Construction of an Afghan National Identity: The Discourses of *Time* and *Newsweek*

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Abstract: Following the Derridean notion of deconstruction, an analysis of post September 11, 2001 discourses of Time and Newsweek over the discursive construction of an Afghan national identity shows how the media discourse through its specific linguistic signs and logocentric discourses may create a text that dehumanises or stereotypes a certain people. Thus, if a text is not deconstructed or critically read, one can miss the continuous attempt of how it engages itself in the act of establishing a kind of truth.

This study analyses the discourses of *Time* and *Newsweek* related to Afghanistan by using J. Derrida's reading strategies known also as deconstruction. Reading à la Derrida can be very tiring because his texts are "a moving chain or network," which discourages the reader to "get to the point." His writing as Johnson puts it, "mimes the *movement* of desire rather than its fulfilment, refusing to stop and totalise itself or doing so only by feint."[1] His strategy is what Royle indicates "Slow Down."[2]

Another striking feature in Derrida is that he rejects any clear-cut definition of his concepts—he discards the concept of key ideas—if there is any key idea in a Derridean text it is supplemented by another term to other "non-synonymous substitutions."[3] Derrida also rejects the concept of *owning an idea*. In an interview he mentioned,

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"Deconstruction will not say 'Heidegger in general' says thus or so."[4] In the same way, it is not possible to say Derrida in general says thus or so.

Derridean deconstruction also brings forth the issue of the vulnerability of language. After Lacan, a compatriot of Derrida, we know that we enter a world, into a "symbolic world" that already has a language, already has tools of language, and we just use our intellect to use those tools according to our ability.[5] Therefore, each reading would be idiosyncratic depending on the particular "subject's" interaction with or understanding of this world, including the cultural space where s/he is born, that is, how a sign has its atypical way of being considered in that culture. Derrida finds "Each reading is singular." Thus, a lot of responsibility has been imposed on a particular reading without making it an absolute reading. Royle suggests that Derrida's texts have "described and transformed the ways in which we think about the nature of language, speech and writing, ... culture, ethics, politics...literature and philosophy."[6]

As hinted above, Derrida's text is widely identified as deconstruction which "... is at present a little understood but much overused term."[7] Deconstruction is a theory of reading and writing that can be practiced. As such, it is always good to have examples since "an example always carries beyond itself."[8] In this essay, examples would be obtained from newsmagazine discourse.

According to its dictionary meaning, to deconstruct is "to analyse the language of literature and philosophy, especially so as to show that parts of it may not be consistent with each other."[9] Royle defines deconstruction as a noun, as:

> ... not what you think: the experience of the impossible: what remains to be thought: a logic of destabilization always already on the move in 'things themselves': what makes every identity at once itself and different from itself: a logic of spectrality: a theoretical and practical parasitism or virology: *what is happening today in what is called today society, politics, diplomacy, economics, historical reality, and so on: the opening of the future itself* [emphasis added].[10]

It is apparent from the two definitions cited above that deconstruction is what is happening today and in every space, and that language

can have different meanings that can only be understood by referring to the context. Derrida is emphatic that there is nothing outside of the text (*Il n'y a pas de hors-texte*)[11] and what he re-phrases elsewhere as "there is nothing outside context" and/or "there is nothing but context."[12] This suggests the idea that it is hardly possible to determine meaning "out of context," without knowing the atypical nature of sign and how they "play" in a particular text and/or context.

Deconstruction is both description and transformation. Doing deconstruction is like growing up, like heading towards a transformation. However, unlike most traditional ways of reading a text, it perhaps is a process of growing up to know "how the text [may] allude comprehension, how its unity [may] disintegrate and how its declared central concerns serve to conceal more crucial manoeuvres" before reaching a *coherent* meaning of a text.[13] Deconstruction, therefore, is closely related to the word "'analysis' which etymologically means to undo—a virtual synonym for 'to de-construct.'"[14] Therefore, despite its manifold nature of difficulty, deconstruction delves into the *"careful teasing out of warring forces of signification* within the text itself."[15]

A text may signify in more than one way, and that is why Derrida discourages attaching a certain meaning over the text. This also presses him to suggest not to tag a *telos*, a teleological end at the beginning, which would guide the reader or the analyser of a text/discourse to reach the abode for which s/he has planned to reach already. It corrupts the concept of future of the text. The idea of presupposition (about a text) would bring no help to the analyser of a text as a critic but may direct a stereotypical analysis. Deconstruction is a critic of a text. But a deconstructive critic "does not point out [simply] the flaws or weaknesses or stupidities of an author," on the other hand, it aims at showing the "necessity" for which the author demands that what he *"does* see is systematically related to what he does *not* see."[16]

Reading Media Texts

A piece of news as an edited version of reality could never be the whole reality. It could be one version of reality while the other versions are suppressed to emphasize a certain meaning/or reality.

The content of newspapers is in a broad sense synonymous to
language or discourse or text (each synonymous term refers to
linguistic sign only).

Fowler argues that this "language is not neutral but a highly
constructive mediator." Thus, the content of newspaper "is not facts
about the world, but in a very general sense 'ideas.'"[17] Then whose
idea is that when one news-text portrays a certain people as
"perpetrator of evil" and another text mentions them as "freedom
fighter?" Van Dijk asks this question and also indicates that all
discourse is "about us and them," which to an extent, is written by
us to be read by them or vice versa.[18] Thus, a sense of conflict is
there. But now after Derrida, it is more apt to say that *in discourse
there is difference*. And if in discourse it is possible to posit difference,
it is necessary to be doubly cautious when explaining its contents. It
is necessary to unravel what is actually happening in and around a
piece of discourse.

This study took its data from *Time* and *Newsweek*, to reread them,[19]
to bring *a shift in the perspective* in reading news magazines, instead
of showing the faulty structure of these textual edifices. Instead of
saying that *Time* and *Newsweek* reporters had a flawed perception
of the phenomena in Afghanistan, this reading suggests that they
could have a different understanding of those phenomena. It shows
what particular form of "knowledge/power" actually helped them
to produce these texts. Whether they misunderstood the "play of
signifiers" in the context of Afghanistan or misread them and the
misapprehension thus ensued, led them to construct an identity that
was inadequate in nature.

This study shows that these storywriters carried out the
construction of a national identity from a personal to collective level,
from the space of gender to that of ethnicity. The concept of national
identity formed discursively in several studies,[20] in fact, has its roots
in the Foucauldian concept of discursive construction.[21]

The Research Design

This essay analysed texts of *Time* and *Newsweek* after the September
11, 2001 incident that demolished the World Trade Centre and
partially damaged the Pentagon. Afghanistan, due to its connection

with Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaedah, received a significant amount of coverage in these two magazines with topics ranging from the "Taliban" and "tribal lords" to "Afghan women" that help construct a concept of Afghan identity. This study chose 32 articles (out of 68 articles published during that time in these two newsmagazines), which have been written on Afghanistan. Articles that simply mentioned Afghanistan but did not elaborate the concepts (gender-based or ethnic and national characterization) that helped in constructing an identity were avoided. The breakdown of these 32 articles, which construct an Afghan national identity, is shown in Table 1.

Table   Number of News-stories Content Analysed

Magazines	Period	Issue	Articles
Time	Oct. 2001- Dec. 2001	11	14
Newsweek	Oct. 2001- Dec. 2001	12	18
Total		23	32

Among these 32 articles, there are reports, opinion articles and editorials. All these news items have been mentioned as news stories to avoid problems caused by considering further sub-genre studies in the news world. This study simply investigates how a national identity is constructed in discourse.To separate the mechanism of language, to see them distinctly, this study used the tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which helped the researchers to locate the linguistic expressions, that is, how ideas are articulated in language/discourse. Then post-structuralist reading strategies, like deconstruction, are employed to read the bedrock structure, the hidden ideology under these linguistic signs.

Her Story of the Burka

It has been observed that the readers have a tendency to get to the point, to reach a hasty conclusion about a fact instead of slowing down, instead of venturing all the ways adequately about the

explanation of a text. Instead of knowing how a sign is over determined in a culture, we comment about the *other*.[22] For instance, a sign like burka (veil) has a culture-specific meaning in Afghanistan, a Muslim society, which demands to be understood according to that specific culture. Otherwise, it may lead to a gross misunderstanding of that sign.

The news-stories like "Damned Anyway" (*Time*), "Now I See the Sunlight" (*Newsweek*), and others refer to the burka.[23] It is instructive to look at how this burka relates to the concept of Afghan female emancipation or women liberation and gender politics as illustrated in these texts. It is also interesting to see how these texts at the end help in constructing an identity of Afghanistan.

Roughly, these stories talk about women and their status in Afghanistan. The stories "Damned Anyway" and "Now I See the Sunlight" establish the point that Afghan women are forced to wear the burka. This generalized notion is based on a few selectively chosen interviews. By doing so, they miss seeing the cultural sign that wearing the burka is an Islamic attire and, instead, they comment on other people's idiosyncratic theological marks. However, they *foreground* (in CDA terms) this concept of the burka, which has produced further discourses that help in constructing the identity of Afghanistan. But what is at aporia here?[24] The aporia is, the news-story writers found a problem (e.g., wearing the burka) and went "fanatic" to provide an explanation, because everything needs an explanation; so they could not stop providing one, no matter real or unreal.

Here, in these texts we see that an interaction with some women in Afghanistan, gave Hanna Beach and Melinda Liu (*Time* and *Newsweek* reporters respectively) an erroneous perception regarding Afghan women's reluctance to wear the burka. Additionally, their generalization is questionable as it is based on a faulty and limited sample, an obvious methodological flaw in their process of data gathering. The discourse on and around the burka that constructs the identity of Afghani women are:

1. She told how much she <u>hated</u> the all-enveloping burka under which the ruling Taliban had required virtually all women to hide. It gave me headaches, she said.[25]

2. I felt so <u>depressed</u> wearing the veil, she said.[26]

3. Inside Kabul <u>some</u> Afghan women have removed their burkas, and can freely feel the sun on their faces for the first time in years.[27]

4. Women in the capital <u>at least</u> won the right to take off the <u>suffocating</u> burkas <u>imposed</u> by the Taliban. But it was a right few of them exercised in daily life.[28]

5. Most women are still waiting—and wearing their <u>veils</u>. They want to see if Northern Alliance representatives managed to stabilize their control of urban areas and convince residents that they're serious about <u>women liberation</u>.[29]

6. But she is the only woman in Khoja Bahauddin who doesn't wear a burka in public.[30]

Then there are discourses, which do not talk about the burka, but talk about those burka-wearing women, thus, the oppressed Afghani women:

1. <u>Call it a reality check</u> for those who think Afghan women <u>would</u> be freed from years of <u>oppression</u> if the US-led military campaign brings down the Taliban regime."[31]

2. <u>But</u> when the Islam-inspired mujahedin government took over in 1992 life begun to change.[32]

3. When the Taliban came to power its <u>fanatical clerics</u> erased all remaining rights [of women].[33]

4. In the mid-1900s when King Mohammad Jahir(sic) Shah ruled Afghanistan, wealthy women strolled Kabul's streets in <u>jeans and western dresses</u>.[34]

In the first set of two examples, they are Mental Processes of <u>hate</u> and <u>depress</u> (in SFL's term) that explain the effects of the burka on them. According to Halliday, Mental Process relates to "feeling, thinking and perceiving things," which is related to a particular person's judgment.[35] And as Khan shows in his study that since Mental Processes do not have a factual basis, they tend to be ideological.[36] They are personal; they are particular and cannot be

generalized if the samples are inadequate. The few women of Kabul whom the *Time* and *Newsweek* reporters interviewed do not represent the attitude of the women of a predominant Islamic society of Afghanistan where wearing the veil is not an imposition but a voluntary act in conformity with religious injunctions.

Melissa Hussain points out that the Western media is never tired of highlighting the immediate "dreams of the female" in Afghanistan and Iraq and that "she must rid herself of the veil and don a miniskirt" to be truly happy.[37] This veil, which Hussain explains elsewhere as an "overdetermined symbol," has different implications in different cultures. She, however, laments that:

> The veil has been so often used by the first world media as an excuse to bomb, pillage, and destroy Middle Eastern and South Asian countries, since it is all in the name of freeing the 'oppressed' women.[38]

And also that

> In the post-9-11 world, the female subaltern has been colored by the west-and the U.S. government in particular, in collaboration with the mainstream media-as the dark, complete 'other' who must be rescued from her oppressors and from her cultures, ironically, through war and devastation.[39]

By foregrounding the burka, Western media stresses on a particular aspect of female emancipation reducing it to only the dress code. Thus, the eventual construction of Afghan females as "oppressed" is perhaps too parochial. On the other hand, Afghani men are constructed as the oppressor of women who imposed this "all-enveloping" and "suffocating" burka on them. These men do not "believe women should have rights."[40] The idea that the women should not have rights has been disclosed by one Nazir to the *Time* reporter, who works as a feminist activist in Afghanistan and is "the only woman in Khoja Bahauddin *who doesn't wear a burka in public*." So the standard of emancipation is reduced only to the dress code whereas these Afghan females had been facing a number of other socio-political crises.

In fact, by projecting a certain view of Afghan females and by making obvious their "plight," *Time* and *Newsweek* invoke a kind

of sympathy that requires to be answered. This job of arousing awareness on behalf of the "oppressed" Afghan females is similar to what Spivak explains as the act of "white men saving brown women from brown men" in another context.[41] The reporters of *Time* and *Newsweek* have taken the responsibility (by themselves) to report on these burka-wearing females in order to save them, sometimes offering an alternative between Taliban and Northern Alliance:

> *The future of women depends on who ends up running the country.* The Northern Alliance, the loose coalition of former mujahedin fighting the Taliban, *could* play a major role [emphasis added]. [42]

The choice of *modality* here (in SFL's term), "could," suggests (also *insinuates* in CDA's term) that they are perhaps interfering in calculating their future. On the contrary, these Afghan females could have different understanding of their future. Due to the differences in culture perhaps they also define female emancipation and read destiny in different terms than a *Time* reporter does.[43] Therefore, as Samir Amin has rightly pointed out, one has to be careful when the "'imitation' of the western model" is suggested as "the only solution" for all the societies.[44]

In another context, Hanna Beech says:

> Call it a reality check for those who think Afghan women would be freed from years of oppression if the US-led military campaign brings down the Taliban regime.[45]

Clearly, Beech is worried about the future of Afghani women. Thus story writing, in her hand, has become an ideological act rather than that of stating the phenomena as it is. By tagging an emotional association to the real world incident, *Time* has made stories in the news media, to quote Fowler, as not "facts about the world, but in a very general sense 'ideas.'"[46] But whose idea is that as van Dijk asks?[47] Evidently, it is the idea of the reporter as well as of the media she is serving. Thus, Beech reports a feminist activist Nazir, an Afghani working in Afghanistan, as saying "The majority of Afghan men do not believe women should have rights." Nazir's utterances cannot be dissociated from the text of Beach and that of *Time*. We

may ask: who is this Nazir, and why is she highlighted? Is it because of her western education? Or her feminist activist identity? Or for what we know from another constative utterance that says: "she is the only woman in Khoja Bahauddin who doesn't wear a burka in public"?[48] So, it seems as if the burka has a place in the concept of emancipation—female emancipation (*Time*'s term would be "women liberation"). Nazir is emancipated because she does not wear a burka—she is not "damned anyway" like her other Afghan sisters.

The stereotyping that Afghan women are suppressed and cannot exercise their rights generates the question about the universal notion of rights. Should we not always remember that right is a cultural artefact, and there will always be a difference between the rights exercised across societies? Thus, it might be too parochial to insinuate that Afghani women are *damned anyway* and *cannot see the sunlight*.

An Aporetic Study of "only"

"Only" is an instance of modality of intensity. Instead of searching for other possible reasons, the storywriter in the following text emphasises a particular reason for the Afghan girls' going to school, which is an obvious instance of aporia:

> But in the eighth grade class, only 12 students sit at the desks...many parents believe a couple of years education is all their daughters need to become good housewives. Other girls in the area attend classes only because international aid groups give extra food to refugee families that send their daughters to school.[49]

Getting "extra food" has been identified as the sole reason behind Afghan females going to school. The storywriter's judgment shows this as the *only* reason. This piece of information, which is backed by one Mental Process, *believe*: "many parents *believe* a couple of years education is all their daughters need to become good housewives" makes the whole expression an instance of typical Presupposition in SFL terms. This can also be identified as an instance of primary stereotyping to feed further stereotyping about Afghan females. Like *only*, other examples of intensive adjunctival modality

even, *still*, *just* or *simply* appear with similar significations in these news magazines for instance:

1. Most women are <u>still</u> waiting—and wearing their veils.[50]

2. Women in the capital <u>at least</u> won the right to take off the suffocating burkas imposed by the Taliban.[51]

Hi(story)[52]

The stories in *Time* and *Newsweek* were developed either as individual stories or as issues, e.g., political or social.[53] The stories in these two newsmagazines emanating from the sign of 'burka' interrelates other signs and affects the act of signification. This comes out clearly in their use of another concept, that is, the concept of leadership.

Two Leaders, Two Characters: Mullah and Karzai

The title of the *Time* story is "In (His) God He Trusts." But what does it precisely indicate? Is the title pushed to alienate Mullah Muhammad Omar or to alienate Islam? It can be any or both. In the sub-headline, the storywriter says:

> The Taliban's leader is a one-eyed master of few words—with a firm belief in dreams and righteousness.[54]

It is clear in the above passage that alienation is marked on both levels. A one-eyed master could easily be substituted by a one-eyed monster. This caricature is not only an instant of "manippean discourse" in Kristevan-Bakhtinian terms, but also an act of "othering" in Karim's manner, which is less than a sound characterization of a chief leader of a country.[55] While those stories develop the character of Karzai, a "chosen leader," is carried out differently.

Yusufzai (*Time*'s reporter) writes:

> You don't know the face of Mullah Muhammad Omar, the 42-year-old chieftain of Afghanistan's Ruling Taliban. The fuzzy photo of him (see right) is one of the few known to exist. Omar avoids the camera—not because of vanity (he is half blind,

having lost the use of one eye in combat in the 1980s) nor
because he wants to hide in the shadows. It's because Islam
proscribes representative artwork, and Omar includes
photographs in that concept. *Religion is Omar's obsessive core,*
as I learned in my many interviews with him in Kandahar, the
Taliban's hometown and Omar's heavily guarded lair [emphasis
added].[56]

How do we read the last two lines? "Religion is Omar's obsessive
core..." and before that "Islam proscribes representative artwork..."
Who is at question? Islam or Omar? What is needed here is a few
lines explaining "representative artwork" and personal understanding
of a religious phenomenon. If this was done, the storywriter could
have saved his story against the accusation of "othering," or
"alienation" or "caricature" in characterization. However, the story
writer did not do so. Karim (1998) and van Dijk (1998) find this
usual in the characterizations of Muslims and Muslim leaders.[57]
Yusufzai, the writer of this story, is not an exception.

One can distinguish the demarcation line between choosing the
textual or the linguistic marks in explaining these two leaders—
Karzai and Omar (various warlords are also explained in the same
manner as Omar was. We are not explaining bin Laden here, since
he is not from Afghanistan). These characterizations reveal one
Derridean phenomenon clearly, that is, how devastatingly we are
always in need of a concept of logocentrism, a concept that says
that everything has a binary way of expression in human society.
But this binary way is unlike the Hegelian or Marxist concept of
"contradiction" or "dialectic." Derrida's binary system is based on
two opposites but these opposites are placed in a *conceptual
hierarchy*: for instance a text would explicitly be in need of favouring
the concept of good over bad, truth over falsehood, or ideal over
actual. In that case a text would require seeing someone or something
in a lower place so that it can uphold the good (!) over the bad one.
And that is the process how a text proceeds, as Derrida would suggest.

If we look at the characterization of Karzai, the "chosen one," he
is almost positioned as the model. Karzai is described as the leader
"on whom the world has pinned its hope for the future of
Afghanistan."[58] On the contrary, Omar, the *fallen one,* and his
associates are characterized as baser than Karzai. Karzai is best

explained not in terms of what he is but in terms of what he is not.[59]
Here are some examples:

a.   He is not an obstreperous warlord with blood on his hands,
     plunder on his mind and ragtag army.[60]

b.   He is not a bully, or a crook, or a chauvinist, or a zealot—
     none of the things that have defined recent leaders [emphasis
     added].[61]

c.   While he never took up arms against the Taliban, Karzai did
     spend his time in Pakistan learning the intricacies of tribal
     etiquette and negotiation from his father, Abdul Ahad Karzai,
     an advisor to the former king, Mohamad Zahir Shah.[62]

Such are the qualities that *Newsweek* found in a leader like Karzai.
One story even suggests that:

> The critical thing is that everyone should work with and
> through Karzai so that he can consolidate and wield powers,
> says McWilliams [a former US special envoy to Afghanistan in
> late 1980s].[63]

The suggestion that Karzai should be provided assistance did not
come from the storywriter, it came as a comment from one former
US official. However, we have shown already that it is hardly possible
to dissociate a comment made by the storywriter and his/her
characters in that story. That is, if every sign in a text contributes to
the meaning of that text, then that comment has a place as well. As
Hussain said: "who do the media choose to interview, and who do
they not interview...is an ideological choice."[64]

   Looking at this vulnerability of discourse, deconstruction works
as a watchman against any production of justice and truth in
discourse. "Deconstruction is a vigilance about the fact that we are
always obliged to produce the truth [in discourse]."[65] Moreover, since
deconstruction considers it necessary to discover the "unconscious
of the text [discourse]," it thwarts the quest for an ultimate truth, a
so-called *only* truth. So, institutionally, say in publishing houses,
when a truth is produced and upheld as the true form of truth/
knowledge, it perhaps hides or suppresses (an)other forms of truth/
knowledge. Deconstruction suggests to investigate the locale of that

other, the one which is marginalized. It suggests to read the other amidst a discourse created by the authority no matter how true its guise appears to be.

Conclusion

A single idea like the idea of difference, aporia or trace can be available in a text. For instance, here in this study of media texts the most important concepts would be aporia and trace. That is, media studies are based on traces, based on our previous reading of signs, and since media, at least in today's world is engaged in creating a common sense or hegemony in Gramsci's terms, it tends to be aporetic, that is prone to uphold a justice, a truth, better say, sell a version of truth. In these texts of *Time* and *Newsweek*, examples are in plenty when the storywriters create a tension, a textual problem (like, emancipation, politics and identity crisis) and then suggest a hasty conclusion, a judgment, which would perhaps be a judgment of their own (legitimised by the editor, thus an instance of *institutional collective* explained in Fairclough).[66]

For students and teachers of linguistics and of media studies, then, it is inevitable to know about this *play of signifiers*, that is, they should know that signs in a text are engaged in a constant war to emphasize a specific meaning. And if we know this phenomenal world *only* in language or in discourse, it would be necessary to know the trajectory of discourse when describing a phenomenon.[67] Without the critical reading of a text, it would be difficult to know the meaning of a text.

Deconstruction spends plenty of time on a single sign. It tries to provide a genealogical study of signs. One may stop at the edge of the text knowing that "there is nothing outside the text."[68] However, one should always concentrate on the external factors that possibly influenced the creation or production of a text.

In this study, we have shown that any gesture in a text would be significant, each sign appears with signification and each sign has a relation to the central meaning of that text. Thus, the burka as a sign has an effect on the whole discourse of this identity formation. It is associated with not only the construction of female identity but also the identity of male as well. In addition, this sign is also associated

with the politics and religion of *other* and *othering*. However, when the idea that the burka is a gesture of repression is determined by an outsider (*Time* or *Newsweek*), it is perhaps carried out at the expense of ignorance of another people's culture.

It should be evident that the linguistic signs that *Time* and *Newsweek* reporters use to produce their texts require further reading, this reading too demands further reading or re-reading.[69] It is inevitable, perhaps, to say that every text requires further reading. Every text should be reproduced and rewritten to fully fathom the inherent meanings it contains.

Notes

1. J. Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans., Barbara Johnson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981), xvi.

2. Nicholas Royle, *Jacques Derrida* (London: Routledge, 2003), 15.

3. Jacques Derrida, "Différance," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans., Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), 12.

4. Royle, *Jacques Derrida*, 25.

5. Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans., Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge, 2001), 1-8.

6. Royle, *Jacques Derrida*, 8.

7. Stuart Parker, *Reflective Teaching in the Postmodern World: a Manifesto for Education in Post Modernity* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997), 68.

8. Derrida, *Spectres of Marx* (London: Routledge, 1994), 34.

9. *Oxford English Dictionary* (London: OUP, 1995), 302.

10. Royle, *Jacques Derrida*, 24.

11. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans., G.C. Spivak (USA: John Hopkins University Press, 1976), 158.

12. Royle, *Jacques Derrida*, 65.

13. Parker, *Reflective Teaching in the Postmodern World*, 69.

14. Barbara Johnson, "Introduction" to Derrida, *Dissemination*, xiv.

15. Ibid.

16. Johnson, "Introduction," xv.

17. Roger Fowler, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press* (London: Routledge, 1991), 1.

18. Teun Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, eds., Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen & Heidi Hamilton (UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 352-371.

19. The concept of re-reading is used here in a Derridean sense as each reading as a re-reading of a text. See Derrida, *Of Grammatology*.

20. Ruth Wodak et al., "The Discursive Construction of national Identities," *Discourse & Society*, 10, no. 2 (1999): 149-173; R. Hulsse, "The Discursive Construction of Identity and Difference—Turkey as Europe's Other," conference paper, in *The Political Uses of Narrative*, Mannheim (26-31 March, 1998), http://www.globalpolicy.org/wtc/media/2002/0701australia.htm; M. H. Khan, "The Discursive Construction of Afghan National Identity in Time and Newsweek" (MA thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia, 2003).

21. The construction of any topic or concept is always a discursive construction as explained in M. Foucault, *An Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans., S. Sheridan (London/New York: Routledge, 1991). Foucault's first hypothesis for discursive formations was, "statements different in form, and dispersed in time, *form a group* if they refer to one and the same object." That is, discourse that constitutes a topic/concept (here, a national identity) is constituted of heterogeneous statements in innumerable linguistic forms. See Ibid., 32.

22. In this study, we understood a sign is "overdetermined" in an Althusserian not Freudian sense—as at any given "historical moment" any expression of a social practice (like wearing burka) is a gesture of "the effects of the contradictions" in that practice. It has a complex machination that is applicable only in that society, in that social formation and cannot be answerable or explainable under any other rigorous rules outside that society. See L. Althusser & E. Balibar, *Reading Capital* (London: verso, 1990).

23. See Hanna Beech, "Damned Anyway," *Time* (October 29, 2001), 47; see Melinda Liu, "Now I See the Sunlight," *Newsweek* (November 26, 2001), 35.

24. Aporia, we know by definition is a "non-road" in Derridean term (derived from Latin "a" without and "poros" road), is roughly "a rhetorical term for *doubt* or *difficulty in choosing*." See Royle, 92-93. And Beardsworth indicates: "An aporia demands decision, [and] one cannot remain within it." See J. Beardsworth, *Derrida & the Political*, (London: Routledge, 1996), 5.

25. Liu, "Now I See The Sunlight," *Newsweek*, 35.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Rod Nordland, "Warlord Nation," *Newsweek* (3 December 2001), 32.

29. Liu, "Now I See The Sunlight," *Newsweek*, 35.

30. Beech, "Damned Anyway," *Time*, 47.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Liu, "Now I See The Sunlight," *Newsweek*, 35.

35. M.A.K. Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (London: Edward Arnold, 1994).

36. See Khan, "The Discursive Construction of Afghan National Identity in *Time* and *Newsweek*," 76.

37. Melissa Hussain, "The Female Subaltern in the Post-9-11 World: Some Reflections" in *Meghbarta,* 4 no. 5 (2003). *http://www.meghbarta.org/2003/june/ourwrld.html#melisa.*

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Beech, "Damned Anyway," 47.

41. G.C. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: An Introduction* P. Williams and Laura Chrisman eds., (Cambridge, Great Britain: CUP, 1994), 94.

42. Beech, "Damned Anyway," 47.

43. *Time* and *Newsweek* are American news media. We considered the media house here as the *institutional collective*, as described in Fairclough. See N. Fairclough, *Language & Power* (England: Pearson Education, 2001), 41.

44. Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (UK: Zed Books, 1989).

45. Beech, "Damned Anyway," 35.

46. Fowler, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press,* 1.

47. Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis," 356.

48. Every utterance, according to J.L. Austin is either constative or performative. According to definition, "constative utterances are those with which something is said, that is, with which a statement that is either true or false is made." On the other hand, performative utterances "are those with which something is not simply said, but done." See Edmund Arens, *The Logic of Pragmatic Thinking: From Pierce to Habermas* (New Jersey, USA: Humanities Press Int'l Inc., 1994), 50.

49. See Beech, "Damned Anyway," *Time*, 47.

50. See Liu, "Now I See the Sunlight" *Newsweek*, 35.

51. Ibid.

52. Since a sign of patriarchal notion is in question here, so the title of this section has been chosen as 'hi (story)'.

53. Khan, "The Discursive Construction of Afghan National Identity in Time and Newsweek," 81.

54. Rahimullah Yusufzai, "In (His) God He Trusts," *Time* (15 October 2001), 26.

55. Karim H. Karim, "The Historical Resilience of Primary Stereotypes: Core Images of the Muslim Other," in *The Language and Politics of Exclusion: Others in Discourse*, ed., Stephen H. Riggins (London: Sage Publications, 1998), 153-157.

56. See Yusufzai, "In (His) God He Trusts," *Time*, 26.

57. See Karim, "The Historical Resilience of Primary Stereotypes: Core Images of the Muslim Other," 153-182; Van Dijk, "Opinions and Ideologies in the Press," in *Approaches to Media Discourse*, eds., Allan Bell & Peter Garrett (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 21-63.

58. Tim Mcgirk, "The Great New Afghan Hope," *Time* (17 December 2001), 26.

59. Khan, "The Discursive Construction of Afghan National Identity in Time and Newsweek," 81.

60 See Ron Moreau, "The Great Conciliator," *Newsweek* (24 December 2001), 27.

61. Ibid.

62. Rod Nordland, "Warlord Nation," *Newsweek* (3 December 2001), 32.

63 See Moreau, "The Great Conciliator," *Newsweek*, 27.

64. Melissa Hussain, personal communication, 3 September 2003.

65. G.C. Spivak, "Strategy, Identity, Writing," interview with J. Hutnyk et al., in *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies and Dialogues* (New York: Routledge, 1986), 46.

66. Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (UK: Longman, 2001).

67. Khan, "The Discursive Construction of Afghan National Identity in Time and Newsweek," 90-91.

68. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 158.

69. Khan, "The Discursive Construction of Afghan National Identity in Time and Newsweek," 93.