When Muslims Read Milton:
An Investigation of the Problems Encountered
by Teachers and Students in a Sample of British and Pakistani Universities

by

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To the trinity of my life that means the world to me: my mother, Professor Sanobar Musavir; my father, Mr. Munir Badar Awan; and my husband, Fahed Bhatti; who have all been a true source of inspiration, encouragement and support.

To the three amazing years of marital bliss!

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Abstract

The main aim of the thesis is to explore issues raised by teaching *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith scenarios. Milton's poem was chosen because it is an overtly Christian text that is taught across the globe in Higher Education Institutions to students of different cultural and religious backgrounds. In particular, this study analyses the character of Eve and the narrative of creation as presented in *Paradise Lost*, and explores them both through feminism and Quranic feminism, as well as by a detailed analysis of present-day teaching methodologies as experienced by academics and students in the UK and Pakistan.

The first half of the thesis examines relevant critical approaches to *Paradise Lost* and deals with my own close readings, while the second half of the thesis investigates the cross-cultural teaching perceptions of academics through interviews and explores Muslim students' experience by the use of questionnaires. No previous research has explored the ways in which Muslim students read and experience *Paradise Lost* from a religious and cultural perspective, therefore this research as a first full-length study, breaks new ground and examines Pakistani-Muslim and British-Muslim students' attitudes towards this Christian epic. The research focuses on the key issues of *Paradise Lost*, such as the scenarios pre- and post -fall, the sensuous nudity of Eve, rape, and the concept of redemption, in order to undertake a comparative analysis of Christianity and Islam from the Muslim perspective. As the current political situation between the Muslim and Western worlds has become increasingly fraught, it is critical to look further at the influence of English literature on Muslims in order to deepen trans-cultural and trans-religious understanding and build bridges. The study intends to contribute to that overall aim by suggesting the way in which academics in both the UK and Pakistan could modify the culturally-specific pedagogical approaches when teaching a Christian text to Muslim/multi-faith students. If utilised, this might serve to create a better understanding of the difference between Christian and Islamic literary texts which might, in turn, promote increased reciprocity – not only in academic circles but for the wider political scenario.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter outlines the aims of the study while examining the methodology and literature review used to undertake the study.

1.1 Aim of the Study

The purpose of this research is to investigate the human fall in *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the *Bible* by examining it from a Quranic perspective in order to analyse the experience of Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK. The "foreign" nature of the language, concepts, and approach of the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* can be problematic for Muslim/multi-faith students, and this may alienate them from the text and the teaching process. The research questions the Christian tradition of blaming Eve for the fall, as presented in *Paradise Lost*, and compares it to the Islamic narrative in order to understand the teaching and learning difficulties of considering Eve's portrayal in *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario. The *Quran* presents one monolithic and unvarying conception of women, and the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost* propound similar monolithic views. Surely it is possible to develop conflicting, even contradictory, interpretations of the representation of Eve/women in each of these three texts, but the narrative of the fall grounded in patriarchal reading of sacred texts is a major source of Eve/women's degradation, and it would be intriguing to explore how this is demonstrated in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, while keeping in mind the religious persona of Eve in Islam.

Muslim students are being taught the story of the fall in *Paradise Lost* in a Biblical context rather than a Quranic one. No previous research explored the ways in which Muslim students read and experience *Paradise Lost* from a religious and cultural perspective, therefore this research, as the first full-length study, breaks new ground and

examines Pakistani-Muslim and British-Muslim students' attitudes towards a Christian epic. The perspective of Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost* is explored in Pakistan and the UK as Pakistan is a Muslim majority country and the UK offers multi-faith/multi-race teaching. Thus, the investigation focuses on the key concepts of *Paradise Lost* regarded as blasphemous and taboo in the Islamic world, for instance the human fall related to Eve; the challenging speeches of Satan against God; issues of nudity, rape, and incest; and the concept of salvation and redemption associated to Jesus and Mary, and explores them in terms of their religious context from a Muslim/multi-faith learning perspective. As the current political situation has pressed relations between Muslim and Western world, it is critical to look further at the influence of English literature in Muslim world in order to deepen trans-cultural and trans-religious understanding and build bridges between the two. The study is useful to alter the culturally-specific pedagogical approaches towards teaching a Christian text to Muslim/multi-faith students, and might lead to a better acceptance of Christian texts in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

1.1.1 Key Research Questions

> The research focuses on the key issues of how Muslims read *Paradise Lost*. It examines the scenarios pre- and post-fall in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*. The Christian narrative contextualised in *Paradise Lost* blames Eve for the human fall, while in the Quranic narrative Satan is blamed for the "original sin" of tempting Adam to eat the fruit. The Christian narrative contradicts the Quranic narrative by blaming Eve for the fall and this can be an anathema for Muslim students.

> *Paradise Lost*, unlike the Biblical and Quranic narratives, portrays Eve's nudity in sensuous ways. Milton's minute description of Eve's nude body can be

visualised and that might disturb Muslim readers because of their religious affiliation with Eve.

> Other than portraying Eve as a seductress, the other female mythical and fictional figures who experience rape and incest in the poem are presented as mirror images of Eve. Such narratives in a mixed-sex group can create embarrassment and anxiety for students due to their religious and cultural commitments.

> Satan's speeches against God are very challenging and it makes God and Satan seem equal rivals. This issue can be politically dangerous as in the Muslim world such an approach is considered blasphemous; it can stir students' emotions and might put Pakistani academics in a difficult situation.

> Redemption is one of the key concepts of *Paradise Lost*, and Jesus as God's Son is believed to redeem all that Eve has lost. This Christian concept challenges the ultimate supremacy of the Muslim God, as Jesus is not considered His son but only a prophet in Islamic belief. As such, Muslim students might find the central theme of the poem difficult to analyse.

All these issues show that *Paradise Lost* is a potentially difficult text to teach in Muslim/multi-faith scenario. The data is to be gathered and analysed on the basis of gender and country of residence in order to examine the similarities and differences among Muslim students of Pakistan and the UK.

1.2 Methodology

This section examines the structure of this study, which is divided in Part A and Part B and also presents the literature review used in both parts.

1.2.1 Structure

The project's originality is evidenced in its unique methodological approach and structure. Since *Paradise Lost* has never been researched before from the perspective of

Muslim/multi-faith teaching, and there were no case studies or analysis that could provide a basis for such research, the structure and methodology used for the study are a combination of conventional and non-traditional approaches. The thesis is divided into two parts: Part A offers an essential literary and cultural contextualisation, which leads to a series of thematic hypotheses, while Part B draws upon the issues that emerge from Part A and undertakes a close analysis of the data collected from teachers and students.

Part A broadly engages with outlining the key differences between Christian concepts presented in *Paradise Lost* and the parallel Islamic beliefs, for example the account of the human fall, the character and representation of Eve, and redemption associated with Jesus and Mary. It explores the possible perspectives and difficulties in a Muslim/multi-faith teaching and learning scenario. Chapter 2 examines possible teaching approaches of *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario by investigating the religious, socio-cultural and political context of the poem as well as critical perspectives such as feminism, Quranic feminism and Post-Colonialism. Chapters 3 and 4 set out a background for identifying key problems that Muslim students and teachers might have while discussing a Christian poem, deriving from differing Islamic beliefs. These chapters examine the issues that emerge from *Paradise Lost*, such as the account of the fall along with its reasons and consequences, the identity and representation of Eve and her sensuous nudity, and the concept of redemption; and analyses them through the *Bible* and the *Quran* from a Muslim perspective. These chapters set out the distinctions among the narrative of the fall in the *Bible, Paradise Lost* and the *Quran* in order to develop an understanding of the issues that these differences might pose for Muslim students studying in the UK and Pakistan.

Part B of the thesis is comprised of Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 followed by an overall conclusion of the thesis in Chapter 10. Overall, it evaluates the questions highlighted in

Part A by carrying out interviews and questionnaires with academics and Muslim students in both Pakistan and the UK. Interviews with academics are conducted in order to examine the culturally-specific teaching approaches, identify problematic situations and develop fruitful pedagogical approaches when teaching Christian texts like *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students. Subsequently, the questionnaire surveys taken from Muslim students in the UK and Pakistan are carried out to investigate the hypotheses discussed in Part A from Muslim students' perspectives. Chapter 5 discusses the methodology used in Part B and outlines the step-by-step procedure of data collection including the process of selecting research tools, data collection modes, sample selection, questionnaire design, piloting and evaluating, and analysing findings. Chapters 6 and 7 present the interview discussion, analysis, and key findings of the qualitative research, and Chapters 8 and 9 examine the findings of the questionnaire surveys. Chapter 10 provides an overall conclusion of Parts A and B of the study.

1.2.2 Literature Review

Although there has not been any literature published that relates directly to the field of Muslim students' perspective of Christian texts, or the specific approaches of teaching Christian texts to Muslim students, the key literature on *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran* helped develop the links between existent scholarship and new research. The methodology in Part A of the thesis mainly relies on feminist and Quranic feminist critique and a close reading of *Paradise Lost* in order to formulate hypotheses on Muslim/multi-faith teaching and learning of *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the Biblical account of the fall. Although theories directly related to the criticism on Eve's fall and female identity are explored repeatedly, possible key perspectives that involved socio-religious and political context of Milton's narrative and post-colonialism in relation to

Pakistani teaching of *Paradise Lost* are also used to investigate *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/Multi-faith teaching scenarios.

Paradise Lost can be taught from many different angles, and the perspectives that have been explored over the years in dominant criticism on *Paradise Lost* were examined from the perspective of Muslim/multi-faith teaching. Critics have long considered and continue to recognise *Paradise Lost* as a masterpiece with a thematic and structural blend of multiple traditions. The analysis of narrative influenced by these traditions might be a useful approach to handle the difficulty of Christian context in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

The socio-religious context of Milton's narrative demonstrated the influences of Early Modern context of seventeenth century England. From the perspective of gender hierarchy to female isolation, from mainstream socio-religious spheres to critiquing women as morally weak and subservient and men possessing heroic qualities, all these attributes relate *Paradise Lost* to a seventeenth century context. Aughterson's broader historical framework provides readings that reflect gender construction in seventeenth century England and offers understanding of Early Modern treatment of female gender from socio-religious, physiological and political perspectives (*Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook: Constructions of Femininity in England*, 1995). Her work has been useful to examine Eve in the parameters of conduct, morality and submission, as this establishes Eve's prelapsarian silence, submission and nudity and postlapsarian disobedience, oscillating between seventeenth century parameters of virtuous women. In Early Modern England, women's physical frailty was considered a symbol of moral weakness that allowed the devil to attack their souls easily (Diane Willen, 2008 "Religion and the Construction of the Feminine"). Willen highlights the role of religion constructing females as eternally damned, their souls seemingly possessed by sin. This has impact

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upon an analysis of *Paradise Lost* in that Eve and other mythical female figures are paralleled with fragile flowers, making them more vulnerable to Satan. Moreover, Satan meets Eve in isolation, as if he knew that he could seduce a female easily. The influence of cultural history on seventeenth century English Literature is emphasised by Scott-Warren who points out the cultural bias evident in Milton's representation of male and female genders (*Early Modern English Literature: Cultural History of Literature*, 2005). This text was useful when examining the implications of Adam and Eve's distinct hairstyles on the narrative of the fall and the gender constructs in seventeenth century. Eve's loose tresses, on a symbolic level, signify the reason for man's fall in that reason is swayed by passion; on the other hand, Eve's uncovered hair covering her nude body insisted the Pauline dogma of reserving shame as a female attribute. Therefore, the Biblical notion of blaming women for the original sin was practised in seventeenth century tradition and was often used in literary discussions of Early Modern period. The period, however, also saw Milton's female contemporaries rewriting patriarchal Biblical traditions by presenting Eve's tale from a liberal perspective. Jane Anger in *Her Protection Against Women* (1589), and Rachel Speght in *A Movzell for Melastomvs* (1617) published in defence of women's equality against the patriarchal norms. Women's education was supported immensely by Margaret Fell in *Women's Speaking Justified* (1666), and by Bethusa Makin's *Essay to Revive the Ancient Education of Gentlewomen* (1673); moreover, women's pursuit of knowledge is celebrated by Aemelia Lanyer in *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, (1611). Such writings, although they had a critical reception by male authors of the time, not only provide a unique perspective about power struggle in Early Modern England and the liberation women were trying to seek in society through print, but also offer a context of gender politics evident in print in which *Paradise Lost* may be written. The scope of this study and the limitations on the

Pakistani curriculum do not allow for a detailed analysis of how these women writers could be perceived by Muslim students. However, should further research be undertaken it would be interesting to provide students with a description of Eve from Speght and ask them to contrast it with that written by Milton.

In writing an epic, Milton is participating in an overwhelmingly male (and patriarchal) tradition. This participation reinforces his representation of his male characters as 'heroic' and his female characters as silenced and powerless. However, it could also be argued that Milton subverts this male tradition to some extent through Eve's active agency in his poem. The heroic virtue in *Paradise Lost* is divided between the characters of Adam, Satan and Jesus (Steadman, "Heroic Virtue and the Divine Image in *Paradise Lost*", 1959). Stedman's thesis stresses the division of power among male characters of the poem which also allowed for an analysis of female characters being silenced and powerless. Many critics, like Lewalski, however, see Milton's use of heroic grandeur associated with Satan, his society and hell in order to project the impact of epic ("The genres of *Paradise Lost*", 1989). Satan's powerful character has been the most debatable character, as it not only informs the genre of *Paradise Lost* but also the political context of the poem. Satan's attempt to recover power is seen as Milton's struggle during his political battle, as Hill argues (*Milton and the English Revolution*, 1997). Hill's account draws a parallel between Milton and Satan, considering him as Milton's mouthpiece: exiled, revengeful, but determined, referring to Milton's journey of political turbulence. Kastan provides the political allusions Milton had while portraying Satan's character, as Satan helped Milton to emphasise the political injustice of monarchs, supposed as God, and sharing sympathies with Satan's fall (Kastan, *John Milton Paradise Lost*, 2005). Satan's challenging speeches against God and his will and determination were enough to make him a hero of the epic poem, yet the accounts of

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Satan's heroism suggest difficulties for Muslim/multi-faith teaching and reading. The socio-religious and political context helped shape the narrative of *Paradise Lost* and can be used to approach *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching in order to tone down the Christian context.

After examining different perspectives on the background of *Paradise Lost*, the research was narrowed to focus upon theories related to Eve in order to explore teaching perspectives of presenting Eve in Muslim/multi-faith scenario. This ensured a robust and informative analysis, particularly because the narratives of the fall related to Eve in Islam and Christianity (the *Quran* and the *Bible*) contradict one another, as the study's main focus is to find out and tone down the contradictions that Muslim students experience while reading Milton. Many women writers and feminist critics, during and after Milton's time respectively, have investigated the politics of interpreting the political canon in the light of the narrative of the fall. These investigations have been helpful when examining Milton's treatment towards gender and to identify Eve's otherness and reasons for the fall in the narrative of *Paradise Lost*. Froula employs the historicist feminist approach, as she examines Eve's character from the cultural and religious perspective of women as silent and subservient. She critiques the way Eve as a motherless child is taught to see, speak and accept patriarchal norms. Froula argues that the spiritual and moral superiority Eve seeks in Adam is false, as Adam fears Eve due to her completeness, which he lacks in himself ("When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy", 1983). Belsey investigates the power struggle between sexes and examines Eve's sensuality and beauty as her strength, seeing Adam's weakness against Eve's sexual charms (*John Milton Language, Gender and Power*, 1998). In the narrative, however, Adam is not seen to be threatened due to Eve's self-sufficiency, nor is love for Eve a battle; it is rather Milton who provides the ultimate patriarchal rule in

heaven and creates the gender differences. The scholarship of Froula and Belsey are, however, very useful to examine Milton's bias against female gender, from presenting the myth of Narcissus in Eve's introduction in order to show her partly fallen nature to Eve's sensual portrayal in order to stigmatise her as temptress bringing on the fall. Their minute attention to the patriarchal details laid out in Milton's construction of Eve's identity and representation engage with a helpful debate that has been frequently referred to in my own close readings of the text.

A less conventional approach is provided by McColley, whose thesis examines the Biblical context of the poem in terms of Milton's gender construction and argues for Milton's fair treatment towards female gender. She insists on the gender difference that God made while creating Eve from Adam's rib, and that Milton only followed the tradition in his narrative ("Milton and the Sexes", 1989). It is ironic that McColley refers to Milton's just gender treatment, as her own reading of Biblical narrative is based on subjectivity. Such criticisms require direct analysis of the *Bible* to explore critics' interpretation of disapproving or accepting the religious texts. Many critics, however, have divided opinions on Biblical interpretation of gender. For example, Donne (*John Donne: A Critical Edition of the Major Works*, 1990) and Kaiser (*Hard Sayings of the Bible*, 1996) are of the opinion that woman, having been created from man's rib, is of the same essence and should be respected; whereas feminists critics like Gross view the Biblical account of the fall as belittling to womanhood (Gross, *Feminism and Religion*, 1996). Gross' thesis highlights the Biblical encouragement of patriarchy and woman's subjection, as she notes that women can never find healing if they are continued to be judged in Biblical perspectives. The multiple speculations on power struggle between genders, based on the Biblical account of the creation and fall, emphasised the need to engage with Biblical narrative directly.

Quranic feminists, in contrast to the Western feminists, emphasise the need to acknowledge the Quranic narrative of the fall in order to approve and uplift women's status (Hassan, "Equal Before Allah? Woman-man equality in the Islamic tradition", 1989). Quranic feminists argue that the female identity is belittled as a result of sexual politics interpreted in the account of the fall that privileges men as "Self" and undermines women as the "Other". Quranic feminists Stowasser (*Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation,* 1996) and Ali (*The rights of Women in Islam,* 1992) highlight the reasons of the Quranic revelation to the pre-Islamic Arab society, suffering from moral degradation, as a source to strengthen the deprived segments of the pre-Islamic world, like women. Critics like Wadud argue that Allah's Quranic revelation liberated women from the sexual subordination 1400 years ago, when Western feminism was not even thought about (Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective,* 1999). Wadud's thesis re-reads the patriarchal interpretations of gender constructs, and takes evidence of women's rights directly from the *Quran.* Quranic feminists, however, interpret the Quranic revelation as an endorsement to women's independence and equality, and their thesis has been a source of inspiration for this study in order to examine Eve's role in *Paradise Lost* from the Islamic perspective. The Islamic account of the fall of Adam and Eve remains the centre of attention to examine whether "God has a special relationship with males or that males embody divine attributes and the women are by nature weak, unclean, or sinful" (Barlas, "Quranic Hermeneutics and Women's Liberation", 2005). The account of the Quranic narrative of the fall and the theses of Quranic feminists might create an interesting parallel to both Milton's Biblical narrative and Western feminists' theses in order to analyse the hypothesis of Muslim students' difficulties in reading Milton. Such criticisms require direct analysis of the *Bible* and the *Quran* to explore feminists' interpretation of

disapproving or accepting the religious texts. Therefore, in this study the scenarios of pre- and post-fall are investigated in *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran* to both make clear the facts behind the Christian and Islamic tradition of tagging women and examine the key religious differences presented in *Paradise Lost* that might be problematic in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

Other than following the Biblical perspective of the fall of labelling female representation as sinner, *Paradise Lost* can be controversial due to the dominant theme of redemption. The approach of religious optimism in reference to the human fall in *Paradise Lost* is opted for Lovejoy, as he analyses the fall as fortunate while considering the theme of redemption more important than the fall itself ("Milton and the Paradox of the Fortunate Fall", 1937). Although this perspective can be useful in Muslim/multi-faith teaching in order to dilute the effect of Eve's sin, the Christian concept of redemption challenges the omnipotence of God in Islamic perspective. The sharing of power between God and Son is not a well-received thought in Islam as God is "the one and the only" with the power to bless mercy on His creation. The hope of Jesus' Second Coming as a redeemer is also affirmed by Milton's prophetic use of the phrase "Mary the second Eve", who will restore all that Eve had lost (Walter Lim, "Adam, Eve, and Biblical Analogy in *Paradise Lost*", 1990). This debate established the dilemma that Milton's Muslim readers might suffer from, as the "hope" in the poem is very Christian in itself. As the reader/student of *Paradise Lost* has a very important role in this study, it is argued that readers' conscious, analytical engagement with the narrative leads them to suffer along with the fall due to their religious involvement with and awareness of the narrative. Fish's ground-breaking work on Milton's reader offers a unique means of analysing *Paradise Lost* from the reader's perspective, but more detail is needed when examining the Muslim reader's perspective.

1.3 Milton and the Muslim Reader

This section examines certain reader-response theories that will lead us to understand the ways Muslim students may read Milton, since the thesis is with reference to Muslim students' reading experience of the Christian epic. By the end of this research we will see that the text is not static, as it produces different meanings in different spaces and times. These meanings largely depend on readers' interpretations, and these interpretations are usually based on readers' prior knowledge, experience, hypotheses, expectations, and/or set of norms and beliefs. The question is whether the text causes the reader's interpretative process to make judgments, or whether the reader's personal interpretative skills find solutions to the problems of the text in order to develop understanding. Umberto Eco in *The Role of the Reader* (1979) argues that some texts are open and invite a reader's effort to produce meanings, whereas some texts are closed and lead a reader to a predetermined response. On the other hand, Gerald Prince argues that the text is written for a particular readership, "the narratee", and that there are two kinds of readers: "virtual", readers the author has in mind, and "ideal", readers who are insightful and recognise every move of the author ("Introduction to the Study of the Narratee", 1973:178). Although this distinction between the narratee and the actual reader was ignored in further development of the reader-oriented theories, it highlighted the role of the reader in development of meaning. The above, perhaps, cannot be the case for Milton's text. *Paradise Lost* was written in a period of socio-political unrest and in targeting a particular readership Milton was expecting: "a fit audience find, though few" (VII:31). However, the text has universal appeal and even after decades plays a central part in determining imperial and educational purposes, proving that "the Literature of England is now more valuable than that of classical antiquity" (Clive, 1973; Vishwanathan, 1989 cited in Von Maltzahn, 1999:249).

In *Truth and Method* (1975), Godamer argued that literary work does not appear as a finished work; rather its meaning depends on the historical situation of the interpreter. From early in the Restoration, most of Milton's readers distorted the fusion of theology and epic that was integral to his poetics. Others, however, were ready to separate *Paradise Lost* from his notorious reputation, mainly by reading it independent of Milton's socio-religious status. Moreover, it has been argued that "the philosophical opposition between monism and dualism and the political opposition between freedom and authority simply did not have the same power over Milton as they did over eighteenth-century readers of his work" (Kolbrener 1995:73). It seems that the character of Satan has received much attention in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, certainly because of Milton's political ambitions, whereas Heaven, Adam and subsequently Eve gained readership in eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Milton and his work remained under constant evaluation through the eighteenth century and beyond, as long as the issue of English Revolution remained important to his most influential readers: Samuel Johnson, Lord Macaulay, and T. S. Eliot (Von Maltzahn, 1999:245). The antagonistic aspect of the poem put his readers in a difficult situation, as Milton had "put such long & horrible Blasphemyes in the Mouth of Satan, as no man that feares God can endure to Read it, or without a poysonous Impression" (Von Maltzahn, 1992: 194). Such reading complications might help the reader of this thesis to contextualise the situation of Muslim students (readers), as in Islam, God's omnipotence and supremacy is the ultimate truth.

Later on, in order to serve "educational objectives[,]... the circulation of *Paradise Lost* came to define the frontiers of English Protestant culture ... and a more effective reading encouraged its reception as a National poem" (Von Maltzahn, 1999:248), and more broadly of "traditional Western Culture" (Rumrich, 1996:146).

Now the promotion of Western values of English culture, apart from its agonistic views, can be another issue for multi-cultural readership of *Paradise Lost* (Christian literature) particularly in educational institutions. This can be verified by Culler's distinct models by which universities operate: "The first makes the university the transmitter of a cultural heritage, gives it the ideological function of reproducing culture and the social order. The second model makes the university a site for the production of knowledge..." (Culler, *Framing the Sign*, 1988:33). These goals might affect Muslim/multi-faith students' reading experience, as in Western institutions students may undergo a cultural shift or a religious shock, whereas in Muslim universities students' resistance against multi-faith discourses may be endorsed.

Fish's account of "affective stylistics" in *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (1972), focuses on the readers' guided experience as they pass through the text. Later, his interest in Milton's corpus and Milton's readers' experience made him write "What It's Like to Read L' *Allegro* and Il *Penseroso*" (1992) and *Surprised by Sin: the Reader in Paradise lost* (1998). In these writings, Fish proposed that the reader's understanding is guided by the narrative due to the sequence of words in the text, and that the meaning of the text is controlled by Milton. Fish argues: "I don't mean that he [Milton] left us free to choose whatever interpretation we might prefer, but that he left us free *not*[1] to choose, or more simply, that he left us free" (1992:33). Fish analyses the way that Milton's narrative in *Paradise Lost* involves the reader's perception of the fall and the reader's engagement in the narrative to realise and experience reader's own fallen nature (1998). Fish's approach explains the limited role of the reader in interpreting the text as their understanding develops from what they experience while reading and from what Milton allows them to interpret. Fish

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[1] Emphasis added by Fish

notes that "we are ... accused, taunted by an imperious voice ... with no consideration of our feelings (1988:9). He argues that "the poem's method is to involve you in a plot by confronting you with interpretative crises" (1998: xiv). Dobranski in *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England* disagrees[2] with "Fish's image of Milton" and argues that "the poet presents readers with real, sometimes strenuous, interpretive choices" (2005:184). Fish's scholarship in *Surprised by Sin* (1998) has been useful to understand how captivating Milton's narrative is for the reader, and it can be interpreted from his theory that Milton leaves no other option for a reader but to experience the Christian fall. This, perhaps, is the most difficult task for the (Muslim) reader. Fish probably has a Christian reader in his mind while he discusses the reader's realisation of their (already) fallen nature. His thesis does not identify the impact of reading the Christian fall in *Paradise Lost* on Muslim/multi-faith readers. Moreover, Culler, in *The Pursuit of Signs: semiotics, literature, deconstruction* (2001), argues that Fish never actually researches the conventions that readers follow while reading. Thus, further in this section the ways in which contemporary Muslim readers might approach the text is explained.

Terry Eagleton in *Literary Theory* argues that the text is merely a series of "cues to the reader" that help him or her to construct a hypothesis and reach a conclusion: "The reader makes implicit connections, fills in gaps, [and] draws inferences..." (1983:76). Eagleton's view could be true about Muslim students reading *Paradise Lost*, as due to having prior Islamic knowledge of the narrative of the fall and having a belief that Islam is the only truth[3], it is easier for them to make connections and find distinctions between the Christian and Islamic narratives. Jauss in *Toward Aesthetic of Reception* (1982) gives

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[2] See also John Rumrich, *Milton Unbound* (1996); Sharon Achinstein, *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (1994) for critics contradicting Fish's account
[3] See the Questionnaire findings that suggest students' adherence to the Islamic beliefs and their discomfort due to the Christian context of the poem

a historical dimension to reader-reception of a narrative. According to Jauss, readers use a "horizon of expectations" to analyse any text in a given period of time, and the reading perspective depends on the expectations of the period. Although *Paradise Lost* has been read and interpreted from multiple perspectives over the years – supporting Juass' theory – it is interesting to note that the issues for seventeenth century readers, for instance Satan's blasphemy[4], are still problematic for contemporary Muslim[5] readers. Therefore it is not simply the period that influences the text's reception, but the reader's (state of) mind. In Iser's view, history and context are not important, and "meaning" according to this theory relies on the dialectical relationship between the text and the reader (The *Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, 1978). Iser's theory supports this thesis as it stresses the (prior) experience of readers at the centre of the literary process. This may be taken to mean that the text attracts a range of possible readings according to its reader's experiences; therefore such previous experience (knowledge) assists Muslim readers to interpret *Paradise Lost* differently than readers of different religious background and cultural commitments. Their understanding is based on their prior knowledge of the subject and they make wider connections among characters of Adam, Eve and Satan. Widdowson and Selden explain Iser's view that "if we are atheists we will be affected differently ... [by the text] than if we are Christians" (*A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*: 1993). Their statement provides justification for the resistance that Muslim readers may feel towards *Paradise Lost* due to the Christian narrative. Muslim readers' prior religious knowledge (belief), which portrays Eve as innocent and respectable, may not coincide with the different religious assumptions that present her as temptress and seductress in *Paradise Lost*. In this case Muslim readers (students and teachers) may associate the poem's characters (Adam, Eve, Jesus and

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[4] See above, also see Von Maltzahn (1992) for further reading
[5] See interview findings that suggest problematic teaching and learning in Muslim scenarios

Satan), incidents like dream sequences (Books V, XII), the temptation scene and the fall (Book IX) and the departure from Paradise (Book XII), and practices (European romance and nudity) with their own belief system and cultural commitments.

Eagleton argues that the whole point of Iser's reading theory is to "bring us into deeper self-consciousness, catalyz[ing] a more critical view of our own identities... what we have been "reading", in working our way through a book, is ourselves" (1983:79). This suggests that while reading Milton, Muslim readers tend to shape their own beliefs and identity by constantly questioning their existing ideas and comparing them with those presented by Milton – particularly the ideas that might enable them to judge their religious tolerance. Eagleton argues that Iser's liberal humanism is less liberal for a reader who, in order to undergo a change, needs to hold his beliefs fairly provisionally. Iser's theory is likely to bring forth a more flexible attitude in the reader, but this constant questioning and assessment of the text and one's own beliefs may either collapse (Muslim) readers' existent ideas and transform them or make them resistant towards the text. The ways in which Muslim students cope with the text of *Paradise Lost* is further examined in Part B in interview and questionnaire findings. Specifically: are they resistant to or transformed by the text; and does their cultural, sexual and religious identity have any impact on their understanding of the texts of the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*? From the above discussion, it can be concluded that "the reading of Milton's writings always awaits (reader's response), and with it the chance to experience more wholly our being in the world in relation to the divine, whatever that may be" (Von Maltzahn 1999:249). To understand a detailed account of the narratives of the fall in Islam and Christianity, the King James Version of the Bible is used as a primary source to examine the Biblical context of the fall presented in *Paradise Lost*, and Pickthal's

English translation of the *Quran* is used to analyse Islamic account of the fall from a Muslim perspective.

Another useful perspective of interpreting the existence of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim teaching, particularly n Pakistan, could be post-colonialism. The scholarship of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin defines the power relationship between English Literature and British occupation of India and establishes the exploration of Biblical texts, like *Paradise Lost*, in India (*The post-colonial studies reader*, 2006). Said's thesis in *Orientalism* (1978) is a major foundation in understanding cross-cultural controversies and Western prejudice towards Muslims, which was useful to understand the relation between colonial powers and the colonised. Therefore, the purpose of teaching English Literature to the subject races (Muslims and Hindus) in India was to develop their lacking aesthetic morality by inducing Christian values into Indian teaching syllabus, as referred by Vishwanthan (*Masks of Conquest: Literary Studies and British Rule in India*, 1990). The English literature was used to promote Christian tents in the colonial India and, as Menon notes, for converts it was a welcoming introduction to Christianity (*Reading and Rewriting Paradise Lost in Colonial Bengal*, 2009). Menon notes that the "epic tradition" followed in *Paradise Lost* was well-received by Hindus as it paralleled their tradition of praising the heroic virtues of multiple deities in Ramayan[6]. However, the Christian context of the poem and challenging heroic virtues of Satan against God might increase the pressure of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan. The scholarship of post-colonial critics helped to contextualise post-colonial roots of Christian texts, like *Paradise Lost*, in Pakistani teaching after India's division, thereby analysing post-colonialism as one of the perspectives in which to teach *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim scenario.

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[6] Sacred text of Hindus

After engaging with the key criticism on *Paradise Lost* in Part A, the teaching perspectives of Pakistani and UK academics are examined in Part B by conducting interview surveys, and then Muslim students' experience of reading Milton is investigated in questionnaire surveys. The methodology used for Part B[7] of the thesis involved interviews and questionnaire surveys in Pakistan and the UK in order to evaluate and validate the hypotheses presented in Part A. This study opted for a purposive sampling, where participants have significant relation with the research topic in order to get an in-depth analysis of less-researched topics (Seale, *Researching Society and Culture*, 2004), therefore Muslim students were chosen from a sample of questionnaire surveys, and academics teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students were chosen for interviews in Pakistan and the UK. It is not as problematic to find a sample in Pakistan compared to the UK, as the UK is broadly multicultural and academics face the challenge of teaching multi-faith students, therefore finding a sample of teachers who frequently encounter Muslim students, and finding Muslim students in multicultural university, have been challenging. Thus, the reports gathered by Census (2001) and National Statistics (2004) proved to be helpful in finding areas with maximum Muslim populations in the UK. Further to this, Higher Education Statistics (2009/10) were used to find universities with maximum intakes of Muslim students studying English Literature.

During the data collection, a semi-structured interview technique was used to find out extensive information on a subject which has never before been examined (Wengraf, *Qualitative research interviewing: semi-structured, biographical and narrative methods*, 2001). Wengraf's approach of employing semi-structured interviews helped this research to get extensive knowledge of the perspectives and practices used to teach *Paradise Lost*

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[7] Methodology of Part B is discussed further in detail in Chap 5

in Pakistan and the UK to Muslim/multi-faith students. The semi-structured interviews helped to maintain the flow of the discussion and simultaneously allowed the researcher to explore academics' perspectives towards teaching a Christian text to Muslim/multi-faith students. Their observation and personal experience of teaching Christian texts to Muslim/multi-faith students was taken into consideration. The collected interview data was than transcribed and coded to recognise similar themes as it allows a robust content analysis (Ryan and Bernard, "Techniques to Identify Themes", 2003). Coding proved useful in developing new themes from the collected interview data and categorising them accordingly in the reported findings in Chapters 6 and 7.

For quantitative research questionnaires were used to gather students' responses, as they are time- and cost-effective (Wisker, *The Postgraduate Research Handbook*, 2007). It was not possible to interview a sample in multiple universities due to the time and cost restraints. Therefore, questionnaires were sent out to UK students via emails, and Pakistani students were reached in person due to universities' lack of integrated IT systems. The questionnaires were designed carefully to meet the research's purpose of analysing Muslim students' experience of reading *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the *Bible*. Their responses were measured in reference to Islamic and Biblical perspectives of the fall, and their cross-cultural attitudes were analysed by asking their perspectives on the social understanding of issues (prevalent in *Paradise Lost*) like veiling, nudity, rape and incest. Questionnaires were piloted on a group similar to the sample before sending to the actual sample (Oppenheim, *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*, 1998). A group of Muslim students in Pakistan was selected as a pilot sample and the questions were tried and tested in order to clarify any ambiguity. The collected data was further analysed through SPSS 13.0 and presented through Microsoft Excel 2007. The findings emerging from questionnaires were than compared to the

interview findings and the findings of Part A in the conclusion of Chapters 8 and 9 in order to grasp the overall findings.

1.4 Conclusion

Religion is one of the key issues that might differentiate communities, and based on the current political scenario it is a matter of contention worldwide. As Britain is broadly multicultural[8] and more than half of the non-White population[9] is Muslim, this research intends to break down barriers between cultures/students of different communities by proposing productive teaching practices of Christian texts to Muslim/multi-faith students. This research serves to unleash the key distinctions between the narratives of the fall, the perception of women associated to the fall widely labelled as sinner in literary texts, and the controversial identity of Jesus and Mary in Islam and Christianity. By analysing these religious differences in reference to *Paradise Lost*, the thesis examines how crucial it is to recognise that English Literature, and particularly Early Modern Literature, is embedded in Christianity and is broadly taught to Multi-faith students around the globe. It simultaneously explores the issues of morality in the narrative of *Paradise Lost*, for example nudity, rape and incest that might be embarrassing in mixed-sex and/or mixed-faith teaching. The study also analyses all the key myths related to female construction in *Paradise Lost* which suggest that Eve's character is entirely responsible for the fall, and questions Milton's use of mythical/fictional references in a Christian text. The Islamic perspective of the fall offers a very different perspective to Milton's poem, which is rooted in Christianity.

The narrative of the fall and Milton's portrayal of Eve in *Paradise Lost* become complex and problematic when taught in Muslim/multi-faith scenario. As such, the thesis determines the religious differences and then surveys the problems of teaching

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[8] And universities are growing global internationally
[9] See Chap 5 for full details

and reception of contradictory Christian concepts when *Paradise Lost* is taught in Muslim/multi-faith groups in Pakistan and the UK, and examines teaching as a mode to promote reciprocity both in academic and wider political scenarios.

Chapter 2
Paradise Lost in Muslim/Multi-faith Scenario:
Context and Critical Perspectives

The main purpose of this chapter is to explore the problems encountered by teachers and students while teaching *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario. The Biblical narrative of the fall is just one of many contexts that could be used to teach *Paradise Lost*, but when taught in Muslim/multi-faith scenario multiple perspectives could be considered in order to minimise the conflicting Christian concepts of the poem for productive multi-faith teaching. This chapter sets out the socio-cultural and political background of *Paradise Lost*, along with finding the influences of these contexts that shape the narrative and characters of *Paradise Lost*. These contexts are examined as a way of approaching the text in Muslim and multi-faith teaching. The chapter compares Eve's representation in *Paradise Lost* with Milton's contemporaries writing about Eve and the role of women in Early Modern society, presenting the advent of what could be called an early prototype of feminism in Early Modern England. Historicist feminism is used to focus on the construction of gender roles in seventeenth century England, with reference to gender hierarchy, physical and moral weakness, education and intellect, and dress and conduct. This enables an evaluation of Eve in relation to the seventeenth century parameters of an ideal woman.

The next part of the chapter examines the possible critical perspectives that might be employed while teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith groups in Pakistan and the UK. There are several perspectives that could be used to teach *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario. Firstly, feminist criticism specific to *Paradise Lost* is used, which involves outlining historical progression from mainstream 1980s feminism to post-feminism in the 21st century in order to understand the construction and interpretation of the Miltonic idea of female identity throughout the centuries. Secondly,

Quranic feminism in relation to Muslims' perspective of understanding the narrative of creation with respect to *Paradise Lost* is employed. Thirdly, the narrative is engaged with Post-Colonialism in relation to Pakistani teaching, which provides a background of how *Paradise Lost* became a part of Pakistani curriculum. The discussion of the context and critical perspective of the poem leads to the key questions of how *Paradise Lost* could be approached by the teachers in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, and is explored in Part B of the thesis as part of the data collection and analysis.

2.1 *Paradise Lost:* Religious and Socio-Cultural Context

It is important to discuss the context of the poem and relate it to the teaching practices that might include the historical or Christian context of *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and UK universities when teaching Muslim/multi-faith students. Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* at the time when England was experiencing both political and religious flux. He engaged with these changes by writing not only a Biblical epic, but a work that sought to define the roles of Christian men and women. This section emphasises the relationship between gender, religion and print in the seventeenth century England and the ambiguities prevalent in its socio-cultural beliefs and practices in order to explore some issues that the twenty-first century reader of *Paradise Lost* must confront. Simultaneously, it focuses on Milton's religious beliefs and his understanding of gender through the representation of Adam and Eve providing an association of faith and gender that will be explored in the later analyses of Muslim students' responses to both.

2.1.1 Milton and the Seventeenth Century Woman Debate

There remains a question over whether Early Modern women ever experienced a "Renaissance", since their identity became more contained during the reign of James I "when strict measures were introduced to curtail female activities that challenged entrenched gender roles" (Ostovich and Sauer, *Reading Early Modern Women*, 2004:6).

Nevertheless, this period, for the first time, saw English women preaching, and subsequently writing and publishing in their defence. In particular, the "pamphlet wars"[10] from this period prefigure modern feminist discourses and encourage the modern reader to reconsider the start of English feminism. There is no straightforward answer to social shaping of gender identity through political movements and multiple religious sects in Early Modern England. The traditional dichotomy between private and public spheres, Catholic and Protestant fundamentalism, and Puritan individualism and emphasis on spiritual companionship, altogether complicated the prevalent practice of patriarchy. Kenneth Charlton in "Women and Education" demonstrates that the religious education of females began in the church and continued in households where women served as "agents" to transfer knowledge to their children (2008:17). Such religious education was spread in the context of the Protestant state church in order to entail the power structure of society and maintain obedience, subjection and uniformity in the subjects. This obedience and submission was primarily maintained through gender hierarchies in the household, as this helped the political and social stability[11]. Shannon Miller in "Serpentine Eve: Milton and the Seventeenth-Century Debate Over Women" notes that the "notions of political obedience were based on the obedience of a wife to her Husband" (2008:63). We can observe that Milton was of the similar view since his engagement with the family/state analogy intersects with his representation of Adam and Eve's hierarchal relation and the balance created in Eden. In *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Milton agrees that it is "unprofitable and dangerous to the Commonwealth, when the household estate, out of which must flourish forth the vigor and the spirit of all

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[10] See also Katherine Usher Handerson and Barbara F. McManus (1985) for a detailed account of English Pamphlet Wars; see also Ostovich and Sauer for excerpts from these female authors (2004); for an account of the influence of female pamphleteers on Milton see Sumers (2004)
[11] See also Margaret Ezell, who argues that: "Relations between husband and wife are part of the larger questions in the seventeenth century on the nature of political theory and individual liberty" (1987:60)

public enterprises, is so ill contented and procur'd at home, and cannot be supported" (1953-82: 247).

Patriarchy sought to define and confine female roles in Early Modern England. Kate Aughterson argues that "this organisational shift to the public / private split between men and women's identities through work is discernible in overtly ideological texts of the period" (Aughterson 1995:195). The portrayal of the two major characters of *Paradise Lost* seems stereotypical in which the patriarchal system is reinforced: a man must be the head of the family and the father takes over many of the priest's functions. At its most extreme, patriarchal ideology emphasised the subjection of the wife before her husband, leaving no space for female identity and equality, but less radical thinkers focused on the spiritual equality of a woman, promoting individualism and the spiritual connection with God. For example, William Gouge in his conduct book *Of Domesticall Duties* notes that a wife "may do nothing against God's will, but many things must she do against her own will, if her husband require[s] her" (Gouge 1676:337). Milton's patriarchal beliefs are evident in the way he introduces Adam and Eve in his poem. Their roles are described as ruler and subordinate respectively, which is apparent from this: "The superior love" of Adam (IV: 499) which presents "true authority in men" (IV: 295) and confers "absolute rule" (IV: 301), in contrast to Eve's identity which is perceived as inferior, "not equal as their sex not equal" (IV: 296).

Milton embraced many theological beliefs that differentiated him from contemporary Christianity, meaning that both Milton and his poetry defy straightforward categorization for the modern reader. Seventeenth-century historians relate him to Puritanism because of his anti-monarchical and anti-church literary activities and strict religious beliefs; to Calvinism for his belief in predestination; to Armenianism for keeping a hope in salvation, and to Antinomianism for rejecting socially-established

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morality acting against Godly order. Like Puritans, Milton was of the opinion that Adam's disobedience had corrupted human nature, and that Adam's "descendants were utterly incapable of performing any virtuous act of their own volition" (Martin Evans, "John Milton", 2011:156). The development of such thought is sometimes considered to be a result of his political despair, as English people could not strongly defend their freedom against the monarchy. Therefore, *Paradise Lost* "dramatizes major theological issues – including predestination, foreknowledge, free will, and providence – central to both the religious controversies that grew out of the Reformation and the religious ferment of the English Revolution" (Loewenstein, "The seventeenth-century Protestant English epic", 2012:150). Another part of Milton's theological belief that was shaped by his political career and also influenced his poetry is the exercising of free will: "God left free the Will, for what obeys / Reason, is free" (IX:351-2). Human beings "by degrees of merit rais'd' may work their way up to Heaven" (VII:157-61) since they, as God observes, are "Authors to themselves" in "what they judge and what they choose" (III:122–3). This shows that Milton's "man falls freely and possesses the means to resist temptation" (Loewenstein 2012:150). By giving such freedom to man and angels, Milton not only limits God's powers but also challenges his foreknowledge. The issue is whether or not Milton's God knew about Adam's fall beforehand, and whether if he had known he would have prevented Adam and Eve from sinning and bringing the curse to mankind. Therefore, if God permitted free will, Adam and Eve must not be punished. The long-standing question of whether free will and God's foreknowledge[12] and omnipotence coexist remains debatable, but for Milton and many of his contemporaries "to accept any kind of determinism was to abandon free will, and to abandon free will was to abandon theodicy" (Danielson "The Fall and Milton's theodicy", 2006:150). The

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[12] For further discussion on free will, foreknowledge and Milton's theological believes see also Danielson's *Milton's Good God: A Study in Literary Theodicy* (Cambridge and New York, 1982); Danielson's "Timelessness, Foreknowledge, and Free Will", *Mind* 86 (1977), 430-2

difference between the Catholic and Protestant faiths has often been related to the question of free will, "but a more basic distinction concerns authority, which Protestants place, not in the institution of the church or its hierarchy, but in Scripture – 'the only true theologie' (Milton, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 1973 *YP* 7: 306) – and in the Holy Spirit that makes it 'piercing'." (Christopher "Milton and the reforming spirit" 2006:196). Milton defined "True Religion" as revealed religion: "learnt and believed from the word of God only" (Milton cited in Sharon Achinstein *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England*, 2003: 127).

Milton's theological patterns are independent from one another in *De Doctrina Christina* and *Paradise Lost,* as in the epic he presents his ideas about God more freely[13] and imaginatively than in the theological tract. The contradictions of the poet's theological beliefs may depend on his own uncertainties or evolving vision. In *De Doctrina,* which remained unpublished until 1823, Milton explained how to read the Bible thematically[14] in the book about beliefs, and then proves his point by citing both Old and New Testaments. Radzinowicz notes that Milton read the Bible "*typologically, subjecting the Old Testament to a Christian hermeneutic, according to which events and persons of the Old are seen as foreshadowing or predicting those of the New Testament*" ("How Milton read the Bible: the case of *Paradise Regained*", 2006:203). Milton praises the Hebrew Bible in its exposition of sonship, arguing that "The generation of the divine nature is by no one more sublimely or more fully explained than by the apostle to the Hebrews" (Milton, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 1973 *YP* 6:211). He also concentrates on the ways of worship that man must follow, saying that God ought to be worshipped by "methods he himself has prescribed" (Milton, *Complete Prose Works of*

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[13] For comparison between *Paradise Lost* and *De Doctrine* see also C. A. Patrides, "*Paradise Lost* and the Language of Theology, (1967: 102-19); Joan Webber "Milton's God" (1973:514-531)

[14] For detailed reading on Milton's ways of reading the Bible see *Yale Prose 6:* 581; also see Budick -- Hartmann and Budick in the bibliography1986:198-212; Lewalski, 1979:111-44).

John Milton, 1973 *YP* 6:666). The following beliefs complicate Milton's religious persona: his rejection of the Trinity[15] in which the Son was subordinate to the Father, his sympathy with the belief that Jesus was not divine, and his controversial dogma on mortalism in *Paradise Lost* in which the soul dies with the body and also in *De Doctrine*: "If Christ really died, then both his soul and his body died ... As for his divine nature, it is more questionable whether that also succumbed to death" (Milton, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 1973 *YP* 6:439). *De Doctrine* makes clear Milton's position by "amassing scripture texts – but his understanding of those texts and their terms often differed markedly from that of his Puritan contemporaries and his later orthodox Christian readers" (Lewalski "Forum: Milton's Christian Doctrine", 1992:152). Yet there are many Protestant Christian beliefs simultaneously projected in *Paradise Lost*, for example the citation of Old and New Testaments, unworthiness of humankind and the significance of Christ's love leading to salvation.

This simplified and regulated form of worship had a direct impact upon the way gender identity was constructed during Milton's period, and it further contributed to the spread of censorious views on morality. According to the definition in *OED*, "Puritan" is on the one hand about strict faith and on the other about morality and spiritual individualism. Both have an impact on the way present-day teachers and students interpret *Paradise Lost*.[16] When considering gender, Puritanism was not an organised movement to liberate women and provide gender impartiality, but a means to create a godly community, emphasising scriptures and preaching and finding a direct relationship

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[15] See also Christopher: "Milton finds no scriptural warrant for the Holy Spirit as a *Person* within the Trinity, but his *Christian Doctrine* assembles many verses about 'the spirit of God'. As he explains in *Christian Doctrine*, the communion that obtained between man and God in his tradition was the kind of union that occurs in 'persuasion' (see *Yalse Prose* 6:471-5): agreement of mind and heart and soul, unity in the Spirit. In *Christian Doctrine* the Son and the Holy Spirit are both defined by their dialogue: of each, Milton says that he 'never speaks anything of himself but always refers to the authority of God the Father' *(Yale Prose* 6: 259-60)". ("Milton and the reforming spirit" 2006:200)

[16] Discussed more fully in relation to findings of interviews in Chap 6 and 7

between the individual and God. However, Puritanism did contribute to gender equality. Before the Civil War, women of this self-fashioned godly community, engaged in spiritual Reformation, but did not intend to be a part of politics and policy making. During the next two decades of revolution, these women became politicised and "developed a form of political consciousness and acted to influence political outcomes" (Willen 2002:34). During the Civil War, women from different sects emerged more fully on the public sphere and a type of "sexual politics" began, as men and women competed for control in many congregations (Crawford 1993:140ff). Milton's Puritanism[17] follows Hutchinson's definition of Puritan according to the political understanding in the reign of Charles I. A Puritan was one who dared to question the king's "impositions in the worship of God", resulting in the disturbance of public peace, and who objected to "unjust oppressions of the subject". Those who could fight in favour of the public interests were Puritans (Hutchinson 1973: 43ff), however Milton's Puritanism does not represent individualism in terms of spiritual gender equality, as shown through his treatment of gender in *Paradise Lost*. Milton, while his representations of gender could be seen as ambiguous since the Puritan notion of the individual's (man/woman) direct relationship with God, and Milton's personal belief published in *De Doctrine Christina* that "any man who wishes to be saved must work out his beliefs for himself" (*John Milton The Major Works*, 1991:723) remains obscure in *Paradise Lost*, indicating the containment of women through Eve; they have to admit to, and agree with, the fact that they do not want to know any more than they are told. Milton's Eve never interrupts during the conversation between Adam and Raphael, because she is "inferior in mind and inward faculties" (VIII: 541-2). She is completely reliant on her husband's knowledge: "God is thy law, thou mine: To know no more/ Is

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[17] See also "The Non-Puritan Ethics, Metaphysics, and Aesthetics of Milton's Spenserian Masque Catherine", 2003:215-244

woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise" (IV: 637-8). *Paradise Lost* persistently

presents Eve as less worthy than Adam: her sex, her responsibilities and her faculties are

all inferior, so that she does not possess any superiority to or equality with Adam. Even

direct spiritual connection of Eve with God was not possible unless Adam acted as an

intermediary between the two[18]. This suggests that women had to worship God through

the medium of their husband, as does Eve: "without whom am to no end, my guide and

head, what thou hast said is just and right" (IV: 442-3). Patriarchal texts of the

seventeenth century like *Paradise Lost* indicate that women in seventeenth century

England have an inferior place in the socio-religious hierarchy, below both God and

husbands, and they have to obey men without objection as "to know no more/ Is

woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise" (IV: 637-8). The marginality and

inferiority of women are reinforced in Book VIII, although it is presented so carefully

that readers may not at first appreciate it. For instance, Eve goes to the garden while the

discourse of Adam and Raphael takes place, emphasising the role of women in a

patriarchal family system, when women undertook domestic labour and men handled the

external crucial affairs: "Delighted, or not capable her ear/ Of what was high: such

pleasure she reserved,/ Adam relating, she sole auditress;/ Her husband the relater she

preferred/ Before the Angel, and of him to ask" (VIII: 51-55). The reason for Eve's

absence is that according to patriarchal traditions in early modern society, women were

not considered able to understand and interpret God's words. Thus, Milton presents Eve

as preferring that Adam translate God's "discourse" thereby showing her complete

dependence on him. Milton discourages female potential by undermining Eve's intellect

"inferiour, in the mind/ And inward faculties" (VIII: 541-2). The mainstream

fundamentalist authors, relying on Pauline tradition, viewed Eve's sin as inherent in all

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[18] See later (pp: 48) Eve's dream sequence and the debate of Lanyer on woman's pursuit of knowledge

women since women were forced to be marginalised not only in print and on socio-cultural grounds but also in religious terms. Apart from the social hierarchy, the religious hierarchal structure in churches also discouraged women from speaking. Achinstein argues that "Every sect sees the face of his own Religion in the Scripture, not because it was there before, but because his strong fancy and prejudice brought it thither..." (Achinstein, 2003:18). But the sects where were the radical women's voices emerged, patriarchal writers in seventeenth century England could easily justify their (patriarchal) practices and preferences through the *Bible*.

Milton's text, if read in the context of the "pamphlet wars" may provide a liberal view for Muslim/ multi-faith teaching as some of the pamphlets make an easier way in for Muslim readers not wishing to condemn Eve in the context of mainstream patriarchal seventeenth century theology, and if taught without the social context can be difficult for Muslim/multi-faith teaching. Students from different faiths may not be able to relate to the patriarchal Christian literature, and so will have trouble contextualising the text and the poet's religious beliefs. Both the context of gender hierarchy as constructed by religious sects initiated by socio-political movements of Early Modern England, and Milton's female contemporaries defending Eve and themselves in print, reflect upon the intentions of misogynist male authors of the period, who attempted unsuccessfully to marginalise women. Gender historians believe that religion had a positive impact on lives of early modern women: although religion was gendered, it provided women a mode of expression. Early Modern women considered that "piety was a virtue in which they could and should excel ... Piety also 'provided women of various ranks with a platform of which to emerge on a public stage, especially during the mid-seventeenth-century during the sectarian radicalism of the Civil War and Revolution'" (Diane Willen, "Religion and the Construction of the Feminine", 2002: 23). The social upheaval

produced by the English Civil War and interregnum (1642-60) promoted women into performing new roles in the absence of their husbands. Piety extended from the private to the public sphere, with women who provided religious education to children and exercising authority over servants now beginning to "serve as patrons of the clergy, translators of religious texts, prophets and visionaries, sectarian figures, religious exemplars and lay teachers" (Willen, 2002:24). This section identifies the profusion of dissenting voices that English Civil War gave rise to in order to define woman's identity, and takes account of the ways Milton and contemporary female authors interpret the "gender debate" via representation of Eve's character. Muslim readers, if provided with an understanding of the range of sectarian pamphlets published in context of *Paradise Lost*, can well perceive the socio-cultural situation of patriarchal practices that defined gender roles in Early Modern England, as well as the role of male-female authors trying to shape and/or maintain a sexual identity fighting for or against the existent gender politics, thereby enriching their understanding of the text[19].

2.1.2 Physical and Moral weakness

Women in Early Modern England were considered as "the weaker vessel" on both physical and moral levels (Fraser, 1984:4) and the misogynist tradition of early Christianity[20] emphasise women's "potential for corruption" (Willen, 2002:23). The female body was considered as frail and it was thought to imply a moral and spiritual inferiority that could result their souls be attacked by Satan more easily than those of men. This idea appears to be an interpretation of Biblical narrative of the fall that condemns Eve for being seduced by Satan due to her moral/physical weakness. In

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[19] As in the case of sample universities, Pakistani teachers offered minimum or no context of the text whereas in the UK a brief context is offered but not from the perspective of pamphlet wars
[20] For an account of patriarchal Christian traditions practiced in Early Modern England and women writing rereading the Bible, see Suzanne Trill's "Religion and the Construction of femininity", in Wilcox (*Women and Literature in Britain, 1500-1700*, 1996); see also N.H. Keeble for the cultural constraints on seventeenth century women reinforced thorough biblical narrative of the fall (*The Cultural Identity of Seventeenth-Century Woman: A reader*, 1994: x)

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contrast, masculine strength was accepted due to men's stronger genital organs. For example, Galen, a classical Roman physician and philosopher of Greek origin, suggests that "the testis of a male are as larger as a warmer animal" (Galen cited in Aughterson 1995:48), which showed man's strength as a ruler. The gender debate began with the birth of the first woman from man's rib, and Early Modern writers who wished to attack women, via inherited tradition, found ample precedent in classical antiquity. Contrarily, most of Milton's contemporary female authors who justified women's position used the Bible or Church doctrine to define their identity. They promoted the female sex through the most influential Biblical reference of Eve by discussing Eve's mode of birth, her role in expulsion from Heaven, her mode of punishment, and the promise of redemption made to her.

Jane Anger's *Her Protection Against Women* (1589) is considered to be one of the earliest[21] English responses to the women question in the pamphlet wars. She suggests that God formed Adam "*In principio* of drosse and filthy clay" and that only after "God saw that in him his workmanship was good" did God create "woman of mans fleshe, that she might bee purer then he" (Ferguson, 1985:65). She also argues "how far we women are more excellent then men" (1985:65). She contends: "From Woman sprang mans salvation. A woman was the first that beleeved, & a woman like wise the first that reverd of him. In women is onely true *Fidelity:* ... but grace was first given to a woman, because to our lady: which premises conclude that women are wise" (Ferguson, 1985:65–66). In 1611, Aemelia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*[22] blames Adam[23]

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[21] See Shepherd (1985:30) ; Ferguson (1985:58) for discussion of earliest English female authors
[22] For a discussion on Lanyer's passion in inscribing Jesus to search for patronage, see Erica Longfellow (2004)
[23] But surely *Adam* cannot be excusde,
Her fault though great, yet hee was most too blame;
What Weaknesse offerd, Strength might haue refusde,
Being Lord of all, the greater was his shame;
Although the Serpents craft had her abusde,

for being lord of the earth and deceived by a weaker sex. She argues that Adam is responsible for the original sin, and that this error is subsequently inherent in all men. Likewise, Speght in *A Movzell for Melastomvs* argues: "Yet we shall find the offence of *Adam* and *Eue* almost to paralell," for "if *Adam* had not approoued of that deed which *Eue* had done, and beene willing to treade the steps which she had gone" he could have saved her. (1617: 4–5; C2v–C3r). Speght argues that Eve's flexibility towards Satan and transgression from the state of obedience is because of how she is made, as Eve resembles a "Cristall glasse" which cracks more easily than Adam's "stone pot" (1617: 4; C2v). Miller argues that these female writers, by justifying Eve's transgression, justify women's position and their "own entrance into print" as well by identifying themselves with Eve instead of Mary (2008: 47). She notes that Milton would have read the pamphlet war (before writing *Paradise Lost*) between Joseph Swetnam and three women pamphleteers who responded in defence of women (Rachel Speght, Ester Sowernam, and Constantia Munda), since a copy of Rachel Speght's *Mouzell for Melastomus* is found in Milton's library, and that debate appears to "shape Milton's choices[24] in *Paradise Lost*"[25] (2008: 44). These female writings in defence of Eve may be interpreted as vehicles for questioning the social constraints imposed on women, but for the post-Civil War female authors[26] like Margret Cavendish and Lucy Hutchinson the fall is deployed to promote women's engagement and authority in politics in seventeenth century England. Such writings are examples of women negotiating constraints on their intellect, representing

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. . . .

No subtill Serpents falshood did betray him,
If he would eate it, who had powre to stay him? (Lanyer, 1611: D1r–v)

[24] It is further analysed in this chapter how Milton responded to these female authors by continuing the "anti-feminist" debate in *Paradise Lost*; see also Miller (2008)

[25] See also Kari McBride and John Ulreich who note that Milton should be read "in the light of early modern treatises on the nature of women and the entire history of the *querelle des femmes*" (1999:190); Mary Nyquist has suggested that "Milton could not but have known that questions of priority figure prominently in the Renaissance debate over 'woman'" (1988:107)

[26] See also Shanon Miller's "All about Eve: Seventeenth-Century Women Writers and the Narrative of the Fall" in *The History of British Women's Writing, 1610-1690* (Mihoko Suzuki, 2011)

themselves as philosophical and analytical thinkers and creating a space in the political/public spheres.

In Book IV, when Milton undertakes a detailed introduction of Adam and Eve, the Early Modern socio-cultural context becomes evident through the representation of gender hierarchy accomplished by physical and moral weakness of the female sex. Adam and Eve are introduced with predefined roles of power and subjection. The initial representation of Eve, however, is immediately followed by the myth of Proserpina who was raped by Pluto, the king of hell. This raises the question of why Milton introduces rape twice (Sin and Proserpina) into *Paradise Lost* before introducing Eve, a character who will be tempted by Satan. The two possible reasons for this allusion to sexual assault are: first, proof of female weakness as a victim; or second, an attempt to expose women's moral frailty. In the text, all male characters (Satan, Adam, Christ, and God) are logically consistent with and heroic in their roles, either being morally good or evil. The women, however, are presented as dishonest and corrupt in character: Sin is incestuous with her father (II: 766); Proserpina eats the forbidden 'seven grains of a pomegranate'[27] and is raped (IV: 268-72); Rhea is jealous of her inferior status to that of a maiden[28] (IV: 279); and Eve sins completely. One of the key questions emerging from this context is how both teachers and Muslim students respond to the female characters[29] in the poem and whether or not sympathy is ever possible for Muslim/multi-faith pedagogy.

Eve's moral weakness is also reflected through her pride – which presumably resulted the fall, as it is commonly said that pride came before the fall.

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[27] The story of Proserpina is discussed in more detail in Chap 4
[28] The story of Rhea is discussed in detail in Chap 4
[29] A detailed discussion on how Eve's identity is constructed thorough different female characters in *Paradise Lost* is undertaken in Chap 4 and is also discussed in Part B of interview and questionnaire findings

A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love: There I had fixed
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire...
                                                   (IV: 461-6)

The image that Eve sees in the water is "Alluding to Ovid's story of the proud youth Narcissus, who was punished for his scornfulness by being made to fall in love with his own reflection in the pool, and to pine with vain desire". This passage is ironic as we know that "Eve is to fall into precisely this error of seeking...an ideal self" (Fowler, 1976:222). Eve's self-love could be the reason of her fall, but unlike Narcissus, Eve does not "return to pine for it forever... [instead] she chooses his [Adam's] manly beauty above her own" (Revard, 1973: 75). This correction of choice distinguishes Eve from Narcissus and foregrounds Eve's power of choice (Kilgour, 2005:336), although that proved fatal later. Revard and Kilgour focus on Eve's power of choice, yet they do not seem to consider how Milton misuses this power later in Book IX when she errs in deciding and eating independently[30].

In Book VIII, however, the narrative suggests that her fall resulted from her deprivation of love instead of self-love and pride:

...keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgement to do aught, which else free will
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!
                                                   (VIII: 634-8)

Raphael tells Adam not to love Eve exceedingly and that passion of Eve will lead him to lose his wits; he needs to be rational while loving her, lest he sins against God's order. Therefore, Eve cannot be loved passionately by Adam even though he is the only one with whom she could share all her fears, joys, dreams and love. Eve considers Adam her

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[30] Eve's tragic predestined fall and freedom of choice are discussed later

guide and wants the maximum affection, protection and support from him, but Adam

does not fulfil these desires, allowing Satan to address this deficiency later on. It is,

therefore, important to explore in Part B whether the teachers relate Eve's fall with her

weakness (suggesting her pride and narcissistic desires as a root cause of the fall), or

present her as a sufferer of love tragedy.

Eve's weaker sex reflects her moral weakness; Book V retains a close focus on

Eve's identity, intensifying reader's appreciation of her inner thoughts via the dream

sequence[31]. A close analysis of the text reveals that Milton's Eve has the propensity to be

disloyal to Adam and susceptible to Satan. In her "dream", Eve appears to agree to make

Satan her "guide":

> With him I flew, and underneath beheld
> The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide
> And various: Wondering at my flight and change
> To this high exaltation; suddenly
> My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
> And fell asleep.
>
> (V: 87-92)

Eve explains how she flew with Satan (unknown to her), and how excited she was to see

the earth beneath her. The lines are, however, ambiguous since the other interpretation of

the quote could be that earth was surprised to see her excitement at the flight, and

"wondering" suggests earth's shock at Eve's transgress. The last line reinforces this by

referring to death and mortality as a consequence of tasting the fruit that Eve will bring

to herself, paralleling how in the dream she "sunk down and fell asleep" (V: 91-2). Of

course Eve does not realise that her companion is Satan, but the reader is able to predict

how Milton's term "guide" in the dream sequence foreshadows, for the reader, Satan's

successful temptation of Eve. In this Book, Satan has taken the place of Adam.

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[31] Eve's dream sequence in *Paradise Lost* is further analysed in reference to Lanyer and Speght who
encourage women's pursuit of knowledge delivered to them through dreams

Previously, Eve has considered Adam to be her "guide[32]": "my guide and head, what thou hast said is just and right" (IV: 442-3). Book V thus acts as an introduction to Book IX, where Eve's dream will be realised, and Book XII when she will see God in her dream[33]. The function of the whole dream, as Bowers notes, is to "engender pride, a sense of discontent with her hierarchal relation as subject to Adam" ("Adam, Eve and the Fall in *Paradise Lost*", 1969:267). Bowers views Eve's dream in a cause and effect relation to the fall, but he ignores the cultural sigma of demon power over dreams; this parallels Milton's way of responding to contemporary female authors who saw dreaming as a mode through which God delivered knowledge[34]. One of the most powerful elements of the dream occurs when Eve is attracted by the pleasant smell of the fruit. When driven to eat it, she experiences a craving desire:

> So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
> Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
> Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell
> So quickened appetite, that I, methought,
> Could not but taste. (V: 282-6)

The word "appetite" suggests different ways of understanding Eve's nature. "Appetite" may either refer to the desire for knowledge, the longing to be immortal, and/or to physical lust. Critics, like Fowler think that Eve loses half of her innocence after this dream and that she is partly fallen (1976:263-4). But in Book V, Eve regrets her dream and proves to be a follower of divine law:

> But silently a gentle tear let fall
> From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
> Two other precious drops that ready stood,
> Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
> Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
> And pious awe, that feared to have offended. (V: 130-5)

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[32] As per Early Modern culture, Eve due to her weaker sex, was always dependent on a male guide either as Adam or Satan

[33] For a relation of the dream sequence in Books V and XII, see later debate in the section of knowledge and intellect

[34] See Milton's role in continuing the pamphlet war in *Paradise Lost* in the section of knowledge and intellect

Eve cries out of remorse, guilt and fear, with the tears representing true contrition, allowing Milton to portray that challenging the divine order even in dream needs to be pardoned. When Adam consoles her and kisses away her tears, she redeems her purity and those tears are a source of her purgation. The teachers in Pakistan and the UK might look at the dream sequence in Book V as an important prophetic moment in order to show Muslim/multi-faith students readers how Milton sets out Eve's fall in the poem. This section discusses how Eve's physical weakness is related to her gender and moral inferiority. However, it is crucial to consider how the socio-cultural context of seventeenth century England is perceived in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, in reference to lack of female morality and physical weakness. This might result in some agitation among Muslim/multi-faith students because of their religious connection with Eve.

2.1.3 Education and Intellect

During the seventeenth century, women were considered to be deficient in intellectual power and so were not expected to understand business, politics or even divine words. McColley in "Milton and the Sexes" explains the limitations of women and their isolation from the outside world and suggests that in seventeenth century England "women did not hold civil offices or ecclesiastical offices, attend universities, or engage in the major professions" (McColley 1989:149). Therefore, their major duties were to raise children, manage the household and to be submissive to their husbands. Female education was not extensive and women were mainly taught to read the Holy Scripture and household manuals adhering to St. Paul's Biblical injunction: "And if they learnt anything, let them ask their husband at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (I *Corinthians* 14:35). The patriarchal family system ensured that fathers and husbands retained absolute authority. A woman lived half of her life in subservience to her father and the rest to the husband, and wedlock appeared to remove any freedom for

women. A contemporary metaphor describing such a submission is given by William Whateley in *A bride-bush: a direction for married persons*: "She submits herself with quietness, cheerfully, even as a well-broken hoarse turns at the least turning, stands at the least check of the rider's bridle, readily going and standing as he wishes that sits upon his back" (Whateley 1619:43). Whateley describes a wife's submission and considers this her grace and spiritual salvation. He argues that women should be obedient and act according to her rider's (husband's) wish. It is important to remember that these texts are written by men, and one cannot rely solely on the evidence in such writings that "women were uniformly downtrodden in seventeenth century Britain" and were "elucidating an ideal that was doubtless never achieved" (Graham, et al., 1989:8). Gradually, the period saw women begin to gain some independence as, for example, translators, teachers, preachers and religious writers (Snook, 2005), (Longfellow, 2004). It is contradictory to Milton's understanding and representation of Early Modern culture in *Paradise Lost* that his female contemporaries showed extensive knowledge of classical and later authorities. However, their writing was not limited to religion and meditation, but also encompassed passion and romance[35].

Literacy[36] was a critical requirement for most of the women renowned for their piety. Educated[37] women started to find meanings and derive authority for interpretation of spiritual texts, and also began to publish in defence of female education, knowledge and intellect. Tattlewell's protest in the pamphlet war condemned the practice of denial

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[35] For female writings about passion and romance see Snooks' account on Mary Wroth (2005:23); also see religious passion in Lanyer's writing in Longfellow (2004)

[36] See Edith Snook who argues that "Key to understanding early modern literacy is the distinction between reading and writing literacies. Reading was actually taught prior to writing in schools and at home, with the result that those with less education – particularly women and the poor – could have learned to read without ever learning to write..." (*Women Reading, and the Cultural Politics of Early Modern England*, 2005: 8-9)

[37] See also Kevin Sharpe suggesting that "Nearly all the readers about whom we have information are male. Educated women read, but in a patriarchal culture that valued female silence as well as obedience, women's responses to books were seldom articulated or recorded publicly" (*Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England*, 2000: 251)

towards "'generous and liberal [female] Education'", yet the female authors fighting for women in Early Modern England – for example, Speght, Sowernam, Munda, Lanyer and Anger – "displayed impressive learning in these treatise" (*Half Humankind*, 1985:35). In the seventeenth century "a learned woman (is) [was] thought to be a comet, that bodes mischief whenever it appears", yet Milton's contemporaries argued that women needed education to "polish" their souls (Bethusa Makin, *Essay to Revive the Ancient Education of Gentlewomen*, 1673: A2 recto). Even the immediate context of the publication of the 10 Book version of *Paradise Lost* (1667) included the publication of Margaret Fell's *Women's Speaking Justified*, where Fell reinterprets the creation and the fall narrative in order to authorise women's right to preach and speak against the Pauline tradition of prohibition of such acts, arguing that "the Woman spoke the truth unto the Lord" (1666: 116). These women expanded their domestic roles through rereading Biblical narratives and making "God's words their own" (Trill, "Religion and the Construction of femininity", 1996:41). These writings tended to transform Protestant ideas[38] and challenge stereotypical constructs of masculinity and femininity embedded in traditional Christian narratives.

In order to examine whether Milton's Eve demonstrates in any form the complex development of female intellectualism in the mid- seventeenth century, it is useful to examine not only those sections of *Paradise Lost* where she appears, but also those where she is absent. It is noticeable that Eve does not appear in Books I-III, although she may be linked through Sin, the only female in Book II; whereas there is an absence of female characters in Book I and III. In Book I Milton describes the purpose of poem and a physical description of Satan and hell. It also contains the inspiring passionate speeches

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[38] See also Suzane W. Hull arguing that "Women were told over and over and over that they were inferior, that they had lesser minds, that they were able to handle their own affairs" (*Chaste, Silent & Obedient*, 1982:27)

of Satan to his followers "better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven" (I: 263). In Book II, Satan encounters his daughter Sin. The allegorical figure of Sin is the first female character introduced in *Paradise Lost*; she provides Satan with the key to hell, allowing him access to heaven. Similarly, Eve is the only female character in Eden, and by eating the fruit opens the gates of knowledge, sin and damnation to all humankind. This may be interpreted as Milton's attempt to generalise all women and to link Eve with evil, where "Sin" and "sin" are combined.[39] In Book III, Milton introduces God, the Son and the heavenly host in heaven. In this Book, male power dominates while female presence and identity is lacking. Female absence in the introductory books can be seen as an act to achieve "The basic masculine sense of self that is formed through a denial of the male's initial connection with femininity" (Kahn 1986:33). Throughout Book III, Milton praises male faculties. Attributes like rationality, analytical power, superiority, independence, grace and glory are all identified as masculine:

> Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
> Most glorious, in him all his Father shone
> Substantially expressed, and in his face
> Divine compassion visibly appeared,
> Love without end and without measure grace,
> Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.

<div align="center">(III: 138-143)</div>

The quotation above reveals the glory and grace which Jesus, as Son of God, has inherited from his Father. Similarly, both Fowler and Steadman affirm this concept of assertion of masculine glory and notes that "The Son of God, Adam, and Satan are all described as gloriously heroic, but each manifests heroic excess or pre-eminence in a characteristically different quality" (Fowler 1971:151). With Son it is grace 'without measure'; with Adam, 'exceeding love' (IX: 961); with Satan, merit (II: 427-9)" (Steadman 1959:92). Heroic qualities are thus exclusive to male characters. As such, the

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[39] See the similarity discussed between Sin and Eve later in Chap 2 and 3

first three Books act as a denial of the female identity, integrity and dignity. The disrespect for a daughter – Satan's incest[40] with Sin ("womb conceived a growing burden" (II: 766)), or disregard for a mother – Sin's rape by her son; Death ("embraces forcible and foul ingendering with me of that rape begot these yelling monsters" (II: 794)) may be considered vivid examples. Milton's patriarchal preference have been identified and criticised[41] by Milton's contemporaries and modern feminists, therefore it would be interesting to see how Eve (and the other female characters) are presented and perceived in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, with regard to the heroic male characters, because Eve is one of the much-respected religious female figures in Islamic tradition and Milton's biased treatment might offend Muslim students.

Likewise, Eve's absence is maintained in Books VI and VII, as these Books have comparatively no significance for Eve's character, and it is important to consider the issue of Eve's absence and how the teachers justify her absence in the Books that are significant in terms of describing the future and creation of world. The Books discuss the war in heaven between Satan and angels, the triumph of God's Son and narration of Raphael to Adam about the creation of the world in six days. Unlike Books IV and V, Eve has no presence, suggesting that she does not need to have this knowledge which is beyond her faculties and status. However, there is a brief reference to Eve in Book VI by Raphael when he advises Adam to keep obeying God and suggests him "to warn the weaker [sex]" and "let it profit thee to have heard by terrible example the reward of disobedience" (Book VI: 909-11). This notion of women's physical and moral weakness can be understood from Raphael's warning about Eve: he suggests that Eve is weaker and that they should learn from the severe punishment of disobedience that Satan

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[40] Incest and Rape narratives in *Paradise Lost* are discussed more fully in Chap 3 in reference to the Quran and the Bible and are also investigated in data collection in Part B

[41] For a debate on Milton as masculinist see also Nyquist (1988), and Gilbert and Gubar (2000)

received. Understanding Eve's absence in Book VI and VII reveals the socio-cultural context of seventeenth century England: women were not supposed to have learning and therefore access to history or the topic of war was considered male preserves.

Contrary to Milton, however, Lanyer acknowledges Eve's pursuit of knowledge and her learning through dreams, as Lanyer's seventeenth-century dream vision of *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* was also "delivered" to her during a dream, "a condition that helps her reasoning powers" (Woods, 1998:96). Similarly, Speght in her prefix to *Mortalities' Memorandum* (1621) has *A Dreame* in which she describes the virtue of the fruit Eve ate, as that postlapsarian knowledge led women to save themselves from devils. Speght in her dream receives a consolation for her mother's death[42] (as does Eve, who receives consolation for departing from Paradise during her sleep in Book XII). In this way, Speght encourages women's intellectual way of receiving direct knowledge from God and celebrates their quest for knowledge, remapping the "constellation of forbidden knowledge, temptation, and sin presented in Genesis" (Miller, "All about Eve: Seventeenth-Century Women Writers and the Narrative of the Fall" 2011: 65). It is possible that Milton responded to these female authors who defended women's pursuit of knowledge and their prophetic intellect, as *Paradise Lost* has a dream sequence similar to that of Lanyer and Speght. Before assuming Milton's straightforward agreement with these authors and analysing Eve's dream in Book XII, we must consider Eve's dream in Book V where she sees Satan as her guide and is considered partly fallen[43]. The dramatic effect produced in this dream exaggerates Eve's fallen nature, as after eating she "sunk down/ and fell asleep" (V: 96-7). Here "sleep" does not connect her to God, but Satan, and appears as a symbol of mortality (death) as a result of the fall. Hunter argues that

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[42] See also Sumers (2004:208)
[43] See Fowler discussed earlier for more detail

Milton "conceived of this dream in terms of contemporary dream and demon lore[44]" and that he was exploiting current beliefs in "the powers of devils over dreams" and their "operation upon the imagination or fantasy" ("Eve's Demonic Dream", 1946:258). Likewise, Steadman sees Eve's dream in Book V as Satan's "opening foray in the psychic battle between falsehood and truth" ("Eve's Dream and the Conventions of Witchcraft" 1965:567). Later in Book XII, Eve sees God in her dream while Michael shows Adam the vision of the world. When Eve emerges from sleep, she already knows these things: "For God is also in sleep, and Dreams advise" (XII: 611). If the background of this dream is examined in light of Eve's Satan-inspired dream in Book V, the reader may argue that previously the function of Eve's dream is to expose Eve's propensity to fall instead of praising her intuitional capabilities. This means disagreeing with critics[45] like Sumers, who argue that Milton did not discourage Eve's learning as Eve "knows everything intuitively that Adam knows discursively" ("Milton's Mat(t)erology: *Paradise Lost* and the Seventeenth-Century *Querelle des Femmes*", 2004:207). The idea that women were able to read, understand and produce spiritual texts is further undermined when Milton depicts Eve eavesdropping: "Eve, who unseen/ Yet all had heard, with audible lament/ Discover'd soon the place of her retire... Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign/ What justly thou hast lost, nor set thy heart,/ Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine: /Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes/ Thy husband; whom to follow thou art bound;/ Where he abides, think there thy native soil" (XI 265-92). Instead of being taught about their fate alongside Adam, she conceals herself in order to overhear the judgment and is sternly reminded of the obedience due to her 'husband' by the

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[44] For understanding an Early Modern tradition of relating dreams to witchcraft and demon, see also Steadman noting that "Milton has skilfully combined elements derived from the Biblical account of the temptation with details reminiscent of traditional witch-lore and the fall of Lucifer" ("Eve's Dream and the Conventions of Witchcraft" 1965:569)
[45] For a similar account as Sumers' see also Furman and Tufte ("'With Other Eyes': Legacy and Innovation in Four Artists' Re-Visions of the Dinner Party in *Paradise Lost*", 1997:160)

Angel. Transposed onto the Early Modern debate about female scholarship, Milton's depiction of Eve seems to prohibit women from direct religious knowledge as well as suggesting that their attempts to 'eavesdrop' on male scholarly preserves may be considered as failing in obedience.

The major theme of Books XI and XII appears to be "displacement" (Lobis 2003:115), as Adam and Eve prepare to move from their "capital seat" (XI: 343). Eve shows herself "over fond" (XI: 289) of Paradise but Michael reasserts the patriarchy by telling her that "Where he [Adam] abides, think there thy native place" (XI: 292). In Book XI, Eve's presence was not desired by Michael and Adam while they discuss the future world, and they deny her direct knowledge[46]: "let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)/ Here sleep below though to foresight wakest" (XI: 367-8). If the aftermath of the postlapsarian dream is examined, the reader may notice that Eve wakes up "calmed" (XII: 595). The expression "calmed" suggests that this silence must comfort her forever and turn "all her spirits composed/ To meek submission" (XII: 596-7). Instead of feeling empowered, excited and redeemed on meeting God in her dream, Eve's experience is more one of subservience; "waken[ed]", "unworthy" (XII: 622) and guilty for her "wilful crime" that resulted their "banish[ment]" (XII:619). The awakening after her dream is not just from sleep, but from sleeping of conscience that is now revived, ensuring that she must obey Adam forever and let him "now lead on" (XII:614) since "all by (me) [Eve] is lost" (XII:621). Milton, however, presents such submission as a source of women's salvation[47], happiness and contentment.

Eve's absence during all the learning discourses that Adam had with angels, as well as her sleep and awakening (of conscience) demanded ultimate female submission,

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[46] Since it was inappropriate that women should be given access to church lore according to Pauline tradition widely practiced in Early Modern England

[47] See also Theresa M. DiPasquale who argues that the Salvation history begins when the "dignity of both man and woman is restored... Thus Adam is saved only by renewing his love for his spouse, whose "Seed" will be the savior" ("Heav'n's Last Best Gift", 1997:67)

whereas female authors writing in defence of Eve in the same period, could be a matter of interest for teachers in Pakistan and UK, in order to develop a sense of socio-cultural history and women debate in seventeenth century England in which the poem was written. The teachers might look into the religious and socio-cultural context in a way to teach *Paradise Lost* as a text of historical value instead of making it Christian.

2.1.4 Dress and Conduct

The parameters of ideal and virtuous woman in seventeenth century England also included dress and conduct. Women had to cover their bodies to make sure that they could not appeal to any man. Vives, a sixteenth century Spanish humanist, warns women from dressing in a tempting way: "wanton men on seeing the part of the body not used to be seen are set on fire" (Vives cited in Aughterson 1995:73). Eve does not fulfil the criterion of being fully covered, and Milton complicates her nude representation by adding details of her physical attributes unlike the Biblical narrative. The characteristics that Milton demonstrates in Eve are extremely varied. At times, she is strictly presented as a seventeenth century ideal woman who is subordinate in patriarchal heaven, absent in discourses of war, and silent where expected; but in other instances he presents a character who dares to challenge the established fundamentals not only through her nudity but also through her conduct. A woman should be covered and decently dressed, and in her behaviour she must be calm and sober. Her body language and gestures needed to be meek, as notes Vives: "let her see that she laugh not immeasurably". Moreover, she should talk less and listen more and "in going, let the woman neither walk over fast, nor over slowly" (Vives cited in Aughterson 1995:73). In short, she was bound to act within these stringent parameters and she was expected to lack self-will. John Ray's proverb suggests that one of the desired characteristics of a wife is that she should be "well-willed" (Ray 1678:62). These parameters provide a startling contrast to

Milton's Eve, who does not follow such laws since she is naked[48]. In terms of her conduct, she is morally weak as she was seduced by Satan, and she does not listen to her husband or God's command. It is interesting to note that Milton uses Eve's transgressions to question seventeenth century moral codes, yet he presents her as an example of the stereotype of the overly-sexualised woman.

The physical description[49] of Adam and Eve, their hair-length and hair-style all signify the hierarchical status of each sex as identified by the critics. Fowler suggests that "The hair-length proper for each sex follows directly from the statement of their hierarchical relation" (Fowler 1976: 213). Adam is presented as beardless with hair clusters like bunches of grapes associating him with Apollo, the Sun God – an allusion to youth, manliness and authority (Fowler 1976:213); he is "the perfect ideal of youthful manliness" (Blakeney, 56). On the other hand, Eve's long hair shows subjection and submission; her hair is used to cover her nudity in contrast to Adam's authority and manliness: "She, as a veil, down to the slender waist / Her unadorned golden tresses wore" (IV: 304-5). Eve's submission is asserted by using her hair as an instrument to partly cover her body, whereas Adam's hair length was fittingly chosen by Milton as heroes in Biblical and Greek traditions had long hair – this symbolises power and wealth, as Keats notes that "Milton would later (in *Samson Agonistes*) retell the story of a Biblical hero whose strength resided in his hair" (Keats cited in Scott-Warren 2005:267). Dobranski notes the paradoxical implication of Milton's use of hair when describing Adam and Eve: "by emphasizing something as fragile as their hair, he [Milton] underscores the paradox of their strong but vulnerable position in Eden before the Fall: if the couple's luxuriant locks convey their virtue and vitality, they simultaneously

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[48] Eve's prelapsarian innocence and the immoral context of nakedness is discussed in reference to the Biblical and Quranic representation of Eve in Chap 4 and is also discussed in Part B of the thesis
[49] Eve's nudity and physical description is discussed more fully in further chapters from the perspectives of teachers and Muslim students

symbolize how easily Adam and Eve can break God's sole command and how quickly the pair can lose their paradisal marriage" ("Clustering and Curling Locks: The Matter of Hair in *Paradise Lost*", 2010: 347). Apart from the subtle symbolism of hair presenting the gender hierarchy and indicating their fallen nature, Milton includes sensuous details of Eve to exploit her femininity and present her in terms of a sexual stereotype.

> And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
> On our first father; half her swelling breast
> Naked met his, under the flowing gold
> Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
> Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
> Smiled with superiour love, as Jupiter
> (IV: 494-9)

Milton adds to the sexual impact by giving minute details of Eve's long golden hair that covers her fully-developed breast. Belsey notes that "Eve's hair is like a veil covering her unclothed body, a signifier of propriety, of sexuality subdued. And yet it had an intense sexual life of its own as it waves in wanton ringlets dishevelled" (Belsey 1988:65). Belsey argues that "Adam smiles with 'superior love' as his bride makes winning comedy out of her own artlessness" (Belsey 1988:61). The secular love discourse of the Early Modern period makes the beloved superior to all in the lover's eye, but Adam appears to enjoy the inferiority of his beloved's submission and surrender, suggesting a more patriarchal interpretation of the gender hierarchy, since "Women [in marriage] were still the opposite sex, everything that was not masculine" (Belsey 1988:61). Even Eve's nudity and sexuality are presented as a gender discourse and teachers could represent such passages with a feminist perspective. However, one of the key issues that must be explored in Muslim/multi-faith teaching and learning scenario is: how are such passages that deal with nudity and sexuality approached and perceived? Discussing Eve's nudity in such provocative sexual way can be one of the most

uncomfortable feelings for Muslim/multi-faith students and teachers, and it is explored more fully in Chapter 4.

Eve's transgression in terms of her conduct can be examined from her act of disobeying Adam and God and bringing the fall. Before exploring her transgression in Book IX, it is important to understand the idea of the "Tragedy and Tragic Hero". Tragedy is "an event causing great suffering, destruction, and distress" (*Oxford Dictionary* 2009). A Tragic Hero is considered to be a person who brings out the big action to the audience and, simultaneously, s/he is the one around whom the whole story revolves. Aristotle in *Poetics* discusses the characteristics of a tragic hero: "in the tragic [hero/] character there should be an element of "goodness" possible in all types of person, "even a woman or a slave, though the one is of course the inferior and the other a worthless being"" (Drakakis 1992:6). This interpretation of a central character bringing about a change with an element of possible goodness may well be found in the character of Eve. Therefore, Eve's transgression from the seventeenth century code of conduct can also be taught as a tragedy, where Milton leaves no choice for her but to fall. Therefore, in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, the fall can be taught from Eve's own understanding of how and why she eats the fruit. There are two key moments: at the point of the fall and immediately after. At the moment of the fall, Eve describes her act as a woman's wish to acquire independence:

> What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
> Under this ignorance of good and evil,
> Of God or death, of law or penalty?
> Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
> Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
> Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then
> To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?
> So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
> Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate!
> Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,
> Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
> That all was lost. (IX: 773-784)

In this speech Eve uses heroic language; the words are dramatic like those of a tragic hero, resembling a soliloquy on stage, when the audience expects an action that brings a big change. Her words have valour, her intention has determination and her thought process is logically stable. At this point the reader might be able to understand her strengths as self-will and power of decision, but the wish to bring a change to the world brings Eve a tragedy. Eve's act is seen as the "root of all our woe" (IX: 645) and the earth that is a symbol of prosperity and fertility "felt the wound" (IX: 782). The consequence of tasting the fruit as told by Raphael is death, as he earlier forbade Adam to eat it, "lest you die" (IX: 663). Yet Eve appears to have no other choice but to act accordingly in the "evil hour" (IX: 1067), and so was free to fall[50]. Her apparent choice to exercise free will resulted in the predestined fall that destabilises[51] the social order maintained in the Garden, as she decided independently of Adam. Additionally, it can be inferred that the social order was disturbed due to Eve eating alone without Adam, since "their eating has always been a communal act; and it is the social coherence of their relationship that had up to this point maintained their spiritual purity" (L.Tigner, "Eating with Eve", 2010:248). Milton, however, demonstrates that women must follow subservient practices to create a natural balance, for if they are allowed to lead they will bring eternal damnation through their fatal choices. It is inferred that woman's will, according to Milton, is only exercisable if it aligns with patriarchal commands, otherwise she is free to chose death and disaster like a tragic hero. At the point immediately after she tastes the fruit Eve's feelings are quite opposite to what she felt earlier, before tasting the fruit. She goes through a state of a psychological war, unconsciously explaining the reasons for her action:

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[50] For Milton's philosophy of free will see Julia M. Walker, "'For each seemed either': Free will and Predestination in *Paradise Lost*" (1986); also see Dennis Danielson's "Milton Arminianism and *Paradise Lost*" (1978)

[51] As discussed above, the maintenance of social order in Early Modern England depended on a familial stability that required the wife to obey her husband and follow the patriarchal rules

> But to Adam in what sort
> Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
> As yet my change, and give him to partake
> Full happiness with me, or rather not,
> But keeps the odds of knowledge in my power
> Without copartner? so to add what wants
> In female sex, the more to draw his love,
> And render me more equal; and perhaps,
> A thing not undesirable, sometime
> Superiour; for, inferiour, who is free
> This may be well: But what if God have seen,
> And death ensue? then I shall be no more!
> And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
> Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
> A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve,
> Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
> So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
> I could endure, without him live no life.
>   (IX: 816-33)

The first thing that strikes Eve's mind after tasting the fruit is how she will appear in

Adam's view now, since the only way she could achieve the higher status to attract

Adam profoundly was through knowledge. She has two options: first, to retain the

knowledge secretly and therefore be "more equal" or even "superior" to Adam –

therefore, the fruit gave her wisdom to recognise that as "inferior" she could not enjoy

"free" will, and Adam's love. The second option is to share that knowledge with Adam

and make him a partner of her happiness forever. The first option, could justify her status

and would be helpful to "draw his love" more, but on the other hand if she dies and

Adam obtains another partner that would be "A death to think". Because Adam is the

centre of Eve's life, if he stays with her she is ready to face death, but without him, life

would be meaningless[52]. Even after exercising her free will, Milton's Eve relies on Adam

for happiness. Milton represents Eve as the inferior sex who transgresses from the social

norms by attempting to exercise authority, yet whose love and subservience belong to

Adam even after eating the fruit. Burden argues that Eve errs in claiming independence

of choice as a female prerogative, and that leads to her fall. Milton, says Burden, intends

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[52] This reflects the seventeenth century social practice that women should be utterly reliant on men

us to see it as a joint fall[53], not merely because Adam agrees to eat the fruit afterwards, but because he allows Eve to garden alone. He notes that the tragedy is more Adam's[54] than Eve's, as he could not control his wife's decisions (*The Logical Epic* 1967). Burden, while claiming Milton's narrative as joint tragedy, must reconsider the pre and postlapsarian sufferings of Eve and the extent of punishment she was given after the fall, in contrast to Adam. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore in Part B if the teachers in Pakistan and the UK present Eve's fall as a love tragedy and teach Eve's character as a tragic hero, instead of Satan who is usually linked to the tragedy and often taught as a tragic hero.

Milton's representation of Eve promotes patriarchy, indicating that if women are silent and obedient they could be perceived as chaste and ideal, but if they transgressed they would end up bringing the fall. However, the poem establishes an understanding of the gender politics of Milton's period by presenting Eve as an independent character with a rebelliousness that may be set alongside the context of a wider seventeenth century revolutionary discourse[55]. The importance of contemporary contextualisation in Milton's construction of Eve's character might help the teachers by presenting the religious and socio-cultural background before discussing the Christian narrative of the fall directly. By contextualising *Paradise Lost* within the Early Modern socio-religious framework, it is clear that the poem constructs women as conforming to the strict tenets of that faith. While present-day students might choose to make a comparison with the role of women in their own culture/faith, by exploring the historical context teachers may relate the representation of women in Milton's epic to the past. The most important questions to emerge from the contextual analysis are: how comfortable are teachers and Muslim

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[53] See also Campbell's view on joint fall later in interview findings in Part B
[54] See also Revard: "Milton's narrative voice offers little assistance: he is more likely to refer to the couple as the guilty pair than to dispute upon the division of guilt" (1973:69)
[55] Discussed more fully in Chap 4 in the section of Rape

students when discussing the Christian context of the poem in Pakistan and the UK; does historicisation enable teachers to effect a distance between present-day faith and seventeenth century beliefs; do teachers along with the Muslim students find it difficult to perceive Eve's character divided in *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*; and how do the trans-cultural differences in attitudes of students impact upon their understanding of the poem?

2.2 *Paradise Lost:* **Political Context**

The political context of *Paradise Lost* and the unrest that caused Milton to write such a complex and divisive poem is another aspect that the teachers in Pakistan and the UK might consider in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. Milton is often considered a polemicist due to the passion and zeal of his writings, particularly in the prose works produced during the Interregnum. The main thrust of Milton's political writings involves the Puritan reformation of the Church and his support for a free commonwealth society following the replacement of the monarchy. He was an activist against the monarchy of Charles I, supported Oliver Cromwell and was appointed as a Secretary of Foreign Languages, becoming a key voice of the English Revolution. Milton's writings *Of Reformation Touching Church-Discipline in England* (1641), *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrate* (1649), and *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660) were the outcome of the socio-political conflict he was facing. *Paradise Lost*, however, is a creation of despair as Milton encountered deep disappointment from the weakened revolutionary fervour of the Commonwealth and the restoration of the monarchy with the return of Charles II to England (Kastan 2005: xix). Indeed, "Restore" (XII: 623), is one of the important themes of *Paradise Lost*. The Restoration saw some of Milton's argumentative writings banned and his books were burnt publicly. Certain critics like Lewalski notes that some people thought Milton "deserved hanging"

(Lewalski 2000:403). The acute political controversy of Milton's prose works and the subsequent attacks upon him suggests that present-day students might find an interesting comparison with their own situation with regard to faith. This section looks at political context of *Paradise Lost* and how this may be used to suggest new ways of teaching the poem to Muslim/multi-faith students.

Turning to the political ideas that are embedded in the religious dogmas, Stanley Fish in *Surprised by sin: the reader in Paradise Lost* (1998) portrays Milton as a Calvinist who believed in the doctrine of predestination. Fish argues that by justifying the ways of God to man, Milton attempts to expose our fallen nature in order to teach us how to "distrust our own abilities and perceptions" and that this is indeed the "hardest of all lessons" (Fish 1998:22). In contrast, Kastan suggests that by doing so Milton actually intends to make people realise that the ways of gods (kings) are not just, and that we must raise a voice against their cruelty (Kastan 2005:xxix). Kastan's political reading provides an interesting context for present-day teaching. The hierarchical setting of heaven, with its absolute monarch, resembles exactly the structure of the government that Milton opposed in his political writings. In contrast, hell with its election, debate and council is what Milton wanted for a reformed English nation. It is commonly argued that Milton's belief in free will, his strong determination and his love of liberty makes Satan a mouthpiece for Milton – "better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven" (I: 263). As such, Milton's war against the monarchy and Satan's revenge against God correlate, and Satan's powerful lines on exile echo Milton's retaliation against restoration of monarchy: "A mind is its own place, and in its self / Can make a Heaven of Hell and Hell of Heaven" (I: 255-6). As Blake famously states: "he [Milton] was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it" (Blake 1988: 35). Like many critics, Christopher Hill argues that "in the view of Blake, Shelley, Blinsky -- all romantic radicals, we note that

Satan is the hero of the *Paradise Lost*" (Hill 1997:367). Milton frequently calls God a king: "all-powerful king" (II: 851), "matchless king" (IV: 41), "all bounteous king" (V: 640). In *Paradise Lost*, God is an unmerciful and hierarchical King – if someone raises their voice against injustice they are expelled, like Satan, and if someone wants to enjoy free will, they must taste death like Adam and Eve. Likewise, Raphael advises Adam to remain unwise since "Heaven is for thee too high / To know what passes there" and suggests he "be lowly wise" (IIX: 172-173). Smith notes that the context of the poem is directly related to Milton's political despair: "Monarchist on Heaven, Republican on Earth" (Smith 2001:263).

Therefore, while touching upon the political context of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, the teachers might also link epic genre of the poem with Satan's character. Lewalski notes that "*Paradise Lost* is an epic ... [that] undertakes in some fashion to redefine classical heroism in Christian terms" (1989:79). She argues that Miltonic epic employs "the heroic mode of Satan" that tends to explain Satan and hell in "heroic terms" like "'glory', 'ambitious aim', 'impious war in heaven', 'battle proud'" (1989:83). Although a consideration of the generic status of *Paradise Lost* as an epic can be significant in teaching, the heroic epic tradition that promotes Satan's character enabling him to challenge God can be considered as blasphemous in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. The question of what role Satan plays within the poem, his seventeenth century contextualisation and the Western emphasis upon independence and heroic (male-dominated) epic tradition are all key to understanding some of the complexities of teaching Satan's character to Muslim/multi-faith groups. In the data collection of Part B it will be explored whether Muslim teachers and students alike find Satan's challenge to God discomforting or blasphemous.

One of the most intriguing aspects of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Muslim countries like Pakistan could be its political context, because of the existent political and religious framework. But can such a political text be taught without the political background? It is also noticeable that a politically dangerous text in seventeenth century England can still be perceived as dangerous in Pakistan in the twenty-first century. However, it is critical to find out how far the teachers in Pakistan can address such issues, if there are any reasons that prevent them to doing so, and whether they find it difficult to cope with the political impact of the poem. *Paradise Lost* can be dangerous in a Muslim society because of its direct contradiction to the Islamic beliefs; even this research would be radically dangerous[56] for undertaking an approach to examine these issues. In contrast to Pakistan, it should be explored whether the text offers similar problems to the teachers in UK while teaching the poem in a political context. Teachers' observations of how Muslim students perceive the context of poem in Pakistan and the UK will be examined in Part B, including an enquiry into whether it is helpful to discuss context of the poem in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. Overall, it would be useful to examine whether it is appropriate to alter the teaching content according to the beliefs of the audience, along with exploring more productive ways of teaching a Christian text to Muslim/multi-faith students.

2.3 Critical Perspectives

While teaching *Paradise Lost* many teachers use a theoretical perspective, referring to the key critical works that might inform the students' reading. Indeed, *Paradise Lost* can be read from many different angles, providing multi-layered meanings which are often antithetical. The multidimensional nature of *Paradise Lost* was recognised as early as 1734 when Jonathan Richardson, noted that "a reader of Milton must always be upon

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[56] See Jujja's comments about the research in interview findings

Duty; he is surrounded with Sense, it rises in every line, every Word is to the Purpose"
(Richardson 1734:295). As the research examines the perspectives of teaching a
Christian text to Muslim/multi-faith students as well as Muslim students' experience of
studying *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK, it is imperative to focus closely on
different teaching perspectives that could be helpful in undertaking a fruitful teaching
and learning experience. The Biblical narrative of the fall in *Paradise Lost* contradicts
the Quranic narrative in many different ways[57], therefore the next half of the chapter
explores different possible perspectives of teaching the poem in Muslim/multi-faith
teaching in Pakistan and UK. This discussion involves: feminist criticism directly related
to Eve in *Paradise Lost*; Quranic feminism dealing with a comparative narrative of
creation in the *Quran*, since this study examines Muslims' experience and it is
imperative to understand the Islamic perspective of the fall that academics might use in
Muslim/multi-faith teaching; and the post-colonial background of the poem that might be
employed to teach *Paradise Lost*, particularly in a Pakistani context.

2.3.1 Feminist Perspective

The main theme of Milton's *Paradise Lost* is often considered to be man's fall due to the
first disobedience. But the perspectives teachers employ in Muslim/multi-faith teaching,
and what Muslim readers interpret from Milton's narrative of the fall, are key issues for
debate. One of the perspectives for teaching *Paradise Lost* is to use feminist criticism.
Other than Milton's contemporaries[58], various authors like Christine Froula in "When
Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy" (1983), Catherine Belsey in *John
Milton Language, Gender and Power* (1988), Diane K. McColley in "Milton and the
Sexes" (1989), and Joe Mason in "Eve in *Paradise Lost*: The Image of an Image" (2004)

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[57] The distinctions are discussed in Chap 3 more fully
[58] See the section on cultural context for Milton's contemporary female (feminist) authors

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engage readers with the problems of political and religious reforms, the politics of language, power struggle, gender hierarchy and the literary influences on *Paradise Lost*. Froula, Belsey, and McColley are the key critics from the initial phase of feminist criticism in the 1980s. At this time, scholars started to investigate the canon from a different perspective as pioneers of feminism. Mason belongs to a more recent period and argues against this earlier philosophy, considering it redundant. It is interesting that the earlier critics both praise and condemn Eve for similar reasons, while Mason, in responding to them, presents a wholly negative view of female identity in *Paradise Lost*.

Froula notes that Milton's Eve is not an individual but a mere shadow, image and reflection of Adam. She has no voice and no vision, and is bound to see everything through Adam's eyes. The poem asserts a male dominance in which woman is trapped and not allowed to raise a voice. She argues that Milton wants women to be condemned if they ever try to overpower men and "the poem's master plot is designed precisely to discourage any 'Eve' from reading this authority in any other way" (Froula 1883:151). Milton's socio-cultural values emerge as a background to the poem, arguing that authoritative, outspoken and liberal women should be condemned. Froula notes that Adam is suffering from a complex that Eve was born from his rib and that he perceives himself incomplete and images completeness in Eve instead:

> Adam's anxiety suggests that the 'completeness' he fears in Eve and lacks in himself attaches to the function Adam associates with his rib... (Froula 1883:154)

Belsey focuses on the areas of gender politics, divisions of power, struggle for absolute rule and sex-based hierarchy in Milton's poetic works like *Paradise Lost, Samson Agonistes* and *Comus*. She offers a feminist approach to Eve's weakness and oppression in *Paradise Lost* and suggests that Eve's character is strengthened by her description as

beautiful and sensuous: "God rightly made her powerful: so beautiful". She further argues:

> In *Paradise Lost* love is seen as a power struggle in which both partners keep Adam under surveillance, continually examining him for signs of weakness. The danger is that he may surrender to Eve's sexuality, the potent force which necessitates and justifies patriarchal mastery. (Belsey 1988:65)

Although Belsey provides strong evidence, her analysis of love in *Paradise Lost* could be considered reductive because in *Paradise Lost* love cannot be depicted as a battle between Adam and Eve. Belsey's suggestion of power struggle between sexes needs to be related to the wider argument of the contentment and contestation of both body and soul. Although masculinity is never socially threatened in the text, Adam does not consider Eve inferior. He describes her as his mirror image: "[the] best image of myself" (V: 96), and "myself before me" (VIII: 495-496). On first seeing Eve, he says: "Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim My other half..." (IV: 487-88). Belsey and Froula both support Eve to such an extent that this makes Adam directly or indirectly responsible for her undue submission. No matter how dissatisfied Eve is about the hierarchal system, she considers Adam as her God – "He for God only, She for God in him [Adam]" (IV: 297-9). It is Milton who rather creates the difference between sexes in his narrative. Belsey provides biographical reasons of Milton being sexist, as she argues that Milton had a hatred for Eve because he identified her with his ex-wife, Marie Powell, paralleling the self-assertion and self-determination of an "adventurous Eve" (IV: 921) with independent Marie. Belsey notes that "Both Eve and Marie have golden hair which reaches to their waists. Both are outspoken though capable of control. Both of course defend their freedom" (Belsey 61). She further suggests that the sexual bias in Milton was influenced by his failed marriage and "The truth of Milton's married life is also the truth of the sexism of *Paradise Lost*" (Belsey 59). It would be intriguing to find

out whether academics in Pakistan and UK teach the text by exploring biographical elements of the poem. It is probable that academics in Pakistan and UK use feminism, because the narrative significantly deals with gender hierarchy as referred by Froula and Belsey. It is, however, tricky for Pakistani and UK teachers to relate feminism to *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, because it is a Western concept. Therefore, there are many questions emerging from this discussion, for example, do Pakistani academics find it as easy as UK academics, and do they employ any other perspective along with the feminism? Does it help or hinder to use feminism in teaching *Paradise Lost*?

A less partisan approach is taken by McColley in her article "Milton and the sexes", where she argues that Milton is not sexist; he is rather the one who justifies Eve's spiritual and moral gifts and suggests that Milton never "deny[ies] to women perfectibility in any spiritual or moral gifts" (McColley 1989:149). She suggests that Milton is justly concerned about the relationship between the sexes as depicted in the *Bible*, and argues that *Paradise Lost* is a story of a superior, self-willed, liberal woman: "The imagery of *Paradise Lost* gives at least equal and sometimes superior value to constructs of the feminine" (McColley 1989:157). McColley, in order to respond to the feminist views of *Paradise Lost*, argues that Milton is right if he suggests Eve as inferior to Adam because when God made her from Adam's rib, He [God] created difference. God, in making Eve from Adam's rib, suggests a sex that is subordinate, perhaps created only secondarily in God's image and so spiritually inferior (McColley 1989:150). Her statement, however, appears to be somewhat ironic, since McColley justifies Milton as a feminist, yet she affirms the subordination of women. Likewise, Milton suggests: "Not equal, as thir sex not equal seem'd" (IV: 295). McColley's argument of the religious context to gender inequality is complex. Many critics argue that unlike *Paradise Lost*,

Genesis does not proclaim the inferiority of women. It focuses rather on equality: "God created man in his own image . . . male and female created" (*Genesis* 1:27: 2). So both men and women are created in God's image, indicating the purity of both the sexes, God's choice of the rib for Eve's creation "affirms woman to be of the same essence as man" (Kaiser 1996:666). According to Kaiser, the Biblical phrase "bone of my bones" (*Genesis* 2:23: 3), connotes "'a very close relative,' 'one of us,' or in effect 'our equal'" (Kaiser 1996:94). It is important to consider the Early Modern religious poet John Donne, who paraphrased the same thought in one of his sermons: "[woman] was not taken out of the foot to be trodden upon" (Donne 1990:290). It is very interesting to note that Donne is one of Milton's contemporaries and he addresses the issue of gender with much more equality, exposing the patriarchal perspective of Milton's personality. It is, therefore, argued that patriarchal interpretations of the *Bible* have made the account of human fall more complicated in terms of the stature of female identity in a religious context, and it needs to be addressed in a wider perspective[59]. A more contemporary critic, Joe Mason, considers in "Eve in *Paradise Lost*: The Image of an Image" (2004: no pag.) that Eve's character is a shadow of Adam. He argues that Eve's temptation by Satan was a result of Eve's discontent with her status, and her narcissistic desires. Mason contradicts the ideas of Belsey and Froula, who perceive Eve's beauty as a positive attribute, and condemns Eve for her narcissistic desires. He blames Eve's beauty, seeing it as a cause of man's fall since "Satan continues to call Eve's attention to a realm of beauty... [and] he reconstructs Eve's identity..." (2004). Mason suggests that when Satan exploits Eve's narcissistic desires, he makes her think of death and being apart from Adam, so that she deliberately eats the forbidden fruit to live with Adam forever. Thus,

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[59] The Islamic perspective of the account of creation is discussed later in the chapter

she does not think of God's order and the consequence that they will have to face because of her self-will and selfish desires:

> She is now consumed by a selfish desire to destroy Adam along with herself because she can no longer conceive a separation from him [Adam]. (Mason 2004)

Mason argues that Eve has a marginal, less powerful identity because she may only perceive God through Adam: "Adam experiences God; Eve experiences Adam, who acts as an intermediary between her and God" (Mason 2004). It is, therefore, paradoxical that Mason considers her selfish although he concludes that her character is subservient to Adam and God through him. Mason propounds Eve as selfish and her beauty as a cause of destruction of mankind, whereas McColley's assumption of Eve's portrayal as inferior is based on Biblical precedent and not Milton's imaginative description. McColley attempts a neutral approach to *Paradise Lost*, advising readers not to ignore Milton's lofty purpose and suggesting that "it would be rude to ignore Milton's primary interest ... and sad to miss his harmonies, in an argument about precedence" (McColley 1989:189). The question is whether Eve's beauty makes her strong before Adam, resulting in gender equality; or if she is flawed enough to deliberately cause destruction of mankind, bringing the agonies of labour to men and woes of labour to women: "with pain you will give birth to children...through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life" (*Genesis* 3:16:4). Being beautiful might boost one's confidence, but does Eve depend on her beauty to be powerful, worthy, honourable and loveable? Although Milton states that Adam is "weak/ Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance" (IX: 532-3), and the sexual act for Adam is "the sum of earthly bliss" (IX: 522), Eve is also shown as a helper of Adam in labour, a companion and completion to Adam in solitude than only a seducing beauty: "I from the influence of thy looks receive/ Access in every virtue, in thy sight/ More wise, more watchful, stronger..." (IX: 309-11).

While Eve's relationship with Adam might be based on love, she is still persuaded by Satan, indicating a character that is made restless due to her marginality. The Serpent fills in the gap that Milton's unjust treatment created in Eve's personality. He makes her feel important and soothes her emotionally, while providing a recognition for which she always yearns. It is ironic that Eve, created for the satisfaction of Adam, is herself dissatisfied. Yet in a further twist of perception, it is not her beauty that makes her appear self-centred, but her love for Adam that forces her to disobey God's command. She is not selfish, for she loves Adam and wants to live with him forever, and regards Adam as a source of spiritual faith, "He for God only, she for God in him [Adam]" (IV: 297-9). Although it is difficult to link Eve with multiple antithetical meanings of the text, it must be considered whether teachers in Muslim/multi-faith teaching relate the poem directly with feminism, or use feminism against the religious Biblical perspective. Do they think God created the gender difference instead of Milton, or do they consider it as an act of manipulating the sacred text by presenting Eve as inferior?

2.3.1.1 The Fortunate Fall

In order to defend Eve and improve her status in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*, the perspective of fortunate fall may be employed. When Adam and Eve leave paradise, Milton describes their departure as "dismiss not disconsolate" (XI: 113). They shed some tears (XII: 645-6), but look forward to a new world before them (XII: 647). The concept has a long history as part of Christian theology; Felix culpa, known as fortunate fall, is a concept associated with St. Augustine's perception of the fall, as he professed that good out of evil can be created as the fall had an outcome of the Second Coming. Thus, the fall can be seen as fortunate in *Paradise Lost* because of the Christian concept of resurrection; Jesus will be born again by "Second Eve [Virgin Mary]" and

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finally defeat Satan and "bruise thy [his] head" (X: 181), and his triumph would be the source of redemption for all humans as Mary's "seed shall all restore" (XII: 623).

Arthur O. Lovejoy in "Milton and the Paradox of the Fortunate Fall" notes the risk and paradoxes in Augustinian concept of the fall. He notes that happiness is "...reserved for the conclusion, where it could heighten the happy final consummation by making the earlier and unhappy episodes appear as instrumental to that [final] consummation" (Lovejoy 1937:295). Lovejoy also notes St. Ambrose' concept that "sin is more fruitful than innocence" (St. Ambrose cited in Lovejoy 1937:171-2), arguing that Adam and Eve's sin of eating the fruit affirmed the Second Coming of Jesus, something that innocence could not achieve. Lovejoy tends to bridge the arguments of St. Augustine and St. Ambrose with the narrative of *Paradise Lost*. He argues that the themes of disobedience that caused the fall, and its consequence that leads to salvation, must be taken separately in the poem as he notes it to be the only solution that causes the fall to appear as fortunate; since Adam and Eve disobeyed, suffered and at the end were assured of final redemption. However, in twelve Books of *Paradise Lost* the hope of happy ending in terms of resurrection was kept until the very end of the poem, as Fish notes that the idea of the fall ending in a "promised resurrection" only became explicit towards "the closing of the ascending action when it reaches the voice of God unfolding the plan of felix culpa" (1988:90).

This can be a perspective of teaching *Paradise Lost,* but perhaps not a helpful tactic for Muslim/multi-faith teaching. However, there are many other reasons apart from redemption that could be used in teaching to conclude that the fall is fortunate: Eve ate the fruit in order to get an unending life, as Satan while tempting Eve says: "ye shall not die ...it [fruit] gives ye life to knowledge" (IX: 662-3), yet while she does fall and becomes mortal, she is also "graced [to be] the source of life" (XI: 169), as Michael

promises her, resulting in the growth of human race. Being like "gods after knowing both good or evil" (IX: 708-9), in some ways became a truth, as human beings were blessed with a sense of right and wrong and therefore can refrain from evil: "Adam and Eve as knowing subjects are in position to possess heaven within... [because of] knowing the difference between Good and evil" (Belsey 17). Perhaps a final reason for interpreting the fall as fortunate is the reaffirmation of Eve's love for Adam, which she acquired after the fall; they leave paradise together: "hand in hand" (XII: 649). Although the concept of fortunate fall could be helpful to uplift the reception of Eve and the perception of the fall, in its essence it is very Christian and can raise more unsettling questions than it might satisfy for students in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. Therefore it would be intriguing to examine whether teachers use a further Christian perspective of the concept of fortunate fall, or a western approach of feminism to teach *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, and whether they find that it is helpful or complicates the situation further?

After discussing the feminist perspective of Eve's description in *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the *Bible*, and the Christian of redemption related to fortunate fall, it is valuable to discuss the perspective of Quranic feminism as another possible way of exploring Eve's identity in *Paradise Lost* through the Islamic framework in Muslim/multi-faith scenario.

2.3.2 Quranic Feminism

The *Quran* is a sacred text of Muslims and is examined for its influence upon students reading *Paradise Lost*. Quranic feminism is a form of Islamic feminism that brings forth the idea of Islamic gender equality from the birth of first woman, Hawwa (Eve), therefore it can be one of the perspectives of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. However, this perspective can be difficult and "dangerous" for teachers as perhaps not many Muslims are keen to associate Islam with the "foreign nature" of the

term "feminism", or might think it politically dangerous to discuss religion publically –
particularly with reference to any other religion, for example Christianity, in the current
religious scenario.

The term Quranic feminism originated from Islamic feminism, since this
movement promotes gender equality rooted in the *Quran*[60] and proclaims the traditional
exegesis to be patriarchal. Quranic feminism in its essence is a modern approach, but it is
not new to Islam. Fatima Mernissi in *The Veil and the Male Elite* argues that Islamic
feminism developed as early as the advent of Islam, and was promoted and spread by
Aisha and Umme Salama, the wives of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)[61] (Mernissi
1992:163, 118, 145). Islamic feminists propound the gender equality and liberation that
lies in following the Islamic practices. In contrast to the Quranic feminists, Western or
secular feminists advocate dissection of civil society and the state from religious dogmas.
The similarity between the two approaches is that they both reject the idea of considering
women as subservient and promote gender rights and equality, but the difference is that
one seeks its justification within the religion and the other pronounces its stature by
being separated from faith. However, the reason religion plays such an important role in
determining the status of women derives from the Biblical creation narrative, which
stigmatises women as woe to men due to Eve's first disobedience. The narrative of
creation in Islam and Christianity are not similar, and that validates why Islamic
feminists tend to propound gender equality on the basis of religion in contrast to the
secular feminists. Some of the most publicised examples of Islamic feminists[62] are Asma
Barlas, Amina Wadud, Ali Asghar, Fatima Mernissi and Riffat Hassan who, despite of
all the challenges, questioned the patriarchal interpretations of the *Quran* and

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[60] See a detailed introduction to the *Quran* and its revelation in Chap 3
[61] Abbreviation for Peace Be Upon Him; used for all the Messengers of Allah
[62] Islamic feminists and their critique is discussed in Chap 3 and 4 in more detail

reinterpreted the sacred texts (the *Quran* and Ahadith) in order to create a better acceptance of women.

Quranic feminists such as Amina Wadud and Asma Barlas have engaged in theological and historical readings of the sacred texts[63] in order to recover women's real place in Islam. Asma Barlas' major focus of research explores the context of the *Quran* particularly in the debates about gender, sexuality and violence. Most recently, her work engages with the issues of Western violence against Muslim minority and the segregation of "Islam from civility and civilization" (Ithaca College Faculty). Wadud, an African-American Islamic scholar, converted to Islam in the 1970s and become a prominent feminist activist in Islamic Studies. Although she is best known for her academic writings dedicated to defending women's position in Islam and engaging in hermeneutics of the Quranic exegesis, she is also famous for leading a mixed-sex Muslim Friday prayer in New York (2005) as a part of her activist work, and is one of a few Muslim female Imams[64]. Through the Quranic account, Wadud's *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* provides a theological explanation of women's place in Islam. In this work, she proves that The *Quran* treats women as equal to men by re-interpreting the patriarchal readings of the *Quran* (Wadud 1999). In her work, *Inside The Gender Jihad* she outlines her personal experiences and discusses the issues faced by Muslim women, including their struggles with the problems of social status, education, veiling, sexuality and leadership, and renders the gender struggle as Jihad[65] (Wadud 2006). Asghar Ali in *The Rights of Women in Islam* broadly covers the gender issues of the pre-Islamic period[66], analysing them through Islamic framework in the post-Islamic period, and discusses how the advent of Islam proved to

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[63] The *Quran* and Hadith
[64] Person who leads Muslim prayer
[65] Arabic term used for a struggle in Allah's path
[66] The pre-Islamic period and advent of Islam is discussed in Chap 3 in more detail

be a miracle with all the solutions for women's rights from marriage to divorce, education to inheritance, and the custody of children to maintenance. The book attempts to create a better understanding of Shariah[67] and empowers women from Quranic arguments (A. Ali 1992). Fatima Mernissi is a Pakistani-Moroccan scholar of Islamic studies and former professor at Mohammed V University. Mernissi, in *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in a Modern Muslim Society*, presents fresh insights into women's status within the Islamic society and discusses gender politics as a religious institution. She presents variant perspectives about Muslim veiling[68], pronouncing Islamic fundamentalism as a defensive response to the modern sex roles and sexual identity (Mernissi 1987). Her research progressively establishes an Islamic feminist approach by confronting patriarchy in Arab cultures, but not the sacred revelation itself. This has allowed her to introduce Muslim women into the feminist discourse and to broaden their avenues in socio-cultural spheres.

It is paramount to understand that in the *Quran*, unlike the *Bible*, the fall is considered a historic moment instead of a moment of sin associated with Eve. In Islam, Satan is believed to be a sinner and is blamed for Adam and Eve's disobedience: "O Adam! ... Satan caused them to deflect therefrom and expelled them from the (happy) state ..." (*Quran* 2: 35). The account of creation is also discussed by Islamic feminists – for instance, Riffat Hassan, a Pakistani-American theologian, in "Challenging the Stereotypes of Fundamentalism: An Islamic Feminist Perspective" demonstrates that the creation of humanity is described as an evolutionary process in the *Quran* that started with the creation of both Adam and Eve (Hassan 2001:4). She argues that the inclusion of non-Quranic sources in the interpretation of the Quranic exegesis is the origin of many negative attitudes towards women (Hassan 2001:3). Similarly, Hassan in "Equal Before

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[67] Islamic law
[68] Since Eve's nudity is provocative in *Paradise Lost*, nudity and veiling remain the key themes of the research in Chap 4 and is explored in Part B in the Interview and Questionnaire findings and analysis

Allah? Woman-man equality in the Islamic tradition" compares the Jewish and Christian accounts of the creation with the Islamic perspective. She debates that according to the Islamic narrative of creation, although Eve was created after Adam, her origin is Adam's rib, and while she was created for Adam this does not imply that she is secondary in status to Adam (Hassan 1989). Therefore, the sacred texts must be examined carefully in order to avoid any gender-related interpretation. From the above discussion, it is clear that the Biblical narrative of the fall presented in *Paradise Lost* contradicts the Quranic narrative of creation, and this must be set in a wider revolutionary discourse[69] in reference to a Muslim reader and how these differences are handled by the teachers in Pakistan and UK to create a better acceptance of *Paradise Lost*. It is also important to examine whether the teachers employ the Quranic narrative in order to create a better understanding of other religions and improve students' tolerance, or whether they find it challenging to discuss the Quranic narrative of creation with the Biblical one which might induce a religious anxiety among the students. It is also worth exploring whether Quranic feminism impinges upon staff and students simultaneously, and if it might benefit exploring other faiths in a Muslim/multi-faith teaching of Christian texts.

2.3.3 Post-Colonialism

The term Post-colonial broadly engages with the "issues of cultural diversity, ethnic, racial and cultural difference and power relations within them" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2006:5). The theory of Post-colonialism can be used as a perspective for teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim students, particularly in Pakistan, as it gives a background of inclusion of the Christian texts like *Paradise Lost* in Pakistani syllabus, which can be critically political in current scenario. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note that "At a strategic moment in the British occupation of India, English literature was invoked

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[69] The differences are further discussed in Chap 3 and Chap 4

precisely for its imputed power to convey universal values" (2006:72). Viswanthan in "The Beginnings of English Literary Study in British India" notes that while "keeping with the government policy of religious education neutrality, the Bible was proscribed and spiritual teaching forbidden" (2006: 376). When the colonial administration in India found it difficult to introduce Christianity among the masses, they introduced the concept of "universalism" to include English Literature in the existing education system. It became a technology of Empire and understood as "elevation of the Hindus and Muslims whose 'ignorance and degradation' required a remedy not adequately supplied by their respective faiths" (2006: 378). Priya Joshi in *In another country: colonialism, culture, and the English novel in India* argues that during the British rule in Indian sub-continent, English literature was one of the strategic tools used to invade India (Joshi 2002). The apparent reason presented to the "subject races" (Cromer cited in Said 1978:36) for teaching Christian literature is discussed by Viswanthan, who argues that colonial Indians under British rule "to be educated are represented as morally and intellectually deficient and the attribution of moral and intellectual values to the literary works they are assigned to read" (Viswanathan 1990:4). Similarly, the biases against the native languages of sub-continent of India and the superiority of Western language and literature is presented by Thomas Macaulay, a well-known proponent of the institution of English literature into the colonial curriculum of India, who notes that "[I] have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is, indeed, fully admitted by those members of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of education" (Macaulay cited in Black 2006:468). Whereas Rajiv Menon, in "Gaining Imperial Paradise: Reading and Rewriting *Paradise Lost* in Colonial Bengal", engages with the idea of colonial roots of *Paradise Lost* and argues

that in colonial India texts like *Paradise Lost* were especially promoted and added into the curriculum since they advocate Christian beliefs. He also argues that the practice of teaching the text of *Paradise Lost* was continued after the division of India and Pakistan, and subsequently Bengal (Menon 2009). It can be argued that teaching *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and Bengal could be perceived as a symbol of continued colonisation. Moreover, if the text was used as a technique to introduce Christian values into the colonies, it would be interesting to explore how it is taught in Pakistan today. For example, which books and characters of the poem are focused upon in Pakistan in comparison to the UK, and what do the Pakistani/Muslim teachers and Muslim students perceive from the Biblical narrative of fall in reference to the Quranic narrative – the one they perhaps always believed in? When attempting to bring about a productive change in existent pedagogy of a *master-narrative* (here the term refers to a narrative produced by the master nation and simultaneously the one that received extreme critical appreciation) being taught to the colonised, one must consider Bhabha's model 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse' from a distinct angle. Homi Bhabha's term "colonial mimicry" is defined as "the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha 1994:122). Mimicry in Post-colonial literature is an important term, as "mimicry rearticulates presence in terms of its "otherness," that which it disavows" (Bhabha 1994:130). Mimicry does not always have to be copying the master and suppressing one's cultural and/or religious identity. In a modern global perspective, adopting Western pedagogical practices and appropriating them to (Eastern) Pakistani socio-religious and political environments or implementing Pakistani techniques of teaching Christian texts in Western countries (which may also be called reversed mimicry[70]) can have a positive

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[70] For reversed mimicry, see also Amardeep Singh for "Mimicry and Hybridity in Plain English" (2009)

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impact on multi-faith teaching. *Pedagogical mimicry* could promote[71] religious tolerance among Muslim/multi-faith students in Pakistan and the UK through teaching and exploring multiple faiths while teaching a Christian text, and also *pedagogical appropriation* through examining Islamic concepts would encourage self-representation and students' participation in Muslim teaching of Christian texts.

2.4 Conclusion

The chapter seeks to define how the gendering issue of Early Modern women is richly associated with the complicated social and inter-textual relationships between Early Modern England and *Paradise Lost*, and how the poem's ultimate purpose is to discourage women from interpreting this authority in any other way. If the poem is read and taught in the socio-cultural context of the pamphlet wars, Milton's contemporary women writers, and Milton's political and religious reputation, the text could be interpreted and analysed more fully in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. Providing appropriate background knowledge while teaching Christian texts can incur students' sympathies towards the Christian culture and texts instead of creating a cultural and religious clash that can occur when discussing religious beliefs without any context. Milton's Eve shifts from obedience to transgression, and such transgression in the seventeenth century text helped shape the sexual, cultural and artistic landscape of the Early Modern period. A close analysis of Eve in *Paradise Lost* reveals that she consciously or unconsciously acts in ways that transgress the accepted masculine power structure and gender scripts for the appropriate feminine behaviour of Early Modern England. However, the poem can serve as an enlightening and valuable analysis of the taboos of Milton's period, and the influence of masculinist perspectives on the assignment of female evil. It is, therefore, argued that Milton proclaims women to be

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[71] See Chap 10 for implications of improving fruitful teaching techniques of Christian narratives in multi-faith scenarios

condemned if they ever try to overpower men. This chapter presents an overview of how a Christian text like *Paradise Lost* might be taught in Pakistan and the UK in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. *Paradise Lost* proclaims itself to be a master-narrative with the lofty purpose of justifying the ways of God to man, but due to its Christian and Western context, the poem could offer certain problems in a Muslim/multi-faith teaching environment. The chapter offers possible ways to approach the poem by using a socio-religious or political context, and analyses the probabilities that might help or hinder a productive Muslim/multi-faith teaching. The chapter further explores different critical perspectives of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith groups like feminism, Quranic feminism and post-colonialism in order to achieve a productive teaching and learning experience for teachers and Muslim/multi-faith groups respectively. It also refers to several potential problems in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*: the Christian context of the poem, the political impact of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan, representation of Eve divided in *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*, the Western nature of key concepts of the poem and its teaching perspectives.

The next chapter draws out the distinctions between the narratives of fall in *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the *Bible* and the *Quran* in order to understand the key issues encountered by teachers and Muslim students. It presents the Biblical and Quranic perspective of creation and its consequences, and compares it to *Paradise Lost* from teachers' and students' perspectives. This investigation further leads to a debate about Eve's controversial identity in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*, contextualised in the *Bible*.

Chapter 3
The Narratives of Creation and Eve's Identity
in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*

Paradise Lost is written in the Biblical context of the creation, yet it is taught in different cultures to the students of different religious commitments. The focus of this chapter is to explore the learning experience of Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK and examine how the Christian background of the poem impacts upon Muslim/multi-faith teaching. This chapter examines the key moments of the fall in the *Quran* and the *Bible* and compares it to *Paradise Lost*. It explores how the fall is associated with Eve's identity and the punishment of motherhood and menstruation, while investigating the role of knowledge in the fall. The chapter provides the basis for data collection by analysing the major distinctions between creation narratives, and points out key questions that need to be explored in Part B of the thesis.

To investigate these issues in more detail and compare the narratives of creation in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*, it is helpful to understand the history and revelation of the *Quran* and the status of women in Islam. Both these topics are discussed in detail for two reasons: first, this research focuses on the reception of *Paradise Lost* among Muslim students and analyses Muslims' perspectives of the creation influenced by the Quranic narrative of the fall, so it is critical to understand the background of the *Quran*; second, Western readers need to understand the background of the *Quran* and the status of women in order to evaluate the Islamic perspective of the fall.

3.1 Background

The *Quran* is believed to be the most authentic and significant religious text of Islam. It was revealed by Allah[72] to the last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) over a period of 23 years

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72 Arabic word; Islamic name for the one and the only God, the Creator and the Sustainer of the whole universe

(610 CE to 632 CE)[73]. The *Quran* was revealed in Arabic but the text has been subsequently translated into many languages because of Muslims' diverse multilingualism and preference for understanding the *Quran* in their native discourse. A.R Kidwai suggests that the "bibliographical material on this subject was quite scant before the fairly recent appearance of *World Bibliography of the Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Quran*, which provides authoritative publication details of the translations of *The Quran* in sixty-five languages" (Kidwai1986). Allah revealed the *Quran* to Muhammad (PBUH) not only out of His immense love for Muhammad (PBUH) but also as a responsibility to propagate and explain it to his Ummah.[74] Allah says: "And We have revealed the Scripture unto thee only that thou mayst explain unto them that wherein they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe" (*Quran* 16:64). The first revelation to Muhammad (PBUH) occurred when he was 40 years of age, and he received the last revelation at the age of 63 – two months before he died, just after his Hajj[75] (A. Zahoor, Z. Haq 1998). According to Imam Malik, one of the four[76] known compilers of Ahadith, "Allah commissioned him (Muhammad PBUH) at the age of forty and made him die when he was sixty three. There were not more than twenty white hairs in his hair (head) or beard, may Allah bless him and grant him peace" (Muwatta 49:1.1).

The *Quran* was revealed over a period of 23 years because it was meant to be recited and learnt by heart: "And (it is) Qur'an that We have divided, that thou mayst recite it unto mankind at intervals, and We have revealed it by (successive) revelation" (17:106). While there had been numerous translations, it is important to understand that

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73 Common Era: Christian Era/Current Era
74 Followers of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
75 Islamic Pilgrimage
76 Acknowledged Ahadith (saying of the Prophet Muhammad) compilers of Sunni sect are; Bukhari, Muslim, Abu-Dawud, and Muwatta

for Muslims the transcription remained the same. No changes have been made in the transcription of the Quranic text, "unlike the earlier monotheistic communities (mainly Jews and Christians) corrupting their prophets' revelations (Torah and Evangel)" (Stowasser, 1996:13).To establish the authenticity of the *Quran*, the most important fact is that Allah Himself promised to preserve it from corruption[77]: "Lo! We, even We, reveal the Reminder (the *Quran*), and lo! We verily are its Guardian (from corruption)" (*Quran* 15:9). Aisha Stacey suggests: "Muslims have no doubt that the *Quran* is exactly the same today as it was more than 1400 years ago when it was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad" (2009). Similarly, Stowasser notes that "The *Quran* is both God's original and eternal Scripture and also His last, perfect and unchangeable revelation to humankind" (1996:13).

Muslims are ordained to follow the patterns of Islamic teachings based on the *Quran*. One of the most powerful elements in this guidance is the concept of mercy: "And (bethink you of) the day when We raise in every nation a witness against them of their own folk, and We bring thee (Muhammad) as a witness against these. And We reveal the Scripture unto thee as an exposition of all things, and a guidance and a mercy and good tidings for those who have surrendered (to Allah)" (*Quran* 16:89). Not only the *Quran*, but also Muhammad (PBUH) himself is regarded as a source of mercy through the guidance he offers to his Ummah[78]: "Lo! there is a plain statement for folk who are devout. We sent thee [O Muhammad] not (but) as a mercy to mankind." (*Quran* 21:107). The *Quran* also confirms the revelation of earlier scriptures like the Jewish Torah (Torat), the Hebrew Bible; Psalms (Zabur); and the Gospel of Jesus (Injil) and testifies to the message of the truth that they spread because these books contain signs of God's miraculous presence. The *Quran* declares the existence of earlier scriptures and their

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77 Here corruption refers to any alteration in a sacred text
78Followers

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messengers, and asks Muslims to believe in other scriptures' revelations, at the same time stressing that the *Quran* is the ultimate truth: "He (Allah) hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel..." (*Quran* 3: 3-4). On the other hand, the *Quran* curses those who have corrupted[79] the scriptures and misled followers: "Therefore woe be unto those who write the Scripture with their hands and then say, "This is from Allah" that they may purchase a small gain therewith. Woe unto them for that their hands have written, and woe unto them for that they earn thereby" (*Quran* 2:79). It is therefore noted that the idea of alterations in the *Bible* can be estimated with the number of editions it possesses for different religious and cultural communities and age groups (unlike the *Quran*). This distinction is, however, relevant to this study because Muslim students are used to one definitive account of the fall, and they might find it difficult to engage with the differing narrative put forward in *Paradise Lost*.

3.1.1 Status of Women in Islam

To explore the relationship between the *Quran* and the influence of the fall on women's identity, women's status in Islam must be understood before and after the advent of Islam, and investigated through the Shari'ah[80] – the code of life as described in the *Quran*, Sunnah[81] and Ahadith[82]. The Hadith literature is the leading source of Quranic interpretation and is consulted for all queries related to Islamic customs. The most authentic compilations of Ahadith (also referred in this research) are Sahih Al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu-Dawud and Malik Muwatta. These Ahadith collections have great authority in Islam second only to the *Quran*.

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79 Made changes and misled people with false interpretations
80 Islamic jurisprudence
81 Life of Muhammad (PBUH)
82 Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); singular is Hadith

Jahilya[83] is described as the period before the advent of Islam and is considered to have been a time when women were repressed. According to the *Quran*, Arabs in Jahilya buried their infant daughters alive though the *Quran* strictly condemned such practices through its revelations (*Quran* 16:59, 43:17, 81:8-9). During that period, it was a shame to give birth to an inferior sex instead of having a son to raise their generations. However, Imam Bukhari, an eminent compiler of Ahadith, notes that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "One to whom a daughter is born and who does not bury her alive, nor humiliate her, nor prefers a son to a daughter, will be sent by Allah to Paradise" (Bukhari, cited in A. Ali 1992:21). Women's status in Islam can also be understood when we explore the treatment of women during the Jahilya period. Islam, on its advent, gave women rights in inheritance, marriage, divorce and sexual equality (A. Ali, 1992). The feminist critics, rereading the *Quran*, note that the Islamic sacred texts treat both sexes equally, unlike the other religions: "And whoso doeth good works, whether of male or female, and he (or she) is a believer, such will enter paradise and they will not be wronged the dint in a date-stone" (*Quran* 4:124). This equal treatment towards the sexes is not only reflective in rewards, but in punishments as well: "So Allah punisheth hypocritical men and hypocritical women, and idolatrous men and idolatrous women. But Allah pardoneth believing men and believing women, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful" (*Quran* 33: 73).

Despite promoting equal rights, Islam exalted women's status as: "The basic teachings of the *Quran* focus on efforts to improve the condition of, and strengthen the weaker segments of society in pre-Islamic Arabia – orphans, slaves, the poor, women etc" (S.S.Ali, 2000:56). Thus Islam, through the revelation of the Quran, recovered women from ill-treatment and encouraged men to treat women respectfully. Hadrat Ali reported that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "One who honours women is himself honoured

83 The Arabic term denotes ignorance

and one who insults them is also lowly" (A. Ali, 1992: 80). Muhammad (PBUH) always preached good treatment towards women. His last sermon, known as the "Farewell Sermon", emphasises fair treatment of women: "O People, it is true that your women have certain rights over you... to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers" (Duran, et al., 2001:15). It is therefore noted that the history of Quranic feminism was grounded 1400 years back at the time of the advent of Islam, much earlier than Western feminism, as notes Wadud: "Islam gave women their rights fourteen hundred years before the West" (2006: 60). It is therefore evident that Islam, through the teachings of the *Quran,* liberates women and promotes equal and fair treatment of them.

After developing an understanding the *Quran* and the status of women in Islamic teachings, the next sections investigate the scenarios pre- and post- fall in the *Quran,* the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost,* and explore how the identity of Eve/women is constructed through the consequence of Eve's fall. This is, in turn, used to examine the development of Muslim/multi-faith teaching and learning experience more deeply. For each section, the Quranic narrative is discussed first, followed by the narratives of the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost* which are then analysed to find out the key questions for data collection.

3.2 The Creation Narratives

In the *Quran*, the act of man's first disobedience is discussed as a human error rather than a sin. It is narrated that Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit as a result of Satan's temptation of both of them:

> And We said: O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden, and eat ye freely (of the fruits) thereof where ye will; but come not nigh this tree lest ye become wrong-doers. But Satan caused them to deflect therefrom and expelled them from the (happy) state in which they were; and We said: Fall down, one of you a foe unto the other! There shall be for you on earth a habitation and provision for

a time. Then Adam[84] received from his Lord words (of revelation), and He relented toward him. Lo! He is the relenting, the Merciful. We said: Go down, all of you, from hence; but verily there cometh unto you from Me a guidance; and who followeth My guidance, there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve. (*Quran* 2: 35-38)

The Quranic narrative of the human expulsion from heaven is an outcome of Allah's forgiveness after their repentance. The story is remembered only as a historic event and as a lesson for humans to avoid Satan's temptation. It is evident from the Quranic narrative that Allah forgave Adam and Eve and guided them to the righteous path; it was Satan who seduced both of them into eating the fruit, and Eve is not blamed for this. Moreover, the term used for Adam and Eve once they ate the fruit was Zalamna,[85] 'the wrong-doers', instead of sinners (*Quran* 7: 23). In terms of teaching, it is important to find out whether teachers include the Islamic perspective of the fall in their Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*.

In contrast to the Quranic narrative, the Biblical account of humans' first disobedience is called the "fall" and was caused by Eve. According to the *Bible*, Eve is tempted by Satan, disguised as a serpent, to eat the forbidden fruit of knowledge, and after eating she gives it to Adam as well:

> And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. (*Genesis* 3:6)

It is evident from the quote that Eve was tempted, ate the fruit first, and gave it to Adam afterwards. As Adam said: "but it was the woman you gave me who brought me the fruit, and I ate it" (*Genesis* 3: 12). Such narrations present Eve as weak, and as a result the

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84 Adam is a Hebrew word that means "the creation of soil". Adam is used here for both Adam and Eve as the word "Eve" is not used in the Quran. The issue of Eve's un-naming is further discussed later in this chapter

85 In the Quran Adam and Eve were called "Wrong Doers" after eating the fruit and its Arabic translation is "Zalamna": those who disobey and do wrong to themselves

successive daughters of Eve (i.e. women) were associated with that sin and are broadly discussed in Western literature. Therefore, the perspectives of teachers in Pakistan and UK needs to be examined about how they perceive the Biblical narrative of the fall impacts upon English literature: do they find it difficult to explain the negative views of authors against female characters, and does the Christian context of English literature affect Muslim/multi-faith teaching?

Similar to the Biblical narrative, in *Paradise Lost* the fall was a consequence of Satan's temptation when Eve went away from Adam. Satan seduces her by giving her self-assurance and accepting her individual worth as "fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods" (IX: 489) and "goddess among gods" (IX: 547). For the first time, Eve is given a positive identity in the poem that is solely related to her; she is convinced by Satan that after eating the fruit: "ye shall be as gods, knowing both good and evil as they know" (IX: 708-9). Therefore, Milton blames Eve for the fall as does the *Bible*:

> Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate!
> Earth felt the wound and Nature from her seat
> Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
> That all was lost
>
> (IX: 781-4)

Eve eats the fruit and loses all that she had; she brings woe to the world with the resulting human suffering. At first, Adam agrees to eat the fruit to live with Eve, without thinking about the circumstances, "from thy state / Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe" (IX: 915-16). But this choice was not entirely Adam's sacrifice for Eve, rather it may be read as a conscious act of self-fulfilment: "if death / Consort with thee, death is to me as life" (IX: 953-4) and "to lose thee were to lose myself" (IX: 959). Champagne argues that "Adam's devotion to Eve emerges as a species of self-love" (1999: 117), as Adam blames Eve entirely: "She gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (X: 140-3) – and seems to regret

praising Eve earlier. He blames her for making him trust her and for seducing him to taste

the fruit:

> I also erred, in overmuch admiring
> What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought
> No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
> The errour now, which is become my crime,
> And thou the accuser.
>
> (IX: 1178-82)

Adam's shift and duality from love to distrust could be disturbing for Eve, but the way in

which Adam blames and praises her is embedded in the wider Puritan treatment of

women, identifying them either as ideals like Virgin Mary or sexually dangerous like

Eve. Therefore, Milton was for some reason trying to stick as closely as possible to the

conventional, Biblical version of events in his portrayal of Eve and Mary, although his

inclusion of mythical and fictional characters in the Biblical narrative might not justify

that.

Paradise Lost echoes the Biblical account of the fall by blaming Eve, although the

Quran does not curse Eve/women for bringing the fall at all. For Muslim readers of the

Quran coming to *Paradise Lost*, it might be anathema that Eve is regarded as the sole

sinner, bringing about the human fall from grace. Adam and Eve are the first Prophets of

Allah, and the majority of Muslims[86] feel devotion and affection for them. To understand

Muslim students' perception of the fall it needs to be explored whether they find the

Christian context of *Paradise Lost* problematic: do they consider the fall an event of a

historic nature or a sin; do they believe that Eve should be considered a sinner and

blamed solely for the fall; and do they refute Milton's narrative of the fall in reference to

the Quranic narrative? Similarly, it would be interesting to find out how teachers tackle

the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching and whether they

relate it to the Quranic perspective.

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86 See the findings of the questionnaires in the section of "Identity of Eve"

3.3 Eve's Naming and Identity

This section explores the identity of Eve in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*, looking at the texts from Muslim students' perspectives to explore how they would perceive Eve in *Paradise Lost* in contrast to the *Quran*, and how teachers present the character of Eve in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. The question of identity leads to the exploration of the way "she" is named, discussed and perceived in these texts and how that affects the treatment of women, who are further associated with the notion of sin and the fall.

One of the basic concerns of identity is naming, as names serve to distinguish an understanding of the self among various cultures, religions and sexes. In several Surahs[87] of the *Quran*, the story of Adam and his wife is narrated. Allah says in the *Quran*: "He it is Who did create you from a single soul, and therefrom did make his mate that he might take rest in her" (*Quran* 7:189). Eve is never named in the *Quran*: "The *Quran* does not mention Adam's wife by name, nor does it indicate how she was created" (Stowasser 1996:25). However, this does not imply that Eve/women have no significant identity in Islam. It is usually considered that Eve is called Adam's wife/mate in the *Quran*, as the *Quran* mentions "Adam and zauj[88]" instead of "Adam and Hawwa[89]". Riffat Hassan in *Members, One of Another: Gender Equality and Justice in Islam*, suggests: "Adam's zauj is not necessarily a woman. In fact, the term zauj is also a masculine noun (in Arabic) and, unlike the term Adam, it has a feminine counterpart, zaujatan[90]" (Hassan 1989:5). The reason that there is an absence of the word "Hawwa/Eve" in the *Quran* is due to the fact that the word "adam[91]" not only refers to a male individual "Adam", but to all human

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87 Chapters, singular surah
88 Arabic word meaning mate/ spouse/partner
89 Islamic name of Eve
90 Arabic term for wife
91 "Adam" (with capital A) is used for male sex and "adam" (with small a) is used for all human beings created from soil

beings made from the same essence of soil (earth). The term adam is derived from "adamah", the Hebrew word àãîä meaning "earth". Hassan notes: "The term "'adam'" occurs twenty-five times in the *Quran*. In twenty-one instances, it refers not to a specific person but to human beings when they reach the stage of moral autonomy and become capable of being God's vicegerents on earth" (Hassan). It is noted that "adam", in the *Quran*, represents the whole of humanity, not just a male individual. Thus, the idea that Eve is nowhere named in human creation justifies itself when we observe that rather than talking about each sex separately in about thirty passages on human creation, the *Quran* refers to the whole of humanity "an-nas", "al-insan", "al-bashar"[92] (Hassan). This may also be seen as a proof that Allah has been just and Adil[93] towards the sexes, and reflects that in the *Quran*. Therefore, adam is not a gendered identity but a living being created from soil and *zauj* is his/her mate. The only woman's name mentioned in the *Quran* is Hadrat Maryam[94] and a whole chapter, Surah *Maryam*, is named after her: "Of the *Quran*'s 114 chapters, she [Mary] is among the eight people who have a chapter named after them" (Galvan). Allah chose Hadrat Maryam to be a symbol of chastity: "Behold! the angels said: 'O Mary! God hath chosen thee and purified thee – chosen thee above the women of all nations.'" (*Quran* 3:42). The reason she is named in the *Quran* is because Allah knew that unbelievers would doubt her chastity[95] or misconceive Jesus as Allah's Son: "Such was Jesus, son of Mary: (this is) a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt. It befitteth not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him! When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is" (*Quran* 19: 34-35). The rest of the women are represented as either wives or mothers of the Prophets or leaders and are named in Ahadith and Islamic exegesis; for example, Eve is

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92 Arabic expressions for human beings
93 Adil is one of Allah's 99 names and that means "the one who is just in His dealings"
94 Mother Mary
95 Debate on the chastity of Mary Vs. Eve is later discussed in Chap 4

known as "Hawwa" in the Ahadith. Since Eve is not blamed for the fall in the *Quran*, women in Islam are not ill-treated and humiliated in the rest of Quranic narrative. Muslim students need to be asked how they perceive the Islamic Eve, and if they consider that the un-naming of Eve refers to her non-significance in Islam.

In the *Bible* the name of Eve is given by Adam: "Then Adam named his wife Eve" (*Genesis* 3: 20). Unlike the Quranic narrative, Eve is an active figure in the Biblical account of the fall. Her existence in the *Bible* is very important because the first sin of human beings is directly associated with her. In Western tradition, the symbolic interpretation of women as wicked is traced back to the Biblical account of Eve. It is very interesting to note that the Old Testament symbolises Eve as the origin of all evil, and subsequently the New Testament confirms the fallen nature of women. Eve is recognised as the first woman on earth who brought evil and sin with her: "No wickedness comes anywhere near the wickedness of a woman... From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die" (*Ecclesiastes* 25:19-24). This statement explains that the root cause of death and disaster derives from the first sin of Eve, and implies that the nature of every woman is as wicked as Eve's. The echo of such expression is also found in the words of Timothy: "Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor..." (*Timothy* 2:11-14). The comparison of Biblical and Quranic narrative of the fall highlights a marked difference in a way it treats Eve and women subsequently. The fall influences the status of women; in the *Quran* women are treated well, whereas the disgraced image of Eve subsequently led to the evil identity of women in early Christianity: "I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare..." (*Ecclesiastes* 7:26-28). The long history of women's subordination is followed from the Biblical account of

Eve's subservient relationship to Adam and that causes contemporary feminists to debate Biblical influence on gender issues. Gross argues that if the Biblical narrative of the fall is continued to be believed and related to the female sex, "no woman will ever experience wholeness, healing, integrity, and autonomy while committed to a Biblical religion" (1996:141). On the other hand, Quranic feminists argue that Islam justifies women's status and promotes gender equality. Asghar Ali argues that "there is no doubt that there is a general thrust towards the equality of the sexes in the *Quran*" (1992:51). Similarly, Wadud notes that according to the *Quran*, "man and woman are two categories of the human species given the same or equal consideration and endowed with the same or equal potential" (1999:118). As compared to the *Quran*, the Biblical treatment towards Eve and women is unkind, therefore Muslim students might find it unjust to relate Eve with the Biblical interpretation of the fall.

After exploring Eve's identity in the *Quran* and the *Bible*, Eve's identity in *Paradise Lost* must be examined. Eve is depicted through fictional and mythical figures as an immoral and frail being in *Paradise Lost*. Milton presents female figures that are deceitful and immoral and which mirror Eve: Sin, Proserpina, Pandora, Helen, Venus, Hermione and Olympias are all sexually provocative, incestuous and often the cause of bereavement and catastrophe. Milton's exploitation of female mythological figures in the Christian epic, *Paradise Lost*, complicates its thematic existence by inter-layering two distinctive belief systems: theology and mythology. It is important to mention that there is no discussion of mythological characters in the *Quran* and the *Bible*. The physical representation of women, like Sin, in the poem is not only bewitching but repulsive. Sin is the first female character introduced in Book II of *Paradise Lost* when Satan encounters his daughter, who provides him with the key to hell thereby allowing him access to heaven. Thus, there is a similarity between Sin and Eve, who is the only female

character in Eden and who, by eating the apple, opens the gates of sin and damnation to all humankind. The words and evil designs of Sin underscore the story of man's fall due to Eve, proving her to be the reflection of Eve. Even on a basic level we can see punning between the words "evil" and "Eve". Sin says that "none can pass (hell)/ without my opening" (II: 76-7) which suggests that without Eve's sin of "opening" her mouth and eating the fruit, the human race could have been kept away from suffering and sin. Thus, tasting the forbidden fruit results in "a world of woe" (IX: 6-11) that "brought death into the world and all woe" (I: 3) that is brought to the human race by Eve. Not only the actions but the physical description of Eve resembles that of Sin. When Sin is introduced she is seen to possess the same physical characteristics as of Eve – both are fair: "The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair" (II: 50), both resemble their creator; as Sin is Satan's image: "Thy self in me my perfect image viewing" (II: 765) and Eve is God's: "Fairest resemblance of thy maker fair" (IX: 538). It is ironic that Sin has attractive grace, but that she also resembles Satan (her creator). How, for a Christian text, is it possible that Sin who is a daughter of Satan, born out of an evil physically, and an outcome of evil allegorically, has attractive grace (II: 764) that resembles Eve's attractive grace (IV: 253)? The multiple meanings derived from the presence of Sin, without even her presence in the Biblical story, prove to have a logical reason in the poem[96]. The poem shows a continuous shift[97] between the Biblical narrative of the fall and mythology. One of the questions it will be necessary to explore is: how do teachers discuss the fictional and mythical characters in Muslim/multi-faith teaching? Do they relate Eve with Sin? The students are asked about their perception of Milton's Eve and whether they think that

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96 Chap 4 provides in-depth analysis of the other mythical figures
97 The Biblical context of the fall along with an implication of the mythical figures

Milton is partial about presenting Eve morally inferior. Do they think that the fall caused any change in human nature?

After discussing how the narrative of the fall and its impact on female identity can be problematic in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*, it is interesting to draw a comparison among the modes of punishment given to Adam and Eve. This would further determine how the fall is understood in the traditions of the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*, thereby helping to understand Muslim perceptions about the fall in *Paradise Lost* in comparison to the *Quran*.

3.4 Eve's Punishment: Motherhood

This section examines how motherhood and menstruation are related to Eve's punishment for the fall. The Quranic narrative states that Eve is not a temptress who brought the fall to human beings; instead Satan is blamed for seducing Adam and Eve together, therefore motherhood and menstruation are not linked to Eve's punishment for the fall. Since the accuser was Satan, there was no severe punishment for Adam and Eve as they asked for Allah's mercy and repented their disobedience: "They said: Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely we are of the lost!" (*Quran* 7: 23). Allah forgave them as they asked for forgiveness: "Adam disobeyed his Lord, so went astray. Then his Lord chose him, and relented toward him, and guided him" (*Quran* 20: 121-122). The Quranic Eve, unlike the Biblical Eve, was not punished with a child-bearing curse. The status of the mother is high in Islam, and the *Quran* insists that the faithful show love and respect to mothers: "And We have enjoined [duty] upon man concerning his parents – His mother beareth him in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years – Give thanks unto Me and unto thy parents..." (*Quran* 31:14). Allah did not punish women by making them subordinate to men, but ordered that men

must treat women with love: "But consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good" (*Quran* 4: 19).

According to the Biblical account, Eve tempts Adam to eat the fruit and as a result all women become a part of that sinning and must be considered morally weak and signified as an evil that could seduce or be seduced easily and must be punished forever: "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you" (*Genesis* 3: 60). In the *Bible*, God punished Eve/women in two ways: first he cursed her with the pain and grief of childbirth and second he made her dependent on her husband and subordinate to him. However, critics like Atkinson honour women for the pain of childbirth and notes that through the grief and pain associated with the psychological and physical suffering women experience during childbirth, motherhood may be paralleled with sainthood: "the association of motherhood with suffering and suffering with holiness ... [made it] possible for women who were mothers to be eligible also for sainthood" (Atkinson 1991:241). Atkinson, in a way similar to that of the *Quran*,[98]provides the basis of motherhood being treated as sainthood, whereas the Biblical narrative associates motherhood with a punishment of the fall. Eve is a religious figure in Islam and is also considered as mother of mankind, and consequently she is treated with dual respect. Therefore, for Muslims students the Biblical interpretation of Eve's motherhood as a punishment for the fall might be upsetting.

In Milton's narrative, Eve is punished as in the Biblical punishment. Her motherhood is cursed and she is made to surrender before her husband forever. Milton's God reasserts the patriarchal hierarchy; he punishes Adam for obeying Eve, and Eve for

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98 See the Quranic treatment towards motherhood discussed earlier in this chapter

committing a sin. He confirms Adam's superiority over Eve by arguing that Eve's beauty was to attract Adam's love instead of his subjection:

> Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
> Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
> Superiour, or but equal, that to her
> Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
> Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
> And for thee, whose perfection far excelled
> Hers in all real dignity? Adorned
> She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
> Thy love, not thy subjection
>   (X: 145-153)

God points out that Adam was not created to follow Eve, who is subordinate to Adam, and that he must love rather than obey her. Consequently, God punishes Eve with the everlasting pain and grief of child birth:

> Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
> By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
> In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will
> Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.
>   (X: 194-6)

The word "multiply" means to increase or enhance, suggesting that the distress and trouble of Eve will be increased beyond imagination; she will deliver children with immense pain and must obey Adam forever. Milton's Eve suffers from guilt due to Adam's suffering and God's anger. She accepts that she deserves to be punished forever and to live with the curse of childbirth: "The misery; I deserved it, and would bear/ My own deservings; but this will not serve:/All that I eat or drink, or shall beget/Is propagated curse" (X: 726-9). Fish notes that Milton uses Henry James' technique of "guilty reader": "The readers as well as the characters have been involved in the evil and have been forced to recognise and to judge their involvement" (James cited in Fish 1988:142). Eve is not alone in her suffering, otherness, guilt, and ignorance, as Milton's skilful versification might make it more difficult for Muslim/multi-faith teaching as the students might travel along with his characters. His use of unrhymed verses allowed the

narrative of *Paradise Lost* to flow in multi-dimensions supporting his Protestant political views, mythological illusions and the Biblical narrative of fall, and his use of blank verse[99] encourages readers to sympathise with Eve's motivations and sufferings. Eve's sufferings and guilt might well be shared by students, and that should be addressed very delicately in teaching scenarios.

Eve's cursed motherhood is echoed by Sin's curse of pregnancy. Although the story of Sin and her son Death has nothing in common with the Biblical fall, in the narrative of *Paradise Lost* this relationship has a great importance. Therefore, students could perceive the role of Eve as evil as parallel to that of Sin. Both Eve and Sin are given the same roles of destructive mothers, and Milton creates a parallel in Eve's temptation by Satan with Sin's incest[100] by Satan. Sin gives birth to Death after having incestuous "joy" (II: 765) with Satan, "Me overtook his mother all dismayed" (II: 792), and Eve is a mother "Mother of Mankind" (V: 388). Similarly, both of these mothers bring death and mortality: "Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out death... Me overtook his mother all dismayed (*Paradise Lost* II, 787-92). Sin is the suffering mother who faces an instant birth and death of her offspring, "constantly re-forming and breeding, giving birth to dog-like young. She has no control over these changes but is held captive by cruel pregnancies in a body in perpetual labour, cursed by her own fertility. Satan raped his daughter in heaven, and she gave birth to Death" (Sims 2008). Likewise, Eve's motherhood was also punished by God: "Children shall thou bring forth in sorrow" (X: 195). As Griffin notes:

> Sin, as a part of Punishment, is condemned by God to bear the "hell hounds," dogs that wriggle out of her womb to gnaw on her and then creep back inside where they "bark'd and howl'd within unseen." Sin's punishment of continually bearing ravenous dogs was a foreboding of

99 Similar to the common spoken rhythms of the human voice
100 Chap 3 consists of a section on rape and incest to discuss Eve's chastity or fidelity

God's punishment of Eve (and all women) with labour pains and of all humanity with the propagation of sin through its offspring. (Griffin cited in Jenkins 1997:108)

Griffin's concept is emphasised by the words of God in the *Bible*: "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children..." (*Genesis* 3:16, 60).It is argued that women are presented in constant physical, moral and psychological suffering, and that Sin's curse is paralleled to Eve's motherhood. Since incest is abhorred in an Islamic context and motherhood has a high status in Islam, Muslim readers might feel uncomfortable reading such discourse. Such negative impact of Eve's motherhood could be nullified during teaching by referring to Van Dan Berg's article, which rejects the automatic conflation between Sin and Eve that one can easily derive from Milton's close textual analysis[101]. Van Dan Berg states that "For Eve the pain of childbirth is outweighed by hope in God's covenant. Through her maternity, his promise would be fulfilled ... that could redeem woman from the monstrous delusions of witchcraft most dreadfully embodied as Sin" (1986:351). Berg, unlike Griffin, perceives the two female characters very differently: "Unlike Sin, Eve has the complexity of a human character, overlaid with Milton's fantasy of human perfection and his knowledge of human vulnerability" ("Eve, Sin and Witchcraft in *Paradise Lost*" 1986:355). Thus it would be helpful to examine students' and teachers' separate views about Sin and how these characters are taught in relation to each other. It would also be useful to gather the responses of Pakistani teachers about how they perceive Eve's character, and whether it is easy for them to teach Eve in relation to the Islamic Eve and/or Sin, or if they deal with Milton's Eve independently.

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[101] For a parallel between Sin and Eve see above

3.4.1 Menstruation

This section examines the Christian assumption of punishment of the fall related to menstruation, and explores it from Muslims students' perception of the fall and its punishment. Although menstruation is not explicitly mentioned in *Paradise Lost* – perhaps because it was considered too filthy in the Early Modern period to discuss openly – it is linked to issues of fertility and conception in *Paradise Lost,* and this investigation would be relevant to Muslim students reading the narrative.

Many critics argue that the Biblical interpretation shows menstruation as a part of the punishment of the fall associated to Eve and Eve's daughters (women). Philip notes that when reading Biblical interpretations "menstruation and childbirth ... [in relation to] their impurity has been greatly emphasised, while their other aspects, like fertility, have been neglected" (2006:2). Such patriarchal interpretation is also highlighted by Solnic, who argues that "Eve's sin means that all women must "'suffer torment and misfortune.'" And therefore she must have her period every month... so that she will always remember her sin and remain in constant state of repentance" (Solnic cited in De Troyer 2003:6). Thus, menstruation is seen as marker of impiousness and uncleanness of woman, originated by Satan's temptation. The prelapsarian Eve was unaware of sexuality and only experienced shame in her nudity when she tasted the fruit, and that awareness led to God's severe punishment of childbirth (X: 193-5). The sorrow, curse, grief and pain are all associated with the single biological process of conceiving a child. This echoes *Genesis:* when God punishes Eve, He says that He will "multiply thy sorrow and thy conception" (III: 16). In early Christianity, a menstruating woman is seen as a "pollution" (*Ezekiel* 22:10), probably because of her first sin. Leviticus advocates the harsh treatment of menstruating women: she should be "put apart" for "seven days" and anyone who "touches her" or her "bed" or the place where she "sits" during those days

would remain "unclean till evening". He must "bathe with water" to purify himself or if he "lie[s] with her at all" he will remain "unclean for seven days" (*Leviticus* 15: 19-24). After her period, she should go to a priest on "eighth day" to sacrifice two "pigeons or two turtles" as a "sin offering...an atonement for her before the Lord for the issue of her uncleanness" (*Leviticus* 15: 29-30). Menstruation is related to uncleanness as a result of sin, as she must sacrifice something to be free from sinning and be clean again. This opens a debate not only for the religious scholars, but for the feminists as well, who deal with the term "menstrual politics" that make women "other" in a male-dominated society on the basis of their physiological and functional differences (Delaney, et al., 1988:54-5).

The Islamic Eve is not punished with the cursed childbirth and the disobedience is related to both Adam and Eve together, however the *Quran* does not relate menstruation to Eve's punishment. According to Spellberg, early Muslim critics misinterpret the biological cause of menstruation in woman, relating it to the pre-Quranic tradition of the fall in Genesis (1996:319). However, Quranic religious scholars are strictly against the notion of the polluted nature of women, seeing menstruation as a biological process (Spellberg 1996:320). Quranic feminists note that in pre-Islamic times it was seen as taboo or pollution, but after Islam's advent it was recognised as an "inconvenience" to women (Joseph & Najambadi 2006:27). It is, therefore, argued that Islam interprets menstruation as biologically natural and healthy to women. Islam forbids sexual relation at the time when woman is bleeding because the "Islamic notions of purity and spirituality are the basis for mutual sexual enjoyment" (Joseph & Najambadi 2006:28). It is not the curse that women carry due to the fall, and unlike early Christianity, men are not forbidden to touch or be touched by menstruating women. Aisha, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), relates that "[I used to] comb the head of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, while I was menstruating" (Bukhari 6:291).

However, the *Quran* does talk about the "illness" of menstruation and tells Muhammad (PBUH) to forbid people from sexual intercourse during menstruation (*Quran* 2:222), not because this is pollution, but for its harmful effects to health of both men and women. There emerges a question for Muslim students on how they perceive menstruation according to their religious belief. This would help to identify how informed they are religiously about the fall and the punishment related to it, as the more informed they are, the greater their chances to relate the Quranic narrative with *Paradise Lost*, and therefore find it problematic to learn about Biblical narrative of the fall and its punishment.

3.4 Knowledge as a Cause of the Fall

Seeking knowledge can be seen as one the foremost ways to empower an individual male or female. This section proposes to highlight the importance of knowledge with reference to the account of the fall in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*. The Biblical and Miltonian narratives perceive knowledge as a direct cause of the fall, whereas the *Quran* has a different approach. The teaching of Islam begins with acquiring knowledge, as the very first revelation to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is about learning: "Read: In the name of thy Lord Who createth, Createth man [adam/human] from a clot. Read: And thy Lord is the Most Bounteous, Who teacheth by the pen, Teacheth man [adam/human] that which [t]he[y] knew not" (*Quran* 96:1-5). It is argued that the *Quran* broadens the conservative assumptions of superiority of men over women and allows women equal access to acquire knowledge, as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) notes: "Every Muslim male or female is requested to seek knowledge" (Al-Hariri 1987: 51). The *Quran* teaches all human beings to pray for enhancement of knowledge, regardless of gender: "say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (*Quran* 20: 114). Knowledge is not a reason of expulsion from Paradise; instead it is a path that leads towards Paradise, as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) notes: "Whoever goes down a path/road searching for Knowledge,

Allah will make it easy for him the road to Paradise" (Muslim 3:99). The disobedience of Adam and Eve was not the act of eating from the tree of "knowledge": "And (unto man): O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden and eat from whence ye will, but come not nigh this tree lest ye become wrong-doers" (*Quran* 7:19). Eating from the tree of "eternity/life" is the reason for their disobedience: "But the Devil whispered to him, saying: O Adam! Shall I show thee the tree of immortality [Shajarati^l Khuldi][102] and power that wasteth not away?" (*Quran* 20: 120).

Islam does not support discrimination on the basis of gender: "the Qur'an (does) not use sex/gender to discriminate over women, but it also does not stigmatise sex itself" (Barlas 2002:149). Instead the distinction is among those who strive to acquire knowledge and those who remain ignorant: "say (unto them, O Muhammad): Are those who know equal with those who know not?" (*Quran* 39:9). Islam encourages human beings to research and explore the hidden truth of knowledge of the universe: "And whoso bringeth the truth and believeth therein - Such are the dutiful" (*Quran* 39:33). It provides women with equal opportunities of seeking knowledge to enable them to understand their rights and develop their consciousness accordingly: "they have rights similar to those against them, in a just manner" (Al-Hariri 1987:51). Not only secular but also spiritual knowledge, that uplifts and enlighten one's soul and mind, is fundamental for Muslim men and women, and that knowledge makes them God-fearing, as Allah says "only His slaves who have knowledge fear Allah" (*Quran* 35:28) and "only those with knowledge will understand it [the fear of Allah]" (*Quran* 29:43). It is critical to notice that in Islam, knowledge is a key to the identification of one's self that subsequently leads to recognition of *Allah* directly, unlike Milton's Eve in *Paradise Lost* who depends on

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102 Arabic word used in the *Quran* for the tree of life/immortality

Adam and his knowledge as an intermediate link between her and God[103]. As a consequence of this restricted knowledge, Milton's Eve could neither identify herself nor God.

It is noticeable that the fall in the *Bible* came about when a woman tried to gain knowledge: "[from] the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (*Genesis* 3:17). St. Paul in the New Testament notes: "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I don't permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner" (I *Timothy* 2:11-14). According to the Biblical instructions for women, they have to be passively submissive even in learning, and must not question man's commandments or seek to learn and investigate any teachings (I *Corinthians* 14:35).

Paradise Lost consistently deals with the power struggle associated with knowledge between the genders. The hierarchy maintained in hell and heaven is due to knowledge; God is the most powerful in heaven and Satan is the most powerful in hell. From God to Jesus, Satan to Lucifer, and Adam to the angels, this attribute is limited to the male sex instead of the equal division of knowledge between Adam and Eve. The fall in the poem is directly influenced by the inequality of knowledge. Milton's Eve remains happily ignorant and does not desire to know any more than Adam tells her. Milton deliberately makes Eve deliver the message to the reader that women acquire honour if they are pleased to accept ignorance and do not participate in their husbands' knowledge and power: "God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more/ Is woman's happiest

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103 As in the Pauline perspective, women were not allowed to speak in the church – see Chap 2 for the context of the poem

knowledge, and her praise" (IV: 637-8). Her ignorance is presented as prelapsarian innocence when she accepted Adam as her God (IV: 300). Whenever the angel comes to transfer knowledge from God, Milton makes Eve leave so that she cannot hear the discussion:

> Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
> Delighted, or not capable her ear
> Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved,
> Adam relating, she sole auditress;
> Her husband the relater she preferred
> Before the Angel, and of him to ask, Chose rather...
> (VIII: 48-54)

Milton presents Eve as being unsuitable to hear the Divine words of knowledge. She is not able to understand the superior discussion because of her inferior faculties. She rather prefers Adam to relate to her all that he heard, rather than acquiring the knowledge directly from the angel; she lacks a direct contact with God's words. Milton's attitude towards Eve is similar to the Biblical treatment of women as an inferior sex, unfit for wisdom and knowledge. Satan provides Eve with a chance to extend her faculties and bring about a change in the hierarchal relationship that she and Adam have experienced so far. Eve, who has remained submissive, is convinced by Satan that she may be of a higher status, like a god, on the basis of attaining knowledge: "ye shall be as gods, knowing both good and evil as they know" (IX: 708-9). Close analysis of the text just before the fall reveals how frustrated Eve was due to her ignorance when she ate the fruit from the "tree of knowledge" in order to get an exalted status and achieve superiority to be loved by Adam:

> What fear I then? rather, what *know* to fear
> Under this *ignorance* of good and evil,
> Of God or death, of law or penalty?
> Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
> Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
> Of virtue to make *wise*: What hinders then
> To reach, and feed both body and mind?
> (IX: 773-9; emphasis added)

Subsequently, it is intriguing that right after eating the fruit Eve assumes how she will appear before Adam after acquiring the knowledge:

> But to Adam in what sort
> Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
> As yet my change, and give him to partake
> Full happiness with me, or rather not,
> But keeps the odds of knowledge in my power
> Without copartner? so to add what wants
> In female sex, the more to draw his love,
> And render me more equal; and perhaps,
> A thing not undesirable, sometime
> Superiour... (IX: 816-33)

Eve perceives herself to be more desirable to Adam after eating from the tree of knowledge; she starts to understand the gendered power struggle of knowledge and hopes to be treated as more equal or sometimes even superior.

In the *Quran*, seeking knowledge is encouraged and equally attainable by men and women, and the fall was not due to the acquisition of knowledge. On the other hand, knowledge in the Christian texts the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost* is gendered, so that only men may have knowledge and Eve's transgression is specifically about acquiring an understanding of gender hierarchies which she then tries to challenge. The critical textual analysis of the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost* proves that to empower someone it is essential to allow them to seek knowledge, but the question is: how the process of learning, gaining wisdom and acquiring knowledge related to a right to speak and permission to question? It is very important to see whether the learning environment of *Paradise Lost* allows Muslim/multi-faith students to bring in the discussion of their own religions. Their freedom to question/resist why they are taught a Biblical text, the formality level between teachers and students, and teachers' observations of students' attitude during religious discussion should be explored.

3.5 Conclusion

The identity of Eve embodies a fusion of Biblical and Quranic traditions, and this chapter explores how Milton's image of Eve in *Paradise Lost* differs from that in the *Bible* and the *Quran*. The chapter engages with the discussion on the creation narratives in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost* and examines the impact of these narratives on Eve/women's identity. This provides key questions[104] of how *Paradise Lost* could be taught in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. The most stimulating questions evolved are: should the Quranic perspective of the fall be related to the Biblical narrative while teaching; how is the Christian context of English Literature, particularly in *Paradise Lost* I, made apparent; is the learning environment when discussing *Paradise Lost* flexible enough to allow students to question or resist; and have teachers noticed any resistance from students due to the Biblical context of poem? Similarly, the chapter also investigates the problems that the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* may offer to Muslim students, including: the contradictory narrative of the poem with the *Quran*, the representation of Eve as a sinner, Milton's partiality to showing Eve as morally inferior, and the punishment of the fall as motherhood and menstruation.

The next chapter evaluates the stature of Eve in terms of her "Representation" in *Paradise Lost* as compared to the *Bible* and the *Quran*, and shows how that can be problematic in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. It discusses Milton's use of mythical female characters in order to construct Eve's image from a more specific analysis of *Paradise Lost*, in terms of Eve's representation in comparison to the *Bible* and the *Quran*. For example, Eve's nudity could be offensive to Muslim students, as Milton merges the image of the Biblical Eve with his personal interpretation with reference to Mythical

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104 The Chapters 2,3 and 4 tend to focus on the poem from the perspective of the Muslim/multi-faith teaching and academics in Pakistan and UK, and these questions are investigated in the interviews and questionnaires in the Part B of the thesis to analyse the exact scenario

goddesses. To understand this ambiguity, *Paradise Lost* needs an in-depth analysis by focusing on the significance of other female characters referred to in the poem.

Chapter 4
Eve's Representation and Other Religious Issues
in *Paradise Lost* in reference to the *Bible* and the *Quran*

Representation of Eve as sexually provocative can be most controversial in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK. *Paradise Lost,* a Christian epic written in Early Modern England, presents a contrasting view not only to a Christian doctrine of chaste women but also to the ideology of ideal Biblical and Quranic woman. This chapter discusses the key issues related to women/Eve's representation constructed in *Paradise Lost,* the *Quran*, and the *Bible*. It explores the representation of women/Eve in the poem, for example the significance of issues like nudity, sexuality, rape and incest, infidelity and adultery. The structure of this chapter brings up the key themes of *Paradise Lost* and explores them in its Biblical context, and in order to understand these issues from Muslim/multi-faith teaching, the Quranic reading is also undertaken. This chapter, like previous chapters, would highlight key questions for Part B of the research where they will be investigated in interview and questionnaire surveys.

The chapter is divided into three sections. Section I explores the "physical" representation of Eve, including Eve's sensuous nudity and the discourses on Muslim veiling. Section II deals with the "literal" representation of women, investigating the ways women are presented as "evil" and how it influences Eve's character. It is subdivided into two categories: (a) Rape and sexual assault, and (b) Infidelity and adultery, in relation to the female characters in *Paradise Lost*. Section III examines the other religious issues that could be problematic in *Paradise Lost*, for example identity of Eve in relation to Mary, identity of Jesus as God's son and the Christian concept of redemption. To investigate these concerns in *Paradise Lost*, Chapter 4 deals with the close comparative reading of *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible*, and the *Quran* with a focus of female representation in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

4.1 *Paradise Lost* and the Issue of Nudity

This section examines Eve's controversial physical representation in *Paradise Lost* from the perspective of Muslim/multi-faith teaching. It examines Eve's nudity as sexually provocative and compares it in the *Bible* and the *Quran*. The investigation moves on to explore the discourses on veiling in order to understand how critical Eve's nudity can be among Muslim students of *Paradise Lost*.

4.1.1 Eve's Physical Representation

The representation of Eve in *Paradise Lost* as naked and sexually highlighted can be contradictory in a variety of ways. Firstly, Milton's poem is a literary text that proclaims its purpose is to justify God's ways to man, but it does not address female sexualisation of the narrative. Secondly, the poem is a Christian epic, yet the *Bible* condemns women who present themselves in the way Eve is depicted. Although Eve is naked when discussed in *Genesis*, her nudity is not sexualised. Thirdly, in *Genesis* not only is Eve presented naked, but so is Adam, and *Genesis* never gives minute details of either Adam or Eve's nude bodies. The *Quran* and the *Bible* not only oppose the act of nakedness but also recommend ways to behave modestly, although early Christianity shows gender preference while focusing only on women in such discourses. Early Christianity strictly instructed women to cover their head in public: "For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered" (1 *Corinthians* 11:6), whereas Islam urges both "believing men and believing women" to be modest: "And those who malign" others by showing their charms they "bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin" (*Quran* 33:58). The Biblical and the Quranic difference in account of the fall lies in the fact that the *Quran* does not blame Eve for the fall, but Satan who seduced Adam and Eve together: "Let not Satan seduce you as he caused your [first] parents to go forth from the garden and tore off from them their robe [of

innocence] that he might manifest their shame to them..." (*Quran* 7: 27). Therefore, in Islamic tradition of creation the shame related to nudity was caused by Satan's temptation to both Adam and Eve, but in *Paradise Lost* Eve alone bears the shame of nudity, fall, immorality and the curse.

Both Islam and early Christianity claim to teach and promote modesty by covering the private body parts, and veiling to prevent any misdeed: "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest" for it is good for them not to provoke men by "display(ing) [of] their adornment..." so they should cover their body by "draw(ing) their veils over their bosoms..." (*Quran* 24:31) and "...draw their cloaks close round them..." (*Quran* 33:59). Similarly, St. Paul in his letter to Timothy suggests: "I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls ...but with good deeds..." (1 *Timothy* 2:9-10). Ironically, it is only women who are asked to dress decently and behave modestly, they have to cover their hair or be shaven (1 *Corinthians* 11:6) – whereas for men there are no such restrictions[105] in terms of guarding modesty because man "is the image and glory of God" (1*Corinthians* 11:7). However, Islam does not only ask women to be modest, but it also demands men to guard their modesty: "Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest", because this would prevent them from any evil emerging in their heart and "that is purer for them" (*Quran* 24:30). Wadud (2006) argues that the *Quran* is a non-patriarchal text, since it demands men to "lower their gaze" (*Quran* 24:30) and guard their modesty in a verse prior to urging women (*Quran* 24:31).

In the *Quran* and the *Bible*, Eve's physical representation is very different from that in *Paradise Lost*. In the *Quran*, the nakedness of Adam and Eve is not portrayed as seductive either to the reader or to each other: "And when they tasted of the tree their

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105 As in the seventeenth century only women were required to be chaste and modest and these characteristics were only expected from women, see socio-cultural perspective in Chap 2

shame (nakedness) was manifest to them and they began to hide [by heaping] on themselves some of the leaves of the Garden" (*Quran* 7: 21). Similarly, Eve's nakedness in the *Bible* is treated as innocence rather than an instigation to physical desire both in the pre- and postlapsarian scenario, and their nudity is not an issue of modesty: "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (*Genesis* 2:25). The act of being naked was not sinful, since they were unaware until they ate the fruit and had knowledge of good and evil, and only then did they cover their bodies with leaves: "...she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked..." (*Genesis* 3: 6-7). It is critical to observe that postlapsarian shame is associated with the nudity of both Adam and Eve in the *Bible,* whereas Milton only sexualises Eve's nudity, and Adam's nakedness is presented as masculine and godly[106]. Thus, it could be controversial for the Muslim/multi-faith students of *Paradise Lost* to see that only Eve is subjected to shame: first for her nudity and then for her fall.

Paradise Lost follows a Biblical tradition in blaming Eve entirely for the fall, but the narrative varies significantly with the *Bible* when dealing with Eve's nudity in a sexual manner. Eve's postlapsarian shame in *Paradise Lost* and Milton's sexualised representation of the prelapsarian Eve are two distinct issues, but both of them are potentially problematic when teaching the poem to Muslim/multi-faith classes. By including sensuous images of Eve, Milton develops her femininity, presenting her in terms of a sexual entity, creating doubt in her prelapsarian innocence. In the postlapsarian narrative, nudity "naked thus, of Honour void, Of Innocence, of Faith, of Puritie" (V:1075) is treated as a state of remorse, shame and guilt, whereas the prelapsarian nudity is more a conflict between Eve's nudity and so-called "spotless

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106 See Chap 2 for Adam's godly physical representation

innocence" (IV:318) or "harmless innocence" (IV:388) – after all, Adam and Eve are in Eden and know nothing about sex – and the postlapsarian eroticisation of the female body. It is almost like the pagan myth in which the reader brings in the eroticisation of nudity as directed by Milton's minute details of Eve's sensual nudity – but the characters do not take part in this eroticisation, as they are unaware that there is any sin in nakedness. Since nakedness for Muslim students is very different, and of course there are degrees of nakedness from veiling hair/head to covering the body, the vocabulary used to describe Eve's body calls upon a postlapsarian understanding of sexuality and "adulterous lust" (IV:753) instead of signifying innocence in her "naked beauty" (IV:713) and "naked limbs" (IV:772). Milton adds to this sexual impact by giving minute details of Eve's long golden hair[107] that covers her fully-developed breast and "mysterious parts" that are not "concealed" (IV:312). In contrast to the *Bible* and the *Quran,* which strictly focus on guarding one's modesty, Milton ironically uses Eve's "unadorned golden tresses" as a "veil" to cover her "swollen breast naked" (IV:495-6), yet her "Dishevelled" hair in "ringlets waved" presents a strong sexual appeal as "vine curls" at one end, and symbolise the aftermath of lovemaking on the other (IV: 304-307). Milton's Eve lures Adam with her "beauty and submissive charms", and "half-embracing leaned" on him with her "swelling breast" and half covered "under the flowing gold/ Of her loose tresses hid" (IV: 494-9), and trapped in these seductive charms Adam later follows Eve in eating the fruit. Eve's swollen breast is covered by her hair, but hair is itself a symbol of sexuality in seventeenth centaury, as Scott-Warren notes that in Early Modern literature, "Unbraiding of hair leads to liquefaction of sex... [and] loose hair go[es] hand in hand with loose morality[108]" (Scott-Warren 2005: 203). Likewise, Fish

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107 See section on veiling for Eve's hair as a symbol of veil and sexuality later in the chapter
108 See Chap 2 for the seventeenth century parameters of ideal women, also see Vives and St. Paul in reference to hair and morality

notes that the narrative of *Paradise Lost* is "explicit in a negative way" as it "continue[s] to evoke" the "sensuality of the scene in seductiveness of Eve's tresses" (1998:105).

It is, however, argued that such discourse might give students[109] a visual sense of nude Eve, as her swollen naked breast partly covered with her golden hair is explicitly expressing her femininity and sexuality. Therefore *Paradise Lost,* while revealing the seductive side of Eve, might stir the emotions of Muslim/multi-faith students who encounter Eve's prelapsarian sensuous nudity and her postlapsarian shame, and this could complicate Muslim/multi-faith teaching. To realise how important the issue of nudity and sexuality in *Paradise Lost* is from the perspective of Muslim students, analysis of veiling discourses must be undertaken. This is further explored in interview and questionnaire surveys in Part B of the thesis.

4.1.2 Discourses on Veiling

Islam has long promoted covering the body by veiling, and it would be useful to analyse the controversies this concept brings. "Veiling" or "Hijab" is considered as the "sixth pillar"[110] of Islam, and is the most controversial marker of Muslim women's "otherness" in non-Muslim world (Wadud 2006:219). Hijab is the headscarf worn by Muslim women; it may sometimes include a veil that covers the face and the rest of the body except for the eyes and hands. In the last few decades, the veil has become the subject of much controversy, creating segregation not only between the sexes but also among religions, nations and cultures. In Islam, the foremost function of human clothing is to conceal: "We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame" (*Quran* 7:26). In the primitive ages, the primary function of a woman's dress was to conceal her from "men's eyes" and to "render her unattractive to others", but this concealment at the same

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109 Evident from the findings of the questionnaire, see chapter on questionnaire findings
110 Five Islamic Pillars being 1. Shahada (Belief in oneness of Allah and on last Messenger P.B.U.H), 2. Salah (Prayers), 3. Sawa (Fasting), 4. Zakat (Alm-giving), 5. Haj (Pilgrimage)

time leaves out the element of "attraction" and "mystery" (Crawley 1931:8-11). Likewise, Wadud discusses how the social distance imposed by veiling enhances the (sexual) charms because of the "allure and exoticism" enchanted by the "invisible beauty" (2006:222) – as in *Paradise Lost* Eve's naked bosom "veil[ed]" by her hair adds to her sensuality.

Western-ideology feminists (in the East and the West), as suggested by Guindi, view veiling as an aspect of "patriarchies" and a symbol of women's "subordination and oppression" (1999:3). The freedom that Western feminism focuses on may consider veiling as a subordinate act, but Hirschmann perceives veiling as a "touchstone" in order to develop a complex understanding of "agency, subjectivity, and freedom" (1997:467). For some, Islamic veiling is sexual oppression, lack of feminine independence, a threat of Islamic radicalism to the secular values of West, and sometimes "resistance to Westernisation and cultural 'Pollution'" (Hirschmann 1997:463). For others, it suggests an autonomous choice and a positive legitimate exercise of practicing one's religion with freedom. Indeed the Western reaction to veiling is not a product of contemporary feminism but has a long history. For British imperialists, Muslim veiling appeared as "the ultimate symbol of Eastern backwardness" (Hirschmann 1997:467). Said's analysis, adopted by Foucault's notion of knowledge and power, argues that those who have power control the impact and meaning of truth or knowledge (1978:32), therefore the idea of oppression and subjection of Muslim veiling came from Western imperialism. Leila Ahmed affirms Said's view that the veil was portrayed as one of the "fundamental reasons for its general and comprehensive backwardness" of Muslim societies, and if removed could be the only way "Muslim societies begin to move forward" towards "mental and moral development" (Ahmed 1992:152-3). Modern Muslim feminists seem to have divided opinions on veiling as a marker of patriarchal oppression or religious

practice. Fatima Mernissi considers veiling a tool for the collective fantasy of the Muslim community to "mask" women and make them "disappear" from the male territory, making it "illegal" for them (1982:189), but she argues that the complex mystery associated with the veil gets more controversial when Western feminists analyse "women's liberation" particularly as a "religious problem" rather than political or economic one (Mernissi 1987:7). Wadud, one of the most controversial[111] contemporary Quranic feminists, sees veiling as a sexual integrity and a personal choice that liberates women to look dignified and preserves their identity. She argues that veiling suggests silence and conformity for many Western feminists, but the liberty and freedom of women should not be measured by the "45 inches of material [i.e. cloth used for veiling]" (Wadud 2006:219). She shares her personal experience of an "unnerving" treatment towards veiling, and admits that in academic conference settings people would avoid her because of the "preconceived notions about the relationship between hijab and intellectual competence", and after her talk how they would "clamber" around her to "engage in continued dialogue" (Wadud 2006:222).

On the other hand, Wadud thinks the Western fashion for female clothing has "pornographic tendencies" (2006:220). It is, therefore, noted that if the function of clothing is not fulfilled and dress is worn to reveal rather than conceal the body, there may be such dangerous results as sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape[112]. This is a very controversial issue in the West. For example, a study showed that many men believe that "women provoke rape by their dress or behaviour...and [these] women deserve to be raped" (Zurbriggen & Yost 2004:288-300). For Muslims, such attitudes may be seen as a

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111 Wadud criticised the traditional exegesis of the *Quran* as patriarchal and reread the *Quran* with a feminist focus. In 2005 she led a Muslim Friday prayer in New York city mosque and was hugely criticised by Islamic traditionalists
112 Evidenced in the questionnaire findings

reason why rape cases are seen more frequently[113] in Western countries rather than the countries that promote veiling: "Rape – In the 80s and 90s, US rates were higher than most of the Western countries, but by 2000, Canada is leading the statistics. Rape reports are lower in Asia and the Middle East" (*Nation Master* 2006). This thesis does not investigate the problematic concepts around rape in Western society, but it is important to understand how Muslim readers interpret the link between sexual assault and clothing/the veil since this is central to the way they will interpret Eve's presentation in *Paradise Lost*. In order to examine cross-cultural perceptions among Muslim students about the issues of nudity and sexuality in *Paradise Lost* and veiling, they must also be asked about their understanding of the reasons for rape[114] and whether they relate it to veiling and/or cultural and religious practices.

If the Islamic consideration of modesty is taken back into account, the gendered[115] character of veiling might be questioned, since both Muslim men and women are required to be modest[116] (*Quran* 24:30-1). It is noted that both the sexes are required to cover their private parts, and in this regard men also have to wear "long trousers" and often "headgear" (Hirschamman 1997:472). Veiling is not only a female attribute since Muslim men also veil (cover) their heads[117] and bodies, not only in old traditions, but in Arabs it is still a common practice, suggests Fadwa (1993). The concept of veiling is not universal even among Muslim women. Some cover their faces, others only heads; some wear a long garment over their clothes and some do not wear any of

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113 Evidenced in questionnaire findings, also see interview findings where Ahmed and Chaudary note that the social context of Western countries allows the discussion on sexuality more openly than in Pakistan
114 Although the question is slightly tangential to the research, it was added in the questionnaires to investigate the cross-cultural perspective of such issues and that might well be linked to how committed they are religiously
115 See the discussion of patriarchal reading of the *Bible* contextualised in *Paradise Lost* in Chap 3
116 See the previous discussion on modesty earlier in this chapter
117 Most particularly during offering prayer

them, but instead wear non-revealing clothes that fully cover their body. Apart from the controversies related to Islamic veiling, critics like Helie Lucas point out the non-Islamic origin of veiling, suggesting that veiling is not an intrinsic part of Islam but rather emerged out of other Eastern cultures (1994:395). Students' views on veiling must be considered to critically evaluate how far nudity and sexuality in *Paradise Lost* might be problematic. Part B explores their perceptions about whether veiling should be seen as a personal choice of a modest dress of women/men who feel more at ease when covering themselves, and who want to practice their distinct culture and religion without being oppressed by the (foreign) society or their male family members. Do students think it should be criticised as a religious or a political phenomenon, or it should be seen as a part of culture or ethnicity that people may carry on with freedom? Similarly, teachers' observations regarding the relationship between veiling and level of commitment of veiled students and the perception of veiling must be investigated. After discussing problems of nudity and discourses on veiling, it is useful to comprehend how issues of female sexuality are dealt with in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario, therefore, the link between rape, incest and female infidelity in *Paradise Lost* is discussed in context of Biblical and Quranic traditions in next section.

4.2 *Paradise Lost* and the Issues of Female Sexuality

Paradise Lost does not solely deal with female nudity and sensuality, but the narrative goes beyond female bodies to discuss their overly sexualised personas in order to contextualise Eve's character as immoral, and this can be significantly problematic in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. This section explores the narratives of rape and incest described in Milton's Christian epic and compares it with the perception of rape and incest in the *Bible* and the *Quran*. The next half of this section examines Milton's use of female mythical figures and their inclusion in the narrative of the fall. It investigates the

representation of these "fair" creatures as it influences Eve's characterisation in the poem, and examines them from Muslim/multi-faith teaching scenario.

4.2.1 Rape Narratives and Incest

Milton's views are generally considered to be Puritan[118], but his construction of female sexuality in *Paradise Lost* does not follow these religiously strict patterns. The sexual strangeness of his female characters is vivid in their evil portrayal: Sin and Proserpina are sexually provocative and active, they experience sexual assault, and their narrative leads to the implication of Eve's fallen identity. One of the most influential works on rape by Susan Brownmiller defines rape as a "dull, blunt, ugly act..." (1975:228), and she notes that Sigmund Freud first proposed that "rape was something desired by women" (Freud cited in Brownmiller 1975:315). The Miltonic idea of rape or sexual assault in *Paradise Lost* may rely upon the same Freudian notion. Analysis of rape incidents in a seventeenth century Christian epic may represent the already established idea of existent women's rape fantasies. It has been argued that women's rape fantasies are viewed as a "collective shame of women" which result in "embarrassment" if they admit it, because they will bring into reality the "male myth" that "all women ... [who have rape fantasies] want to be raped" (Forrester 1986:63). Although such arguments have little bearing on actual crime – either now or in the seventeenth century – the idea of "rape fantasy" is useful when analysing Milton's female figures, Sin and Proserpina. Sin, who seems "woman to the waist" and is "fair" like a charming woman (II: 650), presents three aspects of her presence: she is "the spacious front of temptation" because she is a fair beautiful woman who could tempt any individual with "the foul

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118 Milton's religious views and his inclination towards Early Modern understanding of gender identity are discussed in Chap 2, p 30-34

involvement", with fatal results of "the mortal consequences" (Fowler 1976:120-1). She possesses a "mortal sting" (II: 653), meaning that that anyone who commits a sin has to die; it echoes *Corinthians*: "The sting of death is sin" (XV: 56). Milton's Sin is fascinated by "joy" that she shares with her father - Satan in "secret [that] conceived [her] womb [with a] growing burden" (II: 265-7). Sin's incest with Satan gets her "pregnant" with her son, Death, who was eventually her "inbred enemy" as he forcibly "embraces [and] rape[s]" her (II: 785-94), resulting her in a constant curse of pregnancies[119]. She suffers by constantly bearing dead hell-hounds. However, sexual relations between father and daughter[120] or son[121] and mother find no place in Islamic or Biblical traditions, and can be an issue for Muslim/multi-faith teaching. It is clearly mentioned in the *Quran* that incest is haraam[122]: "Forbidden unto you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters" (*Quran* 4:23). For Muslim students, this relationship can be very problematic. Particularly, if seen in reference to Eve, teaching the text can be very sensitive. The *Bible* also "cursed" the man who is sexually involved with his sister (*Deuteronomy* 27:22), daughter-in-law, aunt, father's wife or brother's wife (*Leviticus* 20:10-21). It is therefore argued that both the *Quran* and the *Bible* abhor incest, and *Paradise Lost* does not replicate the story of the fall in a religious context, although by transferring incest onto the character of Sin, Milton creates the paradox of detailing incest while condemning it through horrible representation of Sin's cursed pregnancies. Incest is taboo in most cultures (including the Early Modern culture in which *Paradise Lost* was written), and so students from most backgrounds would find

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119 See section on motherhood in Chap 3
120 See Electra complex by Freud that discusses a sexual attachment of daughter with her father
121 See Oedipus Complex by Freud that discusses a sexual attachment of son with his mother
122 Legally and religiously forbidden by Islamic law (Sharia)

the incestuous relationships between Satan, Death and Sin to be troubling[123] or at least transgressive[124].

After a comprehensive discussion of Sin, incest and rape in Book II, Milton introduces Eve to the reader in Book IV. This book begins with Satan's soliloquy, which aims to destroy and divide God's kingdom by tempting his creation and leading them into sin. It is followed by the warning myth of Proserpina (IV: 268), immediately following Eve's introduction (IV: 288). According to the Greek mythology, Proserpina – goddess of springtime and queen of underworld– was raped by the king of hell, Pluto, because she ate the forbidden seven grains of a pomegranate that resulted in the world being barren half the year. The myth has a strong connection with Eve's fall, not only because of the forbidden and "fatal liquorishnesse" that retains Proserpina in hell, like "the apple thrust Evah out of Paradise" (Sandys 1970:195), but most significantly because of the rape and temptation of both women by the king of hell, which brings the disaster to earth. Empson supports this idea. suggesting that "Proserpina, like Eve, was captured by the king of hell, but she then became queen of it...Eve we are to remember, becomes an ally of Satan when she tempts Adam as to eat with her" (1966:173). It is argued that Milton compares both women due to their common fault, however it is important that Eve's temptation by Satan should not be misunderstood as equating exactly with Proserpina's rape by Pluto, as it can create unease in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. However, it would be interesting to examine whether teachers in Pakistan and the UK discuss Proserpina and Sin, and how easy it is to discuss rape in Pakistani teaching. There are many issues other than rape and incest in the poem that reflect

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123 Evidenced in the findings of the questionnaire; most of the Muslim students are very uncomfortable with such discourse
124 See the discussion in Chap 2 where Milton's Eve transgresses from all the ideals of morality and decency, and Milton suggests to the reader that women who attempt to exercise any authority must be condemned

feminine infidelity, such as myths of adulterous women and the way Milton constantly provides clues to relate them to Eve. To explore the text more from Muslim/multi-faith teaching, all the female references should be taken into account to understand Milton's construction of Eve's (fallen) identity.

4.2.2 Infidelity and Adultery

It is suggestive that Eve is represented through various mythical characters, which reveal her as a seductress to students. Milton, like many authors of his time, suggests: "frailty thy name is woman" (Shakespeare 2006 II:9) and argues that the root cause of woe is to be a woman, who exploits man by her feminine charms and seduces him with her sweet words while pretending herself innocent and weak. Milton's construction of femininity in *Paradise Lost* reveals that feminine physical weakness indicates Eve's moral weakness, a frailty that is replicated in other female figures in the poem.

Milton simultaneously compares Eve with goddesses/women who were both transgressive[125] and frail, or were extremely chaste and morally strong. All women described as "fair" by Milton are those who brought destruction due to their beauty. Sin who "seemed woman to the waist and fair" (II: 650) is incestuous. Proserpina is a "fairer flower" (IV: 270) and is raped by the king of hell. Pandora "with her fair looks" (IV: 719) brings all evils to the earth. Venus is the "fairest goddess" (V: 381) and favours Paris, making Hera (Juno, the goddess of marriage) and Minerva (the goddesses of virginity and wisdom) revengeful. Similarly, the most perfect beauty is Milton's Eve who is "fair no doubt" (IV: 568), and is Adam's "fair spouse" (IV: 742), who perceived Eve as "fair angelic" (V: 74) and called her "My fairest, my espoused" (V: 18). Eve is presented as a "fair virgin" (IX: 452), "fair, divinely fair" (IX: 489); she is God's "fairest creation"

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125 See Eve's transgression from the Early Modern codes of ethics and morality in Chap 2

(IX: 896), who turned the world into "woe" (IX: 11) after tasting "those fair apples" (IX: 585).

Milton's discussion of female fidelity extends when he discusses Flora – the goddess of flowers and spring – in the beginning of Book V (V: 16), in order to relate female fragility[126] with frailty. The frailty of Eve's character is underscored as Milton creates a parallel between Eve and Proserpina through Flora, as they are "symbolically identified with fair or fragile flowers" (Fowler 1976:280). Eve is identified as a "fairest unsupported flower" (IX: 432), who walks with "her rosy steps" (V: 1): expressions like "fair" and "unsupported" "rosy steps" denote the instability of Eve's nature and character, who would be easily tempted by Satan. Similarly, Proserpina, who was raped by the king of hell, is "herself a fairer flower" (IV: 270). The subsequent imagery of flowers, starting from Proserpina in Book IV, moves on to Flora in Book V and continues with Eve in Book IX, where the image becomes tragically prophetic. The story of Proserpina's rape in Book IX is discussed in such a way that dramatically points out the fall of Eve later in Book IX:

> O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
> Of thy presumed return! event perverse!
> Thou never from that hour in Paradise
> Foundst either sweet repast, or sound repose;
> Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
> Waited with hellish rancour imminent
> To intercept thy way, or send thee back
> Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
> (IX: 412-419)

On the surface level, words like deceived, failing and hapless target Proserpina's return from hell after her rape, but are used as an apostrophe to Eve even before the fall; they are tremendously prophetic and dramatic (Ricks 1978:97). As Milton narrates, all the

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126 See the Early Modern context of the poem where physical weakness is associated with moral weakness

sweetness of flowers and the beauty of the seasons have become bitter as Proserpina has lost her "innocence", "faith" and "bliss". Eve, of course, will lose her innocence and the eternal bliss of life and spring of heaven by disobeying God and Adam.

Milton refers to Minerva – the goddess of virginity and wisdom – later in the climax of Book IX (420), which implies doubts about Eve's chastity due to Satan's temptation. Milton gives an explicit parallel with Sin's incest, Proserpina's rape and Eve's temptation by the kings of hell, Pluto and Satan, in his earlier books. The Greek myth suggests that Minerva (also known as Athena) covers her body with a shield to protect her from men and so is called the goddess of virginity, but naked Eve could not protect herself from Satan's temptation. Milton puts the colours of Minerva, purple, azure and gold around the "fragrant body" of Eve in Book IX where Eve is actually seduced.

> Eve...
> Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
> Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
> About her glowed, oft stooping to support
> Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
> Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
> Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays
> Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
> Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
> From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
> (IX: 424-433)

Minerva in Greek mythology "appears as the preserver of the state, and presided over the more intellectual and moral side of human life" (Blakeney 1920:85). Ironically, Milton's Eve is not wise enough to preserve heaven from Satan because the storm of the fall was so "nigh". Minerva is also mentioned in the myth of Paris, referred in Book V, where Paris had to choose "the fairest" among the goddesses. According to the myth of Paris, he had to choose "the fairest" among three goddesses: Venus, Juno (Hera), and Minerva.

Paris chose Venus, the goddess of love and beauty, who was the most beautiful of all and came naked; her nakedness here is a reminder of Eve's nudity:

>...the fairest Goddess feigned
>Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
>Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil
>She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
>Altered her cheek.

<div align="center">(V: 381-5)</div>

When Paris chose Venus, Minerva and Juno (the goddess of marriage) become vengeful and conspire against Paris, provoking the war of Troy. The war ends ten years later with the destruction of Troy, and Milton associates that with the fall of man, notes Fowler: "For Paris' fatal choice of beauty offered by Venus led to the rape of Helen[127] and eventually to the destruction of Troy, which is for Milton a mythic analogue to the fall of man" (1976:280). Blessington supports the idea and notes: "destructiveness is later replaced in the beauty contest on Mount Ida that eventually brought about the fall of Troy" (1979:53). The myth is a narrative of how fair women become the cause of destruction and war, just as Eve deceives Adam and eats the fruit, thereby bringing death to the whole human race.

Milton in *Paradise Lost* tends to emphasise that every beautiful woman is morally weak, and the context is always sexual (Belsey 1988:53). The character of Milton's fair Eve is reflected in all the evil deeds of Pandora: "Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed.../Brought her in naked beauty more adorned/More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods/Endowed with all their gifts, and O!" (IV: 710-713). The myth of Pandora suggests that she is the first woman on earth who with her charms and beauty

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127 Helen's beauty caused the most memorable war between the Trojans and the Greeks. Helen, the wife of a chief of Greece, Menelaus, is seduced by Paris and carried off to Troy. The Greek chiefs avenged this and the war began. After the death of Paris, Helen married Paris' brother Deiphobus. Later she betrayed him as well and went back to Sparta to her first husband, Menelaus, after Troy faced defeat (Blakeney 1920:246)

brought misery upon the human race (Blakeney 1920:377). According to this myth, Pandora brings a box with her to earth filled with every human ill, and opens it, spreading disaster. Milton parallels Eve and Pandora by calling her "more lovely than Pandora", showing that Eve's act of bringing human woes to earth after the fall was more destructive than Pandora's. Similarly, Eve's beauty became the cause of the fall as Satan was also attracted by the beautiful "fair" Eve and was eager to approach her while she was alone:

> Occasion which now smiles; behold alone
> The woman, opportune to all attempts,
> Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
> Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
> And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
> Heroick built, though of terrestrial mould;
> She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods!
> (IX: 481-9)

Satan agrees to attempt the weaker target – a sex that is weaker not only physically but morally too. He is glad to have Eve alone and will seduce her easily, since Adam is considered to be a stronger[128] sex. The lines are suggestive and have multiple meanings. They show the Early Modern dogma of gender division of dominance and moral weakness, and Satan's thoughts of targeting Eve "alone" and finding her as "fit love for Gods" relates his physical attraction towards Eve. The mystery of this secret love affair continues in Book IX when Eve is not just tempted by Satan's flattery to eat the fruit, but also shows inclination to his physical appearance and his sweet attractive grace. Salkeld notes that Milton's Satan disguises himself as a beautiful serpent because Milton was aware of the tradition that Eve was attracted by the serpent's beauty (1617:218):

> Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
> Circular base of rising folds, that towered
> Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head

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128 See Early Modern tradition of patriarchy in Chap 2 where female is considered the weaker sex and the devil can attack her soul more easily

> Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
> With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect
> Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
> Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
> And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
> Lovelier.
>
> (IX: 496-504)

For Eve, Satan was an attractive creature with a pleasing and lovely shape, smoothly shining and foamy soft skin, and greenish gold colours in its glittering eyes; its floating movement made Eve not just amazed but delighted. This physical attraction and the myths attached to the first encounter of Satan and Eve are dramatic enough to prove Satan is a beloved of Eve:

> And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
> Lovelier, not those that in Illyria changed,
> Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
> In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed
> Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen;
> He with Olympias; this with her who bore
> Scipio, the highth of Rome.
>
> (IX: 503-510)

The secret love affair reaches its climax when Milton introduces the myths of Hermione and Olympias. According to the Greek myth, Hermione was a daughter of Helen[129] and wife of Cadmus who metamorphosed as a serpent. She embraces him, changes his form and gives birth to evil children (Sandys 1970). By giving this background to the fall, Milton demonstrates that Eve after Satan's temptation would give birth to evil children. The linked myth is of Olympias, who was the mother of Alexander and wife of Philip of Macedonia who withdrew his love from her after she was found guilty of sleeping with a serpent and was cursed to bear evil children. It was later realised that the serpent was a form of Jupiter Ammon (Fowler 1976:469). Milton's synchronisation of mythical stories moves step by step with the evil development of Eve's character. The guilt of Olympias from engaging in an extra-marital affair with serpent and bearing evil children as a curse

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129 See the discussion earlier in this section on Helen becoming the cause of the Trojan War

echoes the guilt of Eve, seduced by Satan disguised as serpent and resulting her in a cursed motherhood[130]. The subsequent myths of Hermione and Olympias are closely followed by the scene of the fall in Book IX, when Eve actually falls. Milton's symbolical use the myths of women who are guilty towards their husbands suggests his ultimate opinion about Eve's fallen nature, not only in terms of sinning and morality but chastity as well. Such myths impart the character of Eve as seductress and temptress, leaving the students in doubt of Eve's chastity, suggests McColley: "All of these thorny allusions to classical myth involve difficulty and choice: choice for the reader and choice for Eve" (1978:55). Therefore, the construction of Milton's account of the fall based on the Biblical context, when combined with myths and allusions, could increase problems in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

Adultery is occurs in certain myths – Helen and Paris, for example – but it is critical to understand the Biblical and Quranic perceptions of such issues in order to focus the experience of Muslim/multi-faith scenario. The Biblical account of the fall does not include the myths of adultery and rape; neither is Eve's chastity is doubted in it. Adultery is considered a hideous act in the *Bible* and is strictly forbidden (*Exodus* 20:14). The punishment of adultery as declared in the *Bible* is "death" (*Leviticus* 20:10) or a punishment as dreadful as death, like stoning until death (*Deuteronomy* 22:24). Similarly, Zina[131] is considered to be a very polemic issue in Islam. In the Quranic context it is believed to be an "evil act" and "abomination" because it strictly condemns "fornication and adultery" (*Quran* 17:32). The punishment of adultery is also very strict in the *Quran*

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130 See section on motherhood in Chap 3 where Eve's punishment of labour during childbirth is compared with that of Sin's curse of bearing hounds, and the punishment of the fall is compared in the *Quran*, the *Bible* and *Paradise Lost* and the elevated status of motherhood in Islam. Also see the discussion where the comparison of Eve and Marry are undertaken later in this chapter
131 Arabic term used for extra-marital or pre-marital sex

as it asks to "scourge" the adulterer and the adulteress "a hundred stripes", and no one should take "pity" on them; Allah wants people to "witness" that horrible punishment to protect them from the sin of adultery (*Quran* 24:2-3). Thus, it is argued that the erotic imagery and the provocative female characters may not be acceptable for reading in a mixed-sex group of Muslim students. The poem, while exposing female nudity and fidelity, often transgresses from standards of decency, morality, and modesty expected by multicultural groups and can create anxiety and embarrassment for students. Similarly, when the sexualised context is associated with Eve, it might offend students coming from different cultural and religious commitments, and students must be asked about their perception of such discourse. After analysing how Milton's narrative of the fall develops by discussing sexuality and frailty of women/Eve, and whether these issues affect the poem's reception in Muslim/multi-faith groups, it is critical to compare the characters of Mary and Eve in *Paradise Lost* along with the *Quran*, while focusing on the concept of redemption from Muslim/multi-faith teaching aspect.

4.3. *Paradise Lost* and the Other Religious Issues

The following section investigates other religious problems in *Paradise Lost* that might influence the reception of the poem in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario. The contrast created in the poem between Eve and Mary in terms of their motherhood and piousness could be troublesome for Muslims, as in Islam Mary and Eve are respected equally because the fall did not influence Eve's representation. The Christian context of the poem is not only directly related to the fall in *Paradise Lost,* but also related to the idea of redemption and human salvation, and that contradicts Islamic belief. Jesus in Christianity is the son of God and he would redeem humans from their sins, which are a result of Eve's fall. As the fall in Islamic tradition is not considered as sin and it did not change human nature, Islamic tradition does not support the idea of human salvation by Jesus,

neither does it admit Jesus as God's son. These issues can be seriously problematic in Muslim/multi-faith teaching because these are the core beliefs of Islam.

4.3.1 Mary – the Second Eve

Milton in *Paradise Lost* presents Eve as the one who transgresses morally, socially and religiously. She can never be a role model for students, and this can be difficult in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. The journey of Eve from innocence to exile relates her to many other female figures discussed earlier in the chapter which showed how Milton's narrative of the fall addresses the issue of Eve's identity[132] and female infidelity in *Paradise Lost*, in the way she experiences innocence, temptation, seduction, alienation and exile (Walter Lim 1990). Milton evokes the theological context by relating Eve to one of the most significant female figures of the *Bible*, the Virgin Mary – mother of God's son, Jesus:

> ...Hail Bestow'd...
> Long after to blest Marie, second Eve
> Hail Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful Womb
> Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons
> Than with these various fruits the Trees of God
> Have heap'd this Table
>
> (V: 386-91)

Milton's reference to Mary as the "second Eve" refers to the Biblical tradition of the Annunciation: "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that are highly favoured" (*Luke* 1:28). Milton's reference in calling Mary the "second Eve" is a continuation of the myth of Paris[133], where Milton calls Eve fairer than Venus[134] (V: 381). The symbolic presence of the phrase "second Eve[135]" suggests that Mary is compared with that of Eve; Mary's seed will be blessed since she gives birth to God's son, whereas Eve's motherhood is a form of a curse as a consequence of Satan's

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132 See the discussion on Eve's identity as discussed earlier in Chap 2
133 See the section on myths for a detailed discussion on the myth of Paris
134 See above the discussion of how Venus is related to Eve in *Paradise Lost*
135 Right after the myth of Venus

133

temptation, which is why Mary will "repair what was lost by *Eva*" (Willet 1608:54).

Mary or Hadrat Maryam is considered one of the most righteous and honourable women

in Christian and Islamic traditions. She is the only woman who has a chapter named after

her in the *Quran*[136] and is a virgin mother of Prophet Isa[137]; Allah chose her and

"purified" her by exalting her status "above the women of all nations" (*Quran* 3: 42).

Similarly, in Christianity she is the virgin mother of Jesus, the son of God, and is "highly

favoured" for this (*Luke* 1:28). Fowler notes that Mary and Eve have similar

characteristics: they relate "typologically" with each other (1976:280) as Jesus is also

called the "last Adam" (I *Corinthians* 15:45). The prelapsarian virtues of un-fallen Eve

and the function of motherhood may assist the students in creating a parallel between the

Virgin Mary and Eve in *Paradise Lost*: "Yet innocence, and virgin modesty/ Her virtue,

and the conscience of her worth (VIII: 500-1). However, these virtues are very short-

lived in the poem; Eve, who was introduced in Book IV, was partly fallen through her

temptation dream[138] in Book V and she fell completely from a state of honour in the

climax of Book IX. In Muslim tradition, both Eve and Mary are wife and mother of the

Prophets of Allah – Adam and Isa respectively. Both these females are considered

virtuous and chaste, and they are equally treated with respect. From the context of the

comparison of Mary and Eve in *Paradise Lost*, Muslim students should be asked whether

they perceive Mary and Eve as equally chaste and righteous, or whether they think that

the fall caused Eve to be morally inferior to Mary.

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136 Chapter 19 of the *Quran* is named after Mary, the excerpts of that chapter are used in the discussion in Chap 2 in the section of Naming
137 Arabic name of Jesus
138 See the detail of the temptation dream in Chap 1 in the section of Eve's character development in Book V

4.3.2 Jesus and the Concept of Redemption

Paradise Lost follows the Christian traditions of redemption (*Genesis* 3:15) by mentioning "...thy seed shall bruise our foe" (XI: 155) – here Milton is referring to the Christian concept of salvation, by which Jesus will rescue humans from sin and death. Walter Lim notes that Milton's allusion to Eve as a prototype of Virgin Mary "grounds the epic in promise... of salvation" (1990:129), but the concepts of redemption by Jesus in relation to human salvation, and the idea of Jesus as the son of God, do not exist in Islam. Therefore Muslim students would be asked if they perceive Jesus as redeemer, messiah, God's prophet or God's son, and whether teachers find it easy to teach redemption in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. One of the major distinctions between the Biblical and Islamic traditions is the concept of Holy Trinity that keeps God, son of God (Jesus) and Holy Spirit in unity. Similarly, Jesus admits that he has taken the "commandment" from his "Father [God]" (*John* 10:18), but there is no reference made in the *Quran* of any relation that Allah may have. Allah clarifies that He is the only One to be worshipped, and it's not His honour to beget or be begotten by anyone: "Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally Besought of all! He begetteth not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him" (*Quran* 112:1-4). In Christianity, Jesus is a "form of God" (*Philippians* 2:5), whereas in Islam Jesus described himself to be a "slave [and] Prophet" of Allah, and that is a "truth concerning on which they [non-believers] doubt [and] It befitteth not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son" for He orders a thing to "Be [in a form] and it is" (*Quran* 19: 30-5). Therefore, Muslim students' perceptions of Jesus must be taken in account in reference to Quranic context in order to analyse the reception of Christian context of redemption presented in *Paradise Lost*.

4.4 Conclusion

Rule-breaking has always been a major aspect of literary and cultural development. The chapter focuses on the transgressive, taboo-breaking and socially/religiously resistant acts like nudity, incest, rape and adultery which are associated with women in an Early Modern literary text. However, *Paradise Lost* as a Christian epic cannot justify the frail nature of women while portraying women to be as immoral as Eve, Sin and Proserpina. Milton shows beautiful women bringing disastrous consequences if the practice of keeping them subordinate is not followed strictly. Thus, the idea of relating evil women with Eve and comparing Mary with Eve can be an issue in Muslim/multi-faith teaching. On the other hand, the Christian concept of redemption associated with Jesus and his identity as God's son contextualised in *Paradise Lost* is also explored from Muslim/multi-faith teaching, and is examined in Part B of the thesis. The next half of the thesis is Part B of the research, where the key questions raised in Part A in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are evaluated by using interviews and questionnaires in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9, as a tool to further explore the experience of Muslim/multi-faith teaching and learning scenario of *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK. The next chapter draws out the methodology of the research in Part B, and discusses the process of sample selection and the research tools used to validate the research questions developed in Part A.

Chapter 5
Methodology for Data Collection

The aim of this chapter is to examine the methodology executed in Part B of the study to collect the data and respond to the proposed research questions investigated in Part A, namely:

i)   How the Biblical narrative of the fall embedded in *Paradise Lost* is taught to Muslim/multi-faith students in Pakistan and the UK;

ii)   How *Paradise Lost* in a Biblical context is experienced and received by Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK. What are the differences (if there are any) on the basis of gender and country of residence?

The chapter outlines the research tools selected and the sample selection procedure for this study in Pakistan and the UK and also discusses the limitations of the study. The targeted universities for data collection from UK were determined on the basis of three criteria: 1. Universities situated in or near the densely-populated Muslim areas[139]; 2. Universities having a high number of (Non-EU/British) Muslim students enrolled[140]; 3. Universities offering a degree course in English Literature[141] that includes teaching *Paradise Lost.*

Selecting the study sample in Pakistan was not as difficult as the UK since Pakistan is a Muslim country with Islam being the main religion. The sample selection in the UK was more challenging because the task was not only finding the universities with Muslim students but also Muslim students studying *Paradise Lost.* Therefore, the sample from the British universities that were considered for data collection were Muslims students studying *Paradise Lost* and the academics teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students. In Pakistan, the data were collected from the universities situated in the Punjab province because the sponsor University for this Project exists in

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[139] Recorded by Census (2001), National Statistics, UK (2004)
[140] Recorded by HESA (2009/10); Higher Education Statistics Agency
[141] Browsed through universities' websites

Punjab and there were not sufficient funds available to travel to other provinces[142] in

Pakistan. The sample in other provinces could have been contacted through the internet

(as in UK) instead of travelling to them but the IT system in Pakistani universities is not

as integrated as in UK universities; hence the students could not be reached through

email. The universities[143] chosen for this study are Bahauddin Zakriya University

Multan, Bahauddin Zakriya University Shaiwal, and Islamia University Bahawalpur.

5.1 Muslim Population in Britain [144]

In order to choose a sample based on the above-mentioned criteria in the UK, it is

necessary to examine the Muslim network in Britain first. To focus clearly on the

Muslim population out of the non-White Asian or British Asian communities it is pivotal

to examine the population division of the Britain by religion (National Statistics UK,

2001). According to *The Sunday Times*' official research, "The Muslim population in

Britain has grown by more than 500,000 to 2.4 million in just four years" (2009).

Population of Great Britain: by religion, April 2001			
	Total population		Non-Christian religious population
	(Numbers)	(Percentages)	(Percentages)
Christian	41,014,811	71.8	
Muslim	1,588,890	2.8	51.9
Hindu	558,342	1.0	18.3
Sikh	336,179	0.6	11.0
Jewish	267,373	0.5	8.7
Buddhist	149,157	0.3	4.9
Any other religion	159,167	0.3	5.2
All non-Christian religious population	3,059,108	5.4	100.0
No religion	8,596,488	15.1	
Religion not stated	4,433,520	7.8	
All population	57,103,927	100.0	

Table 1: Great Britain's Population; by Religion (National Statistics UK, 2001)

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[142] Pakistan has four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as Serhad)

[143] Only those universities from Punjab were considered for data collection that showed interest in taking part in this study

[144] The focus in this research is Muslim population of Britain; however some of the statistics below show that most of the Muslim population resides in England than the other parts of Britain

Table 1 demonstrates that Christianity is the main religion in Britain, whereas the Muslim population of Britain is second to Christianity, "there were 1.6 million Muslims living in Britain in 2001" and this community makes "(52 per cent) of the non-Christian religious denomination" (National Statistics 2004).
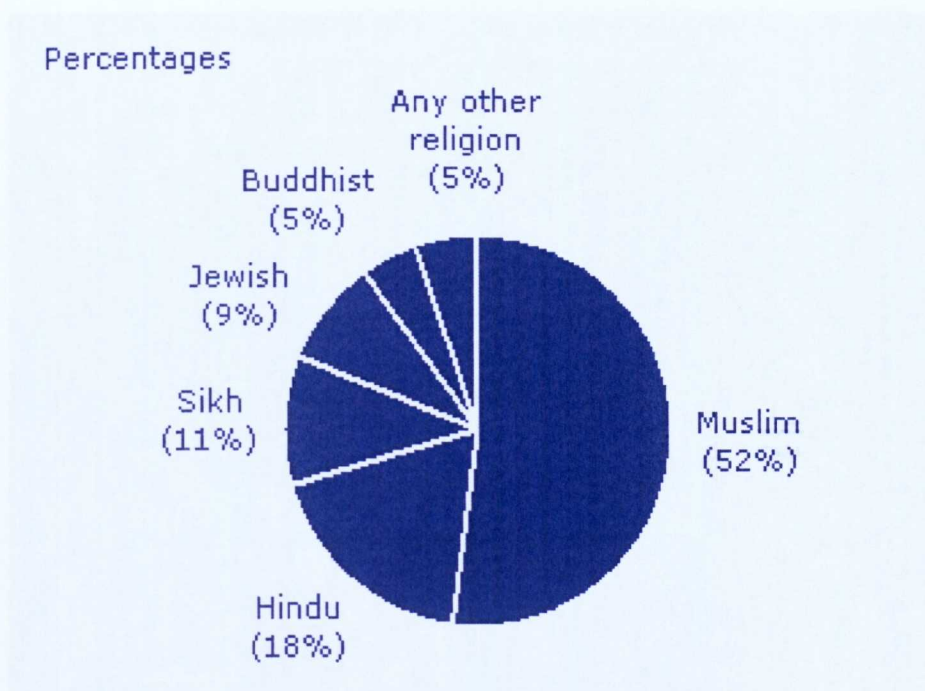
Percentages

Figure 1: Non-White Religious Distribution (National Statistics UK, 2001)

In Figure 1 it is evident that the Muslim population in Britain is more than half (52%) of the non-white population. Whereas Hindus, according to Table 1 and Figure 1, comprised 18 per cent, and Sikh comprised 11 per cent of the total non-Christian religious population.

The Muslim population increased more significantly "than [in] the rest of society", whereas the Christian population fell in Britain by "more than 2 million" between 2004 - 2008 (National Statistics Research cited in *The Times* 2009). Figure 2 demonstrates the steady growth of Muslims in the UK in 4 years from 2004-2008. In 2004, the Muslim population in the UK was around 1,860,000 which rose to about

2,500,000 over four years, which means the "Muslim population in Britain [is] growing 10 times faster than [the] general rate" ("The Islamification of Europe" 2009). It is critical to understand that the recent growth of the Muslim population of the UK reinforces how timely and important this research is.
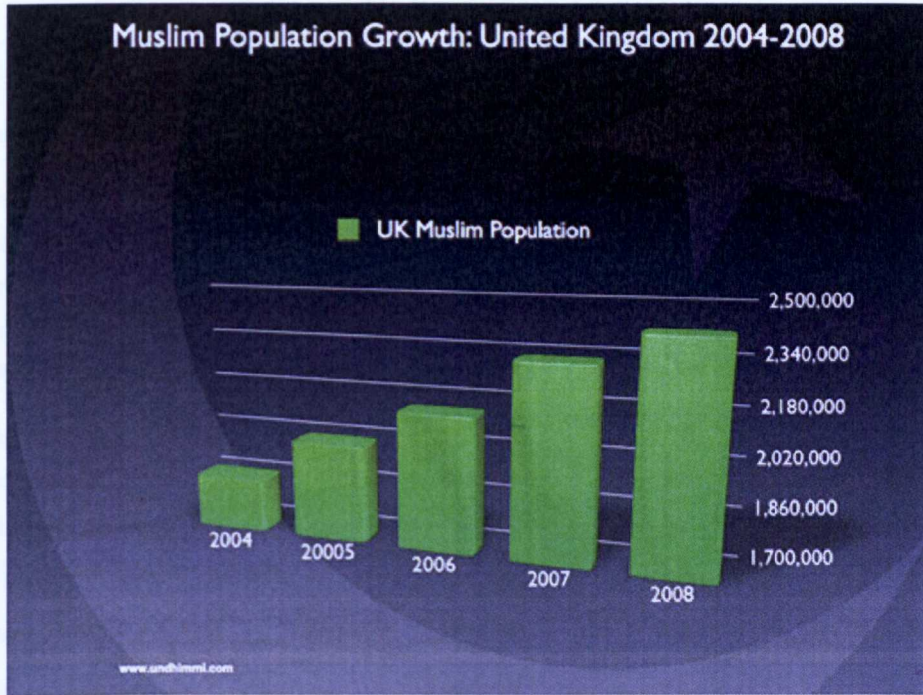

Figure 2: (Un:dhimmi, "The Islamification of Europe", 9 August 2009)

The significant increase of the Muslim population, according to Sophie Gilliat-Ray, is a result of immigration, birth rate and conversion to Islam (2010:117). Therefore when calculating which region to collect data from, the focus was narrowed down to the regions of London and the Midlands due to the large population of Muslims in these areas.

Great Britain is broadly multicultural and the number of non-White British Asian or British Asian groups "grew by 53%" in ten years "from 1991 to 2001", according to

the results of the Census[145] 2001, and "around half of the non-White population were Asian of Indian, Pakistani [and] Bangladeshi origin" (National Statistics, UK 2004).

Population of the United Kingdom: by ethnic group, April 2001

United Kingdom

	Total population		Non-White population
	(Numbers)	(Percentages)	(Percentages)
White	**54,153,898**	**92.1**	.
Mixed	**677,117**	**1.2**	**14.6**
Indian	1,053,411	1.8	22.7
Pakistani	747,285	1.3	16.1
Bangladeshi	283,063	0.5	6.1
Other Asian	247,664	0.4	5.3
All Asian or Asian British	**2,331,423**	**4.0**	**50.3**
Black Caribbean	565,876	1.0	12.2
Black African	485,277	0.8	10.5
Black Other	97,585	0.2	2.1
All Black or Black British	**1,148,738**	**2.0**	**24.8**
Chinese	**247,403**	**0.4**	**5.3**
Other ethnic groups	**230,615**	**0.4**	**5.0**
All minority ethnic population	**4,635,296**	**7.9**	**100.0**
All population	**58,789,194**	**100**	.

Table 2: Population of the UK by Ethnic Group, (National Statistics UK, 2001)

As highlighted in the Table 2 and Figure 3, the majority of UK population was White at the time when the data were collected, but among the non-White the highest population was Asian or Asian British. From Table 2 and Figure 3, it is noticeable that for the population of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh origin, Islam is one of the most popular religions that is practised in the UK. It is also noted by UK national statistics that the

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[145] The statistical information from 2001 is from a Census run every 10 years by National Statistics UK; the information gathered was from their latest 2001 records before their recent research published in 2012. However, the rest of the data was from National Statistics 2004-2005 and from HESA 2009/2010

largest non-Christian religion in the UK is Islamic, and Muslims "comprised over half of the non-Christian population" (National Statistics, UK 2004).
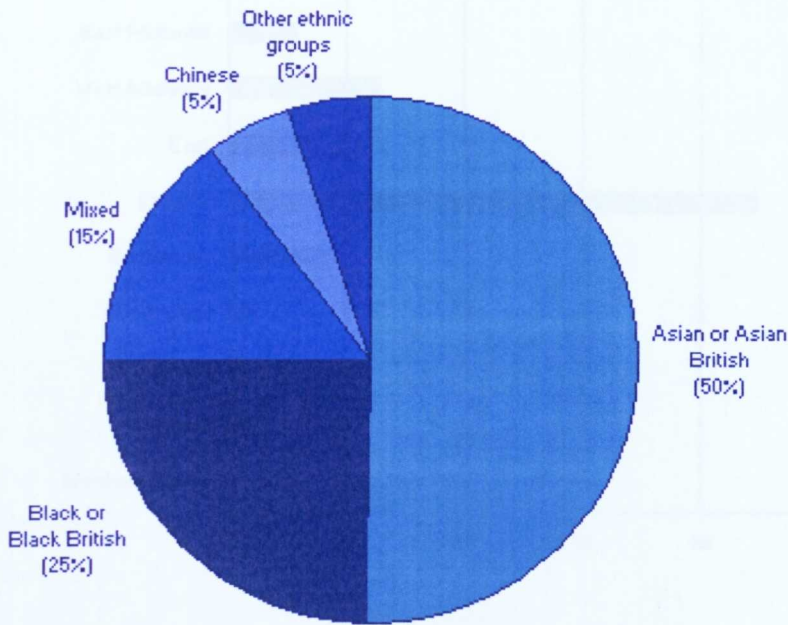

Figure 3: The non-White population by ethnic group (National Statistics UK, 2001)

The next focus is to examine the areas that have highest non-White population. Figure 4 presents the regional division of the UK in terms of non-White population. As shown in the Figure, the division of the Muslim population by region is recorded by the Census 2001. According to the National Statistics, "Non-White ethnic groups are considerably more likely to live in England than in the other countries of the UK" and they make up to "9 per cent of the total population in England compared with only 2 per cent in both Scotland and Wales and less than 1 per cent in Northern Ireland" (National Statistics 2004).
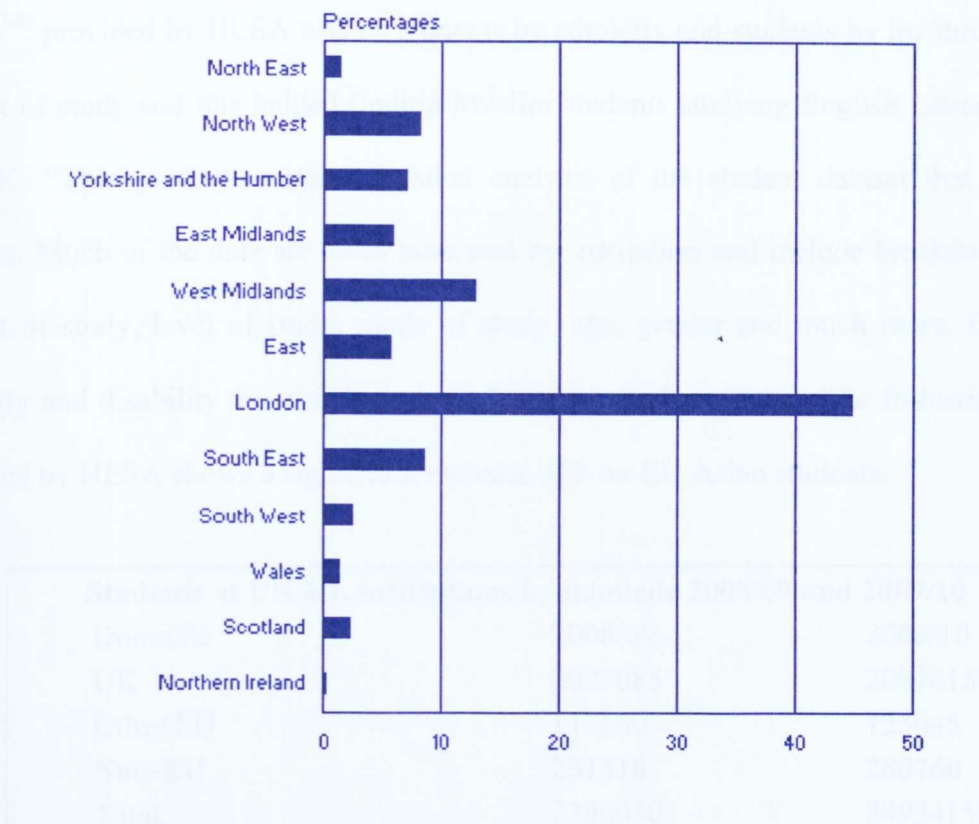
Figure 4: Regional distribution of the non-White population (National Statistics UK, 2005)

Figure 4 shows that the non-White population is most likely to live in London. About half "(45 per cent) lived in London and the second highest non-White population is in West Midlands" in 2001 (when data were recorded) and it makes "(13 per cent)" of the non-White population, followed by the "South East and North West both at (8 per cent)", followed by Yorkshire and Humber which together make "(7 per cent)" of non-White population.

After determining the distribution of Muslim groups in the UK, the next focus was on finding the Higher Education Institutions with relatively higher numbers of enrolled (non-EU/ British) Muslim students. Through the records of Higher Education Statistics Agency "students in Higher Education Institutions 2009/10… comprehensive data on student domicile, level and mode of study, subjects of study, qualifications obtained, offshore provision [was available]" (HESA 2009/10). The focus of the

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record[146] provided by HESA was on students by ethnicity and students by institution and subject of study and this helped finding Muslim students studying English Literature in the UK: "This product contains detailed analysis of the student dataset that HESA collects. Much of the data are cross tabulated by institution and include breakdowns by subject of study, level of study, mode of study, age, gender and much more. Data on ethnicity and disability are also included..." (HESA 24 Feb, 2011). The following data recorded by HESA shows a significant increase of Non-EU Asian students.

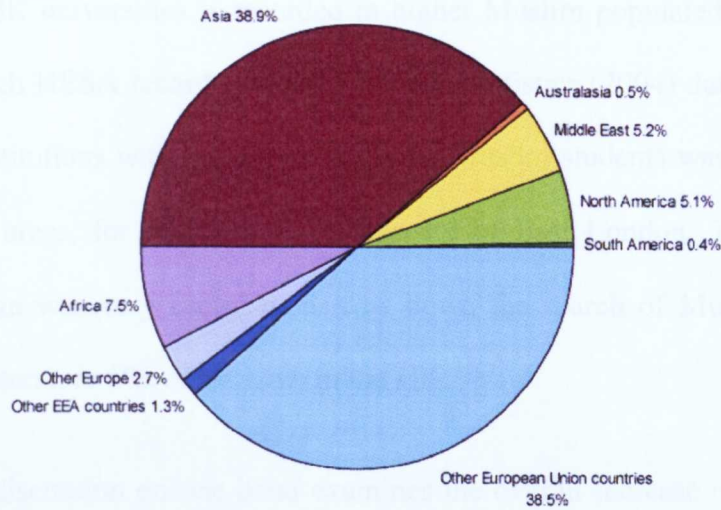| Students at UK HE institutions by domicile 2008/09 and 2009/10		
Domicile	2008/09	2009/10
UK	2027085	2087615
Other EU	117660	125045
Non-EU	**251310**	**280760**
Total	2396050	2493415

Table 3: Students in Higher Education Institutions (HESA 2008/09, 2009/10)

For example, Table 3 from HESA reveals that the number of non-EU students at UK Higher Education Institutions in 2008/09 was 251,310, and this figure significantly rose to 280,760, as compared to the number of UK and EU students in the academic year 2009/10.

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[146] Due to the massive amount of HESA recorded data, cross-tabular data showing ethnicity and institutions are not provided, but their sources are given in references

Chart 3 - Non-UK domiciled undergraduate students by region of domicile 2009/10

Percentages in this chart have been rounded to one decimal place, therefore they may not sum exactly to 100%

Asia 38.9%

Australasia 0.5%

Middle East 5.2%

North America 5.1%

South America 0.4%

Africa 7.5%

Other Europe 2.7%

Other EEA countries 1.3%

Other European Union countries 38.5%

♦ Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited 2011

Figure 5: Non-UK Domiciled Undergraduates (HESA 2011)

On the other hand, the following Figure 5 shows that "non-UK Asian" students for undergraduate degrees are highest in number, comprising of 38.9% of the total non-EU students from the rest of the world. The HESA record is presented in Figure 6 and Table 4 on ethnicity of non-UK domiciled students. It illustrates that Asian students with non-UK domicile are highest in number than the other UK domiciled students in academic year 2009/10.

Ethnicity of UK domiciled students		
Ethnicity *	**2008/09**	**2009/10**
White	1594980	1648070
Black	111590	118290
Asian	**166795**	**173075**
Other (including mixed)	68025	73665
Not known	85695	74515
Total UK domicile	2027085	2087615

Table 4: Ethnicity of Students in Higher Education Institutions (HESA 2008/09, 2009/10)

The available HESA record (2009/10) and the data provided by Census report (2001) demonstrates a relatively similar set of information; the high (non-EU and British) Muslim intake in UK universities is recorded in higher Muslim populated areas. It was also helpful to match HESA record with the National Statistics (2004) data as that also showed that the institutions with maximum intake of Muslim students was in or around Muslim populated areas, for example the University of East London. Therefore, the recorded HESA data was very useful to narrow down the search of Muslim students studying English Literature (*Paradise Lost*) in the UK.

The above discussion on one hand examines the overall increase of Muslims in Britain along with the dense Muslim populated areas in the UK, and on the other hand it also explores British institutions with a significant presence and increasing intake of non-EU/ British Muslim students. Therefore from the UK only those universities were considered for data collection which were in densely populated Muslim areas, which had the highest multi-cultural and Muslim students intake, which offered courses in Early Modern English Literature with a module that included *Paradise Lost,* and last but not least which were interested in taking part in this research. Therefore, the final eight universities for data collection from the UK were: Birkbeck University London, University of Birmingham, University of Bradford, London Metropolitan University, University of East London, University of Greenwich, University of Leicester, and University of Surrey. The next stage after selecting the universities was to collect data in Pakistan and the UK. But before the data collection could take place, the necessary tools and methodology needed to be determined.

5.2 Data Collection

The data collection methodology undertaken for this study is mixed method/model research. The data collection instruments used for this study are interviews and questionnaires as shown in the following Figure 6.
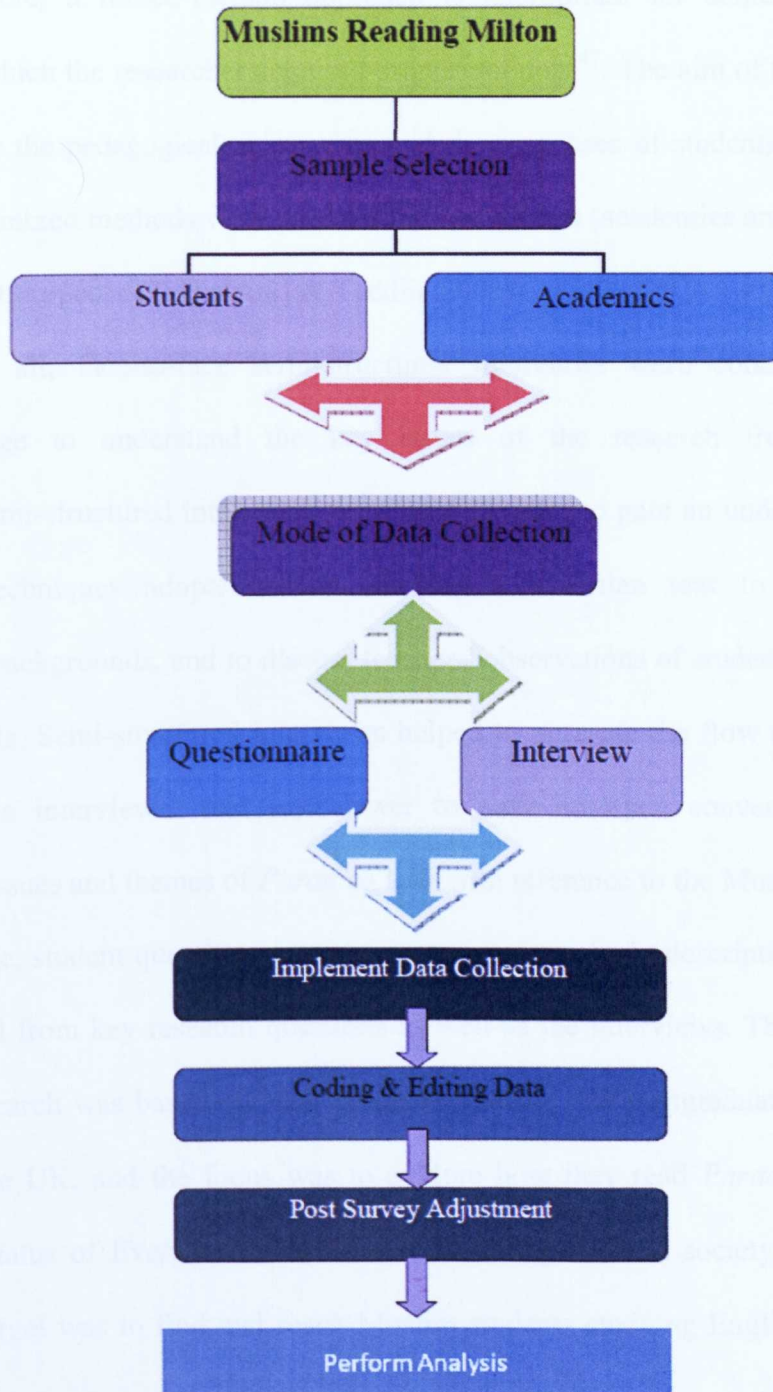

Figure 6: Data Collection Methodology

Figure 6 outlines the step by step methodology used for sample selection and data collection. A "mixed model research combines qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures" (Saunders, et al., 2007:153). The views of various groups of people (students and academics) were to be taken into account for this research; therefore, a mixed-method approach is appropriate for achieving optimal responses, for which the researcher acquired proper training[147]. The aim of the study was both to examine the pedagogical approaches and the responses of students as shown in Figure 6; hence mixed methods were used for the two groups (academics and students) to achieve different purposes (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003).

First of all, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted at an exploratory stage to understand the key issues of the research from teachers' perspectives. Semi-structured interviews were used in order to gain an understanding of the teaching techniques adopted when teaching a Christian text to students of mixed/Muslim backgrounds, and to discuss teachers' observations of students' responses to Christian texts. Semi-structured interviews helped to promote the flow of discussion and allowed the interviewee and interviewer to have an open conversation while exploring new issues and themes of *Paradise Lost* with reference to the Muslim students. At the next stage, student questionnaires were employed to obtain descriptive data[148] on the issues raised from key research questions as well as the interviews. The sample for quantitative research was based on Muslim undergraduate and postgraduate students in Pakistan and the UK, and the focus was to explore how they read *Paradise Lost* and perceived the status of Eve/woman in the text according to their society, culture and religion. The target was to find and reach Muslim students studying English Literature

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[147] The researcher took one-to-one training sessions on data collection procedures, tools, designing the questionnaires, designing the interview questions and undertaking the interviews
[148] The data presented in charts and figures (graphs)

through the process of searching universities with a higher number of Muslim students; please refer to Figure 9 (Sample Selection for Quantitative Research) and its explanation in the thesis. Both the qualitative and quantitative research methods were balanced. For qualitative research, the interviewees were the lecturers and professors teaching *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK, in Higher Education institutions at undergraduate and postgraduate level. For quantitative research the participants were undergraduate and postgraduate students of Muslim background studying in Pakistan and the UK. The next stage after the data collection was coding and editing to interpret the data which lead to the post-survey adjustments before the final analysis of the data. This adjustment was not with the data itself but to make wider connections between hypothesis (Part A) and the findings (Part B).

5.2.1 Qualitative Sampling

Sample size varies on research topic and field in which the research is undertaken, it is also "determined by the extent to which the research question demands responses from a number of people who could be said to be representative of certain population" (Breakwell 2006:235). Therefore highly targeted small samples that possess certain characteristics pivotal for the research were used, as shown in Figure 7.
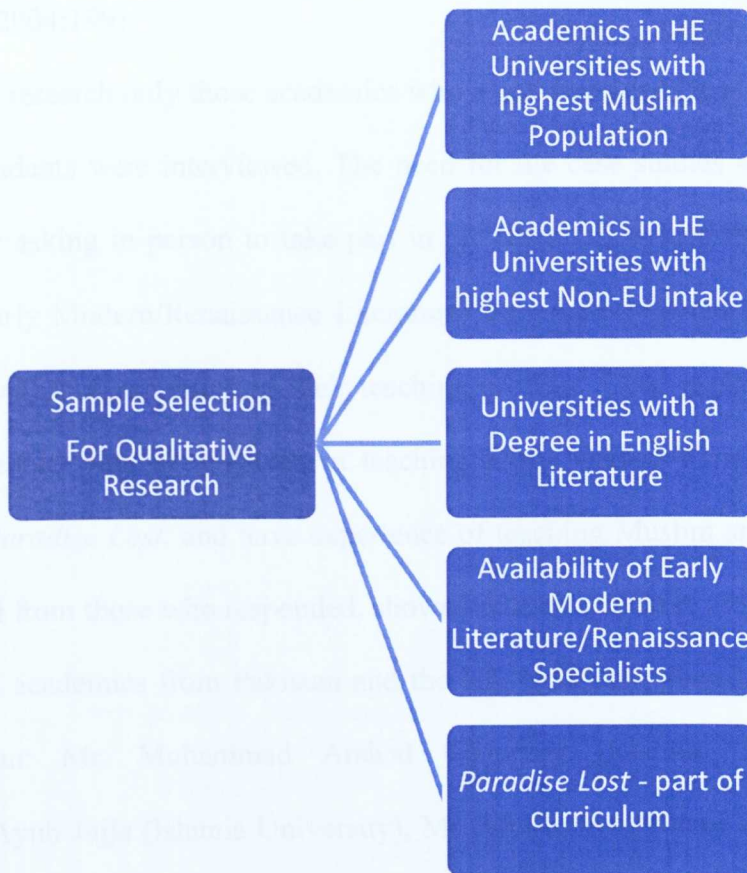
participants are selected on the basis of having a significant relation to the research topic (Seale 2004:179).

In this research only those academics teaching ... with multi-faith and/or Muslim students were interviewed. The ... was published via email, and by asking in-person to take part. ... and professors who teach Early Modern/Renaissance ... from the relevant universities ... research interests. Out of the key ... Renaissance literature, specifically Paradise Lost and ... teaching Muslim students, data were only collected from those who responded ... available. Therefore, in total seven academics from Pakistan and ... The participants from Pakistan are: Mr. Muhammed Arshad ... University), Prof. Mohammed Ayub Jajja (Islamic University), Mr. ... Bukhter (Islamic University), and Dr. Zia Ahmed (Bahauddin Zakaria University) and from the UK: Prof. Gordon Campbell (University of Leicester), and Dr. Kate Hodgkins (University of East ...

Academics in HE Universities with highest Muslim Population

Academics in HE Universities with highest Non-EU intake

Universities with a Degree in English Literature

Availability of Early Modern Literature/Renaissance Specialists

Paradise Lost - part of curriculum

Sample Selection For Qualitative Research

Figure 7: Sample Selection for Qualitative Research

The above Figure 7 draws out the detailed procedure of sample selection for qualitative research involved in this study. After having defined the population (i.e. lecturers and professors tutoring the course on Early Modern / Renaissance literature, teaching *Paradise Lost* as one of the key texts to a class of multi-faith/ Muslim students), as shown in Figure 7, the appropriate sampling strategy had to be decided in order to draw the sample participants from the key population of interest (Seale 2004:173). For this study a purposive or (non-probability) judgemental sampling is used, where the researcher uses his/her own judgement to select cases that will be best suited to meet the core objectives of the study (Saunders, et al., 2007:213). A purposive sampling is "where

participants are selected on the basis of having a significant relation to the research topic" (Seale 2004:199).

In this research only those academics who teach *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith and/ or Muslim students were interviewed. The need for the case studies was published via email, and by asking in person to take part in the research, to lecturers and professors who teach Early Modern/Renaissance Literature; they were selected from the relevant universities' websites according to their teaching profiles[149] and research interests. Out of the key people who are involved in teaching Early Modern/Renaissance literature, specifically *Paradise Lost,* and have experience of teaching Muslim students, data were only collected from those who responded, showed interest and were available. Therefore, in total seven academics from Pakistan and the UK were interviewed. The participants from Pakistan: Mr. Muhammad Arshad Chaudary (Islamia University), Prof. Muhammad Ayub Jujja (Islamia University), Mr. Muhammad Sohail Falaksher (Islamia University), and Dr. Zia Ahmed (Bahauddin Zakriya University), and from the UK: Prof. Gordon Campbell (University of Leicester), and Dr. Kate Hodgkins (University of East London), Prof. Marion Wynne-Davies (University of Surrey).

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[149] A brief profile of academics is given below

Participants	Position	Further Information
Participant 1 Muhammad Arshad Chaudary	Assistant Professor of English Literature at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan	Mr. Chaudary has a research interest is in Classical, Early Modern and Romantic poetry.
Participant 2 Muhammad Ayub Jujja	Professor of English and Pakistani Literature at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan	Dr. Jujja has an expertise in comparative literature, Novel and Pakistani literature.
Participant 3 Muhammad Sohail Falaksher	Assistant Professor of English and Linguistics at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan	Mr. Falaksher is M.Phil linguistics and his field of interest is Poetry and Phonetics and Phonology.
Participant 4 Zia Ahmed	Assistant Professor of English and Canadian Literature at Bahauddin Zakriya University, Multan, Pakistan	Dr. Ahmed has broad interest in Canadian literature and Post-Colonial literature and his research is on Sufism.

Figure 8.1: Overview of Interviewees in Pakistan

Participants	Position	Further Information
Participant 1 Gordon Campbell	Professor of Renaissance at the University of Leicester, UK	Prof. Campbell, who is a Renaissance and Seventeenth century specialist, has a particular interest in Milton. His work on Milton (2007), (2008) has won the Hanford Prize of the year for both volumes. He recently published a history of King James Version Bible. He was Honoured Scholar of the Milton Society of America (2005). He has (extensively) travelled worldwide to teach and lecture on Milton and Theology. He has a particular interest in the Islamic world, for which he has made over a 100 research trips in last 25 years.
Participant 2 Katherine Hodgkins	Principal Lecturer of Early Modern Cultural History at the University of East London, UK	Dr. Hodgkins, who has a research interest in Early Modern Cultural History, has a research expertise in madness, religion and autobiography.
Participant 3 Marion Wynne-Davies	Professor of Early Modern Literature at the University of Surrey, UK	Prof. Wynne-Davies, who is a Head of an English Department, has international reputation in Early Modern Literature, and has a particular interest in feminist and post-colonial discourse. One of her articles, *A Touching Text* focuses on the socio-cultural aspect of performing Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* in a Muslim society; Tehran.

Figure 8.2: Overview of the Interviewees in the UK

The biography notes in Figure 8.1 and 8.2 provide an overview of the academics interviewed. All of the respondents' research and teaching interests are similar to the core areas of this study (i.e. Early Modern poetry, Milton, culture, comparative religion and teaching experience of *Paradise Lost* to Muslim students). Even though the number of the interviewees was not large, the data produced was considerable due to the semi-structure interview technique used. It is also important to note that all the respondents are key researchers and academics, and that the data therefore gathered was enough to gain insight about the phenomenon under investigation. The time duration of the interviews was variable according to the availability of the interviewee and the depth of knowledge required; for example, the interview with Prof. Gordon Campbell lasted for about two and a half hours and the interview with Dr. Zia Ahmed lasted for about an hour and a half. But the other interviews lasted for 40-50 minutes and sufficient data was produced. Although the sample size was not huge, it produced data covering all the key issues of the research and provided valuable information to improve pedagogy in Muslim/multi-faith teaching scenarios.

5.2.1.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Interview is a widely used mode of data collection and is central in most research plans investigating the detailed responses of the participants. Semi-structured interviews are non-standardised, "in contrast to the other forms of interviews (i.e. structured or unstructured) and are often referred to as qualitative research interviews" (King 2004:11-22). Qualitative interviews provide "access to the attitudes and values" of the interviewee participant, which, for example, questionnaires cannot explore (King 2004). This method proved to be useful because the topic has not been researched before; therefore data which explores the ideas behind how a Christian text is taught to the class of mixed/Muslim religious background was of great value (Byrne 2004:179-192). The other advantage of

the semi-structured interview is that it permits the researcher to react to a topic that emerges during the interview (Breakwell 2006:330), therefore themes which were of special interest of the interviewee and which may open valuable perspectives on, for example, their perception of the trans-religious difference, may be explored. Moreover, the questions in the semi-structured interview tend to be suggestive rather than dictating the interview; this helped the researcher to schedule and restructure the interview questions according to individual participants and use them as an "active agent" (Lyons & Coyle 2007:40). This allowed the formality of interview to be minimised, while turning it into a "conversation with a purpose" (Burgess 1984:102), which influenced the flow of the talk positively. In certain cases the interviewee wanted to lead/begin the discussion without waiting for the researcher to ask questions, for example, Dr. Hodgkins after viewing the interview questionnaire went on to respond to the questions, and Dr. Jujja without even looking at the questions started discussing his experience of teaching *Paradise Lost*. In other cases, the interviewees were ready to respond to the asked questions (for example, Dr. Zia Ahmed, Dr. Sohail Falaksher and Mr. Arshad Chaudhary) but in both cases follow-up questions were asked accordingly. Additionally a careful probing was used to keep the discussion on track but not biased, since "probing needs skill because it can easily lead to bias" (Fielding & Thomas 2001:129). The presence of the researcher in face to face interviews could possibly produce the Hawthorne effect; "the effect of the observer on the 'observed'" (Parahoo 1997:313). To reduce that effect, a method devised by Cormack (1996) was used, and the respondents were only offered general background and purpose of the study[150]. It is also useful to understand that the interview format was semi-structured and that also did not require too many details, because mostly questions were asked as follow-up.

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[150] Except Wynne-Davies, who already knew the background being supervisor of this research

5.2.1.2 Interview Agenda

The formulation of the interview agenda was based on the main themes discussed in the previous chapters such as the status of women in Islam and Christianity, the identity of Eve and the account of fall in Islam, Christianity and *Paradise Lost*; as well as the issues like veiling, and female sexuality in reference to their reception in a class. The start of the interview was more about general questions to help build a rapport with the interviewee and the later questions were more particular to the core of the research. For example, Prof. Campbell has travelled extensively around almost 70 countries to teach, discuss and lecture on Milton, and the conversation began with his teaching experience around the world to the audience of multiple faiths. His expertise on comparative religion and specialised knowledge in Early Modern literature also led us to the core area of research questions such as how far he changes the content of his speech in multi-faith mixed-sex audience.

The interview schedule was not standard for all interviewees; in this situation the wording and order of the questions do not remain same for each respondent (Seale, 2004:165). In this research a semi-structured interview technique is adopted which is "less rigid in format, involving an interview guide rather than an interview schedule" (Griffin 2005:181). The prepared questions were altered or changed according to the respondents' comments and flow of the conversation. The comments of the respondents were rephrased and incorporated into further questions which were deemed to be appropriate at the time. This is the reason Tom Wengraf suggests that the semi-structured interviews are "high-preparation, high-risk, high-gain, and high-analysis operations" (Wengraf, 2001:5). For example, when Ahmed explained that only the first few Books of *Paradise Lost* were included in the Pakistani syllabus, he was asked about possible reasons of preferring and teaching only first few Books of *Paradise Lost* and leaving the

other Books. Similarly, interview from Chaudary was a good opportunity to discuss such issues, and he was asked if it was because of the cultural or religious reason to design the course in this way. Another important question emerged spontaneously in Pakistan when the character and representation of Eve was under investigation, which was whether the academics, despite the students, were comfortable enough to discuss Eve's nudity and sexuality in a class, while keeping her religious status in mind (See Appendix A: II[151]). The interview questions for academics in Pakistan and the UK were similar but not identical because Pakistan is not a broadly multicultural country and Pakistani teachers do not have to face the challenge of multi-faith teaching, whereas in the UK there are multi-faith students other than Muslims. Therefore only those questions were asked from Pakistani and UK academics which were considered to be more relevant according to their students, course design and socio-cultural priorities. Another such question that emerged spontaneously and had high importance and relevance according to the Pakistani socio-cultural trends was: how do you balance the discussion on Christianity, Islam and *Paradise Lost* in class? This particular question was spontaneously asked to Ahmed when he was stressing the importance of highlighting Islamic beliefs before introducing Christian concepts; it was not really valid for the academics in the UK since they do not discuss the distinctions of the text of *Paradise Lost* with Islam, although this omission was, in itself, useful when considering the findings.

5.2.1.3 Qualitative Data Analysis: Categorisation and Content Analysis

In this research interviews were the primary source of data, thus it was important to devise a systematic ways of summarising the information provided by the respondents. The data was transcribed from the recordings word-for-word into Microsoft Word files and then sent to the interviewees for their consent and was edited, in some cases,

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[151] Appendix A:III shows the follow on questions as well

accordingly. Therefore, after transcribing the data from audio-recordings made during the interviews, the mass of gathered data was organised into a meaningful whole and put into the related categories of the key research themes and questions known as coding. Coding is useful to divide and categorise the data into meaningful chunks and that helps to distinct patterns for analysis and further investigation (Taylor & Gibbs 2010). In this study coding enabled the researcher to interact with the data to pose questions and concentrate on new themes since the presuppositions and previous knowledge of the subject area was not available. Coding also helped to shape the interview findings into meaningful whole, and to structure Chapters 6 and 7 thematically for further analysis.

Even though the transcription of the audio recording is very time-consuming and laborious,[152] it is a substantial part of the interview method and is a "valuable part of research, because it brings the researcher 'close to the data'" (Denscombe 2007:196). Once the data was transcribed, it was sent to the interviewees to obtain their consent to carry out the analysis on the transcribed data. The interviewees at that stage were asked to add in or edit the data accordingly. Kate Hodgkins and Zia Ahmed made a few changes to give the data more sense. The consent from interviewees confirmed the transcribed data's accuracy and authenticity in order to carry out the analysis. Note-taking during the interview was not used as it can disturb both the interviewee and interviewer. Coding allowed the researcher to manage and comprehend the large amount of data produced from an average size sample, and to integrate the related data of common themes and repeated patterns from different transcriptions (Ryan& Bernard 2003:85-109). At this stage the content analysis served to list and review common themes, for which the data were read multiple times. The next step was to attach

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[152] It took almost 4-5 hours to transcribe a 40 minutes interview but it was a crucial part of analysis as it made further analysis easier. In some cases it took even longer because of the non-native background of researcher

significance[153] to the common themes while considering alternative explanations by looking at differences and similarities in responses. These themes served to develop the key issues for further exploration[154], and to draw and validate the possible conclusions for the research questions out of them. The final stage was to draft a report of findings while synthesizing and summarizing it through analytical understanding. Since the study is cross-cultural the findings were based on wider cultural, feminist, socio-political and religious trends.

5.2.2 Quantitative Data Collection: Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used subsequently as a second primary research tool to examine the students' experience of reading *Paradise Lost*. Questionnaires, in contrast to interviews, are primarily cost- and time-effective and are used to gather information from large number of respondents (populations) or small groups (samples) in many different locations (Brewer 2003:254). Respondents feel a greater sense of anonymity and they are more willing to give personal or embarrassing information or to admit to certain un-social opinions while filling out a questionnaire than discussing it face to face. Further questionnaires can be used to develop an understanding of people's opinions, motives or attitudes in behaving in a certain way, and can provide factual knowledge about a practice and/ or a belief (Seale 2004). Additionally, for respondents of self-administered (On-line) questionnaires (in case of UK participants) it is something that they can do in their leisure time (Denscombe 2007:169).

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[153] To add meanings to the common themes developed during the interviews and link them to the research questions
[154] In questionnaire surveys

5.2.2.1 Quantitative Sampling

The following Figure 9 demonstrates the sample selection procedure for quantitative research.
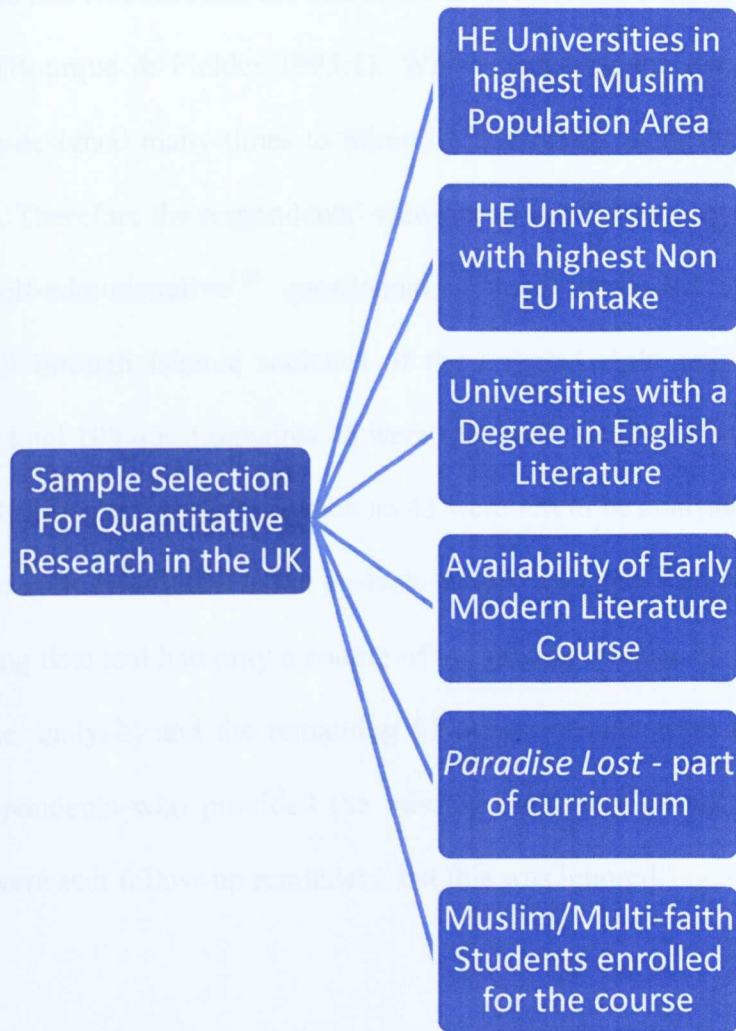

Figure 9: Sample Selection for Quantitative Research

The sample of the quantitative research, as shown in the above Figure 9, was Muslim students studying in British and Pakistani Higher Education Institutions, and reading *Paradise Lost*. For the Muslim students' questionnaire (See Appendix A: III), again the

non-probability purposive sampling[155] was used because only Muslim students studying *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK were relevant. The questionnaires were internet mediated[156] for the Muslim students studying in the UK, whereas in Pakistan the questionnaires were self-administered paper-based[157]. Self-administrative questionnaires encourage a heightened response and are one of the most effective tools to collect data in research studies (Bourque & Fielder 1995:1). While designing the questionnaire, the questions were re-designed many times to minimise any biases along with the leading questions (if any). Therefore the respondents' views were not directed by the researcher. A further 100 self-administrative[158] questionnaires were forwarded to the Muslim students via email through Islamic societies of the targeted eight universities in the UK[159]. Out of the total 100 questionnaires 45 were sent back, but two of them were with missing data and had no personal information so 43 were left to be analysed. In Pakistan, 100 questionnaires were distributed to the students and 67 were received back: 6 of them had a lot of missing data and had only a couple of questions answered so they could not be included in the analysis, and the remaining 61 questionnaires were considered for analysis. The respondents who provided the missing data were contacted for further information and were sent follow-up reminders, but this was ignored.

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[155] See sampling for interviews
[156] Questionnaires were sent out to UK sample via email through mailing lists of Islamic societies of UK universities
[157] As discussed earlier, the IT system of the universities in Pakistan is not well integrated as in UK and students could not be reached through the email, therefore the researcher had to travel to the sample unlike the British sample
[158] Self-administered (on-line) questionnaires were used; where respondents fill questionnaires in absence of researcher
[159] Initially universities were contacted directly in order to reach the sample, but they were reluctant to share students' personal information (e.g. religion) and eventually Islamic societies were contacted; these societies were very helpful in circulating the call for participation to their members from English departments

5.2.2.3 Questionnaire Design

A series of questions closely related to the research question were asked. Some of them were very basic questions dealing with the common Muslim beliefs and practices but referring to the key themes of the proposed study to "link with the conceptual framework of the study" (Oppenheim 1998:221). The questions were designed on the basis of the data collected by the interviews and the key themes of the research, for example the identity of Eve and Hawwa, students' perception of the fall, their perception of veiling, nudity and the discourse of rape and incest in *Paradise Lost*. The questions were clear in order to develop the understanding of the readers and to get appropriate data from them according to the themes designed (Gina Wisker 2001:149). The "flow" and understanding and/ or readability of the questions were checked by "read[ing] it out loud" before sending it out to the sample (Oppenheim 1998:221). The design of the questionnaires also focused on the length of the questionnaire and the grouping of items, because the longer the questionnaire, the lower the response rate (Wisker 2001).The survey length designed required approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Furthermore, grouping of the questions was used to facilitate respondents' understanding of individual question while addressing the key issues of the research question. The questionnaire in both Pakistan and the UK was in English and was identical in themes. It was divided into three main sections: I. Fall and identity of Eve, II. nudity and veiling, and III. demographics. Since it was understood that most of the academics from Pakistan do not explicitly discuss Eve's nudity and sexuality, the responses of the Muslim students on this issue was essential to address the key questions of this research and compare it with the British Muslim respondents. Each of these sections had a group of relevant questions focusing on the core areas of the research e.g. representation of Eve, menstruation as a punishment of the fall,

identity of Jesus, nudity and sexuality, and incest[160]. Special care was given to instruct the respondents on how to fill out each question; for example, respondents were instructed to check the box or in some instances they were asked to read the quotation given in the questionnaire from the text of *Paradise Lost* before answering any particular question or a series of questions where needed. Questionnaires are identical for Pakistani and UK students and are in English. It is perceived that the level of English of Pakistani students is high and they are capable to understand the language because of their exposure to English in their classes[161]; moreover, it is also verified through piloting that they were able to understand the language and terms used in questionnaires.

5.2.2.3 Piloting

Oppenheim suggests that questionnaires have to be tested, "improved and than tried out again...until we are certain they can do the job for which they are needed" (Oppenheim 1992:47). A vital part of quantitative research is piloting. It is also referred to "small scale version[s], or trial run[s], done in preparation for the major study" (Polit, et al., 2001: 467). It is always advisable to test the questionnaire to ensure its effectiveness in order to get as much valid data as possible, as it allows any errors to be eliminated before its distribution. The role of the pilot is to improve the validity and reliability of the data significantly. A typical piloting involves "a convenience sample pilot with colleagues and friends to remove any obvious errors" (McCaig & Dahlberg 2010:181). It is very important to ask the subjects for feedback and alter the questionnaire before sending it to the sample (Peat, et al., 2002:123). In this research piloting on a group similar to the target population of the study was undertaken, checked and altered (about 20 days before sending out the questionnaires. Muslim students in Pakistan who studied *Paradise Lost* were sent questionnaires via email for pilot testing; later the discussion held via *Skype*

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[160] For sample questionnaire, see Appendix A:III
[161] English is the official language in Pakistan, and the mode of teaching in Pakistani universities is English

and according to their responses the questionnaire was altered and retested on a different group in Pakistan, before sending it to the sample). For example, the format of question 2 and 3, where students were asked about the first word that comes to mind when considering the Islamic Eve and similarly about Milton's Eve, was initially open-ended and most of the piloting sample left it empty in the first round. In the second round of piloting, when it was turned to the closed ending format, of the same sample almost the entire piloting sample responded. The close-ended questions mostly had a higher response than the open-ended questions, thus the final draft of questionnaire had all the close-ended questions with an option "if other please specify". The further change made while piloting was to reduce the extent of personal information asked in the demographics section. The piloting sample either felt too tired to fill the form in full or lost interest by then, leaving out the last bits; or they might have perceived it unnecessary to give many personal details like ethnicity or country of origin. Piloting also helped to rephrase some of the questions to avoid subjectivity and/or to develop the clearer meaning of the questions. For example, the questions dealing with Milton's treatment of Eve were rephrased[162] to avoid any bias, as this is one of the key themes of this study and could lead to subjectivity.

5.2.2.4 Statistical Data Analysis

In this study, collecting data through the questionnaire survey proved to be a systematic way to investigate the responses of the sample on potential issues that involved counting or measuring their approach. Quantitative data can be divided into two groups: categorical data and numerical data. Categorical data cannot be measured in numbers but it can either be classified into sets and categories. Numerical data, on the other hand, can be measured into numbers and quantities (Saunders, et al., 2007:418-9). As the study

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[162] Moreover, questions were checked by researcher's supervisor and Dr Meadows (Sociology), from whom the training on data collection was acquired, before sending it to the sample

seeks to understand the attitudes and opinions of Muslim students and their perception of a Christian text, it is important to examine the percentage of the target population which reacted in a certain way to a particular question. This helped to understand the importance of certain issues, as well as variables according to how gender and country of residence influence their perceptions. This allowed an understanding of students' responses based on their level of religious commitment and the cultural impact of their beliefs. Furthermore, percentages developed from the tables and charts were used for data analysis in order to give the whole research trustworthiness and reliability. The software SPSS version 13.0 and Microsoft Excel version 2007 were used to make the charts and analyse the data. All the important information was added in the software, such as individual themes of the questionnaire, along with the variables of respondents against which the questions were to be analysed, such as their country of residence and gender. Their individual responses were generated for each question to achieve accurate statistics of the responses. Once the statistical analysis was done in terms of tables, figures and percentages, the responses were further analysed and compared among each other and the key findings were outlined in Chapters 8 and 9.

5.3 Ethical Considerations

This section outlines the ethical considerations undertaken for this study. It includes ethical approvals[163] from the target universities involved in this project and the consent and confidentiality of participants. The researcher took training from University of Surrey Ethics department and training was also provided by department of Sociology.

5.3.1 Participant Consent and Confidentiality

Ethics remain a pivotal theme in research that influences people's behaviour (Saunders, et al., 2007). Subjects that cause emotional or physical harm were strictly avoided to conform

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[163] For Ethical Approval forms please see Appendix B

to ethical research standards. All participants in qualitative and quantitative research were clearly informed of purpose of the study and its focus on the experience of Muslim students reading *Paradise Lost*, as it is crucial to define the research question to the target population (A. Willims 2003). For qualitative research, interview consent forms[164] were sent to the interviewees before the interviews. In addition to the consent form, once the data was transcribed, it was sent back to the interviewees to obtain their consent on the transcript before carrying out further analysis and they also waived their right for anonymity. Similarly, for quantitative research it was clearly explained in the cover letter/information sheet attached with the questionnaire that the participation in this research is entirely voluntary and their responses will be kept confidential according to the Data Protection Act of 1998 (Wisker 2001:147-8).

5.4 Limitations

While conducting the proposed study, there were some difficulties that were likely to limit the influence and importance of the findings and drawn conclusions. To find and reach the sample among huge but distributed Muslim population in the UK was challenging. The most convenient (in terms of time and cost effectiveness) mode of communication (via e-mails to the Islamic societies of the UK universities) was chosen to reach the sample, and this could affect the reliability and number of the responses[165]. Discussing someone's religion publicly could be a very sensitive issue, thus the selection of expressions and questions used in questionnaires were rephrased many times to bring about neutrality, but that might have diluted the impact of the proposed research issues. The other difficulty faced was the coverage of rich text dealt as a primary source, for example *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*, and to split them in chapters individually and equally in Part A and then respond to them in Part B, as the time

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[164] See Appendix B:1 for interview consent form
[165] Also see Chap 8 demographics for detail

duration over which the dissertation was written was limited, thereby restricting the size of sample.

Here it is worth mentioning that only an exemplary analysis can be given and that the outcomes of this research are limited. Further due to a relatively small sample, the findings and outcomes of the study can not be generalised and do not claim to be fully representative.

5.5 Conclusion

The investigation of the sample in Britain showed the existence of huge Muslim population, and its rapid growth in the UK and evidence of a high intake of Muslim students in UK institutions reinforces how timely and important this research is.

Choosing methodology for research is the most crucial but sensitive part of the project because it determines the scope, originality, and findings of the whole idea of the proposed research question. This chapter outlines the methodology undertaken for exploring the key questions developed in Part A of the thesis. Although it is non-traditional for study in English literature to opt for fieldwork as part of methodology, because this topic has not been researched before, it was an essential element allowing a thorough and robust investigation of the key hypothesis by including experiences and observations of teachers and Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK. The chapter discusses the data collection tools and procedure, as well as some initial information on data. Detailed findings that are drawn from the in-depth data analysis of qualitative and quantitative data gathered from interviews and questionnaire surveys are presented in next chapters. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the findings and discussion of academics' interviews, and Chapters 8 and 9 examine the findings of students' questionnaires.

Chapter 6: Interview Findings and Discussion I
Cross-Cultural Experience, Perspectives and
Practices of Teaching *Paradise Lost*

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the findings obtained from the interviews with academics from Pakistan and the UK. The full interview transcripts are available in Appendix C (I), and also a CD of interview recordings is included in Appendix C (II). This cross-cultural study of *Paradise Lost* produced data that draws upon the qualitative research in previous chapters, providing fresh insight into a little-researched field. The chapter is divided into two sections: Section I explores the Biblical roots of English Literature, particularly Early Modern Literature, and focuses upon the experience and perspective of academics when teaching a Christian text to Muslim/multi-faith students; Section II examines the teaching practices and perspectives on *Paradise Lost* in Pakistani and British institutions, focussing on the individual Books and characters in order to produce in-depth information on how academics perceive the students' reception of the poem. The sequence of academics' responses is adjusted according to the themes developed in the chapter and is not uniform.

6.1 Context for the Interviews

The key themes and questions which arose in Part A were used to focus the discussion during the course of the interviews. All the interviewees in Pakistan and the UK had experience of teaching a range of Christian texts in English literature to students of a Muslim background. They commented on how their teaching techniques changed or remained the same in order to understand the ways Muslim students receive and respond to a range of Christian texts, with specific emphasis on *Paradise Lost*. The academics interviewed from Pakistan, Muhammad Arshad Chaudary (Islamia

University), Muhammad Ayub Jujja (Islamia University), Muhammad Sohail Falaksher (Islamia University), and Zia Ahmed (Bahauddin Zakriya University), all have experience of teaching English Literature to Muslim students, as Pakistan is a Muslim country whether the majority of the students in academic institutions are Muslim. UK academics interviewed also had direct contact with and experience of teaching English Literature (and *Paradise Lost*) to Muslim/multi-faith students. This is evidenced by their responses to the questions. For example, Katherine Hodgkins from the University of East London confirms that the intake of Muslims at UEL is "inevitably higher in English Literature" and UEL, as an institution, overall has a "fairly large population of Muslim students". She notes this in comparison to University of Swansea, where she taught previously. This could be because London is densely populated by Muslims, as recorded in Chapter 5. Hodgkins notes that in English, UEL usually gets "maybe half a dozen [Muslim students] a year" and the proportion of the overall class is female. So for an average module group, "I might have 4-5 girls and 1 boy of Muslim background". Marion Wynne-Davies from the University of Surrey notes that she has taught students with "a non-Christian background over the years and currently including Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Buddhists and students from the Far East who believe in Shintoism, mainly above UG level either PG taught or PG research". Gordon Campbell, who has travelled to many multi-faith and Muslim cultures to teach and lecture Milton, also notes that he had "many Muslim students over the years and they are often more secular than they appear". Campbell suggests that Leicester University has a significant Ahmadi community and the Islamic society of the University "is pretty impressive [... and is] doing a decent job; especially with newly arriving [Muslim] students who feel baffled by England" (Campbell).

In the following sections the key research questions explored in the previous chapters are highlighted and the responses integrated in order to examine the current teaching practices of Christian text like *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario.

6.2 Teaching English Literature as a Christian Corpus

One of the most prominent themes that emerged during the course of the interviews was the amount of Christian theology embedded in Early Modern and/or English literature taught to the students doing English degrees. Early Modern literature is rooted in Christianity and the Bible and it is critical to understand that the fundamental trend of sixteenth and seventeenth century writing was religious. This was evidenced equally in the responses of both UK and Pakistani academics. Campbell reports that poetry is a "religious tradition from start to finish" and he teaches texts like "*Holy Sonnets* and *Easter Wings* ... [and authors like] Herbert [who is] deeply Anglican, Milton [is] the Puritan" to multi-faith students. Similarly, Pakistani academic Ahmed affirms the idea that the Christian concepts of English Literature bring a kind of "alienation [that] is present between these subjects and the students". He reports that in Pakistani Higher Education institutions, the texts taught in MA English "unfortunately or fortunately ... [are] related to Christian theology and Christian subjects and there is very little about Islam". The idea of studying English literature embedded in Christian theology can be problematic for students coming from multi-faith backgrounds, leaving them in isolation, and this can affect the students' academic success. Ahmed considers that, overall, English Literature is "highlighting, praising and admiring Christianity" and refers to texts like "*First Coming, The Second Coming* or *Byzantium*" because "these also present ... [Christian] religious ideas and same is the case with *Waste Land* and *Paradise Lost*" (Ahmed). He notes that it is not only the religion that is different for students but also the culture that these texts present, as the students cannot interpret

English Literature "unless you ... create the environment in the class to understand English culture that comes with their religion". Campbell notes that students tend to be susceptible to adapting these cultural and religious changes or resistant to changing them, depending on how committed they are to their religious beliefs.

While exploring the students' acceptance or resistance to these cultural and religious beliefs, academics had various understandings according to their experiences of teaching a Christian text to multi-faith/Muslim students. The students coming to a degree course in English literature vary from teenagers to mature students (Hodgkins), and Campbell understands the problem of "teaching really a Christian corpus of literature" to the group of young and mature students, "none of whom is a sixteenth century Christian, most of whom are very secular but it includes the odd religious Christians and the odd Muslims who ... [are] likely to have a religious background" (Campbell). Wynne-Davies, who never noticed any resistance, suggests that she can "envisage" the students' resistance if they consider that "theirs was the only faith that was right and that all other faiths were wrong". Perhaps the condition pointed out by Wynne-Davies is relevant to Muslims' religion, as they consider their faith to be the ultimate truth. For such a situation, Jujja refers to the growing "religious intolerance" and thinks that these are "the difficult times" in terms of discussing religion publically. He reports that he teaches while "keeping in mind the [political] sensitivity towards such issues", and avoids talking about religious issues in class and even in this interview. It is noted that Jujja intentionally avoids religious discussions, as he perceives it a dangerous approach to discuss religion in public due to the current political turbulence directly influenced by religion. It is, therefore, critical to understand the need to revise pedagogy in order to harness religious difficulties which might be caused due to teaching Christian texts in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario.

After emphasising the troubles that religious discussions might stir, Jujja relates that he found his students more resistant towards Indian texts than Christian ones. He quotes an example of *Waiting for the Mahatma*, a 1955 novel by R. K. Narayan, which is problematic because students do not seem to "accept this that Mahatma is a god-like figure". It is significant that teachers in both Pakistan and the UK understand the complexity of teaching a Christian text to multi-faith students, but they do not report any resistance. Jujja, who finds it politically dangerous to talk about religion, considers Hindu texts more of a problem for students than Christian texts. It is, therefore, argued that students' resistance against the god-like figure of Mahatma may well be compared to Satan in *Paradise Lost* with the same notion of resistance that might be implied from this rebellious figure who challenges God's authority directly.

In order to prohibit religious debates in the class, Jujja tends not to emphasise the religious context of the text: "I would not say that giving them a kind of background information/knowledge to some extent might not be desirable but I do not do it". He further explains the reason he avoids religious discussions: "We don't play it keeping in mind the current circumstances", but this varies with the situation, "sometimes it really becomes hard to talk about some issues but sometimes the teachers ... manage them" (Jujja). Jujja is not the only academic in Pakistan who is extremely cautious about the sensitivity of religious issues; Chaudary suggests that "we do not teach students such concept[s] of Christianity which can conflict with their religious ideas" and while teaching a Christian text "we tell the students that these are the ideas of the poets, so for as religion is concerned we have neither to take them for granted nor do we rebut them" (Chaudary). On the other hand, there are Pakistani academics who believe in a different philosophy and expect and demand students to be more "open ... [to be] able to grasp the subject" (Ahmed). Ahmed argues that as a teacher he

has to explain to students that the literature they are studying "is Christian, [and] it belongs to Europe so ... you are reading a literature related to their culture [and] their religion." He notes that he has to ask the students to be "open up to some extent [and] not confine...within Pakistan[i] [values]." Similarly, Hodgkins reports that as a teacher you "tend to assume a general secularism" in the class on a "presumption that it is allowable to talk about religion analytically [and particularly] with the Early Modern material you have to be able to do that." Ahmed and Hodgkins demand openness and assume secularism in a class but this assumption can be challenging for the Muslim students when religion is directly addressed[166]. This assumption of general secularism might be explored from Wynne-Davies' suggestion on how she measures the student's secular behaviour:

> I have never had that [resistance from Muslim students] and I think that is a testament that young people who go to university just tend to be more open; they are there to learn they are there to explore. I am not saying that suddenly they would say Oh Gosh I am going to convert to Christianity but it means that Oh Yes so that's what Christians think. (Wynne-Davies)

The testament Wynne-Davies presents about the openness of the students is their silence or non-resistance. Perhaps it is difficult to understand the students' resistance and the way they might resist, and it is unwise to assume them to be open-minded on the basis of their lack of resistance and silence. Resistance never comes out in the scenario of a class, as Campbell notes: "where it does come out [is] when you talk to them privately" which makes the teacher realise that there had been "moments of unease" in the class, and then "that is the time when you get troubled students" (Campbell). Hodgkins reports that although "this is not something I've paid any serious attention to." Muslim students' attitude to certain topics may vary. She points out that the "trouble is that they would not tell me if they are resistant" because Muslim

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[166] Evidenced in the questionnaire findings, in the discussion of students having trouble in the Christian context of the poem in Section 1

students are usually "very quiet", and perhaps this is the way they show resistance; notes Hodgkins: "they would be even quieter than usual in relation to a particular topic" or if they were very uncomfortable in the last class discussion, some "particular students might choose to miss the class if it's about something particular – religious poetry, for instance". It is noted that Wynne-Davies assumes Muslim students' silence as testament to their openness, whereas Campbell and Hodgkins present a more complex understanding of lack of "apparent" resistance and silence.

The idea of quietness as a mode of resistance gets more complex when Hodgkins reports a greater number of female Muslim students opting for English than Muslim males, as female Muslim students due to their "strong cultural tendency" are very shy and "quiet anyway" (Hodgkins), so it would be hard to notice their resistance in terms of silence. Similarly, Ahmed also notes the silence of female Muslim students as a cultural trend: "they are taught to hide[167] themselves from the beginning (childhood) not only physically but mentally". It is not always the case that academics notice this attitude of emotional hiding in female Muslim students, as they often express their ideas more explicitly: "I have found [when] talking to Muslim women a sense that so much of what we teach is Christian" (Campbell). On the other hand, Ahmed notes that Christian theology embedded in literature is also difficult for the male students who are not ready to accept the foreign religion, and it would "burden their minds" and they would not be able to "reconcile with their existing [religious] ideas" (Ahmed). It is noted that apart from the cultural tendency of being quiet, Muslim male and female students are reported to show resistance in one way or another, for example by missing a particular class, by being quiet or reacting in private conversations.

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[167] Discussion on veiling and hiding continues further in this chapter.
Also see Muslim students' perception in the questionnaire findings

Apart from the resistance. Muslim students might also show interest in religious debates and get actively interested because "they will take it as an opportunity, or be pleased to be given the opportunity to explore questions of faiths seriously in an academic context, because when you are studying English that does not often come up" (Hodgkins). Hodgkins, like Wynne-Davies[168], supports the idea of students coming with a positive approach to learning, but the idea that religious discussion does not come "often" in English perhaps is debateable. Like, Wynne-Davies and Hodgkins. Ahmed suggests that the "waves of change are everywhere, not only in England and America but also in Pakistan... as people are becoming more tolerant to other faiths ... although they are very much resistant but there are feelings that the resistance will subside one day". He notes that he has observed the changes in students' attitudes recently, but still "time is needed" for that and this is the reason only "1-2% of the students who want to have real learning and are from liberal and open-minded families" show no resistance "even if the Christian religion is discussed".

From the above discussion it is noticeable that the majority of English literature written particularly in sixteenth and seventeenth century is embedded in Christianity, however some Muslim students show resistance to religious debates in class, while the other might discuss their unease in "private" or with the teacher "at the end of semester" (Campbell), by missing a particular class due to previous religious discussion, or be extremely quiet in those discussions. The use of silence can either be the result of a cultural/religious tendency or be used to show resistance. Therefore while academics in the UK (Hodgkins and Wynne-Davies) and Pakistan (Ahmed) claim increasing tolerance amongst students, the use of silence as a resistance suggests a deeper-seated reluctance to engage in religious debate. On the other hand. Jujja points

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[168] See Wynne-Davies' comment on lack of students' resistance earlier in the chapter

out contemporary political issues of growing "religious intolerance" and the way it affects their teaching in Pakistan, therefore it is important to direct the Christian religious discussion of a literary text much more carefully. There is a thriving need to address these issues not only to develop productive teaching but also to improve the socio-political unrest worldwide.

6.3 Perspective of Teaching Religious Material

The academics were asked about the teaching perspective they draw upon while teaching religious material, since the perspective with which one teaches a Christian text to multi-faith and/or Muslim students determines the text's reception among students. Jujja suggests that he often "avoid[s] religious issues ... and usually focus[es] more on common human issues". He suggests that it is not "my approach" to focus on "highlighting someone else's culture or literature". According to him this perspective might be useful to temper the resistance of students or "religious intolerance". On the other hand, he does not consider British Literature as specifically Christian, unlike the other interviewees; rather he regards it as "secular writing" (Jujja). As noted earlier, he teaches any Christian text with a minimal, moderate or sometime no background knowledge regarding the distinctions between the religions. In contrast to Jujja, Ahmed's perspective of teaching a Christian text to Muslim students is to focus on comparisons between the Islamic and Christian perspectives, particularly on the "concept of sin and forgiveness". He refers to committing a sin and points out the consequences in both religions, as in Christianity if one commits a sin they "have to bear a physical punishment" which is not similar in Islam. He quotes the example of the crucifixion of Jesus, who was "crucified so the eternal seat of man was restored to him". He argues that this is very different in Islam because there is the concept of

"forgiveness" after sinning. However, he also notes that cross-religious comparisons[169] are not always easy, and it gets difficult to explain certain Christian beliefs as he is not a Christian by religion. Therefore, Jujja and Ahmed use different tactics to create a better acceptance and understanding of texts by involving or excluding religious comparisons.

It is helpful to examine Campbell's strategy to avoid any kind of religious reactions from the multi-faith audience, since Campbell has travelled around the world (to about 100 countries) to teach and lecture, and has a research interests in Milton and religion. When he was asked about his perspective on delivering a talk on religion/ religious text to a multi-faith audience, he suggests that it is important to be "conscious" while in different cultures, for "I have to bring genuine respect for [their] belief". He notes that it is obvious that "in some places I can be more honest than others". For example, in Saudi Arabia he has to be especially "cautious about what ... [he] say[s] to anybody", noting that it requires one to "understand and not to assume that my values are universal values because they are not". He reports that it is helpful not to be "judgemental" about students' cultures whether it is of "past or present" and one must not say that "I will only read literature that reflects my values". It is reported that English Literature, and particularly Early Modern Literature, is overtly Christian and as such teachers have to be very cautious when teaching Muslim/multi-faith students. As Campbell clearly advises, when teaching/lecturing in other cultures and/or to a multi-faith audience, it is important to show respect for their religions and religious beliefs. Therefore, it would be helpful to imply the same practices of being non-judgmental and bringing genuine respect to others' beliefs even in one's own culture when audiences/students are multi-faith.

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[169] Ahmed notes that his students comment and refer to the irony in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (2003) where "the friars and the monks are selling pardons and forgiveness" for money.

The respondents mostly considered it necessary to teach Early Modern literature as a Christian text because of the society and period in which it was written, although they considered it problematic for Muslim students in both the UK and Pakistan. Apart from the religious commitment of students, both Hodgkins and Campbell reported that twenty first century students in the UK tend to come from secular backgrounds and therefore also found it difficult to access the Christian ideology. More complex responses emerged when political issues were mentioned. For example, both Ahmed and Wynne-Davies clearly taught the text in a religious framework as they believe that knowledge of other faith encourages "tolerance" (Ahmed). However Jujja specifically does not use a Christian background in his teaching in order to avoid complications. He also noted that Indian texts are more problematic for students than the Christian texts. Perhaps, however, the key finding came from Hodgkins' comments on how students' silence demonstrated resistance and she argues that this is more pertinent for female Muslims, a point that was agreed by Ahmed.

It is interesting to find out the variation and similarities in views of Pakistani and UK academics. For instance, Ahmed and Wynne-Davies, while teaching in different parts of the world, tend to promote religious tolerance by teaching cross-religious material, whereas Jujja does not use a Christian context at all while teaching. Perhaps this is because of the cultural context of the two different Pakistani universities, the one in which Jujja teaches being more traditional than Ahmed's. It is important to note that both Pakistani universities are in the same province (i.e. Punjab) but Islamia University Bahawalpur is more traditional[170] than Bahauddin Zakriya University Multan, since Bahawalpur as a city is more traditional. Similarly, the

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[170] The dress code and attitudes of people of Bahawalpur is more conservative than Multan; moreover, Multan is a big city with many universities and academic institutions

findings from Ahmed, Hodgkins and Campbell observe the resistance of Muslim students towards Christian texts and it remains constant irrespective of where they live (or where they are taught). Campbell presents a more flexible attitude towards religion by bringing a conscious "respect to students' beliefs". Campbell's approach towards acceptance of other religions might arise from his research interest in comparative religions and touring experience. Therefore, the teaching perspectives of academics in the UK (Campbell) and Pakistan (Jujja and Ahmed) are influenced by their own cultural context and research interest.

6.4 Teaching Experience of *Paradise Lost*

Part A of the thesis broadly examines the religious differences between *Paradise Lost* (written in a Biblical context) and the *Quran*, and the issues that *Paradise Lost* may pose when taught to Muslim/multi-faith students. The initial discussion in this chapter investigates the perspective of academics regarding religious texts and their reception; the findings suggest that most English Literature promotes Christian beliefs, so sometimes it gets difficult for teachers to draw a line between religious discussion (in reference to certain text) and religious controversy. This section outlines the experience of academics teaching *Paradise Lost* and any issues that arose due to religious or cultural differences in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

Religion is one of the vital parts of Muslim identity. The first thing recited in their ear right after their birth is Shahadat: the verses that confirm the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH). Campbell points out that for some people, "religion is ... [their] identity: it is what they are and it is particularly true in the Islamic world and Pakistan is a good example". He notes that it is not the same case with Hindu religion: "if you press [some Muslim] and say 'what are you' they never say Pakistani, they say Muslim" whereas, in India they would say "Indian". Similarly,

Wynne-Davies and Campbell note that Muslim students "are better informed about their religion than the Christian students" (Campbell). Ahmed explains the reason for their better religious understanding: "they read the stories of religion and they follow the Holy *Quran* [so] they have a prior knowledge" of Islam. For the Muslim students, who have a religious understanding of Islam that is very different from the Christian beliefs, reading *Paradise Lost* might be stressful as they could make connections between Islamic and Christian characters[171]. Ahmed is familiar with such difficulty as he notes that giving students the knowledge of Christianity directly without discussing their own religion "is like already attacking their religious beliefs", and they will not accept "the Christian text as equal to the Islamic text because they believe that the *Quran* is the final word and Islam is the final religion". They are so committed that they will never believe nor agree "that any other religion can be like that [Islam]" and as a result Christian concepts create a clash with their existing religious ideologies and devotion (Ahmed). On the other hand, Falaksher reports that students understand Christianity because it has some similarities with Islam and there is no need to deliver a "prior lecture about Christianity in class...at all" (Falaksher) in order to teach *Paradise Lost*. He further notes that because of these religious similarities between Islam and Christianity, he has not noticed any "negative reaction" from students as he has taught Milton with "different aspects" every time with "freedom of expression" among the students.

During the course of interviews it was noticed that academics possess different opinions about whether or not *Paradise Lost* is a religious text. In the beginning of interview Falaksher suggests that he would like it to be "clear" that he does not consider *Paradise Lost* "a religious Book/text" and that there are only a few "elements

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[171] Also see the section above on Milton and the Muslim reader in Part A

of religion," but Ahmed emphasises that *Paradise Lost* is a "religious text ... [because] it mentions "the story from the *Bible* [about] Adam and Eve ... [and refers to the Christian] faith." In this respect Chaudary notes that in *Paradise Lost* "there are many ideas which do not lie inside of the ideas [of Islam]." Jujja, as mentioned in the initial discussion, does not consider English Literature as uniformly Christian but he suggests that in *Paradise Lost* he does discuss the "crucifixion of Jesus Christ", which contrasts with Islamic beliefs, and he explains to students that "it is their perception and ... [Muslims] have a different perspective on it". It is evident that UK and Pakistani academics realise the importance of religion for Muslim students, as well as the complexity of teaching the religious context of the poem. The opinion of approaching *Paradise Lost* with or without a prior discussion on Christianity, however, seems divided among Pakistani academics.

The female academics from the UK, Hodgkins and Wynne-Davies, agree that in sixteenth and seventeenth century poetry many of the poems have a religious context "sometimes particularly if it is a poetry of religious metaphor but [most of the religious teaching] is based on Donne, Herbert and Milton" (Wynne-Davies), and in *Paradise Lost* one "obviously need[s] to teach religion to some extent, but you don't need to teach ... the theology in quite same way" (Hodgkins). Wynne-Davies reports that she does not expect students to have extensive Biblical knowledge but she would like them to know "the Greek and Roman myths" and to "make an effort to read the annotation so they are picking up the Christian allusions" in order to develop an understanding of the text. She notes that there are many other cultural differences in *Paradise Lost*; for example, Muslim students have marriages "arranged by their parents" whereas *Paradise Lost* offers the notion of romance that is purely European, "although Adam is there and Eve is given to him by God their relationship is much more equal in that he

falls in love with her and she falls in love with him, and that is pure European romance". On the other hand, she emphasises the religious stance of the poem and notes that when teaching *Paradise Lost* "you explain the ways of God to man and that's completely meaningless to Buddhist students, it does make you understand how very Christian the texts you teach are" (Wynne-Davies). However, Campbell suggests that it "requires a kind of delicacy ... and a tested knowledge" to teach Christian literature. He suggests that he only had problems while teaching *Paradise Lost* in lectures when he referred to Milton's God saying "this is seventeenth century God [and] it's very different from the God that you believe in or don't believe in or don't care about, and Milton's God as one of his contemporaries said is six feet high, he is an elderly giant, its like me. It's not the God that anyone in a twenty first century believes in". He reports that as a result he had "Christian students who regarded that as blasphemous" and that they were offended. He notes that the authority in the lecture is "far more in the Islamic world [in terms of] the notion of respect for the teacher [and] that is a real danger zone there". It is noticeable the way Christian students reacted and considered a comment as blasphemous, and this could be used to evaluate how Muslim/multi-faith students would feel when something religiously challenging is taught. On the other hand, Campbell's observation of authoritative teaching in the Islamic world must also be taken into account while analysing the reception of *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan.

In the above discussion, the experience of academics teaching *Paradise Lost* is taken into consideration. The respondents from Pakistan and the UK mostly agree that the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* and the religious elements of the poem may pose difficulty when interpreting the text. However, Campbell and Wynne-Davies noted that Muslim students are better informed of their religion than other students and take religion as their "identity" (Campbell). Likewise, Ahmed reported that students'

Islamic awareness is a part of their religious commitment and background. Apart from the religious differences noted, Wynne-Davies mentions that *Paradise Lost* can generate cultural differences for Muslim/multi-faith students due to its tradition of European romance. Surprisingly, Falaksher from Islamia University does not notice any resistance from the students as students are familiar with beliefs similar to those of Christianity. It is argued that although Falaksher's statement on resistance contradicts other interviewees, he never discusses Christianity directly with his students nor does he perceive *Paradise Lost* as a Christian text, so perhaps his students' lack of resistance depends on the authority of the teacher, which is far greater in a "Muslim world than the UK" (Campbell). Thus the most important finding comes from Campbell, who noted that the teaching of *Paradise Lost* requires "tested knowledge and delicacy" particularly in lectures because of the authority of a teacher could possibly offend students. Similarly, it is important to see if Muslim students perceive the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* as problematic, as the Biblical narrative of the fall contradicts the Quranic narrative in many different ways[172]. The following section examines the critical perspective of teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim students while identifying the religious elements that might pose complexity in the reception of the text.

6.5 Critical Perspective of Teaching *Paradise Lost*

Part A, Chapter 3 outlined certain critical perspectives of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith scenario such as feminism, the concept of the fortunate fall, Quranic feminism and post-colonialism. The critical perspective from which academics teach *Paradise Lost* depends on many factors, including their research interests, their personal religious commitment, and the audience as well as the historical background of the text. Wynne-Davies reports that when teaching *Paradise Lost* she uses a

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[172] See Chap 3 for detailed account of the fall in the Biblical and Quranic narrative

"historical perspective" while looking at the political conditions of the period and focuses on "the division between Protestantism and Catholicism and the impact of that on the early seventeenth century ... [while] look[ing] at Milton's republicanism with the role of ... Satan in *Paradise Lost*" (Wynne-Davies). She notes that "being a historicist feminist" she also engages with the feminist perspective and examines "the way female identity is constructed", as she finds it critical for studying *Paradise Lost*. Hodgkins, in contrast to Wynne-Davies, reports that in order to teach *Paradise Lost* she would teach religious perspective but that does not "need to teach them (students) theology". She suggests that there is no "need to have a sense of ... the difference between Protestant and Catholic" to develop an understanding of the text; she rather focuses on questions like "justification and free will ... particularly in seventeenth century Protestantism and Christianity" while linking it with the "theological framework in the era Milton is working in". She reports that in class she explores questions like "whose fault is it, and why the fall happens, [and] whether it could have been foreknown". She notes that she has not "thought about the resource of alternative versions" of the fall, for example the Quranic perspective; although she shows an understanding of the fact that the "*Quran* will tell the story of the fall in other ways", she has not "actually drawn on that", though she would find it useful. She suggests that the Biblical narrative of the fall "is tiny, extremely little" and that there is a substantial amount of "writing up that happens in the dozen volumes of *Paradise Lost*", which makes her reluctant to relate the story "back to the Bible". She reports that the story of the fall is not new to most students but they only have a "vague notion of the fall and original sin in terms of Adam and Eve", which is not sufficient knowledge. It is noted that female academics Wynne-Davies and Hodgkins teach *Paradise Lost* in entirely different ways. Wynne-Davies prefers a feminist perspective while relating the socio-

political background of the poem, whereas Hodgkins teaches the poem from the perspective of justification and free will.

Ahmed employs both feminist and Islamic perspectives when teaching *Paradise Lost* because of the Christian context of the poem, as it often gets "difficult" when the discussion is on sin, relating to Eve and subsequently to women. He suggests that his female students often ask: "why [does] ... Christian literature portray women as a sinner?" He notes that it is difficult because of the Quranic narrative of the fall as "in Islam this is not the case, Eve/women are not considered to be sinners". He finds it critical to deal with the Christian concept of sin which "we need to look at in *Paradise Lost*" (Ahmed). He reports that he often refers to feminism while teaching *Paradise Lost* and one should "highlight at least this aspect that when God created man and woman they were not sinners" by birth. On the other hand, Falaksher suggests that he uses reader response theory while teaching *Paradise Lost*, but he does not find teaching a Christian text that difficult. This is because Pakistani society is aware of Christian concepts and values, as in Pakistan "we have Christians around, so in class we can [easily] discuss Hadrat Jesus Christ Alih-e-Salam[173] and we know a lot of things about him because we believe as Muslims that he is a Prophet of Allah and we give respect to him in the same context." It is argued that Falaksher tends to relate two dissimilar religious concepts by saying "Hadrat Jesus Christ Alih-e-Salam"; these words are a combination of a Christian and an Islamic portrayal of Jesus. Hadrat Issa Allih-e-Salam is borrowed from Islam and Jesus Christ from Christianity. In Islam, Hadrat Issa[174] (Jesus) is one of the Prophets of Allah, whereas in Christianity he is considered God's son and the redeemer of human sins. Therefore, it is not possible for Muslim students to "respect" Jesus in the "same context" and that distinction, if taken for granted, might

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[173] Arabic term meaning may peace be on him
[174] See the religious distinction between Jesus and Hadrat Issa discussed in Chap 4

not be well received by Muslim students and would not support reader response theory. Jujja notes that while teaching *Paradise Lost* he uses feminist theory, but he strictly "avoid[s] going into the religious perspective of feminism". He suggests that he "would never ever do this" and if he is asked about that in class he tells his students not to involve him in religious debate as he is "not the authority on that" and, therefore, he uses "a moderate approach otherwise you drag yourself into trouble" (Jujja). He further reports that "while teaching the crucifixion of Jesus Christ" he explains to Muslim students that "it is their [Christian's] perception and we have a different perspective on it so that's it". It is suggested that religion is one of the problematic subjects for the academics in Pakistan, like Jujja, and according to him to stay free from trouble such discussions should be avoided in class.

In terms of critical perspective, Campbell suggests that he does not "do isms of any kind like Marxism, Freudianism or feminism"; he is more interested in the "questions" that feminism asks rather than "the answers that it provides", but he teaches *Paradise Lost* as romantic tragedy. It is noted that Campbell teaches the story of the fall without any theoretical perspective, but his opinion of perceiving *Paradise Lost* as a romantic tragedy may well be seen as a tragedy of Eve, instead of Adam and Eve together as a couple, and that might represent a certain sympathy towards feminism.

Jujja teaches *Paradise Lost* from the Islamic perspective, as he notes that there are two ways of teaching the poem: "one is that whosoever will indulge, as they call, in the original sin of pride is punished [and] the second is [that] the character of Satan is presented as a ... hero [and] that is very figurative language so it means that probably that stance, that perspective [of being proud] is there as part of the human package". He reports that the sin of pride is shown in "all those lines spoken by Satan" and if we

focus on "the context in which it was written, the message is very clear that man needs to submit himself to the ultimate will of God and should never ever commit the sin of pride". When Jujja refers to the term "original sin" he relates it to Satan's pride, and adds "as they call it"; this refers back to the fact, discussed in Part A of the thesis, that there is no concept of original sin in Islam related to the fall of Adam and Eve. Likewise, Chaudary notes that "the biggest sin" is to "disobey the commandments of God" and suggests that Satan out of pride "defies to the authority of God, he does not prostrate to the commandments of God [and] this is the biggest sin". It is argued that Jujja and Chaudary, like other Pakistani academics, understand pride as the original sin, a sin that is always and only associated with Satan. Therefore, Pakistani academics use an Islamic understanding of Satan's pride[175] and do not link it to Eve and Narcissus.

It is noted that all the interviewees from Pakistan and the UK teach *Paradise Lost* from different perspectives. Wynne-Davies uses a historical perspective while focusing on the political movements of the period; she also looks at the construction of gender identity and the role of Eve in the text. Hodgkins explores the religious perspective while examining questions like "justification and free will" and the religious movements in Milton's period. Campbell does not use critical theory but he teaches the poem as a romantic tragedy. Pakistani academic Ahmed uses Quranic feminism to discuss the text along with secular feminism, whereas Jujja and Chaudary use religious perspectives to teach the text and perceive "original sin as Satan's pride". It is argued that Pakistani academics use Quranic feminism by relating the narrative of fall with the *Quran* and supporting Eve/women, but do not acknowledge the "term",

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[175] According to the *Quran*, when God created Adam He ordered all the angels to prostrate before Adam but Satan, who was the most devout angel, refused to do that because of his pride. Satan said that the stance of Adam is soil whereas he is created from fire, therefore his stance makes him superior to Adam and this pride made him fall from his status of an angel living in heaven to the devil thrown into hell

perhaps because of the political reasons[176]. It is useful to note that there is no uniformity in teaching perspectives in Pakistan and the UK. The two female British academics teach the text in totally different ways: one as religious, the other as historical. Wynne-Davies' and Hodgkins' perspectives are perhaps based on their research interests. Wynne-Davies, being a historicist feminist, focuses on political and gender issues, whereas Hodgkins' research expertise is in autobiography and religion. Similarly, Ahmed focuses on the feminist perspective due to his interest in gender studies. The most crucial finding comes from Jujja and Chaudary who focus on a Quranic perspective of the fall in *Paradise Lost* and perceive the original sin as Satan's pride instead of Eve's.

After considering the teaching perspectives of academics, the following section explores which Books and characters from *Paradise Lost* are focused on in Pakistani universities, in comparison to the universities in the UK, and their reasons for choosing some Books and/or characters while dropping the others. As such, the next aspect also examines the observations of academics regarding student's religious interest in some particular characters and incidents from *Paradise Lost*.

6.5.1 Focused Books

Paradise Lost is divided into twelve Books, each Book focusing on various themes[177], and since the time of the lecture/seminar[178] is comparatively short, it is necessary for academics to discuss some Books, with particular themes, more than others. Hodgkins notes that: "the trouble is … [that] this course is trying to get through a lot in a little space of time" and she focuses more on "Books IV and V, I know this is Adam and Eve in the garden" and then she moves on to the climax "of the story of the fall [in

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[176] See Quranic feminism in Chap 3
[177] See Chap 2 for the major themes related to Eve's character development and socio-political impact
[178] Pakistani universities don't offer teaching seminars other than the lecture

Book] IX and X". For other British academics, like Wynne-Davies, it varies between lectures and seminars. In her lectures, she focuses on the "entirety of *Paradise Lost* [and] wants the students to know the overall Book [of] *Paradise Lost*", whereas, in seminars she discusses individual Books "and might well do the character of Satan and [the] character of Eve". Campbell notes that "students read less now than they once did [so we now focus on] Books I, II, IV, [and] IX". It is interesting to note that all the academics from the UK focus on those key Books that deal with Eve's sensual physical appearance and her fall after being seduced by Satan.

On the other hand, for Pakistani academics the situation is the opposite: Chaudary from Islamia University suggests "in our syllabus of *Paradise Lost* we have the first two Books", and Falaksher from the same institution confirms that "sometime we give reference to Book VII and VIII but we focus most importantly on Book I". On responding to one of the questions about the possible religious controversy between *Paradise Lost* and Islam, together with the possibility of students' resistance towards certain issues like Eve's sexuality, Chaudary says: "I think the selection of this portion of poetry is wise enough that they have not included these Books which can raise some kind of religious controversy so they have included only the first 2 Books". It is probable that in Pakistani Higher Education Institutions a module on *Paradise Lost* (or any other text) was designed according to the socio-religious background of Pakistan. Jujja suggests that "we have already excluded many texts from our syllabus of post-colonial novels because of the odd references to this and that [sexuality]." It is noticeable that he does not use the word "sexuality". When asked a similar question about the cautious selection of module content in terms of Books of *Paradise Lost*, Ahmed disagrees with Chaudary and argues that "when MA in English [in Pakistan] was introduced, there were other Books [of *Paradise Lost*] in the course as well; these

Books do have a number of references about sexuality but maybe [the reason behind the selection of only first two Books] is the length of the poem". He further explains that "the people who chose this text and designed the course [after partition from India] were taught [directly] by the English people and were more open [minded] than we are now". Thus the reason for choosing only the first two Books while designing the course remains uncertain, unless both length and religious controversy are referred to. The first two Books of *Paradise Lost* included in the syllabus of Pakistani institutions do not refer to the character of Eve or the incident of the fall at all; they only deal with Satan's speeches against God[179]. This demonstrates a major difference when compared to the UK academic system and the place of *Paradise Lost* within the curriculum.

In UK institutions, there is no hard and fast rule in terms of which Books (of *Paradise Lost*) or texts are to be taught while planning a module and it is entirely down to the course coordinator to include or exclude certain texts. Interestingly, certain texts prescribed during the British Raj[180] in India are still taught in post-colonial Pakistan, and *Paradise Lost* is a good example. Ahmed suggests that the texts are selected by people who were taught by "English people". This is affirmed by Priya Joshi, a post-colonial critic, who argues that in "the immediate sphere of colonial state apparatus ... emphasis on literature in the educational curriculum was primarily conveyed by English poetry, with essays and drama following" (Joshi 2002:17). The introduction of English Literature in India during the British Raj was an "important method for instilling British social ideals in Indian society, as literary study was an effective way of introducing imperial rhetoric in mainstream society[181]... [while] leading to the

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[179] Controversial speeches of Satan against God prove to be problematic for Muslim students as suggested by Pakistani academics. The exploration of Satan's speeches is further discussed in this chapter
[180] British Rule is commonly known as the British Raj in India and Pakistan
[181] See Chap 2, Viswanthan argues that the colonial Indians "to be educated are represented as morally and intellectually deficient and the attribution of moral and intellectual values to the literary works they are assigned to read" (Viswanathan 1990: 4).

insinuation of Christian ideology into British education" (Menon 2009). Menon

suggests that "John Milton's *Paradise Lost* became an especially popular text in the

colonial curriculum[182], as it presented a method for teaching tenets of Christianity

through the English literary canon" (Menon 2009). Menon examines the continuation

of teaching/reading *Paradise Lost* in the academic curriculum of Colonial Bengal – the

text existed and was further re-written because of its influence and similarities with

"Indian epic-tradition" about their Bhagwans[183]. Chapter 2 notes that teaching *Paradise*

Lost as an epic can be one of the perspectives, but unlike India the epic tradition is not

related to religion in Pakistan; instead it can oppose religion. In *Paradise Lost* the

heroic character of Satan challenges God's authority and also seduces Eve, and can

only be perceived as a villain due to such characteristics leading to the difficulty of

teaching *Paradise Lost* as an epic.

The colonial Indian practice of teaching *Paradise Lost* was passed on to

Pakistan and was followed in Bengal after the further partition of Pakistan. *Paradise*

Lost was used as a tool to transmit and promote Christian beliefs through British

education in colonial India by the British Raj, and in Pakistan and Bengal subsequently.

Therefore, the reason of when and how the decision to teach only the first two Books of

Paradise Lost (to avoid the anti-Islamic narrative of creation) in Pakistani institutions

was made remains uncertain, but is uniform in Pakistani curricula[184].

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[182] See Chap 2. Thomas Macaulay, a well-known proponent of the institution of English literature into the colonial curriculum of India, wrote, "[I] have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is, indeed, fully admitted by those members of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of education (Macaulay cited in Joseph Black 2006: 468)

[183] Bhagwan is Hindu's God. Hindus worship multiple Gods and Deities; each for different purpose, for instance for rain, food and money they have individual Gods.

[184] All the three different universities that were part of the data collection followed strictly the same pattern

6.5.2 Focused Characters

As examined earlier, Pakistani universities teach only first two Books of *Paradise Lost* in their undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and they mainly discuss the character of Satan. In contrast, UK universities tend to focus on the first two Books of the poem, along with Books IV, V, IX and X, and the main characters in these Books are Adam, Eve, Satan and God as well as fictional and mythical female figures like Sin and Proserpina. This section examines which characters are mainly discussed in UK and Pakistani universities, and from what perspective those characters are presented in relation to the narrative of the fall.

6.5.3 The Character and Perception of Satan

Satan is one of the highly influential characters in *Paradise Lost,* receiving considerable attention from critics from many different angles: religious to political, and historical to autobiographical. In addition, since it is likely that Muslim students regard the character's revenge against God as blasphemy, Pakistani academics might find difficulty in teaching Satan. Chaudary notes that he often discusses the character of Satan in class as he is "the most powerfully drawn character", but this discussion arises from "some religious feelings" amongst the students. He notes that he makes it clear to the students that Satan "is very proud and his pride is the direct cause of his damnation ... [and] fall from heaven into hell". He reports that in the first two Books there are "certain fiery speeches of Satan" which "are [clearly] objectionable" to the students. He explains to his students that they do not have "to believe them" as they are "designed to challenge the authority of God" and are "blasphemous". He notes that there are not any noticeable reactions from students about Satan's speeches but when there is any reaction, he explains to them that Satan is a "rebellion and he was fired by God". He notes that he only teaches such poetry from an "aesthetic and literary point of

view" and does not teach the "conflict[ing]" concepts of Christianity". He agrees that Satan's speeches "come in conflict with our religious beliefs, and we as Muslims are bound to condemn Satan whenever he speaks against God" and this is "categorically [made] clear to the students." He suggests that he tells his students that they should not analyse *Paradise Lost* "from a religious point of view", and should instead focus on "its literary merits". Falaksher, as suggested earlier in this chapter, does not consider *Paradise Lost* as a religious text; when asked whether he had seen any resistance towards Satan's character he, like other Pakistani academics, responds that pride was the main cause of "Satan's fall" and that he explains to the students that "this is Biblical story, and epic as well, [and] we don't have real facts here as we have in our religion". He notes that in Islamia University the academics tend to deal with students' religious concepts "before starting *Paradise Lost*" and that they discuss religious differences independently. He suggests that "we give them this notion that we do not have here a real story [of the fall in the poem] but we have some similarities, some familiar things" and the poem arises from "Milton's mind" and that Milton uses his "own story-writing … tactics", arguing that is the reason he "did not see any kind of reaction from students". Chaudary also supports this perspective and comments that "we are Muslim", and because the ideas in *Paradise Lost* "are presented by a Christian poet," there exists a "sharp contrast between our religious beliefs and that poet's beliefs" which we must mention to avoid any conflicts. Chaudary's and Falaksher's constant use of "we believe" and "our religious belief" suggests their personal commitment towards Islam and that they also consider these speeches as blasphemous.

Jujja, on the other hand, presents a broader concept of morality and the sin of pride while talking about the character of Satan. He suggests that "everyone knows it is

Satan speaking" and that the events occur as a result of his pride[185], and that is "condemned in every society [and] every religion ... from very early days". Students understand this character as an "issue of broader morality" so he does not treat this text as Christian but considers it "moral". He notes that "apart from religion ... there are not many clashes" between our societies. Jujja's perspective on Satan's pride shifts from an Islamic perspective to the broader moral perspective of pride; just as in Christianity, pride is one of the seven deadly sins. On the other hand, Chaudary reports that although "there is some moral embodied" in the poem, in the class "we do not seek any moral guidance" from the poem; instead he "focus[es] more on aesthetic pleasure." Ahmed supports the point of view of Jujja and Chaudary in omitting the religious context of the poem and suggests that "it becomes" easier for teachers when they talk about *Paradise Lost* in "reference to epic" and in this way the "religious text" might lead to a "literary discussion". He notes it gets even easier if it is taken into consideration that the characters of the poem are not human: "only Adam[186] is human and God and Satan are not human". He suggests that "Milton seems to eulogise Satan's characters in the first Book", presenting him as "God's equal rival." However, using only the first two Books of *Paradise Lost* in the syllabus is considered as "trouble" by Ahmed, because Satan's "grand character...degenerates as we move on to the next Books" and usually "there's a problem again" as students argue: "why does Milton portray Satan as great ... [as a hero]?" At that point it is easier to "convince" them by explaining the "epic traditions on the one hand, and on the other [if] the villain is so great and is defeated, [imagine] how great the God would be?" He further suggests that it tempers students' emotions

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[185] Jujja refers to the text of Christopher Marlow's *Dr. Faustus,* saying that "it was again the sin of pride and being ambitious" that led Faustus to damnation like Satan
[186] Ahmed surprisingly did not mention Eve here but in further conversation about the fall, he promotes the idea of a joint fall of Adam and Eve in the poem

when he informs them that "the status of God is actually highlighted[187] because of the Satan's highlighted character", since Satan is eventually defeated by God.

For UK academics, Satan does not prove as difficult to teach. Wynne-Davies notes that when she discusses *Paradise Lost* in seminars she focuses more on individual Books and she "might well do the character of Satan and the character of Eve". She "links [Satan] very much to republicanism" and finds Satan "a much more interesting character ... [as] Satan does have all the best lines." Hodgkins reports that sometimes she does not "particularly look at the character of Satan because of the time, but students tend to do that". She notes that over the years students seem to be "more interested in Satan than Adam and Eve" and while discussing Satan she looks on "the material of free will and choice" and explores "whether or not it's right to rebel and to disobey[188]," although it is possible to do it "equally well through Satan" or Adam and Eve. Hodgkins suggests that in the beginning of the lecture, she tends to make a "kind of generic remark ... [that] obviously some of the material we are looking at is religious; I am not making any assumptions about whether you believe or not believe, and you are not required to believe any of the material in order to study it." She notes it is hard to say anything "beyond that level". She reports that she never really noticed any resistance from Muslim students: "they would never explicitly talk about resistance or discomfort necessarily" as they are aware of the concept that "Early Modern England has particular and often prejudiced views of the Eastern world, and so they are quite alert to that", and also they "will have done a bit of stuff on Orientalism" so "will pick up [such prejudiced] references". At the same time, she notes that *Paradise Lost* in a way is "more difficult because it seems so enclosed within Christianity", and in her

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[187] Ironically if the biographical element of the poem is considered, Milton presents Satan as a much powerful Deity as he is in "the Satan's party", for further discussion, see Chap 2 for poem's context
[188] See the discussion on obedience with regards to the fall in *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran* in Chap 3

view the students might not offer any resistance because "they are not being asked to make a comparison". This evidences a very sharp contrast between the UK and Pakistani academics. Hodgkins explains the reason that Muslim students are not resistant is that they are not asked to compare two religions, whereas Pakistani academics make comparisons precisely in order to create an acceptance of the text among the students. In contrast, Hodgkins refers to Donne's *To His Mistress Going to Bed* where she had Muslim students "getting explicitly indignant". She notes that in that text the lines: "In such white robes, heaven's angels used to be/Received by men; thou, angel, bring' st with thee/A heaven like Mahomet's paradise" (Donne 1986:19-21). She points out that the "idea of Paradise for men as being full of virgins available to them" caused Muslim students to react and they were offended, saying that "this is not true and this is not what Muslims believe in the first place, and secondly he does not even get the name right; look, he says Mahomet." In such a situation she introduces the idea that "we need a historical perspective, and this is a common transliteration of the name in this period, this is not being insulting; but perfectly fair point in other ways". She notes that's "one of the points" where Muslim students "were more likely to be willing to explicitly speak as Muslim, because Islam is [directly] being addressed." It is significant to note that Hodgkins refers to the historical perspective of the text in order to resolve any religious complications that seemed problematic for Muslim students when Muhammad was addressed, and it could be seen as an element of students' religious intolerance.

Hodgkins reports that she did not notice any resistance from the students while teaching *Paradise Lost* because they understand the "prejudice" of Early Modern England against the Eastern World and because they are not asked to make comparison with their own religion. Contrastingly, Pakistani academics revealed their own

religious commitment, noting that the speeches of Satan are "objectionable" and "blasphemous" (Chaudary), therefore they have to use different tactics to try and negate the Christian/Miltonic concept (of the fall and Satan's speeches) and make it a more general justification to God's status. The lines spoken by Satan in revenge for God are the "best lines" from poetic and literary point of view as recognised by UK academics (Wynne-Davies), however they are considered the most problematic and blasphemous for Pakistani academics. The most intriguing finding emerges from the way teachers in Pakistan and the UK might tend to assume lack of students' resistance with or without comparing students' religious beliefs with the Christian ideas.

6.5.4 The Character and Perception of Eve

From both the Christian and the Islamic perspective, Adam and Eve have historical and religious importance for students of Muslim/multi-faith backgrounds. As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, the fall is perceived differently in Islam and Christianity, in particular how it impacts upon the status of Eve and women in socio-religious and literary scenarios. Moreover, the representation of Eve in the classroom has considerable impact upon the reception of *Paradise Lost* among Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK. It is important, therefore, to examine how the academics in Pakistan perceive Eve's character and present her to the students, in contrast to UK academics.

Jujja finds it interesting that in *Paradise Lost* the entire fault was considered as woman's, and has to explain to the class that in early English literature this was "the attitude towards women and these were the constructs [in English literature] and we are coming out of it now". He reports that he "first present(s) the things" and then gives his "opinion in a moderate way without challenging any dogmas." With regards to *Paradise Lost* he also discusses the "status [and] the stature of woman in reference to

man" and relates it to the current social scenario of the Christian world: "of course because in that society they [women] were accepted at the lesser / lower position", but gradually the "society moved forward because of these feminist writers and movements [and] this is where they are at the moment." Jujja notes that his both male and female students "have [a] very refreshing outlook and they [do not] seem ... to share these biases against women." It is noticed that Jujja always remains very cautious about any kind of religious discussion not only in the class but also in the interview, perhaps because of the "religious intolerance" that he referred to earlier. Like Jujja, Hodgkins suggests that she also discusses "the ways in which the representation of Adam and Eve tie into debates about marriage and work and the idea of Paradise" and the individual roles of men and women.

In contrast to Jujja's and Hodgkins' social focus on Eve's character, Falaksher uses a religious perspective and reports that "we have got the same respect and honour for Eve in *Paradise Lost* as we do have in Islam." Eve is treated as the "mother of mankind and we take her character in same perspective." He argues that the fall is "always [taken] as a human error [and] we don't take it in a serious manner[189]" and "always take Eve (A.S)[190] as a Prophet" instead of "a sinner" as the fall was just a human error and that [could be] possible with any human being." Perhaps, this is where Falaksher more explicitly uses reader response theory and thinks about Muslim students' background, or his personal religious commitment, and avoids the Christian context of the poem, but again he never admits to the problematic Christian context of teaching *Paradise Lost*. As compared to Falaksher, Ahmed is more focused and open on the socio-religious resistance of Pakistani society, even referring to Eve as a sinner in the poem. He notes that any teacher in Pakistan can be accountable for the

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[189] See The Quranic narrative of creation in Chap 3
[190] Abbreviation of Allih-e-Salam meaning may there be peace on them

"propagation" of Christian beliefs and can be "blamed of blasphemy" since the Pakistani Society is "fundamentalist" with regard to religion. He notes that the teacher has to point out that "it is the Holy text and Holy character" and one cannot ignore this fact while teaching *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan. He notes that "the best way" he has found to teach *Paradise Lost* in terms of presenting Eve is to "introduce her as a mother of mankind instead of saying the wife of Adam" or a sinner. In this way, Eve attains "a bigger and vaster [greater] status for the people of Pakistan [Muslims] specially" and subsequently, this negates her previous sin in relation to the poem and "that is forgiven." Ahmed suggests that "the product is more important than the cause of that product[191]." He relates this idea to Milton's Eve, asking what would happen if Eve had never eaten the fruit: "how would the mankind come into existence?" He agrees that "it is a very tricky question when she is [seen as] a sinner in the text, [and it is problematic] ... to justify that sinner" as a mother. Ahmed suggests that if we analyse the poem in a "cause and effect" relation, then we see that "Satan tempted Eve and it ... [is this] world that is created, then why to run behind sin?" It is noted that in this way Ahmed brings about the similar notion of the fortunate fall[192] and the happy ending, as presented by Lovejoy (1937) discussed in Chapter 2. He relates it to the Christian philosophy of St. Augustine and argues that even in Christianity the concept of forgiveness exists, though it is different from that in Islam; he refers to the first few lines of the poem where it is stated that "Christ[193] gave sacrifice and sin ... [was] forgiven and man's seed ... restored", therefore there is no need to discuss that sin anymore. He explains to students that Eve in the poem was "not a sinner, she was

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[191] Ahmed refers the text of *A Scarlet Letter* where Hester commits a sin of adultery and the product of that "is a beautiful female figure and Hester ... claim[s] that she must be accepted" and when followed by the priest's confession that he is the father of that girl, the parenthood diminishes their sin of adultery
[192] Wynne-Davies also talks about the idea of fortunate fall but in a different way in the following discussion
[193] See Chap 3, the Section on Eve as Mary for the discussion on the Muslim's reception of resurrection, also see the findings of questionnaire for account on Jesus

rather a woman, a mother and is responsible for the fruit of this world." He further reports that he has to explain the "distinct[ion] between Eve in Islam, [the] *Bible* and *Paradise Lost*" because the story is associated to the *Quran*, and he cannot suggest "that a religious text is wrong [because] that has to be accepted", therefore he relates it to "possibly another interpretation" in the *Bible*. He notes that if one does not teach *Paradise Lost* this carefully it "can turn the tables to those people who already doubt and suspect what the teacher ... say[s] about their Eve, their God [and] their Prophet. You have to repeat again and again that this is written in [the] *Quran* and then again you explain the literary or other religious aspect of it."

It is argued that Ahmed understands the religious commitments of the Muslim students well, and at the same time he is extremely cautious about the accountability of undermining anyone's religious beliefs by considering Eve as a sinner. He believes in the Quranic narrative of the creation, but might "want to play safe" as referred by Jujja, due to the political scenario. While there might be personal reasons for this difference, it is not possible to explore this conclusion within the parameters of the research. It is therefore suggested that the responses of Pakistani academics towards Christian texts/beliefs might well be policed and controlled (perhaps by the government or extreme religious groups) and that they are acutely aware of the consequences if Islamic Shariah is not followed. For instance the key themes of the fall in *Paradise Lost* are so controversial that if they teach further than the two Books and discuss Eve's nudity and sensuality in Book IV, her sin in Book IX, or examine the theme of redemption in Books XI and XII openly they can seriously be in trouble and be accused of blasphemy. It can lead to strikes on university level, the loss of a teacher's job, and in extreme situation one could receive a court sentence on allegation of blasphemy, or extreme religious groups might take action.

The presentation of Eve varies immensely in the British institutions as compared to the Pakistani ones. Wynne-Davies suggests that she tends to focus on the construction of Eve's character in *Paradise Lost* and "show[s] through the use of mythology that Eve is already fallen and Milton is setting her up as flawed." She notes that "we have two characters in the Book who are deeply human and that's great [that] they are flawed [and] they are mortal ... [and] are human." It is critical to understand that flaws are not related to Prophets in Islam because they are considered innocent, and Pakistani academics are particularly reluctant to use the word "sinner" for Eve. Wynne-Davies presents the concept of Fish (1998) to show "that Milton is trying to bring people into the text to recognise that flaws and lack of perfection might not be a bad thing and this is a notion of a fortunate fall." Wynne-Davies suggests "it's the reader who brings sin into *Paradise Lost* [and] into Eden," since Eden is the beginning of the world and there is nothing before that "according to the Christian ideology". When Eve looks into the water and "falls in love with herself that's ... based on the myth of Narcissus" – but Eve does not know that myth, so it represents reader's conscious attempt to bring in "the Greek myth of Narcissus" into a Christian story. Wynne-Davies suggests that "we are then fallen [and] we are postlapsarian", and by relating Eve to Narcissus she falls partly through pride. This brings Eve closer to the reader and a "link ... [is] develop[ed]" which is never made with Adam; he "is too distant." The reader can relate to Eve's fallen nature and imagine that "she is actually like us." It is interesting that Wynne-Davies presents the idea of the fortunate fall, as does Ahmed but in a contrasting way. Wynne-Davies argues that it makes Eve human and mortal to be flawed and that the idea of sin is brought into the story by the reader, due to the myth of Narcissus, bringing Eve closer to the reader because readers are postlapsarian. It is argued that firstly the myth is embedded in the story by Milton, not

by the reader, and that secondly not all of the students in the class are Christian and so may not believe in postlapsarianism. This is particularly true of Muslim students, and this form of approach would consequently create a distance between Eve and the Muslim students. On the other hand, Ahmed brings in the idea of the fortunate fall while giving a cause and effect relation between Eve eating the fruit and the resulting existence of a beautiful world. He notes that Eve is not a sinner because the poem begins with the Christian concept of Jesus sacrificing himself to attain forgiveness for humans. It is noted that Ahmed, in order to affirm an Islamic concept of a sinless Eve in a Christian text, refers back to a Christian idea of fortunate fall that is contradictory to Islam – the idea of Jesus being associated with forgiveness is not accepted in Islam. It is noted that Muslim students might not accept the idea of Jesus as saviour[194] as this directly challenges God's authority, as referred in Chapter 4.

Ahmed notes that there are many other concepts like the creation of the world, hell, and good and evil that must be dealt with before "starting the discussion" on *Paradise Lost*. He suggests that teaching *Paradise Lost* becomes "more difficult" when commentary begins with the "Christian ... [concept] of Satan tempt[ing] Eve". Christian literature "introduces a type of openness and ... it is difficult" for female students who have a "religious madraassa[195] background" because they "would not be ready to accept it at all." He notes that the "teacher is required to do a lot before starting the text of *Paradise Lost*" in order to convey the meaning; therefore it is important to state "that our religion mentions the story of Adam and Eve ... and the world was created [when they were sent down to the earth], same is the case with [the] *Bible*." He notes that this is the easiest way to create "acceptance" for the text and at that point students are prepared to understand the poem. *Paradise Lost* "pose[es] such

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[194] Evidenced in the findings of questionnaire
[195] Having a background of conservative religious school and teachings

difficulties" that the teacher is "under burden ... to be very careful that he may not be declared [as a] ...non-believer and [the one who] favours the Christian text and does not favour Islamic text." This may be the reason that Chaudary does not discuss the character Eve at all; he suggests "In the first 2 Books the character of Eve does not exist ... so there do not arise any question of discussion of this character." He suggests:

> We believe in the tenets of the Holy *Quran* and the Sunnah of Prophet Mohammad PBUH. Now there are many ideas which do not lie inside of the ideas which we found about the fall of Satan and Adam which are discoverable from the Holy *Quran*. So the students have already authentic knowledge of the story of the fall. (Chaudary)

According to the statement above, Chaudary argues that the authentic knowledge of the fall is acquired from the *Quran* and Sunnah[196], and associates the fall with Satan instead of Eve. He admits to his own religious commitments and that he shares with students the tenets of the Holy *Quran* and the Sunnah of Prophet Mohammad PBUH. Similarly, Campbell, on teaching a Christian text like *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith students, suggests that, as a teacher, his "job is to help people to develop imaginative sympathies for literature that does not share their values ... [and] to understand them in a sympathetic way." He is interested in constructions of characters and finds "many odd things about Eve." He notes that according to the traditional reading of the fall, it is Eve's fault and that "the Biblical narrative is written as an endorsement of the awfulness of women, so women are the woe of men as the medieval pun had it," yet, in *Paradise Lost* Milton treats the fall as "jointly the fault of Adam and Eve." He notes that in Book 9, line 999 Adam gets weak and he is "fondly overcome with the female charm" thereby turning the poem into "a tragedy[197] of love." Milton appears "very egalitarian" to him; he notes that "the beginning of Book 9 is tragic," when Adam and

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[196] Sayings and life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
[197] For close reading of the text see Chap 2; specifically the concept of tragedy of the fall, where Eve is perceived as tragic hero

Eve's priority is to love each other instead of obeying God. He suggests that tragedy differs from comedy since in tragedy "obedience has higher value than love" and in this way "Milton turns it into a joint tragedy and they fall because of their love for each other." It is argued that *Paradise Lost* can well be read/taught as a love tragedy, but it can not be perceived as a tragedy of a couple, rather of a female protagonist struggling and suffering in a patriarchal hierarchy (as examined from close reading of the poem in Chapter 2). Ahmed, like Campbell, points out the concept of a joint fall because of Adam's weakness but he does not relate it to love tragedy and does not support the idea of Milton being egalitarian. Wynne-Davies, being a historicist feminist, discusses "the difference on the views of [Milton's depiction of] Eve" and refers to the ideas of different critics: for some "Milton is terrible ... [while] other critics think that Eve is in fact the most interesting character". Campbell argues that the "misogynist views" of the sixteenth and seventeenth century writers are "regard(ed) as unacceptable" but there is no reason to "get upset by Milton's misogyny because he lived in the seventeenth century, and they were all like that and he was a bit more tolerant than others." Although Campbell might believe in Milton's egalitarianism for his presentation of a joint fall, it is argued from the comments made by Pakistani teachers that the Muslim students[198] might regard Milton's construction of femininity in *Paradise Lost* as distancing them from the poem.

While discussing Eve's character and representation in *Paradise Lost* Ahmed suggests that in "all Christian English literature" women are designated as morally weak and that authors remain very critical about women; he refers to "Milton's writings, Pope's work ... even in Chaucer's work, female characters are ... ridiculed" and sees this as referring back to Eve. He notes that religion is utilised in every period

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[198] Also evidenced in the findings of questionnaire

of "English Literature from Medieval to Renaissance and up to Elizabethan age. Woman was responsible for every evil ... [and that is] rooted from the same Biblical theory [presented and promoted] by Milton". He notes that a few days ago he read an article by a Canadian author asking: "is it that God is a woman?" He suggests that this statement recalls the "process of creation" that is shared by God and women, but that God is portrayed with masculine attributes[199] "in all religious ... or mythological literature." He argues that early Christianity demands women "hide[200] themselves ... because they are creation of shame ... [and] sin according to them" and correspondingly presents men as godly. Ahmed argues that if Christianity promotes the idea of women possessing a weak[201] nature then it should not blame Eve for her weakness that resulted in the fall; moreover, Adam as a godly-male figure,[202] should be strong enough to resist temptation from a weaker sex. He suggests that it was a mutual weakness resulting the expulsion from Eden in *Paradise Lost* and the *Bible*; that is, Adam left Eden with Eve not because "he loves Eve but because he was [shown to be as] kind [as] ... God who forgives the sinner ... [therefore Adam] support[s] her in the time of disaster". He notes that the literary texts like *Paradise Lost* and other Christian writings are based on chauvinistic discourses to "control women ... and seek power for men;" therefore, "*Paradise Lost* should not be taught in reference to [the] Biblical studies" because of its Biblical interpretation of Eve/women as sinner. He argues that Christian texts, like "Hindu[203] texts", create a negative image of women and "misinterpret" the story of the fall: "the story can mislead the students to prove that

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[199] See Chap 2 for Milton's depiction of Adam as God and the Pauline doctrine regarding men and women
[200] It is argued that the *Quran* unlike the *Bible* demands both males and females to hide their private parts equally; for a detailed account see the section on Nudity and veiling in Chap 4
Also see St. Paul's statements in Chap 2 in the discussion of ideal parameters of chastity
[201] See Chap 2 for discussion on women as a weaker vessel in the section of physical and physiological weakness
[202] See the discussion on Adam presented as Jupiter in Chap 2
[203] Indian religious texts

woman is the sinner in this world." He further suggests that the teacher's responsibility is to relate that "the process of victimisation" of women "was carried on through religion ... [in order to] undermine the social status of women," an argument that allows "men and women in Pakistan ... [to] accept *Paradise Lost*." It is suggested that Adam possesses all the godly characteristics, whereas Eve has evil attributes; the unequal distribution of power and the fallen status of Eve might create a problem with the reception of *Paradise Lost* for Muslim students[204]. Ahmed notes that texts often manipulate and exploit religion and religious characters, and that this is not a strategy readily accepted by Muslim students in Pakistan [and the UK][205]. It is informative to note that Campbell and Ahmed share the concept of a joint fall but perceive it differently. Campbell argues that the joint fall demonstrates Milton's egalitarian depiction, whereas Ahmed notes that Milton's interpretation is misleading, pointing to the common weakness of Adam and Eve.

Hodgkins, unlike other British academics (Wynne-Davies and Campbell) finds it "tricky ... [to] present characters in terms of how you teach a text like this (*Paradise Lost*)." She notes that she focuses on the "relationship ... between Adam and Eve, and ... the different ways in which they are positioned in relation to God and each other"; she also discusses more "about marriage and ideas about a woman's place." She focuses more on text-based exercises where she asks "different groups to look at different passages of conversation" between Adam and Eve in order to evaluate: "whose fault is it?" Other groups could be asked to analyse the text of the "temptation scene [where] the serpent is talking to Eve," to analyse Eve's nature and ask if she was "always ready to fall ... [or] is she already guilty on some level, or is she actually being seduced by Satan who is ... clever[er] than she is?" She might also look at where "Eve

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[204] Evidenced in the questionnaire findings
[205] Evidenced in the questionnaire findings

is explaining to Adam that we should go off and garden separately", and there she asks her students to debate whether Eve "is already on some level afflicted by the sin of pride". She notes that the students, while analysing the text, "do get quite active about it" and they might say "look, Eve is already vain; or, it's not her fault because look what Satan is saying to her; or, she is right, why should she stick with her husband all the time." She further suggests that "the notion of character in this text is in certain ways problematic" but engaging the students in textual analysis while asking them to discuss the possibilities "allow[s] a kind of character-based way into it." Hodgkins' class activities like the "temptation scene" between Satan and Eve, referring to Eve's fault, or the "argument [about the] garden" between Adam and Eve, associated with Eve's pride, might create an agitation among Muslim students since Eve does not fall in the Islamic narrative and pride is usually linked to Satan's fall.

Pakistani academics use an Islamic perspective of the fall during teaching and present it as a historic moment or a human error, tending to avoid the Christian narrative. Moreover, they strictly perceive and present the character of Eve as the "mother of mankind" (Ahmed & Falaksher). Jujja and Ahmed note the political motivation behind English literature as an "exploitation" of religious beliefs in order to undermine women's status through the narrative of the fall. Similarly, they try to ensure that the students' religious beliefs are not challenged. Campbell notes Adam and Eve's fall as a love tragedy, whereas Wynne-Davies analyses Eve from a feminist perspective and regards Eve's fall as a "bridge" that brings her closer to the reader. Hodgkins presents Eve's character through close textual analysis in order to develop a debate among students. However, the most interesting finding comes from Ahmed when he notes how the teachers in Pakistan are 'policed' and not allowed to talk about

Christianity, which highlights how socio-political elements evolve culturally-specific teaching practices.

6.5.5 Other Female Characters

While Milton in *Paradise Lost* presents two key female figures in the main plot (Sin and Eve)[206], he also refers to a number of other female figures from Greek mythology, history and religion (e.g. Proserpina, Venus, Helen, Mary)[207] relating them to Eve's fall. It is, therefore, important to explore whether the academics discuss other female figures in *Paradise Lost* in order to evaluate the influence of the mythical figures on Eve's character. Ahmed suggests that if Eve is "taken as a sinner [then] we all are a product of sin and we all become sinners regardless of being Muslims or Christians". He suggests that such a view "is very bad ... and we need to temper this concept". He only "discusses the birth of Christ and Maryam's[208] character [in the poem] from the concept of Christianity, when she is heightened to the state of god." He suggests that the poem overtly "interpret[s] Christian concept but the intensity of this concept must be removed" because such concepts are contradictory to Muslim beliefs. It is noted in Chapter 4 that in Islam, like in Christianity, Mary is considered as a symbol of chastity and purity, but from interview findings it is evident that Mary is not taught in relation to Eve in Pakistani teaching of *Paradise Lost* as this reading might cast serious doubts on Eve' purity, which can be problematic not only for students but also for teachers.

Hodgkins reports that she does not talk about other female characters, she would rather refer to Sin in a few lines while she discusses the overall story. She notes that she does not think that "Sin is ... a character, in certain ways; she is [rather] a

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[206] See Chap 3 for a detailed account of comparison between Sin an Eve in the Section of Naming and Identity

[207] See Chap 4 for the discussion on comparison of Eve and other mythical and religious women

[208] Muslim name of Mary ; also see a comparison between Mary and Eve in reference to *Paradise Lost*, the *Bible* and the *Quran* is discussed in Chap 4

female persona." Likewise, she briefly discusses the lines where Proserpina "appears but again if ... [she was] teaching an entire module of *Paradise Lost* ... [she] might do it differently." Similarly, Wynne-Davies prefers to discuss Proserpina rather than Sin in class because she "find[s] Sin a very disturbing figure, even the visual idea of Sin is quite horrible [and] it is one of the darkest characters in *Paradise Lost*." She suggests that "students do not actually like dealing with Sin, they would much rather deal with Eve and Proserpina as they have a promise of resurrection and a promise that everything is going to be OK, but it is never going to be OK for Sin." She suggests that "Proserpina is in a way the kind of classical shadow [and] echo of Eve" as both are fallen because of eating forbidden fruit, and like Eve, Proserpina "sinned; but she is more about cyclical, to do with spring and summer ... the winter she spends underground and in the spring and summer she comes back and brings fertility to the world." Wynne-Davies relates this cycle to the Christian cycle in which "Eve is ideal and prelapsarian, Sin is lapsarian but then Jesus dying on the cross ... enable[s] human beings to be brought back into heaven so it's a cyclical thing as well as the Christian story." She further notes that "if you bring in the New Testament alongside the Old Testament ... you have to look at both the characters of Sin and Proserpina." It is argued that the text of *Paradise Lost* demands an in-depth knowledge of Christianity to be transferred to the students, and that might be disturbing for the Muslim students. Ahmed reports that "many religious concepts emerge from Greek mythology so we tend to talk about myths in the class" but he "cannot talk about all the characters and issues like rape." He further argues that the impact of mythic references for Eve's character means "we shall have to differentiate between the physical and metaphysical characters" and then understand that "the concept of rape is physical so we don't talk

about Eve's psychological temptation in terms of [Milton's mythical characters who are] rape[d]."

The other Pakistani academics do not discuss the further female characters because they do not appear in first two Books. Sin appears in Book II but she is not taught, perhaps due to the complex representation of Sin as incestuous and cursed and her extreme resemblance with Eve. It is noticeable that most of the academics do not consider Adam an interesting character and find Satan and Eve more ambiguous; however these last two are precisely the characters who might prove to be the most offensive for Muslim students. It is also important to notice the different perceptions of academics about the same characters due to varied reasons[209]. Furthermore, the academics from Pakistan do not discuss other female characters which might influence the representation of Eve, perhaps because of the careful selection of the text. The interesting finding evidenced above came from Ahmed confirms that the socio-political restraint in Pakistan does not allow teachers and students to "talk about the issues like rape".

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the Pakistani and UK academics' experience of preparing a Christian text and teaching it to multi-faith/Muslim groups. Further, it has examined their observations regarding students' responses, in particular the resistance to different religious elements of *Paradise Lost*. It is argued that the interviewees teach the text with various perspectives depending on their research background, theoretical approach, socio-cultural and political environment and in some cases personal religious beliefs. It is noted that mostly female Muslim students opt for English degrees and are usually shy. UK academics reported more resistance from Muslim students towards

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[209] The reasons proved to be personal religious commitment, socio-cultural constraints and/or personal research interests

Christian texts than did the Pakistani academics. Resistance is reported either in private or as a mode of silence in UK teaching scenarios, whereas in Pakistan there is little resistance shown; perhaps due to the controlled[210] teaching environment, or because of the text being taught from an Islamic perspective which avoids Christian context. It is important to note that there is no uniformity in teaching perspectives in Pakistan and the UK, and if there were there would be better chances to mutually develop[211] productive Muslim/multi-faith teaching of the Christian texts which would bridge the gaps on a broader level.

The focus of Pakistani academics is to create a better acceptance of the Christian text in Muslim teaching; they achieve this by tempering the Christian values and blasphemous sections about Satan. There is also a careful selection of the first two Books of *Paradise Lost* in order to avoid non-Islamic attributes; Eve's evil representation, her sexuality and nudity; the other mythical female characters and, therefore, rape and incest; and the Biblical narrative of the fall that contradicts the Islamic narrative of creation. The more political issues associated with teaching Christian texts like *Paradise Lost* in a Muslim country pose considerable difficulty for the Pakistani academics, since their teaching appears to be policed due to the growing religious intolerance and they do not want to be given a title of "non-believer" (Ahmed). Ironically, given these difficulties, the text of *Paradise Lost* remains an important part of the Pakistani Higher Education curriculum and Milton remains a key figure. The existence of *Paradise Lost* as a set text in Pakistani curriculum can be traced back to the British colonisation of India, when the poem was one of the one of the texts used as a colonial tool in the British education system to promote Christian

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[210] Teaching in which students' responses are controlled and teachers have a much higher authority e.g. Pakistani teaching. Please also refer to Campbell's observation in interview analysis regarding controlled teaching in Pakistan

[211] See Chap 10 for the discussion lack of funding available for such projects and how it could be improved

values in the sub-continent. Therefore, the teaching of *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan (and Bangladesh, as discussed above) can be seen as an act of incessant colonisation, although it is no longer taught from a post-colonial perspective in Pakistan.

Paradise Lost is taught from an Islamic perspective to Muslim students, since multi-faith teaching is not involved in Pakistan. In contrast, UK academics have to face the challenge of multi-faith teaching, since the text promotes Christianity. It is suggested that apart from the religious contradictions, *Paradise Lost* also possesses some cultural differences; for example, a European romantic tradition which is alien to Islamic countries. Moreover, Early Modern writing demonstrates prejudices against the Eastern World, which is recognised by the students, and therefore academics use extra effort in order to create a better understanding among Eastern/Muslim students. It is suggested that the teaching of such texts needs extreme delicacy and tested knowledge and that the teacher must bring genuine respect to the students' beliefs (Campbell). Therefore, this study is significantly important as it highlights all the issues Christian texts might pose in cross-cultural and cross-religious teaching of *Paradise Lost* and how that could influence the current socio-political scenario.

The next chapter is a continuation of the findings of qualitative research on the teaching methodologies used for sensitive issues that *Paradise Lost* may pose in class among Muslim students; for example, questions of nudity and sexuality. The tactics used to teach *Paradise Lost* in a mixed-sex and mixed-faith/Muslim groups are examined in order to explore the most effective way of presenting *Paradise Lost* to students of different religious commitments, and Muslims in particular.

Chapter 7: Interview Findings and Discussion II

Altered Pedagogical Approaches and the
Productive Muslim/Multi-Faith Teaching of *Paradise Lost*

This chapter is a sequel to Chapter 6, which deals with the analysis and findings of the administered interviews in Pakistan and the UK. In this chapter the practices of teaching *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith/Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK are taken into consideration. The chapter is divided into two sections: Section I deals with the teaching perspectives of Pakistani and UK academics, with specific reference to nudity and sexuality and how these are approached in mixed-sex multi-faith/Muslim groups. This discussion includes an investigation into different perceptions of veiling. Section II discusses the academics' views on an alteration of methodology used for multi-faith/Muslim teaching and concludes with an analysis of the most productive way of developing this teaching.

7.1 Nudity and Sexuality in *Paradise Lost*

This section provides a comparison of the academics' perception on issues that *Paradise Lost* may pose in terms of dealing with Eve's nudity and sexuality in a class of (possibly veiled) Muslim students. The tactics used to teach such issues in a mixed-sex and mixed-faith/Muslim group are examined to explore the most effective way of presenting *Paradise Lost* to the students of different religious commitments.

The discussion of Adam and Eve's nudity, Eve's sexuality and other female fictional and mythical figures in *Paradise Lost* might not be a desirable topic for Muslim students (and perhaps for most of the Pakistani academics), but it is one of the striking

themes discussed by feminist critics[212], for example Froula (1983) and Belsey (1988), and as such needs to be explored. Campbell notes that "the curious thing is the initial description of Adam and Eve in Book IV; [where] you think of their nakedness and Milton's interest in their hair[213]", although he notes that certain critics think that "Milton is slightly kinky on the subject of hair [but] ... that's anachronistic." It is noted earlier in Chapter 4 that Eve's hair is a symbol of her sexuality and subjection, whereas Adam's hair is one of his Godly attributes – this is also noted by Fish (1988). Campbell notes that Milton's introductory description of Adam and Eve is a matter of curiosity, but that the response of the students towards sexuality or nudity usually depends on their age. He reports that in class "we often talk about starting those [physical/nude] descriptions, and hair question produces a giggle and it's different in mature students". He suggests that undergraduates aged between "18, 19 [and] 20 are very open if you want to talk about death or sex; they are happy to talk" as compared to the mature students. He suggests that "Muslim [students] even women who are covered ... appear[ed] ... [to him] at least to be entirely untroubled by the conversation". He notes that Muslim students "would often wear what their parents tell them to wear, but they are better informed about their religion than the Christian students and they are often more secular than they appear". Campbell referred to one of his mature female[214] students who argued that he often "talk[s] about things that polite people don't talk about and ... it was [about] God, religion, politics, sex and death and polite people don't talk about this." It is suggested that in this respect *Paradise Lost* deals with those issues that are considered as impolite in Muslim society. It is also argued that the fact that Muslim students are better informed of their religion than

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[212] See Chap 2 for the detailed discussion on feminist readings of *Paradise Lost*, also see Chap 4 for Eve's nudity and mythical figures

[213] See Chap 4 for the discussion on hair in section on Eve's physical representation,
Also see hair as a symbol of sexuality, and as a veil covering Eve's body

[214] Presumably the student was either a Muslim or from a non-Christian background because this comment emerged from a discussion about teaching *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith students

the Christian students make them more vulnerable[215] to these issues. Campbell points out the difference between students' attitudes towards the issue of nudity; the younger they are, the less likely they are to be concerned about such issues. However, it is important to compare Campbell's observation in relation to the questionnaire findings.

On the other hand, Wynne-Davies reports that she does not focus on sexuality and looks rather at the gender role of Eve. She suggests that the Early Modern society[216] would expect women "to be silent ... obedient and good but that's her social ... [and] gender role" and she explores this representation in the poem. Wynne-Davies uses a cultural context in her teaching and examines the moral codes of Early Modern society in reference to Eve's character, as examined in Chapter 2 more fully. She does not "tend to do criticism which deals with sexuality as a whole". She notes that Eve is "heterosexual and she is subordinate to Adam in terms of her sexual identity," but on the other hand, she is also "attracted to Satan in her dream and dreams are key to psychoanalytic thinking ... [and that] reveals ... how her notion of eroticism is really working"; but she notes that she does not include these aspects in her teaching. Rather, she compares the role and behaviour of Early Modern women and Eve "and of course she (Eve) does not behave like that in terms of her nudity"; Eve transgresses[217] the morality of Early Modern women as "she's naked" and therefore deviates from her constructed "gender role". Wynne-Davies discusses the socio-cultural aspects of Early Modern gender identity while examining Eve's character in terms of gender construction in the class, and does not focus on sexuality. Hodgkins, in contrast to Wynne-Davies, finds it more interesting to debate sexuality in terms of "Adam and Eve having sex in Eden". She refers back to the "medieval debates whether sex is a consequence of the fall or not" in order to locate

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[215] Evidenced in the findings of questionnaire
[216] See socio-cultural context of the poem and the Early Modern parameters of ideal women in Chap 2
[217] See discussion on Eve's transgression in Chap 2,
Also see Chap 4 for the discussion on mythical figures in comparison with Eve

"Milton's argument that ... Adam and Eve had sex in the Garden of Eden as a particular intervention in that kind of old debate". She also relates sexual identity to the "general protestant valorisation of marriage, in the idea that this is God's plan for man and woman, as it should be in the Garden of Eden". She does briefly talk about the "physical appearance of Eve [but not] so much as seductive ... it's more the question of what is the rationale of saying curly hair represents subjection?" She also talks about passion verses reason, and notes that "Adam is letting passion overcome his reason ... [so] sexuality is permitted in the Garden of Eden". She suggests that she also touches upon "angels making love and angels blushing" in Eden. It is argued that such discussion of Adam and Eve having sex in the Eden, which also led them to the fall, might embarrass Muslim students since the nudity of Adam and Eve is not portrayed as seductive[218] in the *Quran*.

In contrast to UK teachers, Ahmed notes the cultural restraint as he finds it difficult to discuss sexuality in Pakistani institutions and if required "the teacher has to strike these issues very delicately". He reports that it is nearly impossible to talk about Eve's nudity, not only because of her religious status, but also with regard to her role as the mother[219] of mankind, and that it is "difficult when it comes about a mother, [and] the socio-religious aspect" has to be considered as part of teaching. He argues that as a teacher he "look[s] like a father" to his students "and they don't expect such issues to be discussed by ... [him] and it is even more difficult for a young teacher [to discuss sexuality or nudity because] students may assume that s/he is interested in their bodies so that is problematic". Ahmed suggests students do not expect a discussion of sexuality

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[218] Evidenced in the questionnaire findings

[219] Ahmed refers to Salman Rushdie's text *Midnight Children* (2006) where he as a child saw his mother bathing and "he describes that how she looked and gives full details of her body parts, this is not acceptable in Pakistan and India and [it] was published abroad of course it was read by scholars but not accepted by the [common] public"; he suggests that "although the text is great" the question of sexuality in reference to one's mother "is not acceptable in our society". He than refers to another text *Ice Candy Man* (1989) by Bapsi Sidwa where there's a brief discussion of sexuality, which he can discuss in his class. He states that Sidwa talks about sexuality "from the point of a child who sees the genital of her cousin but [the reference is made] in a couple of lines" and it is dealt without much stress on sexual issues.

See also the status of motherhood in the *Quran* discussed in Chap 3

from a university academic of his age, and see him more as a father figure. Therefore, *Paradise Lost* is a text that poses socio-religious problems not only for the students but also for the teachers in Pakistan, and that also could influence a student-teacher relationship. Ahmed reports that the constraint about the discussion on sexuality "might be relaxed after 20-30 years … [and it needs] modern writers from Pakistan [to publish and] research more on such issues". He argues that this constraint depends on the "traditional" values that are followed in Pakistan and students' values are led and "dominated" by their society. Similarly, Jujja also highlights the cultural aspects that influence the reaction to nudity and sexuality, as discussed in previous chapter; he notes that in Islamia University they have "excluded many texts" because of the "odd" sexual details in them. Such discussions are upsetting to his students due to the "social [and] cultural environment", as students complain that: "sir these are very embarrassing references" and that his "female students had [more] issues". He notes that a brief reference is made to sexuality only when it is necessary. On the other hand, Chaudary does not discuss sexuality or nudity at all in *Paradise Lost* since only the first two Books are taught, so there is no need to consider sexuality as an important theme. He, like Ahmed and Jujja, finds Pakistani society as "comparatively religious and primitive … [to Western culture and reports that] our students … also belong to a social background that is not much advanced, so we are a little bit careful about discussing sex … in a class especially in the presence of the girls". Chaudary compares the socio-religious difference of Eastern and Western societies and the opinions of the students; he judges Western culture to be more open to discussions of sex, but perhaps that is not always the case[220].

Falaksher also avoids the discussion of sexuality in *Paradise Lost* and considers that it is not "very important [because] the story is strong … [and has] a grip" and he does not see

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[220] Evidenced in the findings of the questionnaire that Muslim students living in the UK mostly responded in a similar way as Muslim students in the Pakistan

any need for such discussion. He reports that if required, only "mild" discussion about Eve's sexuality can be expected because of the "general social constraint [on one hand] and the respect and honour" associated with Eve, on the other. He notes that "we just take her [Eve] as our mother and that would be always in our mind and there would be no such kind of [sexual] thing in our mind [while discussing her character] never ever". As discussed earlier in Part A of the thesis[221], Muslims irrespective of their role (as a teacher or a student) take Eve as their mother and cannot talk about her sexuality and nudity freely. In terms of the reception of Eve's nudity and sensuality, Campbell notes that he has taught Milton to many Muslim students who are "often from culturally conservative backgrounds, and ... [he has] heard Eve represented as a 'white girl'[222], with all the derogatory associations of that phrase" (Campbell, email 06 December 2010). Such response from Muslim students[223] perhaps seems to show their religious affiliation with Eve and that how offended they feel with Eve's representation as nude.

The interviewees from Pakistani institutions tend not to discuss sexuality for a number of reasons. Most of the respondents agree to ignore the nudity and sexuality of Eve in the poem because of her religious status. They also note that the values of Pakistani society are more traditional and religious than those of the UK. Jujja points out the unease of his students with such discussions and Falaksher revealed a strong religious commitment when avoiding sexual discussion about Eve. Ahmed refers to the expected behaviour of academics in Pakistan that might affect student-teacher relationship; he also points out the political problems that *Paradise Lost* might pose for Pakistani teachers if they attempt to debate sexual issues related to religious figures, like Eve. The UK

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[221] See a detailed discussion in Chap 2
[222] Campbell reports later in this chapter that he has heard "Muslim students talking about white girls meaning slut" and they associate this with Eve's nudity in *Paradise Lost*
[223] Students' devotion and affection with Eve remains the same, irrespective of them studying in the UK or in Pakistan, as shown in questionnaire findings

respondents dealt with sexuality and nudity in different ways. Campbell notes that his personal experience of discussing Adam and Eve's physical appearance had mixed responses from young and mature students. The female academics again interpret these issues based on their research interests. Wynne-Davies analyses Eve's nudity more as a transgression of the moralities of Early Modern women and focuses on Eve's gender role in the poem. In contrast, Hodgkins discusses Adam and Eve's sexuality and refers to the historic debate about sex being the reason of the fall. Perhaps the most intriguing finding, however, came from Falaksher, who notes it as a taboo or an extreme act of defiance to discuss Eve's nudity and sexuality since he can "never ever ... think" of discussing this. Therefore, perhaps due to the cultural difference UK respondents can more openly discuss sexuality and nudity than the Pakistani respondents, but it is important to find out if a similar variation is found among Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK.

7.1.1 Discussion of Sexuality in a Mixed-Sex Group

It is clear from the above discussion that some academics are more reluctant to discuss sexuality than others. However, in order to undertake more precise examination of the teaching practices and experience of *Paradise Lost*, it is important to explore the discussion of sexuality in mixed-sex and multi-faith/Muslim groups. Hodgkins suggests that if she has a group with mixed-sex Muslim students then she is more cautious while "setting people to discuss a particular passage" because she is aware that "Muslim girl[s] ... take [it] very seriously talking about sex ... [and for them it is not] acceptable to discuss [sex] in mixed-sex groups." She refers to the love poems of Donne and notes that during any sexual discussion "Muslim girls will all form little groups together; because they are sitting together anyway, they [would] turn around and talk to one another." She reports that if occasionally "they end up with a group which is mixed sexually then ... [she would] give them the less rude parts of it because ... there is no point in making

people very uncomfortable; [in order for them] to be able to have a discussion." Hodgkins' observation of Muslim girls shows that female Muslim students are introverts and would prefer to sit with one another, and that they are not comfortable with discussions concerning sex[224]. Falaksher has a dissimilar view as he reports that he has never had problems while discussing sexuality in a mixed-sex group of Muslim students because "while teaching literature we don't need to take care of such things because we are providing knowledge". He notes that "definitely we cannot be naked; we have to be in our moral circle, we have to maintain religious and ethical boundaries." Falaksher seems to be very reluctant when dealing with Eve's sexuality because of his personal religious commitment but he does not report any problems while discussing sexuality in a mixed-sex group.

Wynne-Davies suggests that in a mixed-sex group she would be "much more careful ... to deal with [the discussion of] sex or the body" if she did not know the students' faith, "but if it ... [is] a mixed-sex with a mixed-racial background" then she is more cautious. She notes that in such scenario she would not "start discussing things like homoeroticism [as] it would acutely embarrass" students. Similarly, while discussing sexuality she "would not use the word [like] genital in a mixed-racial mixed-sex group." Likewise, she would not do it where "there ... [are] all men ... because they would consider [it] totally inappropriate for a female professor to start talking about male and female bodies". She notes that "as a female professor it's very difficult" for her to discuss certain topics, and only when required she would explain things "a little bit more pointed towards the footnotes." Wynne-Davies refers to discussing sexuality in a mixed-sex group as a complex situation, as she is cautious in mixed-race, mixed-sex groups or in an

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[224] Also evidenced in the questionnaire findings

entirely male sex group. She describes the difficulty of exploring sexual debates as a female teacher in mixed-sex groups as it is not what students would expect from her.

Chaudary, like Hodgkins, refers to Donne's poems having multiple sexual elements but he has never noticed "any strong repercussions from students because ... they are grown up". Although he does not discuss sexuality or nudity in Paradise Lost, he notes that it is not "a taboo in the class, it can be discussed in the presence of female students, but with certain limitations". He reports that the students never ask to "stop this discussion [and say] this is against our sense of morality" but the female students often "feel shy; they bow down" as a reaction; for example to the text of Ice Candy Man (Sidwa 1989), which offers many sexual discussions. He notes that he tries to be "cautious ... not [to] harrow their religious feelings" by promoting sexual debates that are prohibited by Islam. Chaudary has noticed a non-verbal reaction from his female students but they never show verbal resistance even in extremely embarrassing situations. This, perhaps, is evidence of Campbell's point that teachers have an ultimate authority over students in a Muslim world. It is significant that Pakistani academics seem to talk comparatively freely about sexuality, but strictly avoid such discussion in relation to Paradise Lost. On the other hand, Jujja refers to the "socio-cultural environment" that keeps him "very conscious" and that's why he only briefly refers to sexuality and does not go into sexual details in a mixed-sex group – perhaps this is his way of "playing safe[225]". Ahmed notes that discussing sexuality[226] in a mixed-sex group might be possible in "cities like Islamabad" where students "have interaction with foreigners but in most common middle class areas in Pakistan it is not possible". In reference to the mixed-sex

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[225] See Jujja discussing religious intolerance in Chap 6
[226] Ahmed refers to the Hardy's character of Eustacia in The Return of the Native, (1995) and suggests that he can discuss her "eyes and hair and limbs but we cannot talk about her sensual parts ... it's very hard in our society to do that in the class". While discussing students' unease with such issues he quotes an example of the movie Scarlet Letter where students saw "Dimmesdale was taking bath in the pool, they tried to avoid that and they made us realise that they are not comfortable with that"

students he suggests that it is problematic to discuss "body parts in the lecture" particularly in presence of female students, for whom hiding is a "chief virtue", so he "ask[s] them to read a particular scene at home and give their interpretation". He reports that sometimes he "feel[s] hesitant in portraying such [sexual] scenes", because as a teacher "you need to take [have] students' confidence", therefore, he explains to the students that he is referring to "it solely to discuss the text," but if all the students participate this makes the "teacher comfortable" to explore such issues. Ahmed suggests how a multi-cultural environment influences the reception of issues like sexuality, as he thinks that students in small cities are more conservative than those in the big cities who encounter cultural exchange frequently. He like, Wynne-Davies, highlights the problem of discussing sexuality in a mixed-sex group.

Apart from the students, academics also feel uneasy talking about sexuality and nudity in Pakistan and in the UK, although the level and reasons may vary. It is noted that Wynne-Davies and Ahmed, who have very different socio-cultural backgrounds, note the difficulties of discussing sex as an academic in a mixed-sex group and particularly before the students of the opposite sex. They share the idea of students' expectation from a teacher to abstain from discussing certain issues like sex, "genitals", (Wynne-Davies) and "female body parts" (Ahmed). Hodgkins' textual analysis tends to separate Muslim girls into a group or give them "less rude passage" if in a mixed-sex group. In contrast, Chaudary and Falaksher seem to be much relaxed in discussing sexuality in a mixed-sex group, apart from *Paradise Lost*, and suggest that they never noticed any "strong repercussion" from students, although they did notice female students who "bow down and feel shy" (Chaudary), but the non-verbal response can be related to Campbell's point that the higher authority of a teacher in a Muslim society has an impact upon students' responses, in particular controlling their resistance to the text. Jujja maintains his cautious

approach towards discussions related to religion or sexuality in any form in the class, perhaps due to the current political scenario. His institution is in the part of Punjab that is comparatively considered more conservative than the BZ University where Ahmed teaches. The key finding emerged from Ahmed who notes that multiculturalism influences students' attitudes and allows them to be open to discussions related to sexuality. However, it would be useful to examine the variation among Muslim students' responses from Pakistan and the UK, as the UK is vastly multicultural.

7.1.2 Perceptions of Veiling[227]

Veiling has been a significant theme in this research; from the importance of veiling in a Early Modern perspective to Eve's transgression and lack of veiling, and Milton's use of hair as a veil for Eve's nude body. All have been explored in Part A Chapters 2 and 4 of the thesis. In this section, the different perceptions of and reasons for veiling are explored with specific reference to veiled Muslim female students. This discussion helps in understanding teachers' perception of veil that further leads to develop an understanding of students' responses in perceiving the veil and nudity[228]. It is important to note that there is a huge variation among Muslim students in terms of veiling, and for academics, particularly those from the UK, it is useful to distinguish the religious background of students in terms of veiling. Hodgkins notes that "the only way" she can only tell students' religious background "is whether they are covered or not" and beyond that she has "no way of telling ... they may have Muslim names but ... [she does not] actually know what that says about their personal investment." Campbell, having visited many Muslim countries like Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia, has a complex understanding of Muslim's attitudes towards veiling and nudity. He reports that "nakedness and the perception of the human body are culturally conditioned ... [and in] the Islamic world, it

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[227] Also see criticism on veiling related to Eve's nudity in Chap 4
[228] In the questionnaire findings examined in the next chapter

is far from simple," since "the veil ... is not always historically associated with women." Moreover, this perception of the veil is entirely different in "Jeddah and Islamabad, in London and in Paris and in each case the veil interacts with a different culture, so there is no single view in Islam that is eternal [and] historical about the hiding of parts of the body". He notes that there is a considerable variation among Muslim women: even in "in Haj[229] [some of them are] entirely covered with gloves and ... [even] flying goggles so it is not just the chador[230]" that other women possibly wear while performing Haj. He reports that beyond cultural differences, there are "generational differences [like] ... class tradition" but nudity is so rejected among Muslims that women "are never naked in the presence of their husbands; even while making love they cover themselves with chador". In contrast, wearing hijab[231] in the Western world represents "one part of immensely complex women who are living between two societies and making very sophisticated negotiations between those two". He notes that it is helpful to avoid making assumptions "about belief". Likewise, Hodgkins reports that she does not assume Muslim girls to be "devout" on the basis of whether they are covered or not, "because it's a matter of personal choice"; she reports that she has taught "girls from lots of different backgrounds who come in, and plenty of them are religious, but don't cover their heads." Ahmed notes that the "Purdah system [veiling] should [be] see[n] ... in reference to the Arab society" that existed during the revelation of the *Quran*. In the Arab society, women were considered "a useful commodity ... [due to their] sexuality," since those societies had "all evil[s]" like rape and when the *Quran* was revealed "it had to finish [abolish] the evils of that society," therefore veiling was determined as appropriate for women. Campbell notes that veiling for Muslims "can be entirely secular culture or on the other hand it can be a deliberate religious act". He suggests that there are variable reasons for wearing hijab but

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[229] Islamic pilgrimage
[230] One long covering sheet from head to toe
[231] Form of veiling that also covers the face

that the mode remains constant: in some cases, it is to avoid the "male gaze and you just feel more comfortable" in a veil while men are leering at you; this reference of hiding from male gaze is also noted by Crawley (1931). Other than the secular reasons, Campbell notes that the "veil represents a kind of religious privacy of being with God and it has got nothing to do with the world and it looks like the same covering [but] it is very different indeed". He notes that veiling only "trouble[s]" him "when it comes with a sense of moral superiority" among female Muslim students. He suggests that he is extremely "sensitive towards racism" and he "struggle[s]" when he hears "Muslim students talking about white girls, meaning slut" and this can also be linked to Wadud's comment of Western culture having pornographic tendencies (2006).

Campbell identifies the complexities of veiling and its variation among Muslims in different parts of the world. He notes that veiling sometime signifies racism, either as the segregation of Muslim women or as a deprecation of other races. He suggests that the reasons for and perceptions of veiling vary depending upon the understanding of socio-cultural practices and religious values and it has not been a gender-specific attribute historically[232]. Campbell's argument is a combination of his travelling experience, multi-faith teaching observation and cross-cultural interest. On the other hand, Ahmed, perhaps due to his personal religious commitment, provides a religious (Islamic) interpretation of veiling associated to revelation of the *Quran*. However, while presenting an Islamic view of veiling he must acknowledge that veiling is not gender-specific as the *Quran*[233] promotes veiling for both genders. Hodgkins shows her observation of veiled and un-veiled Muslim students and notes that it is not helpful to make a judgement about religious commitment on the basis of veiling; she perceives veiling as a matter of personal choice among Muslims. Therefore it must be explored whether Muslim students'

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[232] As discussed in Chap 4 while discussing the criticism on veiling
[233] See Chap 4 for the Quranic perception of veiling

perceive veiling as a matter of personal choice or religious commitment. However, the most complex finding came from Campbell's comment that the veil as not only a marker of Muslim identity (or women's submission), but also of a perceived superiority over other races.

7.2 *Paradise Lost* and the Alteration of Pedagogical Approaches

This and the next section present the broader strategy of Muslim/multi-faith teaching while examining it from the perspective of presenting *Paradise Lost* to Muslim students. The responses of the academics were gathered on how their pedagogical approaches change while teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students, since in Pakistani institutions almost all the students are Muslim, whereas in UK institutions multi-faith/Muslim teaching exists. The academics were asked to discuss their teaching methodology when using a Christian text like *Paradise Lost*.

Hodgkins notes that while teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students she tries to keep it on the "analytic level" while suggesting to the students that she is "presenting a historical moment in Christian theology". She acknowledges that "the idea of God's elect is still an important one in certain religious groups," and notes that if she had a student "who believes in predestination" she would "try and take it as a resource." Wynne-Davies suggests that "it has not been particularly easy" to teach *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith students because "it is so based on the *Bible* that you have to get students to understand the *Bible* before they understand what Milton's doing ... so it is more problematic". Surprisingly, she does not find it "as problematic with Muslim students as it is with [other] Asian students from countries like China where "students [tend not to] have ... faith", because Muslims are familiar with the *Quran*, a text that has many similarities with the *Bible*. She notes that "now" she understands that there are many "key differences in relation to Eve" in Islam and Christianity but she "never taught it like that

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[and she] probably would [have taught] ... [if she] was in the same situation". Since Wynne-Davies is a primary supervisor of this study, she has now awareness of the controversies between the narratives of Islam and Christianity and she intends to imply certain changes to fit in multi-faiths students in a Christian teaching. She notes that through teaching multi-faith students "a very interesting discussion" can be produced, because this allows them to discuss "another's belief system in order to understand the text better and to understand the multiplicity to interpret the text". She suggests that in this way it can be helpful to "point out that the text is not that static, there is not one single meaning, the text produce[s] different meanings at different times for different readers and that is manifest if you have multi-faith groups." Although Wynne-Davies has not practised these ideas yet, her understanding of how Christian and religiously contradictory texts like *Paradise Lost* may be used as a strategy to engage with multi-faiths beliefs during Christian teaching and is likely to enhance productive Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

Campbell notes that he would be more careful in a lecture than a seminar "because of the authority of the teacher" in lectures. He notes that the most desirable quality of the teacher is to have "respect" for their students by "honouring what the religious and cultural beliefs they possess". On the other hand, in seminars where there are open discussions on Christian texts, like *Paradise Lost*, Campbell indicates that students "are always puzzled about the fact that I don't have a religion but it does not come out in the seminar." Campbell's tactics of being cautious in lectures and relaxed in seminars cannot be followed in Pakistan as Pakistani institutions do not offer teaching separately in seminars, therefore there might not be much relaxed/informal discussions among Pakistani academics and students, and the element of the teacher's authority may persist in controlling students' attitudes towards the texts. Ahmed reports that while

discussing Christian texts like *Paradise Lost* the "classroom becomes a Christian island because no Muslim character or belief is discussed [in the poem] but of course ... some comparisons with Islam" are drawn. He notes that if the teacher in Pakistan does not relate *Paradise Lost* to the student's religion s/he often has to face the "accusation" that the "teacher has become Christianised". On the other hand, Chaudary reports that he "definitely" changes the style and "do[es] not involve ... [their] own Islamic teaching" but that this creates "a kind of anomaly among the students which they should renounce". He suggests that in order to avoid any agitation he is clear to point out to the students that these ideas are foreign and are not for them to follow. Falaksher contradicts Ahmed and Chaudary and reports that he has never had to alter his tactics to teach *Paradise Lost* because of the commonalities between the *Quran* and the *Bible*.

The responses of the interviewees have variations with regard to the teaching approaches, since they teach in different parts of the world and with different expectations of instruction. Hodgkins notes that the methodology used to teach multi-faith/Muslim students is to emphasise the analytic and to develop students' background as a resource. Similarly, Campbell reports that honouring students' religious values and beliefs is helpful in multi-faith teaching. Wynne-Davies and Falaksher do not consider that teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslims is problematic due to the similarities of Christianity and Islam. However, Wynne-Davies notes that she now understands the enormous differences between the religions with regard to the narrative of the fall. Ahmed again reports a policed teaching methodology which has to relate the text with Islamic beliefs in wider to avoid any "accusation" of being "Christianised". In contrast, Chaudary's comment, that he does not involve Islamic beliefs while teaching *Paradise Lost*, not only contradicts Ahmed's views but also his own earlier responses where he describes making religious comparisons while teaching *Paradise Lost* – perhaps because

of policed teaching, which he might not want to admit. Similarly, his response to demand that students renounce any anomaly refers back to the idea of authoritative teaching. The most intriguing finding, therefore, comes from Wynne-Davies who brings about the idea of producing a multi-faith discussion among students in order to result in a multiplicity of the textual interpretation of *Paradise Lost*.

7.3 *Paradise Lost* and Productive Teaching

After examining the current practices of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK, this section explores more productive ways to develop the teaching of *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith/Muslim students. The key themes and issues of this research were explored with the respondents during the course of interviews and at the end they were asked to suggest the most productive way of teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students.

Falaksher, as a Pakistani academic, believes that the text of *Paradise Lost* "should not be taken from the perspective of Islam only, we ... [must] take care of other religions as well" and the focus of teaching should be on the students to make sure that they "benefit from the concepts of morality, the concepts of evil or good, and the concepts of God and his power and ... love for us". He notes that the "theme of justification of the ways of God to human beings" is very important and all "the other themes are mild themes than God's love". He notes that such "Biblical stories [narrated in *Paradise Lost*] would clarify the concepts about the role of human beings on earth and their duty towards God". Falaksher, like Wynne-Davies[234], recommends the multi-faith discussion of the poem, but on the other hand keeps his argument entirely religious and focused on God's love, instead of Eve and her fall. Similarly, Jujja notes that the focus of teaching should remain on the "human issues and the literary merits" of the text instead of "sexuality and

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[234] See Wynne-Davies' comments in previous section

religious issues which might be there, but we must focus upon other issues, dimensions or aspects of *Paradise Lost*." He refers to this doctoral study in Pakistan and suggests "it would be a very dangerous strategy" to choose this topic of research because "religion is one thing I would never touch upon!" (Jujja). Jujja, like Falaksher, prefers human issues of morality and goodness over fall and sexuality. He found this research dangerous because of the issues it highlights, for example the status of Islamic Eve in relation to Milton's Eve, discussion of Eve's nudity, sexuality and the narrative of rape and incest, Quranic feminism and cross-religious controversies of Islam and Christianity in a religious poem. It can also be politically and socially dangerous for a young Muslim female researcher to examine all these issues and investigate them from 'male[235]' Muslim and non-Muslim academics and male students, as it might stir religious debates or cultural taboos.

Ahmed emphasises the feminist perspective and notes that in order to stabilize the status of women the "outcomes of the text should be focused on more ... instead of teaching the sin and fall directly". Furthermore, like Falaksher and Jujja, he promotes the religious ideology of love of God. He notes that *Paradise Lost* should be taught in order to praise a merciful God, rather than the concept of "punishing [or] angry God", and it should be realised by the students that the "world is created for man [and] man has to make this world beautiful". He comments that students should be given a lesson to remain "happy even in the hardships of this world ... [since their] parents[236] lived happily on earth after a big punishment so this can result as a better acceptance of ... [the] text". Chaudary notes that the most productive way of teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim students is to be "aware" of the "pro-religious ideas [of the poem] and ... those ideas [that] coincide with our Islamic ideas ... [so that can be] illustrate[d] with reference to the

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[235] Although the study involved female academics and female students, but such issues must not be discussed by a Muslim female with other men in a Pakistani society.
[236] Adam and Eve are considered as humans' first parents in Islam

Holy Quran and the Sunnah". Whereas, for Islamic "diversions" the teacher must keep the Christian ideas in focus in order to avoid "any [religious] controversy among the students".

From UK academics, Campbell reports that the most productive way of teaching *Paradise Lost* is to "create trust ... amongst the participants so that conflicting perspectives are welcome". He does not teach *Paradise Lost* from a specific critical perspective since he does not "encourage presentism, but rather an understanding of the literature of past". Hodgkins notes that after understanding this research and the Quranic narrative of the fall she "would be really interested to see the students more as a resource, and to think about whether that is something to address more explicitly". She notes that she would like her students to think about "the choices made by human beings in relation to the Divine, for example". Wynne-Davies notes that teaching *Paradise Lost* from the varying views of the frailty of human nature and gender constructs in terms of female identity allows her to teach the poem "slightly differently" as she "now understand [s] [that the text of *Paradise Lost*] is something very Christian and the romantic hero and heroine in Christian writing is a rebel ... whereas, those are idealised figures in other faiths". She notes that she would now "definitely" consider taking "creation narratives and looking at the *Quran* ... at the *Bible* [and] maybe looking at other creation narratives" to discuss the fall and "give a brief quote or little summaries and swap among students". She notes that the students might also be asked to "to bring ... in their own narrative of creation and swap it with somebody who does not have that background and then think about the differences" before reading what "Milton was trying to do and ... [see if] it [is] relevant today, ... [or] relevant to [them]? How does it work for ... [them] now being Ajmal[237] or a Hindu male from Mumbai?" She notes that as universities

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[237] Ajmal is a Pakistani male Muslim name

become internationalised, "otherness and difference" should be explored more rather than "rejecting" it, and teaching techniques should be changed more "radically" since British society is now "international on global scale" (Wynne-Davies).

The interviewees suggested interesting and productive ways of teaching *Paradise Lost* to multi-faith/Muslim students. The respondents from Pakistan focus mostly on the outcomes of the teaching but prefer a mild discussion of issues like sexuality and the fall associated to Eve, and note that the text must be focused to promote morality and humanity. Falaksher and Ahmed comment that the text should be taught to promote God's love for humans instead of his punishment, and also to improve women's status. Similarly, Chaudary and Jujja seek to avoid any religious controversy and focus more on "human issues," rather than sexuality and religion. Indeed, Jujja considers an approach such as this study "dangerous". The UK academic, Campbell, embraces the idea of encouraging trust among students to enable them to discuss ideas freely. Female UK academics, Hodgkins and Wynne-Davies, agree with the concept of comparing creation narrative of the *Bible* and the *Quran* to other religious narratives, as well as using students' background as a "resource" (Hodgkins). Therefore, the most important finding emerged from Wynne-Davies' suggestion of having a need of "radical" change in pedagogical approaches since UK universities are more "international" and that the "otherness and differences" of international students' cultural and religious values must be explored.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the broader issues of multi-faith/Muslim teaching of *Paradise Lost* as embedded in Christianity, while examining the practices and perspectives of Pakistani and British academics. Since Pakistan and the UK have different socio-cultural and religious backgrounds, the teaching practices of the two countries are diverse. The text of

Paradise Lost, based on the Biblical narrative of the fall, poses many problems for academics teaching in Pakistan, and there is tacit pressure (from the government and/or religious groups) which results in the policed teaching of Christian texts. However, Pakistani academics have much more authority over the students as compared to UK teaching. Although Pakistani academics tend to minimise the religious controversies that might be initiated by a Christian text, their authoritative teaching impacts hugely on students' responses resulting in the ability to control resistance. On the other hand, the informal teaching offered in seminars in UK institutions may serve to create understanding and gain the students' trust individually. In Pakistani institutions, any discussion of Eve's nudity and sexuality is considered to be a taboo or an extreme act of defiance. Eve is strictly associated with Hawwa in Muslim teaching and Pakistani academics have to struggle with the concept of Eve's fall while teaching *Paradise Lost* from an Islamic perspective. Contrarily, in UK institutions the text is taught to Muslim/multi-faith students with reference to the Biblical context even though it contradicts the Islamic narrative. It is suggested that multi-faith teaching could benefit from broader discussion among students which could result in a multiplicity of the interpretations of the creation narrative and create a better acceptance of the poem among multi-faith/Muslim students. Therefore, to develop internationalism UK institutions might undergo a change in pedagogical approaches in order to accommodate different cultures and religions. Similarly, Pakistani institutions could revise their teaching approaches towards Christian literature and use that faith as a resource to compare it with Islam to improve religious tolerance and explore foreign socio-religious values, since it is not possible to understand and analyse English Literature/*Paradise Lost* (or any other Christian text) with little or no contextual knowledge.

In the following Chapters 8 and 9, findings of the quantitative research are presented and analysed. These chapters explore Muslim students' perception of the key themes of Eve's identity and her representation in *Paradise Lost* in comparison to the *Quran*, the issues of the fall, nudity and sexuality, rape, the perception of veiling and other religious differences such as the status of Mary in comparison to Eve and the status of Jesus as the redeemer and God's son. The responses of Muslim students are taken into consideration on these issues of *Paradise Lost*, and are analysed in reference to the interview responses and hypothesis.

Chapter 8: Questionnaire Findings and Discussion I
Understanding Eve and the Narrative of the Fall in
Paradise Lost from a Muslim Perspective

This chapter and the following Chapter 9 draw out findings from the administered questionnaires to Muslim students studying *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK, and present Muslims' views on the distinct issues and themes that are derived from Part A and are similarly explored in the interviews in Part B. The chapter focuses on the key issues of *Paradise Lost* according to the questionnaire: the Christian context of *Paradise Lost*, the narrative of the fall in *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the Biblical narrative and the contrasting views in the *Quran*, and the identity of Eve in reference to the human fall. This chapter examines all these issues with regard to Islamic tenets. The chapter is divided into five sections; Section I presents the demographics of the students, Section II explores the Christian context of the poem, Section III examines the narrative of creation in Islam and *Paradise Lost*, Section IV investigates the identity of Eve, and Section V analyses menstruation as a punishment of the fall.

Irrespective of the different perspectives that are used to teach *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK, questions in the questionnaire are kept identical for Muslim students of Pakistan and the UK. The level of the questions is kept basic since they are the core values of Islam and the themes of the questions are intrinsic to the themes of the research. The sequence of questions is not identical in the questionnaire and is adjusted according to the themes developed in the chapter. For each question an overall response is presented in a pie chart, which is further split to discern certain variables of gender and country of residence presented in bar charts. This split has helped to evaluate any similarity or contrast in the distinctive responses of Muslim students on the bases of gender and culture. It is important to consider that the percentages in this chapter are rounded to one decimal and may not equal exactly 100.

Throughout this chapter, students' perception on the Islamic perspective of the fall along with the Biblical account is explored, since it is important to understand how the respondents' personal beliefs influence the reception of *Paradise Lost*, as the poem is embedded in Christian concepts that contradict core Islamic beliefs. The findings in this chapter tend to evaluate hypotheses presented in Part A of the study by analysing them with the relevant interview findings.

8. 1 Demographics of Respondents

This section discusses the demographics of the respondents of the administered questionnaires. It presents the personal details of the respondents including the respondent's gender and country of residence; these are also the variables that are used for further analysis of the collected data.

8.1.1 Country of Residence

Figure 8.1.1 illustrates the responses of respondents from Pakistan and the UK. The Figure shows that the respondents from Pakistan are greater in number than the number of UK respondents. UK respondents form 41% (43 students) and Pakistani respondents from 59% (61 students) of the total respondents.
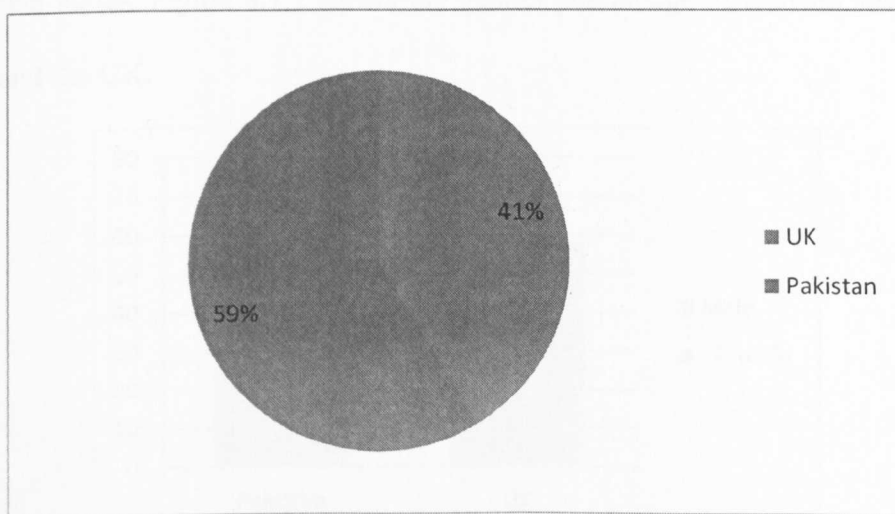
Figure 8.1.1: Number of Respondents from the UK and Pakistan

The increased number of respondents from Pakistan compared to the UK could be related to the mode of administration of the questionnaire. This might have influenced the number of respondents in three ways: 1. The researcher could not be there physically in universities of different parts of the UK, therefore students were sent the questionnaires online through Islamic societies and that might have slowed down the response rate; 2. Since the Islamic society was the only time- and cost-effective mode to reach the Muslim students in eight different universities, other Muslim students who might not be members of that society could not be reached; 3. UK universities have a multi-cultural, multi-faith population of students and, as Hodgkins pointed out, usually in University of East London each session in English has about half a dozen Muslim students, whereas Pakistani universities have an entirety of Muslim students and that could have led to a comparatively smaller number of respondents from the UK.

8.1.2 Gender

As examined in the previous chapters of interview findings, the students of English Literature are usually mostly female. The data produced from the questionnaires presents the similar results as the respondents from Pakistan and the UK consisted of more females than males. Figure 8.1.2 shows the gender percentage of Muslim students from Pakistan and the UK.
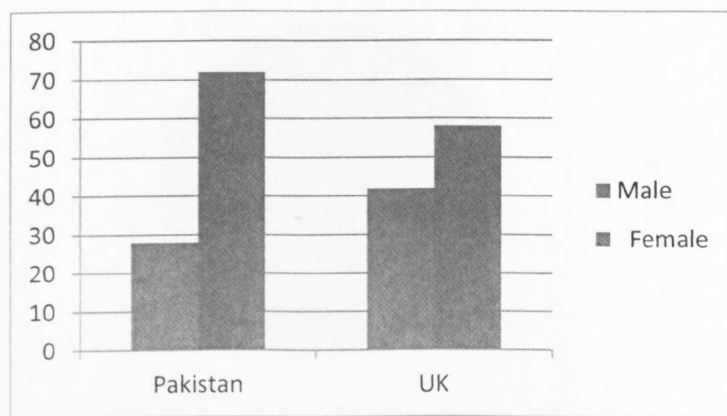
Figure 8.1.2: Gender of the Respondents

The Figure demonstrates that the female Pakistani respondents are more than double the male respondents from Pakistan. Thus the male respondents are only 28% and the female respondents are 72%. Female respondents from the UK are only slightly higher in number than the male respondents, as the female respondents are 58% and the male respondents are 42% of the total UK respondents. This can be linked to Hodgkins' observation that English courses usually have more female students than male students.

8.2 Christian context of *Paradise Lost*

This section examines Muslim students' perceptions and experience of studying *Paradise Lost* within a Christian context. This is a key question of this research and it has been repeatedly explored in detail in Part A of the thesis and also examined in Part B in the interview findings.

Q. Is it problematic for you that *Paradise Lost* is written in a context of Christianity and you are being taught a Biblical narrative that negates the Quranic story of the Fall?

This question is asked from Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK, in order to understand their experience of studying *Paradise Lost* within a Christian context. The narrative of creation that is presented in *Paradise Lost* is contextualised in the *Bible* and contradicts the Quranic narrative, presenting Eve as a sinner.
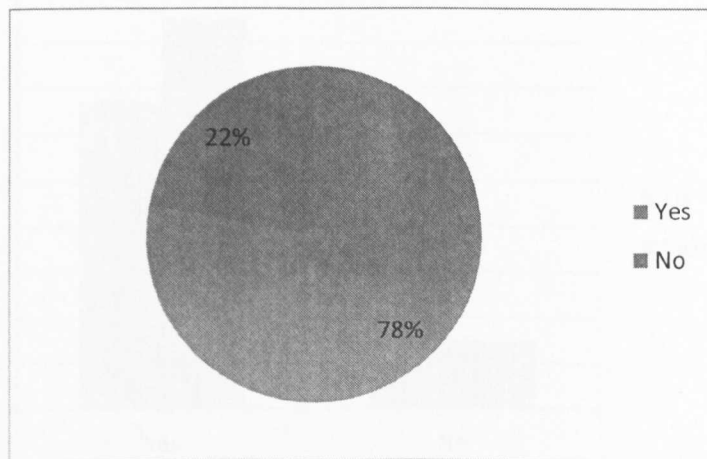
Figure 8.2.1: Problematic Biblical Context of *Paradise Lost*

Figure 8.2.1 illustrates the overall responses of the students as to how problematic they find that Christian context of *Paradise Lost* that negates the Islamic narrative of creation. It is interesting to see that 78% of the respondents agreed that they have problems with the Biblical context of the poem and 22% disagreed.
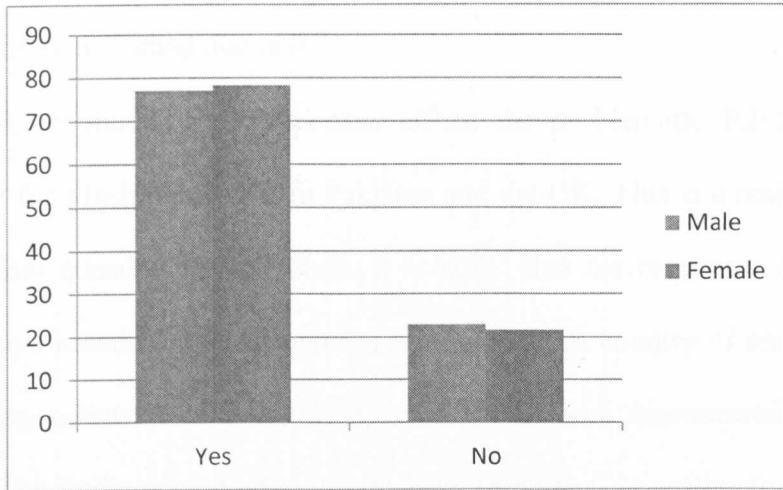
Figure 8.2.2: Gender and the Problematic Biblical Context

Figure 8.2.2 demonstrates that a high number of male (77%) and female (78%) students find *Paradise Lost* problematic because of the Christian context of the fall that negates the Quranic view. Thus, the overall response from male and female students is almost identical.
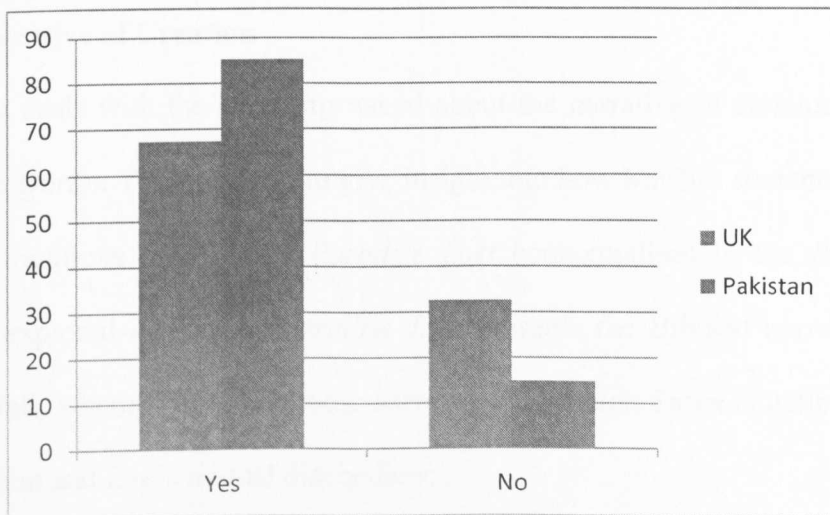
Figure 8.2.3: Problematic Biblical Context

67% of students from the UK and 85% of Pakistani residents find the Biblical context of *Paradise Lost* as problematic, since it is written in the context of Christianity and it negates the Quranic view. This suggests that Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK face problems due to the Christian context of *Paradise Lost*, but Pakistani students seem to be slightly more disturbed due to it.

The higher numbers of responses affirm the problematic Biblical context of *Paradise Lost* for Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK. This is a major finding as it supports the key question of this study. It is noted that the responses on the basis of gender is almost identical, but differences are noted from country of residence. Higher number of respondents from Pakistan appears to be more disconcerted than the UK respondents. The findings contradict the interview findings, as academics from Pakistan and the UK never noticed a strong resistance from students, whereas from questionnaire findings it is evident that only a small percentage of Muslim students from Pakistan and the UK find the Christian context of poem unproblematic. Therefore students record a resistance to the Biblical narrative of *Paradise Lost* which has gone largely unnoticed by academics.

8.3 The Narrative of Creation

This section deals with the questions asked about the narrative of creation in *Paradise Lost* and the *Quran*. This will help to give insight into how Muslim students perceive the fall in the traditions of Milton's *Paradise Lost* contextualised in the *Bible*, and the *Quran*. As explored in Part A, *Paradise Lost* presents the Biblical narrative and Eve causes the fall, whereas in the Quranic narrative of creation Satan is believed to be the cause of Adam and Eve's mutual disobedience.

Q. In *Paradise Lost* **Eve, after being seduced by Satan, seduces Adam into eating the fruit. Do you refute this statement in context of the Quranic narrative of the Fall?**

This question deals with the very moment of the fall in Book IX, where Eve is seduced by Satan and eats the fruit and subsequently tempts Adam to do likewise. This question is asked in order to investigate whether Muslim students are aware of the distinction that *Paradise Lost* and the *Quran* have in terms of the fall being blamed on Eve.
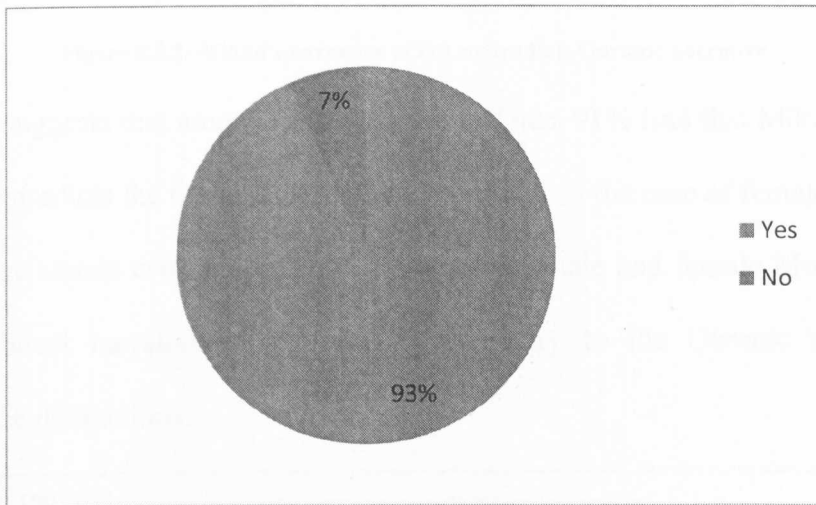
Figure 8.3.1: Milton's narrative of the fall contradicts Quranic narrative

Figure 8.3.1 propose that the majority of respondents (93%) find Milton's narrative of the fall a contradiction to the Quranic narrative of creation, and are well aware of the Islamic interpretation of creation.
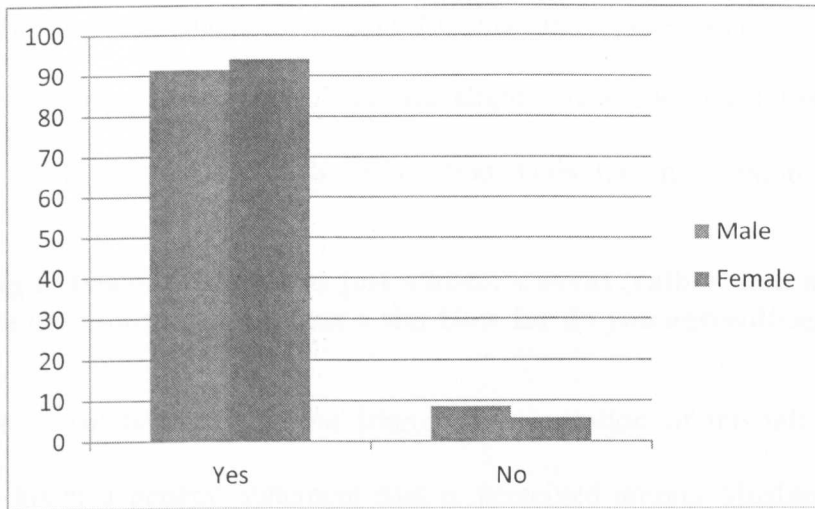
Figure 8.3.2: Milton's narrative of fall contradicts Quranic narrative

Figure 8.3.2 suggests that among male Muslim students, 91% find that Milton's narrative of the fall contradicts the Quranic narrative of creation. In the case of female respondents the percentage stands even higher (94%). Therefore, male and female Muslim students find the Biblical narrative of the fall contradictory to the Quranic narrative and understand the distinctions.
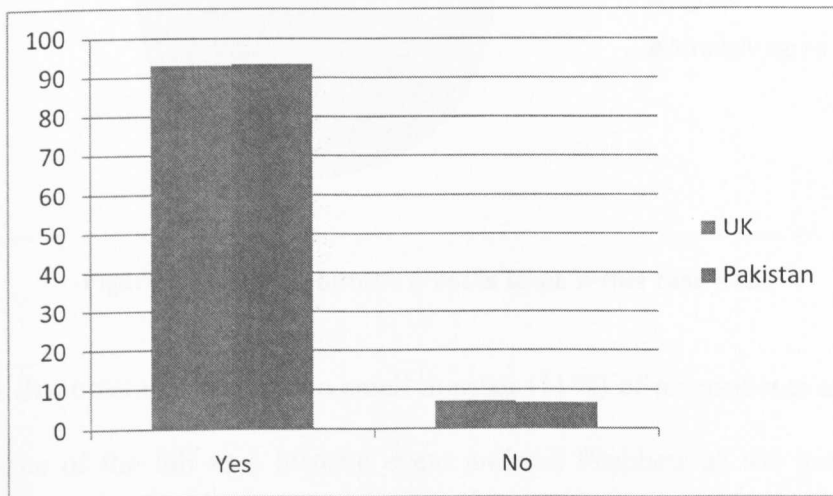
Figure 8.3.3: Milton's narrative of fall contradicts Quranic narrative

Figure 8.3.3 illustrates that an equal number of respondents (93%) from the UK and Pakistan find that Milton's narrative of the fall contradicts Quranic narrative of creation.

The responses from students propose that Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK understand the differences between the narrative of the fall in the *Quran* and

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Paradise Lost. It is noted that there are no differences in response on the basis of country of residence, whereas male respondents are slightly less convinced than females in believing that Milton's narrative of the fall contradicts the Quranic version.

Q. According to Islam, the Fall was just a historic event (rather than a sin) because Prophets are too innocent to commit a sin. How far do you agree/disagree with this statement?

The question is solely based on the Islamic representation of the fall, and Muslim students are given a general statement that is perceived among Muslims in order to explore their responses on the Islamic perception and how sympathetic and religiously committed they feel towards the Prophets (Adam and Eve).
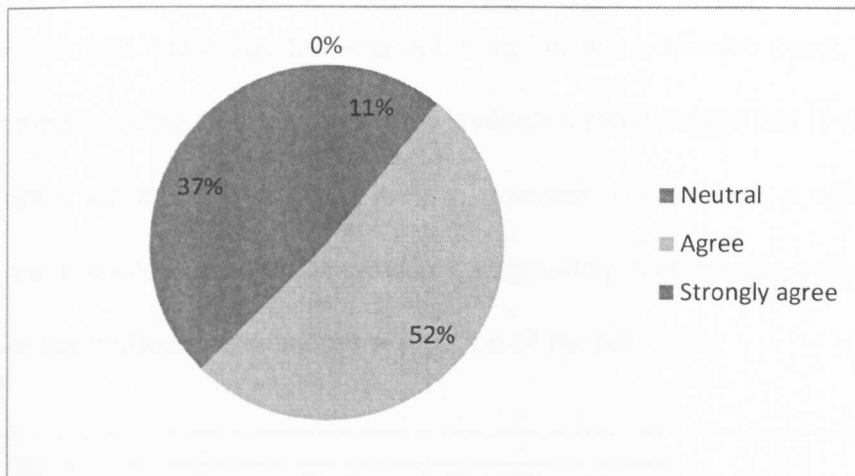
Figure 8.4.1: Fall as historic event in Islam rather than a sin

Figure 8.4.1 demonstrates that only a small number (11%) of respondents are indifferent about the issue of the fall as a historic event and the Prophets as too innocent to sin, whereas 52% agree and 37.5% strongly agree that the fall was just a historic event in Islam rather than a sin and the Prophets are too innocent to sin. It is critical to note that 0% of students disagreed with the statement, confirming that the fall is perceived to be a historic event in Islam rather than a sin.
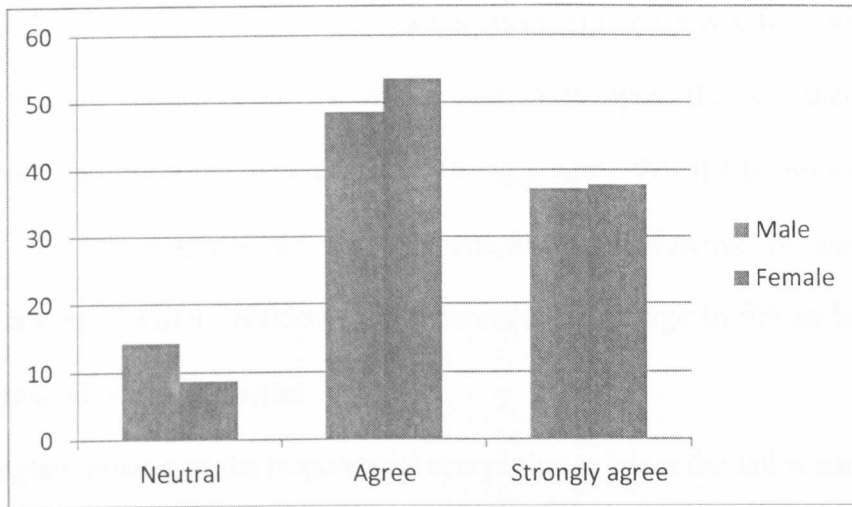
Figure 8.4.2: Fall as historic event in Islam rather than a sin

Figure 8.4.2 illustrates that only 14% of male and 9% of female students have no opinion on whether the fall was just a historic event or a sin. On the other hand, 49% male and 54% female students agree that fall was not a sin but just a historic event, and 37% of male and same percentage among the female students strongly agree that it was a historic event and not a sin and the Prophets are too innocent to sin. Thus, a complex set of responses are recorded from male students suggesting that female respondents are slightly more committed to the Islamic perception of the fall.
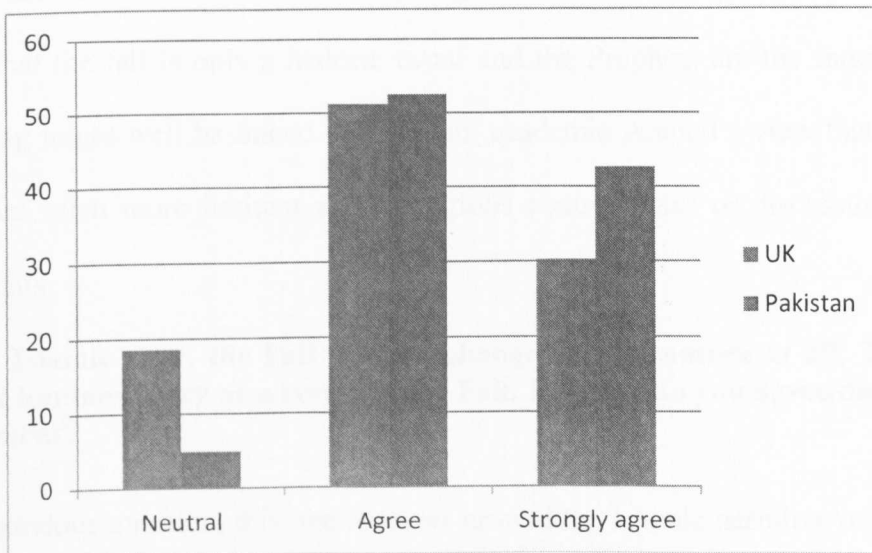
Figure 8.4.3: Fall as historic event in Islam rather than a sin

Figure 8.4.3 demonstrates that among UK students questioned about the nature of the fall in Islam, 19% are neutral about the whole case, 51% agree that the incident is of a historic nature and not a sin, whereas 30% strongly agree that it has more of a historic importance and the Prophets are too innocent to sin. Following the same range of responses, among Pakistani residents these percentages change to 5% as being neutral, 53% agree and 42% strongly agree.

A higher number of the respondents accept that in Islam the fall is considered as a historic event rather than a sin and the Prophets are too innocent to sin, as was noted in Chapter 3. Students completely avoided the options of disagree and strongly disagree, therefore their choice of neutral is used to assess their acceptance of this question. Thus, a marked difference is noted among the number of neutral responses – these are much higher in the UK than Pakistan, but their point of agreement about the historic nature of the fall is similar and remains more than half (53%). This suggests that Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK are religiously sympathetic towards the Prophets and are religiously committed irrespective of their cultural differences. The most traditional responses are recorded from Pakistani postgraduate female respondents who strongly accepted that the fall is only a historic event and the Prophets are too innocent to sin. This finding might well be linked to Pakistani academic Ahmed's view that his female students are often more hesitant about religious controversies or discussions than the male students.

Q. In the Islamic view, the Fall did not change human nature at all. There is no curse that humans carry as a result of the Fall. How far do you agree/disagree with this statement?

Like the previous question, this one revolves around the Islamic narrative of the fall and is based on the Islamic perspective that humans carry no curse related to the fall and that it did not change human nature. This question investigates Muslim students' awareness

of their religious beliefs in order to examine their perception of the Christian narrative of the fall presented in *Paradise Lost*.
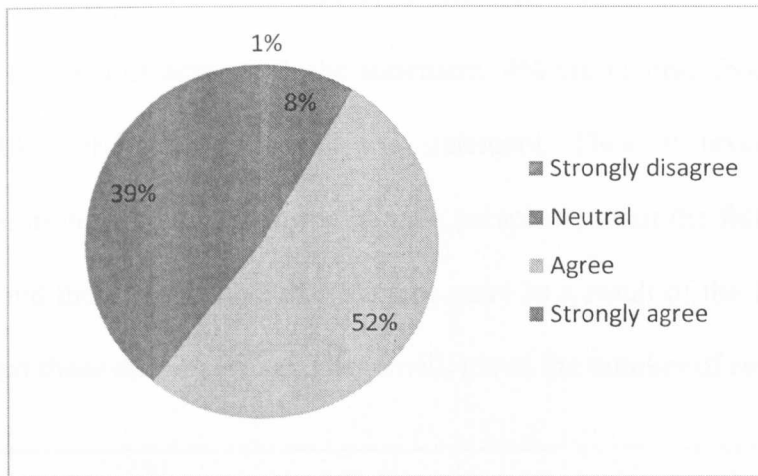
Figure 8.5.1: The Fall neither changed human nature nor is considered a curse

Figure 8.5.1 shows that only 1% of Muslim students strongly disagree that the fall neither changed human nature nor was a curse upon mankind. Consulting the original data, the percentage represents only one student who strongly disagreed to the statement and that is not a robust trend. However, 8% of respondents have no opinion on this statement and 52% agree that the fall didn't change human nature nor it is a curse, and 39% students strongly agree with this Islamic belief of creation.
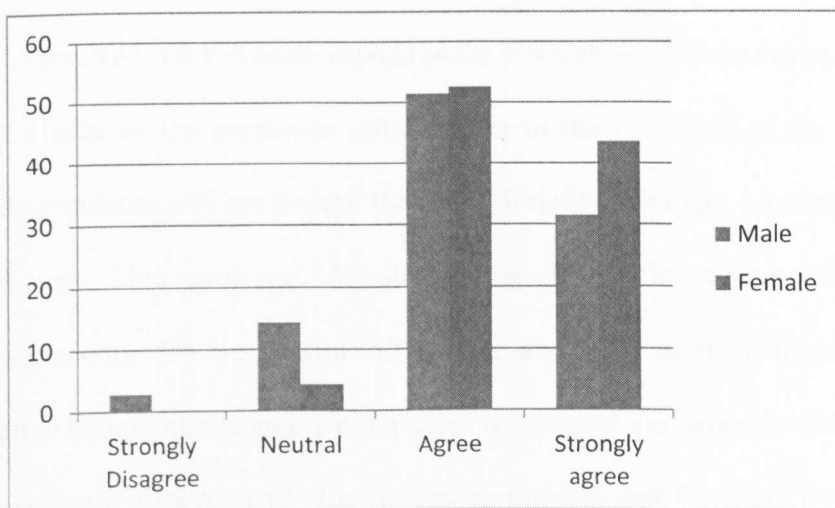
Figure 8.5.2: The Fall neither changed human nature nor is considered a curse

Figure 8.5.2 illustrates that among male students only 3% strongly disagree with the whole argument that the fall is not a curse and it did not change human nature, whereas 14% are neutral about it, 51% agree and 31% firmly believe in it. In the case of female students, none of them disagree with the statement, 4% are neutral about it, 52% agree with it and 44% strongly agree with the statement. Thus, it reveals that female respondents are more cautious about the Islamic perspective that the fall did not change human nature and there is no curse that humans carry as a result of the fall. However, it is also noted that these differences are very small, given the number of respondents.
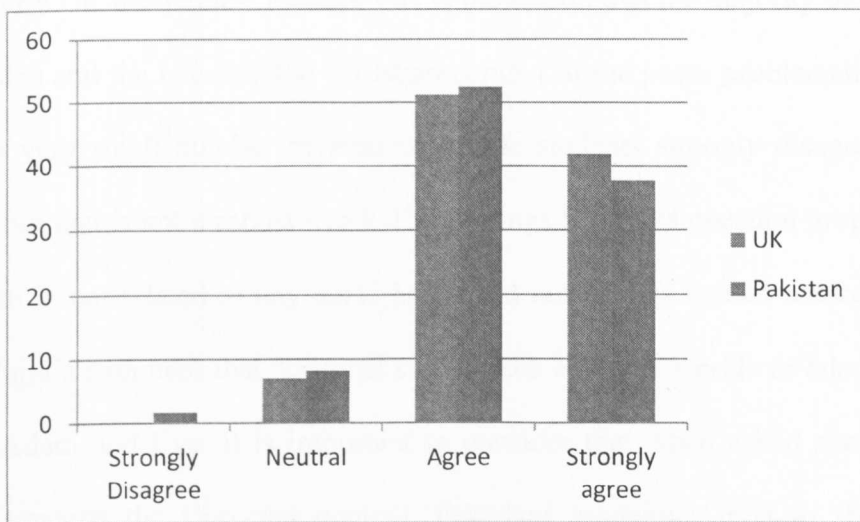
Figure 8.5.3: The Fall neither changed human nature nor is considered a curse

Figure 8.5.3 illustrates the responses with respect to the residence of the respondents; among UK respondents, 7% are neutral that the fall neither changes human nature nor is considered a curse, 51% agree and 42% strongly agree with the same statement. Among Pakistani respondents, 8% are neutral, 53% agree and 38% strongly agree that the fall does not change human nature and is not a curse upon mankind, whereas 2% of Pakistani respondents strongly disagree with this statement, proving that Pakistani respondents are somewhat less cautious about the Islamic perspective of the fall than UK respondents.

The overall responses of Muslim students agree with the statement in the question, however their responses are not as predictable as the responses in the previous questions. Instead of the commonality seen in previous responses (having Pakistani respondents sticking more to the extreme agreements of the questions), the most religiously committed responses for this question are noted from UK females, who believed the fall did not change human nature and humans are not born with a curse of sin. This implies that Muslim students, irrespective of their cultural background, are well aware of their religious beliefs and the context of the Quranic narrative of the fall as was pointed out by UK academics. Perhaps this is the reason that the majority of the students from Pakistan and the UK find the Christian context of the poem problematic[238]. On the contrary, a very small number of Pakistani male students strongly disagree with this statement, but that is not a robust trend. The findings from this question propose that the fall in Islam is not related to any curse and it did not change human nature, as well as verifying Jujja's comment that "original sin" is seen as Satan's pride in Islam and is not related to Adam and Eve. It is important to consider that when asked about student's resistance towards the Christian context, Pakistani academics tend to show lack of awareness to the extent of problems students might face due to the Christian belief that relates the original sin to Adam and Eve, although they seemed aware of the original sin only related to Satan in Islam.

8.4 Identity of Eve

This section explores the identity of Eve in *Paradise Lost* and compares it with the Islamic Eve (Hawwa). In the Biblical narrative of the fall contextualised in *Paradise Lost*, Eve brings about the fall after being seduced by Satan and subsequently tempts Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. In the Islamic narrative of the creation, both Adam and

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[238] See findings of Question 1

Eve ate the fruit together because of Satan's temptation and Eve bears no sin and no curse. It would help to examine students' affiliation and devotion to the Islamic Eve and their perception of Eve in *Paradise Lost*.

Q. **What is the first phrase that comes to your mind when you are asked about Islamic Eve, Hadrat Hawwa?** (*Please check only one*): Mother of humankind, First woman on earth, Cause of Adam's fall, Disobedient towards God, Other (please specify).

Muslim students are asked about their perception of the Islamic Eve in order to explore how they identify her in relation to the fall.
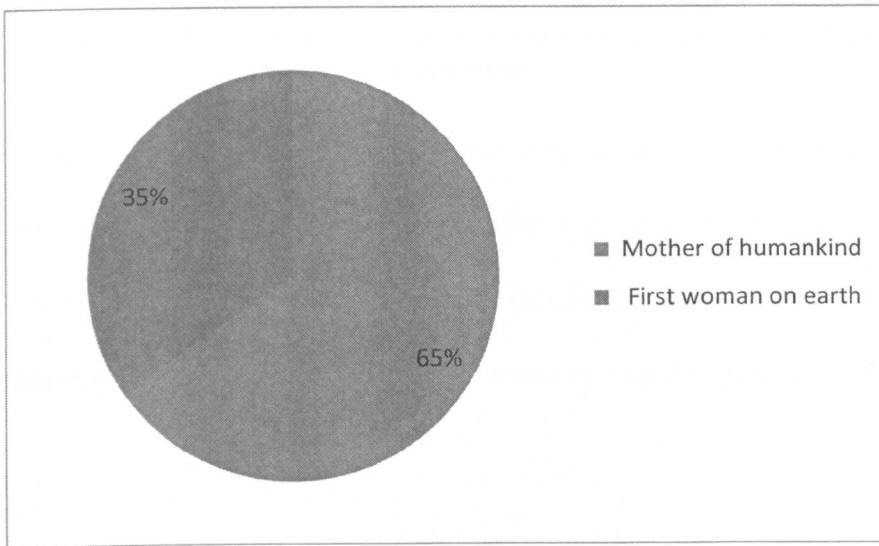
Figure 8.6.1: First phrase that comes to mind when asked about Islamic Eve (Hawwa)

Figure 8.6.1 illustrates the overall responses of Muslim students about how they perceive Hawwa; 65% responded that Eve is the mother of humankind, whereas 35% perceive her as the first woman on earth. It is important to note that for this question and the following one (where the question is about perceiving Milton's Eve), the options were identical and students had to choose from one of them. However, all the Muslim students choose mother of mankind or first woman on earth, and not the other options, the cause of Adam's fall or as disobedient to God.
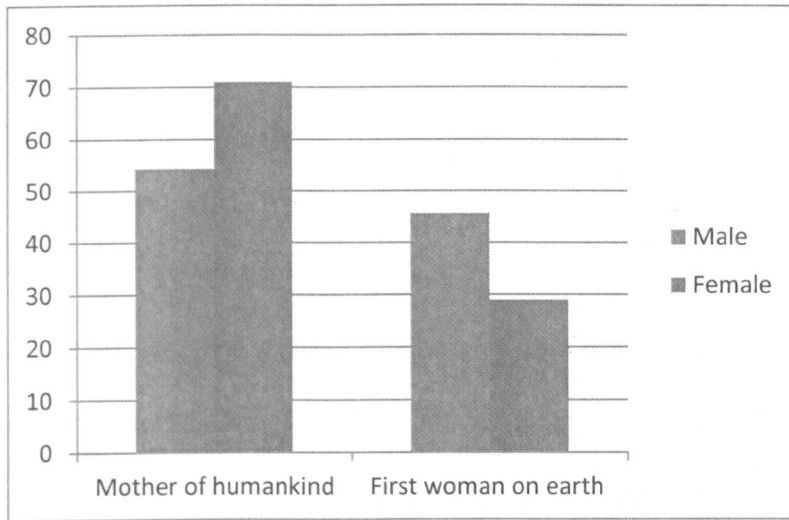
Figure 8.6.2: First phrase that comes to mind when asked about Islamic Eve (Hawwa)

Figure 8.6.2 demonstrates the differences between how male and female Muslim students perceive Hawwa: 71% of female students and 54% of male students perceive her as a mother of humankind, whereas the rest consider her as the first woman on earth. This proposes that female students consider her more as a mother and show bonding with her.
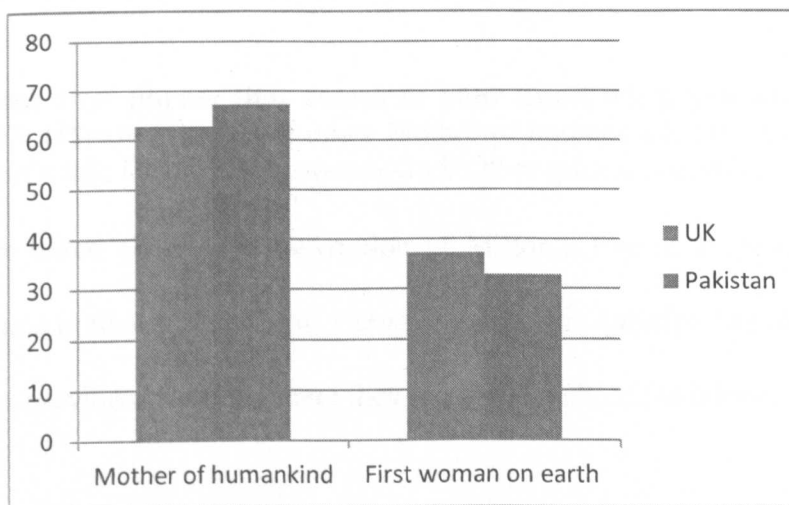
Figure 8.6.3: First word that comes to mind when asked about Islamic Eve

Figure 8.6.3 illustrates that 63% of UK students noted Eve as the mother of humankind, whereas the rest of the students considered her to be the first woman on earth. In the case

of Pakistan, 67% of the students responded that was Eve the mother of humankind, whereas the rest considered her to be the first woman on earth. It demonstrates that there is little difference between the responses of students from Pakistan and the UK, although Pakistani students showed more recognition of Islamic Eve as mother of mankind.

It is crucial to consider the significance of this question, as it gives the first impression that comes to students' minds about the Islamic Eve. All of the respondents opt for mother of mankind and first woman on earth, leaving the other options of the cause of Adam's fall and disobedient to God, proving that the Islamic Eve is not recognised as a sinner. It is suggested from the findings that more than half of Pakistani and UK respondents feel connected with Eve as they perceive her as mother of mankind, and perhaps are likely to be disconcerted by the Biblical context of the fall in *Paradise Lost*. Therefore, the findings illustrated by the above figures can be perceived that religion is for Muslim students a universal truth that does not extensively change by cultural perspective or gender. The questionnaires therefore verify Campbell's observation that Muslim students believe their identity to be defined by their faith.

Q. What is the first phrase that comes to your mind when you are asked about Milton's Eve? (*Please check only one*): Mother of humankind, First woman on earth, Cause of Adam's fall, Disobedient towards God, Other (please specify).

Students were asked about their perception of Milton's Eve in order to explore their attitudes to the narrative of the fall in *Paradise Lost*. This question has identical options as given in the previous question where they were asked about the Islamic Eve.
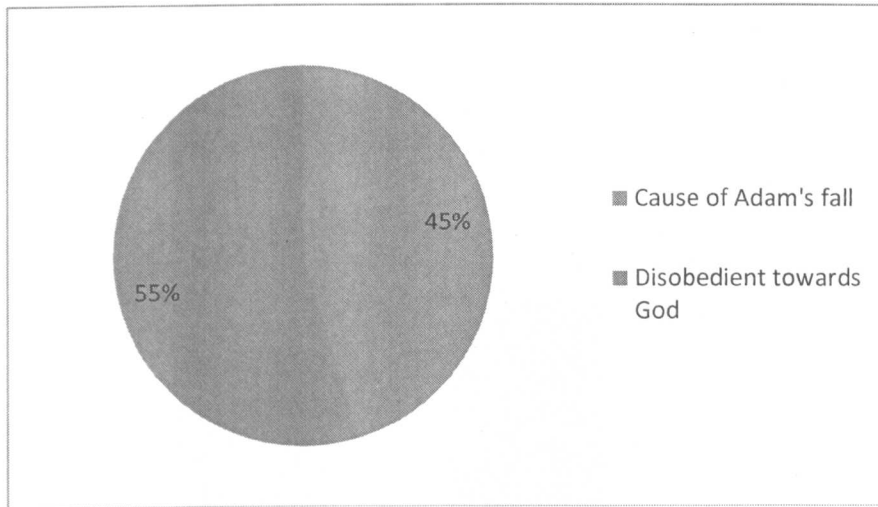
Figure 8.7.1 First phrase that comes to mind when asked about Milton's Eve

Figure 8.7.1 demonstrates the overall responses of Muslim students on how they perceive Milton's Eve. It suggests that 45% of students consider Milton's Eve as the cause of Adam's fall, whereas 55% believe her to be disobedient towards God. They leave the option of first woman on earth and mother of mankind (which they chose for Islamic Eve). More than half the students chose the option identifying Milton's Eve as disobedient towards God. This suggests that while considering Milton's Eve, students can distinguish between the Christian and Islamic perspective and respond according to their previous religious knowledge.
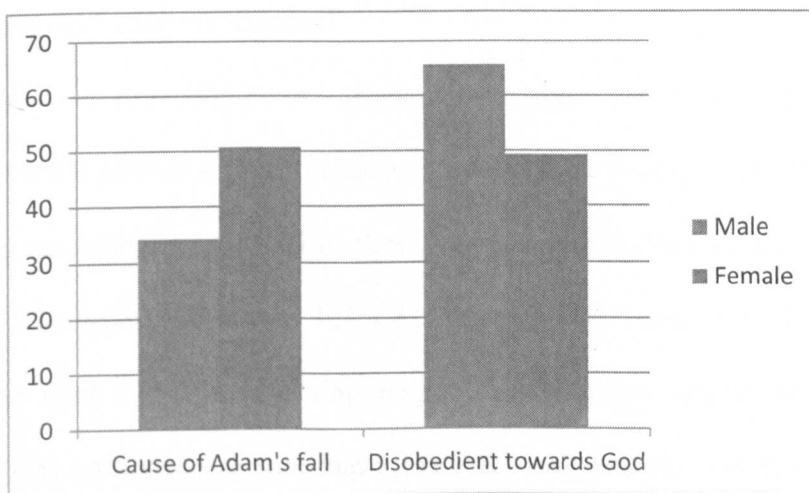
Figure 8.7.2 First phrase that comes to mind when asked about Milton's Eve

The following Figure 8.7.2 demonstrates that among male respondents, 34% blame Eve for Adam's fall whereas 51% of female students believe her to be the reason for Adam's

fall. On the other hand, 66% of the male and 49% of the female respondents perceive her as disobedient towards God and see her as the cause of Adam's fall.
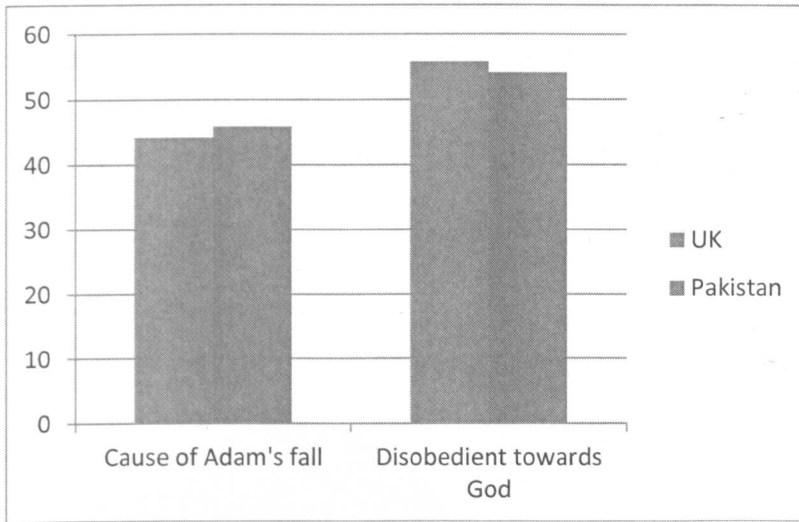
Figure 8.7.3 First phrase that comes to mind when asked about Milton's Eve

When comparing the responses with respect to country of residence, Figure 8.7.3 demonstrates that in the UK 44% of students blame Eve for Adam's fall, whereas 46% of Pakistani students believe the same. On the other hand, 56% of UK-resident students believe that she was disobedient towards God, and in Pakistan 54% of students also believe her to be disobedient towards God. The responses from Pakistani and UK students are seen to be almost identical.

This question proved to be of importance because it clearly distinguishes between the Islamic Eve and Milton's Eve. Similarly, it is also vital to understand that the options given for this question are identical to those given in the previous question, where the Islamic Eve is discussed. More than half of the respondents believe that Milton's Eve is disobedient to God and the remaining respondents consider her to be a reason for Adam's fall. It is interesting to note that more Pakistani students consider Milton's Eve as to be the cause of Adam's fall. This might indicate that they in some ways echo the Early Modern ideal of keeping a husband in high esteem, and perhaps this is their

cultural understanding of gender relationships. More UK respondents perceive Eve as disobedient to God, so perhaps their commitment to God made them feel that disobedience to God is a greater sin than causing (human) Adam's fall.

Q. How does it make you feel to consider the Islamic Eve (Hawwa) as a temptress or seductress?

Respondents are asked about their comfort level when perceiving the Islamic Eve (Hawwa) in the light of the Biblical narrative of the fall that is presented in *Paradise Lost,* in which Eve is shown as a temptress.
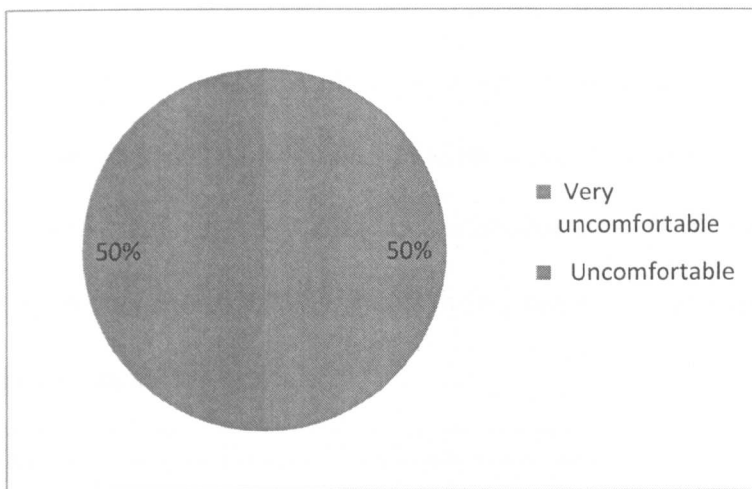
Figure 8.8.1: Considering Islamic Eve a temptress or seductress

Figure 8.8.1 suggests that 50% of Muslim students are very uncomfortable when considering the Islamic Eve as a temptress and the rest, 50%, feel uncomfortable, leaving the options of comfortable, very comfortable and neutral. This demonstrates that Muslim students find it difficult to learn about the Biblical interpretation of the fall and relate Eve with Hawwa as they are very uncomfortable when considering Hawwa as a temptress or a seductress.
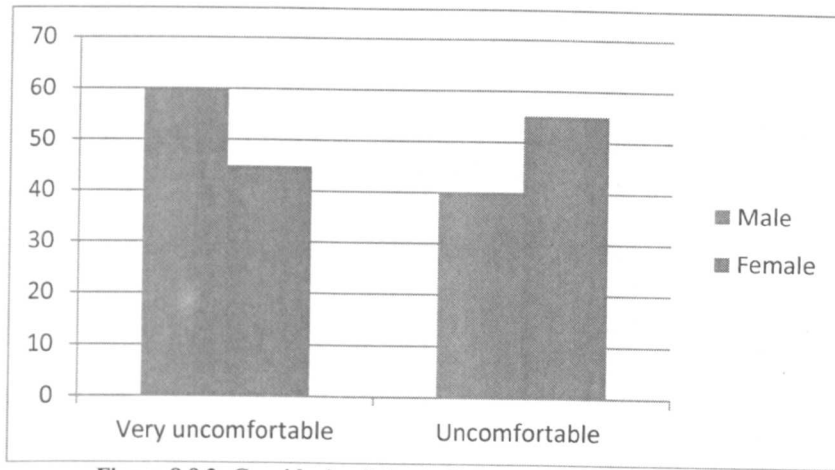
Figure 8.8.2: Considering Islamic Eve a temptress or seductress

Figure 8.8.2 illustrates that more than half (60%) of the male Muslim students are very uncomfortable in perceiving Islamic Eve as a temptress and the rest (40%) feel uncomfortable. However, 45% of female Muslim students agree that they are very uncomfortable, whereas the rest (55%) feel uncomfortable when considering Hawwa as a temptress. The figure suggests that male students feel more uncomfortable than females in perceiving Hawwa as a temptress.
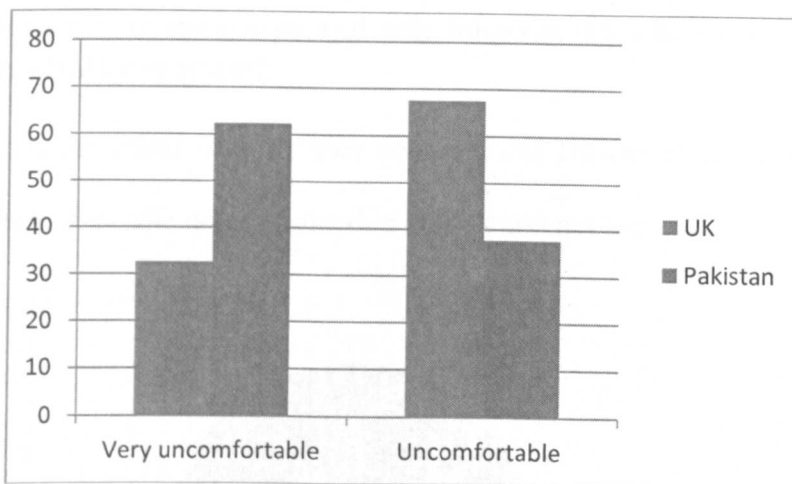
Figure 8.8.3: Considering Islamic Eve a temptress or seductress

Figure 8.8.3 demonstrates that more students from the UK (67%) are uncomfortable than Pakistani students (32%) in considering Hawwa as a temptress. However, Pakistani students responded more about being very uncomfortable (62%) than UK students (33%), showing their religious attachment with Hawwa.

All students from Pakistan and the UK agreed that they feel uncomfortable in considering the Islamic Eve as a temptress or seductress. It is interesting to note that for this question more female students opted for uncomfortable with normal intensity, whereas male students chose very uncomfortable in perceiving Eve as temptress, showing their stronger religious affiliation with Eve. Although the overall responses from Pakistan and the UK are equally divided between the options of very uncomfortable and uncomfortable and students completely disregarded the other options (comfortable and very comfortable), more Pakistani male students opted for very uncomfortable in perceiving the Islamic Eve as temptress/seductress. This finding can be related to Pakistani academic Ahmed's comment of students being cautious of what he says about "their Eve" and the growing religious intolerance pointed out by Jujja. Similarly, Ahmed and Falaksher noted that it is helpful to harness those religious feelings by presenting Eve as mother of mankind instead of sinner.

Q. Eve is not named in the *Quran* and only found in Hadith; do you think Eve has no significant identity in Islam?

The respondents are asked whether they consider that Hawwa (Eve) has no significant identity in Islam, since she is only named in Hadith and not the *Quran*.
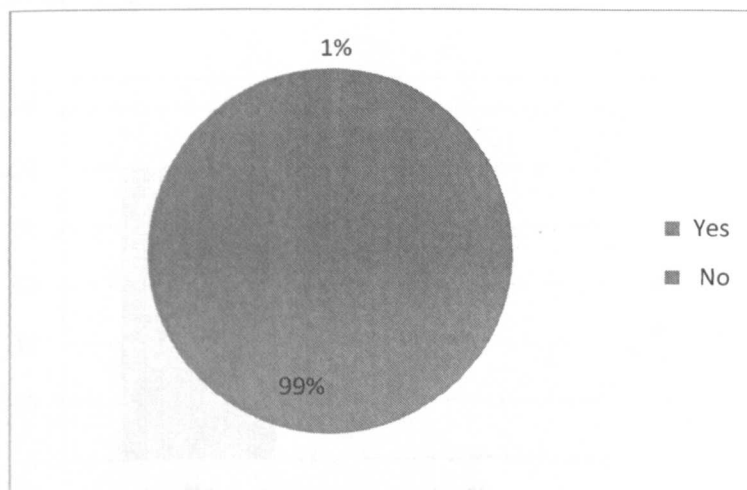
Figure 8.9.1: Eve's significance in Islam

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Figure 8.9.1 illustrates the overall responses of students from Pakistan and the UK when asked about the significance of Eve in Islam, particularly as she is not mentioned in the *Quran*. Only 1% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 99% of the responses negate the statement affirming Eve's significance in Islam. Consulting the original data, the percentage represents only one student who strongly agreed with the statement, and that is not a robust trend.
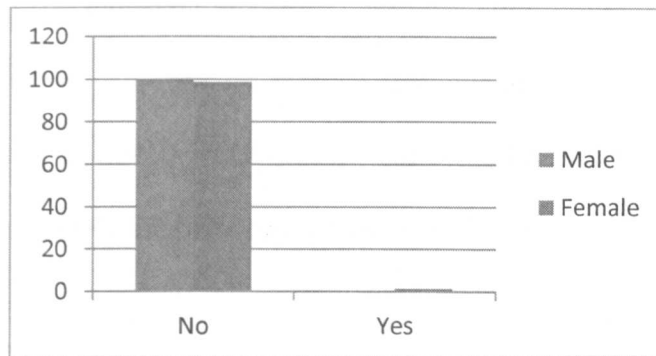
Figure 8.9.2: Eve's significance in Islam

Figure 8.9.2 demonstrates that all male students (100%) agreed that Hawwa has significance in Islam, whereas in the case of female students only 1% believe Hawwa to be insignificant in Islamic perspective. This proposes that male respondents appear to be slightly more committed religiously than female respondents, although the difference between them is only 1%.
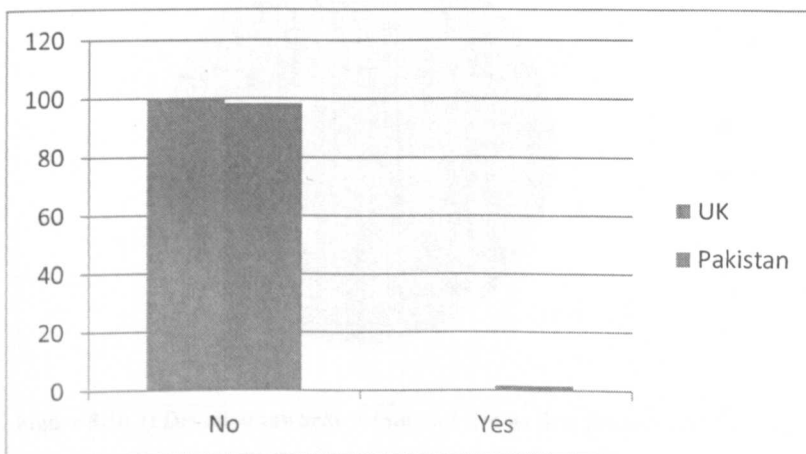
Figure 8.9.3: Eve's significance in Islam

UK-resident students, as demonstrated in Figure 8.9.3, all agree with the statement that Eve is a significant figure in Islamic view. Among Pakistani respondents only 2% believe that she is not an important figure in the history of Islam, whereas the remaining 98% believe in her significance.

The findings that emerged from this question suggest that UK students are more convinced that Eve has significance in Islam (even though she is not mentioned by name in the *Quran*) than the Pakistani students, who only slightly (1%) disagreed with that statement. It is, therefore, important to note that overall, students from the UK and Pakistan realise Eve's significance religiously and it can be perceived that their religious awareness of the fall in Islamic perspective that is not linked to Eve.

Q. Do you as a Muslim feel devoted to the first Prophets, Adam and Eve, and love them as your first parents?

The respondents are asked about their affection and devotion towards Adam and Eve as the first Prophets and parents, as in the Islamic tradition they are considered to be the first parents of mankind.
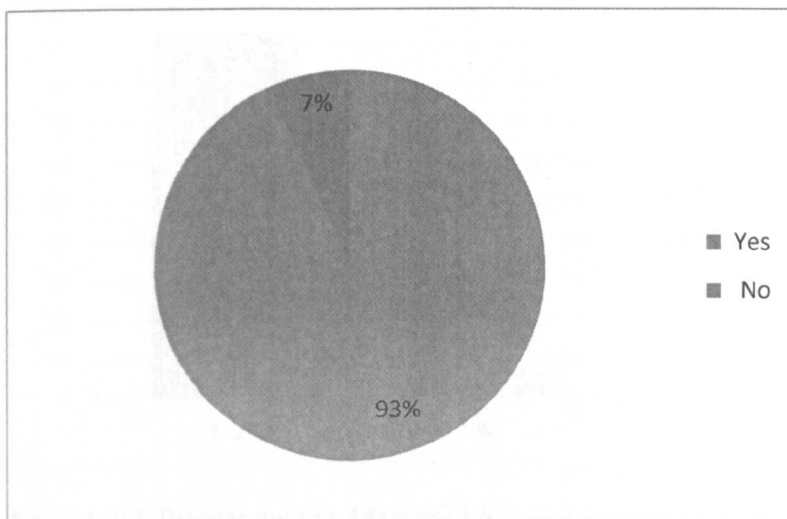
Figure 8.10.1: Devotion towards Adam and Eve as first parents and Prophets

Figure 8.10.1 illustrates that only 7% of the students say they feel no affection or devotion to Adam and Eve, however the remaining 93% admit their attachment and affection for them.
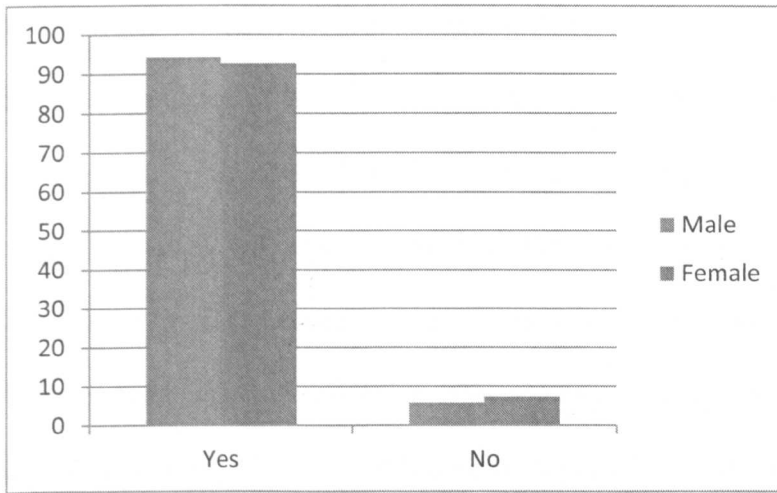
Figure 8.10.2: Devotion towards Adam and Eve as first parents and Prophets

Figure 8.10.2 demonstrates that 94% of male respondents and 93% of female respondents feel devoted to Adam and Eve as their first parents and the Prophets, whereas as little as 7% of female respondents and 6% of male respondents disregard this idea of love and devotion towards Adam and Eve. Thus, the responses of male and female students are nearly identical in this regard.
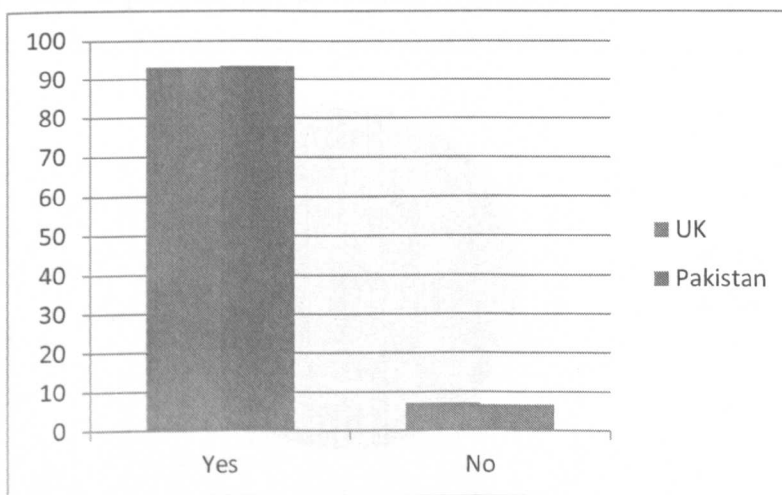
Figure 8.10.3: Devotion towards Adam and Eve as first parents and Prophets

Figure 8.10.3 demonstrates the responses of UK and Pakistani students and suggests that UK students and Pakistani students demonstrate the same percentage (93%) in responding to the devotion and affection towards Adam and Eve.

The findings from this question propose that the association Muslim students feel with Adam and Eve is because of their religious affection and devotion towards them, and only a small number of students (7%) felt otherwise. The responses of students are very similar and even identical, suggesting that the core religious questions are responded to in a similar way, regardless of gender and country of residence. It is noted that Muslim students' responses are reliant on Islamic perspectives and they consider it as the only truth to believe in. This can be linked to Wynne-Davies' comment that she can envisage students' resistance on Christian texts if they believe their religion is the ultimate truth, and therefore students' consistent responses, in line with the Islamic perspective, suggests students' resistance and ultimate belief in Islam.

Q. Do you think Milton is partial if he suggests Eve as inferior to Adam?

After discussing the problems of the Christian context of the poem and the discussion about perceiving Hawwa as a temptress, Muslim respondents are asked if they consider Milton biased when he presents Eve as inferior to Adam.
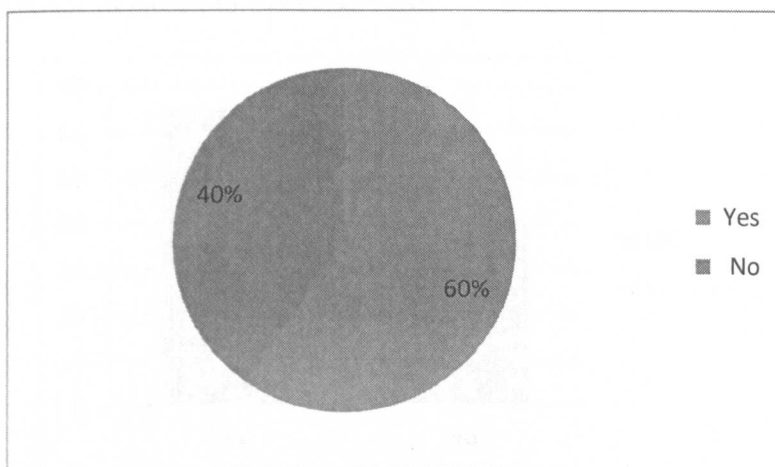
Figure 8.11.1 Milton is partial if suggests Eve's inferior status to Adam

Figure 8.11.1 illustrates the overall responses of Muslim students if they consider Milton to be partial on presenting Eve as inferior to Adam. It suggests that more than half (60%) of the respondents believe that Milton is partial when he suggests Eve is of an inferior state to Adam, whereas the remaining 40% believe that Milton is not partial in doing that.
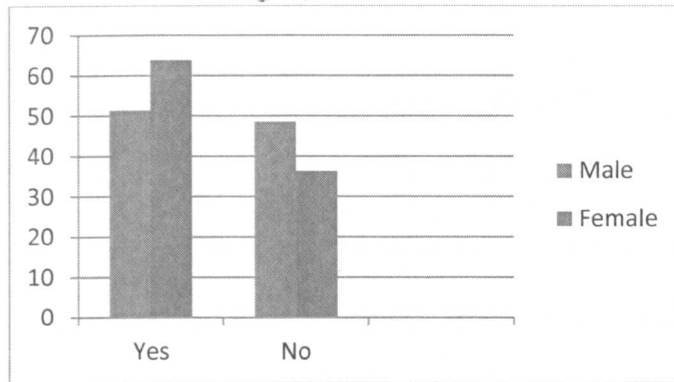
Figure 8.11.2 Milton is partial if suggests Eve's inferior status to Adam

Figure 8.11.2 illustrates that female students (64%) are most likely to perceive Milton as biased as compared to male respondents (51%), whereas remaining females (36%) and remaining males (49%) understand the opposite. It is evident from the finding that female Muslim students tend to find it more disturbing than male students that Eve is presented as inferior to Adam in *Paradise Lost*.
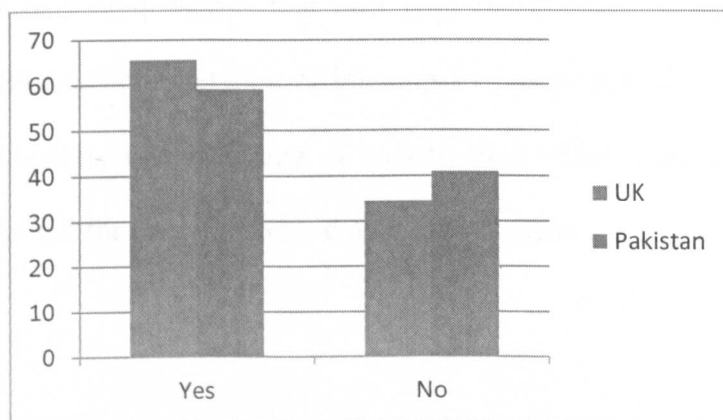
Figure 8.11.3 Milton is partial if suggests Eve's inferior status to Adam

Higher number of respondents from the UK (66%) and Pakistan (59%) believe that Milton is partial in suggesting Eve's inferior status to Adam, and the remaining respondents from the UK and Pakistan believe him to be impartial. Figure 8.11.3 demonstrates that responses from Pakistan find Milton less partial than UK students, who are more likely to find Milton biased on presenting Eve as inferior.

The findings extracted from the above discussion suggest that overall female students may relate to Eve more than their male counterparts, as they found Milton biased in his presentation of Eve. The responses for this question are not identical and have considerable variation; perhaps this is because the question is not directly related to the narrative of the fall and religious issues, so that students were able to think about the poem as independent of religion. Muslim students' lack of resistance in this question is noted due to the fact that religion (Christianity/Islam) as a whole is not addressed. Moreover, the country analysis proposes that UK students are more likely to find a bias than Pakistani respondents; this must be seen in relation to the trends of feminism in each country, as in the UK feminism is widely accepted and female rights are considered as an important issue, whereas in Pakistan feminism is gradually establishing.

8.5 Punishment of the Fall

This section consists of questions that deal with the Quranic account of the fall in contrast to the Biblical interpretation of blaming Eve as presented in *Paradise Lost*. It also examines Muslims' understanding of menstruation which resulted as a marker of punishment of the fall for Eve and Eve's daughters (women).

Q. The Quranic narrative of the Fall suggests that Satan tempted Adam and Eve together to eat the forbidden fruit; do you think we can blame only Eve in *Paradise Lost* for the Fall?

Respondents are asked if they think that the fall in *Paradise Lost* should only be regarded as Eve's fault, and in contrast to the Quranic narrative, she should be solely blamed for the fall.
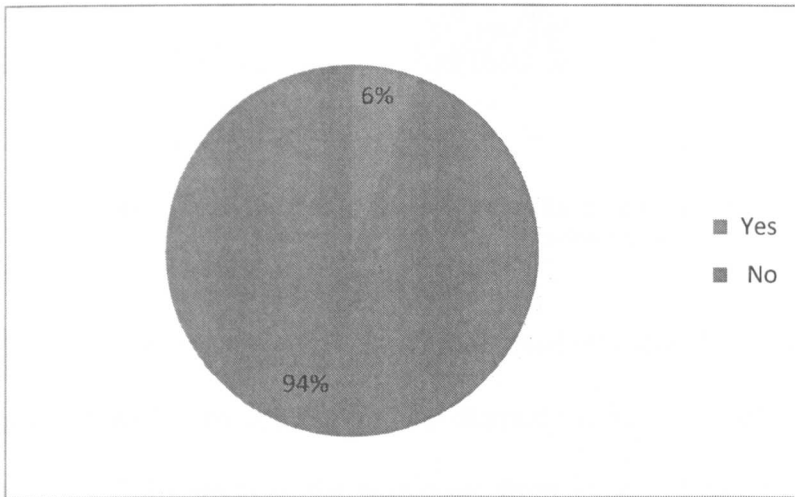

Figure 8.12.1: Eve having been tempted by Satan should be solely blamed for eating the forbidden fruit

Figure 8.12.1 demonstrates the overall responses of Muslim students from Pakistan and the UK. It suggests that as little as 6% of respondents agree that Eve should be blamed for the fall in *Paradise Lost*, but the most common response (94%) is that Eve should not be solely blamed for the fall, proposing that Muslim students are sympathetic to Milton's Eve in light of the Quranic account of the fall.
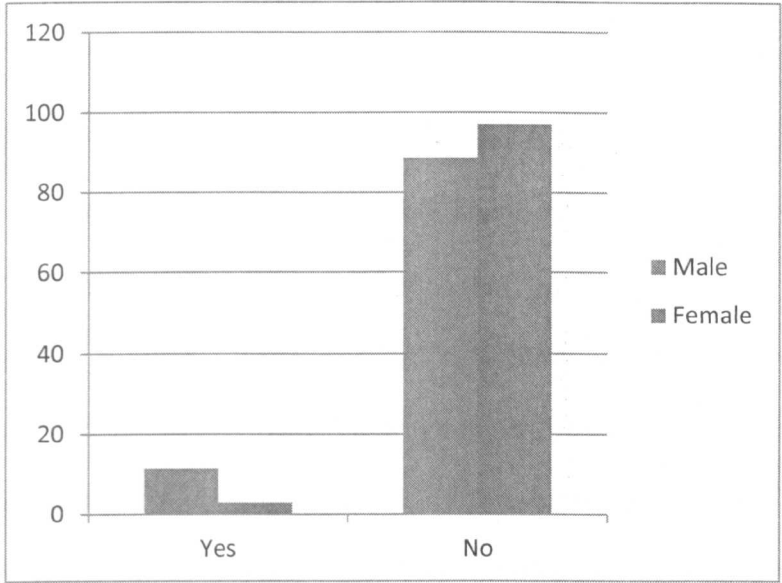
Figure 8.12.2: Eve having been tempted by Satan should be solely blamed for eating the forbidden fruit

Figure 8.12.2 demonstrates that only 11% of male students and 3% of female students believe that Eve should be the only one to be blamed for being tempted by Satan and eating the forbidden fruit; whereas the responses from male (97%) and female (89%) Muslim students support the idea that Eve must not be blamed alone for being tempted by Satan and for eating the forbidden fruit. Although both male and female students are supportive of Milton's Eve, the responses from female students are (8%) higher than males.
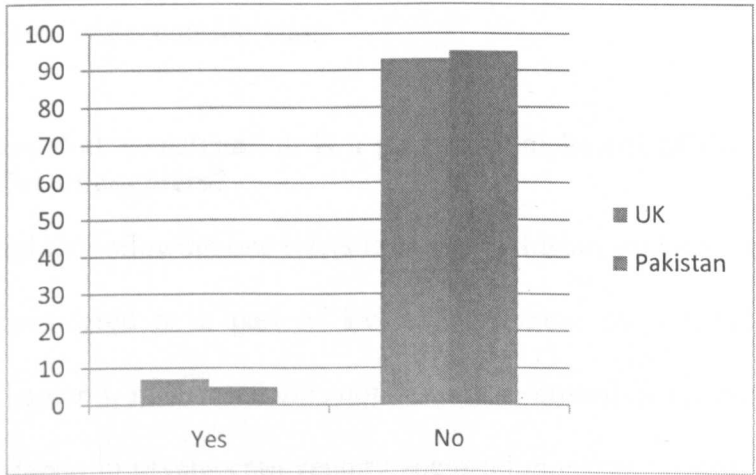
Figure 8.12.3: Eve having been tempted by Satan should be solely blamed for eating the forbidden fruit

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Only 7% of UK students and 5% of Pakistani students support the idea of blaming Eve alone for having been tempted by Satan, as illustrated in Figure 8.12.3. However, the remaining UK (93%) and Pakistani (95%) respondents believe that she should not be the only one to be blamed for eating the forbidden fruit.

The findings from this question propose that the majority of Muslim students from Pakistan and the UK are sympathetic towards Milton's Eve. Male respondents showed the least agreement with this question whereas females the most that Eve should not be blamed in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The findings can also be interpreted as an emerging social change in Pakistan that was pointed out by Ahmed, since female students in Pakistan are reacting against gender discrimination and they disregard Milton's punishment of Eve as a result of the fall. Although UK academics never noticed students arguing about the Biblical treatment of women represented in literature, Ahmed and Jujja noted students' reaction to Christian texts, asking why women are always blamed and how this accusation is related to the Biblical interpretation of Eve/women. In interview findings, the idea of controlled teaching is found to be a major issue in Pakistani academic system, whereas it is noted that Muslim students in the UK do not open up much to express themselves as compared to the Pakistani students, and this should be taken into wider consideration.

Q. Do you agree that menstruation is a part of punishment of the Fall associated with Eve and Eve's daughters?

This question and the following one seeks to explore Muslim students' attitudes towards menstruation, considered as a part of Eve's punishment for the fall. As discussed previously in Chapter 3, menstruation is not directly discussed in *Paradise Lost*, since it was considered taboo in seventeenth century socio-religious framework, but it is tacitly

prefigured when Milton narrates God's punishment of Eve with the pain of childbirth and the recognition of fertility.
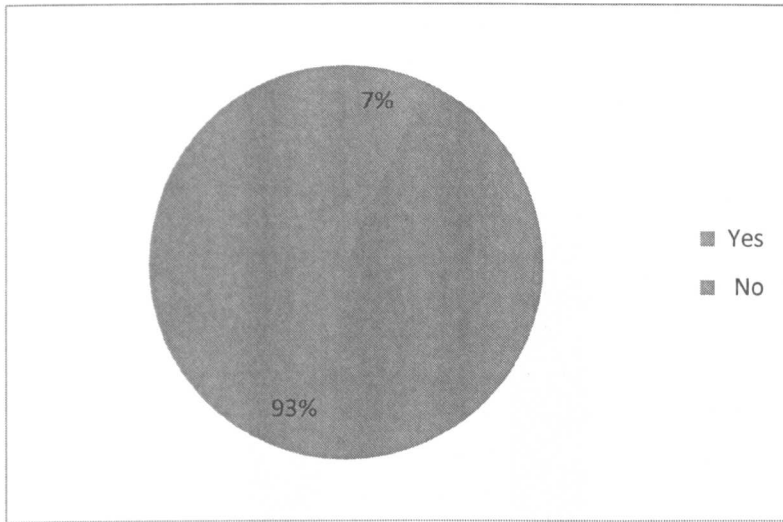

Figure 8.13.1: Menstruation as a punishment of the fall for Eve and Eve's daughters (women)

Figure 8.13.1 demonstrates the overall responses of Muslims' perception of menstruation as a result of Eve's punishment for the fall. It shows that only 7% of the total respondents agree with the statement that menstruation is a punishment of the fall, whereas the remaining 93% refute this concept.
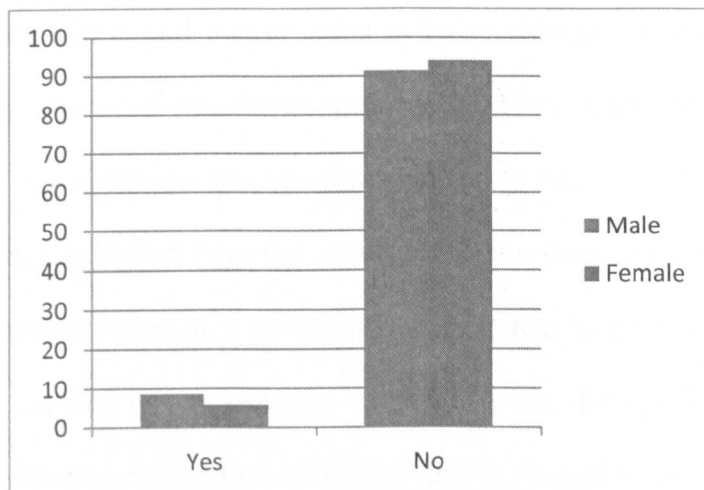
Figure 8.13.2: Menstruation as a punishment of the fall for Eve and Eve's daughters (women)

However, among male Muslim students 9% agree with this statement and consider menstruation as a punishment of the fall, whereas 91% disregard this concept and

consider it to be a natural process. In the case of female respondents, 6% consider menstruation to be a part of punishment of the fall and 94% think otherwise, as shown in Figure 8.13.2. This demonstrates that the responses of male and female respondents are similar.
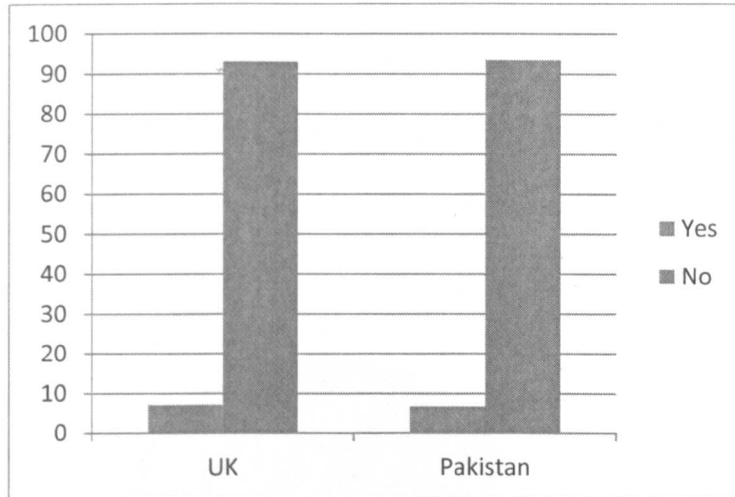

Figure 8.13.3: Menstruation as a punishment of the fall for Eve and Eve's daughters (women)

Figure 8.13.3 illustrates the distinctions of students' responses according to country of residence. It shows that UK respondents (7%) and Pakistani respondents (7%) present identical responses and regard menstruation to be punishment of the fall for Eve and women; similarly, the same number of respondents (93%) from the UK and Pakistan rejected this idea of menstruation as a punishment for the fall.

The findings extracted from the above discussion proposes that Muslim students do not consider menstruation as a part of punishment that is given to Eve/women as a result of the fall, as they do not perceive the fall as a sin. This perhaps is due to their realisation of the Islamic perspective of the fall (that is caused by Satan instead of Eve), and therefore menstruation is not the result of a curse. Similarly, Islam has favoured motherhood and considered childbirth as a blessing. Therefore, students perceive

menstruation according to the Islamic perspective discussed earlier in Chapter 4 and do not consider menstruation as punishment for the fall of Eve and her daughters.

Q. Do you agree that menstruation is a marker of impiousness and uncleanness of woman originated by the temptation of Satan?

This question was a counterpart of the previous question, which deals with menstruation as a part of the punishment of the fall. In this question, Muslim respondents are asked whether they consider that menstruation is caused by Satan's temptation to Eve and if they perceive it as impiousness and uncleanness due to Satan's temptation.

0%3%

97%

Yes
No
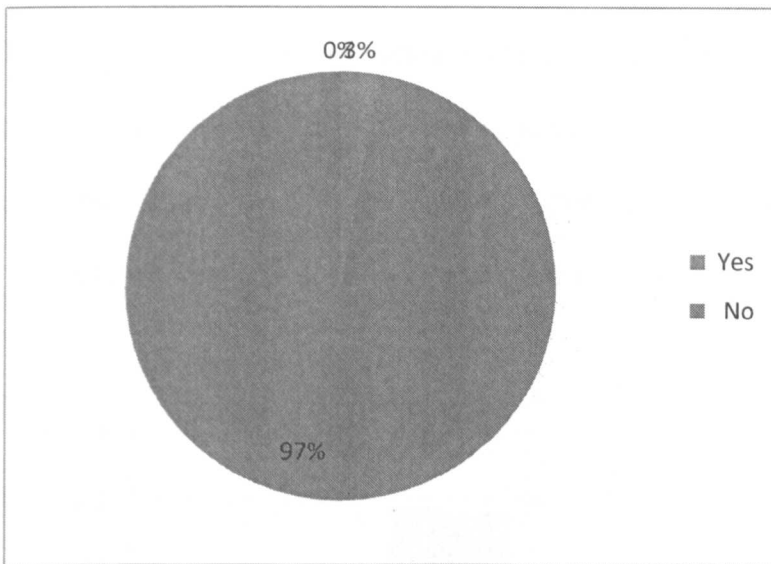
Figure 8.13.1: Menstruation caused by Satan's temptation

Figure 8.14.1 demonstrates that as little as 3% of Muslim students agree that menstruation in woman is caused by the impiousness and uncleanness is a result of Satan's temptation. On the other hand, the remaining 97% disregard menstruation as a part of the fall and do not consider women impious or unclean as a result of the fall.
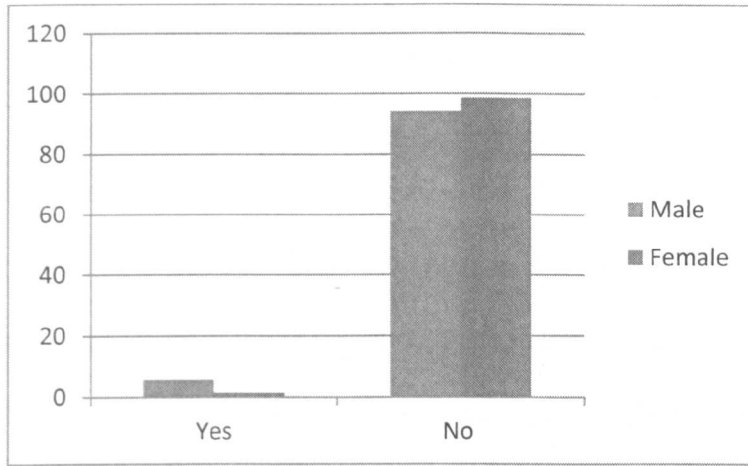
Figure 8.13.2: Menstruation caused by Satan's temptation

Figure 8.13.2 illustrates the variation in responses according to the gender of the respondents. Only 6% of male and 1% of female students regard menstruation as a result of the impious and unclean nature of women that resulted from Satan's temptation, whereas the remaining respondents consider it to be a natural process. This means that a small number of male respondents do believe that menstruation is a cause of Satan's temptation.
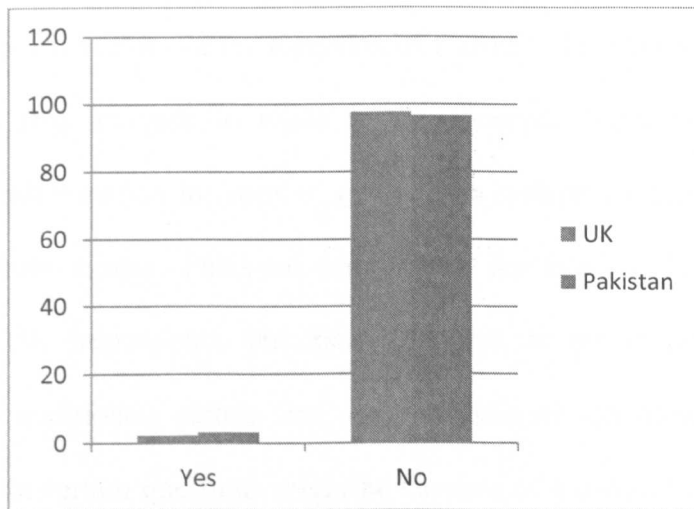

Figure 8.13.3: Menstruation caused by Satan's temptation

Among UK residents only 2% agree that menstruation is a marker of impiousness and uncleanness of woman resulting from Satan's temptation, and among Pakistani residents

3% believe the same. On the other hand, 98% of UK students and 97% of Pakistani residents rejected it as a false assumption, as illustrated in Figure 8.13.3.

The findings evidenced from the question suggest that Muslim students do not consider menstruation as a result of Satan's temptation and the fall, and the responses are similar among respondents from the perspective of gender and country of residence. This suggests that Muslim students retain a full awareness of the Islamic perspective of the fall and perceive it as Satan's fault instead of Eve's, even when reading Christian-based literature.

8.6 Conclusion

The conclusion in this chapter sums up all the key findings from this chapter and analyse them in relation to interview findings along with the findings of Part A of this study.

8.6.1 Christian context of *Paradise Lost*

It is suggested from the findings that most of the Muslim respondents from Pakistan and the UK experience difficulties in the reception of *Paradise Lost* because of its Christian context and that they struggle to relate to the concepts that contradict an Islamic perspective. Overall variation in terms of gender and cultural background is also noted but this is far from simple. Pakistani respondents are seen to be more religiously committed than UK respondents, but their responses do not show a regular (either religious or less traditional) pattern and vary in different questions. Students' less traditional views in certain questions might be because of a cultural context that allows them to have a liberal religious view, or due to their age they are not as mature as postgraduate students and so do not show a keen interest in religion. But it is not always the case that UK students' views are less Islamic, since they found the Christian context of the poem more disconcerting than Pakistani students did.

It is useful to consider that none of Pakistani and UK academics reported much significant resistance from the students due to the Christian context of the poem, but responses of the students suggest that it is certainly problematic for them as was argued in Part A of this study. Although Pakistani academics do not involve many Christian concepts by teaching only the first two Books of *Paradise Lost*, Pakistani students' responses suggested a significant difficulty with the Christian context of the poem. On the other hand, UK academics teach all the major (Christian) themes of the poem and yet UK students showed that they are troubled too. Therefore, there is a need to introduce some radical changes[239] in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of the Christian texts, like *Paradise Lost*, in Pakistan and the UK in order to develop productive teaching and acceptance of Christian texts.

8.6.2 Narrative of creation in Islam and *Paradise Lost*

It is often observed that Muslim students, irrespective of their gender and country of residence, responded in similar ways: indeed, sometimes their responses were identical. The main reason for these similar or even identical responses, is the nature of questions where religious beliefs (Christianity and/or Islam) were directly addressed or contradictory. This is due to Muslim students' deep understanding of the Quranic narrative of creation, as the questions on the Islamic perspective of the fall were responded to identically and in line with the Quranic perspective.

Overall, in this section, students from both Pakistan and the UK appeared conscious about religious questions of the poem that relate to or contradict with the Islamic perspective, for example in questions where Milton's narrative of creation contradicts with the Quranic perspective, it is interesting to note that the responses on the

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[239] See conclusion for suggested radical changes

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basis of country of residence were almost identical and only varied on the basis of gender.

Students' responses on the basis of gender also showed variance in this section. The most traditional responses are recorded from female respondents who, for example, question that the fall is only a historic event and the Prophets are too innocent to sin, showing their strong acceptance. Similarly, it is noticed that male students are slightly less convinced by the statement than female students; however, there are no differences in responses on the basis country of residence for these questions. These findings could find justification in Pakistani academic Ahmed's observation of female students having fewer tendencies to accept religious controversies/contradictions than the male students.

Some cases in this section also evidenced significant variation among students' responses, for example in the question about the Islamic perspective of the fall, the most religiously traditional responses were noted from UK respondents. On the contrary, Pakistani respondents (3%) strongly disagreed with this Islamic perception, but this is not a robust trend. A strong agreement from UK students implies that Muslims students, irrespective of their cultural background, are strongly committed to the Islamic beliefs.

The above findings propose that Muslim students are religiously committed and their beliefs are lead by the Islamic perspectives, as the majority of questions in this section only witnessed a few disagreements to the Quranic narrative of the fall. This implies that the Quranic narrative of creation is the only truth Muslim students believe in, and that allows them to compare it with Milton's Christian context of the poem as indicated earlier in Part A of the thesis. Perhaps this is the reason that the majority of the students from Pakistan and the UK find the Christian context of the poem problematic. This finding can also be verified by Chaudary's view that the concepts of *Paradise Lost* are from Milton's mind and no truth lies in them, therefore the poem is taught for

aesthetic pleasure as Muslims have their own understanding of truth demonstrated in the Quranic narrative and they do not have to seek guidance from Milton's poem. Therefore involving the Quranic narrative of creation in Muslim/multi-faith teaching might improve students' involvement and the learning process.

8.6.3 Identity of Eve

As in the previous section, this section often evidenced identical responses that are in line with Islamic perspective, because this section explored the identity of Eve in Islam and *Paradise Lost*. Although variation is not noted frequently in students' responses in this section, Muslim students' attitudes can be perceived by their choice of responses that might reflect their cultural understanding of Eve's identity.

The first two questions in this section are about Muslim students' perception of both the Islamic Eve and Milton's Eve and the options given in the questionnaires were identical for both questions. It is useful to note that in the question about the Islamic Eve, all the students opted either for mother of mankind or first woman on earth, whereas for Milton's Eve all of them chose either cause of Adam's fall or disobedient towards God. The findings indicated that both Pakistani and UK respondents feel more connected with the Islamic Eve, as they perceive her as the mother of mankind, and therefore they are likely to be disconcerted by the Biblical context of the fall in *Paradise Lost* that presents her as a temptress. However, the difference between responses is not huge and the overall findings suggest that the Islamic Eve is not recognised as a sinner by the majority of respondents, and that they strictly follow the Quranic account of the creation. Therefore the findings can be perceived as suggesting that religion is, for Muslim students, a universal truth that does not change by cultural perspectives, gender or age. The questionnaires therefore verify Campbell's observation that Muslim students believe their identity to be defined by their faith. On the other hand, Pakistani students, by

considering Milton's Eve as to be a cause of Adam's fall, showed their cultural understanding of gender relationships and this in some ways echo the seventeenth century ideal of keeping a husband in high esteem; whereas more UK students, by perceiving Eve as disobedient to God, show a commitment to God that made them feel that disobedience to God is a greater sin than causing (human) Adam's fall. Therefore these questions suggest their deep religious perceptions of Eve and also highlight their distinct understanding of relationship between husband and wife (Adam and Eve) and human and God (Eve and God).

It is noted that all of the Muslim students found it uncomfortable to consider the Islamic Eve as temptress or seductress as portrayed in *Paradise Lost*. However, more Pakistani students opted for the more religiously committed options of being very uncomfortable in perceiving the Islamic Eve as temptress/seductress. This finding can be viewed by relating Jujja's comment of growing religious intolerance and that this is not the right time to push students religiously. Similarly, Ahmed noted that students are extremely cautious of what teachers say about "their Eve". Therefore, it is helpful to harness those religious feelings by presenting Eve as mother of mankind instead of sinner as practised and suggested by Pakistani academics (Ahmed and Falaksher). Although more intense options were chosen by Pakistani students, which can in some ways be explained by controlled Pakistani teaching, it is critical to note that Muslim students in the UK also found it uncomfortable though this is not something to which is paid much attention in the multi-faith teaching in the UK.

Findings from the next question propose that all the Muslim students (except one Pakistani respondent) agreed that Eve has significance in Islam irrespective of the fact that she is not mentioned by name in the *Quran*, and the highest agreement is noted from UK students. Therefore, the findings verify that all the students from the UK perceive

Eve as an important religious figure and it is not helpful to make judgements of how committed students are on the basis of their cultural context, as pointed out by Hodgkins. Students' responses can also be linked with Quranic feminist Hassan's thesis (2001) that showed the Islamic perception of the word "adam[240]" used in the *Quran* for all human beings created from soil instead of a male sex (Adam). Similarly, Muslim students' responses were very similar, and even identical, when they were asked about their affection and devotion towards Adam and Eve as their parents and the Prophets. This suggests that the core religious questions are responded to in a similar way, regardless of gender and country of residence.

Students' responses varied where they did not have definite answers from their previous religious knowledge and they had to think of *Paradise Lost* independently from Islam or Christianity. Perhaps in these cases the cultural context becomes more visible; for instance, the question on Milton's bias of presenting Eve as inferior shows the cultural understanding of feminism in East and West as UK students showed more profound agreement to Milton's biasness than Pakistani respondents. Although Quranic feminists, like Wadud (2006) and Ali (1992), claim that the *Quran* gave women their rights at the time of its revelation about 1400 years ago, in theoretical perspective, Western feminism emerged and got acceptance earlier in the West and Quranic feminism is only establishing gradually, and therefore students from the UK are more alert to Milton's biased attitudes towards representation of Eve than Pakistani students. This could also be the case because UK students are taught Eve's character in much more detail than Pakistani students and they realise Milton's bias more deeply.

The findings emerging from this section suggest that Christian texts, like *Paradise Lost*, push Muslim students religiously and they find it very uncomfortable to

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[240] Originated from a Hebrew word "adamah", meaning created from soil, also see Chap 2 for full detail

grasp the Christian context of the poem, as referred earlier in Part A that they should not be taught only the Christian context of the poem, and that the socio-cultural and political influences of the poem should also be highlighted to tone down the Christian content. Also, in the conclusion it is suggested that apart from the Christian perspective of the poem, the Islamic perspective (and maybe other beliefs) should also be explored. They find it difficult to consider Eve as temptress or seductress, as the Christian narrative of creation contextualised in the poem blames Eve entirely for the fall. Therefore, Muslim students find Milton biased in portraying a negative persona of Eve in Biblical context as they feel affectionate to her. It is also evident from the findings that they believe in the Quranic creation of the fall that does not blame Adam and Eve and they find it as a universal truth. Therefore, this issue must be seen in the current socio-political scenario of religious intolerance, and Muslim/multi-faith teaching might be used to harness those religious feelings in order to encourage students' sympathies with the religion/culture they do not belong to.

8.6.4 Punishment of the Fall

The findings emerging from this section present students' attitudes towards Milton's punishment of Eve as a result of the fall and the Biblical perception of menstruation as a marker of punishment of the fall.

The findings of this question proposed that the majority of Muslim students feel sympathetic towards Milton's Eve by agreeing that Eve should not be blamed solely in *Paradise Lost*. Females agreed with it the most whereas a small number of UK respondents showed the least agreement. Apart from showing religious sympathies with Eve, this finding can be inferred as a social change in Pakistan, as female students show reaction to gender discrimination and disregard Milton's punishment to Eve as a result of the fall. It is critical to understand that Pakistani academics noted students' reaction

against the representation of women in Christian texts but UK academics never noticed such issues. Therefore, despite the controlled teaching in Pakistani academic system, students are able to express themselves more than the UK Muslim students, as Hodgkins noted that Muslim students have a tendency to be quiet and they would never express if they had problems. Perhaps this is why UK Muslim students showed explicit resistance in the questionnaires but never showed it in the class.

The findings from the last two questions in this chapter proposed that even when reading Christian-based literature, Muslim students retain a full awareness of the Islamic account of the fall and perceive it as Satan's fault instead of Eve's. As the majority of them disregard the Biblical perception of menstruation associated with Eve's fall and rejected it as a marker of uncleanness and impiousness caused by the fall. It is important to note that Muslims do not consider human fall as sin; their responses, however, contradict the Biblical interpretation of menstruation seen as a marker of original sin as noted by Solnic (cited in De Troyer 2003) and Philip (2006), and are in line with the Islamic belief system that does not consider menstruation as a marker of curse, and rather perceives it a biological process.

From the above findings it is noted that students agree with the Quranic narrative of creation, as referred earlier in Part A of the study, and acknowledge that it does not demonstrate gender bias but rather promotes equality (Hassan 1989), as Eve was not punished as a result of the fall. As examined from the close reading of the *Quran* and the *Bible* in Part A, Islam, unlike early Christianity, associates motherhood with blessing and does not relate the fall with it, and Muslim students showed complete agreement with it. From the interview findings where Hodgkins pointed out Muslim students' shyness, quietness and reserved attitudes in Christian discourses, and Campbell noted that the resistance of Muslim students comes out after the class or in private conversation, it can

be inferred that Muslim students in the UK cannot openly express themselves in class and may feel isolated from the Christian discussions; in that case introducing the Islamic perspective might connect them to the Christian text, allowing them actively to participate during religious discussions. However, it will also improve student-teacher relationship as students would see teachers' interest in their religious beliefs.

The next Chapter 9 continues with the questionnaires' findings on the rest of religious issues of *Paradise Lost* like nudity, sexuality, veiling and incest, and examines students' responses on the Christian concept of redemption as related to Jesus and Mary.

Chapter 9: Questionnaire Findings and Analysis II
Understanding Nudity, Sexuality and Other Religious Issues of
Paradise Lost from a Muslim Perspective

This chapter is a sequel to Chapter 8 as it continues to discuss the findings of the questionnaires administered in Pakistan and the UK among Muslim students studying *Paradise Lost*. This chapter addresses the key questions explored in Part A of the thesis and also investigated in the interviews regarding female physical representation and other religious issues. This chapter is divided into three sections; Section I deals with the issues of nudity, sexuality, veiling and rape, Section II explores issues of motherhood and incest, and Section III examines other religious ambiguities of the poem for Muslim students, for example redemption and the identity of Jesus as God and God's son, and Mary's status as superior to Eve. The analysis of the responses is based on two variables: gender and country of residence. As in the previous Chapter 8, percentages in this chapter are rounded to one decimal and may not sum exactly to 100.

9.1 Nudity, Sexuality and Veiling

This section examines the more polemic issues of *Paradise Lost*. Although this chapter deals with certain passages of the poem that Muslim students in Pakistan might not be taught, since Pakistani academics do not explicitly discuss nudity particularly in reference to Eve. As such, the questions are based more on an analytical level[241] and students are taken as a resource to gather their responses on such issues even if they haven't read that particular part of the poem. In such cases, students are provided with the excerpts from *Paradise Lost*:

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[241] As in Chap 8, in this chapter questions are systematically arranged covering both the key Islamic beliefs that contradict the Christian context of the poem and the key issues of *Paradise Lost* that might cross students' cultural boundaries

This section deals with Eve's nudity. Please read the quotation from *Paradise Lost* before answering:

> And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
> On our first father; half her swelling breast
> Naked met his, under the flowing gold
> Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
> Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
> Smiled with superiour love, as Jupiter
>   (*Paradise Lost* IV: 494-9)

Q. How far do you agree/disagree that the erotic imagery and the provocative female representation is acceptable to be read in a mixed-sex group for Muslim students?

Muslim students from Pakistan and the UK are explicitly asked about their perception on the provocative and erotic female representation, and whether they consider it appropriate to have such discourse in a mixed-sex group.
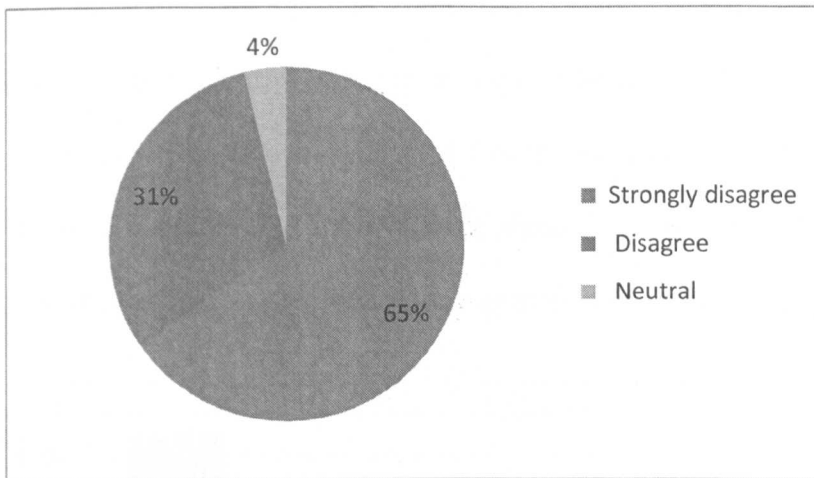
9.1.1 Acceptance of erotic and provocative imagery in mixed-sex groups

Figure 9.1 demonstrates that from the overall responses, 4% of respondents are neutral about whether erotic and provocative imagery and female presentation in mixed-sex groups of Muslim students could be acceptable or not, 31% students find it unacceptable and remaining 65% find such discussion highly unacceptable in a mixed-sex group.
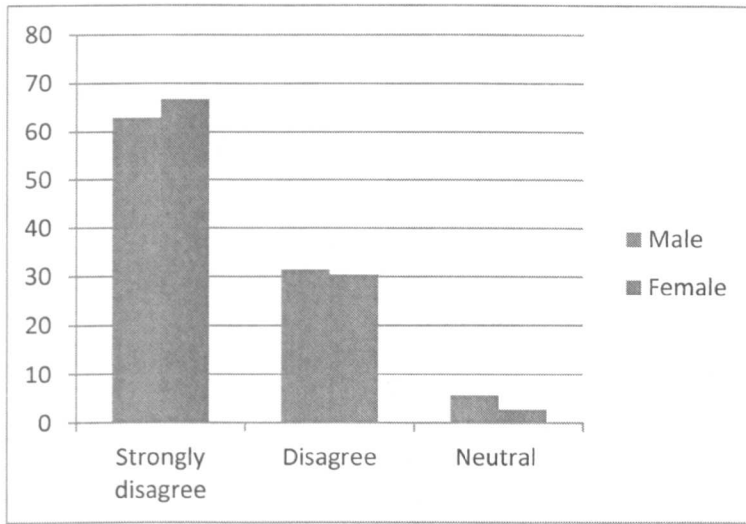
9.1.2 Acceptance of erotic and provocative imagery in mixed-sex groups

Figure 9.1.2 illustrates that male (63%) and female students (67%) respond in a similar way and strongly disagree to the discussion of erotic and provocative imagery and female representation in mixed-sex groups. Similarly, 31% of male students disagree and remaining 6% are neutral about it, whereas in the case of females, 30% disagree that it is acceptable to discuss provocative images in a mixed-sex group; 3% remain neutral. Therefore, a mild difference is noticed where female respondents show stronger disagreement towards the acceptance of erotic imagery than the male respondents.
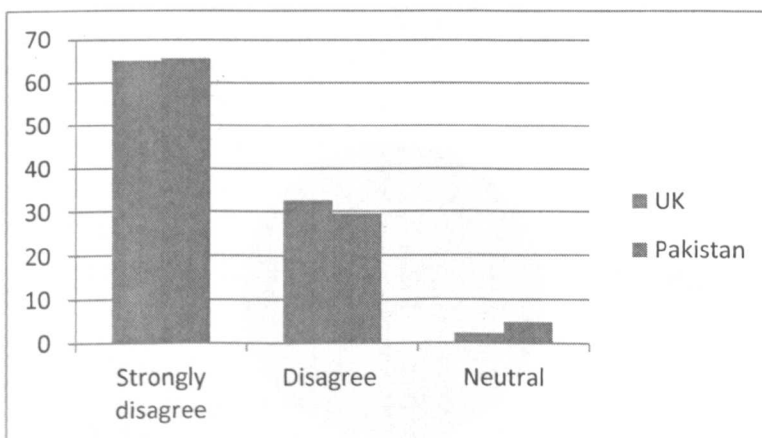
Figure 9.1.3: Acceptance of erotic and provocative imagery in mixed-sex groups

Figure 9.1.3 illustrates that both UK (65%) and Pakistani respondents (66%) find the whole idea highly unacceptable as they strongly disagree about accepting such discourse in a mixed-sex group, whereas 2% from the UK and 5% from Pakistan are neutral about

it. Therefore, the responses of Pakistani and UK respondents are quite similar to each other, but Pakistani students showed more reservation about such discussion.

The findings from this question suggest that Muslim students are not comfortable about discussions on erotic and provocative issues, particularly in a mixed-sex group; however a very small number (4%) of respondents from UK and Pakistan were neutral. There is no noticeable difference in the responses on the basis of gender and country of residence. The findings also propose that discussing *Paradise Lost* is very hard indeed if one goes beyond Book II in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, and this could be the reason why Pakistani academics include only the first two Books in teaching.

Q. In the *Quran*, is the nakedness of Adam and Eve portrayed to be seductive either to the reader or to each other?

The question intends to explore Muslims' perceptions of the appearance and nudity of Adam and Eve from an Islamic perspective. Regardless of gender, qualification, or place of residence all the respondents disagree that in the *Quran* the portrayal of Adam and Eve's nakedness was meant to be seductive to the reader or to one another.
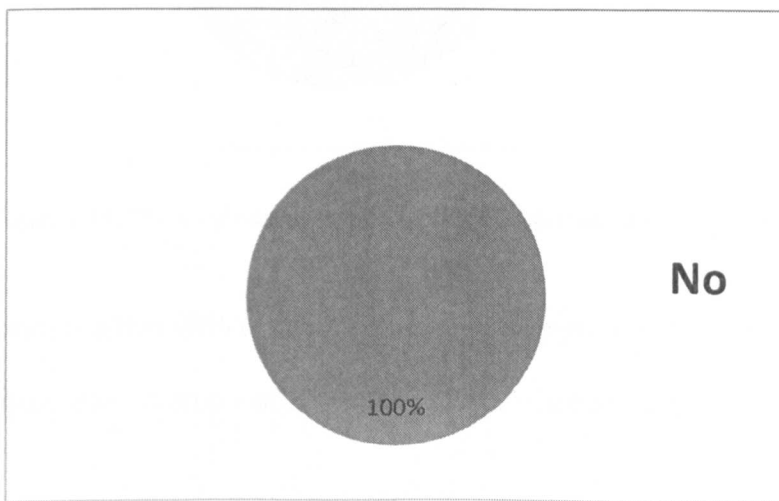

Figure 9.2.1: In the Quran, nakedness of Adam and Eve portrayed to be seductive

All Muslim students from Pakistan and the UK agreed that Adam and Eve are not portrayed as seductive in the *Quran*. Thus the responses of the students were identical and this suggest their awareness of the Quranic perspective of the fall, as it was also recognised by UK and Pakistani academics, and it can also be seen why Eve's nudity in *Paradise Lost* can be difficult for them.

Q. In the *Quran*, the act of nakedness was not sinful for Adam and Eve since they were unaware of it; the fruit gave them knowledge of good and evil and then they covered their body with the fig leaves. Do you agree?

This question investigates the Quranic perspective of Adam and Eve's nakedness and their awareness of it. This would help to recognise the difference from Milton' nude Adam and Eve with the Islamic characters and analyse how problematic it could be for students to encounter Eve's sensuous nudity in *Paradise Lost*.
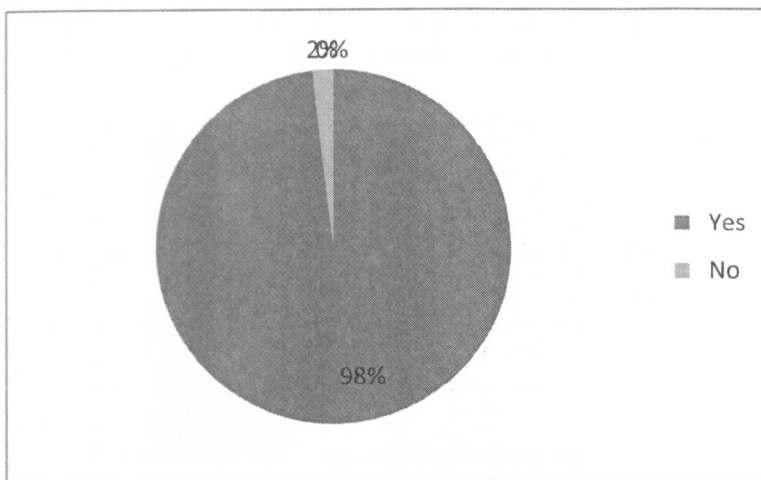

Figure 9.3.1: The act of nakedness is not sinful for Adam and Eve in the *Quran*

Figure 9.3.1 illustrates that 98% of the Muslim students agreed that Adam and Eve's nudity is not considered as an act of sin in the *Quran*, whereas only 2% disagree with this statement.
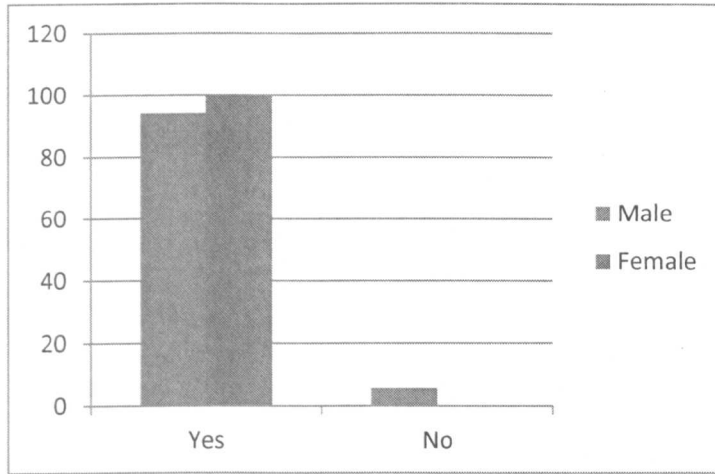
Figure 9.3.2: The act of nakedness is not sinful for Adam and Eve in the *Quran*

Figure 9.3.2 illustrates that 94% of male students find the act of nakedness not sinful, whereas 6% do find it sinful. Among females, all of them find the act of nakedness not sinful at all, as Adam and Eve were not aware of good and evil.
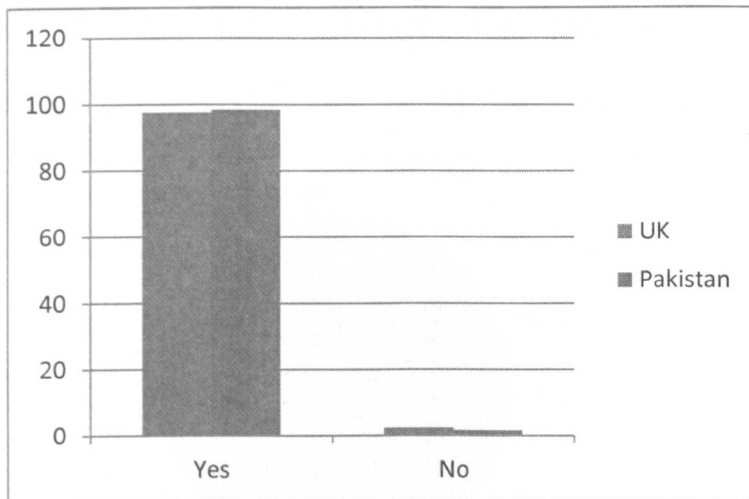

Figure 9.3.3: The act of nakedness is not sinful for Adam and Eve in the *Quran*

Figure 9.3.3 demonstrates that UK residents and Pakistani respondents responded in an almost identical manner and regard the act of nakedness as not sinful for Adam and Eve as they were unaware of good and evil.

The findings of this question are related to those findings of the previous question where respondents agreed to an Islamic fact that the nakedness of Adam and Eve is not portrayed as seductive. In this question, respondents agreed that the nakedness of Adam

and Eve was not sinful. There is no remarkable difference in the responses on the basis of gender and country of residence. This suggests that Muslim students are well informed about their religious beliefs and that is why Eve's sensuous nudity, as represented in *Paradise Lost*, can be problematic for them. The finding could also be verified through the Pakistani academic scenario, where discussing Eve's nudity in *Paradise Lost* is considered to be a taboo due to socio-political reasons. This is not completely agreed by Pakistani academics, but Falaksher's comment that he "could never ever discuss Eve like that" may explain how difficult it is for Muslim students (in Pakistan and the UK) and teachers to regard Eve's nudity as sensuous and sinful.

Q. Since the *Quran* and the *Bible* abhor nudity, Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her seem like a sinning character even before the fall. Do you agree?

The narrative of creation in the *Quran* and the *Bible* do not present sensuous images of Eve as Milton does. The Muslim respondents are asked if they think that the way Eve is presented in *Paradise Lost* makes her seem already fallen and sinning.
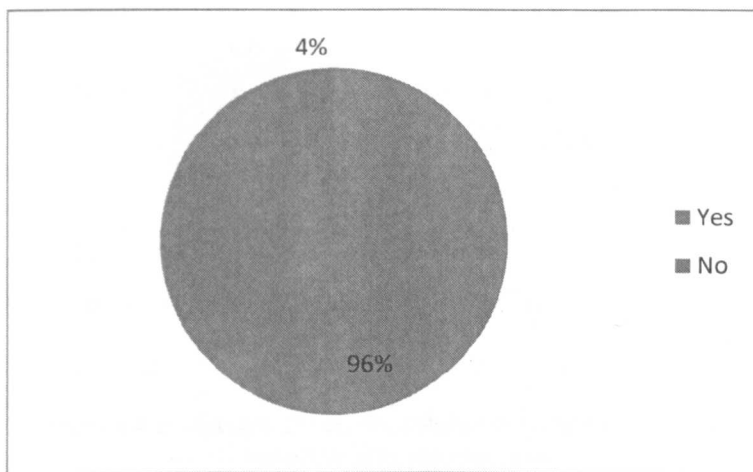

Figure 9.4.1: Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her seem like a sinful character

Figure 9.4.1 demonstrates that 96% of the respondents believe that Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her look like a sinful character, whereas only 4% disagree with this.
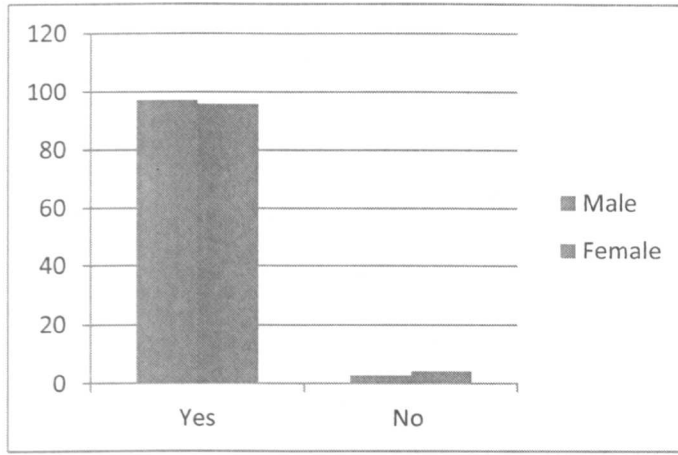
Figure 9.4.2: Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her seem like a sinful character

Figure 9.4.2 illustrates that 97% of male respondents and 96% of female respondents believe that Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her seem like a sinful character. Only 3% of male respondents and 4% of female respondents disagree with the statement. Therefore, the responses on this basis are very similar.
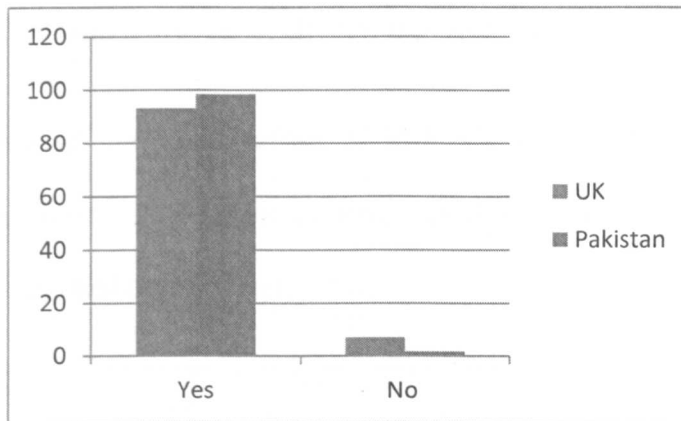

Figure 9.4.3: Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her seem like a sinful character

Figure 9.4.3 demonstrates that among the total respondents, 93% of UK and 98% of Pakistani respondents agree that Milton's details of Eve's nudity present Eve as a sinful character. Thus, Pakistani respondents are slightly more of the view that Eve's nudity makes her a sinful character even before the fall.

Muslim students agree that Eve's sensuous nudity make her a sinful character even before the fall. The findings propose that the responses are very similar for this question and only a few respondents from UK disagreed with the statement. This proposes that Muslim students are made uncomfortable by Eve's nudity in *Paradise Lost,* and demonstrates how problematic these passages could be for them when reading *Paradise Lost.* Since Eve's nudity is highlighted in *Paradise Lost* in order to show her transgression from Early Modern moral codes, as examined in Chapter 2, Wynne-Davies, while teaching, examines Eve's nudity in terms of her deviation from her gender role. Although Eve's nudity is not explored sensuously by Wynne-Davies, it can still be a very sensitive issue in Muslim/multi-faith teaching as noted in the finding. Contrarily, Pakistani academics avoided the word "sinner" or "naked" for Eve in interviews, which verifies the finding that for both Muslim students and teachers Eve's nudity and sinning are very problematic.

Q. Do you think Milton's words in describing Eve's nakedness give you a visual sense of her sexuality?

This question discusses the visual effect of Milton's details of Eve's nudity on the students and enquires whether Muslim students can visualise Eve's body from Milton's narrative of Eve's physical descriptions.
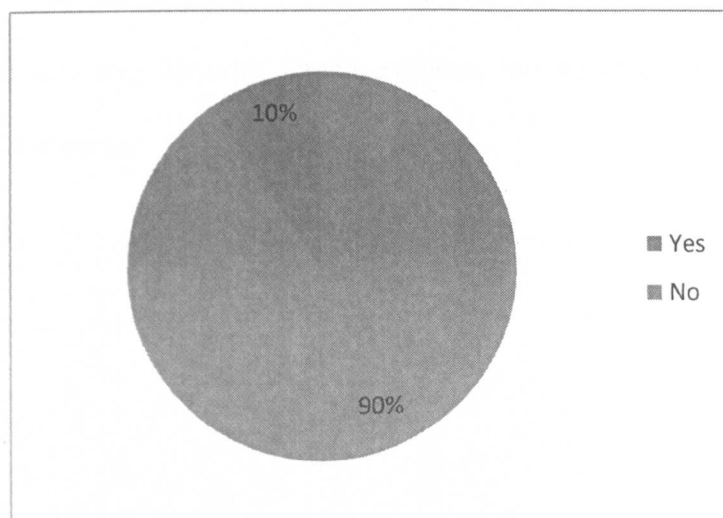

Figure 9.5.1: Milton's description of Eve's nakedness gives visual sense of her sexuality

Figure 9.5.1 demonstrates that 90% of the overall responses agree that Milton's description of Eve's nudity gives a visual sense of her sexuality, whereas 10% believe otherwise.
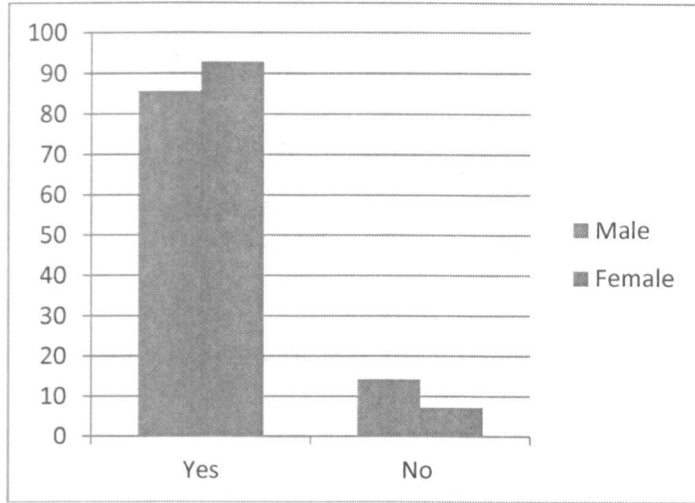

Figure 9.5.2: Milton's description of Eve's nakedness gives visual sense of her sexuality

Figure 9.5.2 illustrates that among the male respondents 86% believe that Milton's description of Eve's nakedness gives students a visual sense of her sexuality, whereas the remaining 14% think otherwise. Among female students, 93% believe that Milton's description of Eve's nakedness gives a visual sense of her sexuality, whereas the remaining 7% think otherwise. Thus, the findings may suggest that female students are more alert and sensitive to the sexual details in *Paradise Lost*, as they find Milton's description of Eve enables them to visualise her sexuality more clearly than their male counterparts and this may be why female students are more prone to be religiously stressed in such discourse.
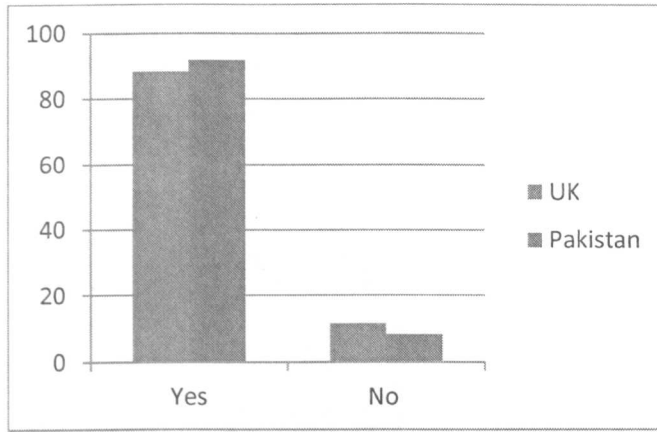
Figure 9.5.3: Milton's description of Eve's nakedness gives visual sense of her sexuality

Figure 9.5.3 illustrates that UK respondents (88%) seem slightly less convinced than Pakistani respondents (92%) in finding that Milton's description of Eve's nakedness gives a visual sense of her sexuality. The percentage of agreeing students from Pakistan and the UK is very high, and only varies slightly in accepting that Eve's nudity can be visualised by Milton's narrative.

The findings of this question propose that Milton's description of Eve's nudity enables students to visualise her, and females' responses show intense agreement to this question. Apart from students' religious understanding of nudity as immorality, this finding could be seen as a socio-cultural influence on Pakistani female students as Jujja and Chaudary also note the female students feel shy during discussion of nudity and "bow down" (Chaudary). It is important to note that Pakistani academics do not examine Eve's nudity, whereas UK academics do, and the findings suggest that Milton's narrative of Eve's nudity can be visualised and create unease for Muslim students both in Pakistan and the UK.

Q. How far do you agree/disagree that Milton exploits Eve's femininity by presenting her as a sexual stereotype?
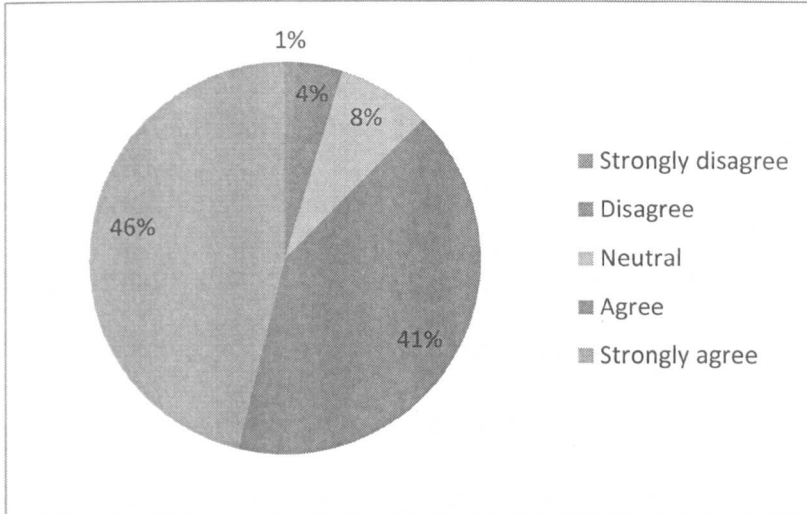
Figure 9.6.1: Milton's exploitation of Eve's femininity as sexual stereotype

Muslim respondents in Pakistan and the UK are asked about their conception of Milton in terms of his construction of Eve's femininity in *Paradise Lost*. Figure 9.6.1 demonstrates the overall responses of Muslim students and shows that only 1% (one person) does not believe that Milton exploits Eve's femininity as a sexual stereotype, 4% just disagree and 8% are neutral about it. While, 41% agree and 46% strongly believe that Milton's presentation of Eve's sexuality is an exploitation of her femininity.
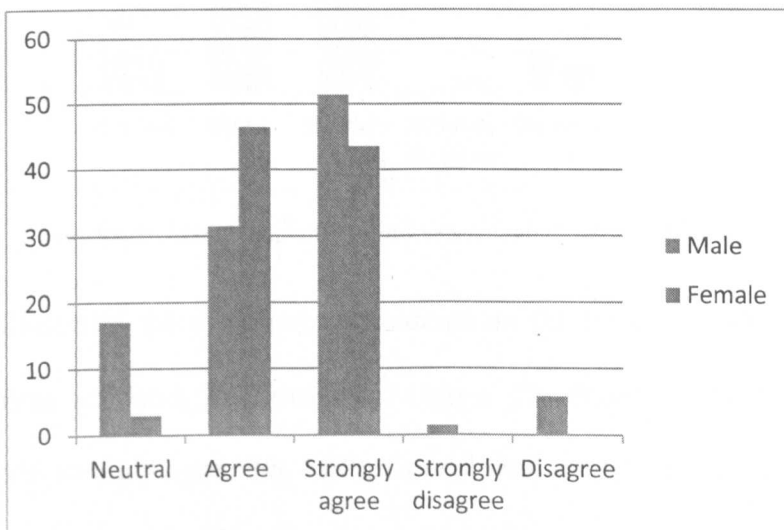

Figure 9.6.2: Milton's exploitation of Eve's femininity as sexual stereotype

Figure 9.6.2 demonstrates the responses of students on the basis of gender. It illustrates that 31% of male respondents agree and 51% strongly agree that Milton's exploitation of Eve's femininity is presented as sexual stereotype, however 17% are neutral. Among female respondents, 3% are neutral about it, 46% agree and 43.5% strongly agree that Milton's construction of Eve's femininity is biased and sexually exploitative. Only 1% of male respondents strongly disagree and 6% disagree that Milton's presents Eve as a sexual stereotype. However, it is important to note that overall female respondents see Milton as more biased than their male counterparts do. Similarly, a small number of female respondents showed strong disagreement with the statement. This shows that male students find Milton's construction of femininity more difficult than female students.
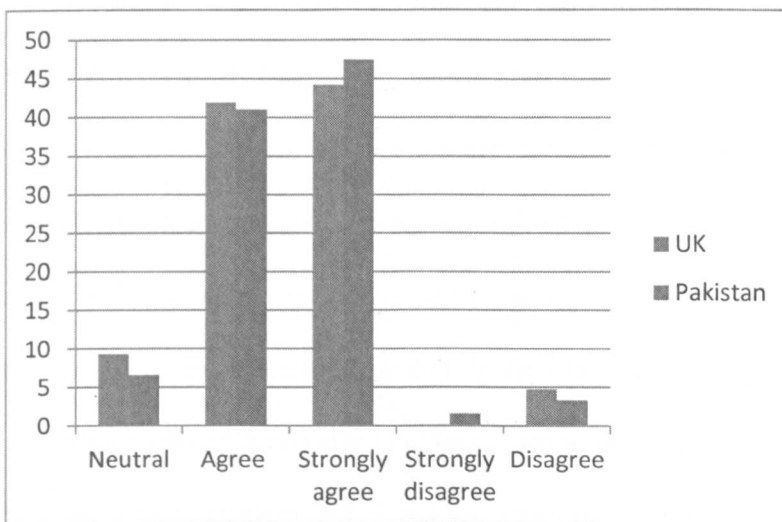
Figure 9.6.3: Milton's exploitation of Eve's femininity as sexual stereotype

Figure 9.6.3 illustrates the responses of students on the basis of country of residence. Among Pakistani residents 2% strongly disagree, 3% disagree, 7% are neutral, 41% agree and 47.5% strongly agree that Milton's exploitation of Eve's femininity is a sexual stereotype. Whereas among UK respondents none strongly disagree to it, 5% disagree, 9% are neutral about it, 42% agree to the statement and 44% strongly agree that Milton

exploits Eve's femininity as a sexual stereotype. However, Pakistani respondents show more complex responses in terms of strongly agreeing with Milton's exploitation on one hand, and one person strongly disagreeing while, but this is not a robust trend and cannot be generalised as a major finding, since only one student showed strong disagreement.

The findings extracted from the above figures affirm that many Muslim students believe that Milton exploits Eve's femininity in terms of making her into a sexual stereotype. It is noted that all female respondents agreed to this statement, while the minimum agreement is found from the male respondents who disagreed to Milton's sexual exploitation of Eve. This could be because female students relate to Eve more easily and perceive Eve's nudity more sensitively than some of male respondents from UK and Pakistan, who disagreed perhaps because they do not feel attached to Milton's Eve. This could be linked to Campbell's comment on how female Muslim students called Eve "white girl with all the derogatory associations of that phrase." Perhaps this is another way of showing their unease for Eve's representation. However, the discrepancy between male and female responses is more consistent across the UK and Pakistan. Muslim women of both countries are disturbed by the representation of Eve's sexuality and perceive the use of a sexual stereotype in her depiction by Milton. Although such resistance from female students is noted by Pakistani academics, as discussed in previous question, this has never been evident in UK teaching scenarios and its reasons should be explored.

Q. How far do you agree/disagree that *Paradise Lost* while dealing with Eve's nudity often transgresses from standards of decency expected by multicultural groups and can create anxiety and embarrassment for a Muslim reader?

This question is to examine the reaction of Muslim respondents on discussing different themes of *Paradise Lost*, for example Eve's nudity and sexuality and their overall perception and experience in studying *Paradise Lost* in a multicultural group.

Figure 9.7.1 *Paradise Lost* **dealing with Eve's nudity may create anxiety and embarrassment**

Figure 9.7.1 illustrates the overall responses of Muslim students examining their experience of studying *Paradise Lost* in multicultural groups. It demonstrates that half (50%) of the respondents strongly agree that this discussion makes them anxious and embarrassed, 46% agree with this, 3% remain neutral and only 1% (one person) disagrees that *Paradise Lost* when dealing with Eve's nudity transgresses decency standards expected in multicultural groups and may create anxiety and embarrassment.
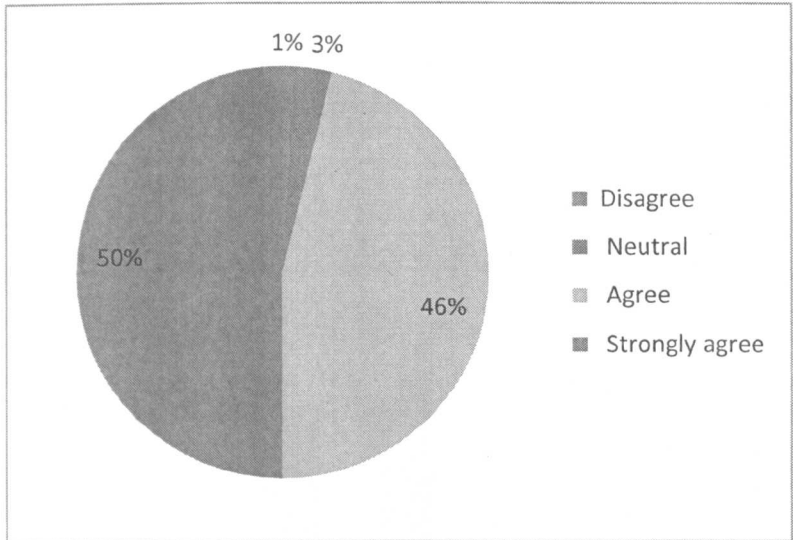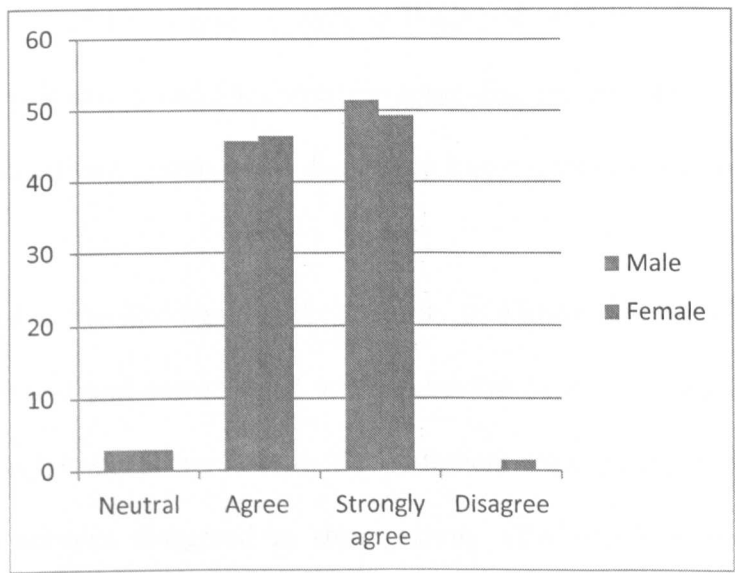

Figure 9.7.2 *Paradise Lost* **dealing with Eve's nudity may create anxiety and embarrassment**

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Figure 9.7.2 illustrates that the responses of male and female students to this question are similar. Male and female respondents equally agree (46%) and are equally neutral (3%), about embarrassment and anxiety that the discussion of certain themes of *Paradise Lost* may cause. However, only one female student disagrees with this statement.
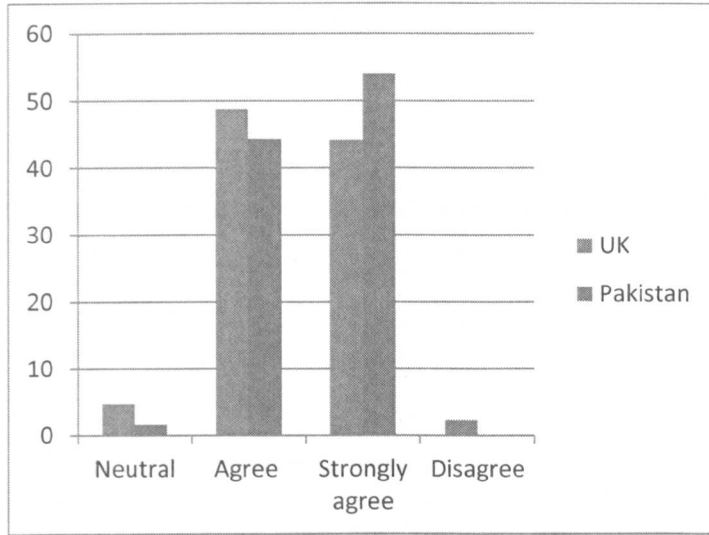
**Figure 9.7.3 *Paradise Lost* dealing with Eve's nudity may
create anxiety and embarrassment**

Figure 9.7.3 demonstrates that among UK residents, 2% disagree, 5% are neutral, 49% agree and 44% strongly agree that they would feel anxiety and embarrassment due to Milton's discussion of Eve's nudity. Among Pakistani residents, 2% are neutral, 44% agree with normal intensity and 54% strongly agree that anxiety and embarrassment may be caused in multicultural group while discussing Eve's sexuality and nudity in *Paradise Lost*.

It is noted in the findings that the majority of Muslim students from the UK and Pakistan feel anxious and embarrassed when *Paradise Lost* is discussed in a mixed sex scenario. Male respondents agree with the statement most strongly, whereas a small number of UK females disagreed to some extent. This could be seen as a cultural difference that is reflected more in UK respondents, perhaps because of the influence of multiculturalism as they got used to Western representations of women. This finding can also be perceived from Campbell's comment on how one of his mature students pointed

out that he sometimes discusses issues that polite people do not talk about, issues like "God, religion, politics, sex and death", and ironically *Paradise Lost* deals with all such issues. Hodgkins, though, explores passion verses reason while teaching, and discusses Adam and Eve's nudity and love-making as a possibility that caused the fall, and the findings from this question propose that such discussion might be extremely embarrassing for Muslim students.

Q. If the function of clothing is not fulfilled, and dress is worn to reveal rather conceal the body, may the results be the following dangers[242]? (*Please check one*) Sexual harassment, Sexual Assault, Rape, None of the Above.

The issue of rape, sexuality and nudity has been one of the key issues of the research and has been repeatedly discussed earlier with respect to Eve, Sin, Proserpina and other mythical figures in Part A of the research. This question is intended to examine Muslim students' perception about the relationship between nudity and clothing and the consequences related to the social understanding of dress.
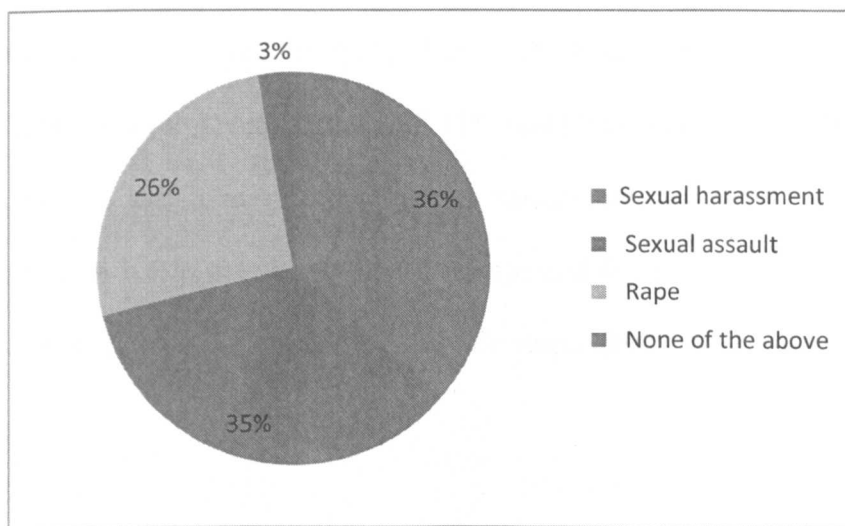
Figure 9.8.1: Results of clothing worn to reveal rather than conceal

Figure 9.8.1 illustrates the overall responses of Muslim students in order to investigate students' perception of lack of clothing and its consequences. It shows that 36% of the

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[242] This question is asked to examine students' attitudes towards their social understanding of issues like clothing and dress as discussed in relation to Veiling in Chap 4

respondents believe if clothes are worn more for the purpose of revealing than concealing then result could be sexual harassment, 35% feel it may lead to sexual assault, 26% agree that it may result in rape. A very small number of respondents (3%) feel that none of the given situations would happen.
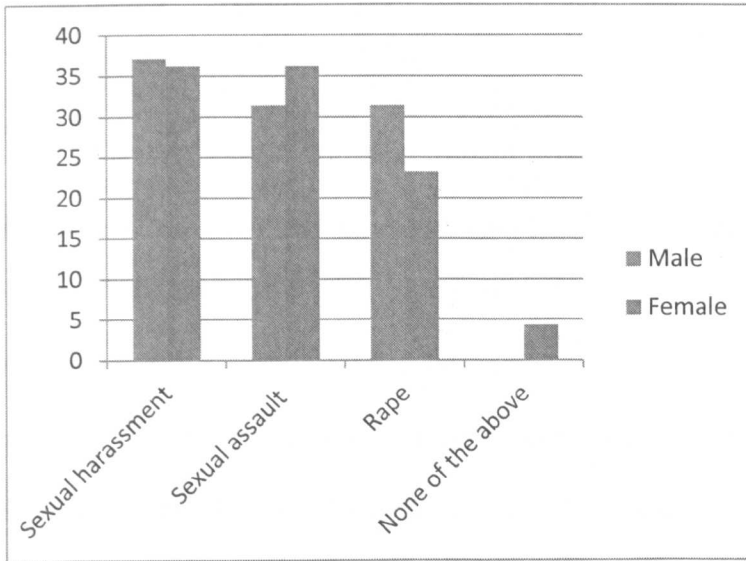
Figure 9.8.2: Results of clothing worn to reveal rather than conceal

The Figure 9.8.2 demonstrates the gender variation on this topic, showing that 37% of male respondents believe that revealing dress may lead to sexual harassment, 31% believe that it may lead to sexual assault and 31% feel it may lead to rape. 36% of female respondents believe that it may lead to sexual harassment, 36% believe it may result sexual assault, 23% feel it may be the cause of rape and 4% believe it may lead to none of the above. It is interesting to notice that male respondents are more traditional than females.
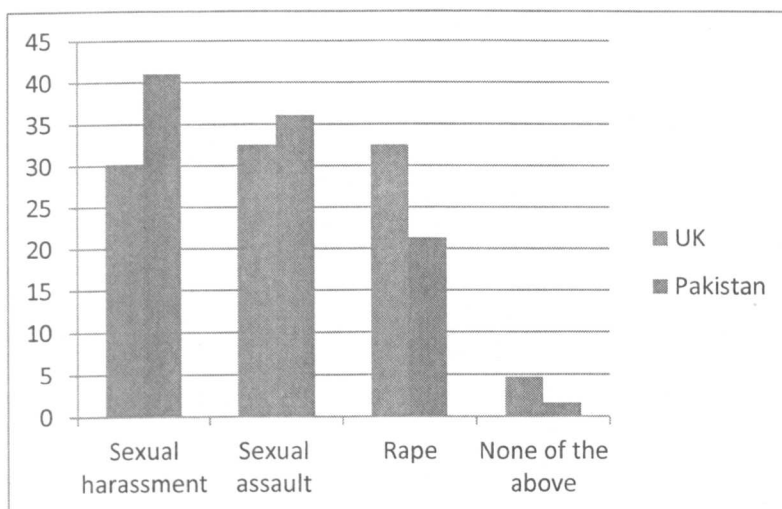
Figure 9.8.3: Results of clothing worn to reveal rather than conceal

As per UK respondents, shown in Figure 9.8.3, 30% assume the result of revealing clothes is sexual harassment, 33% think it can be sexual assault, 33% confirm rape and 5% choose none of the above from the given options. As for Pakistani respondents, 41% believe that the result of revealing clothing can be sexual harassment, 36% feel that it can be sexual assault, 21% believe it can result in rape and only 2% consider that none of the given options would be the result of clothes are worn to reveal rather than conceal. However, there is a variation in the responses of Pakistani students, as they come from a more traditional background than UK students; they do not consider the result of revealing clothes to be rape, as many of the UK respondents do, but they rather consider sexual assault as a result of improper dressing. Similarly, Pakistani students (2%) show a minor tendency, whereas UK students (5%) prove to be a little more open-minded about dress and accept that none of the above can happen. The highest responses for sexual harassment and sexual assault are from Pakistan – this might mean that the students from Pakistan are more acquainted with cases of violence against women because of the cultural context of their society. It should be noted that, while UK students were prepared to consider rape because that crime is more openly discussed in their culture, Pakistani students were more ready to perceive sexual harassment and sexual assault as an outcome of wearing revealing clothing.

The discussion above proposes that the majority of Muslim respondents believe that if clothes are worn to reveal rather conceal the body this may result in sexual harassment, sexual assault and/or rape. However, a small number of female respondents from Pakistan and the UK believe that the consequences would be none of the above. Females, irrespective of their cultural and religious commitment, show relaxed attitudes towards their social understanding of dress than male students, who have more reserved responses in preferring veil. The key finding is that male students think women dressing to reveal their bodies would result in rape, suggesting that they are in the old phrase "asking for it" as noted in Chapter 4, whereas females both from the UK and Pakistan reject this idea, showing understanding of social freedom and liberty. This finding suggests that the students' responses in understanding wider social issues may vary complexly on the basis of gender, as compared to the comparatively straightforward responses in questions related to faith. Therefore, it can be perceived that if such issues are dealt with directly in religious context in a literary text, like *Paradise Lost*, their responses would be equal in rejecting the idea of nudity (especially in reference to Eve), making it problematic for Muslim teaching of *Paradise Lost*.

Q. Do you agree/disagree that rape cases are seen more frequently in Western[243] countries rather than the countries which promote veiling?

In order to understand the view of Muslim students more precisely in their understanding of the cultural difference with respect to clothing and veiling, they are asked about their perception on whether the frequency of rape cases is higher in Western countries in comparison to countries promoting the veil.

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[243] This question is explored in Part A Chap 4 in the section of veiling and is based on a study that proposes that rape cases are found more in Western world than the Eastern countries
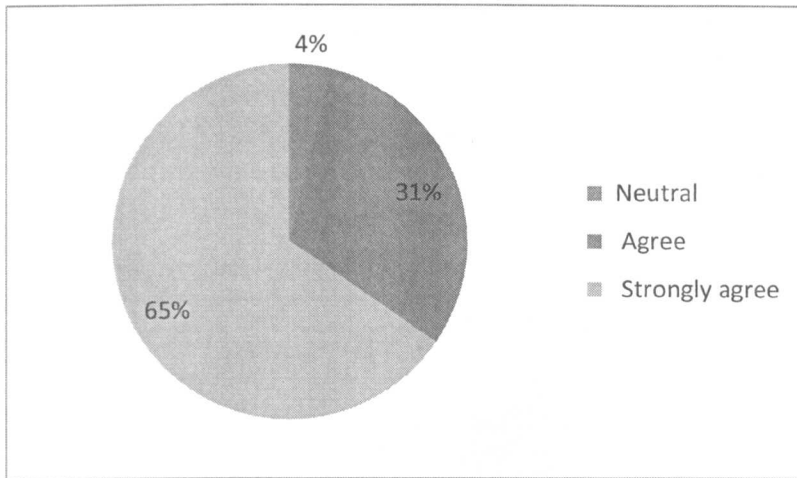
Figure 9.9.1: Rape cases more frequent in Western countries than the countries promoting veiling

Figure 9.9.1 demonstrates that 31% agree that rape is more frequent in Western countries with no veiling restrictions and 65% strongly believe that veiling does affect rape cases and that they are more frequent in the Western world than in Eastern countries; only 4% of the respondents are neutral about this question.
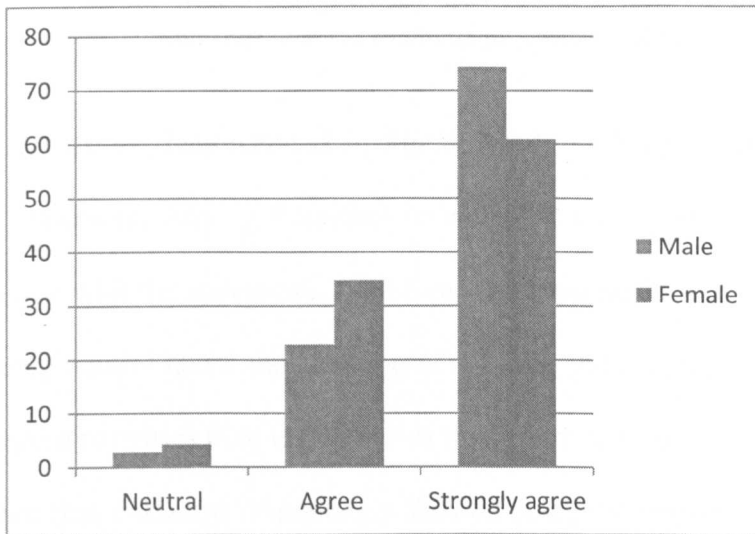
Figure 9.9.2: Rape cases more frequent in Western countries than the countries promoting veiling

Upon gender categorization, Figure 9.9.2 demonstrates that 3% of male respondents are neutral about the statement of rape being more frequent in Western countries with regards to veiling, 23% believe that rape cases occur more often in Western countries and 74% strongly believe that. Among female respondents, 4% remain neutral about it,

35% agree to it and 61% strongly believe that in Western countries more rape cases result than in countries that promote veiling. Thus male Muslim students (74%) seem more cautious about veiling and considering it as way to prevent molestation than the females (61%).
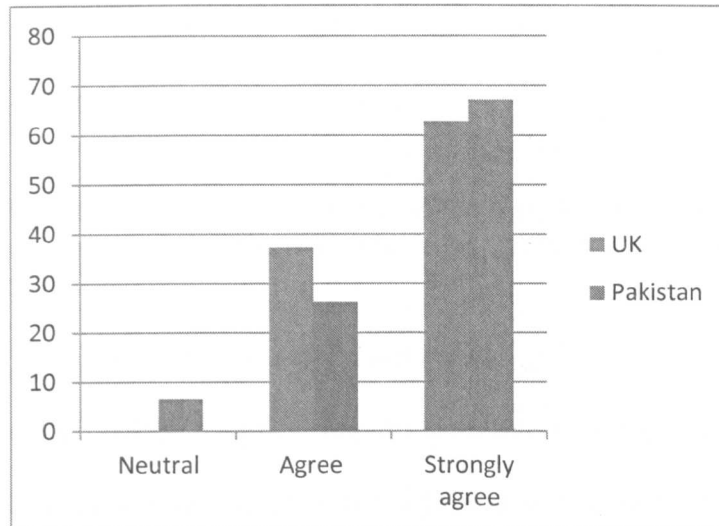
Figure 9.9.3: Rape cases more frequent in Western countries than the countries promoting veiling

Among UK residents, as demonstrated in Figure 9.9.3, 37% agree and 63% strongly agree with the statement. Among Pakistani residents, 7% are neutral, 26% agree and 67% strongly agree with the statement. Therefore, Pakistani students (7%) showed more flexibility in being neutral about the question of whether the frequency of rape cases is more in the Western countries than the countries that promote veiling.

It is noted that Pakistani respondents showed complex responses as some of the respondents from Pakistan are neutral about the statement that rape cases are seen as more frequent in Western countries than in the countries that promote veiling, whereas the rest agree with it with greater intensity. This suggests that Pakistani respondents' perception of Western culture as immoral as it does not promote veiling, whereas a small number of Pakistani students have a more moderate approach about associating veiling to rape. This finding could be linked to Ahmed's point of seeing change in his students'

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approaches and attitudes in perceiving and accepting change open-mindedly. However, the responses of UK students were divided in agreeing and strongly agreeing, and this proposes their consent with the statement that rape cases are more frequent in Western countries as they directly relate it to veiling. From the overall responses for this question, it can be perceived that Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK are bound to the religious tenets of morality associated with veiling.

Q. Veiling should not be criticised as a religious or political phenomenon but seen as a part of culture or ethnicity that people may carry on with freedom. Do you agree/disagree?

The question is asked to examine the importance of veiling for Muslim students as veiling is discussed explicitly in earlier chapters with reference to the discourse of nudity and sexuality in *Paradise Lost* and also in the interview findings. Muslim respondents are asked for their opinion on whether veiling should be criticised as a religious or political phenomenon or should be seen as a cultural practice.

Figure 9.10.1: Veiling should not to be criticised as religious or political phenomenon

Figure 9.10.1 demonstrates that 17% of the respondents agree that veiling should be seen as a cultural practice instead of a religious or political phenomenon, 79% strongly agree with this statement and only 4% of respondents are neutral that it should be accepted as

part of the cultural practice and must not be criticised as political or religious ideology, indicating that it can be practised freely.
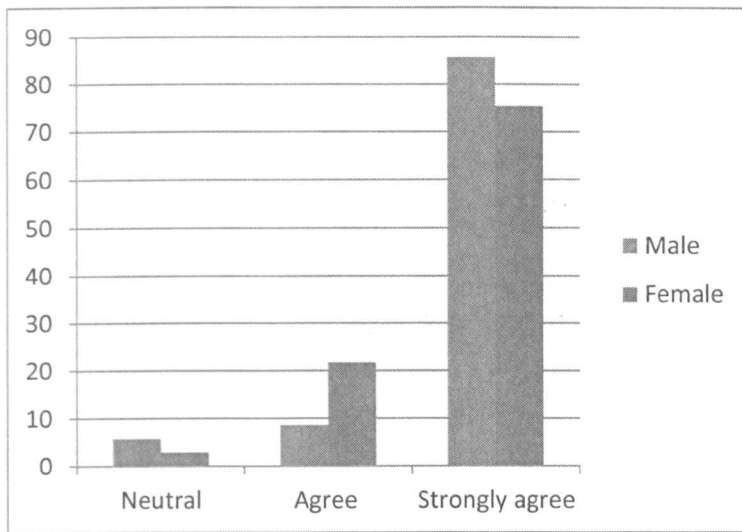
Figure 9.10.2: Veiling should not to be criticised as religious or political phenomenon

Among male respondents, as shown in Figure 9.10.2, 6% are neutral, 9% agree and 86% strongly agree that veiling should not be criticised as a religious or political phenomenon but should be seen as part of a culture. Among female respondents, 3% are neutral about the whole argument, 22% agree in favour and 75% strongly agree to it. Therefore, male respondents are seen as more responsive to the sensitivity of criticism towards veiling than female respondents, who are less likely to feel strongly about the perception of the veil.
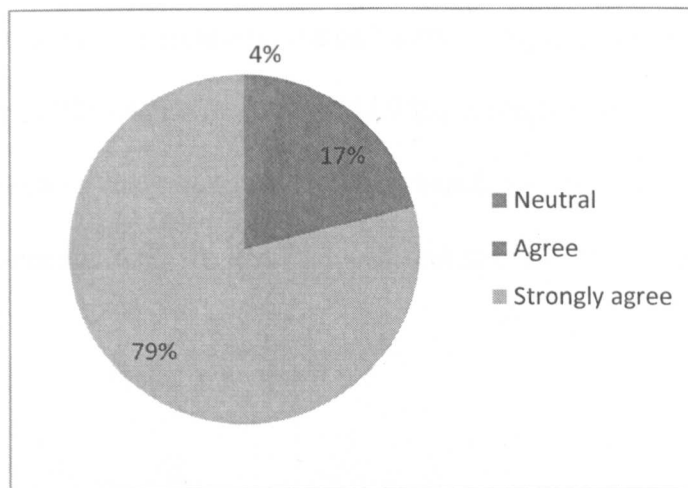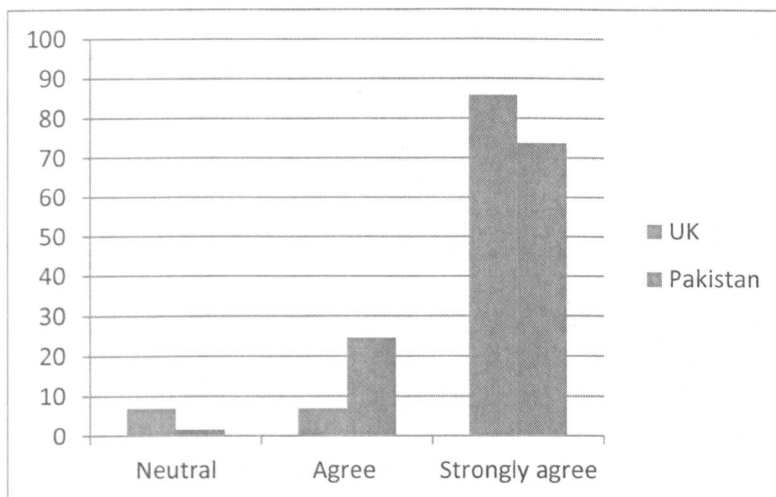
Figure 9.10.3: Veiling should not to be criticised as religious or political phenomenon

Figure 9.10.3 demonstrates that 7% of UK respondents are neutral, 7% agree and 86% strongly agree that veiling should not be criticised as a religious or political phenomenon but should be seen as part of a culture. In comparison, only 2% of Pakistani respondents are neutral, 25% agree and 74% strongly agree that veiling should not be criticised as religious or political phenomenon but seen as part of a culture. However, the responses from UK respondents are more complex; despite having a liberal socio-cultural background, they on one hand are more concerned (86%) about the perception of veiling than Pakistani students (74%), and on the other hand are slightly more neutral (7%) than the Pakistani respondents (2%). This seeming contradiction in UK respondents might be explained by the high-profile media discussion of veiling in the UK which could have led to polarised reactions, while in Pakistan veiling is considered commonplace and therefore not as controversial.

The findings that originate from the question suggest complex responses from UK respondents. For UK students the veil is a major area of debate that causes polarised responses. Although, overall responses suggest that both Pakistani and UK respondents stood up for the perception of veiling, showing their understanding of the current socio-political scenario of veiling being hugely criticised over the years as an Islamic stigma

used to oppress females. The most intense responses are recorded from the male students, and this might be because students from the UK are living in a multicultural society and have encountered or perhaps suffered due to such issues. Female students are slightly less convinced about the statement, and that could also be understood from Campbell's observation of Western veiling as showing "one part of immensely complex women who are living between two societies and making very sophisticated negotiations between those two." This suggests that although women in the West might veil due to accepting a religious practice, at the same time they have inclinations towards the Western cultural traditions.

Q. Veiling should be seen as: (*Please check only one*) Sexual integrity, Personal choice that liberates women to look dignified, Patriarchal politics, Gender submission, Sexual oppression, or a Religious practice.

This question is a subsequent part of the previous question, which explores the perception of veiling among Muslim students. As veiling is a very complex phenomenon and means different things to different sets of people, the options in this question are kept wide varying from negative to positive perceptions about veiling. Veiling might be viewed as a positive action in some cultures[244], but a negative one in other cultures, and that a broad range of optional responses in questionnaire is included in order to reflect the spectrum of different interpretations that might be placed on the act of veiling.

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[244] For example, in some countries (like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan) veiling is considered a positive action, in others it is seen as a symbol of segregation and a social taboo (like in France)
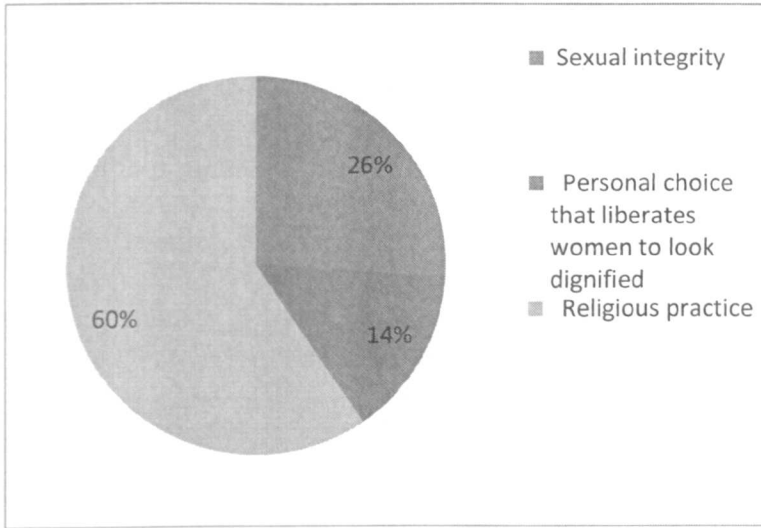
Figure 9.11.1: Perception of veiling

Figure 9.11.1 illustrates that 26% of respondents perceive veiling as a sexual integrity, 14% believe it to be a personal choice that liberates women to look dignified and 60% perceive it as a religious practice, leaving the option of patriarchal politics, gender submission and sexual oppression.
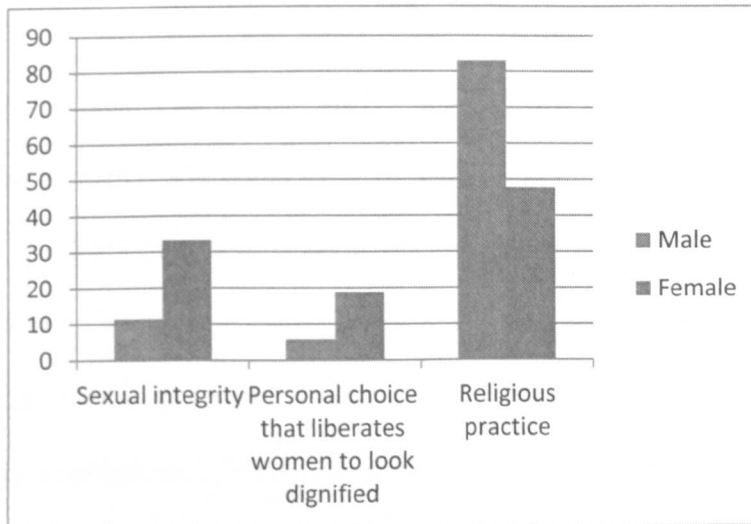
Figure 9.11.2: Perception of veiling

Among male respondents, as demonstrated in Figure 9.11.2, 11% perceive veiling as a sexual integrity, 6% take it as a personal choice that liberates women to look dignified

and 83% consider it as a religious practice; whereas in the case of female respondents, 33% perceive it as a sexual integrity, 19% view it as a personal choice and 48% recognise it as a religious practice. Therefore, there is a big difference in terms of students' perception of veiling as more female students perceive veiling as a sexual integrity than male respondents, who take it as a religious practice.
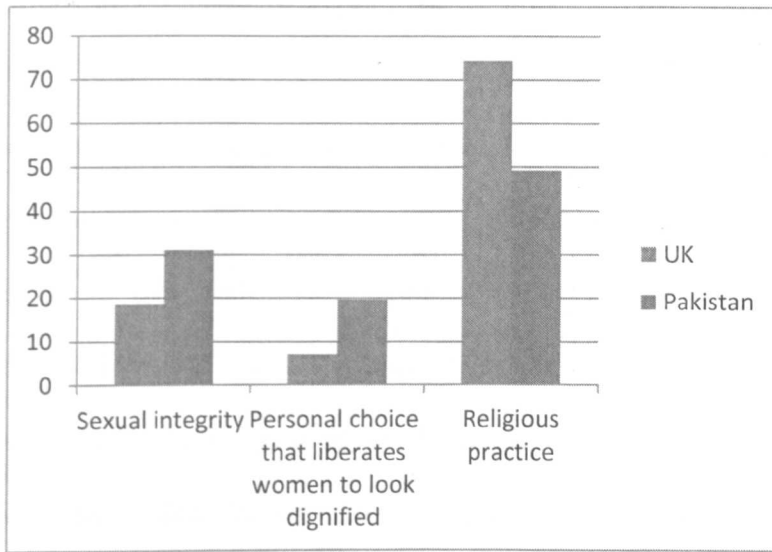
Figure 9.11.3: Perception of veiling

Among the UK residents, as Figure 9.11.3 illustrates, 19% perceive veiling to be a source of sexual integrity, 7% consider it as a personal choice that liberates women to look dignified and 74% take it as a religious practice. Among the Pakistani residents, 31% perceive veiling to be a sexual integrity, 19% consider it as a personal choice that liberates women to look dignified and 49% take it as a religious practice. Therefore, unlike Pakistani respondents, UK respondents associate veiling more with a religious practice.

The responses recorded for this question proposes that the majority of respondents believe veiling to be religious practice. Although this question is a subject of huge variation, no one chose the options of sexual oppression, patriarchal politics or gender submission and this confirms Said's (1978) and Ahmed's (1992) thesis,

previously discussed in Chapter 4, of how Western feminists control and manipulate the meaning of veil and that is not what Muslims believe. Students' attitudes towards veiling represent socio-religious aspects; for Pakistani students veiling is sexual integrity and a way to look dignified and for UK respondents it is religious commitment. Although this may contradict UK students' responses in previous question, where 79% of them felt that "veiling should not be criticised as a religious or political phenomenon", this can be perceived as their retaliation to the Western criticism of a religious practice being manipulated as gender politics, as noted by Said (1978). More males perceive it as religious practice and more females view it as sexual integrity and a way to look dignified. It suggests that male respondents consider veiling as a part of God's ordainment, whereas female students are keen on the social impact of veiling and prefer it as a personal choice to look dignified, as Wadud (2006) notes that veiling preserves women's dignity. The finding also verifies Ahmed's observation that for female Muslim students hiding is a chief virtue. This might contradict Campbell's comment that Muslims students are more secular than they appear as they usually wear what their parents want them to, because in this question Muslim students explicitly stand for veiling as a religious practice, a personal choice that liberates women to look dignified, and sexual integrity.

9.2 Sin's Incest and Motherhood

This section discusses the character of Sin in *Paradise Lost* and interprets Milton's construction of femininity as a degradation of women by presenting a character like Sin, whose evil representation in terms of her physical and moral characteristics (involving rape and incest) might disturb Muslim students. Respondents are given the following excerpt from the poem for this section.

This quotation is from *Paradise Lost* and it deals with Sin's motherhood. Please read the quotation before answering this section:

> The one seem'd Woman to the waste, and fair,
> But ended foul in many a scaly fould
> Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd
> With mortal sting: about her middle round
> A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd...
> ..._and such joy thou took'st
> With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
> A growing burden...
>   (*Paradise Lost* II: 650-767)

Q. Sin is the first and the only female character other than Eve in *Paradise Lost*. Her incest with her father (Satan) makes her pregnant with a son (Death). Later, she is raped by her son, and as a result suffers constant pregnancies, bearing hell hounds. Do you think motherhood/womanhood is abused in such a discourse?

This question deals with the most disturbing character in *Paradise Lost*. Sin is a woman up to her waist and below she is serpent-like creature. After having sexual pleasure with her father, she bears Death, who subsequently rapes her leaving her in a constant suffering of cursed births and deaths of dog-like creatures. Although the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* supports the idea of motherhood (and menstruation[245]) as a part of the punishment of the fall, the respondents are asked whether they consider such discourse as abuse of motherhood.
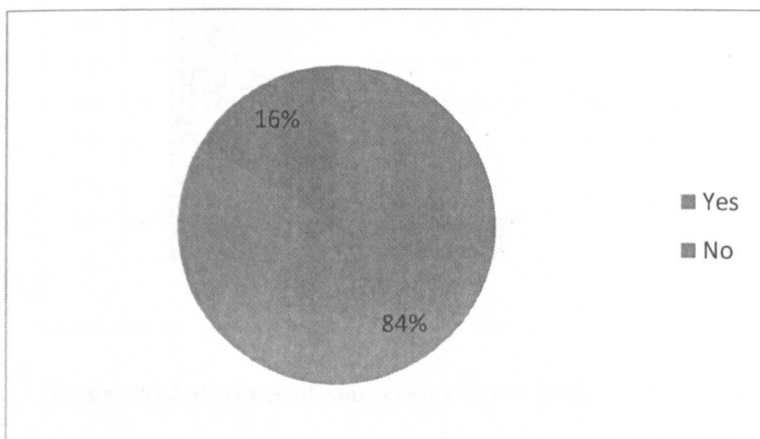
Figure 9.12.1: Abuse of motherhood/womanhood in Sin's incest

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[245] Students' responses on menstruation are explored in previous Chap 8

Figure 9.12.1 demonstrates that 84% of respondents regard such discourse as abuse of motherhood/womanhood, whereas 16% do not believe this.
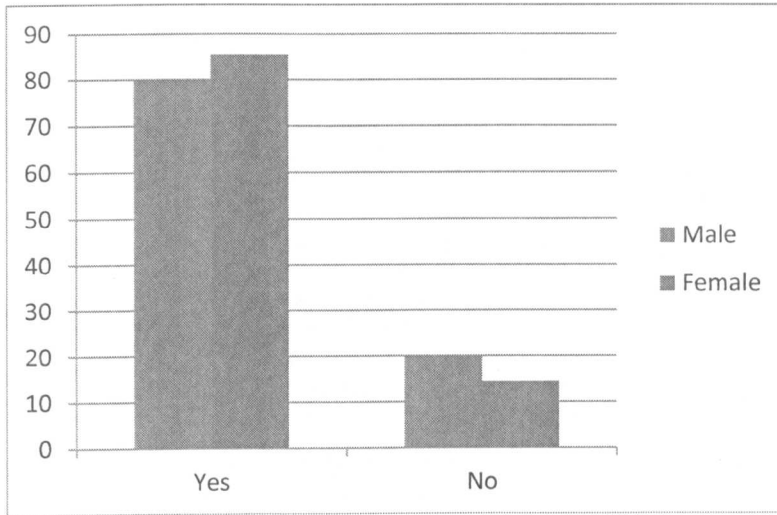
Figure 9.12.2: Abuse of motherhood/womanhood in Sin's incest

Figure 9.12.2 demonstrates that 80% male and 86% female respondents agree that such conversation is a form of abuse of motherhood/womanhood and the remaining believe otherwise. Therefore, female respondents are slightly more concerned about such discussions than the male respondents.
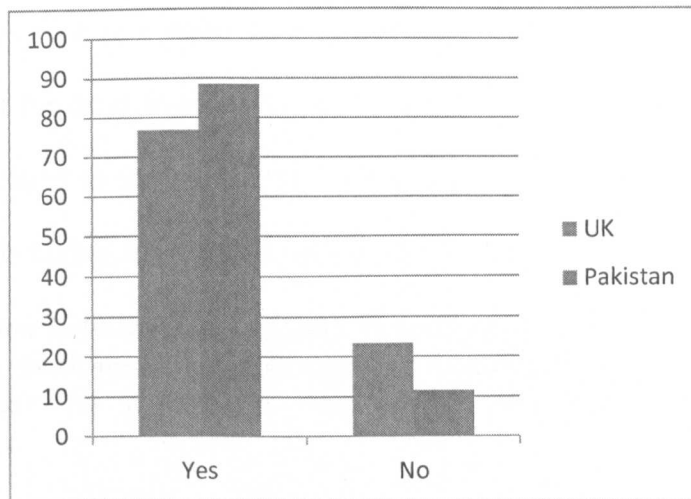
Figure 9.12.3: Abuse of motherhood/womanhood in Sin's incest

Similarly, Figure 19.12.3 illustrates that 77% of UK residents and 89% of Pakistani respondents consider this discussion as an abuse of motherhood/womanhood, suggesting that Pakistani students are more inflexible (religiously traditional) in such discussions than the UK respondents.

The findings propose that some of the respondents disagree that the discourse of Sin's incest and rape show an abuse of motherhood and womanhood, whereas the majority of the respondents agree with the statement. The significant disagreement (23%) from UK students is noted perhaps because students could think about this question independent of religion, and their opinions varied as individuals. It is noted that more females agreed with the statement and showed less flexibility in accepting Sin's representation than the male undergraduate respondents, perhaps because female respondents are keener to perceive feminine degradation as a violation to the Islamic perception of motherhood. This finding can be seen in reference to Wynne-Davies' comment that Sin the darkest character of the poem, for whom nothing is going to be all right, in comparison of Proserpina and Eve. This can also be viewed in Falaksher and Ahmed's attention to Eve's status as a mother (other than her being Prophet) as that makes it difficult for them to relate her with nudity or sin. As examined in Chapter 2, motherhood is related to sainthood in Islamic tradition and mothers' status in Islam is perceived as much higher, and therefore females find such discourse more disturbing.

Q. Sexual relation between a father and daughter, or a son and mother, finds no place in Islamic tradition and it is clearly mentioned in the *Quran* that incest is un-Islamic (haraam). As a Muslim reader, how tolerable/intolerable can such discussion be?

This question is a continuation of the previous question in which Sin's character is discussed, and it serves as a background for discussion of incest (and rape) in relation to Sin, which is explored directly in this question. Muslim respondents are asked about their tolerance level towards the discussion of incest, as this would also help to examine the

problematic narrative of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim reading.
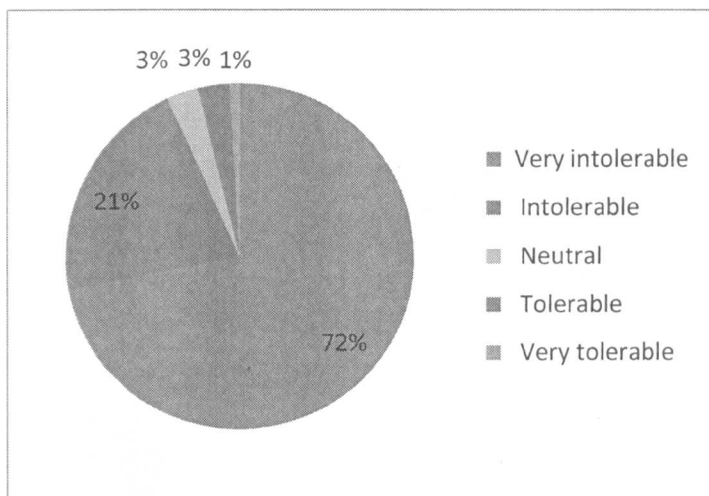
Figure 9.13.1 Tolerance towards the narrative of incestuous relationship among Muslim readers

Figure 9.13.1 illustrates that 72% of the respondents find incestuous relationship very intolerable, 21% are intolerable, 3% are neutral and 3% also find it tolerable and only 1% find it very tolerable when questioned regarding the tolerance of narrative of incestuous relationship among Muslim readers.
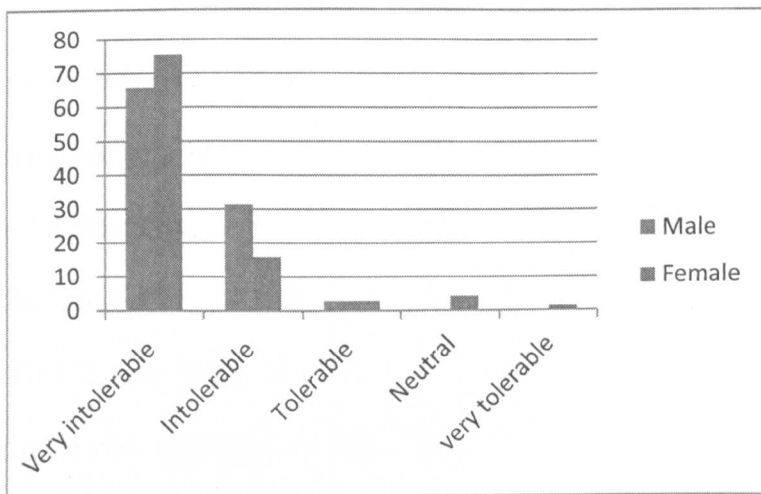
Figure 9.13.2 Tolerance towards the narrative of incestuous relationship among Muslim readers

Tolerance towards the narrative of incestuous relationship among Muslims readers is discussed in Figure 9.13.2 on the basis of gender. Among respondents, 66% male and

75% female students find it very intolerable and 31% males and 16% females find it intolerable. Male and female respondents equally (3%) find it tolerable to discuss the narrative of an incestuous relationship. However, 4% females are neutral and for 1% it is even very tolerable, proving females to be slightly more flexible in attitude towards discussion on incestuous relationship than male Muslim respondents.
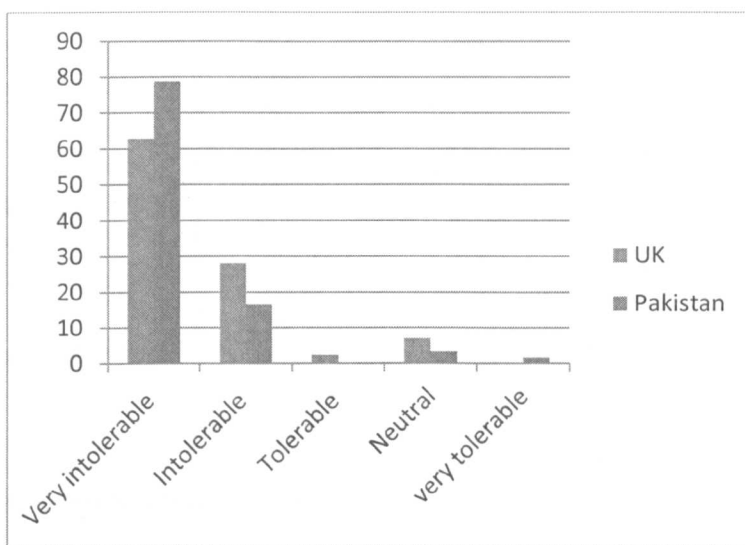
Figure 9.13.3 Tolerance towards the narrative of incestuous relationship among Muslim readers

As illustrated in Figure 9.13.3, for 62% of UK residents the discourse of incestuous narrative is very intolerable, 28% find it intolerable, 7% remain neutral and only 2% show tolerance towards discussing a narrative of incestuous relationship among Muslims readers. Among Pakistani residents, 79% of them find it very intolerable to discuss such narrative, 16% are intolerable towards such narrative discourse, 3% remain neutral and remaining 1% find it very tolerable. The responses are more complex from Pakistani students, who find it very intolerable to have such discussion though some (1%) of them are relaxed and find such discussion very tolerable. Consulting the original data, the percentage represents only one student, therefore this can not be generalised as a major finding because that is not a frequent trend.

The findings propose that this section of the text is very difficult for Muslim students to discuss. The highest responses recorded are from Pakistani respondents who

think that discussion of incest is very intolerable for them, although these responses are slightly inconsistent. Contrarily, only one respondent from Pakistan finds it very tolerable to discuss a narrative of incestuous relationships among Muslim readers. The overall responses, however, show that Muslim students are not very tolerant to such discourses. Although UK academics note that they do not talk about Sin explicitly, this question proposes one of the reasons that Pakistani academics who only teach the first two books of *Paradise Lost* completely ignore the character of Sin.

9.3 Jesus and Mary

This section discusses the other religious controversies that the text of *Paradise Lost* may offer for students of non-Christian backgrounds, particularly Muslim students. Apart from the issues of Eve's evil representation and the contradicting nature of the narrative of the fall, the discussion of Jesus and Mary in *Paradise Lost* is also very significant in terms of the text's reception. The Christian ideology of Jesus and Mary contradicts Islamic representation of these characters in many ways. Firstly, Jesus is not considered as God's son; secondly, Jesus can never be perceived independently as God; thirdly, Jesus is not believed to be a redeemer of human salvation for the fall that was brought about by Eve. Similarly, Mary's identity as a virgin mother of Jesus and her representation as a symbol of chastity does not, for Muslims, suggest that she is superior to Eve (because of the fall) in any way.

Q. Who is Jesus (Hadrat Issa)? (*Please check only one*) Messiah, God's Prophet, God's Son, Virgin Mary's Son, or a source of human salvation

In *Paradise Lost* the angels foretell to Adam and the reader that God's Son will defeat Satan and will be the saviour of mankind. The question has a significant importance to this study as it explores the Islamic perception of Jesus that is contradictory to Christian concept contextualised in *Paradise Lost*.
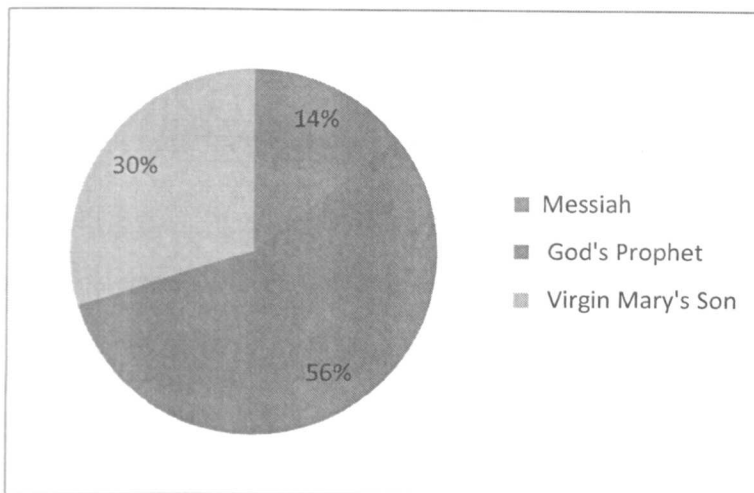
Figure 9.14.1: Identity of Jesus in Islam

Figure 9.14.1 demonstrates that 14% of Muslim respondents believe Jesus to be a Messiah, 56% as God's Prophet and 30% believe him to be son of Virgin Mary, leaving out the options of God's Son and Source of Human Salvation.
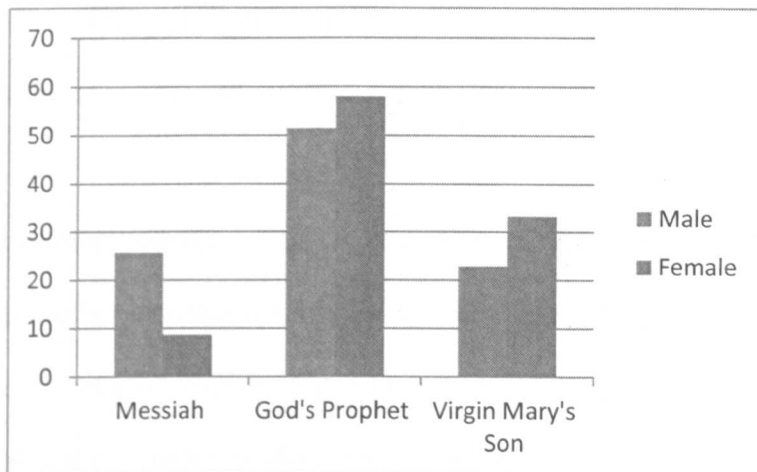
Figure 9.14.2: Identity of Jesus in Islam

Figure 9.14.2 demonstrates that 26% of Male respondents and 9% of female respondents consider Jesus as a Messiah, 51% male 58% female students perceive him as God's prophet and 23% male and 33% female respondents believe that he is Virgin Mary's Son. More female students consider Jesus to be Mary's Son and God's Prophet than Messiah as compared to the male respondents.
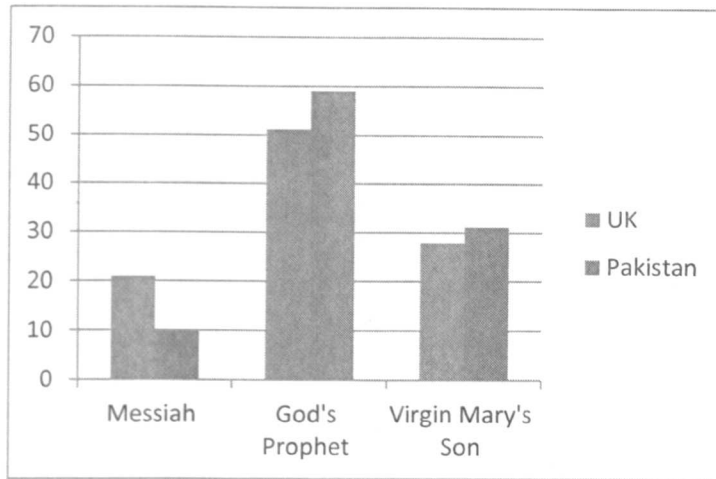
Figure 9.14.3: Identity of Jesus in Islam

The Figure 9.14.3 illustrates that 21% of UK and 10% of Pakistani residents believe

Jesus to be a Messiah, 51% of UK and 59% of Pakistani students see him as God's

Prophet and 28% of UK and 31% of Pakistani respondents are in favour of Jesus as the

Virgin Mary's Son. The significant difference in the responses of students comes from

their opinion on Jesus as Messiah, as more UK students choose that option than Pakistani

students.

The most favoured option for the identity of Jesus in Islam has been God's

Prophet, with the other selected options being Mary's son and Messiah; the options of

God's Son and Source of Human Salvation were not chosen. The absence of these

responses suggests that Muslim students reject the Christian belief of Jesus as God's son

and redeemer. Although Muslim respondents opted exactly according to the Islamic

perspective of Jesus, it is intriguing as to why they voted less for one option "Messiah"

than for the other two. Respondents from Pakistan voted least for the Messiah and

highest for God's Prophet, perhaps because it is direct adherence to Islamic tenets,

whereas Messiah could be interpreted as a Christian (foreign) expression and might be

related with salvation – although in Islam, too, Jesus is perceived as a Messiah as he was

gifted with the ability to perform miracles (like other Prophets). This finding could be

seen in contrast to Falaksher's perception of how his students take and respect the Christian character of Jesus in the same way they feel for Islamic Jesus (Hadrat Issa).

Q. Milton evokes the theological context by relating Eve to one of the most significant female figures of the *Bible* – the Virgin Mary. Do you think that the two religious figures, Eve and Mary, have the common virtue of chastity?

Milton's Eve has been controversial in many ways: from transgressing the ideal constructs of chaste Early Modern woman in terms of her behaviour and nudity, the reason for the human fall from grace, having an ironic resemblance with Sin, and possessing similar attributes of infidel mythical goddesses. With regard to the understanding of the Christian context, the two female figures have characteristics attached to them either as ideal role model (as Mary) or as evil (as Eve). The question aims to understand Eve's identity more precisely among Muslim students by placing her in comparison to Mary, as in *Paradise Lost* Milton pronounces "Mary as second Eve" who will give birth to Jesus to restore all that has lost by Eve. This question will also help to investigate Muslim students' perception of Mary and Eve, as Eve in the Islamic perspective bears no shame or curse of bringing about the fall.
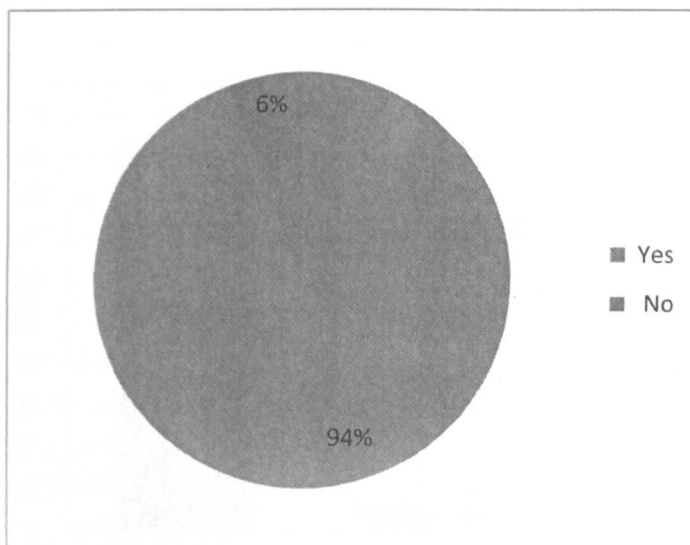
Figure 9.15.1: Common virtue of chastity between Eve and Virgin Mary

Figure 9.15.1 demonstrates the overall responses of students from the UK and Pakistan. It illustrates that as much as 94% of students agree that Eve and Mary share the virtue of chastity equally, whereas only 6% disagree with that.
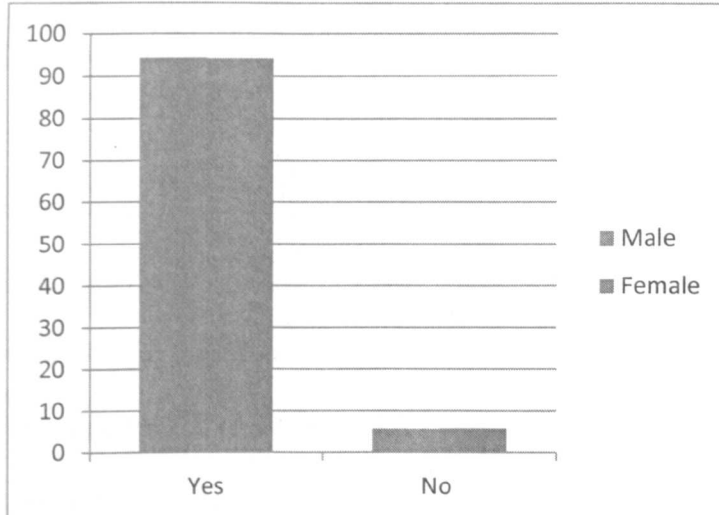
Figure 9.15.2: Common virtue of chastity between Eve and Virgin Mary

Figure 9.15.2 shows the respondents' views from a gender perspective. It shows that the responses recorded from male and female Muslim students are identical, as equal number of male and female respondents favour (94%) and oppose (6%) Eve's chastity in common with Mary.
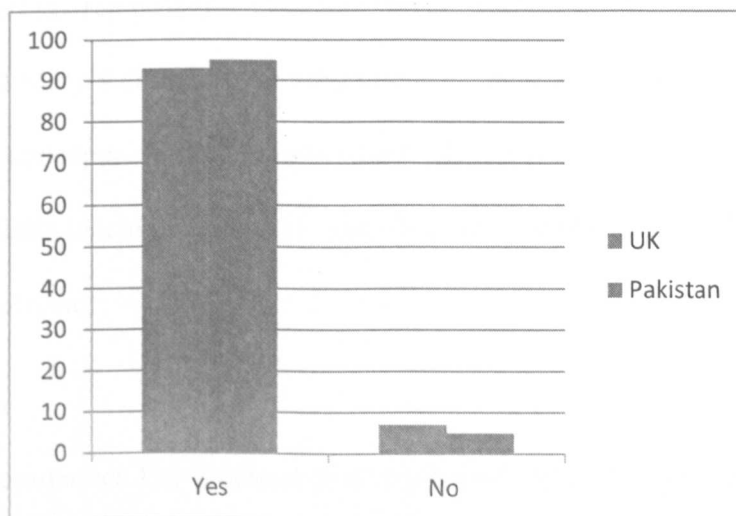
Figure 9.15.3: Common virtue of chastity between Eve and Virgin Mary

Figure 9.15.3 demonstrates the responses from the UK and Pakistani respondents. It

shows a similar set of responses from respondents with a very little difference. It demonstrates that 5% of Pakistani respondents and 7% of UK respondents disagree that Eve and Mary share a common virtue of chastity, whereas 95% of Pakistani and 93% of UK respondents agree to it, showing that Pakistani respondents are only slightly more in agreement of Eve and Mary's common chastity.

The findings from this question propose that in response to the statement, Muslim respondents behaved in similar way in accepting that Eve and Mary equally share the common virtue of chastity and Eve did not lose it due to the fall. It proposed that only UK students showed a slight disagreement about the statement. Therefore there is a huge difference between what Muslim students think in relation to Eve – that she is as chaste as Mary – and what the Biblical interpretation and Milton's narrative portrays. As discussed in Chapter 4, the symbolic presence of the phrase "second Eve" refers to the Biblical tradition of Annunciation, and also suggests that Mary is compared to Eve; Mary's seed would bruise Satan's head, and that would repair what was lost by Eve (Willet 1608). It is critical to understand that according to the Islamic account there is nothing lost by Eve and Mary's son is not believed to redeem human's sin, therefore the majority of Muslims rejected this Christian belief. Similarly, Ahmed's comment affirms this finding that Mary's character "is heightened to the state of god", and the intensity of such Christian concepts should be minimised for fruitful teaching of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, as Mary and Eve are equally respected among Muslim students and teachers.

9.4 Conclusion

This section summarises key findings from each section of this chapter, and analyses it through interview findings in order to validate the hypothesis presented in Part A of the study.

9.4.1 Nudity, Sexuality and Veiling

The findings from the first question of this section proposed that Muslim students are uncomfortable while discussing provocative issues, particularly in mixed-sex groups. There is not much difference noted on the basis of gender and country of residence for this question. The overall findings, however, suggested that it is very hard if one goes beyond the first two Books of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching and that could be one of the reasons Pakistani academics do not involve other Books in teaching.

The students showed complete understanding of Adam and Eve's un-sensuous nudity as presented in the *Quran* and they had identical responses for this question. It can be perceived that the controversial representation of Eve's nudity in *Paradise Lost* can be upsetting for them. Similarly, they showed awareness that Adam and Eve's nakedness is not considered sinful in Islam and that is why discussing Eve's nudity in *Paradise Lost* seems to be a taboo in Pakistani teaching scenarios. The discussion of Adam and Eve's nudity is not sinful in Islamic narrative; however, from the way Eve's nudity is exposed in *Paradise Lost* she seems partly fallen, sensuously provocative and sinned even before the actual fall, as discussed further in the above statement. While considering the cultural constraint of Muslim students and the religious position of Eve, this sensuous representation of Eve's nudity is seen as taboo in Pakistani teaching scenarios. The respondents agreed that Eve's sensuous nude representation made her seem like a sinful character even before the fall. As investigated in Part A of the study, Eve's nudity is presented as a transgression from moral codes of Early Modern society and that is how Wynne-Davies discusses Eve's character in the class. Although such discussion does not examine Eve as a sexual object, her nudity is very problematic for Muslim students and should be tackled carefully in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*. The findings suggest that the majority of students can visualise Milton's description of Eve's

nude body, and female students showed the highest agreement with the statement. This could be seen as a socio-cultural influence on Pakistani females, as Jujja and Chaudary observed that their female students bow down and find such passages disturbing. It is critical to consider that Pakistani academics do not teach such passages from *Paradise Lost* but they have noticed students' reaction to nudity, whereas findings suggest that UK students equally find such passages appropriate but they never showed it during teaching, as noted by UK academics. This can be perceived as UK students not feeling relaxed enough to communicate their issues in the class, but their resistance is shown in questionnaire findings.

The more explicit finding based on gender variation is noted when students were asked about Milton's exploitation of Eve as a sexual stereotype. Female students from Pakistan and the UK showed the most agreement, showing their sensitivity to Eve's presentation, whereas some of male students disagreed with the statement as they might feel disconnected with Eve due to her representation, and perhaps that is a way of showing their unease with her representation. This can be linked to Campbell's comment about Muslim students considering Eve as "white girl with all the derogatory associations". This can be confirmed from the findings of the next question, when students are asked whether Eve's nudity could create embarrassment and anxiety for them: the highest responses were recorded from male students of Pakistan and the UK, and only a small number of females disagreed. It is noted that UK academics discuss certain themes, like the fall as a result of Adam and Eve's love-making, and that can be very problematic for Muslim students. Therefore, exploration of such passages needs extreme delicacy in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost*.

More complex findings emerged when students were asked about their social understanding of dress, and the male students chose rape as the most frequent option as a

result of women wearing revealing clothing. This suggests that they believe in the old phrase of "all women want to be raped and have rape fantasies", as noted by Forrester (1986). However, 23% of female students rejected this idea, showing a liberal approach and sense of social freedom. Disagreement on the basis of gender was also recorded when they were asked whether rape is seen more in Western countries than the ones promote veiling. Males show strong agreement to the statement, similarly Pakistani respondents perceive Western culture to be more immoral than the countries promote veiling; while, female students show a more moderate response and this can be followed from Ahmed's comment of seeing a change in students' attitudes to accept change open-mindedly.

Inconsistency on the basis of gender and country of residence is also noticed in the last two questions of this section, where veiling is discussed. Veiling is a major issue that caused polarised responses. The most intense responses are recorded from UK students, who agree that veiling should not be criticised as a religious phenomenon, and instead it should be seen as a cultural practice so that people can veil with freedom. This attitude of UK respondents could be seen as an influence of living in multicultural society, and that they are keen to modify the preconceived notion associated to Islamic veil and female oppression. However, female respondents showed a relaxed response and this can be perceived as their tendency to negotiate with Western cultural practices, as noted by Campbell. It is important to note that when respondents' perception of veiling was asked, none of them chose sexual oppression, patriarchal politics or gender submission. It affirms Said's (1978) and Ahmed's (1992) views on the subjectivity of Western feminists as they manipulate the purpose of the veil as female subjection, which is rejected by Muslim students. This could be because UK respondents are from the Western part of the world where veiling is associated to religious commitment, and

Pakistani students understand the traditional society of Pakistan and that is why they consider veiling important from a social aspect. It is also seen that male respondents perceived it as religious practice and more female respondents from considered veiling as a sexual integrity or a personal choice that liberates women, as was noted by Quranic feminist Wadud (2006).

From the above findings it is noted that Muslim students' responses varied immensely on the basis of gender and country of residence. In the previous Chapter 8 and in this chapter, when the questions dealt with religion or Adam and Eve directly in *Paradise Lost*, male and female responses were almost the same; however when the discussion moved on to more social issues like rape, the veil and sexuality there are marked gender and cultural differences. Therefore, this section suggested students' attitudes to different social issues that are also present in *Paradise Lost*, and that might help to understand their tendency to accept or reject such themes when read in a religious context. It is evident that the overall majority of students showed resistance to attitudes that are not recognised by their cultural or religious traditions, as was perceived in Part A of the study.

9.4.2 Sin's Incest and Motherhood

The findings based on this section proposed that the majority of students found Sin's character disturbing, and they considered her as an abuse of womanhood and motherhood. As examined in Part A, motherhood is recognised as sainthood in Islam and this is one of the reasons that Pakistani academics were reluctant to discuss sin and nudity in reference to Eve. Sin's curse of motherhood is most disturbing for Pakistani students as they probably perceived such representation as a violation of Islamic tenets of motherhood – perhaps this is because, as Wynne-Davies noted, Sin as the darkest character of the poem for whom nothing is going to be all right, in comparison to

Proserpina and Eve. Similarly, Muslim respondents show an extreme intolerance towards reading the incestuous discourse of Sin, Satan and Death, and the highest responses are noted from Pakistan respondents. This finding verifies the reason Pakistani academics, even while teaching only two Books of *Paradise Lost*, completely ignore Sin's character. It is noted that Sin's representation as a cursed mother and an incestuous woman is recognised as feminine degradation by Muslim students, and it can be extremely intolerable if taught in reference to Eve's mirror[246] image.

9.4.3 Jesus and Mary

Redemption is a key theme of *Paradise Lost* as the narrative stresses human salvation by God's son, Jesus, and the concept of the fall becomes fortunate when it is perceived from the second coming of Jesus as redeemer, as noted by St. Augustine and quoted by Lovejoy (1937). As investigated in Part A in Chapters 2 and 4 this concept is against Muslims' primary belief of God being the only source of human salvation, and that Jesus is not His son but a Prophet. Therefore, the findings of this question show that Muslim students are not willing accept the Christian portrayal of Jesus, as it directly challenges God's supreme authority, and they would rather stick to their Islamic beliefs. This finding could suggest that the theme of redemption in *Paradise Lost* can stir students' religious beliefs in Muslim/multi-faith teaching.

The last question in this chapter brings about the ultimate perception of students as to how Muslim readers perceive Eve and the fall subsequently. The respondents were asked about their perception of Mary in comparison to Eve, as in both Islam and Christianity Mary is the symbol of chastity and purity, and Mary is referred as second Eve in *Paradise Lost*. The findings proposed that Muslim students do not find Eve

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[246] It was a conscious act to refrain from showing comparison between Eve and Sin, as was examined in Part A, because this could create a negative impact of the overall reception of this research among respondents and influence data collection

unchaste and equate her with Mary, which is very different from established Christian beliefs and from what Milton and dominant criticism on Milton portray, but it does align closely with the *Quran* and the hypothesis presented in Part A of the study.

The next Chapter 10 concludes the overall study, while outlining the key findings of the research and suggesting implications.

Chapter 10

Conclusion and Implications

This chapter begins by summarising the overall study and discussing the division between and respective importance of Part A and Part B of this study. Further, it presents findings and implications to develop productive Muslim/multi-faith teaching of Christian texts, like *Paradise Lost*, and suggests ways to improve the current socio-political scenario by multi-faith teaching – as teaching, in broader perspective, can influence social behaviours.

10.1 Summary

This study aimed to provide insight into the new research area of how Christian texts are approached in Muslim/multi-faith teaching and how this experience can be improved for a fruitful learning process. It concentrated on *Paradise Lost* and asked academics from Pakistan and the UK about their experience of teaching English Literature texts that are embedded in Christianity in a Muslim/multi-faith scenario. Similarly, Muslim students' experience of studying *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK was examined in relation to their Islamic beliefs, which are contradicted in the poem.

The study's first half (Part A) provided the basis of how *Paradise Lost* can be controversial in Muslim teaching, and investigated the narrative of the fall as presented in *Paradise Lost* in relation to Biblical and Quranic accounts of the fall. In order to provide a theoretical context for the investigation, the thesis used Feminism and Quranic Feminism with a particular focus on Eve's role in the account of the fall. Subsequently, Part B of the study examined the issues presented in the first half and explored them in both the interviews and questionnaires in order to explore the hypotheses presented in Part A. It is noted that academics in Pakistan are concerned about the growth of religious intolerance, and academics in the UK are seeking ways to provide effective teaching to

multi-faith classes. This project studies Muslims students' religious views and asks academics how they teach a potentially difficult text to students of different faiths: this research is seeking to answer the very concerns which preoccupied the interviewed academics, therefore it is a significant and timely piece of work.

10.2 Findings

The findings emerging from Part A of the study proposed the problems that *Paradise Lost,* as an overtly Christian text, might pose in Muslim/multi-faith teaching in Pakistan and the UK. The close reading and dominant criticism of *Paradise Lost,* and the creation narratives in the *Bible* and the *Quran,* demonstrated the controversies between the Christian and Islamic account of the fall and highlighted the issues of a Muslim reading of *Paradise Lost.* For example, blaming Eve as a sinner of the fall, Eve's sensuous nudity, the challenging speeches of Satan against God, the concept of Redemption, and a comparison between Eve and Mary on the basis of their morality are very controversial issues for Muslims reading Milton. Apart from the key religious issues, there are other moral issues that might trouble Muslim students, for instance the mythical and fictional references of incestuous and adulterous infidel women that are used to represent Eve's character as morally weak. Part A also highlighted the possible teaching perspectives that might be used to approach a Christian text in order to tone down the intensity of Christian concepts in Muslim/multi-faith teaching, for example using a socio-cultural and political context in representation of patriarchy, and gender submission in Adam and Eve's characters, and revenge and ambition in Satan's character, respectively. Teaching perspectives were also examined for fruitful Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost,* such as feminism, Quranic feminism and post-colonialism. All these findings were further examined in Part B of the study by conducting interviews with Pakistani and UK academics and questionnaire surveys with Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK.

The findings from the interviews and questionnaires supported the findings of Part A that academics and teachers found difficulties in teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith students because of the poem's Christian context. However, the findings also suggested that there are ways in which teaching could be altered, both in the UK and Pakistan, in order to improve Muslim/multi-faith teaching of *Paradise Lost* and/or other Christian texts, if pedagogical approaches are revised in order to help students engage more fruitfully with Christian texts and the political, cultural, and religious issues in Pakistan and the UK.

The most important findings emerging out of this study are as follows:

10.2.1 Curriculum and Teaching Practices

> the findings emerging from this study proposed that the Christian context of *Paradise Lost* is problematic for Muslim/multi-faith teaching scenario. Pakistani academics have often seen resistance in the class whereas in UK teaching scenarios the resistance either comes out in private, is defined in silence, or might be shown by missing some particular class on religious discussion; resistance in the class is noted when Islam is directly challenged in Christian texts. The resistance, however, is noted by academics but not considered as an issue for teaching. Pakistani teaching scenarios seemed authoritative as students' responses were controlled, and UK academics found Muslim students shy and quiet but they do not perceive it as a form of resistance. Therefore, there is an interesting parallel between Milton's Eve and students that by reading *Paradise Lost* Muslim students are acquiring knowledge, but there are limits to what they can accept/be taught;

> the teaching practices of *Paradise Lost* are diverse in Pakistan and the UK as Pakistani academics only teach the first two Books while intentionally missing representation of Eve and the Biblical account of the fall, whereas UK academics teach all those Books[247] that deal with the problematic Christian concepts. There is no uniformity seen in teaching practices in the UK and Pakistan which could bring neutrality in teaching Christian texts to Muslim students by sharing teaching experiences;

> *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan is part of a colonial curriculum but it is not taught from a post-colonial perspective; this complicates the situation not only for students but also for Pakistani Muslim academics. They have to deal with the Biblical context of the fall, Satan's blasphemous speeches, Eve's sensuous and sinful representation and the concept of redemption, and they have to justify many fronts while teaching these concepts;

> a culturally-specific teaching approach is implied both in Pakistan and the UK: the Islamic perspective of the fall is implied in Pakistani teaching, in contrast to UK teaching, where *Paradise Lost* is taught from a Christian perspective, and there is growing need to broaden the teaching approaches by balancing theoretical and religious perspectives and introducing cross-cultural values and beliefs;

10.2.2 Faith

> the interview findings suggested an interesting contrast between UK and Pakistani academics, as teachers in Pakistan and the UK tended to assume a lack

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[247] Books (I, II, IV, IX, XII, and XII)

of problems during Christian teaching with or without comparing students' religious beliefs with the Christian concepts;

> Muslim students expressed explicit concerns about the Christian context of the poem which their teachers are seemingly unaware of, as it has gone largely unnoticed by academics in Pakistan and the UK;

> students' responses are much more contradictory from close readings of the poem explored earlier in this study and from the dominant criticism on Milton, but they do align closely with the Quranic perspective and the hypothesis presented in Part A. In the case of Eve's representation, the account of the fall and the concept of redemption, they are strongly resistant to the Christian context of Milton's narrative. For example, their responses opposed both the established readings of theory and criticism that present Eve (woman) as the woe to man, and teachers who assume students' lack of resistance in Eve's portrayal as temptress;

10.2.3 Politics

> Pakistani academics seemed to be cautious about dealing with religious texts and getting involving in religious debates publically, and they consider it a dangerous approach due to the current political scenario and growing religious intolerance;

> the responses of Pakistani academics towards Christian texts/beliefs seemed to be policed and controlled, and they appeared under pressure when dealing with the Christian content. This shows that politicisation influences teaching practices in Pakistani context;

> there is a growing need to explore and discuss the cross-cultural/cross-religious issues on a higher level as world is facing religious intolerance and at the same

time getting global. However, lack of funding[248] and incentives of worldwide governments available to such project restricts people getting involved;

10.2.4 Role of women

➢ Pakistani academics note Muslim students struggling with the ill-treatment towards women in literary texts driven from the Christian tradition of blaming women for the original sin. The overall findings, however, suggests that it is very hard if one goes beyond the first two Books of *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching due to the religious and moral issues related to female gender, for example the fall associated with Eve, and the issues of nudity, rape, incest and female infidelity, all reflecting Eve's immoral persona. This could be one of the reasons Pakistani academics do not involve other than first two Books in teaching;

➢ Muslim students in Pakistan and the UK, and Pakistani academics, find it very hard to deal with Eve's character representation in *Paradise Lost* as nude, sinful and morally weak;

➢ students consider Eve and Mary equally virtuous, as they do not find Eve unchaste and equate her with Mary, which is very different from any of the critics' vies or close reading of *Paradise Lost*;

10.2.5 Culture and Gender

➢ overall, it seems that throughout the entire questionnaire there was no great variation between the responses of UK and Pakistani students, as they represented identical approaches in responding to most of the questions,

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[248] I applied for British Academy funding to compare how Muslims stage Shakespeare in Pakistan and the UK, but it was rejected. It is not about scholarship but feeling the importance of the multi-faith and multi-cultural approaches to and difficulties with certain literary texts and how it can be improved through teaching

particularly when the discussion involved religion (Islam/Christianity), which showed students' adherence to the Islamic tenets;

> students' responses proposed complexity when the questions were about social understanding of issues like clothing, veil and rape, and they had to think independently of religion. Data analysis identified differences between the responses of male and female students. However, complex differences were noted as Pakistani and UK male students showed traditional approaches, whereas Pakistani and UK female students approved a comparatively liberal approach;

10.3 Implications

The following implications can be made for productive Muslim/multi-faith teaching of Christian texts like *Paradise Lost:*

> the pedagogy needs to be revised, and the academics from Pakistan and the UK need to reconsider their current culturally-specific teaching practices by balancing religious and theoretical perspectives in order to tamper the intensity of religious context in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of Christian texts;

> it can be useful to approach the Christian text by exploring socio-cultural and political context initially in order to tone down the Christian intensity of the narrative, and then examine a combination of theoretical perspectives relevant to the text and socio-religious background of the students;

> expanding understanding of religious perspectives while teaching can also be helpful by exploring multiple religious creation narratives, and drawing comparison between *Paradise Lost* and these narratives to show that the text is not stagnant and can produce different meanings in different socio-religious aspects. This will also improve multi-faith students' participation in class;

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➢ the development of multi-faith discussion of Christian texts might improve students' response assuring their inclusion in learning process, for example involving and balancing the Christian and Islamic perspectives of the fall (and perhaps other religious narratives) would allow students to understand wider religious perspectives while relating it to their own religious beliefs;

➢ radicalism can be harnessed for the way that it can exist or not in teaching by exploring literary debates from cross-religious perspectives. Students with strong religious commitments can be encouraged to think more openly about the religious commitments of the writers and texts that they study. It can improve understanding and acceptance of other religions among students, as well as students' tolerance towards religious debates;

➢ Teaching could also be improved by broadening our culturally-specific teaching approaches and implying the practice of being non-judgmental about the religious texts while bringing genuine respect to students' beliefs;

➢ post-colonialism can be used to justify the teaching of *Paradise Lost* in a Pakistani context, and it would also reduce the pressure on Muslim academics teaching Christian texts in Pakistani scenarios;

➢ the danger of politicisation of Christian texts like *Paradise Lost* might be improved by communication between academics in Pakistan and the UK in order to improve pedagogy and develop students' interest and sympathies with Christian texts. Communication and interaction would also help in learning about each other's (Eastern and Western) culture and religion to develop sympathies between students of different cultures and religions; sharing teaching practices can also be helpful as it would allow teachers to re-evaluate potential issues in

current teaching practices and devise more fruitful approaches, and to control religious intolerance and social biases among cultures more widely;

➢ governments should fund cross-cultural studies to get people involved by personal travel or online conferencing, in order to bring real impact on the political situation in relation to Christian texts in multi-faith/Muslim scenarios as well as cross-cultural relations. Academics and students in the UK and Pakistan can possibly encourage investment by identifying mutual issues/goals that deal with the current socio-political scenario and have potential to bring real change in the current political and academic situations;

➢ female degradation can be dealt with by using Quranic feminism alongside Western feminism and it could be helpful ensuring students' acceptance of the text and analysing the multiplicity of textual interpretations;

The study proposed that there is an emerging need to introduce radical changes in Muslim/multi-faith teaching of Christian texts, like *Paradise Lost*, in Pakistan and the UK in order to promote increased reciprocity not only in academic circles but for the wider political scenario. In future it would be interesting to peruse the results to re-evaluate the new pedagogical practices (if they were put in place) and see how this has influenced Muslims reading Milton[249].

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[249] I am going to teach in Pakistan in Bahauddin Zakriya University after my PhD and hope to implement these findings and work closely with a UK researcher to develop further research in this field

Appendices

Appendix A: Research Questions

Appendix I: Sample of Interview Questions for Academics in the UK[250]

Interview Questions   **Time duration: 1 hr (approximately)**

Part 1:

Q1. What texts and which authors have you been teaching in English Early Modern writing?

Q2. Do you teach religious material? If so from what perspective, and do you expect students to have any prior specific knowledge about that?

Q3. On which course have you taught *Paradise Lost*, and from which particular critical perspective?

Q4. How do you present the character of Eve?

Q5. Do you refer to any other female characters? E.g. Sin or Proserpina, and how do you represent them?

Q6. Do you draw attention to questions of sexuality in *Paradise Lost*, and do you use images? If so which ones?

Part 2:

Q7. Have you ever had students form non-Christian/ Muslim backgrounds in any of your teaching?

Q8. Does teaching Muslim/multi-faith group mean you change the way you teach or the focus of the class?

Q9. Would there be a difference if you had mixed-sex multi faith groups?

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[250] This is just a sample of questions asked from the academics in Pakistan and the UK as the interview was semi-structured, no rigid pattern and schedule was followed to maintain the flow of the discussion. Hence, only those questions were asked that deemed to be relevant at the time.

Q10. Have you ever had experience of teaching *Paradise Lost* to Muslim/multi-faith and mixed sex groups? If yes, how did the teaching develop?

Q11. Whether you have had the experience outlined in Q10 or not, what would be the most productive way of teaching *Paradise Lost* in Muslim/multi-faith teaching?

Q12. Would you change teaching methods/module content in Muslim/multi-faith and mixed sex groups?

Part 3:

Q13. Is there any other thing you would like to mention or add?

Q14. Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix II: Sample of Interview Questions for Academics in Pakistan[251]

Interview Questions   **Time duration: 1 hr (approximately)**

Part 1:

Q1. What texts and which authors have you been teaching in English Early Modern writing?

Q2. From what perspective do you teach religious material?

2.1 Do you expect students to have any prior specific knowledge about that?

Q3. From which particular critical perspective do you teach *Paradise Lost*?

Q4. Which books of *Paradise Lost* do you discuss in a class?

4.1 Why only the first few books of *Paradise Lost* were included in Pakistani syllabus according to their course design?

4.2 What is the reason of teaching and giving priority to only a first few books than the others?

Q5. Which major characters of *Paradise Lost* do you discuss in a class?

5.1 Do you find resistance of students towards Satan's speeches against God?

Q6. How do you present the character of Eve?

6.1 Do you refer to any other female characters?

Q7. Do you draw attention to questions of sexuality in *Paradise Lost*?

7.1 Why do not you talk about Eve's sexuality? Is it because of her status of a mother or because of the social-religious resistance towards such discussions?

7.2 Can you discuss issues of rape in the class keeping the socio-cultural scenario of Pakistan in the view?

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[251] There were questions that were immerged spontaneously and had high importance and relevance according to the Pakistani socio-cultural trends: Questions like why only the first few books of *Paradise Lost* were included in Pakistani syllabus according to their course design and the reason of teaching and giving priority to only a first few books than the others. Another such question was whether the academics were comfortable enough to discuss Eve's nudity and sexuality in a class, (despite of the students), while keeping her religious status in mind.

Part 2:

Q8. Does teaching a Christian text mean you change the way you teach or the focus of the class?

Q9. How did the teaching develop while you teach *Paradise Lost*?

9.1 How do you balance the discussion on Christianity, Islam and *Paradise Lost* in class?

Q10. Would there be a difference if you had mixed-sex groups?

Q11.What would be the most productive way of teaching *Paradise Lost*?

Q12. Would you change your teaching methods and/or module content while teaching a Christian context of *Paradise Lost*?

Part 3:

Q13. Is there any other thing you would like to mention or add?

Q14. Do you have any questions for me?
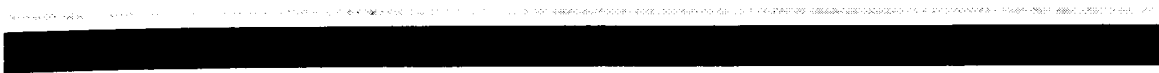
Thank you very much for your time.

When Muslims Read Milton: An Investigation of the Problems Encountered by Teachers and Students in the British and Pakistani Universities

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of my research project exploring teaching and learning experience of teaching Paradise Lost in Pakistan and the UK. The findings from your responses and others will be used as the key data set for my thesis at the University of Surrey, UK. The aim is to examine the experience of Muslim students being taught the story of the Fall in *Paradise Lost* written in a Biblical context rather than a Quranic one. No current research explores the ways in which Muslim students read and experience *Paradise Lost* from a religious and cultural perspective. This questionnaire focuses on the key issues of *Paradise Lost* (e.g. the human Fall, nudity, rape, and incest) and enquires about them on Islamic grounds. The study is useful for Muslim students being studying English Literature and to improve pedagogical approaches of teaching Christian texts to Muslim students, moreover, it intends to promote increased reciprocity not only in academic circles but for the wider political.

The questionnaire should take you 15 minutes to complete. The information you provide is confidential and your data will be held according to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Section 1: Identity of Eve

1.1. Is it problematic for you that *Paradise Lost* is written in a context of Christianity and you are being taught a Biblical narrative that negates the Quranic story of the Fall? (*Please check one of the following*)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1.2. **What is the first phrase that comes to your mind when you are asked about Islamic Eve – Hadrat Hawwa? (*Please check only one*)**

☐ Mother of humankind
☐ First woman on earth
☐ Cause of Adam's fall
☐ Disobedient towards God
☐ Other; Please specify

1.3. **What is the first phrase that comes to your mind when you are asked about Milton's Eve? (*Please check only one*)**

☐ Mother of humankind
☐ First woman on earth
☐ Cause of Adam's fall
☐ Disobedient towards God
☐ Other; Please specify

1.4. **Eve is not named in the *Quran* and only found in Hadith; do you think Eve has no significant identity in Islam?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.5. **Do you as a Muslim feel devoted to the first Prophets, Adam and Eve, and love them as your first parents?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.6. **Do you think Milton is partial if he suggests Eve as inferior to Adam?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.7. **The Quranic narrative of the Fall suggests that Satan tempted Adam and Eve together to eat the forbidden fruit; do you think we can blame only Eve in *Paradise Lost* for the Fall?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.8. **In *Paradise Lost* Eve after being seduced by Satan, seduces Adam into eating the fruit. Do you refute this statement in context of the Quranic narrative of the Fall?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.9. According to Islam, the Fall was just a historic event (rather than a sin) because Prophets are too innocent to commit a sin. How far do you agree/disagree with this statement? (*Please check one*)

☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neutral
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

1.10. In the Islamic view, the Fall did not change human nature at all. There is no curse that humans carry as a result of the Fall. How far do you agree/disagree with this statement? (*Please check one*)

☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neutral
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

1.11. Do you agree that menstruation is a part of punishment of the Fall associated with Eve and Eve's daughters?

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.12. Do you agree that menstruation is a marker of impiousness and uncleanness of woman originated by the temptation of Satan?

☐ Yes
☐ No

1.13. Who is Jesus? (Hadrat Issa) (*Please check only one*)

☐ Messiah
☐ God's Prophet
☐ God's Son
☐ Virgin Mary's Son
☐ Source of human Salvation from their sins

Section 2: Nudity and Veiling

This section deals with Eve's nudity. Please read the quotation from *Paradise Lost* before answering:

> And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
> On our first father; half her swelling breast
> Naked met his, under the flowing gold
> Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
> Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
> Smiled with superiour love, as Jupiter
>
> (*Paradise Lost* IV: 494-9)

2.1. **How far do you agree/ disagree that the erotic imagery and the provocative female representation is acceptable to be read in a mixed-sex group for Muslim students?** (*Please check one*)

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

2.2. **In the *Quran*, was the nakedness of Adam and Eve portrayed to be seductive either to the reader or to each other?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2.3. **In the *Quran*, the act of nakedness was not sinful for Adam and Eve since they were unaware of it; the fruit gave them knowledge of good and evil and then they covered their body with the fig leaves. Do you agree?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2.4. **Since the *Quran* and the *Bible* abhor nudity, Milton's sensuous details of Eve's nudity make her seem like a sinning character even before the fall. Do you agree?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2.5. **Do you think Milton's words describing Eve's nudity, gives you a visual sense of her sexuality?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2.6. **How far do you agree/disagree that Milton exploits Eve's femininity by presenting her as a sexual stereotype?**
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

2.7. **How far do you agree/disagree that *Paradise Lost* while dealing with Eve's nudity often transgresses from standards of decency expected by multicultural groups and can create anxiety and embarrassment for a Muslim reader?(*Please check one*)**
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

2.8. **How does it make you feel to consider the Islamic Eve (Hadrat Hawwa) as a temptress or seductress? (*Please check one*)**
- ☐ Very uncomfortable
- ☐ Uncomfortable
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Comfortable
- ☐ Very comfortable

2.9. **If the function of clothing is not fulfilled, and dress is worn to reveal rather conceal the body, may the results be the following dangerous? (*Please check one*)**
- ☐ Sexual harassment
- ☐ Sexual Assault
- ☐ Rape
- ☐ None of the Above

2.10. **Do you agree/disagree that rape cases are seen more frequently in Western countries rather than the countries which promote veiling?**
(*Please check one*)
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

2.11. Veiling should not be criticized as a religious or political phenomenon but seen as a part of culture or ethnicity that people may carry on with freedom. Do you agree/disagree? (*Please check one*)

☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neutral
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

2.12. Veiling should be seen as: (*Please check only one*)

☐ Sexual integrity
☐ Personal choice that liberates women to look dignified
☐ Patriarchal politics
☐ Gender submission
☐ Sexual oppression
☐ Religious practice

This quotation is from *Paradise Lost* and it deals with Sin's motherhood. Please read the quotation before answering 2.13:

> The one seem'd Woman to the waste, and fair,
> But ended foul in many a scaly fould
> Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd
> With mortal sting: about her middle round
> A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd...
> ..._and such joy thou took'st
> With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
> A growing burden...
>
> (*Paradise Lost* II: 650-767)

2.13. Sin is the first and the only female character other than Eve in *Paradise Lost*. Her incest with her father (Satan) makes her pregnant with a son (Death). Later, she is raped by her son, and as a result suffers constant pregnancies, bearing hell hounds. Do you think motherhood/womanhood is abused in such a discourse?

☐ Yes
☐ No

2.14. Sexual relation between a father and daughter, or a son and mother finds no place in Islamic tradition and it is clearly mentioned in the *Quran* that incest is un-Islamic (haraam). As a Muslim reader, how tolerable/intolerable can this discussion be? (*Please check one*)

☐ Very intolerable
☐ Intolerable
☐ Neutral

☐ Tolerable
☐ Very tolerable

2.15. **Milton evokes the theological context by relating Eve to one of the most significant female figures of the *Bible* – the Virgin Mary. Do you think that the two religious figures, Eve and Mary, have the common virtue of chastity?**
☐ Yes
☐ No

Section 3 Demographics

3.1. Please provide your personal details.

Gender:

Level of education:

Country of residence:

Religion:

Email:

Would you be prepared to be contacted for an interview?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Additional Comments:

Please return the completed questionnaire to me via email by the latest the 25th of February, 2011. If you have any queries or would like further information, please feel free to contact me on 07878725607 or via email on mm00213@surrey.ac.uk.
Thank you very much for your participation

Appendix I: Interview Consent Form

When Muslims Read Milton: An Investigation of the Problems Encountered by Teachers and Students in the British and Pakistani Universities

CONSENT FORM

This consent form outlines my rights as a participant in the research study of the PhD in English Literature in an Investigation of the Problems of *Paradise Lost* conducted by Mahe Nau Awan, Surrey University, Department of English, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH, UK.

I understand that

1. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.
2. It is my right to decline to answer any question that I am asked.
3. I am free to end the interview at any time.
4. I may request that the interview not be taped.

I HAVE READ THIS CONSENT FORM. I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND.

(Signature of Interviewee)

(Printed name of Interviewee)

(Date)

You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. Maintaining your anonymity is a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. There will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of this interview. I will not allow anyone other than the research advisor to hear any audiotape of your voice or review a transcript of this interview. All materials generated from your interview (e.g., audiotapes and transcripts) will remain in my direct physical possession.

(Signature of Interviewer and Date)

UNIVERSITY OF
SURREY

University of Surrey
Department of English
Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences
Guildford, Surrey, GU22 7XH

Email: mm00213@surrey.ac.uk
Mob: 07878725607

10 February 2011

Dear Participants,

This questionnaire is a part of my research project exploring Muslim students' experience of studying *Paradise Lost* in Pakistan and the UK. The findings from your questionnaire and others will be used as the key data set for my thesis at the University of Surrey. The aim is to examine the experience of Muslim students being taught the story of the Fall in *Paradise Lost* written in a Biblical context rather than a Quranic one. No current research explores the ways in which Muslim students read and experience *Paradise Lost* from a religious and cultural perspective. This questionnaire focuses on the key issues of *Paradise Lost* (e.g. the human Fall, nudity, rape, and incest) and enquires about them on Islamic grounds. The study is useful for Muslim students in the UK and Pakistan studying *Paradise Lost* and will also help to improve the pedagogical approaches towards teaching a Christian text to students of different religious backgrounds. Moreover, it intends to promote increased reciprocity not only in academic circles but for the wider political scenario.

The questionnaire should take you 15 minutes to complete.

Please note that the information you provide is confidential and will be held according to the data protection act 1998, and the participation in the research is entirely voluntary.

Please return the completed questionnaire via email by the latest the 25th of March, 2011. Should you have any queries or would like further information, please feel free to contact me on 07878725607 or via email on mm00213@surrey.ac.uk.

Thank you very much for your help,
Mahe Nau Munir Awan

18 April 2011

Mahe Nau Munir Awan

Lecturer in English

English Department

Bahauddin Zakariya University

Sahiwal Campus

Subject: **Ethical Approval for PhD Research**

Dear Mahe Nau,

Thank you for your application of 5th April 2011 seeking Ethics Committee approval for undertaking your PhD research at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. The Committee has carefully considered your application along with the supporting documents.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been successful. The Committee made the following observations on your work:

1. The study does not highlight any pertinent ethical issues with regard to the subject.

2. The anonymity of the participants has been fully ensured.

3. The standard of information and consent is acceptable.

The Committee would like to wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Faisel Yunus

Chairman Ethics Committee

The Islamia University of Bahawalpur

Pakistan

25 April 2011

Mahe Nau Munir Awan
Lecturer in English
English Department
Bahauddin Zakariya University
Sahiwal Campus
Sahiwal

Subject: **Ethical Approval**

Dear Ms Mahe Nau,

Please refer to your application of 4th April 2011 for the subject request. The Committee has carefully considered your application along with the following documents:

- Abstract of the Thesis
- Participant Questionnaire

I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Committee that your application has been successful and would like to make the following comments:

4. The study has been well thought out and does not bear any ethical issues with regard to the subject.
5. The research questions being asked are valid.
6. The welfare and dignity of the participants have been ensured.
7. The standard of information and consent is acceptable.

The Committee would like to wish you every success with your project.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Asif Khan
Chairman Ethics Committee
Bahauddin Zakariya University
Main Campus & Sub Campus

Appendix I: Interview Transcripts[252]

Kate Hodgkins

I have been teaching this course on EML for about 10 years. Basically it is a sort of "introduction to" kind of course, so it takes a relatively conventional gallop through from about 1530's - 40's up to Milton, who is the latest writer that we look at. It is a mixture of poetry and drama with odd bits of prose in it. In a way I suppose because a lot of the students of UEL come from a non traditional background and come from kind of a first generation higher education and this kind of thing, I suppose it makes me slightly more conventional in certain ways in my approach; because I think that one of the things you can't take for granted is familiarity with the kind of icons of English Literature in a way. So I do tend to think that we have to do Shakespeare, we have to do Sydney, we have to do a bit of Herbert, we have to do a bit of Donne, we have to do a kind of familiarization process with the key figures, rather than possibly the more sort of exploratory course that I might otherwise be interested in doing with students whom I might thought have that kind of structure in place. Also quite a number of them also have some difficulty with the unfamiliar language side of things. We are not doing Chaucer, but nonetheless there is a kind of initial panic over what do the words mean on the page. It's also quite textually based; we don't do a huge amount of criticism, we spend quite a lot of time on what do the words on the page say.

Now as far as the students are concerned, the group size I would say on average is between 20-25. The proportion of student from Muslim backgrounds is inevitably higher in English Lit, UEL is an institution with a very large proportion of Muslim students they tend to be more in vocational subjects a lot of them are involved in business studies that kind of pattern. We do have Muslim students taking English degrees, but my point was that in proportion to their presence in the institution as a whole numbers are not very large; many gravitate towards more vocational subjects.)

In English we get maybe half a dozen a year. Mainly women, but again it's the profile of the discipline of the subject, the groups tend to be 3 quarters or more female in any case. I would say in an average group for that particular module I might have 4-5 girls and 1 boy of Muslim background and they vary in terms of religious commitment. The only way I can judge that (ie their level of commitment) is whether they are covered or not. Beyond that I have no way of telling what they actually are; they may have Muslim names but I don't actually know what that says about their personal investment. So that's the kind of starting point for a mixed group. In addition to Muslim students we generally have a few of Caribbean students; some of them are from Anglican Christian backgrounds. We generally have a mixture of mature and standard aged students in the rest of the class; as I say, many women, a lot of local students, a lot of East end students, not! a lot of students from upper class backgrounds; so it's quite a particular profile for a class. Some of them have recently done A-levels. A lot of them would like to do teacher training; that's the other general thing to say: a lot of them are doing English because they see it as a route to teaching.

So in terms of that **what religious knowledge I expect** them to have the answer is very little. Basically, because my interest in this period is autobiographical and religious writing in general, in order to teach that kind of stuff I do a certain amount of teaching and say all right, this

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is the Reformation; this is Calvinism; these are the kind of internal psychic structures we're dealing with in relation to kind of Donne or Herbert. I kind of think about the history of subjectivity but in a way I would say that's more where the religion comes in.

Perspective on PL

In PL, I know I would obviously need to teach religion to some extent, but you don't need to teach them theology in quite same way. You don't need to have a sense of what's the difference between Protestant and Catholic in order to get to know the text. What we do to some extent, in order to think about justification and free will and those kind of questions, we do spend quite a lot of time thinking about what's free will in Christianity, particularly in 17th C Protestantism and Christianity? What's the kind of theological framework in the era Milton is working in? and trying to decide whose fault is it, and why the fall happens, whether it could have been foreknown, and that kind of thing.

Prior specific knowledge: No. Obviously I know that the Quran will tell the story of the fall in other ways, but I haven't actually drawn on that. It's actually interesting to listen to you talking about that just now because obviously the Biblical narrative of the fall is tiny; Eve does not even have a name that is extremely little. So the amount of writing up that happens in the dozen volumes of PL [is substantial], so I do a bit of a comparison back to the Bible. Most students I would say have a kind of vague notion of the fall and original sin in terms of Adam and Eve, which is a fairly minimal knowledge, but I would be surprised if they did not know that, I've never asked them, again. But I haven't actually thought about the resource of alternative versions of that, which would be interesting to do.

Books Focus

In class we tend to do Book IV and V, I know this is Adam and Eve in the garden and we tend to do the story of the fall IX and X but the trouble is as I say this course is trying to get through a lot in a little space of time, and PL - depending which year and what else we are trying to cover, we spend a week or two on it. It's quite a popular thing; students like to write their essays on it, they do actually enjoy it, they get quite engaged in it, because it's a narrative and it has a lot of characters unlike as it were the poetry of Donne - so students do go and write their essays on it. Sometimes I don't particularly look at the character of Satan because of the time, but students do tend to do that, if it is going to be one or the other. I suppose I am interested also in the ways in which the representation of Adam and Eve ties in to debates about marriage and work and the idea of Paradise and that sort of thing; that just happens to be the angle I have chosen to follow. And of course the material of free will and choice, whether or not it's right to rebel and to disobey and so on, you can do equally well through Satan. I do tend to talk about Satan as well partly because over the years students are more interested in Satan than Adam and Eve.

Character of Eve:

It's tricky talking about presenting characters in terms of how you teach a text like this. I ask them to look at the relationship, obviously, between Adam and Eve, and about the different ways in which they are positioned in relation to God and each other, and about marriage and ideas about woman's place. I do generally a kind of exercise where I ask different groups to look at different passages of conversation and say OK whose fault is it? How does it work? If we do a close textual analysis of line x-y where the serpent is talking to Eve, for instance, in that temptation scene, is Eve always ready to fall already, is she already guilty on some level, or is she actually being seduced by Satan who is actually more clever than she is? In the scene where Eve is explaining to Adam that we should go off and garden separately, is this a mark that she is already on some level afflicted by the sin of pride? So what I ask them is to look at that and

decide whose fault is it and who is saying what. And they do get quite active about it; as I say, the notion of character in this text is in certain ways problematic, but it does allow a kind of character-based way into it. They can say, look, Eve is already vain; or, It's not her fault because look what Satan is saying to her; or, She is right, why should she stick with her husband all the time.

Female Characters:

I don't do other female characters in class. I think what I do is start with a sort of general survey - this is the story of PL - to give the context of what we are looking at. There will be three lines in which I will say incidentally there will be Satan and Sin who is in passing his daughter (da de da). Also I don't think Sin is a "character", in certain ways; she is a sort of female persona. Proserpina we talk about briefly only to explain the lines in which she appears but again if I were teaching an entire module of PL I might do it differently.

Sexuality

Oh yes that is a kind of an interesting debate. I refer back to sort of medieval debates whether sex is a consequence of the fall or not, and I suppose what I am doing is locating Milton's argument that obviously Adam and Eve had sex in the garden of Eden as a particular intervention in that kind of old debate. And it has to do with the general protestant valorisation of marriage, in the idea that this is God's plan for man and woman, as it should be in the garden of Eden; so yes, we so look at that passage. Very briefly we talk about the physical appearance of Eve, not so much as seductive, to be honest; it's more the question of what is the rationale of saying curly hair represents subjection, does this make sense. Again it's more to do with subjection I would say than sexuality, although yes, we also talk a bit about passion and the question of whether Adam - because there are suggestions obviously that Adam is letting passion overcome his reason, and from that point of view, yes, sexuality is permitted in the garden of Eden, but it also needs to be governed by reason. It seems to be a sort of interesting topic we do also do a bit of angels making love and angels blushing; we tend to do a sort of side line of that.

Change the way you teach Multi-faith

It makes me more cautious. Before I came to UEL (I have been in UEL for over 10 years) I taught for 6 years in Swansea, which is a very different kind of profile; which is much more sort of traditional white middle class British students coming to the university straight after A levels; not 100 % but most of them. They did not have multi faith students which may have changed but it was about early 90's when I taught Pl there and I was young.

I think a lot of time as a teacher you tend to assume a sort of general secularism. You identify the class rules in place, which tend to be predicated on - even if not absolute atheism - on a general presumption that it is allowable to talk about religion analytically. With the Early Modern material you have to be able to do that; you can't simply stop and say, Do we think this is true or not? about predestination although I do get the odd kind of Baptist student who wants to debate that point. What I try and do is keep it on the level of the analytic, and say that of course it's true that I am presenting a historical moment in Christian theology. At the same time the idea of God's elect is still an important one in certain religious groups, so if I have a student who believes in predestination I might ask them to tell us about that, you know more about that than I do; I try and take it as a resource. I've occasionally taught spiritual autobiography in relation to things like the question of madness, where there is an issue about the madness or not of the writer of a particular text. Religious and non-religious students will often have a very different perspective on that, because inform the point of view of religious students then it may be a narrative which fits quite neatly in the framework of the darkness of the soul followed by

redemption and rebirth, while from the point of view of the secular students they just keep asking about whether or not the writer is mad.

In relation to **PL, yes, in terms of teaching a multi-faith group** the main things that make me very cautious would be presuming that everyone is Christian in the group, which I would not know, or that they have been brought up with some sort of basic familiarity with the church of England, which I can't do; and also presuming that everybody shares a sort of basic secular outlook even if they have a personal religious faith, which similarly I am kind of uneasy about. On the other side, I suppose, if I am talking about Civil War and the idea of the godly kingdom, then obviously I am going to draw parallels with Iran, for instance, and I am very much aware of the way in which the question of establishing God's kingdom on earth remains a live one in terms of contemporary world politics; and I always hope that students will talk about this but they seldom do.

It does make a difference if I **teach mixed sex** and it's a part of it. They are mixed-sex classes, I don't teach single sex; and if I am setting people to discuss a particular passage then I am, for example - it is not about Milton, actually but about love poems by Donne, for example. I am very much aware that for a Muslim girl who takes very seriously talking about sex it is not going to be acceptable to discuss in mixed sex groups. Basically what tends to happen that the Muslim girls will all form little groups together; because they are sitting together anyway, they sort of turn around and talk to one another. And if occasionally the way that the numbers work means they end up with a group which is mixed sexually then I do try and give them the less rude parts of it because I think there is no point in making people very uncomfortable; they need to be able to have a discussion.

Resistance:
The trouble is that they would not tell me if they are resistant. A lot of the Muslim girls are very quiet anyway; there is a strong cultural tendency. With exceptions, and you get some who are very vocal indeed. But I assume they may be devout whether they cover or not. I would not assume that those who don't, aren't, because it's a matter of personal choice; there are girls from lots of different background who come in, and plenty of them are religious but don't cover their heads; equally I would tend not to assume that who did not also don't want to speak.

I would say they would never explicitly talk about resistance or discomfort necessarily, I might think that they would be even quieter than usual in relation to a particular topic. I have, though this is not something I've paid any serious attention to, assumed that particular students might choose to miss the class if it's about something particular - religious poetry for instance; and if they are absent in that class I might think, "they were a little bit uneasy about that last week and that's why"; I do tend to make at the start of a class some kind of generic remark, about "obviously some of the material we are looking at is religious; I am not making any assumptions about whether you believe or not believe, and you are not require to believe any of the material in order to study it". Beyond that level it would be quite difficult to go. I would be reluctant to put them on the spot in classroom, pointedly saying, you are very quiet, is it because you are uneasy about this? In other ways you get some who are very actively interested in it and will take it as an opportunity, or be pleased to be given the opportunity to explore questions of faiths seriously in an academic context, because when you are studying English that does not often come up.

Actually the place where they are most familiar is Donne's *To His Mistress Going to Bed*. There he has lines where he refers to Muhammad's Paradise, and what he is referring to is the idea of Paradise for men as being full of virgins available to them. And I have had Muslim students

getting explicitly indignant about that, and saying this is not true and this is not what Muslims believe in the first place and secondly he does not even get the name right look he says Mahomet. And at that point I have to say, well actually, we need a historical perspective, and this is a common transliteration of the name in this period, this is not being k insulting; but perfectly fair point in other ways. That's one of the points where they were more likely to be willing to explicitly speak as Muslim, because Islam is being addressed; and also they will have done a bit of stuff on orientalism, they will pick up references in plays, and they are aware of the idea of that early modern England has particular and often prejudiced views of the Eastern world, and so they are quite alert to that. I think in a way PL is more difficult because it seems so enclosed within Christianity, and it does not seem to allow that in the same way, because they are not being asked to make a comparison.

Teaching develops:
There are two things I do: a brief kind of general history of Milton's life in the context of the civil war, so there is a general kind of 17th C context - what does it mean to have been involved in a world of revolution, to be very committed to the revolution, to see it fail; what are the kinds of things Milton is working through around the question of authority and obedience in PL. Secondly, what's the religious context of those debates, what are the kind of debates about free will and free knowledge that are embedded in Calvinism and how far is Milton commenting on or responding to those. So I spend a lot of time setting up a context as a framework in which to read the text and then as I just described I do a kind of overview of the narrative. I don't particularly use images; I am not very visual. I tend to use a portrait of Milton and a portrait of the front piece of PL because Puritans are not very image-based themselves.

Productive Way:
I am aware of ways in which I talk about it differently because I know that I have a multi-faith group. But I know for instance that Islam in lots of ways has far less problem with sex in marriage for example than Christianity does, so I kind of assume that they can take that in their strides. It's true it's a mixed sex group, but nonetheless it does not seem too intricate for a Muslim student to engage with the idea of Adam and Eve having sex in the Garden of Eden. That I would take as a relatively straight forward thing. And I would say listening to you talking about the Quran it would be really interesting to see the students more as a resource, and to think about whether that something to address more explicitly. As I say I don't know if the character of Eve is the main way of doing it, because I think that it is not a character based reading of the epic in any case, and I would be more interested in getting them to think about other ways of thinking about the choices made by human beings in relation to the Divine, for example.

Marion Wynne-Davies
I started teaching Early Modern Writing in 1986 and I think what's happened is in those days there were separate courses on the 16 C and on the 17 C that has now diminished considerably so now we tend to do sample texts from both periods and we call it the early modern and even taking extracts from modern editions rather than looking at full texts so for example you have the Faerrei Queen on the table in those 80's we would have done the whole of the poem but now we would simply do book 1. The other thing that has happened I think that Shakespeare has become much more important and he has been segregated from the rest of the early modern.

Religious material:
Religious material I teach mostly; religious poetry and there early 17th C and I would do the Holy Sonnets of John Donne and the spiritual verse of George Herbert and then of course I know that

your work is on PL I teach the PL as an epic a poem but epic. Those are the texts that I teach in religious poetry many other poems have religious context and sometimes particularly if it is a poetry of religious metaphor but really it's based on Donne, Herbert and Milton.

Perspective of teaching religious text:

I use a historical perspective looking at the politics of period so that I look at the division between Protestantism and Catholicism and the impact of that on the early 17th C and I look at the Milton's republicanism with the roles of obviously Satan in PL so I kind of look at the political context and of course being a historicist feminist I also use feminism and I look at the way female identity is constructed that is not as relevant in Donne's Holy Sonnet or George Herbert's religious lyrics but obviously very important for PL but those would be two perspectives I think feminist and historicist.

Students to have prior knowledge:

I would be very very keen for them to have previous knowledge of the religious text. It would be so useful for me if they were versed in even and rudimentary knowledge of the Bible, you have students who are Christian church goers who read the Bible access to the narratives and the metaphors to the religious poetry much much easier to understand they just know it then you get other who come from families and background who are atheists who have no interest in the Bible at all and therefore they don't know what is happening in PL they haven't got clue. Then you have students who come from different religious background and sometimes they have a better understanding of Bible than those who come from countries which have a Christian background. I tend to be very careful when I teach them so that I don't accept any knowledge at all these days.

Which books do u focus:

I teach PL in two different ways; I lecture. I tend to teach the entirety of PL and I present it as a very radical text pointing out that Milton's books were burnt and that he could have been executed at the restoration of the monarchy and therefore I want the students to know that the overall book PL is a radical text that it's something that's challenging to the dominant hierarchies in that period. Milton is republican and he is really trying to change the things. Then I also teach PL in seminars and I tend to focus on individual books and I might well do the character of Satan and character of Eve, those are the two I would look at. And Satan I link very much to the republicanism to the fact that it's true that Satan does have all the best lines he is a much more interesting character and Eve I try and show through the use of mythology that she is already fallen and Milton is setting her up as flawed so you have a 2 characters in a book who are deeply human and that's great they are flawed they are mortal they are human. So I try and show that Milton is trying to bring people into the text to recognise that flaws and lack of perfection might not be a bad thing and this is a notion of a fortunate fall. I also of course show the difference on the views of Eve and feminist critics some like Katherine Belsey thinks that Milton's terrible and other critics think that Eve is in fact the most interesting character. What I try and do is go through the idea of fortunate fall and the idea that it's the reader who brings Sin into ~PL into Eden. So when we have Eden, this is how I get them to do in the class, and Eden of course has to be before the history of the world this is the very start of the world and according to the Christian ideology there should be nothing before this and yet when Eve looks herself into the water she sees herself and falls in love with herself and that's of course based on the myth of narcissus now Eve does not know abut narcissus but we inevitably bring the story in because we all know, well hopefully, the Greek myth of narcissus although indeed students do not tend to know that these days but so they bring in mythology which is pagan into a Christian text now we

are then fallen we are post-lapsarian so that's fine we can do it but I think that imbeds in Eve and from then on she is actually like us so I think there's a link between Eve and the reader which develops which actually is never there with Adam, Adam is too distant.

Mythical female figure:
I tend to talk about Proserpina because Proserpina is in a way the kind of classical shadow echo of Eve in that she too is taken to the world of this where she eats and is fallen she is sinned but she is more about cyclical cycle to do with spring and summer and in the winter she must go and the autumn and the winter she spends underground and in the spring and summer she comes back and brings fertility to the world and that's quite useful, you can than link that to the Christian cycle in that you have Eve as ideal and pre-lapsarian, Sin which is lapsarian but then Jesus dying on the cross to enable human beings to be brought back into heaven so it's a cyclical thing as well as the Christian story so if you bring in the new testament alongside the old testament but you have to look at both, yes I do that. I don't tend to look much at Sin, not when I teach. I find Sin a very disturbing figure even the visual idea of Sin is quiet horrible its one of the darkest Sin in PL and I don't tend to use it in my teaching because students don't actually like dealing with Sin they would much rather deal with eve and Proserpina as they have a promise of resurrection and a promise of everything going to be OK but its never going to be OK for Sin that's it.

Attention to Sexuality:
I don't really do sexuality in PL, I do gender; what is expected of a woman in gender role so that in 16th C she would expect to be silent and obedient and good but that's her social role her gender role. I don't tend to do criticism which deals with sexuality as a whole I tend to look more at gender, Eve's sexuality is clearly that she is heterosexual and she is subordinate to Adam in terms of her sexual identity but at the same time she is attracted to Satan in her dream and dreams are kind of key to psychoanalytic things. A dream reveals the unconscious, reveals what she wants and how her notion of eroticism is really working but I don't teach that, I teach more this is how early modern women were supposed to behave and this is how Eve behaves and of course she does not behave like that you know she's naked but I show she is abhorrent from gender role.

Non-Christian students:
I have many students with a non-Christian background over the years and currently. I have had students who are Muslims, I have had Hind students, I have had Jewish students, I believe I have had students from the far East who believe Shintoism, in Buddhism certainly so over the years I have had students from a number of different religious backgrounds mainly above UG lever either PG taught or PG research.

Change way of teaching or content:
Yes, I would certainly not expect those students to know the Bible so there is a kind of a knowledge bases but no more what I expect them to know western mythology like the GK and Roman myths so I think there is a bases of knowledge and I would then explain you know a little bit more carefully that the whole class I would not identify single individual but the whole class to make an effort to read the annotation so they are picking up the Christian allusions but that is as a means to understand the text to understand what is going on in the text but you could also do things that can be very very different so that many students who have a Muslim background have arrange marriages that are arranged by their parents and that means that it is very different that you are teaching in the kind of individual romantic notion that you find in western or European literature; the early modern period, and even in PL although Adam is there and Eve is give to him by God their relationship is much more run on equals that he falls in love with her and she

falls in love with him and that is pure European romance that comes from the tradition of the medieval period that's not in the Bible and its certainly not in the other cultures and other faiths and I also find myself dealing with notions of falling in love when other faiths do not have that independent falling in love which is spiritual and God given but it's got nothing to do with your community at all nothing. I have had students in the past that say: "why would they do that when you could have a safe and secure marriage arranged for you and don't your parents know you better they know what would be good for you" and it's so different. I do find myself explaining that, you are more interesting in Muslim backgrounds but it's also very different when you get people from Buddhist background and you have no sense of that human beings are central to the universe for them human beings are yet another grain of sand within the galaxy we are as nothing and that is so different. Put that in PL where you explain the ways of God to man and that's completely meaningless to the Bhuddist students but it does make you understand that how very Christian the text you teach are.

Teaching Mixed-sex multi-faith groups:
Yes you do explain things, I think a little bit more pointed towards the foot notes but I would never it isolate individual groups I would always do it blanket but you can actually take advantage of multi-faith teaching because you can use to create a very interesting discussion because students will be coming with different ideologies, different belief system and I think it's really interesting if they can discuss one another's belief system n order to understand the text better and to understand the multiplicity to interpret the text. It helps me point out that text is not that static, there is not one single meaning the text produce different meanings at different times for different readers and that is manifest if you have multi-faith groups and yes I do tend to do that.

Student's resistance:
I can envisage that if there were a student who was so committed that they thought that their's was the only faith that was right and that all other faiths were wrong then that would be problem. However, I have never had that and I think that is a testament that young people who go to university just tend to be more open they are there to learn they are there to explore. I am not saying that suddenly they would say Oh Gosh I am going to convert to Christianity but it means that oh yes so that's what Christians think. It's an interest in what other people believe so never had any problem in my class. In mixed-sex I would be much more careful, I would be very with some groups if it's a mix group in which you are talking about thing to deal with sex or the body, very careful, I might not know their faith but if it was a mixed sex with mix racial background. I might have Chinese I might have Japanese I might have Indians I might have Pakistanis, Arabics who knows. I can see I have got mixed-race and I can see I have got mixed-sex so therefore I know that if I would start discussing things like homoeroticism it would acutely embarrass a lot of people there is a whole notion in terms of sexuality where you need to think about the body and you need to think about genitals bodies have but I would not use the word genital in a mixed racial mixed sex group I could not do it because I know I would embarrass some of them and if you put me in a group where there were all men I could not do it because they would consider totally inappropriate for a female professor to start talking about male and female bodies. If I embarrass them then they would not learn so my whole purpose of teaching them would be defeated. I don't know whether male professor find it more easy to deal with such situation but I think as a female professor it's very difficult.

Use images in class while teaching PL:

No I don't use images in teaching PL but I do use images while teaching other things but not in PL I suppose if I were to use images I would use **Gustav Daure** engravings because I really like those. I particularly like the ones of Satan which shows Satan as a hero, I don't like Blake so I never use Blake in teaching. I do use the image of narcissus, the GK myth narcissus the bloke narcissus to hummer home the text and I read the text for eve's looking at the picture and I say what does it remind you of and I pop the picture of narcissus so that's I use and I never used the picture of them naked. I don't tend to use naked images in my teaching. I suppose if I taught art I would be much more familiar with using it but I teach literature so I don't.

Teaching PL to mixed-sex and multi-faith groups:

Yes I have taught PL [to mixed-sex and multi-faith groups] and it has not been particularly easy because it is so based on the Bible that you to get students to understand the Bible before they understand what Milton's doing and so it is more problematic. Interestingly it is not as problematic with Muslim students as it is with Asian students from countries like Buddhists or Chinese students who have no faith they are much more at sea can't understand why there is so much about individual identity and about human beings being so important. Actually Muslims quiet don't have that problem and that's because they know that the narratives in the Bible and Quran are very similar so they can just pick it up and understand what's happening although of course that I now know that there are lots of key differences n relation to Eve and I never taught it like that I probably would know if I was in the same situation.

Productive way:

I think that having taught PL very much about identity male female identity, Satan Eve, radical female identity people who are flawed, radical, rebellious human beings that for me endorses the quality of human life and the frailty of human nature and gives it validity I think that I would be able to teach it slightly differently that I now understand is something very Christian and romantic hero heroine in the Christian wring is a rebel they are rebels they challenge things all the time whereas those are not idealised figures in other faiths so it would be an interesting way to take creation narratives and looking at the Quran looking at the Bible, may be looking at other creation narratives that I have never thought about yet, not full pages not masses of stuff not expecting the students to read everything but to may be give a little brief quotes or little brief summaries and swap, may be ask them to bring them in their own narrative of creation and swap it with somebody who does not have that background and then think about the ways you have to recognise before you can allow students to read before they can understand what Milton was trying to do and then say well is it relevant today is it relevant to me, how does it work for me now being Ajmal or a Hindu male from Mumbai. I think that I would change it definitely I also think that we are changing our methods of teaching much more radically as we become internationalised and our society now on a global scale is more international and that we also have to recognise otherness and difference and explore it instead of rejecting it just because its different because our students do they are global students these days and I think it is very important that we allow that into our teaching.

Gordon Campbell

I work on Puritanism, I got interested in religious phenomenon initially Christian that took me back to Jewish origins, Islamic manifestations, I span out from that centre in Milton hence the recent book on History of KJV Bible.

In literature age pays off, we can keep reading. We have a significant Ahmadi community in Leicester University, to which the usual reply is they are not Muslims. Well the Pak government,

does not let Ahmadis on Haj, in Shi tradition the Bahais are almost the same they too produced the Messiah. But I was just thinking of the selectiveness of going through the Islamic Societies, ours is pretty impressive, I mean I like it and they are doing decent job especially with newly arriving students who feel baffled by England.

Perspective of discussing and Teaching Milton and text:

Students read less now as they once did, we have moved from saying read some PL next week to saying we are going to study books 1,2,4,9. Some tutors choose to do minor poems as bits of Lyscidas or Cogus, some years there are special subject offered that covered the prose. In terms of perspective, I have the usual liberalist humorous problem of claiming that I don't have one. I don't do isms of any kind like Marxism, Freudianism or feminism.

This is a broad church and I have many colleagues with theoretical interests and we have to respect each other but what the others do is a great mystery to me because I still think in terms of great books and some books being better than other books. My interest in feminism is not in the answers that it provides but I have a fairly serious interest in the questions that it asks; like I suppose the indignation that can be part of the feminist agenda is something that I can only feel on practical issues like y does woman have less pension rights than men but in terms of question that are ask are immensely useful; y are there so few women, y are they silent? I would see for e.g.

In 17 C, where I live, no one can read silently it was invented in 18th C so poetry was meant to read aloud and so was the bible appointed to be read in churches and women are silent in 18 C people learn to read silently and suddenly the novel emerges and it's a form that is meant to be read silently and it's a form that is meant to be read silently, you don't read novels aloud. And if you say who are our greatest novelists Jane Austin at the top, George Eliot, Virginia Wolf etc.

Status of Women Christianity and Islam:

Bible like any sacred text can b used to justify any kind of bigotry or any kind of liberation. If you think of America slavery was defended from the Bible and so was abolition. When Henry the VIII came along and fancied Ann Berlin so all this started on church and the idea of marrying your dead brother's widow in one bit of the Bible it's compulsory and in the other it's forbidden. So you simply pick the bit that suits you and you can certainly find pieces especially in Apostle Paul about the silence of women being good thing so it's a way of giving authority to what you want to do in the first place, it's a very odd business and there are parallel in Islam that you would be aware of sunah 5 dedication to women, women are treated in different ways so gender differentiates in all ways.

Islam and women: I think that's probably right and a part of the reason is that Islam is a later religion and the earlier you go the more misogynist you are and Judaism is still earlier in lots of ways. But religions in general seem to privilege men over women, it's hard to think of one in which it's the other way round even though there are matriarchal tribes that you find periodically and there's a group in Pakistan that is matriarchal tribes that you find periodically but on the whole its patriarchal.

Teaching religious material:

I don't have a religion for that I like lots of people many people, for many people religion is a very important part of their identity it is what they are and it is particularly true in the Islimic world and Pakistan is a good e.g. if you press someone and say what are you the never say Pakistani they say Muslims whereas across the borders in India if you press somebody they would say I am Indian. So Islamic world is quiet striking in that respect that used to be the case

in West, In Milton's times the word Europe was only used by geographies and if you ask anybody else where they lived they would say Christendom. So there was the Christian world and the Islamic world but now that's changed for all kind of reasons. So I am conscious when I travel and when I teach that I have to bring genuine respect for belief and in some places I can be more honest than others. In Saudia I am very cautious about what I say to anybody, but in any other place it's not an issue basically they accept that I am from the west and western people are slightly funny.

I don't make judgements on the past so I see no point in saying I will only read literature that reflects my values so that would mean that I won't read anything published before 1970. I see no reason to get upset by Milton's misogyny coz he lived in 17th C, and they were all like that and he was bit more tolerant than others. But they all had views that we regard as unacceptable.

I think my view is When I am in other cultures be there culture is of the past or the present, than Its not very helpful to be judgemental, its more imp to try to understand and not to assume that my values are universal values coz they are not.

Perspective of Eve:
Well I have an interest in constructions of characters, I mean there are many odd things about Eve, the traditional reading of the fall is that its Eve's fault so the biblical narrative is written as an endorsement of the awfulness of women, so women are the woe of men as the medieval pun had it and the curious thing of Milton's treatment of it is that the fall is jointly the fault of Adam n Eve. So if you think in Book 9 line 999 when Adam fondly overcomes with female charm so he too has a weakness. I find that very interesting because I find Milton as very egalitarian and what he is really arranging for is a joint fall. And the reason is that he is turning it into a tragedy of love. So the beginning of book 9 is tragic. In the garden of Eden Adam and Eve are supposed to obey God as their first priority to and instead their first priority is loving each other. In tragedy as compared to comedy, obedience has the higher value than love and because of that Milton turns it into a joint tragedy and they fall because of their love for each other. So the first obligation is to obey the God. So it's done in the odd ways the other striking thing is in book 4 when they have their little domestic argument and Eve says I would work more efficiently so let's work separately and Adam says Oh it is very dangerous and Eve says you don't trust me so it develops quiet interestingly.

The odd thing is in book 10 when they are blaming each other Eve says that u should have commanded me absolutely not to go and that's one of those interesting moments that separates 17th C from the 21st and it's a distinction does not matter now but its between command and constraint. When Eve says you are a husband you should be commanding me and Adam says but it would take away your freedom and Eve replies no no and in fact Eve is right. And the result is that the fall is jointly their fault rather than just Eve's.

So I try n help students to understand that I remember asking a group of students to read Genesis 2 and at the beginning of the seminar I said any questions? And the remark from one of them was it is the same story and she said which was written first? It is the most extra-ordinary moment. She has gone to a convent school but she had no idea; and I said Genesis is written about 700 BC and PL is written in 17th C, and she said thank you very much wrote that down.

So students are taught from a very basic level and they assume all the literature is contemporary and somehow reflects on contemporary developments, so my job is to help people to develop imaginative sympathies for literature that does not share their values and that's what I

see the job of an academic who teaches eng is doing. Our job is to understand them in a sympathetic way.

Nakedness and perception of human body:

Nakedness and the perception of human body are culturally conditioned I mean the Islamic one is far from simple. If you take the veil; nikab it is not always historically associated with women. And the means some means something very different in Jaddah and Islamabad, in London and in Paris and in each case the veil interacts with a different culture so there is no single view in Islam that is eternal, historical about the hiding of parts of the body. Have you done umrah or Haj? Because there you see women who are entirely covered with gloves and sort of one flying goggles so it is not just the chadar so that alongside the Iran in last couple of years I saw women driving with their heads covered, so even within a country like that the huge variation exists. Beyond that there are generational differences, there are class tradition and even the women are never naked in presence of their husbands even while making love they cover themselves with chadar. It is similar in17th C so we can't generalise this even in 17th C.

The curious thing is the Initial description of Adam and Eve is in Book IV you think of their nakedness, is Milton's interest in their hair, there are Miltonists who think that Milton is slightly kinky on the subject of hair I think that's anachronistic. So Adam's hair is locks and Eve's hair is wanton and the whole notion of constraint is a part of it.

Class of multi-faith students and Eve's nudity:

We often talk about starting those descriptions and hair question produces a giggle and its different in mature students I once had a student in my class and she said you talk about things that polite people don't talk about and I said what's that and it was God, religion, politics, sex and death and polite people don't talk about this. But undergraduate students 18, 19, 20 they are very open if you want to talk about death or sex they are happy to talk.

The same has been true the Muslim even women who are covered they appear to me at least to be entirely untroubled by the conversation.

I find it easy in seminar, I always have a policy of never being judgemental in seminars so I have always refused e.g. to students who have given a presentation to give them a mark because as soon as I say I am judging you that changes the relation where I have had problems is in lectures where I talk about Milton's God I say this is 17th C God, its very different from the God that you have believe in or don't believe in or don't care about, and Milton's God as one of his contemporary said is 6 feet high he is an elderly giant, its like me? It's not the God that anyone in a 21st C believes in. I have had Christian students who regarded that as blasphemous and have come up to me afterwards to say so that they were offended. its Certainly possible that the environment in the lecture, especially coz the lecturer has a authority which is far more in the Islamic world the notion of respect for the teacher there is a real danger zone there. Whereas in a western seminar apart from the fact that I am 100 yrs old we are actually sitting around and trying to discuss the text, so the chemistry of the seminar is very different and I am eager that everyone trust everyone else.

Resistance of students to Christian Text:

I have not actually and this is because they think this as so foreign, and they find 17th C as desperately strange. 17th C is more about Islam e.g. God is a fact, when I first started travelling in the Islamic world I discovered that God is a fact. Students are still I mean they are young they are querying they don't know what they believe. Even Muslim students they often wear what their parents tell them to wear but they are better informed about their religion than the Christian students and they are often more secular than they appear.

The appearance of hijab represents one part of immensely complex women who are living between two societies and making very sophisticated negotiations between those two. So the one thing I have learnt is never to make a simple assumption to say you're a Muslim and therefore you must believe; all I can say is you are Muslim and here is a tradition from which u come and that tradition among other things makes you better informed than anybody else in this room but I don't make assumptions about belief.

Veiling:

The reasons vary a lot of wearing hijab. Sometimes it is as the feminists would have of the emerging of the male gaze and you just feel more comfortable and men are luring at you but there are also people for whom veil represents a kind of religious privacy of being with God and it has got nothing to do with the world and it looks like the same covering its very different indeed. So in people it can be entirely secular culture or on the others hand it can be a deliberate religious act.

I think I am only troubled by it when it comes with a sense of more superiority hence the character of the white girl and when I hear Muslim students talking about white girls meaning slut I struggle with that because I am very sensitive towards racism. I think we are all equal.

Mixed-Sex multi-faith groups

In the case of the men it's only apparent to me that who is Muslim as that signifies to me. In other words religion is not always obvious. There's two issues one is how you actually made up your seminar groups do u mix them or if u have two Muslim women do u allow them to be in the same seminar group and I do give thoughts to those kinds of issues and sometimes I have brought two Muslim girls in the same group. If I know that they are friends and they hang out together and if they both wear hijab I'll stick them in the same group because there will be a kind of sisterly solidarity with each other. Whereas I discovered years ago that if you have northern Irish protestant and a northern Irish catholic there is no point of putting them in a same group because they won't talk to each other and I want the chemistry to work in a group. I want student not to be intimidating so will never have a group with 9 men and 1 woman because it would silence the woman because I want an atmosphere of trust I want everybody free to be able to speak.

We do dramas separately in a renaissance drama course now the dramatic tradition is secular e.g. Shakespeare, but if you look at the tradition of poetry it's a religious tradition from start to finish although they do a bit of Donne that is secular; I also teach them the Holy Sonnets, and they do Herbert deeply Anglican, Milton the Puritan, and texts like Easter Wings so you are teaching really a Christian corpus of literature to group of people none of whom is a 17th C Christian, most of whom are very secular but it includes the odd religious Christian and the odd Muslim who is likely to have a religious background and may or may not be religious you never know. So it requires a kind of delicacy in talking about any of this literature and a tested knowledge that this is a group of people who are their own individuals I am not in a business to stereotype them.

Can u imagine that situation?

Where it does come out when you talk to them privately and then u know what they think about of what's happening in a seminar and that is the time when you get troubled students than in the decorum of the seminar. Normally it comes out in the end of semester when they meet u personally or from the feedbacks and that's when u realize that there may have been moments of unease.

I have found talking to Muslim women a sense of bubal rant that so much of what we teach is Christian and they are always puzzled about the fact that I don't have a religion but it does not come out in the seminar.

Will u be changing your Objectives:

I would, in a lecture I would be more careful because of that authority of the teacher but in the seminar where I am constantly suppressing my authority because the more I can hide under the desk the more they are able to talk so for the tutor its case of never asserting authority and of course what you are fighting is the impulsive student to write down the teacher says coz teacher knows the answer and we are playing a game. I think the most important quality the tutor can have for the students is respect and that respect means honouring what the religious and cultural beliefs they possess.

Productive way of teaching PL??

As with all texts and groups, creating trust amongst the participants so that conflicting perspectives are welcome. That said, I don't encourage presentism (because it's an ism), but rather an understanding of the literature of past.

M. Sohail Falak Sher

I have taught William Blake his mysticism, Milton, Shakespeare's sonnets but I do feel that Milton was a striking kind of poet which gives different notions to students and teachers as well. I have taught Milton with different aspects with new aspect every time because he leaves a different kind of impact on our mind and it needs a different kind of environment and we have good freedom of expression. I don't feel any problem while talking about Christianity or Islam mostly probably because many things are similar and somewhere we have got some problem but all we discuss is in open discussion and I did not face any problem for the last 10 years I have been teaching here, in my class about discussion on Christianity and Islam. 1:22

Perspective of teaching religious material like PL:

I would like to clear one thing; I don't consider this a religious material there are some elements of religion there. I don't think so that this is a religious book, some elements I can find but don not agree to this opinion that this book is religious but there are some elements of religion.

Students to have prior knowledge:

I don't think so there is no need of it. There are some similarities with Islam as well and they already know it. I take some time to explain the concept of Catholic Church, Protestants, the Church of England we explain these things to them clearly but otherwise don't raise any question about anything contradicting. There is no need for a kind of prior lecture about Christianity in class, there is no need at all.

Perspective of teaching PL:

We are using the psycho-analytical theory, reception and the reader response theory while teaching PL. We know Christianity from childhood, we spent some time with Christian as well because in our society Christians are living around and we talk a lot about Hazrat Jesus Christ Alih-e-Salam and we know a lot things about them because we believe as Muslims that he is a prophet of Allah and we give respect to him in a same context. So we give students a real concept of PL.

Characters in PL:

Most probably Hazrat Adam (AS), Hazrat Eve (AS), Satan's character, and somewhere we discuss Hazrat Jesus (AS) and Hazrat Moses (AS) we have got some references from the history as well as the role of English politicians.

Books in focus:
Most probably Book I and II and sometime we give reference to book VII and VIII. But we focus most importantly book I.

Character of Eve:
We have got same respect and honour 6:05. She is a mother of mankind and we take the character in same perspective. We take fall always as a human error we don't take it in a serious manner. We always take Eve (AS) as a prophet and we don't take her as a sinner never ever that was just a human error and that was possible with any human being 7:12 we don't take her as a sinner not at all 7:21.

Other female characters:
No

Resistance from students towards a biblical text:
Not really because we clear their concepts before starting PL and we explain everything independently we discuss the differences. We explain that pride was the main thing for Satan's fall. We tell them this is biblical story and epic as well we don't have real facts here as we have in our religion 8:31 we give them this notion that we do not have here a real story but we have some similarities, some familiar things but these are clearly from Milton's mind and Milton's own story writing and he uses these tactics therefore in all 10 years I did not see any kind of reaction from students the always understood that. 8:57

Teaching Christian text mean you change teaching ways:
No not at all there is nothing like that to change a style, we have many similarities with Christianity we live in this society where we can find Christians around us and we have got some friendly relations with them. While teaching Wordsworth and giving a comparison of Spiritualism and Mysticism in Christianity and Islam we do talk comparisons but just for the sake of comparison and here again we don't change the style we just try to compare the ways of two religions and we don't have any problem at all, all is moving smoothly. 10:13

Attention to Sexuality:
I don't think it is very important, the story is strong having a grip that we don't discuss sexuality, if there would be any kind of discussion it would be mild one nothing very strong about that. Mild because you could say general social constraint and the respect and honour, we could never think about that and nobody could think about that we just take her as our mother and that would be always in our mind and there would be no kind of such thing in our mind never ever.

How teaching develops:
We start with the basic concept that what happened with Adam (AS) and Eve (AS) what was the concept of religion in Christianity and Islam as well. We talk about different sects in Christianity and Islam we compare them. We talk about Church of England and Rome, Catholics and Protestants. We clear their concepts step by step and develop teaching. Further we move with political and cultural movements in that society. First we talk about religious aspect and than we move towards society and than political and cultural aspects.

Part II Recording Clip

Any difference to have Mixed-Sex group and discussion on Sexuality:
No because while teaching literature we do not need to take care of such things because we are providing knowledge. Definitely we cannot be naked; we have to be in our moral circle, we have to be in a kind of religious and ethical boundaries 2:13 that is very important but we did not feel any problems.

Productive way of teaching PL:

That should not be taken from the perspective of Islam only we have to take care of other religions as well 3:10. And we have to think what students would get benefit from, the concepts of morality, the concepts of evil or good, and the concepts of God and his power and his love for us. The theme is very important to have justification of ways of God to human being. That should be taken for all students not only one religion that should be marked for all human beings on this earth that would be very productive without making discrimination that these are Muslims and these are Christians and these are Jews. The other themes are mild themes than God's love to his all creatures.

Anything like to add:
These kinds of biblical stories would clarify the concepts about role of human being on earth, their role in society and the discrimination between evil and good and the duty towards God and such books help students to go to their professional life with greater confidence.

M. Arshad Chaudary
I am MA English and I have been teaching the post graduate classes for last 12 years and I have been teaching different courses. First 2-3 years I taught classical poetry than I thought I should teach some other courses so that I remain in contact with all the syllabus which we have been teaching to the postgraduates.
When we teach Classical poetry there are six poets that are included in classical poetry exam; like Chaucer, Spencer, Milton, Pope, John Ryder, and John Donne.
Similarly in Romantic and Modern poetry we teach Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Yates, Eliot.

Perspective of teaching a Religious text like PL:
We do not give rise to any religious controversy when we teach our students they are religiously very sensitive. So we do not teach them such concept of Christianity which can conflict with their religious ideas so we purely teach poetry from aesthetic and literary point of view and we make it categorically clear to the students. For example there are long speeches of Satan in PL and these speeches are designed to challenge the authority of God and some of the speeches are very blasphemous and you know they come in conflict with our religious beliefs and we as Muslims are bound to condemn Satan whenever he speaks against God so these things are very clear to our students and we make it clear that this is all poet's conception of Satan this is pure operation of poet's imagination and they have to read it from simply linguistic point of view and literary point of view and simply read it and enjoy it and nothing else. They must not think from religious point of view whether these ideas are acceptable to them or not or whether they stand in conflict with their religious ideas. This is not the controversy that we have emerged in.

Critical Perspective:
We have been teaching from pure literary point of view. They read it as any Urdu poetry, we do not seek any moral guidance from that poetry although there are is some moral embodied in that poetry but merely Our objective is to get the aesthetic pleasure from this sort of poetry. If moral is concerned we can get the authentic moral from our religious books. Everybody has a different perception of morality so we do not try to seek any moral from such poetry. This is very clear to the students as well as to the teacher who is teaching this poetry.

Resistance of students towards biblical story or Satan's speeches:
We believe in tenets of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Mohammad PBUH. Now there are many ideas which do not lie inside of the ideas which we found about the fall of Satan and Adam which are discoverable from the Holy Quran. So the students have already authentic knowledge of the story of fall. So they do not bother whatever Satan is saying is true or false So

we purely read it from the poetic point of view it is a poetry we focus the art of versification this is one point that how words have been arranged to produce a poetic effect and certainly there are some rhetorical effects which are produced by poetry: how Satan makes speeches and how he stills the emotions of his audience and how far the students are affected by the speeches. No doubt his speeches are very fiery and they stir the emotions of the reader but you know we read it only to this extent that reaches a poetry it contain ideas and these ideas are presented by a Christian poet and we are Muslim so there is a sharp contrast between our religious beliefs and that poet's beliefs so there must not be any conflicts and we are going to take for granted his ideas nor we are going to rebut them. These are the ideas simply we focus and we try to understand them and at the same time we also try to understand the words in which verses have been made so again next focus is how different critics look upon it.

Characters u discuss in PL:
Mostly Satan you know in our syllabus the first 2 books are included and in these two books the most powerfully drawn character is that of the Satan so we discuss it and at the same time so there are some religious feelings [expressions] are involved during the discussion of this character and we make it clear to the students that so far the behaviour of Satan is concerned in the first 2 books he is very proud and his pride is the direct cause of his damnation as well as fall from heaven in to hell. So this angle is always discussed by us.

Character of Eve:
In first 2 books the character of eve does not exist so there does not arise any question of discussion of this character.

Character of Sin in 2 books:
I think In all the Christian literature there is a very negative opinion so far as woman is concerned. Women is held to be a founder of sin as christen literature found it so you know Satan mislead man through the agency of sin so this point is made clear to the students that the woman is presented in PL from the negative angle and she is held responsible for fall of man from paradise to earth so this angle is always discussed.

Attention to Sexuality:
In first 2 books I don't think there is any question related to sexuality. Sin is not simply related to sexuality. If you disobey the commandments of God, this is the biggest sin. Sexuality I think is a secondary sin. Satan defies to the authority of God, he does not prostrate to the commandments of God this is the biggest sin. So first 2 books I don't think very elaborately or very openly discuss sexuality at all likewise our society is comparatively religious and primitive so as far as our students are concerned they also belong to a social background that is not much advanced so we are a little bit careful about discussing sex etc in a class specially in the presence of the girl students.

16:20 I think the selection of this portion of poetry is wise enough that they have not included these books which can raise some kind of religious controversy so they have included only the first 2 books. 16:26 There are certain fiery speeches of Satan no doubt they are objectionable but we tell the students that they are only the speeches of Satan we have not to believe them. First of all I did not see any reaction about this from students if there is any we tell them that this kind of rebellion and he was fired by God 16:50

Christian text makes you change the way u teach?
Definitely when we are teaching a Christian text we do not involve our own Islamic teaching, in that case we will be creating a kind of anomaly among the students which they should renounce. So when we are teaching a Christian text we tell the students that these are the ideas of the poets

so for as religion is concerned we have neither to take them for granted nor do we rebut them. Writer/poet has taken these ideas from bible or from any other interpretation of Bible so it is his ideas we simply have to understand them and we have to form our opinion purely from literary point of view and not from moral and religious point of view.

Discussion on sexuality in a mixed sex group?
I think if we have male students we can frankly discuss sexuality but as PL is concerned the portion of the poetry we teach the students does not contain any element of sexuality so the question does not arise here.
There are many poems like John Donne's 11:59 poems contain a lot of sexuality and we discuss it openly and we do not see any strong repercussions from students because they enjoy it as they are grown ups and they understand the secrets of sexuality etc so we don't think it is a taboo in the class, it can be discussed in the presence of female students, but with certain limitations. Just take the example of Ice Candy Man, there are certain chapters where there is a naked discussion of sexuality even we can discuss that but we have watched the faces of the girls they feel shy they bow down these are the reactions they show but they will never say that please stop this discussion as this is against our sense of morality, such kind of incident never happened in our class and we are always cautious that we should not harrow their religious feelings. 13:00

Most productive way of teaching PL? 10:59
I think the most productive way of teaching PL is that we should be aware that if there is some religious pro ideas and if those ideas coincide with our Islamic ideas than we can illustrate that with reference to the Holy Quran and the Sunnah and where there is some diversions between these ideas than we can simply focus upon the Christian ideas that we must not arise any controversy among the students.
14:54 The context is actually told to the students because there is political background in which this poem was written and that political background is very categorically told to the students, they know that there was the end of democracy and there was an era of democracy that was ruled back after the restoration of kings 15:14.

Ayub Jajja
Our students do not have problems with the British texts they rather have reservations with the Indian texts for e.g. I am teaching *Waiting for the Mahatma* a 1955 novel by R. K. Narayan. Students don't seem to accept this that Mahatma is god-like figure so they raise this question. Especially in the context of South Asia, these people they do have reservations for India, Hindus etc. But my observation, they don't have this kind of reservation, this kind of attitude towards the British text or Christian writers, there could be many reasons but they don't say that they have any reservations or any such objections. I in earlier days, used to teach Milton's PL and they did not have any objections e.g. while teaching the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, I tell them that it is their perception and we have different perspective on it so that's it. Otherwise they don't start raising any questions that how come he says he was executed so my overall impression and observation is that students here at least in our department in this university, they don't have any reservation say with Christian values, with Christian concepts or perception etc but they do have some reservations about Hindu writers and sometimes they do raise these issues and questions for e.g. last time a student said: "sir, we won't be studying this text, look he has presented like God and etc".
Prior religious knowledge?

OK frankly speaking but these are difficult times and we need to be very careful and I don't believe in unnecessarily provoking my students. So I teach them keeping in mind the sensitivity towards such issues, I would not say that giving them a kind of background information/ knowledge to some extend might be desirable but I do not do it. We don't play it keeping in mind the current circumstances. I mean it brings me to this religious intolerance that's growing everyday and sometimes it really becomes hard to talk about some issues but sometime the teachers like you and me we manage them. Sometimes we don't play it sometimes bring them slowly and gradually along for e.g. after I finished this [novel on Mahatma] they were very happy and agreed that it is a very fine novel and said: "Sir you should tell us more about Gandhi" etc, I mean the teacher needs to be very sensitive towards the choice otherwise I would say on the whole they don't have any strong reservations about literature in particular coz we don't have that much sermons in literature, of course there are at the maximum some ideas and some ideals say in the case of Merchant of Venice for e.g., Shakespearean plays so there are references to Christian values and Christian biases but on the whole I don't have any problem.

Perspective of PL:
I use general perspectives like post-colonial and feminist theories. Because basically I teach Shakespeare and post-colonial Lit and feminism is my favourite topic. Frankly speaking I avoid going into the religious perspective of feminism for e.g. I would never ever do this kind of thinking and I usually tell my students "Don't you drag me on this I am not the authority on that". So I use a moderate approach otherwise you drag yourself into trouble.

Stan speeches:
Everyone knows its Satan speaking, broadly speaking pride was condemned in every society, every religion, and every community started from a very early days. It is not Christianity it is the sin of pride that he was punished. So in our moral code, apart from religion, in our societies of course religion is a big factor, but there are not many clashes in that sense for e.g. in *Dr. Faustus* it was again the sin of pride and being ambitious. So in general I find all these texts moral and this brings me to your point of reception of these texts here, so I don't have any problem teaching these texts here. All these you call them Christian text, I say they are just literature and they present and deal with the same moral values of our people so they don't have any problem with them for e.g. Christopher Marlow's *Dr. Faustus* or *Merchant of Venice* or *PL* or the character of Satan, because even my students know that pride is a sin so issue of broader morality, no one of course condone this attitude that is arrogant, so broadly speaking they don't have that kind of problem, yes my students they do have reservations for Indian texts and I do need to be very careful in selection of this and that.

Theme of PL in your perspective that you transfer to the class:
Broadly speaking to my understanding there are two perspectives one is that whosoever will indulged, as they call in the original sin of pride is punished the second is the character of Satan is presented as a kind of hero that is very figurative language so it means that probably that stance that perspective is there as part of the human package I mean the individuality for e.g. all those lines spoken by Satan, it's part of the human package so human beings have all these things inside them and it has been there so this is the stance of man, so it is there, keeping in mind the context in which it was written the message is very clear that man needs to submit himself to the ultimate will of God and should never ever commit the sin of pride so these are the moral issues and me and my students don't find any clash between these moral values of Christian text [and] with moral environment we have in Pakistan or in any Muslim society.

Eve presentation:

That is very interesting usually it is said that it was all because of woman's fault, Eve's fault, what I usually do is well that was the attitude toward women and these were the constructs and we are coming out of it now, so I first present the things and then I give my own opinion about this that it was not like this and of course in a moderate way without challenging any dogmas. And discuss how it was presented the place, the position the status, the stature of woman in reference to man and this is where they have come from that position to the present one of course because in that society they were accepted at lesser/ lower position, I don't want to use the word inferior, and slowly and gradually society moved forward because of these feminist writers and movements this is where they are at the moment. My male female students have very refreshing outlook and they seem not to share these biases against women.

Attention to Sexuality of Eve:
We have already excluded many texts from our syllabus of post-colonial novel because of the odd references to this and that. In our context we cannot discuss sexuality very open a passing reference can always be made. It is because of the social cultural environment we cannot discuss it openly. I tend to be very sensitive to the opinion of my students and they say that "sir there are very embarrassing references to this and that" so as a strategy and policy we have to take care of that. Both my male and female students had issues but specially females.

How should be the teaching developed to teach a non-Muslim text:
That's very important, coming back to the British literature, we don't regard it here as Christian writings and me and my students regard it all as secular writings of course there are references of Christian values and culture in a broad way. We believe here in this department that it is different from Bible and Christian teaching and if it is about the condemnation of sin we don't have a problem with that. So it is not associated or restricted to Christian teaching so first of all we don't regard these texts Christian writings as such somehow or the other. I don't tend to highlight that we are teaching someone else's culture or literature it is not my approach. I don't tend to highlight the differences I focus more on the common issues cultural, social. I usually avoid religious issues; it could be right or wrong, if they happen to be there so I usually focus more on common human issues.

Mixed-sex group:
We cannot discuss because of the social-cultural issues. It has to do with the strategy of teacher, you refer to these things but you don't go into details to provoke them. I usually don't provoke my students, it might not be a good strategy, sometime you need to provoke your students but I am very conscious of the social cultural environment.

Productive way of teaching PL:
We can focus upon its human issues and literary merits and I would not say that it can credit only if we focus upon sexuality and religious issues which might be there but we can focus upon some other issues, dimensions or aspects of PL. Students don't have any problem regarding its reception as a Christian text because of the common values with all the religions of the world so there is no problem of reception.

Why did you decide to do this particular topic for your research because for me it would be very dangerous strategy and Religion is one thing I would never touch upon!

Zia Ahmed
In our syllabus of English Language and Literature of Master classes in Modern Literature we have been teaching T.S Eliot's *Waste Land, Love Song,* W.B Yates. If you talk about PL it seems to be a religious text as far as it mentions the story from Bible and Adam and Eve like *The*

Second Coming or Byzantium these also present some type of religious ideas and same is the case with *Waste Land*; it does talk about faith. So in Pakistani universities we do have religious texts [in English Literature] but unfortunately or fortunately we can say it is related to Christian theology and Christian subjects and there is very little about Islam and one can say a kind of alienation is present between these subjects and the students. **Perspective on Religious Text:** There are two things that a teacher has to do when in class and teaching a religious text especially when it is not relevant to the teacher's religion or the religion of the students in the class. The teacher has to relate the text with his own/ students' religious mythology and secondly he has to separate it as well and with these both prospects we have to create an environment which means to develop the idea that the religion we are going to discuss is related to their own religion and the differences are also to be discussed because certain openness is also available in English literature which is not there in Islamic or Pakistani literature. For example, the first sin in PL uses a symbol or metaphor of apple but in Quran or Islamic literature it is not like that so we have to say to the students that you're going to read a neither Pakistani nor Islamic literature; it is Christian, it belongs to Europe so keep in mind that you are reading a literature related to their culture their religion so keep yourself open up to some extent; do not confine yourself with in Pakistan only than you will be able to grasp the subject.

Prior knowledge: I think that beginners at least do not have any prior knowledge, if a student comes to first year Master [in English Lit] s/he does not know much about Europe or Christian religion but when they come in a 2nd year because of the religious construction of knowledge [in texts] in part 1 they have some kind of introduction to that. We have to explain them and build that knowledge of what is Christianity; up to what extent it is related to Islam and it is different from Islam.

Perspective on PL: I have tried to create a concept of sin and forgiveness, that in Christianity it is different from Islamic perspective. In Christianity, for example, if you commit a sin you have to bear a physical punishment as they say that son of God, Christ, gave a sacrifice and was crucified so the eternal seat of man was restored to him so some type of sacrifice is required. This is not the case of Islam we have to differentiate that what is a concept of sin in Islam and what is forgiveness. It is difficult when students ask that, sir! you told us in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* the friars and the monks are selling pardons and forgiveness so how easy it is to pay some money and they offer you pardons and you are free from that [sin]. So these are some of the things which are I think religiously its very difficult to explain such things and specially in case of women they always say that woman was the one who did everything wrong, in fact both the parties are responsible to that [sin]. Often female students have been putting this question that why has Christian literature been portray woman as a sinner? There's a difficult question because I am not a Christian and I don't belong to any theology that is Christian and in Islam this not the case, woman is not considered to be a sinner so we have to deal with the concept of sin, so these are the aspects we need to look at in PL. Whenever I talk about feminism I often quote PL, in start of every literature particularly Christian we are told that woman is a source of sin so from the very beginning she is reduced to sin and man is elevated to the status of a god. Similarly when you are going to teach PL you are going to highlight at least this aspect that when God created man and woman they were not sinners but why woman is declared as sinner and not man? It means that woman was thought to be weaker from mind and body and it was thought that Satan could seduce woman but not man. But then the next question is, if woman was one to tempt man, why man was tempted by that very woman? It means that weakness does exist in man too, just level is different. He could have said it woman you are tempted I will not

be! So this goes to reject the very claim of superiority of man because he is also able to be tempted, he is also weak he is also fragile and his faith can also be shaken so it not just woman who is weak.

Balance in 3 Traditions: I have seen one thing in students and that is very particular that they are well aware of Islamic text because they read the stories of religion and the follow the Holy Quran they have a prior knowledge, now if you put Christian text in to their mind direct without talking about their own religion it is like already attacking their religious beliefs, they won't be ready to except it at all especially the male students because they are not ready to except the Christian text as equal to the Islamic text because they believe that the Quran is the final word and Islam is the final religion, Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is the final prophet they are not ready to accept that any other religion can be like that. So if you try to put Christian text in their mind it would be sort of burdening them and they won't be able to reconcile their already existing ideas with the new ones so that is why we have to create an environment, this becomes even more difficult at that time when some female students who have a religious madraassa background, it becomes very difficult when we talk about Christian literature and Satan tempted Eve, they are not ready to listen that they are not even ready to accept that because it introduces a type of openness and there it is difficult. So the teacher is required to do a lot before starting the text of PL. The easiest way I could find is that I must say that our religion mentions the story of Adam and Eve and this happened over there and the world was created, same is the case with Bible so that is where a sort of acceptance is created, students are now ready to accept that but teacher is under burden because he has to be very careful that he may not be declared sort of person who is non-believer and favours the Christian text and does not favour Islamic text, PL does pose such difficulties. It becomes easier when you talk in reference to an epic instead of talking as a religious text; that would be a literary discussion now and it would be easier for the teacher to follow that and again the characters of the text are not human characters only Adam is human and God and Satan are not human [in first 2 books], when Satan comes Milton seems to eulogise Satan characters in the first book, he tries to create as bigger a creature as possibly God may be and they are equal rivals. There's a problem again students will say why does Milton portray Satan as a great person? And I find it very easy to convince students by explaining that actually when he portrays Satan in biggest possible terms it is on the one hand because of epic traditions and on the other hand when the villain is so great and is defeated how great the God would be. So I tend to say it is in a way highlighting, improving or enhancing the character of God rather than the character of Satan because if your enemy is stronger and you defeat the stronger enemy it means that you are stronger than that enemy, so the status of God is actually highlighted because of the Satan's highlighted character.

Fall is a problem: Just a few days ago I read a statement by a Canadian author: is it that God is a woman? When you actually talk about that you consider the process of creation, a woman can create and so does God so this is a similarity but than in all religious literature or mythological literature God has been portrays as a man and same is the tradition followed by the Christian priests as well. Christians ask woman to have hair on their head and they shave the head of the male priests why so because he does not need to hide it and the woman needs to hide herself because she is a creation of shame according to them she is a creation of sin according to them, so they declared God as male so females have to be weak if you think in these terms because God is superior and is male so the other people become weaker in this respect and weak always have to stand responsible for the mistakes of not only themselves but of others as well. As I already said Eve was tempted by her weakness equally man was tempted. But again he was

shown as kind to leave Eden with Eve not because he loves Eve but because he was kind enough like God who forgives the sinner, in the same way Adam was kind enough to follow her and to support her in the time of disaster and the next question is when the world is created as the religious text say, it has to be created but the excuse came from the fall of Adam and Eve [Concept from Fortunate Fall]. And all the burden of that excuse was again on Eve. In all Christian English literature you find it, in Milton's writings, in Pope's work for example he is always being critical about women even in Chaucer's work female characters are not doing great things and are ridiculed instead. In every kind of English Literature from Medieval to Renaissance and up to Elizabethan age woman was responsible for every evil happening and that was routed from the same biblical theory by Milton. I think if feminism has to resist some [thoughts and] people these are the very people that explain Bible and religion like that so there is a direct conflict and controversy going on between religious and feminist text today. Religious text will say and believe that women are responsible for every wrong and the feminism has to fight against that this is the very thing that PL goes to highlight and I think to when the world has become modern and enlightened people know where are the wrongs and where the rights. PL should not be taught in reference to Biblical studies but how things have been misinterpreted and are wrongly said by the people to get a control over women and such movements and to seek power for man as well. This is the point behind writing such texts. May be Milton was in difficulty and he wanted to highlight this difficulty but he used that story and in one way the story can mislead the students to prove that woman is the sinner in this world as the Hindu philosophy also says it is because of woman, not to create a positive impact [of woman] but a negative one. However, if the teacher relates that how a process of victimisation was carried on through religion or though such texts only then men and women in Pakistan will accept PL; the effort of how they try and undermine the social status of women.

I think in Quran as well although there are concepts that woman [mother] has paradise under her feet as she is a mother and she is a daughter and she is a blessing [as daughter] and some type of sensuality has also been created by mentioning that in heaven men will be getting 70 hoor (huriah) women and all of them will be extremely beautiful by highlighting their eyes and lips and hair etc [concept of hoor] but in all these examples we don't find woman as a great character, we only find her as a type of beauty, commodity that is invented [created in order] to please man in Quran and when she becomes a mother she is a giver, she is a creator. She is not going to be the lead person of the house if she is a daughter the highest possible virtue in her is that she is obedient and she has to follow the norms of house, although it is quite different from the Christian text that says woman is responsible for sin. Of course it doe not follow the modern feministic aspect but still it gives more acceptable place to woman at least honour and respect is to hold by the woman. I think which you see here the iLLs of the society about woman are more because of hinduised or indianised [Indian version] prediction of the religious text [penetrating because of media and the values we inherited from them before partition] it's not because Quran says like that. For example the Purdah system [veiling] it's not mentioned as the people believe in purdah, it's not the case there [in Quran]. Actually we should see it in reference to the Arab society which existed when Quran revealed there. In Arab society woman was not taken as equal human being but as a person who has a useful commodity with her and that was sexuality because of her sexuality she could win anybody she could sell herself she could buy the favours of somebody that was a type of concept about her so as a result that was considered evil even in that society and when Quran revealed it had to finish the evils of that society and one of these concepts it is mentioned: don't kill your daughters these are mothers your sisters as result of this

a better status was recorded to her and as a result women can own property, women can run their own business this was not available in the early Christian text, woman was not given the right to vote, they don't inherit anything as in Jane Austin's novel *Pride and Prejudice* the mother of girls is worried about her daughters that what will they do when their father dies, these were some of the terrible realities are there in the [English] texts that are not related to Islamic traditions that students here will always say that such texts are not good with women, Islam is better than that so in that way the text of PL is taught in reference to literature instead of teaching students a biblical text. **Character of Eve:** I think any teacher when s/he is in the class he is going to propagate something, and he can be asked a question as well of why did you propagate this in this society as people say Pak society is fundamentalist society any person can be blamed of blasphemy any question can be brought under question that why did you do that? It is the holy text and holy character etc, I think the best way which I have found is to introduce her as a mother of mankind instead of saying the wife of Adam, when you say she is the mother of mankind it has a bigger and waster status for the people of Pakistan specially and in that way when you call somebody a mother it means that whatever happened before her status to claim as a mother whatever happened though it was a sin or whatever is that is forgiven. The product is more important than the cause of that product. As in the case of *A Scarlet Letter* Hester commits a sin but what is the product it is a beautiful female figure and Hester is dominantly claiming that she must be accepted her love must be accepted and a priest there on the stage he comes and says I am the father of this girl, so when you are a father or mother the cause of that thing goes behind, it is relaxed more important is what you have now. For example, if Eve was not there as a mother of mankind how would that mankind come in to existence? Yet it is a very tricky question when she is a sinner in the text how to justify that sinner can become a mother but then it would be very touchy and critical to say how Maryam [Mary] became a mother that's a very big question and nobody is able to answer that question. If Maryam's son can be accepted without a father why not Hester's daughter can be accepted? And if Maryam can become a mother and is accepted, (we are not going in to details but father is not there), why should not Eve forgiven in respect to that. These are some of the questions that religion and theology fail to answer. Modern mind cannot accept that Maryam can become pregnant without a father. Everything has a cause and effect, Satan tempted Eve and it became a cause now what is a result of it; it is the beautiful world that is created, then why to run behind sin? Sin can be forgiven even Christianity supports the idea of forgiveness. In beginning of PL we learn that Christ gave sacrifice and sin has been forgiven and man's seed is restored, why to talk of that sin then it is diluted, it was in the past but not anymore. I think I have to tell the students that she was not a sinner she was rather a woman, a mother and is responsible for the fruit of this world. I have to distinct b/w Eve in Islam, Bible and PL because all this story is in religious text and we cannot say that a religious text is wrong that has to be accepted that has to shown that you believe in that but there could be possibly another interpretation of it that can happen otherwise you cannot deny you cannot refuse because if you do so can turn the tables to those people who already doubt and suspect what the teacher is going to say about their Eve, their God, their Prophet. You have to repeat again and again that this is written in Quran and then again you explain the literary or other religious aspect of it.

Other Female characters: I discuss the birth of Christ and Maryam's character from the concept of Christianity when she is heightened to the state of god and Holy trinity. Similarly Eve's character should be taken in this perspective rather than a sinner because if she is taken as a sinner we all are a product of sin and we all become sinners regardless of being Muslims or

Christians. This is a very bad title for us and we need to temper this concept. PL goes to interpret Christian concept but the intensity of this concept must be removed. So other examples may be quoted. There are a number of stories in the media like a girl aged 13 years was reaped and got pregnant, how could she be a sinner if she was attacked by some man in the similar context Eve has been attacked by Satan who was very powerful as an angel before and now as an evil. If you say Eve was weak, she can be tempted by anybody it is not her fault [this is her make]. So the text should be seen in terms of social realities and modern concepts. In our religion what is a sin? It is said that if unknowingly you commit a sin is not considered a sin but if knowingly you did something wrong; it was in your power to stop that and you don't, then it is a sin. Similarly, if you say Eve is weak this means that she is not powerful enough to stop Satan or say her stronger and sinner otherwise remove the label of sinner from her because she was weaker so this is the very debate that PL has to bring about.

Resistance towards Rape discussion: Probably it was not possible about 100 years ago to discuss the issues of rape in the class but now in Pak society we have a wave of media and it projects everything openly, for e.g. the rape case of woman in Muzaffargarh Mukhtaran Mai, a book was written on her and she went to America. Now her character and story is known to every young or old student so now it has become acceptable that such things can be discussed in 2011 although it was not like this earlier, so now justice is demanded but if you talk about PL and it's about religion, it is very difficult debate about it in religious context but you can relate it to social examples and then explain briefly about religious interpretation. This is the difficulty that teacher has to overcome.

Sexuality in PL: I think still it's not possible, it's very difficult. It might be possible in big cities like Islamabad that students are at higher level and have interaction with foreigners but in most common middle class areas in Pak it is not possible, you can say that rape has to be condemned but you cannot discussed that how rape was carried out. Similarly media never illustrates how rape happened and never uses images etc even in Pakistani movies we don't see it happening we only have symbolic interpretation so in that context it is very difficult. In case of Hardy's novel we talk about Eustacia's eyes and hair and limbs but we cannot talk about her sensual parts. I have a mixed sex class and it's very hard in our society to do that in the class. For example my class was to see the movie *Scarlet Letter* and there was a scene where Dimmesdale was taking bath in the pool, they tried to avoid that and they made us realise that they are not comfortable with that, in the same way when Hester was taking bath and her [female] servant was seeing her even there they laughed that what type of scene is it going to be. So we cannot talk about female body parts in the lecture particularly before female student who are taught to hide themselves from the beginning [childhood] not only physically but mentally. They cannot express even what is in their mind; hiding is one of the chief virtues that is taught to them. Therefore the teacher has to strike these issues very delicately but cannot say that she was very tempting because her body was like this etc. As for Eve's nudity as a mother; in *Midnight Children* by Salman Rashdi he hides in the bathroom of his mother in a basket and he can see her mother bathing and he describes that how she looked and gives full details of her body parts, this is not acceptable in Pakistan and India and was published abroad of course it was read by scholars but not accepted by the public although the text is great but the question is it is not acceptable in our society, if we try to consider Bapsi Sidwa's *Ice Candy Man* there's a discussion on sexuality but very brief. She explains from the point of a child who sees the genital of her cousin but in a couple of lines. But it's difficult when it comes about a mother, the socio-religious aspect and for a person like me who's been teaching for 20-30 years, I look like a father to them and they don't expect such

issues to be discussed by me and it is even more difficult for a young teacher; students may assume that s/he is interested in their bodies so that is problematic. It might be relaxed after 20-30 years but not now when modern writers from Pak research more on such issues. Classroom is an island and society is a sea. Once the students are out of the class they are dominated by the sea that is traditional. We shall have to differentiate between the physical and metaphysical characters. The concept of rape is physical so we don't talk about Eve's psychological temptation in terms of rape. It is difficult so I cannot talk about all the characters and issues like rape etc so I ask them to read a particular scene at home and give their interpretation and sometime I feel hesitant in portraying such scenes, you need take student's confidence on you and tell them that I am doing to do it solely to discuss the text. The very 10 lines of PL beginning talk about muse, this concept is not Biblical or Quranic but mythological, without myth creation of literature becomes difficult somehow and many religious concepts emerge from GK mythology so we tend to talk about myths in the class.

Change the way you teach: Yes, one of my teachers said a very good thing that when you teach *Dr. Faustus* you become Dr. Faustus and when you teach *Hamlet* you become Hamlet. In fact this English literature cannot be interpreted unless you have to create the environment in the class to understand English culture that comes with their religion that's why you have to discuss some of the thing that are Christian. So element of Christianity does enter there, corruption of Church has to be discussed so classroom becomes a Christian island because no Muslim character or belief is discussed but of course we have to draw some comparisons with Islam but what you are instilling what you are teaching is Christianity is Christian literature. If you teach *Hamlet* for example it is there that the night is very holy and crops continue to grow all the night, why so because Christ was born there. Is it not highlighting, praising and admiring Christianity so that's why we have to accept that we are discussing a Christian text. So the students have to create a space for other religions. The waves of change are everywhere not only in England and America but also in Pakistan as well, people are becoming more tolerant to other faiths as well although they are very much resistant but they are feeling that the resistance will subside one day. That is why 1-2% of the students who want to have real learning and are from liberal and open families they would say that no problem even if the Christian religion is discussed but still a lot of time is needed. Some of the students who come from madrassa background they find alienation because of that, it is very difficult for such mind set not to feel separated from the class and teacher and they say teacher has become Christianised. I face this kind of accusation some of the younger students say that is our teacher a Christian? They say you never talk about prayers and fast! But I think a lot of time is needed, a number of discussions are required and researches have to be carried out to change this mind set.

Teaching development: Goals of the teacher and students are different. The students most of the times want to get the degree and the teachers want to transfer knowledge. So we need to develop the interest and PL is a fascinating story if you put aside a story of religion it is a love story and mythical stories and past discoveries of Galileo that how he saw moon with his telescope. It's not difficult to start PL because people already know the story and they want to know more about it, if we put religion aside. So we should talk more about character of Satan, Adam and Eve more. PL has 12 books and most of Pak universities have Book 1 in their syllabus but that creates a trouble because Satan's grand character is discussed in Book 1 which degenerates as we move on to the next books, so we touch other issues slightly but not all of those. It's not possible to teach PL unless you introduce concept of sin, why hell is created, why world is created, good or evil as Satan says he would spread the evil and out of goodness he will seek the seeds of evil, why he

wants to do that so all these things need to be discussed about beforehand before starting the discussion. I don't think that the reason of syllabus to keep Book 1 is Adam and Eve's sexual discussion because when MA in English was introduced there were other books in the course as well these books do have a number of references about sexuality but may be that was not the reason it's length of the poem. I should say the people who chose this text and designed the course [in very early days] were taught by the English people and were very open than we are now. **Mixed Sex:** In today's world this question does not pose any difficulty there is a kind of competition in boys and girls to be more adaptable to change, yes there is segregation that boys and girls sit separately but the discussion goes on but in limitation. But if they are brought up in certain environment they might feel shy. Teacher is of course not that relaxed as he would have been in a uniform sex class but then the students' response make the teacher comfortable when you find all the students are participating.

Productive Way: I think the outcomes of the text should be focused on more; concepts that are generated out of the text are to be changed now. Instead of teaching the sin and fall directly why not to discuss that these are the methods with which woman was undermined or her weakness was brought forward and men try to claim a superior status if this is the way of teaching it will lead a new dimension to PL that even Milton tried to highlight such issues of his time. PL should not be taken to generate a concept of punishing God, angry God, it should be taken as world is created for man, man has to make this world beautiful and how you can be happy even in the hardships of this world because your parents lived happily on earth after a big punishment so this can result as a better acceptance of such texts.

Appendix D: Key Passages from the Quranic Account of the Fall

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Surah Al-Baqara, (Chapter 2:31-39)

And when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth, they said: Wilt thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee? He said: Surely I know that which ye know not. (30) And He taught Adam all the names, then showed them to the angels, saying: Inform Me of the names of these, if ye are truthful. (31) They said: Be glorified! We have no knowledge saving that which Thou hast taught us. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Knower, the Wise. (32) He said: O Adam! Inform them of their names, and when he had informed them of their names, He said: Did I not tell you that I know the secret of the heavens and the earth? And I know that which ye disclose and which ye hide. (33) And when We said unto the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they fell prostrate, all save Iblis. He demurred through pride, and so became a disbeliever. (34) And We said: O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden, and eat ye freely (of the fruits) thereof where ye will; but come not nigh this tree lest ye become wrong-doers. (35) But Satan caused them to deflect therefrom and expelled them from the (happy) state in which they were; and We said: Fall down, one of you a foe unto the other! There shall be for you on earth a habitation and provision for a time. (36) Then Adam received from his Lord words (of revelation), and He relented toward him. Lo! He is the relenting, the Merciful. (37) We said: Go down, all of you, from hence; but verily there cometh unto you from Me a guidance; and whoso followeth My guidance, there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve. (38) But they who disbelieve, and deny Our revelations, such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein. (39)

Surah Al-Araf, (Chapter 7:1-32)

Alif. Lam. Mim. Sad. (1) (It is) a Scripture that is revealed unto thee (Muhammad) - so let there be no heaviness in thy heart therefrom - that thou mayst warn thereby, and (it is) a Reminder unto believers. (2) (Saying): Follow that which is sent down unto you from your Lord, and follow no protecting friends beside Him. Little do ye recollect! (3) How many a township have We destroyed! As a raid by night, or while they slept at noon, Our terror came unto them. (4) No plea had they, when Our terror came unto them, save that they said: Lo! We were wrong-doers. (5) Then verily We shall question those unto whom (Our message) hath been sent, and verily We shall question the messengers. (6) Then verily We shall narrate unto them (the event) with knowledge, for verily We were not absent (when it came to pass). (7) The weighing on that day is the true (weighing). As for those whose scale is heavy, they are the successful. (8) And as for those whose scale is light: those are they who lose their souls because they disbelived Our revelations. (9) And We have given you (mankind) power in the earth, and appointed for you therein livelihood. Little give ye thanks! (10) And We created you, then fashioned you, then told

the angels: Fall ye prostrate before Adam! And they fell prostrate, all save Iblis, who was not of those who make prostration. (11) He said: What hindered thee that thou didst not fall prostrate when I bade thee? (Iblis) said: I am better than him. Thou createdst me of fire while him Thou didst create of mud. (12) He said: Then go down hence! It is not for thee to show pride here, so go forth! Lo! thou art of those degraded. (13) He said: Reprieve me till the day when they are raised (from the dead). (14) He said: Lo! thou art of those reprieved. (15) He said: Now, because Thou hast sent me astray, verily I shall lurk in ambush for them on Thy Right Path. (16) Then I shall come upon them from before them and from behind them and from their right hands and from their left hands, and Thou wilt not find most of them beholden (unto Thee). (17) He said: Go forth from hence, degraded, banished. As for such of them as follow thee, surely I will fill hell with all of you. (18) And (unto man): O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden and eat from whence ye will, but come not nigh this tree lest ye become wrong-doers. (19) Then Satan whispered to them that he might manifest unto them that which was hidden from them of their shame, and he said: Your Lord forbade you from this tree only lest ye should become angels or become of the immortals. (20) And he swore unto them (saying): Lo! I am a sincere adviser unto you. (21) Thus did he lead them on with guile. And when they tasted of the tree their shame was manifest to them and they began to hide (by heaping) on themselves some of the leaves of the Garden. And their Lord called them, (saying): Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you: Lo! Satan is an open enemy to you? (22) They said: Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely we are of the lost! (23) He said: Go down (from hence), one of you a foe unto the other. There will be for you on earth a habitation and provision for a while. (24) He said: There shall ye live, and there shall ye die, and thence shall ye be brought forth. (25) O Children of Adam! We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame, and splendid vesture, but the raiment of restraint from evil, that is best. This is of the revelations of Allah, that they may remember. (26) O Children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you as he caused your (first) parents to go forth from the Garden and tore off from them their robe (of innocence) that he might manifest their shame to them. Lo! he seeth you, he and his tribe, from whence ye see him not. Lo! We have made the devils protecting friends for those who believe not. (27) And when they do some lewdness they say: We found our fathers doing it and Allah hath enjoined it on us. Say: Allah, verily, enjoineth not lewdness. Tell ye concerning Allah that which ye know not? (28) Say: My Lord enjoineth justice. And set your faces upright (toward Him) at every place of worship and call upon Him, making religion pure for Him (only). As He brought you into being, so return ye (unto Him). (29) A party hath He led aright, while error hath just hold over (another) party, for lo! they choose the devils for protecting friends instead of Allah and deem that they are rightly guided. (30) O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but be not prodigal. Lo! He loveth not the prodigals. (31) Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment of Allah which He hath brought forth for His bondmen, and the good things of His providing? Say: Such, on the Day of Resurrection, will be only for those who believed during the life of the world. Thus do we detail Our revelations for people who have knowledge. (32)

Surah Ta-Ha, (Chapter 20:115-124)

And verily We made a covenant of old with Adam, but he forgot, and We found no constancy in him. (115) And when We said unto the angels: Fall prostrate before Adam, they fell prostrate (all) save Iblis; he refused. (116) Therefor we said: O Adam! This is an enemy unto thee and unto thy wife, so let him not drive you both out of the Garden so that thou come to toil. (117) It is (vouchsafed) unto thee that thou hungerest not therein nor art naked, (118) And that thou thirstest not therein nor art exposed to the sun's heat. (119) But the Devil whispered to him, saying: O Adam! Shall I show thee the tree of immortality and power that wasteth not away? (120) Then they twain ate thereof, so that their shame became apparent unto them, and they began to hide by heaping on themselves some of the leaves of the Garden. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so went astray. (121) Then his Lord chose him, and relented toward him, and guided him. (122) He said: Go down hence, both of you, one of you a foe unto the other. But if there come unto you from Me a guidance, then whoso followeth My guidance, he will not go astray nor come to grief. (123) But he who turneth away from remembrance of Me, his will be a narrow life, and I shall bring him blind to the assembly on the Day of Resurrection. (124)

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