact, the three components are not equal all the time. It depends on the type of fiction. In realistic novels for instance the mimetic aspects are more prominent (Phelan, 1989)

A good Phelan and Chatman's theory has a strong point in that, they see the literary character as dynamic. Chatman is correct when he pointed out that we remember fictional characters vividly even if we don't remember a single word of the story.

From this point, how is the character reconstructed from the text?

Chatman (1978), who developed Barthes' view of character as "Personality traits" revealed that the character is constructed in a series of events that comprise a plot. Character is given some adjectives in linguistic terms.

Furthermore, to quote Roland Barthes, the proper name is an important factor in character construction. "Character is an adjective, an attribute, a predicate.... the proper name allows the person to exist outside of the apparent" (1974, p. 190).

1.1. Definition of Characterization

Characterization is the process by which a writer reveals a character's personality. It is also the art of creating characters for a story, including the process of conveying information about them. Characterization is the art that truly distinguishes modern fiction.

Characters could be introduced through description, actions, speech, or thoughts. "There are two basic types of textual indicators of character: direct definition and indirect presentation " (Kenan, 2002, p. 59).

This characterization method may be used differently by different authors or by the same author in different works or even within the same work.

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, the term characterization refers to "the artistic representation, as in fiction or drama, of human character or motives." Furthermore, Kennedy and Gioia define characterization as "a literary technique used to create, reveal, or develop characters; it aims at portraying imaginary figures whose personalities make the plot vivid and engage the readers with the story in a deep way" (111).

Aristotle introduced the concept of "characterization" in the mid-19th century, but he emphasized plot over character. As a matter of fact, every character in a story is considered a combination of personality traits ranging from the physical (hair colour, age, etc.) to the emotional (sense of humour, morality, etc.). What we are told about a character teaches us about them. Characterization is the process of learning about a character through his or her words, actions, thoughts, opinions, and other characterization techniques.

To summarize, characterization is a method used among authors to describe characters in a specific literary work so that readers could perhaps understand the

characters and acknowledge their personal qualities in the story. Characterization is important as it serves as an essential component of creating a story. To keep readers interested in the character, they must appear real. The author accomplishes this by portraying them as real people. A good characterization gives the readers a strong sense of the personalities and complexities of the characters. It brings the character to life and makes him or her believable.

1.2. Characterization Techniques

How does the text inform us about characters? The purpose of characterization techniques is to allow readers to form a mental construct about a character. Many factors must be considered, including how the character is described, by whom, how characterization is distributed throughout the text, how reliable the amount of information is, what we learn about a character's inner life, and the arrangements of contrasts and correspondences in which the character is depicted.

1.2.1. Explicit and Implicit Characterization

According to Kenan (2002) there are two possible methods an author can convey information about a character: direct (Explicit) characterization and indirect (implicit) characterization (2002, p. 59).

One of most obvious method of characterization is when the author explicitly tells the readers what a character looks like, by naming the trait, using an adjective i.e. he was good hearted or an abstract noun i.e. his goodness knows no bounds, or a part of speech i.e. he loves only himself. This can be done by the narrator (known as authorial characterization), the characters themselves (known as self-characterization), or other characters (known as figural characterization).

In contrast, in indirect (implicit) characterization, the reader must infer what the character is like based on traits revealed indirectly, such as their thoughts, actions, speech, appearance, environment, and interactions with other characters, including other characters' reactions to that character. According to Kenan, implicit characterization is the most indeterminacy preferred today.

Kenan proclaimed concerning actions the trait that "one time actions tend to evoke the dynamic aspect of the character often playing a part in a turning point in the narrative, by contrast habitual actions tend to reveal the character unchanging or static aspect often having a comic or ironic effect…" (2002, p. 61).

Speech can be indicative of a trait or traits, whether in conversation or as a silent mental activity; it can also be indicative of origin, residence, social class, or profession. Kenan claims that "action and speech convey character traits through a cause and effect relation, which the reader deciphers in reverse x killed the dragon, therefore he is brave; y use many foreign words, therefore she is a snob" (2002, p. 65).

The same goes for a character's external appearance (look) and environment, such as her dirty dress and room, which not only express but also result from her depression. Kenan contends that narrative fiction has used external appearance to imply character traits since its inception, influenced by Lavater's theory, which later examined portraits of various historical figures as well as people of his time to demonstrate the relationship between facial features and personality traits, focusing on Balzac and other nineteenth-century authors. Many writers use this technique, such as her intelligent eyes instead of she is intelligent.

The environment (room, house, street, town, which is called physical surroundings or family, social class, which is called human environment) is used as a trait connoting metonymy. Hippolyta Taime (1978), a philosopher and historian, developed the theory of race, moment, and milieu. Chatman also emphasizes the importance of setting in the narrative: "characters exist and move in a space which exists abstractly at the deep narrative… sowed can distinguish the character from the setting in a story" (1978, p. 138)

Moreover, sociological theories developed in the last 150 years proposed that character is determined by one's social background and milieu. Since the late nineteenth century, novelists have used this idea to create characters whose personalities are entirely shaped by their surroundings. In other words, there are two main ways to present a character. Gellet and Valentine (2005) suggested telling and showing, for telling it is stated that "the author tells us about the characters, their ideas, their motivations, etc." for

explaining more, Gellet and Valentine exclaimed that "we see the characters behaving and talking, and draw our own conclusions from this" (2005, p. 12).

1.2.2. Block Characterization

Essential information about a character can be given in a block characterization, which is usually given when the character is first introduced. For complex and dynamic characters, the reader gathers inputs piecemeal throughout the narrative (Gellet & Valentine, 2005).

1.2.3. Reliability

If characters describe themselves (self-characterization) generally the reader treats their opinion by care, because may be their self-proclaimed opinion was given for purposes and it can be non-honest. Characterization by others is also untrustworthy

because it can be influenced by differences in appearance or given for ulterior motives. When evaluating the information received about a character, one must consider the dependability of the characterization's source. A characterization provided by a character whose reliability the reader has reason to doubt will not be accepted at face value; it becomes untrustworthy.

Narration in contrast to self-characterization and characterization by other characters, characterizations given by the narrator are usually assumed to be reliable, and the reader tends to believe the narrator's characterizations more readily than others (Gellet & Valentine, 2005).

1.2.4. Inner Life of Character

The reader will become acquainted with a character according to the details given about this character. The more he understands about a character's thoughts an emotional-responses, such as interior monologue, psycho narration, narrated monologue, or free indirect discourse, the more he empathizes with the character.

Furthermore, Bennett and Royle (1986) argue that a person has two sides: inside and outside, which affect each other, and that to know a person, you must decipher the outer appearance as well as the character's inner thoughts and feelings.

1.2.5. Contrasts and Correspondences

Characters can be classified and defined by comparing and contrasting them to other characters. For example, two characters who are exposed to similar conflicts and problems might indeed correspond on some level, but they respond differently. Such contrasts and correspondences give the reader more information about the character.

By the narrator	Explicit: character description or comment	
	implicit: report of character's actions and/or thought, description of outward appearance and circumstances, contrasts and correspondences	
By a character	by another character	explicit: description or comment; simultaneously implicit self-characterization
		implicit: as implied by choice of expression and description of appearance and circumstances
	self-characterization	explicit: description or comment
		implicit: use of language or gesture, expression, attitudes unconsciously expressed, characteristic props

Table 1.1 Characterization Techniques (Adopted from Lethbridge and Mildorf 1990).

1.3. Narration

According to Chatman, narrative is a structure made up of narrative statements (1978, p. 31). While Kenan defines narrative fiction as "the narration of a series of fictional events (1983, p. 2).

The word narrative derives from the Latin verb narrate, which means to recount. Cuddon (1998) stated that narrative exists in novels, short stories anecdotes and biographies. The narrative is divided into two categories: fictional narrative and non-fictional narrative. It also has many themes and genres, such as personal experience narratives, biblical narratives, and so on (1998, p. 533-535).

Narration is the behaviour of telling a story. It also has more than one meaning when considering the term. Narration is the fiction writing mode in which the narration wants to communicate directly to the reader.

Genette (2009) described narration as the story's voice in which the narrator tells the story to the readers (Hühn, Schmid, & Schönert, 2009).

A verb can be either active or passive in terms of voice. In a general context, voice indicates the subject's and verb's connection to the action that the verb expresses. The narrator is the first speaker of a narrative, and it is also known as the voice of the narrative discourse. If the narrative's content is related to real-world events and people, the narrative is known as a "personal experience narrative," because it is told by one of its characters. Furthermore, as Cuddon (1998) acknowledged, there are different types of narrators (Cuddon, 1998).

1.3.1. Point of View

The point of view is the angle from which the story is told or described; the grammatical person's perspective from which the story is seen. The author can tell the story from four different points of view: first person, second person, third person limited, and omniscient. The third person and first person are both common, but the second person is rarely used. as the protagonist's voice in the story.

Genette (2009) affirms that the narration is consisted of one or several points of view, called also homes of enunciation. Genette focuses on three main points of view that can alternate with in the same narration and structure the focalization which are: the zero focalization (means the narrator knows more than the character), internal focalization (means the narrator knows equal as the character) and external focalization (means the narrator knows less than character) (Hühn, Schmid, & Schönert, 2009).

Genette (2009) distinguishes between a homodiegetic narrator, who is a character in the story, and a heterodiegetic narrator, who is not a character in the story but in some way knows everything about it. He declared that If the homodiegetic narrator is also the protagonist of the narrative, it is an auto diegetic narrator (Hühn, Schmid, & Schönert, 2009).

Marcus and Hartner (2014) defined another type of perspectivity which is Multiperspectivity, they clarified that it is a term used to describe when narration is done from more than one point of view. They stated:

> the arguably most common usages of the term refer to multiperspectivity either as a basic aspect of narration or as a mode of storytelling in which multiple and often discrepant viewpoints are employed for the presentation and evaluation of a story and its storyworld. In the contexts of both definitions, the perspectival arrangements in multiperspective narratives may fulfil a variety of different functions; mostly, however, they highlight the perceptually, epistemologically or ideologically restricted nature of individual perspectives and/or draw attention to various kinds of differences and similarities between the points of view presented therein. In this way, multiperspectivity frequently serves to portray the relative character of personal viewpoints or perspectivity in general. (Hühn, 2014)

1.3.2. Narrative Discourse

Plato distinguishes between two main types: mimesis, which is the direct presentation of speech and action, and diegesis which is the verbal representation of events. This distinction was adopted by Aristotle and Henry James in their distinction between showing and telling.

Showing, also known as scene, expands and describes details across a large space on the page. Because showing allows the reader to experience the plot line alongside the

narrator, this technique is essential for describing significant details and events. While telling is a technique known as summary takes details (or revealing information) and describes them in a small space on the page.

Mimesis is most commonly used in drama and film because it primarily consists of direct presentation of speech and action. Narrative prose and poetry, on the contrary side, are necessarily limited to verbal representation. Even in narrative prose and poetry, degrees of mimesis and diegesis can be differentiated into four main narrative modes (technique) Comment on speech report-description. Telling and showing are defined by Grellet and Valentin (2005) as telling when the narrator relates to what happens through the character's words while showing is when the narrator presents the character's words without explaining. They said:

> telling: the narrator himself relates what happens through description, summary or commentary of the character's words, attitude or action" and "...showing: the narrator only presents the word and gestures of the characters without explaining their motives and thought. The reader draws his own conclusion. (2005, p. 15)

1.3.3. Speech

Direct Speech is the most mimetic narrative mode is direct speech. Speeches are typically delivered in this manner.

Leech and Short (1981) defined direct speech by stating that "when one used direct speech to report what someone has said on quotes the words used verbatim" (1981, p. 318).

Whereas their definition of indirect speech is: "in indirect report one expresses what was said in "one's own words"(1981, p. 318).

Furthermore, direct speech is often introduced by a reporting phrase also known by inquit formulas. Direct speech is normally denoted by quotation marks or other forms of punctuation, occasionally by a dash (or simply by the start of a new paragraph). In direct speech it is better to use present tense as its main tense and uses tense of the first person

when the speaker is referring to him –or herself or when the second person when other participants of the conversation are addressed. The use of sociolect or dialect also serves to indicate spoken language.

Moreover, in the indirect speech the original utterance's tense shifts from present to past, from past to past prefect, and references to the first person are represented in the third person. All of this may be found in any average grammar book. The effect of indirect speech can be viewed as rather monotonous, and it certainly creates a gap between the utterance and the reader's impression of it. Direct speech is more immediate.

1.3.4. Report

The report mode provides the reader with information concerning events and acts in the story, for example: i.e.:

He promised to return.

He promised to visit her again.

Narrator commentary is regularly mixed in with the reports.

1.3.5 Description

It is a narrative mode that portrays objects in space that seem to be the existents of the story, things that can be seen, heard, or felt. Some cautious classical rhetoric distinguishes between:

- The description of place.
- The description of time.
- The description of character.

1.3.6. Comment

The mediator (i.e. the narrator) is most noticeable in the narrative mode of comment. In this style, we discover evaluations of the story's events and characters, as well as general remarks or judgments. Such evaluations can be fairly explicit.

1.3.7. Unreliable Narrator

There are several reasons why a reader could be inclined to distrust what a narrator says. then not all narrators are equally credible. Some narrators just do not know enough to provide an accurate account of what occurred (speculation narrator is never entirely certain), considering the information acquired by the reader unreliable.

1.4. Definition of Character

The term character is used to refer to the person or actor in a story. The novel's story will come alive with the presence of the characters complete with the various conflicts they face. Characters or characterizations will be interesting if there is an action or reaction caused by the character (Santika, 2018).

Therefore, The story characters should seem real so the story itself would be real to the reader, using the method of characterization.

Characterization is the information the author gives the reader about the characters themselves; the author can expose a character in a variety of ways, including his/her physical appearance, what he/she says, thinks, feels, and dreams, what he/she does or does not do, and how other people react to him/her.

A character is a person who appears in a literary work such as a novel, poem, or play (Barnet, 1988). A story usually has numerous characters, one or more of which is the main character. One or more of these characters appears as the main or principal character. Characters are people who appear in a piece of narrative prose or a novel and are understood by readers as having moral qualities and particular tendencies, which are expressed in what they say and do (Abrams, 1982).

Moreover, a character is a person who can contribute to a story in a variety of ways (Dickinson, 1996). In his book, Aspect of The Novel, Foster differentiates flat character from round character. A flat character has a constant trait, which indicates that it does not change from the beginning to the finish of the story. Meanwhile, a circular character is

evolving, which indicates that there will be a variation in the character at the conclusion of the story (Foster, 1954).

In his work on psychology, Aristotle describes character as "habitual behaviour" this means a person is what he usually does.

Both Forster (1927) and Chatman (1978) argue that characters are persons who simulate reality and represent genuine behaviours, sentiments, etc. Forster adds by stating that "since the actors in a story are usually human, it seemed convenient to entitle this aspect people. other animals Have been introduced, but with limited success" (p. 54).

Chatman (1978) argues that a story has been said on events (plot) character appears to be neglected element in literary history and criticism. (p. 107), the absence of an articulate and comprehensive theory of character is partly due to Aristotle's idea that character is fixed and secondary to plot. Whereas, Bennett and Royle defines characters by stating that "characters are the life of literature: they are the objects of our curiosity and fascination, affection and dislike, admiration and condemnation" (p. 60).

Furthermore, Aristotle suggested that characters are secondary while Bennett and Royle claimed them the life of literature. In the other hand, Henry James view was that both characters and plot are equal in the importance and mutually defining (p. 60).

According to Abrams, characters are extremely important elements in the story, characters in term of meaning are the persons presented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say the dialogue and what they do – the action (1981, p. 2).

According to Stanton in the Abrams common use of characters in the story that, the first is introducing the character in the story as an individual providing them with a given name. While the second is that the character refers to a repertoire of interests, emotion, and morals that make up each individual (character) (1965, p. 17).

According to Hugh Holman and William Harno, character is a complicated term that includes the moral constitution of the human personality (1986, p. 51).

Finally, we can assume by the way a character is portrayed, that character is a portray of the creation itself, and within the literary works, character is an imagined person who inhabits a story, having the aspects of being believable and consistent.

1.5. Character Functions

Describing a character alone is insufficient to reach the purpose of analysis; we need to look at a character's function in the narration and the interaction between a character and other characters before we can ask the question:

What function do characters have in the narrative?

Any work of fiction contains a variety of characters: major characters and minor characters. When there is only one, he is called protagonist, Cuddon stated that "the first actor in a play, thence the principle actor or character" (1998, p. 706). The protagonist is the character who dominates the narrative. So, the protagonist is the main struggler in the story. In some narratives the protagonist has opposition by what is 23 called the antagonist. The latter may be one or a group. Cuddon (1998) also defined the term antagonist saying that "in drama or fiction the antagonist opposes the hero or protagonist" (p. 706).

Any work of fiction contains a wide variety of characters, both major and minor. Cuddon stated that "the first actor in a play, thence the principle actor or character" (1998, p. 706). The protagonist is the main figure in the story. As a result, the protagonist is the primary character in the story. In some stories, the protagonist is challenged by what is known as the antagonist. The latter could be a single person or a group. Cuddon (1998) defines antagonist as "in drama or fiction the antagonist opposes the hero or protagonist."

Minor characters supplement the primary characters and assist propel the plot ahead; lesser characters can also function as witnesses.

Minor characters can also end up serving as confidants, i.e. close friends to whom the protagonist can communicate inner thoughts and secrets.

1.6. Kinds of Character

Foster's categories of flat and round characters are among the earliest and most widely recognized classifications of characters in literary criticism. Smaller characters are usually two-dimensional and static. This means that such characters have only a few or even just one characteristic or trait and there is little or no development throughout the narrative (Bennett & Royle, 1986, p. 62).

Foster refers to these characters as "flat" because they have the aspect of memo-dimension and static. He says: flat characters were called "humours" in the seventeenth century, and are sometimes called "types" and sometimes " caricatures". When there is more than one aspect in them, they are built around a single notion or characteristic; we get the beginning of the curve towards the round. (Foster, 1927, p. 73)

Forster contends that a flat character has one thought or characteristic, and that the more he becomes a round character, the more benefits flat characters have. For starters, they are quickly detected by the emotional eye rather than the visual eye. Second, because they do not alter throughout the narrative, they are easily remembered by the reader. Major characters, on the other hand, are frequently multidimensional and dynamic. Forster stated that "it is only round people who are fit to perform tragically for any length of time and can move us to any fooling except humour and appropriateness" (p. 77).

Forster argues that flat character has one idea or quality if more he become round character; Forster gives advantages to flat characters. First, they are easily recognized, by the emotional eye not by the visual eye. Second, they are easily remembered by the reader because they do not change during the narrative. On the other hand, major characters are more frequently multi-dimensional and dynamic. Foster defines round character as: "it is only round people who are fit to perform tragically for any length of time and can move us to any fooling except humour and appropriateness" (p. 77).

According to Forster (1927), round characters are complex characters with numerous attributes (quality, concept) that might grow during the course of action. Forster use criteria to determine whether the character is flat or round. He adds about the criteria of surprising and convincing the reader that "the test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way. If it never surprises, it is flat. If it does not convince, it is flat pretending to be round" (Forster, 1927, p. 81).

Rimon Kenan criticized Forster ideas, he stated that Forster's psychological classification has scope but is still overly reductionistic, because not every character would fit into any of his categories. He stated referring to the views about the aforementioned: Forster's distinction is of pioneering importance, but it also suffers from a few weaknesses: The term "flat" suggests something two-dimensional, devoid of depth and "life," while in fact many flat characters, like those of Dickens, are not only felt as very much "alive" but also create the impression of depth. The dichotomy is highly reductive, obliterating the degrees and nuances found in actual works of narrative fiction. Forster seems to confuse two criteria which do not always overlap. According to him, a flat character is both simple and undeveloping. Although these criteria often co-exist, there are fictional characters which are complex but undeveloping and others which are simple but developing. (Kenan, 2002, p. 40-41)

According to Aristotle, there are two types of characters flat and static. In contrast, some critics classify Sophocles and Euripides' characterization in the ancient novel, claiming that even though novelists occasionally draw from chain comedy, they also create unique types of characters. Some characters are given personal features, such as a name and the novelist eventually make psychological remark beyond the stereotypical categories "good" and "bad" there by establishing the figure with a true psychological existence that comes close to ordinary people.

Furthermore, character growth through suffering is a common theme in the ancient book; some protagonists are not the same people at the end of the story as they were at the beginning.

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┌──────────┐                    ┌──────────┐
│   Flat   │                    │  Round   │
└──────────┘                    └──────────┘
   ↙    ↘                          ↙    ↘
┌────────┐ ┌──────────────┐  ┌─────────┐ ┌────────────┐
│ Simple │ │ Undevelopming│  │ Complex │ │ Developing │
└────────┘ └──────────────┘  └─────────┘ └────────────┘
    ↓          ↓                  ↓            ↓
┌────────┐ ┌────────┐  ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────────────┐
│  One   │ │        │  │ Many qualities│ │Surprises and convinces│
│quality │ │ Static │  │    Depth      │ │Readers, alive, and    │
└────────┘ └────────┘  └──────────────┘ │      dynamic          │
                                        └──────────────────────┘
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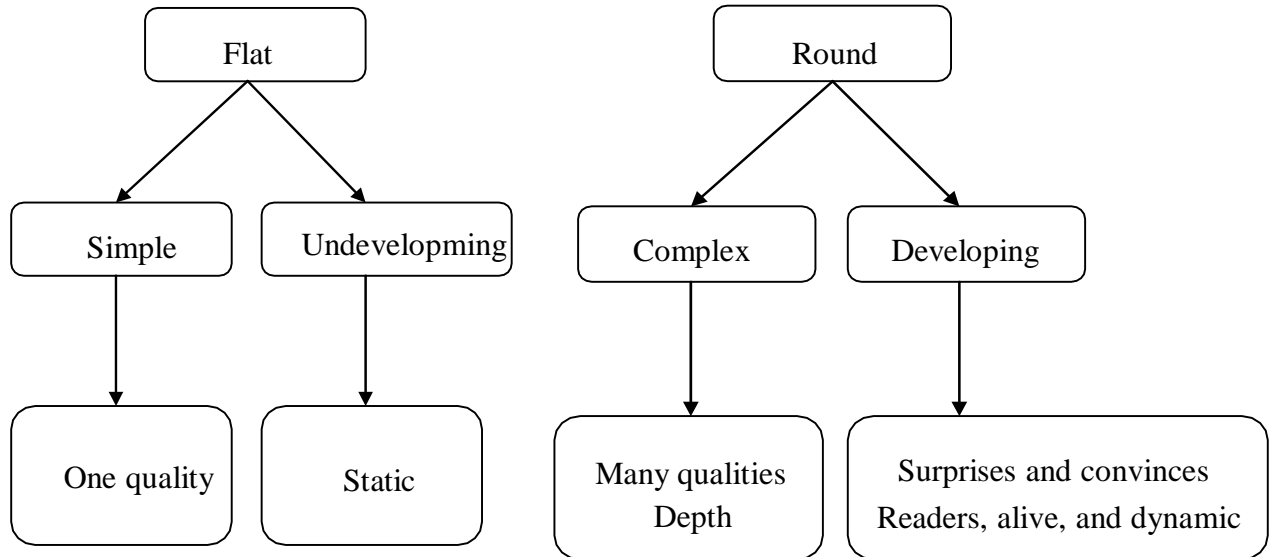
Table 1.2 Recapitulation of Forster's Classification of Characters

```
┌──────────┐                    ┌──────────┐
│   Flat   │                    │  Round   │
└──────────┘                    └──────────┘
   ↙    ↘                          ↙    ↘
┌────────┐ ┌────────────┐  ┌─────────┐ ┌─────────────┐
│ Simple │ │ Developing │  │ Complex │ │ Undeveloping│
└────────┘ └────────────┘  └─────────┘ └─────────────┘
```

```
                ┌──────────┐
                │   Flat   │
                └──────────┘
                   ↙    ↘
         ┌───────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐
         │   Create the  │ │ Very much alive│
         │impression of  │ │                │
         │    depth      │ │                │
         └───────────────┘ └────────────────┘
```

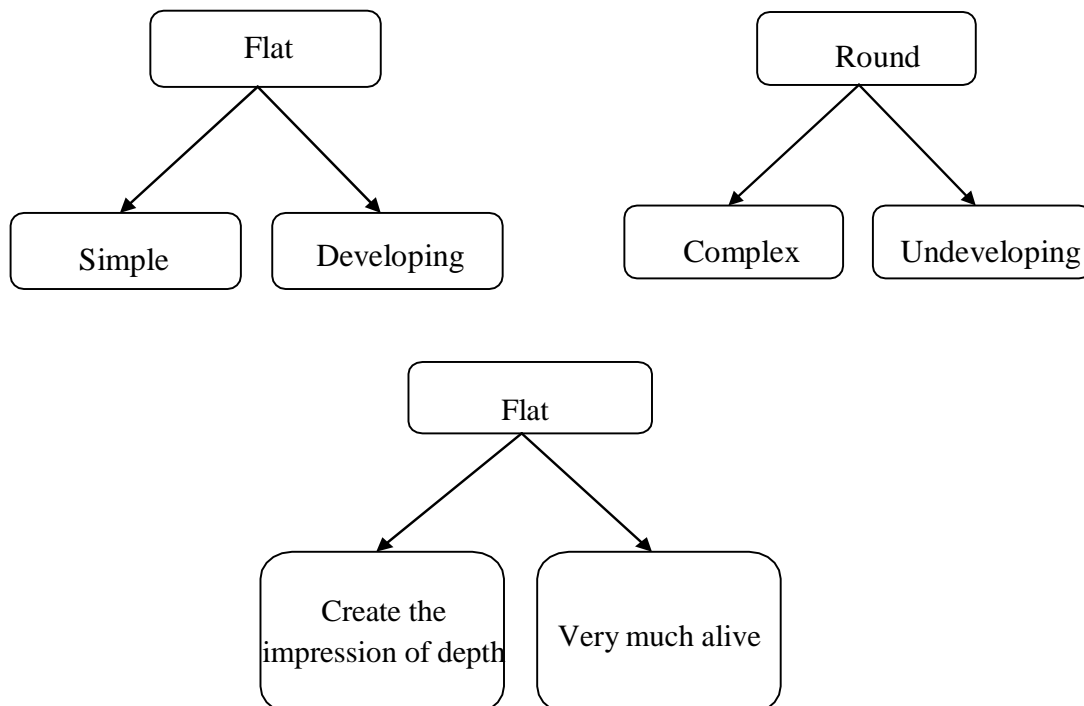**Table 1.3 Recapitulation of Kenan's Exception of Forster's Classification of Characters**

2.1 Muslim Character Representation in Modern Literature

Modern Literature is no exception to the canon of literary traditions that have included works of literature interested in religious topics for many years. Modern literary works aims to reflects society and the struggle of the individuals within the society as literature is considered as reflection of beliefs and a type of product of a social, political, and cultural views.

For instance, Muslim writers share the struggle of society from a Muslim person experience by producing literary works with Muslim characters that reflect and mirror Islamic values, and have a sense of relatability and representation of the Muslim people, in attempt to depict them as individuals and depicts their struggle within a society. The representation of Muslim characters in any literary work requires following a set of rules to create a portray of Muslim people without falling in the trap of lack of representation or Islamophobia.

In representing Muslim character in Modern literature Said declared in his book Orientalism in 1978 Said stated:

> In newsreels or news- photos, the Arab is always shown in large numbers. no individuality, no personal characteristics or experiences. Most of the pictures represent mass rage and misery, or irrational (hence hopelessly eccentric) gestures. Lurking behind all of these images is the menace of jihad. Consequence: a fear that the Muslims (or Arabs) will take over the world (p. 287).

Muslim character representation could encounter a type of stereotype and generalize to a certain extent by embodying the negative image and associating it with Muslim characters like how some writers did as they claim that this category of people which are Muslim people is only responsible of the heartless, merciless, and aggressive acts.

Updike in his novel *Terrorist* (2006) depicted a Muslim character by portraying it as a person who is engaged in terrorist acts and the Quran encourages Muslims to practice violence. DeLillo in his work *Falling Man* (2007) tries to show Muslims as very bad and ugly in terms of attitude, appearances, and way of thinking. In addition to many other

writers and novelists, every writer of these is trying to worsen the image of Muslims using his own way and story.

Muslim character representation in Modern Literature could be stereotyped or created far away from the values of Islam that a Muslim follows or Islam holds. Since Muslim people have an identity that exception them from the others, depicting a Muslim character could encounter an issue of Islamophobia by identifying the Muslim characters as bad characters or representing them as Muslim characters that have no relation to the Islamic values or rules that a Muslim should follows.

Although Islam and Muslim character could encounter a type of misrepresentation in literary works, still there exist several writers who undermined and created a Muslim character that have acceptable representation and portray of Muslim people and Islam through their writings.

2.1.1 Muslim Identity

Muslim people are meant to act in a certain way and have a specific lifestyle following the rules and values of Islam. To follow a specific requirements and principles Muslim people regard as a source of information only the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Prophet (Hadith) and descriptions of his way of life (Sunna).

Muslim people are obliged to follow a set of rules in their journey. For instance, Muslim people are required to follow what called the Five Pillars which are the five obligations that every Muslim must satisfy in order to live a good and responsible life according to Islam. Each of the five pillars is alluded to in Quran. Further insights concerning these commitments are given in the Hadith. Carrying out the Five Pillars demonstrates that the Muslims are putting their faith first, and not just trying to fit it in around their secular lives.

According to Zwemer that:

While, generally speaking, Islam means resignation to the will of God, Mohammed stated that it was, especially, to be submissive to His will in the observance of five duties. These five duties merit reward and are called "the pillars," or foundation, of

religion. Their pious observance is the mark of a true Moslem; to break loose from any one of them is to be in peril of damnation. Mohammed said: "A Moslem is one who is resigned and obedient to God's will, and (I) bears witness that there is no god but God, and that Mohammed is His Apostle; and (2) is steadfast in prayer; and (3) gives zakat (legal alms); and (4) fasts in the month of Ramazan; and (5) makes a pilgrimage to Mecca, if he have the means. (1909, p. 99)

The above quotation contains the pillars that Muslim people follows and try to act upon, which are believing in no God but Allah and his Prophet Muhammed as the last messenger, to pray which in Islam, Muslims pray facing Mecca five times a day: at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and after dark, Muslims can pray individually at any location or together in a mosque, where a prayer leader (imam) guides the congregation. Zwemer viewed that "…Mohammed used to call prayer the pillar of religion and the key of Paradise" (1909, p. 104).

Also, Muslim people donate money to those in need and fast during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, from sunrise to sunset. Pilgrimage which is interested in very Muslim whose health and finances permit it to make a visit to the holy city of Mecca.

Moreover, Muslim identity is also presented in the ways in which Muslim people are dressed modesty and covered. Islam addresses women and men equally. Women in Islam tends to wear a headscarf and modest cloths and the same goes for men; they are obliged to cover and not wear revealing cloths.

Naturally, the interaction between a man and woman in Islam is allowed if the Islamic rules are properly observed, those set of rules are originally created to protect both of them from any undesirable accidents. Mufti Menk stated that the interaction between both man and woman is allowed only while following rules such as lowering the gaze, having no lustful intention, meeting in public and with the present of a third parties (Mindset, 2020).

2.1.2 Islamophobia

Islamophobia is the hatred towards Muslims and the fear of Islam that could be done in different ways whether it is physical or verbal violence. In 1997, the publication

of the Runnymede Trust defined Islamophobia as "the shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam – and, therefore, to fear or dislike all or most Muslims" (Trust, 1997).

According to the same report, Islamophobia has four interconnected dimensions which influence the standards and practices against Muslims. These dimensions are: prejudice, verbal and physical violence, discrimination and exclusion (Trust, 1997).

Allen stated that the term Islamophobia has a recent history when it is used to indicate an attitude of non-acceptance and discrimination against the population of the Muslim community in the "West" which is in the United Kingdom around the late 1980s or the early 1990s (Lopez, 2011). Islamophobia may be defined as a non-acceptance attitude towards Islam, groups of Muslims, and individuals of Muslims based on stereotypes and prejudices (Stolz, 2005).

Various reasons and factors could be indicated as the cause of Islamophobia. Some of the causes are the turning point 9/11 incident or the WTC tragedy in New York, the 7/7 attack in London, honor killing by people of Muslim majority countries and other violent events in the name of Islam leading people to assume and have negative stereotyping of Islam as not a good religion. Islam is portrayed as a religion and culture that implement violent, lunatic, and uncivilized values due to the 7/7 attack (Shaw, 2012).
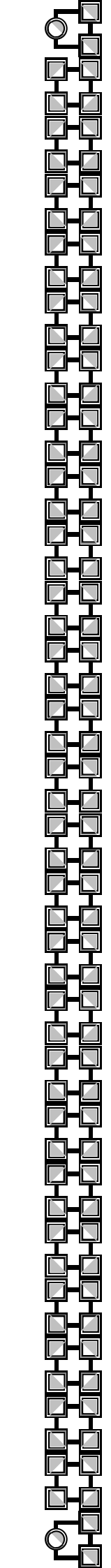
In literature Islamophobia can be seen in the ways in which some Muslim characters are depicted as a dangerous or bad character. A way to understand this is provided by Said (1978) who claims that "Orientalism can also express the strength of the West and the Orient's weakness—as seen by the West" (1978, p. 45).

It can also be seen in creating a Muslim character that is formed as a bad character and along the way it develops into a good character only when it goes against Islam or stop following the rules or the values that identify a Muslim.

Conclusion

To sum up, the presented chapter of the study has introduced different literary theories that suggested different definition of characterization and character, this chapter

has founded that Aristotle, the formalists, and the structuralists all subordinated character to plot. They believed for an open theory of character, in which they saw characters as autonomous individuals whose attributes the reader must discover throughout the narrative. While characterization is the character traits that distinguish each character from each other. Followed by an explanation of characterization techniques and character types. The chapter also includes a brief overview of Muslim identity and Islamophobia aiming at understanding the representation of Muslim character in Modern Literature.

Chapter Two: Corpus Analysis: Investigating the Image of Muslim Characters in S.K. Ali "Love from A to Z"

Table of Contents

Introduction

Literature is a form of human creativity and a living proof of the ideas, feeling, spirit of any time and place. Literature works can be used as a reflection of the living condition where the literary work was made, with literature the reader can have an opportunity to delve and reincarnate into different stories and experience unusual situations, moreover literary works are source of life and moral teaching. This chapter is approached from a descriptive and analytical viewpoint, the chapter is an attempt to determine the characters in *"Love from A to Z"* by S.K. Ali and the ways they are portrayed and presented in addition to some interpretations. Different types of character and characteristic techniques are examined to understand how they operate; they will be analysed along the side with quotations from the novel to know their behind motive.

The novel is full of different subjects and topics that are approached by the characters. It contains some fact that is related to the writer religious background as a Muslim. In *"Love from A to Z"*, the author focuses on portraying different sides of being a Muslim or within a Muslim community, the struggle of self-control and self-discipline to maintain true to the values of the religion. The author wants to convey her impressions and opinions about Islam and Muslims to the audience.

3.1 Corpus Analysis

The novel is a character-driven story that mainly focuses on the thoughts and feelings of the characters; the work in this chapter is to trace the development of the protagonists, Zayneb and Adam, and the other characters. The analysis is mainly cantered around the characters journeys as Muslims. Moreover, the study explores and examines characterization tools and techniques, as well as the types of characters in the novel. It is better to mention that the novel got much attention from readers from Islamic backgrounds as much as non-Muslims because it contains some details about Muslims that non-Muslims are more likely interested in, yet the novel in the field of critic did not get much of attention or criticism.

S.K. Ali's novel idea was influenced by her visit to the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar. In a time when there was a hate train against Muslims online, she found it mesmerizing how the museum was full of living proof of Muslims civilizational contributions. She found the manuscript called "The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence" by Zakariya' al-Qazwini, and she was stuck by the title and the concept of how, in the 1200s, Zakariya' al-Qazwini was trying to see his world and capture it on pages. From there, she tried to depict the image of two people with opposite outlooks on life, capturing the marvels and oddities in their lives:

> The story idea came when I visited the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, at a time when there was a lot of online hate distilling Muslims into simplistic, rage-filled caricatures. I was standing in this museum full of the nuances of civilizational contributions of Muslims thinking, wow, I'm surrounded by all this art with so much depth and yet the way Muslims are understood in Western society is just a cartoonish caricature that doesn't make sense to how I live or how I was brought up. (Belkhyr, 2022).

The author attempted to build a story about journaling that is not entirely framed within the concept of marvels and oddities but includes distinct points of view from two very different people. She stated:

> The challenge was to not only frame the story I want to tell by marvels and oddity entries in a journal but also include distinct points of view from two very different people. First person is also always more candid, but then a journal entry goes a step further into being really revelatory, and I knew that the two characters would have challenges that we needed to go deeper to understand. (Belkhyr, 2022)

3.1.1 Biography of S.K. Ali

The Indian-Canadian author was born in South India and immigrated to Canada when she was three years old. She comes from a family of Muslim scholars and grew up among a Muslim community in North America. S.K. Ali loved reading books as much as writing, when she was eleven years old, she wrote her first complete story and decided to take writing more seriously and became an author. She graduated from York University with a degree in creative writing. She worked on a yearlong research paper that studied the depiction of Muslim women in popular culture ("#SJYALit"). Her thesis mainly discussed the negativity that encounters and surrounds female Muslim identity. However, after graduation, Ali focused on being a mother and pursued a career as a teacher in

Toronto. Until 2007, when she worked hard to land a literary agent to chase again her dream of being an author, in 2016 she sold her first book (Sterry, 2017).

Much of her work is inspired by or greatly influenced by her Islamic background. She had always been focusing on the issues that encounter Muslim people in society and the daily struggle, and more importantly, on the characterizations that emphasize Muslims. Expressing the importance of growing up within a Muslim society, S.K. Ali said:

> I grew up at a time when the Muslim community in North America was pretty small. My family was constantly going on trips to events, conferences, camps, and festivals that took place in the U.S. and Canada, so I had a pretty good understanding of aspects of North American "Muslimness"—it was in my system. (Stauffer, 2017)

S.K. Ali declared that she is not speaking on behalf of the Muslim community but that she is an "Own Voices" author, claiming she is only sharing her experiences as a Muslim woman in her works. According to S.K. Ali "'own voices' for her is someone who tells their own story from the perspective of someone who grew up knowing those communities, and of course there is going to be a lot of diversity within those experiences as well" (Gandhi, 2017).

In the aforementioned quote, S.K. Ali exclaimed that in the process of teaching the readers about her experiences with Islam, she is also trying to educate people about Islam and correct the false stereotypes and misunderstandings that some people hold towards the Muslim community. Her literary works are mainly focused on representing Muslim characters. She contributed by shining a light on Islam and Muslim characters; indicating the struggle that individuals go through on their journeys as Muslims in a society. She created and strongly contributed to the hashtag MuslimShelfSpace as a way to highlight and support other Muslim authors books. She exclaimed that:

> I'm trying to read as much of my MuslimShelfSpace as possible— these are titles featuring Muslim protagonists authored by Muslim writers. There's a dearth of such stories, and I'm committed to supporting the publishing industry as it seeks to change this state of affairs. (Cross-Blanchard, 2017)

On January 1, 2017, the hashtag MuslimShelfSpace launched, and many people supported it by trying to make space for Muslim authors on their shelves as a way to face the increase in Islamophobia. Also, readers contributed by sharing photos of books by Muslim authors on their bookshelves, aiming to encourage others to check out these books and participate in supporting diverse stories and writers. S.K. Ali keeps communicating through her official website with the people who enjoy reading her books and support her writing.

Furthermore, S.K. Ali exploits every little tool to show the ways in which the characters act and think in the story. Utilizing various literary forms and styles as well as the use of different characters in terms of culture, ethnicity, and religion Thus, the environment, family life, setting, narration, and so on reflect on their lives as Muslim characters or among the Muslim society. She utilized photographs and storyboards in creating her characters; she stated that "I'm a very visual person, so I used photographs to guide my writing. I also used storyboards and did character doodles" (Stauffer, 2017).

S.K. Ali's works have been quite appreciated by the readers. Her debut novel, Saints and Misfits (2017), won critical acclaim for its portrayal of an unapologetic Muslim-American teen's life. The novel was featured on several Best Teen Novels of 2017 lists, including those from Entertainment Weekly, Kirkus Reviews, and the New York Public Library. It was also a CBC Canada Reads 2018 longlist title and featured in The Globe and Mail, NBC News, The Huffington Post, Salon, Bustle, CBC Radio's the Next Chapter, The Social, The Morning Show, and other North American media. Much the same with her other literary works, she continues to be featured in several awards (Ali, 2022).

Novels

- *Saints and Misfits* (2017).
- *Love from A to Z* (2019).
- *Misfit in Love* (2021).
- *Love from Mecca to Medina* (2022).
- Picture books.

- *The Proudest Blue*, co-authored with Ibtihaj Muhammad, illustrated by Hatem Aly (2019).

Short stories

- *in Hungry Hearts: 13 Tales of Food & Love* (2019).
- *Once Upon an Eid: Stories of Hope of Joy by 15 Muslim Voices*, edited with Aisha Saeed, co-authored with various including, G. Willow Thompson, Hena Khan, Rukhsana Khan (2020).

3.1.2 Plot Summary of S.K. Ali's "Love from A to Z"

Each chapter of the novel is addressed from either Adam or Zayneb point of view; S.K. Ali constantly switches perspectives between the two protagonists; besides, each perspective of both protagonists is highlighted by their oddities and marvels. The novel starts off with the protagonists Adam and Zayneb and how they discovered the manuscript of "The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence," a book written by Zakariyya ibn Muhammad Al-Qazwini in 1275 AD. While Zayneb found the manuscript inadvertently online during her work on a research project, Adam saw it in person at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha. After getting the chance to see the book, and being inspired by the concept behind it, both Adam and Zayneb decided to start documenting their marvels and oddities in the book. This before even meeting each other, fate was connecting their dots. This fated relationship bloomed after unexpected circumstances led to their meeting along the way in the airport in Doha, Qatar.

The story of the novel begins with Zayneb, who was sent to stay with her aunt in Doha for two weeks as a "suspension vacation" after being suspended from school for writing a note about her Islamophobic teacher, Mr. Fencer. The note was seen by the administration as a "threatening note". On the other hand, Adam is on his way home to Doha after he stopped attending classes and found out he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, the illness that took his mother life. Nevertheless, Adam and Zayneb run into each other at the London airport on the plane; it was Adam who approached her and made the Islamic greeting "As-Salaam-Alaikum" on his way to the plane bathroom after he noticed that she has the same journal as him. Still, all his plans to have a decent talk with

her went to no avail, except the one about him being a Muslim since the age of eleven and Zayneb comparing him to her mother. Talking to her on the plane was also to no avail.

When they landed at the Doha, Qatar, airport, Adam was surprised to recognize his fourth-grade teacher and his mother best friend, Ms. Raymond. At the same time, Zayneb was greeted by her aunt, who is also Ms. Raymond. Fate crossed their paths, and they re-met unexpectedly at a gathering party, where Zayneb found out that Adam is the son of the head of the international school that her aunt works at, and after that, they made plans to spend time together to get to know each other in the Islamic way, where they should be accompanied by another person to keep it Halal. Adam school friends were also involved with their hangouts; those who stayed afterwards became Zayneb friends, as well as Adam family.

Meanwhile, Zayneb was battling from a distance with her friends, Kavi and Ayaan, collecting proofs and evidence of racism and Islamophobia to report her teacher, Fencer, to the school board and show his true face to the people. She was also dealing with her own little battles, whether they were about educating her new Doha friends about culture appropriation, embracing her hijab to the man at the pool that didn't like the way she was covered, or feeling replaced by Naomi, the girl that decided to join them in confronting Mr. Fencer. On the other hand, Adam was still keeping his illness a secret from his father and sister, but after the sudden numbness in his body, he was obliged to start his medical treatments at Zayneb's aunt house and find a way to tell everyone about his illness.

After a while, Adam decided to tell Zayneb about the journal that he shares with her and about his feelings. He invited her to go with him and his little sister Hanna to the exhibition of the Rare Jewels of an Empire. They both enjoyed their time. Adam took Zayneb to an exhibit hall where The Marvels of Creations and Oddities of Existing were. Unfortunately, Zayneb got a notification of her D on Mr. Fencer assignment. She was furious and so angry that she started swearing and speaking loudly about her situation with the Islamophobic teacher, making a big scene at the quiet place. Adam was shocked to see another version of Zayneb; he tried to talk with her about it, but his reaction to the whole situation was so different from Zayneb reaction that they exchanged harsh words,

and Zayneb stormed out of the scene after telling Adam how they are not meant to be together and that they are from different worlds, besides him being a coward for not telling his father about his illnesses, leaving Adam alone next to the manuscript that he thought once was the reason for their bond.

After the big fight, Adam gathered his courage and told his father about his MS and that he had stopped attending classes. He shared his thoughts about reaching his dreams of building and creating things and that he was willing to spend more time with his family. Adam father was sad to hear the news, but he supported his son decisions and decided to forget, move on from his wife death, and be strong for Adam sake. Meanwhile, Zayneb could not be upset about her fight with Adam for a long time because she received tragic news about the circumstances that led to her grandmother death and that she was killed by a drone strike. She also got rejected by UChicago University, but with the terrible news about her grandmother death, being rejected did not matter for Zayneb.

The days after, Zayneb was supported by Emmas and Adam friends, whom are now her friends. She also decided to deal with all the anger inside her about her Islamophobic teacher and the situation of her grandmother death smartly. Adam and Zayneb talked about their feelings within the limits of Islam, and Adam declared to Zayneb that he was ready to help her with her own mission to change things. At the same time, Zayneb expressed her support for Adam condition by conducting research about MS treatments, therapy methods, and more. After that she took the first step by introducing Adam to her mother as a friend. Naturally, Zayneb returned with her mother to the U.S. She bravely confronted Mr. Fencer in class, and she was backed by her classmates and her friends. With the evidence and proofs that Zayneb gathered while in Doha, Mr. Fencer is most likely to be fired.

Years later, Zayneb had her degree in political science, and Adam had already worked on six art installation projects around the Middle East. After a short engagement, Adam and Zayneb got married, and they ended their love story in Istanbul. After having enjoying their time in Istanbul, they visited the grave of the girl that got killed by her father and grandfather, the topic that Mr. Fencer presented to his class and got Zayneb suspended.

3.2 The Major Themes

The novel discussed a number of important themes like Islamophobia, prejudice, Halal romance, Muslim identity and social justice, including a few scenes that addresses chronic illness, cultural appropriation, grieving. S.K. Ali wants to present an idea about the journey of Muslim people in society and how they survive the difficulties they encounter daily. Also, their journey as Muslims attempting to stay honest to their values since integrity is an important essential for Muslims.

3.2.1. Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a major theme in the novel, as it is noticed, this theme covered the whole novel from the first chapters till the last ones. According to Stolz (2005), Islamophobia may be put under the definition of unacceptable act or attitude towards Islam or Muslim people based on stereotypes and prejudices. Stolz (2005) stated that "It is important to see that using a definition including stereotypes and prejudices has the effect of "pathologizing" Islamophobia: an Islamophobic person or institution is said to act on "false" assumptions. Definitions that try to circumvent the "pathological element" in stereotypes, prejudice or Islamophobia are generally not very convincing" (Stolz, 2005, p. 549).

The novel contained several scenes that portrayed Islamophobia, the opening scene that was demonstrated through the narration from the character Zayneb point of view, was a clear description of discrimination and Islamophobia towards her just because she was Hijabi girl, the opening scene was when she had to sit beside a hateful woman in the plane. The woman actions towards Zayneb revealed her Islamophobia, like how she angerly slammed her suitcase into the overhead bin and kept swearing at her. She herself says:

The woman seated beside me on the plane.

She swore under her breath when she saw me. Hijabi me. Muslim me, on an airplane.

She lifted her carry-on suitcase and slammed it into the overhead bin so hard, I was sure she damaged the wheels on it.

Then she rolled her eyes and whisper-swore again when I took a long moment to get up from my aisle seat to let her in. (Ali, 2019, p. 4)

In addition, the woman kept acting badly to annoy Zayneb and let her know that she is not pleased with her sitting beside her. Zayneb reacted politely to the hate and only smiled, she said:

> After Hateful Woman got into her seat, her actions were executed in staccato, each orchestrated to let me know she was mad at my presence. Setting her purse down on the floor, slam, snapping the seat pocket in front of her to punch her newspaper in, pow, pulling her seat belt strap from under her, yank.
>
> "I'm going to need to get up to go to the bathroom quite a bit, you know," she growled at me.
>
> Nice to meet you, too.
>
> "Okay," I said, smiling my smile of deadly politeness. I'd recently learned that smiling calm-evilly in the face of haters, well, stranger haters, gets them more inflamed. (Ali, 2019, p. 4-5)

To conclude, the woman hates reached the peak point when she demanded the flight attendant to change her seat because in her defence Zayneb was writing about her, in the end the woman got seated at the first class while Zayneb had to accept that the hateful women is the victim in everyone eyes at the flight, she said:

> When she saw the Arabic, I wrote in you, Marvels and Oddities, she pressed the flight-attendant call button incessantly. "Either I move or she does," she hissed at the attendant who came by.
>
> "She's threatening me. Writing something about me the whole time." The flight attendant, a guy with dark hair and white glasses, looked at me. "I'm just writing in my journal. I don't get how that's threatening," I offered.
>
> "Move me now." She began gathering her things. I swept my stuff together, put my tray up, and stood to let her pass. She stepped out in front of me, into the aisle, her eyes on other passengers, her head shaking hard in an attempt to solicit sympathy for her plight. (Ali, 2019, p. 26)

This quotation also strengthens the idea that the hateful woman is Anti-Arab since she felt threatened by the words written in Arabic personally, considering it another view of Islamophobia.

Before the Islamophobic experience with the hateful woman at the flight, Zayneb had an incident with her Islamophobic teacher, Mr. Fencer, he presented a case were a Turkish girl was killed by her father and grandfather for being friendly with several boys at the village. Mr. Fencer asked the student to compare cultures, specifically to compare any culture with the Islamic one, Zayneb corrected him that Islam is not a culture yet he clearly was trying to make it about Islam ""Well, technically you can do any culture you're familiar with. But you must do this culture, Turkish—or actually Islamic—as the comparing culture"" (Ali, 2019, p. 7).

He even did a comparison of women's rights around the world about Muslim women being oppressed:

> Sir, we came to the conclusion, with the chart, that certain countries were weaker at upholding women's rights."
>
> "And was there something that these countries had in common? Come on, people. Someone other than Mike?"
>
> "They were all Muslim?" said Noemi, a girl with long blond bangs covering her eyes. She was staring at Fencer with an expression at the intersection of Practiced Boredom and Mild Curiosity, Freshly Piqued. "Is that what you're saying?"
>
> Fencer jumped off the desk and awarded us with his you-got-it stance: hands on his corduroy hips, legs apart, face beaming. "Yes, or, to put it more precisely, you can say that it looks like the majority of those countries follow Islam. Anything else? Zee-naab?" (Ali, 2019, p. 9)

Being consumed with anticipation at getting her hateful teacher fired, Zayneb wrote a note with the hashtag EatThemAlive that expose people like him, and while she was going to add the fork to the knife, Mr. Fencer took the paper and reported her to the principal, turning the whole scene into Zayneb threatening him. Mr. Fencer also mentioned that the results of women's rights comparison around the world clearly shows that the countries that are weaker or upholding women's rights have something in common, which is being Muslims.

Zayneb explained how Mr. fencer was never trying to hide his Islamophobia; He clearly was showing his negative thoughts by bringing topics that only criticize Islam and Muslims, Zayneb explained by saying:

> She told me Fencer was an Islamophobe. That she'd had two classes with him — one in junior year and one first semester of this year—and, somehow, he brought an uncanny number of topics and discussions around to how Islam and Muslims were ruining the world. (Ali, 2019, p. 12)

Moreover, Islamophobia could be also done online loudly if the person is afraid from the people that are against it, for instant when Zayneb found a hate comment under a YouTube video that talk about a situation where a Muslim girl having her freedom from her abusive husband, Zayneb was suspicious from the username and after a good investigating she found out that it was Mr. Fencer account, Fencer commented by saying:

> Why don't you admit it? Your sister was treated the way she was because of Islam. Not because of your brother-in-law. Not because of Saudi Arabia. You're peddling the same thing that got her in trouble, hypocrite. Things won't change until you give up being Muslim. On your own or by other means. I vote for other means. (Ali, 2019, p. 305)

In another Islamophobic scene that Zayneb experienced, Marc, the pool guard, was annoyed that Zayneb was covered while swimming, indicating that she have to wear a proper swimwear, yet when Zayneb showed at the pool wearing a swimsuit for Muslim women that her aunt provided her, Marc was still disproving saying it doesn't meet the requirements and threatening them to complain to his connections, explaining that the phrase 'proper swimwear' for Marc is anything that does not cover the body and the hair, anything that is not connected to Muslims, clearly revealing his critical view on Muslims:

> "We have rules, Natasha." He put his hands on his hips. "This is a condominium complex catering to expats who like certain standards."

> "Oh, no, no." Auntie Nandy said. "Don't use that on me. I'm an expat from two backgrounds and both of those backgrounds, the American and the Caribbean one, are okay with Zayneb swimsuit. Tell me then—exactly which expats are you catering to?" Marc stared at her. (Ali, 2019, p. 152)

3.2.2. Prejudice

Prejudice is also one of the main themes tackled in the novel, as a definition, prejudice is a fault generalized belief, idea or attitude about a particular category of people, Conerly, Holmes and Tamang (2021) suggests that "Prejudice refers to the beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes someone holds about a group. A prejudice is not based on personal experience; instead, it is a prejudgment, originating outside actual experience" (2021, p. 296).

The Muslim characters in the novel were exposed to inaccurate judgement and prejudice just for showing signs of being a Muslim, examples of prejudice occurred in Zayneb point of view narration, when the hateful woman showed signs of being angry and annoyed that she had to sit next to a Hijabi girl, which equal a Muslim person. Moreover, the hatful woman demanded the flight attendant to change her sit, explaining that Zayneb was threatening her just by writing in Arabic in her journal.

"So to really freak her out, here, journal, have some Arabic words, written nice and big.

إن شاء الله" (Ali, 2019, p. 16).

The above quote is Zayneb expression of her own thoughts, although she is herself a Muslim, she still thought that writing an Arabic word could be a revenge for the hateful woman acts and attitude, and will absolutely freak her out and make her stressed, it shows that the prejudice of writing in Arabic which connect to being a Muslim is seen to be dangerous to the extent that it is noticed by the Muslim people themselves.

Despite the fact that Zayneb showed no indication or sign of protest towards the mistreatment, other passengers were gossiping about her as if they already judged her as a troublemaker or even terrorist. She expressed that:

> I clutched my things tighter to me and looked around again, at the passengers' faces—some blank, some frowning, some whispering—my stomach squeezing over and over. Most of them probably believed everything bad that they'd heard about Muslims, the headlines, the "news" stories, the online comments, the rumors.

Was there anybody on this plane who wouldn't look at me and think troublemaker? Or worse, terrorist? (Ali, 2019, p. 27).

In another scene, when Zayneb was prohibited to use the pool because of her swimwear, yet when her aunt gave her a swimwear for Muslim women, the pool guard Marc, who treated Zayneb badly from the beginning, seeing her as danger for being covered and dressed differently, he did not approve of her covered swimwear and tried to scare them by using his connection, which in response, Zayneb auntie said that '"You mean you have some members who are more prejudiced than others"' (Ali, 2019, p. 153).

3.2.3. Halal Romance

Halal Romance is another important theme that was highly noticed throughout the novel. Halal Romance or Halal dating as many call it, is a term used among young Muslims indicating the period that comes before the Islamic engagement, Halal Romance is bound to a certain rules that protect both the pair in their journey, it is important to know that this period does not take a long time, if the couple did not find the alluring aspects or characteristics they have to separate ways, yet, if they are equally in good terms, they should take it to the desirable step that they first wanted from this Halal dating which is marriage. The author assured to depict the Islamic aspects of romance in the characters relationships. For instance, at the very beginning of their relationship, Zayneb was stealing glances at Adam without his knowledge and it was the same situation for him, but then Zayneb reminded herself to lower her gaze and control herself, which is an Islamic mindset, she said:

"if my big sister, Sadia, were here with me, she would text, Lower your gaze like a good Muslim, Zu-zu" (Ali, 2019, p. 30).

The above quotation clearly shows that generally in Islam and for Muslim people, a good Muslim would lower their gaze and have a self-control over their desires.

As their relationship progressed, Adam and Zayneb kept meeting each other, always greeting each other with the Islamic greetings, "Assalamu Alaikum (Peace be upon you)" and "Waalaikum Assalam (And peace be upon you as well)." Yet they were always in an attempt to emphasize the Islamic values.

Mufti Menk, a global Islamic scholar, explained in that matter that Halal dating should be under the supervision of the parents, so the daughter or the son are protected from any type of abuse, as to protect the children from unwanted activities like kissing, hugging and all the intimacy that Islam approve after marriage. He also emphasizes that in Halal dating the couple can have a conversation with each other as exchange numbers but within all those activities there must be a third person, someone who will keep them under the right path, the Islamic way path (Mindset, 2020).

For instant whenever they decide to meet, Adam and Zayneb were most the time companied by people and in public when they are together. Here Adam asked Zayneb to spend the time together after both of them became aware of their own feelings towards each other, he said that "Hey do you want to come with me and Hanna and my Dad to the Museum of Islamic Art on Sunday? If I'm up to it?" (Ali, 2019, p. 177).

Here in the following quotation, it is clear that Adam emphasizes the Islamic rules in his relationship with Zayneb, he assured her that they are going to meet in public accompanied with people and that he will not do any physical intimacy with her until marriage. He said:

> Btw, I'll follow the rules. Like, we won't be alone. My dad's taking Hanna to play on the beach too. And I'll never touch you. Of course. I paused. Until you give me permission, I mean. Until your family does. Until everyone does, I mean. (Ali, 2019, p. 277).

The prioritize of the Islamic value of not having a physical intimacy until marriage was also mentioned in this passage from Zayneb point of view, she said:

> "'He reached his right hand forward and placed it on the teapot. "I'm going to pretend this is your hand. Because I want to touch it, but I'm not gonna, okay?"' (Ali, 2019, p. 309).

The last example of the ending of their Halal romance is the epilogue, Adam and Zayneb were able to have their physical intimacy without being careful about the Islamic values since they are in Halal relationship which is being married, as it was described that

"Then they met for real—heart, soul, and body—the summer of their katb el kitab, the summer they exchanged their vows, after a short engagement" (Ali, 2019, p. 332).

The whole chapter has examples of them doing activities such as kissing, hugging and being alone without them being obliged to be companied. For instance, Adam perspective where he said "Who knew kissing Zayneb would be such a problem while being necessary to my living healthily on this planet? As necessary as how I've learned to keep my MS attacks at bay?" (Ali, 2019, p. 332).

3.2.4. Muslim Identity

Muslim identity is another important theme for our study, it is a subject that S.K. Ali addressed and it can be noticed a lot throughout the whole novel, it is the ways in which some characters can be considered and identity as a Muslim character or not, we proceeded to select few examples. To determine that, characters have to act as Muslims and have appearance like Muslims, in the novel the female characters like Zayneb, her mother are described as Muslim women with hijab, other characters like Ayaan who does not wear hijab, are still identified as Muslims by actions more than appearance, Zayneb said talking about Ayaan that "He doesn't know what I know: that Ayaan is a devout Muslim who goes to the mosque more than Hijabi me. That she prays and believes and is on a million Muslim committees" (Ali, 2019, p. 13).

Other examples of Muslim identity are seen on the activities practised by some characters like praying, making Duaa or respecting Islamic values and references like stories about important figures in Islam. For example, using the Islamic greeting of "Assalamu Alaikum (Peace be upon you)" and "Waalaikum Assalam (And peace be upon you as well)."

Another example is doing the Islamic prayers 'Al Salat' by some characters, Zayneb mentioned doing her prayers after her first day with Adam group friends:

"after Fajr prayer on Saturday, but I looked through the pictures on my phone from last night to find him" (Ali, 2019, p. 60).

Also, activities like making Duaa or the prayer to Allah for the self or for someone else, for an example, when Hanna, Adam little sister, was repeating an Islamic Duaa after praying with her father and brother: "She was repeating the words of the prophetic prayer that Dad had taught her: Forgive us for the wrongs we did, willingly or if we were unaware" (Ali, 2019, p. 81).

There were several mentions of stories about Islamic figures or Islamic references in general, for instance, when Zayneb was stressed out about being near dogs because of her trauma and fear of dogs, she reminded herself of a widely known Islamic story about a woman and a thirsty dog. She said:

> I called to mind the Islamic story that I'd been taught in Sunday school, that Hanna had recounted to me as we waited for Adam to fill out papers at the shelter reception desk, because her dad had just taught her the tale. Prophet Muhammad once told his companions of someone who was forgiven completely by God for every ill deed she'd ever done—because she'd been thirsty and so had climbed down an abandoned well to drink water, and, when she emerged from the depths of the well, she found a dog at the surface, panting from the same thirst she'd felt. She climbed back down and filled her shoe with water and brought it up for the thirsty dog, and thus, for this act of kindness, she was utterly forgiven.

> I told myself that the Saluki Mission Shelter was the woman in the well: noble and selfless. And that I should have a tiny iota of this compassion too. Enough to proceed to see this sad, neglected dog. (Ali, 2019, p. 88)

In another scene, Zayneb mentioned an information about the prophet Muhammed's wife, Khadija, and how she proposed to him while being his employer. She explained by saying:

> One of the reasons Ayaan said she loves being Muslim is because it makes her feel like a natural feminist. "Like, hello? Our queen Khadija didn't wait for the man she had her eye on to ask her, to get on his knees. Nope. Instead, she said, I like you, oh employee of mine. Will you marry me? And then, after they hitched, she just kept her job as his boss. Mad respect." She was talking about the prophet Muhammad. How he was proposed to by his boss, Khadija. (Ali, 2019, p. 208)

Another mention of Islamic figures is when Adam provided Zayneb with information she never heard of about a famous figure that had the same name as her.

"You were named after a maker." She paused with the fork halfway to her mouth. "I was?" "Yeah, Zayneb bint Jahsh, the prophet's cousin. She made leather crafts, bags, and other things. Apparently, she was known for the quality of her work." I picked up the chocolate chip cookie I'd brought for old times' sake. "My father, the historian, makes sure I get this kind of info, especially if he thinks it's about something I'd be interested in. Like other makers." "Oh, yeah, I heard that long ago about sahabiya Zayneb. In Sunday school." She nodded and took a forkful of her pastry. "Maybe one day I will try making some French dessert. Or maybe I'll start with my grandma's roti." (Ali, 2019, p. 304)

The use of Islamic reference was also seen in different events and scenes. When Zayneb talked about Adam to her older sister, Sadia, and she used the word Masha'Allah that is used to expressed a feeling of awe to anything or anyone, she said: " Masha'Allah, he was very cute" (Ali, 2019. 196).

The word Insha'Allah was also used and written in Arabic in the novel. For an example, Zayneb writing in her journal while the Islamophobic hateful woman besides her was keeping an eye on her, she said that

"So to really freak her out, here, journal, have some Arabic words, written nice and big. ان شاء الله" (Ali, 2019, p. 16).

Also when Adam knowledged the death of Zayneb's grandmother, he repeated the Islamic prayer that is used when someone dies or there is a talk about someone's death. He said: "Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon. The prayer came immediately to me. To God we belong and to God we return" (Ali, 2019, p. 243).

Precisely, Adam described the thoughts that encountered him at a young age while learning about Islam, he explained the reasons behind his decision to convert to Islam and became a Muslim like his father. He described it by acknowledging the spiritual peacefulness that his heart felt by practicing Islam with his father specially after the period of his own mother death, Adam also explained the reason behind his reasoning by mentioning that practicing the Islamic ritual obligations like Salat, going to the mosque and saying prayers had impacted him in a positive way. He said:

He'd been teaching me about Islam for almost a year, and for a while I'd wanted to tell him I wanted to do the things he did too. Go to the mosque or prayer rooms at

malls or other places when it was prayer time, instead of watching Hanna outside like I did. Go to jumah on Fridays, instead of staying home with Marta. I also wanted to fast for Ramadan like he had done for the first time that year, and then I wanted to break the fasts with him, when he'd close his eyes after taking that first bite of a date, saying a prayer of gratitude. I also wanted to hold my hand to my heart like him, like he just did now, like he did whenever he said salaam, peace, to someone, closing his eyes again, like he was grateful for that, too. (Ali, 2019, p. 203)

In their journey to know each other and decided to be together Islamically, Both Adam and Zayneb embraced their Muslim identity throughout the novel, for instance, Zayneb was never insecure about her hijab that identify her as a Muslim woman, in fact, Adam was often complimenting her beauty with it: "I aimed my first roll at the middle of the wall in front of me, smiling. He'd noticed. And liked them. My hijabs" (Ali, 2019, p. 290).

And they try to stay committed to the Islamic values and rules. For instance, when Adam and Zayneb were together and they were reminding themselves to follow the rules, setting an example the ways in which a Muslim should act, for example:

Maybe she'd be reluctant to follow me because she might not be sure that I knew the protocol. Of us interacting. Btw, I'll follow the rules. Like, we won't be alone. My dad's taking Hanna to play on the beach too. And I'll never touch you. Of course. I paused. Until you give me permission, I mean. Until your family does. Until everyone does, I mean. (Ali, 2019, p. 277)

Here Adam assured Zayneb that he be following the rules while interacting with her and will only have a physical intimacy with her when they are Islamically together.

"Astaghfirullah. I thought we were following the rules. You should be telling me to lower my gaze, brother," she said, shaking her finger at me, a smile on her face. "And where's your dad? If my sister, Sadia, were here, she'd say we weren't following the rules." (Ali, 2019, p. 281)

Here also Zayneb remined Adam that he should tell her to focus and follow the rule of lowering the gaze. Moreover Zayneb remembered her older sister Sadia that would be also telling her to follow the Islamic rules while communicating with Adam.

3.2.5. Chronic Illness

S.K. Ali attempted to discuss another theme deeply from the perspective of the second main character Adam whom was struggling with a medical condition that also

was the reason of his mother death, the author tried to portray correctly the experience of being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. S.K. Ali stated in the author note that the experience with (MS) was written under the help of a person who was also diagnosed with (MS), she said:

> Adam's multiple sclerosis experiences were written with the help of a family member who was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS early on in his life. With support, especially from his wife of more than twenty years, and good health care, he lives a life of resilience with a positive outlook rooted in his strong Muslim faith. However, it must be noted that MS experiences vary and the circumstances described in *Love from A to Z* do not typify nor communicate the full extent of people's experiences living with the illness. (Ali, 2019, p. 339)

After being diagnosed in November, Adam stopped attending classes and decided to return to Doha, Qatar to spend what left of time for him with his family, he was also stressed to tell the news to his family and had to deal with his journey with the (MS) attacks alone. He said in the matter that "In about eight hours I'll hug my family again. Show love to Dad and Hanna again. And be loved back. For a bit" (Ali, 2019, p. 19).

Adam found it hard to share the news with his family since his father was still grieving about his mother death, he walked alone through his journey with the sudden attacks until the attacks were hard to be handle. He justified his action of hiding the truth from his father by saying:

> Is my refusal to involve Dad in my illness tenacity or stubbornness? I like to think its tenacity, because I have a strong reason for not telling him. He's still having trouble dealing with Mom's death. It will send him spiraling if he finds out about this. (Ali, 2019, p. 142)

Many parts of the novel had a very specific description about the (MS) attacks and how it feels for the patient, Adam described one of his attacks saying:

> MY LEGS USELESS, I LAY crying on the floor of my room. Not from pain, though that was still there, still boring into the back of my eyes whenever I moved them. And I think maybe I hit my hip hard on the floor. It felt sore, bruised. But I mostly cried because it didn't make sense. What had just happened didn't make sense. I cried because I couldn't see. I didn't mean just literally, that my vision was affected, I meant I couldn't see what was next. It felt like the way forward, what to do, was as clouded as my vision. I cried for so long, I was sure hours had passed. (Ali, 2019, p. 135)

Lucky for Adam after a while from having a strong attack that left him not able to see or move, his arms worked, he pulled himself and after struggling to take his phone he connected Zahid the taxi driver, that took him to the hospital and took care of him, he said:

> I looked at the blurry items around me…I shifted myself forward until I could grasp it. And then I dragged it along with me as I inched back to the desk. Lifting the guitar case, I banged it and swept it clumsily along the top of the desk, saying a prayer while doing so, as the case sent pencils and pens and other random things raining down.
>
> The phone fell onto the bed, almost at the edge, and the piece of paper with Zahid's number fluttered beside me. A miracle, alhamdulillah.
>
> He had written his number so big and clear I could make it out. I closed my eyes in gratitude at this, wondering if the tears prickling them again would ever wash away whatever was blurring my vision. (Ali, 2019, p. 137)

As we are going through Adam's journey with his (MS), we get to experience the side effects of multiple sclerosis on Adam and the treatment that Adam went through. When Adam learned to accept help and had to share the news about his illnesses with the people around him. Zayneb who was one of those whom Adam was afraid that his situation will make her reject him, but Zayneb informed Adam that she will support him and she did her own research on his situation and found what could be useful, she said:

> "There are forums, online and in real life, where you can meet others with MS, you know." Her voice quickened, like she couldn't wait to share her thoughts.
>
> "I've found some! I was researching MS treatments and therapy methods, and I found those forums. I'll send you links. Then we can see if there's some sort of support group right here in Doha."
>
> "You researched MS?" I turned to her. Completely to her.
>
> "Yeah? There's so much information! Hopeful information, Adam." She peered at me to make sure I saw how serious she was, enthusiasm taking over her face as she leaned forward in her eagerness to communicate her excitement.
>
> "You don't have to be alone." (Ali, 2019, p. 283)

3.4 Characters

S.K. Ali created her characters in a way that made the characters come vividly to life, she provided them to the readers to decide in which category they are suitable to be, through the novel the audience can notice a good character quality and a good used style to describe the characters in ways that the reader can picture them clearly and visualize the scenes from the novel.

3.4.1. Character Functions in "Love from A to Z"

Kenan (1983) claimed that Forster deviation of characters cannot fit all the characters, and for that he suggested that there are two categories of characters, major character, an important figure sometimes called protagonists that the story actions centre around it or minor character that supports the major character. S.K. Ali used a various number of characters to discuss several topics, the major characters and the minor characters have different type of stories and conflicts, in the end throughout the novel it is noticeable that each story and conflict complement each other.

3.4.1.1. Major characters

We consider three major characters in the novel because they are the most important characters and the novel revolves around them.

1. Adam Chen

Adam Chen is the secondary protagonist and the secondary main character, also the narrator of some parts of novel. He is the Male lead besides Zayneb. He is tall, has angular face with a perfect jawline. Adam is a type of observer with a calm aura, very sensitive, trusting, unselfish, handsome, very considerate and can be depended on, Zayneb described him to her friend saying:

> I lay down again. "I like him because he's gentle and kind and considerate and has this sense of confidence without being in your face about it, and he's super thoughtful; his little sister adores him; so do his friends at the international school he went to. (Ali, 2019, p. 186)

Adam is a Chinese Finnish Canadian Muslim boy who stopped attending university after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a disease that took his own mother life. Adam started journaling on the manuscript, The Marvels of Creation and The Oddities of Existence by the age of fourteen-year-old when he went to the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha and pursued using it for four years. Adam has a creative and artistic ways to turn things into art, he usually craft things to his sister and his last project was observed by the director of art exhibits at Katara. Adam converted to Islam at the age of eleven after his father taught him everything about the religion, according to Adam perspective, He choose to convert to Islam to feel the peace that his father found after his mother death. He said:

> He'd been teaching me about Islam for almost a year, and for a while I'd wanted to tell him I wanted to do the things he did too" "He had told me a long time ago that what he liked best about being Muslim was the peace to be found in it." (Ali, 2019, p. 203)

Adam is supportive, respectful and romantic, in his relationship with Zayneb, Adam was always respectful to the values of Islam and Zayneb boundaries, he was always reassuring her of meeting in public and companied with people, also he was always complementing Zayneb hijab and her beauty on it, he had a very high personality traits along the novel. Moreover, Adam was a great son and brother to his little sister Hanna, creating projects for her and telling her stories about their mother. And also, very empathetic and considerate towards his father that he did not tell his father about his illnesses and tried to endure it all alone, just because his father did not yet get over his wife death.

At the end, Adam marries Zayneb after four years of meeting each other, he started working on six art installation projects on the Middle East and visits supporting groups of MS.

2. Zayneb Malik

Zayneb Malik is the first protagonist and main character, also the narrator of the most parts of the novel and the main events, she is a kind, smart, inspiring, strong, angry, independent thinker, outspoken and a socially conscious high school student who have a

strong drive for social justice. Zayneb is a half-Pakistani and half-Caribbean Muslim girl from a Muslim supportive family, she is the middle child and the second girl after her big sister, she lives in Springdale neighbourhood, Indiana, United States. She has a fear of dogs as she was bitten ten years ago. Zayneb encounter with a lot of Islamophobia throughout the novel, because she wears the hijab that identify her as a Muslim. Zayneb respond strongly to topics like racism, discrimination and never hold back to educate people, as an example when she found out that one of Adam friends 'Emma' culturally appropriate the Native American, wearing a headdress with feathers, she expressed her thoughts by saying:

> Because I just wanted to yank Madison's phone from her, superglue her to a chair, and force her to watch the longest video on cultural appropriation. And a marathon of videos on the more than five hundred tribes living on the land Coachella takes place on. And a video on... (Ali, 2019, p. 59)

Zayneb met Adam in her way to Doha, Qatar after being suspended from school, the reason was writing a note about her Islamophobic teacher, Mr. Fencer, that her and her friends, Kavi and Ayaan were collecting proofs to expose under the movement EatThemAlive. At Doha, Zayneb became friend with Adam friends the 'Emmas' as she refers to them, they became close and they were comforting Zayneb because she knew that her Pakistani grandmother died because of an American drone strike gone terribly wrong on her way to a wedding. At Doha, Zayneb was encountered with many Islamophobic situations but she learned to switch her anger to ideas to fight back. S.K. Ali describes Zayneb as a girl with a strong emotions and anger towards justice, her anger is reasonable but throughout the novel, it shows that her anger doesn't benefit her to make difference or achieve justice. After her vacation at Doha ended, Zayneb comforted Mr. Fencer in front of the whole class, he got fired after a deep investigation. Zayneb learned to open her heart and let people fight with her, she said:

> I was ready to let people in. I'd still keep some people out. But I saw—in this room, out through the window into the library, even in my pocket, with the small goose— that there were so many more that wanted in than out. (Ali, 2019, p. 330)

Zayneb is very smart girl with an exemplary academic record, but unfortunately, she got rejected from her school dream, UChicago. Zayneb found The Marvels of Creation and The Oddities of Existence manuscript online at the age of sixteen and kept

using it for two years. Zayneb got her degree on political science at Northwestern, and married Adam after four years of meeting him in Doha and falling in love with him, she also claimed starting law school in the fall and choosing the thing she wanted the most, human rights.

3. Mr. Fencer

Mr. Fencer is the antagonist in the novel. He is a teacher at Zayneb school. He is a racist, Islamophobic, unbearable, inescapable and evil person. He showed in many scenes his dislike towards Muslims in real life and online, he has been always discussing topics around to how Islam and Muslims were ruining the world. Zayneb and her friends, Kavi and Ayaan, were silently collecting evidences of his racism to expose him on a movement under the hashtag called EatThemAlive. He catches Zayneb writing a note during one of his Islamophobic lessons mentioning the movement with a knife without the fork, he reported it to the principle whom decided it could be seen as a threat and for that Zayneb got suspended for two weeks. At the end, Fencer was comforted by Zayneb and her classmates joined her.

3.4.1.2. Minor Characters

There were many minor characters in the novel *"Love from A to Z"* that we considered as they supported the major characters through the novel *"Love from A to Z"* and helped on advancing the plot.

1. David Chen

David Chen is Adam's father. He is a Chinese Muslim man. He is a caring, kind and supportive father. He is the head of the international school at Doha, He married to Alisha, Adam's mother, and had two children with her, Adam and Zayneb. David converted to Islam a year after his wife death, Islam gave him peace and a reason to hold on for Adam and Hanna. David was still grieving the death of his wife throughout the novel what made it hard for Adam to share his illness news with him.

2. Sylvia

Sylvia is Adam's mother. She is a nice, kind, cheerful and a considerate woman with a deep mindset, she is originated from Finland, she married David and had two kids with him, Adam and Hanna. She got diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in her late twenties, and she got treated, even did well, but then, after she had her Hanna, her second child, it progressed rapidly causing for her death when Adam was at fourth grade. She worked as a teacher at Doha International School with Mr. Raymond, Zayneb aunt, she taught High school art.

3. Hanna Chen

Hanna is David and Sylvia younger child, and Adam's little sister. She is an ambitious, energetic, playful and sociable little girl, she studies at Doha International school, at the fifth-grade. Hanna have a hobby of collecting gems, her dream job is becoming a gemmologist. Hanna didn't get the chance to grow up with the presence of her mother but Adam always tries to give her as much stories as he can. She also learned Islam from her father and Adam, and practically practice the basic like praying and making Duaa with them.

4. Rashaad Malik

Rashaad Malik is Zayneb's father. He is a Muslim man. He is a nice, supportive, considerate and encouraging father. He had three children with Alishia. He works as an ophthalmologist, and being one of the few in Indiana, he doesn't have a quality of time with Zayneb.

5. Alishia Raymond

Alishia Raymond is Zayneb's mother. She converted before marrying Rashaad. She is a kind, strict and a loving mother to three children. She wears Hijab and practise Islam proudly and she works at a travel agency. She has a sister, Natasha, whom Zayneb calls her auntie Nandy.

6. Sadia Malik

Sadia Malik is Zayneb's older sister, she is a caring, considerate and a good listener. Sadia is a good Muslim that always reminds Zayneb for the principles of Islam. She studies at Uchicago, the university that Zayneb want to be accepted in, she is engaged to Jamil, the man she met on her own at college.

7. Mansoor Malik

Mansoor Malik is Zayneb's little brother, He is talking with Hodan since middle school, his family knows about her and naturally they will get together when time comes.

8. Zayneb's Grandmother

They call her Daadi, she is Zayneb's grandmother and her father mother, she is a Muslim grandmother. She is nice, caring, sweet and very close to Zayneb and her siblings, she always stays six months at her son house, Zayneb's home in Springdale and six months in Islamabad, Pakistan where she lived. In October, she passed away in Pakistan because of an American drone strike on her way to a weeding.

9. Natasha Raymond

Natasha Raymond or Nandy as Zayneb calls her. She is Zayneb's mother younger sister. She is a talkative, supportive, young hearted, strong, independent and joyful woman, she is not Muslim like her sister, she was taller and had a pixie cut and more squarish face, with a prominent jawline and a big smile. She works at Doha International School. Natasha is Adam fourth-grade teacher and his mother best friend. Zayneb found her cigarettes accidentally at the bin that she calls it the sin bin, she takes them as an escape but she is trying to quit smoking.

10. Kavi

Zayneb and Ayaan best friend, she is Zayneb's classmate. She is a Muslim girl that was born in Alabama, she has a deep Southern accent. Kavi does not wear hijab, she has

a dark brown skin with a dark hair parted at the side, she has a Southern accent because she is from Alabama. She is a nice, kind, shy and adorable girl. Kavi has an artistic talent, she loves marine life. Her entire portfolio to get into art school was sea creatures done in different mediums. Kavi got accepted into SAIC, Her first university choice.

11. Ayaan Ahmed

Ayaan Ahmed is Zayneb and Kavi best friend, they study at the same Highschool. She has a curly hair and a beautiful smile. She is a strong, independent, quiet, smart and ambitious girl. Her dream job is becoming a lawyer that's why she works hard as a member of the student council. She is a Somali Muslim girl who doesn't wear a hijab, yet she is a devout Muslim who goes to the mosque and practice all what a Muslim should do of activities. Ayaan became friend with Zayneb on the first day of the ninth grade, she told her since Zayneb's brother is also her brother friend, they can be friends too. Zayneb talking about her friend, she said:

> I showed up in the foyer on the first day of ninth grade, clutching my schedule, eyes scanning for Kavi instinctively, even though I knew she was in India on a family trip, her flight delayed.

> "Mansoor's a friend of Abdirahim, my brother. That makes us friends." She smiled. "I'm Ayaan. Let's check if we have any classes together?" And, just like that, she'd stuck by my side. (Ali, 2019, p. 93)

12. Noemi

Noemi is a white girl with long blond bangs covering her eyes, she is a member on the lacrosse team. Noemi is a feminist, she spoke loudly about women's rights and confessed that she could not understand Muslim women wearing hijab and thought of it as oppression until she made her art project. She was working on her art project about sexual assault, high-profile cases, the project focus on stories of girls getting hurt and buried, after she tried to use Fencer handout about the buried Turkish girl, she was furious that he made a world problem about Islam and Muslims. She knew that Mr. Fencer is Islamophobic man and decided to make the right thing and support Zayneb and Kavi and Ayaan to take Mr. Fencer down. She said:

"An Islamophobe." Noemi dropped her legs from the table and crossed her arms. "And then I realized I'd drunk the Kool-Aid, thinking that somehow some women were more oppressed than others due to their background." "She came running to me. To apologize." Kavi laughed. "Because, you know, I'm a brown woman, and I stand for all brown women?" (Ali, 2019, p. 126)

13. Emma Phillips

She is one of Adam's friends and she had a crush on him for years, she studied with him at Doha International School. She is not a Muslim. She has a reddish-brown wavy hair with long bangs, she has a clear skin and lengthy limbs. She is a best friend with Emma Domingo and Emma Zhang. They call themselves the Emmas. After spending time with Zayneb she became close and decided to stay friends.

14. Emma Domingo

She is one of Adam's friends and studied with him at Doha International School. She is not a Muslim. She is Canadian, originally part Filipino, part black. She is the best friend of Emma Philips and Emma Zhang. They call themselves the Emmas. She has a dark brown curly hair with no bangs, clear brown skin and long limbs even though she is the shortest among the Emmas. After spending time with Zayneb she became close and decided to stay friends.

15. Emma Zhang

She is one of Adam's friends and she is Jacob girlfriend, she studied with him at Doha International School. She is not a Muslim. She is the best friend of Emma Philips and Emma Domingo. They call themselves the Emmas. She has a black straight hair with short bangs. After spending time with Zayneb she became close and decided to stay friends.

16. Connor

Adam best friend at Doha, He studied with him at Doha International School. He is not a Muslim. Connor is kind of unbearable, know-it-all and annoying person. But he is also caring, thoughtful and helpful person. He is interested in an older woman, Nancy,

whom is a teaching assistant that helps him for his intro to international economics course. Conner helped Adam a lot in his journey with MS as a supportive friend and always cheering Adam.

17. Zahid

Zahid is a Muslim man that works as a taxi driver. He is Canadian, but his father's family originally from china and his mother's family from Finland, he is married with children. Zahid is a nice, generous, helpful and a good man. He has helped Adam for free when he was struggling with MS attacks.

3.4.2. Kinds of Characters in "Love from A to Z"

Forster (1927) divided characters into two categories which are round and flat based on the depth of their traits.

3.4.2.1. Round Characters

Round characters are complex, have a deepness with a multifaceted personality that shows throughout the story. They are dynamic, have the chance to progress and develop. They are interesting and attract the attention of the audience because they feel lively.

A great example in "Love from A to Z" is Adam and Zayneb, Adam is the second main character after Zayneb since most of the novel events are narrated by her, they are round characters since both of them had an event that turned down their lives and are progressing throughout the story to learn how to deal with those events, they have many traits and qualities that identify them from the other characters.

In the novel, we are firstly introduced to Zayneb's character from her perspective, she describes herself saying:

"Hijabi me. Muslim me" (Ali, 2019, p. 4).

Or by explaining that "But I was born this way. Angry" (Ali, 2019, p. 5).

While Adam describes himself saying that "I'm Adam. I consider, ponder, reflect, and only then do I make a move—in any aspect of my life" (Ali, 2019, p. 79).

Zayneb's personality is complex and full of development and contradictions throughout the novel, she let her anger control her most of the time, until her anger made her be suspended from school, her note that had a knife representing their movement that expose racist people became in the hands of their Islamophobic teacher. Zayneb goes to Doha, Qatar and in her two weeks of suspension vacation, Zayneb started to learn how to fight for her rights and the justice, whether the issues are about her Islamophobic teacher, the hateful woman at the flight, Marc the Islamophobic pool guard or her grandmother that got killed by American drone strike. She learned to fight using the right methods. She also started to develop feelings towards Adam. When Zayneb went back to her school, she exposed Mr. Fencer in a smart way, her classmates supported her, because this time she allowed people to help and fight with her. At the end, Adam and Zayneb got married after four years of pursuing their dreams.

Zayneb reaches her climax when she contorted her Islamophobic teacher, Mr. Fencer without allowing her anger and rage to dominate the scene, also when she accepted people to join her fight and support her in their ways at the end.

In the other hand, Adam's personality is complex differentially than Zayneb's personality, He is passionate about calmness, peace and quietness, Unlike Zayneb, he sees the beauty in everything and through the others lenses and understand their perspective.

Adam went back to Doha, Qatar after he got diagnosed with MS and he stopped attending classes. Adam started struggling with his MS attacks alone, as his relationship with Zayneb get deeper, Adam decided to tell his family and let them in his journey with his illness. At the end Adam and Zayneb got married after four years of pursuing their dreams.

Adam's climax is him telling his father about his MS and sharing his journey with the treatment that he was keeping a secret.

Moreover, it is important to add that the description of their character is exceptional. To clarify, the impressions of characters and the events are filtered and brought throughout the lenses of Adam and Zayneb themselves. The fact that all the details and passages are from their memory or perspective on the other characters and scenes. After tracing back Adam's and Zayneb's development and progress, it is naturelle to knowledge their growth as a process of gradually self-understanding.

3.4.2.2. Flat Character

The novel surprisingly has many memorable flat characters, whether they are good or bad characters, S.K. Ali created flat characters that gave a sense of depth, characters that embodied the novel and were nearby round. The flat characters in the novel had a considerable role in delivering stories in different ways whether to the round characters or the audience.

The Hateful woman is the first flat character that was introduced to the audience, she acted prejudicially towards Zayneb because she was a Muslim, her actions progressed to the point that she asked to change her seat. The whole scene with her, gave the audience a brief scene of what Muslims usually encounter on their daily life and how people tend to not react or help.

Another flat character that had a noticeable role is Adam's mother, she was not present in the novel as a person since she died years before the events of the novel happened, but her characters had a big impact on Adam's decision to keep his illness a secret from his father. Throughout the novel, Adam was struggling to tell his father that he got with the same illness that killed his mother, in a way his father was still grieving even after all those years.

Another flat character is a dead character that was the reason to open discussion about an important topic is Zayneb's grandmother. She died in her way to a weeding by an American drone stroke, making social justice and war another topic that was examined in the novel.

3.4.3 Characterization Techniques of Muslim Characters in S.K. Ali "Love from A to Z"

In the novel we can notice different ways in which the author used characterization techniques with her characters throughout the novel.

3.4.3.1. Block Characterization

S.K. Ali implied the technique of block characterization when she first introduced the character, she provides the audience with unique methods to receive the information about the character throughout the novel. The narrative used in introducing is either by Adam or Zayneb point of view. This is usually used to introduce complex and dynamic characters.

S.K. Ali used block characterization to introduce the main characters to the audience, the first event that crossed their lives and the story behind the journal that both uses throughout the novel, from the point of view of the narrator, she said for introducing the character Adam that:

> March 14, fourteen-year-old Adam Chen went to the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha. A thirteenth-century drawing of a tree caught his gaze…Once he got close, he was rewarded with the name of the manuscript that housed this simple tree sketch: The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence. He stood there thinking about this grand title for along moment. Then something clicked in his mind: Maybe that's what living is—recognizing the marvels and oddities around you. From that day, he vowed to record the marvels he knew to be true and the oddities he wished weren't. Adam, being Adam, found himself marveling more than ruminating on the weird bits of existing. We pick up his Marvels and Oddities journal on March 7, four years after that Saturday at the Museum of Islamic Art. Eighteen now, Adam is a freshman in college, but it's important to know that he has stopped going to classes two months ago. He has decided to live. (Ali, 2019, p. 1)

While for introducing the character Zayneb the author said that:

> March 11, sixteen-year-old Zayneb Malik clicked on a link in her desperation to finish a project…the link was oddly intriguing to a girl looking for thirteenth-century hijab styles: Al-Qazwini's Catalogue of Life as It Existed in the Islamic World, 1275 AD. The link opened to an ancient book. The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence. A description of the book followed, but Zayneb could

not read on. "Marvels" and "oddities" perfectly described the reality of her life right then. The next day, after returning from the history fair (and taking a nap), she began a journal and kept it going for the next two years, recording the wonders and thorns in the garden of her life. Zayneb, being Zayneb, focused on the latter. She dedicated her journal entries to pruning the prickly overgrowth that stifled her young life. By the time we meet her at eighteen, she's become an expert gardener, ready to shear the world. She's also just been suspended from school. (Ali, 2019, p. 2)

In the following passage, SK. Ali introduce Zayneb from Zayneb's point of view for the audience as a Hijabi, Muslim girl saying that "Hijabi me. Muslim me, on an airplane" (Ali, 2019, p. 4).

Or when she described her personality saying "But I was born this way. Angry. When my siblings and I were young, my parents had this thing where they liked to sum each of us three kids up by the way we had entered the world" (Ali, 2019, p. 5).

Here S.K. Ali uses both implicit and explicit description done by Zayneb herself, by describing her personality, her external appearance even a personal information behind the reason of her being the Angry.

Another example of block characterization is when Zayneb introduced her best friend Ayaan as the smart friend who collect information about the Islamophobic teacher, Mr. Fencer, and gave personal information about Ayaan to the audience, she said:

> Ayaan had alerted me to Fencer before I entered his class this semester…He brought an uncanny number of topics and discussions around to how Islam and Muslims were ruining the world. The thing is, Ayaan has wanted to become a lawyer since forever, so she's about building up a case. She doesn't say anything, didn't say anything to Fencer, and just kept collecting information when she'd been in his class. Collecting evidence. Including, recently, data from his online personas. She was supposed to show me some screenshots soon…The other thing is that Ayaan doesn't wear hijab. She's Muslim, and Fencer knows it from her full name— Ayaan Ahmed—but he's not sure what kind. Like, he doesn't know if she cares about her identity or if she practices her faith. Or if she simply has a Muslim name. He doesn't know what I know: that Ayaan is a devout Muslim who goes to the mosque more than Hijabi me. That she prays and believes and is on a million Muslim committees. (Ali, 2019, p. 12-13)

In this passage S.K. Ali uses explicit characterization to name Ayaan traits and information as "she wanted to be a lawyer" "she is devout Muslim" that doesn't unable

the audience to imagine the character, yet the audience can relate to the character personal information. Also, the author uses explicit in Zayneb narration of describing her teacher as Islamophobic, she gave information about his actions so the audience can lean towards Zaynab side of the story.

3.4.3.2. Explicit Characterization

Throughout the novel, S.K. Ali uses explicit characterization more than implicit, the novel is rich by direct information about the character, presented by Adam's or Zayneb's perspective. In the first pages, S.K. Ali uses explicit characterization as we have seen to tell the audience directly about the personality traits of the main character Zayneb, Zayneb did a self-characterization to describe her character as "Muslim, Hijabi" and "Angry", as she explicitly delivered information about the other character Ayaan and Mr. Fencer.

S.K. Ali describes her characters explicitly and provide all the possible information to the reader from the perspective of either Zayneb or Adam as, there are other characters that describe themselves and were described by other characters. For instance, in the following passage, Zayneb describes Adam and present information about him explicitly to the audience, as she also present information about her background, she said:

> He's tall, his legs so long that if he didn't keep them propped up kind of high, he'd be tripping people walking in front of his seat. He looks like he's of Asian background, like me. Well, one half of me, because Dad is from Pakistan, which is in South Asia, but then Mom's family being Guyanese (grandpa) and Trinidadian (grandma) makes her of West Indian background, which is considered to be Caribbean. This guy looked like he was of East Asian ancestry—either Chinese or Korean or from another country. (Ali, 2019, p. 30-31)

Another example of explicit information by other characters besides Adam and Zayneb, for instance, Adam's mother was introduced for Zayneb by her aunt, she said:

> Auntie Nandy drew a breath. "Adam's mother passed away when he was in my class in the fourth grade." "Oh God." I gripped myself tighter. "That's so sad." "It was obviously devastating for him, for the whole family. She was diagnosed with her illness, MS, many years before, in her late twenties, and she coped, even did well, but then, after she had her second child, it progressed rapidly." (Ali, 2019, p. 66)

3.4.3.3. Implicit Characterization

S.K. Ali uses implicit characterization less than explicit characterization. Throughout the novel there is a number of examples and passages that can be used to characterize characters through their actions, speech, surrounding, and external appearance. For instance, Adam delivering the news that he got diagnosed with MS to the audience through his perspective wasn't explicit until half the story. He said:

> The kind of secret that punches people in the gut. The kind written on the folded paper in my duffel, ready to be carried onto the plane to Doha. The reason I avoided flying back home for Christmas holidays. The reason I stopped going to classes. After I received it, in November, I spent too much time incessantly unfolding it to pore over it. Then, one day in December, I folded it up for the last time and kept it that way. I haven't looked at that bit of news since then. (Ali, 2019, p. 23)

Zayneb showed her jealousy throughout the novel of Noemi, she threw words that indicate her annoyance as Noemi started spending time with Zayneb's best friends. She said:

> "'We miss you so much!" Kavi said. "We were doing this-is-what-Zay-would-say so often that Noemi just started saying it for you. The stuff you'd say." "So she's being me?"' (Ali, 2019, p. 231).

In another passage, S.K. Ali uses another method in implicit characterization which is environment. It is defined by either the physical surrounding or human environment. This type of characterization can be rich source of information that the audience can use to have a clear imagination of the characters and the setting. For example, Zayneb describing implicitly her aunt apartment as in:

> But while Auntie Nandy is warm and cheerful, her apartment isn't. Her place is hard and crystal clear and unforgiving. Each room has windows from the ceiling to the marble-tiled floor, with glass table tops and steely reflective surfaces everywhere to further emphasize the clean, cold clarity of the space. It's like a crisp-suit-and-cufflinks-wearing stern man lives here instead of a smiley, talkative aunt who calls me Zoodles. Last night I'd rolled my luggage into the minimalist guest bedroom—white duvet-covered bed framed by a huge, mirrored wardrobe, sleek with no knobs or handles. (Ali, 2019, p. 38)

From this description the reader can conclude that Zayneb's aunt is type of professional, free spirit person and that she doesn't spend her usual time in her own apartment.

3.4.3.4. Reliability

Reliability is when a character self-presented themselves by the narrator to the characters, taking into consideration their actions. Those information by the characters are to be doubt until they are proven. S.K. Ali used many examples of reliability in the novel. the novel is narrated by Zayneb and Adam. For instance, Zayneb presenting herself as an angry girl that talks loudly about social justice, using words like "I'm Angry" or "I embraced my anger", is proven throughout the novel, that Zayneb is consumed by rage and anger that it covers the pints she is trying to make, even if they were rights.

3.4.3.5. Contrasts and Correspondences

Comparison can provide addition information that the readers can understand about the characters. S.K. Ali used many passages of comparison. For instance, Zayneb comparing the prophet to Adam in term of personality and mindset, she said:

> I was thinking of how the prophet Muhammad was a soft, beautiful soul, who didn't get bothered that a woman had asked him, didn't get bothered that she was his boss. How Adam had that kind of soul. I could tell from the way he loved his mother to the way he treated his sister. (Ali, 2019, p. 209)

The above passage is a comparison between the Prophet, who is the source of calmness, peace, considerable and thoughtful, with Adam, who throughout the novel, even with the taught event the crushed his life, he remained peaceful to the others and a source of trust to them, he played his role as a great son and a great brother to his family, as being a good friend to his friends. Even when Zayneb told Adam about her situation with the Islamophobic teacher, he tried to understand his reaction from his perspective.

3.4.4. The Main Characters Development

Throughout the novel, the audience can witness the progress of Adam's and Zayneb's personality since the novel is narrated by both of them.

Zayneb goes from being aware of her anger to transformed her anger as a tool for the social justice and the difference she aspires to make in the world. Being in Doha, Zayneb learned to be patient and understandable. she is courageous and have no fear to talk for those who have no voice, her intentions are right but the way she deliver her reaction put her in problems, as the events in the novel get progressed, she learns to create healthy ways to deal with those problems and to open her heart for those who care and tries to fight with her using different methods and approaches. She said after courageously exposing her teacher:

> I was ready to let people in. I'd still keep some people out. But I saw—in this room, out through the window into the library, even in my pocket, with the small goose— that there were so many more that wanted in than out. (Ali, 2019, p. 330)

In the other hand, Adam himself was the reason for him to take the journey of dealing with his illness alone and not telling his family, throughout the novel, Adam was clearly depressed thinking about his MS and how to deliver the news to his father specially that his dead mother died with the same illness, he was alone dealing with the MS attacks and alone trying to be a the same good Adam for his family.

As the novel events progress and he meets Zayneb, Adam learns to share like he listens to people's problems and likes them sharing them with him, after being honest about his MS, more people tried in their ways to support Adam and encourage him in his journey.

For instance, he was pleased to tell his father about his MS and that Mr. Raymond eased the mission of telling his father for him, he was grateful that he involved her along the way. He said:

> "I had a sudden thought. Ms. Raymond is the best. Without her prepping Dad, I don't know if it would have gone like it had" (Ali, 2019, p. 228).

3.5. Narration

S.K. Ali sought to convey the authentic representation of Muslims and the struggle they encounter for having a Muslim identity through the eyesight of Muslim character.

The novel is narrated in a Multiperspectivity style and the events are narrated from multiple viewpoints, where more than one perspective is used to narrate the events of the novel. It seems at least likely that for the most part of the novel the story is narrated from the point of view of Adam and Zayneb, whom describe the events that they encountered in the novel.

The use of Multiperspectivity created a sense of complexity to the story and richness to the events, it also gave the audience an opportunity to understand the content of the novel from a different point of view and build an accurate imagination of the story line, as different character perspectives and experiences are introduced to the audience. For Instance, Adam was trying to distance himself from Zayneb and avoid having deeper feelings towards her since the illnesses that was the reason of his mother death is threatening his live at the moment. As it is clarified in the quotations blew:

> Then I got to thinking: Was there any use? Of just hanging around with her? When it wouldn't come to anything? I couldn't even say a word to her when she got out of the car. I was trying hard not to so obviously shake off the sensations that had just invaded my body minutes before. She'd stood there for a bit, then looked up at me and waited a few seconds before saying salaam. And I'd thought, No. It isn't the time to begin something with someone so interesting. Someone so cute who I am completely attracted to. Her eyes when she speaks excitedly are captivating, hard to tear away from. And the way she keeps rearranging her lips when she's listening. Like she wants to open them to speak but is still making up her mind on what she wants to say. I could look at her all day. Add to this how frank and open and sure she is, and there, just like that, she had a hold on me. That's exactly why I need to avoid her. I was getting drawn so fast and so hard that I was forgetting the things I had going on, the things I had to deal with. (Ali, 2019, p. 101-02)

Adam expressed that his illness is only an obstacle that will not make his relationship with Zayneb progress.

In the other hand Zayneb explained in her perspective that Adam's actions and him distancing himself from her suddenly are only proofs that he doesn't have mutual feelings for her and that they are different.

I guess this marvel is about God. Because He's the one who lets you know the things you didn't know before. Who allows circumstances to come into your life that make you see. I'm so grateful my crush on Adam lasted exactly five days. Six if you count the airport first sighting. Wow, Emma Phillips's crush on him lasted six years. And was only now coming to fruition. She's zen. He's zen. I'm not. That's what's important. (Ali, 2019, p. 117)

The above quotations give the audience the chance to imagine the situation between Adam and Zayneb from both perspectives. the author participated in narrating the opening passage to provide information about how the main characters Adam and Zayneb obtained their journals, in which explain the structure of their perspectives in the novel. Here is an example for the way in which Adam was presented by the author:

March 14, fourteen-year-old Adam Chen went to the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha. A thirteenth-century drawing of a tree caught his gaze…Once he got close, he was rewarded with the name of the manuscript that housed this simple tree sketch: The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence. He stood there thinking about this grand title for along moment. Then something clicked in his mind: Maybe that's what living is—recognizing the marvels and oddities around you. From that day, he vowed to record the marvels he knew to be true and the oddities he wished weren't. Adam, being Adam, found himself marveling more than ruminating on the weird bits of existing. We pick up his Marvels and Oddities journal on March 7, four years after that Saturday at the Museum of Islamic Art. Eighteen now, Adam is a freshman in college, but it's important to know that he has stopped going to classes two months ago. He has decided to live. (Ali, 2019, p. 1)

While for Zayneb, the author presented her by saying:

"March 11, sixteen-year-old Zayneb Malik clicked on a link in her desperation to finish a project…the link was oddly intriguing to a girl looking for thirteenth-century hijab styles: Al-Qazwini's Catalogue of Life as It Existed in the Islamic World, 1275 AD. The link opened to an ancient book. The Marvels of Creation and the Oddities of Existence. A description of the book followed, but Zayneb could not read on. "Marvels" and "oddities" perfectly described the reality of her life right then. The next day, after returning from the history fair (and taking a nap), she began a journal and kept it going for the next two years, recording the wonders and thorns in the garden of her life. Zayneb, being Zayneb, focused on the latter. She dedicated her journal entries to pruning the prickly overgrowth that stifled her young life. By the time we meet her at eighteen, she's become an expert gardener,

ready to shear the world. She's also just been suspended from school. (Ali, 2019, p. 2)

Being written in a dairy, journaling form affected the novel to be built in way in which the plot is shaped to be divided between Adam and Zayneb perspective, both narrated from their perspectives the events and circumstance that encountered them to the ones that they experienced in common.

Conclusion

This chapter investigated the use of character and characterization techniques in S.K. Ali's novel *"Love from A to Z"*. The success of the novel lies within the accurate representation of Islam and Muslims and the ways in which the author created exceptional characters. S.K. Ali indicated a considerable number of scenes and incidents that happened to her characters while still attempting to clarify the stereotypes and the prejudices that usually people fall into. She provided characters with unique experiences that several Muslims can relate to. The main goal of using character and characterization techniques on the novel is to tackle the pictures in which the author provided for an accepted portray of Muslim people through the characters and the events they witnessed in the novel. Through the content of the novel, the audience will have an idea about Muslim people as Muslims and their journey between practicing their religion and struggling to do so.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study under aims at examining the portray and the representation of Muslim character in S.K. Ali's *"Love from A to Z"*. To achieve the study objectives, the study went through one theoretical chapter and one chapter for tackling the analysis. The first chapter dealt with the overview of the theory of character and characterization and a literary context of Muslim character representation in Modern Literature. We defined the theory of character and characterization according to Aristotle, the Formalist and Structuralist and Chatman and added the historical account for its appearance and development. Furthermore, we separately defined character and explained character kinds and functions, also defined characterization and characterization techniques. Also, we gave well-explained and detailed techniques of characterization: explicit and implicit characterization, block characterization, reliability and inner life of character. In addition. We spotted the light on the second variable which is a literary context of representing Muslim character in Modern Literature, giving an overview about Muslim character in Modern Literature, Muslim identity and the issue of Islamophobia and insufficiency of representation in Modern Literature.

The second chapter tackles the analysis to achieve out our aim. While the novel got much of attention as a literary work, it was not under much of critic that could be useful for our study. We started the chapter by an overview about the author S.K. Ali, her life as a prominent writer, her literary works that specifically have Muslim characters or revolve around Islam and Muslims and mirror the struggle of Muslim people in society. Moreover we gave the plot summary and the themes of the novel to put the reader in the context. After that, we treated each kind of characters and each technique of characterization alone. For each, we extracted quotes that give us the room where we can grasp the reason behind using this kind and technique. In the novel we found all the kinds of characters and extracted many examples for the characterization techniques analysis part.

In this part of the dissertation we answered the research questions asked by the beginning of the dissertation. We confirmed our proposed statement and we stated the characterization techniques used by S.K. Ali throughout the novel *"Love from A to Z"*,

we also confirmed the main characters development throughout the novel *"Love from A to Z"*.

Adam and Zayneb were a mirror of Muslim people as individual and within a society. The novel had various scenes of how Islam is impactful in Adam's and Zayneb's lifestyle and their relationship, we also experienced the struggle that Zayneb encountered for identifying as a Muslim Hijabi girl and lived through Adam's conflict with multiple sclerosis. Moreover, we acknowledged Adam's and Zayneb's character development and growth as much as the ways in which they learned to challenge their difficulties and improve themselves.

To end, the novel is a beautiful piece of art, a reflector insight into the lives of Muslim people and the struggle they encounter for identifying as Muslims, and it sets a good example of how Muslims practices their faith in their daily life. By blending Islamic references and Islamic practices, S.K. Ali was able to picture Muslim people in Modern Literature and set a good representation. Furthermore, this paper is an attempt towards analysing the character and characterization found in our literary work. The novel was not under much of critic like how much attention it got from the audience, yet we tried to provide the student with an account of the ways in which Muslim characters are portrayed and represented in Modern Literature taking the novel *"Love from A to Z"* as a case of study.

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Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude est de souligner l'image du caractère musulman dans la littérature moderne. La portée de l'étude sera principalement limitée au roman Love from A to Z de S.K. Ali, une écrivaine musulmane qui dépeint des personnages musulmans dans ses œuvres. Par conséquent, la structure de cette étude de cas se concentre principalement sur deux chapitres. Le premier chapitre, qui est la partie théorique, traite de la théorie du caractère et de la caractérisation en termes généraux, y compris les types de caractères et les techniques de caractérisation. Suivi d'un bref aperçu de la représentation des personnages musulmans dans la littérature moderne. Le deuxième chapitre est un examen analytique des caractères du texte littéraire à partir des perspectives théoriques proposées précédemment.

Mots clés Caractère et Caractérisation, Caractère musulman, Identité musulmane, Littérature Moderne, Islam.

ملخص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تحليل وتصوير الشخصيات الروائية المسلمة في الأدب الحديث. سيركز نطاق الدراسة بشكل أساسي على رواية "الحب من الألف إلى الزاي" للكاتبة ساجده علي، كاتبة مسلمة تصور شخصيات إسلامية في أعمالها الأدبية. يعتمد هيكل هذه الدراسة على فصلين. الفصل الأول، وهو الجزء النظري، يدور حول النظرية الحديثة للشخصية الروائية. يجمع كل ما يخص النظرية بشكل عام، بالإضافة للأساليب والتقنيات المستخدمة للشخصية و التشخيص. تليها لمحة موجزة عن تمثيل الشخصية الإسلامية في الأدب الحديث. الفصل الثاني هو فحص تحليلي لشخصيات النص الأدبي المستخدم اعتمادا على النظرية المقترحة سابقًا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الشخصية والتشخيص، الشخصيات الروائية المسلمة، الهوية الإسلامية ، الأدب الحديث ، الإسلام.