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Between Algorithm and Accountability: Posthuman Power, Moral Agency, and American Muslim Subjectivity in Laila Lalami's *The Dream Hotel*

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Abstract

This study claims that Laila Lalami in *The Dream Hotel* (2025) shifts datafied to the moral self by subjecting posthuman predictive power to ethically responsible American Muslim persons. It responds to the crucial issue that the current frames of posthumanism, surveillance, and the representation of American Muslims fail to offer a comprehensive account of how moral agency remains a possibility when embodied and in psychic life has turned into a readable, extractable, and manageable data. This study examines the way the novel constructs Sara Hussein into a predictive portrait and rejuvenates her using context, kinship, prayer, and relational accountability. In concept, the research unites posthumanism, the surveillance studies, American Muslim criticism, and the Islamic-infused criticism of the ethics. On the methodological level, it uses

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qualitative textual analysis, a close reading applied to the novel guided by theory and deductive thematic analysis of the novel. The analysis concludes that, first, subjectivity is made mechanically legible by the novel through the disciplining of the body, shot apart data capture, and dream mining. Second, it demonstrates that algorithmic systems purport to have epistemic authority by making archives, dreams and traces of behaviour transparent truth. Third, it shows how Sara defies such down ranging by recalling, placing the story in context, praying and finding strength in solidarity ultimately, redesigning freedom as a caring and shared instead of an individual thing. The research therefore indicates that technology served as the crucial place in reconsidering the premises of moral agency, meaning making and responsible Muslim selfhood under predictive politics in the context of literary studies and greater discussions about data, morals and personhood.

keyword: *The Dream Hotel*; posthumanism; predictive governance; American Muslim subjectivity; moral agency.

بين الخوارزمية والمساءلة: السلطة ما بعد الإنسانية، والفاعلية الأخلاقية، وذاتية المسلم

الأمريكي في رواية فندق الأحلام لليلى العلمي

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قسم اللغة الإنكليزية/ كلية الآداب/ جامعة البصرة

المستخلص

تذهب هذه الدراسة إلى أن ليلى العلمي، في رواية *فندق الأحلام* (٢٠٢٥)، تنتقل من تصور الذات بوصفها بيانات إلى تصورها بوصفها ذاتاً أخلاقية، وذلك بإخضاع السلطة التنبؤية ما بعد الإنسانية لذوات أمريكية مسلمة مسؤولة أخلاقياً. وتستجيب الدراسة لإشكالية محورية مفادها أن الأطر الراهنة لما بعد الإنسانية، والمراقبة، وتمثيل المسلمين الأمريكيين، لا تقدم تفسيراً شاملاً لكيفية بقاء الفاعلية الأخلاقية ممكنة حين تتحول الحياة الجسدية والنفسية إلى بيانات قابلة للقراءة والاستخراج والإدارة. وتفحص الدراسة كيفية التي تُشيد بها الرواية سارة حسين بوصفها صورة تنبؤية، ثم تعيد بناءها من خلال السياق، والقراءة، والصلاة، والمساءلة العلائقية. وعلى المستوى المفاهيمي، يجمع البحث بين ما بعد الإنسانية، ودراسات المراقبة، والنقد الخاص بتمثيلات المسلمين الأمريكيين، والنقد الأخلاقي المستند إلى الرؤية الإسلامية. أما على المستوى المنهجي، فيعتمد على التحليل النصي الكيفي، والقراءة الدقيقة الموجهة نظرياً للرواية، والتحليل الموضوعاتي الاستنباطي لها. ويخلص التحليل إلى أن الرواية، أولاً، تجعل الذاتية قابلة للقراءة الآلية من خلال إخضاع الجسد للضبط، والتقاط البيانات المتشظي، وتعدين الأحلام.

وثانيًا، يبيّن أن الأنظمة الخوارزمية تدّعي امتلاك سلطة معرفية عبر تحويل الأرشيفات، والأحلام، وآثار السلوك إلى حقائق شفافة. وثالثًا، يوضح كيف تتحدى سارة هذا الاختزال عبر التذكّر، ووضع الحكاية في سياقها، والصلاة، واستمداد القوة من التضامن، لتعيد في النهاية تصور الحرية بوصفها قيمة قائمة على الرعاية والاشترك لا على الفردانية. ومن ثم يبيّن البحث أن التكنولوجيا تغدو موضوعًا حاسمًا لإعادة النظر في أسس الفاعلية الأخلاقية، وصنع المعنى، والذات المسلمة المسؤولة في ظل سياسات التنبؤ، سواء في الدراسات الأدبية أم في النقاشات الأوسع حول البيانات، والأخلاق، ومفهوم الشخص.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فندق الأحلام؛ ما بعد الإنسانية؛ الحوكمة التنبؤية؛ ذاتية المسلم الأمريكي؛ الفاعلية الأخلاقية.

1. Introduction

In *The Dream Hotel* by Laila Lalami, the author reflects on the idea of a United States, which is almost in the future, where crime is the reason to be put into detention. Saara Hussein is a Moroccan-American Muslim archivist who comes back, on an academic visit, and is detained after an algorithm marks her as an imminent threat based on compiled data, such as her sleep and dream logs. Since the very beginning of the novel, one can observe a set of bodies whereby, bodily discipline, digital surveillance, and predictive suspicion intersect: Sara is conditioned into immobility and obedience, being subjected to cameras, scanning machines, and, over many pages, being down-demoted to that of being a risk-yielding profile instead of a rights-claiming subject. Lalami builds upon this reasoning by demonstrating that dream-data is never confined solely to the police domain, but it gets commercialized, sold and integrated into broader corporate networks of extraction and experimentation. In that regard, *The Dream Hotel* is not just a surveillance dystopia, but a novel of how the interior life is transformed into the space of administrative legibility, economic value and political action (Lalami, 2025, pp. 12, 76, 88, 187–188).

This assumption places the novel in a straightforward dialogue with posthuman thought. Cyborg is foundational by definition since modern subjectivity is referred to as a machine-organism hybrid (Haraway, 2016), and the concept of cybernetism allowed the human to be reconstructed as soon as information was deprived of a body (Hayles, 1999). Read this lineage, the situation of Sara Hussein, is not merely that she is spied upon; and that she is, ontologically, reformatted into traces that are mechanically read. Later posthuman critique has extended this discussion to ethical, legal and responsibility issues. The posthuman predicament urges to reconsider ethically how to deal with and govern the posthuman without abandoning the responsibilities of continuing to exist in the world

(Herbrechter, 2024), which critical posthumanism cannot afford to think in the form of the end of the human (Braidotti, 2016). These interventions are very important since the novel is not just concerned with how the self is datafied, but it is also concerned with whether there might be any form of moral agency when such subjectivity is broken down into predictive information.

The question is brought even more to the point when one reads it in conjunction with scholarship on the topic of American Muslim representation and legal subjectivity. The U.S. culture that developed after 9/11 is often based on simplified complex representations that perpetuate a novel form of racism (Alsultany, 2013) whereas the American Muslim public life has been conditioned by the juridical epoch of American Islam (Syed, 2025). It is also argued that cultural difference, racial hierarchy and institutional power are central to Muslim moral formation and professional ethics (Mattson, 2025). These interventions explain why Sara Hussein is not a dystopian subject which could be read as generic.

The unique aspect of *The Dream Hotel* is the fact that the hotel does not place Muslimsness on a receive level or sociological background. Rather, the novel provides Sara with an ethical grammar of maternal memory, sensitivity to naming, archival training and the language of responsibility and blame, developed by her father. This anti-language is complete in the prayer scene at which point, Sara resorts to Quran recitation and dwells upon the tradition of prophetic dreams as related to Abraham, Joseph and Muhammad. Most importantly, the novel does not resort to history of Islamic dreams to substantiate predictive detention. Instead, it puts meaningful dreams into perspective, as special, ethically serious, and interpretively challenging. The question, then, is not whether dreams are not meaningful, but whether it can be an algorithmic state that monopolizes the meaning of dreams (Lalami, 2025).

Based on this, this study claims that *The Dream Hotel* shifts off the datafied self to the moral self. Although posthuman systems reconfigure Sara Hussein as a prophecy portrait, text reconstitutes the subjectivity via context, will, kinship, Islamic-tinged moral thinking, and solidarity. It thus conceives the novel as a critique of surveillance and a form of exploration of the manner in which ethical agency and contextual interpretation thwarts the dehumanization of the self to data.

Statement of the Problem

The current critical frames of explaining the reality of technologically mediated fiction as an embodiment of the human subject are not satisfactory as the interior life itself is readable, extractable and actionable information. The being of foundational posthuman thinkers has demonstrated that personhood cannot be conceived in the humanist model of autonomous being, which was previously stable. Cyborg, in particular, is described as a combination of the machine and organism (Haraway, 2016), and the discourse of cybernetics allowed redefining the human as the organism in which the loss of information took the body (Hayles, 1999). Later posthuman criticism has moved this argument to the level of ethics, law, and responsibility, and suggested that renewed attention should be directed to the ethical relations, norms and values (Braidotti, 2016), and the persisting responsibilities under posthuman conditions (Herbrechter, 2024).

However, these frameworks are not sufficient to describe how moral agency works when the power that is mediated by technology not only observes the subject but also prefigures, types, and punishes it by punishments prior to any action being performed. *The Dream Hotel* performs this issue with specific intensity: Sara Hussein becomes visible as a preemptive portrait courtesy of the systems that mesmerize behaviour, dreams, and social residues as become an attestation to future violence. As the novel reveals, compliance starts with the body (Lalami, 2025), and further policing is not limited to apparent behaviour on the part of people since the former goes as far as sifting through dreams (Lalami, 2025). The issue is not only, then, surveillance, but that conversion of the living body and psychic life that precedes it, into a governable evidence.

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that it is to read about American Muslim studies. The study of Muslim representation has demonstrated both how the culture post 9/11 depends on cultural simplifications of complex representations that perpetuate the existence of a new form of racism, and the more recent scholarship has argued that it is a juridical epoch of American Islam that has shaped the Muslim public life in the United States (Alsultany, 2013; Syed, 2025). It has also been indicated that cultural difference, racial inferiority and institutional authority is non peripheral since it is central to Muslim moral society and professionalism (Mattson, 2025).

However, the concerned techniques have not brought adequate explanations on how the posthuman predictive power collides with the American Muslim subject of morality as presented in the context of *The Dream Hotel*. Thus, a sufficient explanation cannot be found of how the novel has worked to put algorithmic preemption in a collision with a morally accredited Muslim selfhood. This study seals this gap by considering the context, kinship, prayer, responsibility and how *The Dream Hotel* shapes the datafied self to the moral self through the explanation of relationship.

Objectives of the Study

1. To see how the transformation of subjectivity in *The Dream Hotel* by Laila Lalami under the surveillance of the posthuman, the predictive government, and what the dream tells us about ourselves.
2. To examine how *The Dream Hotel* recreates American Muslim moral subjectivity as a result of memory, kinship, prayer, responsibility and contextual interpretation.
3. To investigate how *The Dream Hotel* introduces algorithmic preemption into conflict with morally responsible selfhood and how it reinvents its subject out of the reductive data logics.

2. Literature Review

The scholarship that aligns best with the present work involves converging on four overlapping debates, namely, posthumanism and literary posthumanism and surveillance capitalism and predictive governance and American Muslim representation and ethical selfhood and a rising criticism of *The Dream Hotel*.

2.1 Posthumanism, literary posthumanism, and the redefinition of the human

The main horizon through which this study will focus is posthumanism, which undermines the liberal-humanist perspective on the subject as self-contained and independent. Haraway defines modern subjectivity as a machine-organism hybrid, providing an example of a cyborg, who introduces a hybrid creature (Haraway, 1991) whereas Haynes shows that the concept of cyborgs became invigorating when information left its body (Hayles, 1999). Collectively, these interventions rebrand the human as pattern, code and relational

assemblage in addition to embodied singularity per se. Literary posthuman criticism builds up on this observation by considering fiction as a focal point whereby the boundaries of the human are fantasized and challenged. Literature is a kind of privileged speculative site where one can hear the ghosts of humans, nonhumans and posthumans haunting it, which makes literature a site of enunciations of the posthuman (Clarke and Rossini, 2017), and (Nayar, 2025) also believes that literature texts are at the top of the ability to enunciate.

The focus on ethics, law and responsibility has replaced concerns of hybridity and disembodiment in recent posthuman scholarship. Braidotti insists on bringing attention to the new posthuman condition, one that demands clarity of the ethical relation, norms and values (Braidotti, 2016) whereas Käll deems that it is the nonhumans who have been assembling around the formerly unrecognized data subject that digital technologies have obscured (Käll, 2017). Käll also indicates that posthuman thinking has the potential to give rise to a new sense of responsibility, sufficient to digitally reconfigured personhood (Käll, 2017). This moral twist plays a critical role in this situation since *The Dream Hotel* stages a regime where the subject is operationalized as a data and analysed by prediction and measured by machinic traces. What is even more problematic, though, is that it is not simply that the human is decentred but what will become of interpretive and moral agency when personhood is made machine-readable.

2.2 Surveillance capitalism, predictive governance, and algorithmic accountability

The dispersed subjectivity can be controlled solely through posthuman decentring. That entails surveillance research and enquiry on predictive governance. According to Zuboff, surveillance capitalism transforms the private experience into the form of the so-called prediction products as behaviour data (Zuboff, 2019), as individual is a removable source of surplus whose behaviour is controllable, predictable and adjustable. The argument is applicable in markets to governance. Aradau and Blanke demonstrates that algorithmic security makes the other visible instead of obvious using anomaly detection and data patterning instead of obvious definitions of legal categories (Aradau and Blanke, 2018), and Srivastava offers a view that algorithmic governance introduces new private authorities to critical social and political bottlenecks (Srivastava, 2023). Collectively, these studies indicate that predictive systems do not simply observe their subjects, but includes pre-

structuring the terms in line with which subjects become legible, risky or disposable. *The Dream Hotel's* debate is applicable in this case where dreams, biometric databases and associated behavioural traces are used as the means of pre-emptive judgment.

In this vein, accountability has come out as a main issue. Horneber and Laumer introduce the concept of the algorithmic accountability as the question of who should justify the design, development and use and the outcome of an algorithmic system (Horneber and Laumer, 2023). They also emphasize that institutions should have the capacity of explaining and justifying both organizational design decisions and results (ibid). The same can be said by Wieringa, who asserts that accountability failures are created through some medium-specific strategies by algorithm systems not resolvable by transparency alone (Wieringa, 2023). This discussion is the key point of the current research as surveillance per se is not the issue in case of Sara Hussein predicament. She is deprived of a discourse power in determining the meaning of information gathered about her. The question that the novel thus has in a larger sense is whether automated inference may justifiably usurp the human context, an explanation, and moral voice.

2.3 American Muslim representation, legal subjectivity, and ethical selfhood

A third existing literature that the core of this research is American Muslim critique, in which the issue of representation, suspicions, and the formation of legal subjects have been raised as a major issue. Alsultany continues that U.S. culture of the post-9/11 period is based on simplified and complex representations, which seem to be sophisticated, but nevertheless, preserve a new form of racism (Alsultany, 2013). Santesso also mentions that 9/11 made the Muslim minorities visible as 9/11 made them Muslims with the marked bodies that signify the collective threat (Santesso, 2016), and Fadda-Conrey refers to the existence of the guilt-by-association logic in the vigilant citizenship (Fadda-Conrey, 2011). By outlining a juridical era of American Islam, which is influenced by rights discourse, the power of the state, and the war-on-terror government (Syed, 2025), Syed worsens this state of affairs. The combination of them demonstrates that Muslimness in the U.S. setting is never neutral as it is already defined by suspicion, securitization, and overreading the law. This holds significant importance in this context since Sara Hussein is not an unnamed

dystopian figure; her introduction to forecasting and criticism is heightened due to the past histories of racialization and the proliferation of interpretation.

The more recent criticism has been less concerned with representation to moral formation and lived subjectivity. Mattson asserts that the key elements of Muslim moral formation and professional ethics, according to the author, are cultural difference, racial hierarchy, and institutional power (Mattson, 2025); the Muslim identity is a location of larger struggles, according to the author, over meaning and community (Mattson, 2025); the issue of accountability, the author states, this ethical turn is strengthened to a large extent by literary criticism. According to Shomali, Arab American fiction suggests new forms of subjectivity, presenting the boundaries of liberal inclusion (Shomali, 2018), and Gupta believes that Muslim characters are overly forced to conform to the labels of good, bad, or moderate and suggests everyday Islam as a means of reclaiming lived and contextual Muslim subjectivity (Gupta, 2025). Mittermaier also says that being acted upon and receptivity to relationships are also foregrounded in some religious experiences instead of being cultivated to oneself alone (Mittermaier, 2012). Combined, this scholarship can prove particularly helpful to *The Dream Hotel*, where Muslims subjectivity can be traced through prayer, family memory, naming, interpretive caution, and moral self-criticism, not just in the form of representation.

2.4 Literary project, speculative realism, and narrative method of Laila Lalami

The formal approach of Lalami also has to be considered in any satisfactory reading of *The Dream Hotel*, as the argument of the article does not rest on what the novel tells us; it is the organization of the perception in which the argument has to be constructed. The literary project of Lalami in this novel is neither dystopian nor traditionally so, neither techno-fetishistic. Rather, she constructs the oppressive future with administrative realism: detention regimes, biometric arrest, predictive credit, sleep monitoring, circulating dream information seem like realistic additions to current institutional regimes as opposed to a science-fictional moment. This speculative realism helps minimize the gap between the present and the future, promoting recognition and not estrangement and rendering contemporary logics of data extraction and preemption newly apparent.

Simultaneously, the narrative approach employed by Lalami cannot render the topic to profile and potential. Moral and emotional density is restored in the novel because of the focus on naming, kinship, the memory of the Moroccan motherhood and the Quranic recitation, the interpretative nature of dreams (Lalami, 2025). The text formally oscillates in two directions simultaneously: in recording the systems in a documentary accuracy, it maintains an interior and relational world which the systems in question are not able to completely scan. This is imperative to the current study since it indicates that not only theme but also form are coded within the novel the resistance to predictive reason.

2.5 Early studies on *The Dream Hotel*

Since *The Dream Hotel* is a publication of 2025, the scholarship on the novel has been sparse yet already hinting. Initial critiques have focused on its technological and political aspects. Barhoun approaches his research as the earliest surveillance-studies reading of the novel and discusses it in line with the surveillance capitalism, the data double and resistance (Barhoun, 2026). Loyi also interprets the text via the prism of AI policing and capital surveillance by positing that predictive algorithms and capital logics greatly exceed one another in the world of the novel (Loyi, 2026). Combined, these works make *The Dream Hotel* a valuable text in terms of discussion of algorithmic control, prediction, and data extraction.

Concurrently, the intervention of the article is indicated by this early work. Current readings elucidate the processes through which the self becomes data, but it has not yet theorized in full terms how the novel does not permit the self to be spent by data. The uncharted territory is the overlapping of posthuman force and American Muslim moral subjectivity, of how prayer, family memory, naming, accountability, contextual interpretation, a nonliteral interpretation of dreams as counter-epistemologies to algorithmic judgment. Through the introduction of posthuman literary theory in the debate of surveillance studies and American Muslim criticism, the current work supports the argument that *The Dream Hotel* is not merely a novel of predictive control but a novel of moral responsible subjectivity in the context of the datafication.

3. Conceptual Framework

This framework has six cross-cutting concepts: decentred subjectivity, distributed datahood, algorithmic judgement and predictive governance, American Muslim belonging

and overreading, Islamic-inflected moral agency, and relational accountability and collective solidarity. *The Dream Hotel* needs this composite structure as it experiences interwoven ontological, political, historical and ethical crises, which individual theories cannot describe. The framework is developed based on the double movement of the datafied and governable self towards the morally accountable self-evident in the novel. It thus offers the conceptual framework of reading in the technological capture that is opposed by Muslim moral sense interpretation, kinship and collective responsibility.

3.2 Posthuman decentring and distributed datahood

The initial pair of ideas are posthuman decentring and distributed datahood. Posthuman decentring refers to the loss of self-autonomy by the self in the face of technologic mediation network, institutional surveillance and control of the body. It builds on the genealogy of the cyborg being formulated by Haraway as a hybrid of machine and organism (Haraway, 1991) as well as the argument by Hayles that the discourse of cybernetics changed subjectivity when information lost its body (Hayles, 1999). This idea is endowed with ethical power due to Braidotti insisting on the re-evaluation of ethical relations, norms and values under posthuman conditions (Braidotti, 2016). The concept of decentred subjectivity in this research does not imply that one will cease to exist as person, rather, it entails the loss of sovereign self-possession to a mutually mediated power of technologies and administration.

Distributed datahood gives a name to this kind of decentring which is manifested in the novel. The term is based on the idea that the electronic technologies have decentralized the separation between persons and objects, as per Käll's argument that the digital technologies have obfuscated the limits between persons and things (Käll, 2017). This is a critical concept since it keeps datafication away as an externality that, despite being the sole internal component, has changed what an otherwise whole self is like. The dispersed traces of self-make it legible in *The Dream Hotel*. These concepts are used to analyse the aspects of compliance of the body, extraction of dreams, aggregation of archives, and machinic profile out of intimate life.

3.3 Algorithmic judgment, predictive governance, and accountability

In case distributed datahood describes the way, the self is recoded, algorithmic judgment describes how it is regulated. The conversion of dispersed traces into anticipation-based

claims about risk, intention and future action is known as algorithmic judgment in this study. The key in this point is the explanation presented by Zuboff of how surveillance capitalism is achieved since it recognizes a system that transforms human experience into the form of behavioural data and then into prediction products (Zuboff, 2019). Aradau and Blanke take this reasoning farther by suggesting that it is how the other becomes knowable in mass volumes of data (Aradau and Blanke) whereas Srivastava demonstrates how the other is installed with new authorities at critical points of social and political bottlenecks (Srivastava, 2023). Narrated collectively, what these narratives indicate is the fact that prediction is not a mere technical calculation, but a form of power, which authorizes pre-emptive readings.

Under this scheme, the institutionalization of this judgment is called predictive governance, in legal, administrative and corporate forms. This concept is still all about accountability. Horneber and Laumer introduce the concept of algorithmic accountability, that is, the question of who is to justify the design, use, and outcome of machine learning systems (Horneber and Laumer, 2023), and emphasize the need to be able to explain and justify the design and the outcomes of ML systems (Horneber and Laumer, 2023). Wieringa also maintains that accountability is actually a networked description of the sociotechnical system as an entirety, but not a need to be transparent (Wieringa, 2023). In *The Dream Hotel*, the problem of surveillance is not per se, but the usurpation of interpretive competency: the system purports to tell Sara what to do with her life, dreams, and future. This is the idea which guides the reading of the study on the risk scoring, preemption, administrative suspicion, and corporate-state coordination.

3.4 American Muslim overreading and juridical belonging

Posthuman and surveillance theory would be used to explain how the institutions functioning in the novel work, albeit not the only reason why the datafication that engulfs Sara at the very beginning of the novel is historically saturated. That is why American Muslim overreading and juridical belonging is the third element of the framework. The description about simplified representations of complexities that maintain a new form of racism presented by Alsultany's reveals how Muslim characters are accorded surface-level

nuance yet maintained in order (by suspicion (Alsultany, 2013)). Santesso also mentions that minorities of Muslims are publicly legible as Muslims, with visibly marked bodies taken as indicative of general danger (Santesso, 2016), and that the logic of guilt-by-association Fadda-Conreys (2011) describes how ordinary affiliation can become evidentiary burden. Combined, these interventions define a situation, of being not just looked at, but read over, of Muslim subjects.

Based on it, American Muslim overreading is how this study is referenced in order to refer to the racialized and juridical surplus of interpretation used on Muslim subjects in their names and bodies, affiliations and affect which are subjected to meaning through decoding their signs. The term juridical belonging has been inspired by Syed referring to the Syedian concept of a juridical epoch of American Islam (Syed, 2025) as a state where Muslim presence is negotiated by the means of law, rights discourses, and state scrutiny and not by a simple civic inclusion. Such ideas are important as Sara is not a dystopian impersonation: she comes into the predictive regime of the novel already situated in histories of mistranslation, distrust, and forced explanations of reasons. This two directs operationally the naming, migration memory and cultural translation, as well as the burden of overinterpretation, analysis.

3.5 Islamic-inflected moral agency and contextual interpretation

The second idea deals with counter-epistemology of the novel. When the algorithmic systems allege data gnashes out meaning, the novel retaliates with a variant of moral agency based on interpretation, responsibility as well as moral self-doubt. The key role is Mattson, as she asserts that the major aspects of Muslim moral formation and professional ethics are cultural disparity, racial hierarchy, and institutional power (Mattson, 2025), that Muslim identity is a location of greater struggles in connection to the meaning and community (Mattson, 2025), and that accountability cannot be narrowed down to individual behaviour. The idea of everyday Islam offered by Gupta is not unlike the concept, as it does not yield to reductionist notions of the good, the bad, or the moderately Muslim subject matter, but reinvigorates the focus on lived, localized subjectivity that is the Muslim everyday (Gupta, 2025).

Mittermaier goes further to elaborate on this ethical framework by citing that certain types of religiosity are centred neither around acting nor around acting after each

other but instead are centred around being acted (Mittermaier, 2012). The latter knowledge comes in handy when one is dealing with a dream-based novel, since it disrupts the contemporary belief about legitimizing agency, in the form of opaque self-assertion. In this study, the moral agency with an Islamic touch has no sense of doctrinal closure. It refers to a moral sensibility inherently guided by intentionality, praying, humility, reading contextually, and moral accounting of oneself. The conceptual interpretation is thus inherent to the expression: it is the lack of mechanical self-evident dreams in the novel, that makes dreams meaningful. This concept, in its operational form, regulates the interpretation of prayer, recitation of the Quran, family memory, ethical hesitation and lack of algorithm among literalisms.

3.6 Relational accountability and collective solidarity

The last concept is accountability and solidarity as a community. It is a term that denotes the refusal of crisis in the novel by healing an untouched liberal individual. The fact that Arab American fiction suggests alternative subjectivity modes and reveals the constraints of liberal inclusion is significant in this respect since it explains why the ethical horizon of the novel cannot be cut down to rights-bearing self-possession on its own (Shomali, 2018). The focus on subjectivity as accountability to someone other than personal autonomy by Mattson in insisting that accountability is beyond individual action (Mattson, 2025) and by Mittermaier in prioritizing receptivity as being acted upon (Mittermaier, 2012) continues to reinforce this point. Where algorithmic accountability, inquires who needs to defend the system, relational accountability inquires into the one against whom the subject is left to be answerable.

Relational accountability in this work can be said to be the recreation of selfhood by using kinship, blame, care, historical memory and communal witness. The extension of that responsibility outside the family into the vulnerability of collectivity and the resistance of collectivity, is what that solidarity means. In such terms, the action narrative in the novel does not ascend towards the restoration of a sovereign subject, but to the creation of a morally relational subject. This is relevant to American Muslim discourse since membership is achieved not only by means of the public representation but through the family, duty and shared memory. This concept operationally informs the discussion of the

kinship obligation, blame, care, solidarity and the direction the novel takes towards shared freedom.

4. Methodology

This research uses a qualitative textual analysis premised on close reading which is theoretically guided and a deductively themed literary method to analyse *The Dream Hotel* by Laila Lalamine. The major source of data will be the entire text of the novel, as it is read and not in random bits. Descriptive passages, dialogue, dream sequences, prayer scenes, institutional discourse, and relational interactions comprise the unit of analysis and help elucidate the key aspects of the study: bodily discipline, distributed data capture, predictive governance, an archival error, American Muslim overreading, Islamic-inflected moral agency, and relational accountability. This format is suitable as the study aims to describe how the novel narratively formats the datafied self-to the moral self-using patterning, symbolism, repetition, and moral contrast.

Thematic analysis blindly applied analytically to the study of literature and integrated with a deductive process driven by the theory (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Kiger and Varpio, 2020). According to Braun and Clarke, the foundations of the entire analysis are gained through immersion by way of repeated reading (2006). Based on this, the novel was read numerous times, interventions of analysis were created in the form of memos, and the material was coded on the semantic and latent levels. The organization of coding was carried out based on six conceptual levels namely decentred subjectivity, distributed datahood, algorithmic judgment and predictive governance, American Muslim belonging and overreading, Islamic-inflected moral agency, and relational accountability and collective solidarity. Interpretive centrality was used to identify themes not only based on quantifiable measures but based on its suitability to the research question, which is the keyness of a theme (Braun and Clarke, 2006). A repeated reading practice was upheld with mutually reinforcing contextually close reading, memoing, and theoretical consistency in posthumanism, surveillance studies, American Muslim criticism, and Islamic-inspired ethical criticism. This makes the findings interpretive and not generalizable of the study since it relies on a single literary text, yet has an appropriate approach to its purpose because the article is focused.

9. Analysis

The following analysis follows the production of *The Dream Hotel* as an entity that went through datafication to moral relation. Lalami demonstrates how Sara Hussein is initially made mechanically legible, followed by the dream capture and archival overreading, and finally the novel is transformed into the Muslim ethical lexis which was used to dismantle literalism and redefine freedom as relational and not as a personal experience. The argument is then presented as a battle of definitions: of the body, the unconscious, the archive, and the end result is the self, an ethical and collective subject.

9.1 From Body to Dataset: Compliance and the Datafied Subject

Lalami starts to demonstrate that the topic is initially trained as a body and only later unleashed into a dataset. Arrest is not merely physical, it is a drilling of Sara as it makes her readable, manageable and predictively useful. This logic is clearly expressed throughout the novel:

“She stands still, limbs straight, eyes fixed on a point in the middle distance; if Madison has taught her anything, it is that compliance begins in the body. The trick is to hide any flicker of personality or hint of difference. From white domes on the ceiling, the cameras watch” (Lalami, 2025, p. 12).

This excerpt builds the fact that datafication is initiated not through abstract computation but with corporeal discipline. It is necessary to transform Sara into a surface optimized to surveillance before it can be converted to usable information. Immobility, assumption, and impersonation do not happen as part of detention but are the physical predetermination of machinic legibility. The initial reworking of subjectivity in the novel then takes place at the subjective-embodied level of self-presentation as the individual is forced to act as a recognizable item, in place of an expressive being.

When the compliance of the body has been achieved, the regime expands into a wider area of information. The machine well-known as the surveillance apparatus cannot saturate itself with the data in the immediate field of view, it is inexhaustibly eager to extract further traces through which the detainee can be expanded and networked across systems: The system is never clogged with the data it already possesses. It always desires more, in new forms or on other platforms, including human collectors. Should Hinton see something beyond the capability of the cameras, The most important here is the term new formats. As Lalami demonstrates, surveillance, though no more than observational, is accumulative. Sara is no longer a biometric marker or one action, an institutional file. She

is scattered across cameras, employee reports, daily inspections and subsequent legal and business databases. What comes out is not rounded out human subject of observation, but a self that is continually disaggregated into additional data-points. This development is further established by the scene set at the airport where Sara is being questioned and, in the meantime, her phone is utilized in the first instance as an intimate portable library of everyday life:

“Segura didn’t bother looking at her social media accounts, in spite of his earlier questions, but he took careful note of the apps she had—three newspaper subscriptions, a grocery delivery service, a baby monitor, a thermostat sensor, a word game, a sleep-aid tracker, and a dozen more she forgot she even had” (Lalami, 2025, p. 34).

This is an essential event as it demonstrates that identity is being rebuilt via everyday digital practices and not confession or purpose. Home appliances, hobby applications and body technologies are all geared towards a single readable profile. The self has no longer a foundation on testifying, motive, or introspection, it is spread on interfaces that silently record the daily existence. The fact that data are everywhere is not the point which Lalami makes but it has become the case that ordinariness has turned into evidence.

Distribution of traces into predictive judgment is the last stage in this process. The data is gathered and not to be gathered, but to be weighted, correlated and converted to risk. Segura refers to the system as being “holistic” at the airport (Lalami, 2025, p. 33), which becomes extended later to the association of family members and records of dreams. This expansion is most chillingly put forth when the data of dreams is actively involved in prediction of crimes: “They’re among the two hundred data sources used by the crime-prediction algorithm and they’ve raised your risk score above the acceptable threshold” (Lalami, 2025, p. 76). In this excerpt, the novel explains the extent to which the predictive assemblage can go. Judgment does not depend on what she has done, but on a sum of what she uses, whom she is related with, what she sleeps through or what she dreams of. Predictive governance is not then solely a practice that monitors behaviour, but it colonizes adjacency, habit and possibility. *The Dream Hotel* demonstrates that the datafied subject is created in stages: initially with the help of bodily discipline, then by the informational dispersion and lastly by the algorithmic judgment.

9.2 Dream Capture and the Colonization of Interiority

In case Section 9.1 displays the process of objectifying Sara by transforming her body into a dataset, the following transfer of the novel makes the domain of governance run into the very unconscious. *The Dream Hotel* does not hang around trying to track conduct, behaviour or devices; it goes into sleep, captures dreams and turns them into commercial property and state evidence. By doing this, it does not just portray dream capture as a privacy invasion, but a more fundamental ontological dispossession: the subject loses exclusive control over what her interior life means. The first level at which dispossession is inculcated is at the contract level. Making the reproduction of the terms of service of Dreamsaver Inc. clear, the dream-life is pre-appropriated prior to the plot being dramatized with the ramifications:

“By using this product, you grant DI a worldwide, nonexclusive, royalty-free license to host, access, use, interpret, reproduce, process, adapt, modify, and transmit your sleep data . . . We do not share your private data with third parties, except as required by a legal enforcement authority” (Lalami, 2025, p. 88).

This is the key clause as it unveils that interiority is captivated by the language of legality and consent. Dreamsaver is not in an overt method of stealing dreams but acquires them on contract. But the very plausibility of such a set-up conceals a violence of a larger order. The corporation has the right to interpret, adapt, shape, and even to transmit dream-data, rather than simply to archive it. The interpretation is even outsourced. The subject continues to be the nominal owner of her content and, however, loses the control of having her content so read, circulated, and used. The way in between corporate ownership and state intervention is provided within the contract itself. This line of reasoning is pushed to the extreme when the novel shifts to an experimental manipulation of a contract instead of a contractual capture. According to an internal report by Julie Renstrom, dreams are not merely mined post hoc, but constructed, as consumer-test facilities:

“All participants agreed to Dreamsaver Inc.’s terms of service upon implantation with the device, constituting informed consent for this research . . . For the intervention group, an image of Katya brand carrot chips was organically embedded in eight dreams over a three-week-long period” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 187–188).

This quote is heartbreaking as it demonstrates how corporate rationality heaves out the ethical content of consent. It is telling when one speaks of the constituting informed consent. The women at Madison are institutional controls and detainees but the corporation considers prior agreement to generic terms of service to be adequate permission to

experiment with dreams. Prisons never break the laws of the market; they are the ideal market. The monitored combination of dream manipulation, purchasing behaviour and bodily response makes Madison an important location to become valuable. The unconscious turns into a museum and conducting room.

After being captured and manipulated, dream-data moves on to commercial asset, and then becomes juridical evidence. This shift becomes brutal with straightforwardness at the airport as Segura explained: “All I know is that they’re among the two hundred data sources used by the crime-prediction algorithm and they’ve raised your risk score above the acceptable threshold” (Lalami, 2025, p. 76). Dreams are thereby incorporated into a far broader predictive assemblage, and are considered another input in a risk calculus. The fact that they are dreams does not diminish their evidentiary position; in fact the system considers them to be particularly useful since they seem to circumvent the conscious process of curating oneself. Sara subsequently develops this change with bracing accuracy: “Police officers would patrol areas they termed as ‘rough’ . . . Now they sift through dreams” (Lalami, 2025, p. 105). The policing has sharply shifted towards the inside. It does not wait till action has happened in the populace; it anticipates the subject by vice-hyperirritability of digging out personal slumber.

The moral twist in the novel starts as Sara challenges such reasoning of interpretation. During the hearing, she denies the literal interpretation of dreams-content by the state: “I wouldn’t interpret them literally, for starters. My husband and I have our problems, like any other couple . . . My dreams, well . . . they must’ve reflected my anxiety about being a mom and my frustration with him, that’s all” (Lalami, 2025, p. 317). This is the counter attack. Sara does not refute that dreams have an emotional content to the dreams; she refutes them as criminal evidence. She, in opposition to the literalist hermeneutics of the state, reinstates context, affect, relationship, and intention. The anxiety, frustration, or strain may be revealed through dreams, whereas homicidal intent may not be clearly expressed. Having said that, the battle of dream capture in the novel also becomes a battle of personhood: is the subject to be decoded by institutions, or it will be interpreted in terms of dense contexts of lived experience? Through this, *The Dream Hotel* introduces a capturing of dreams as the ultimate form of posthuman control, and also

declares that capturing of dreams is not complete as long as the subject remains uncontrolled by being read, interpreted.

9.3 Archive, Error, and the Limits of Algorithmic Truth

This criticism of the novel goes even more when the surveillance is replaced with the epistemological power of the archive as such. The fact that Sara was training as a historian and digital archivist provides her with the means of language to see an aspect that the RAA does not want anyone to become aware of records are incomprehensive, classification is subject to gaffing, and data does not turn into truth due to mere accumulation. The issue, however, does not just lie with institutions having excessive amounts of information, but with institutions confusing record, with knowledge as well as correlation, with truth.

Very early that differentiation exists. Sara does not want to write down on her notebook as she knows the power with which institutions create armaments out of records:

“Sara resisted the lure of the notebook for as long as she could. Writing about her life at Madison seemed to her a form of capitulation . . . she also worried that whatever she wrote could be held against her by agents who cared only about the data, not about the truth” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 15–16).

This represents one of the earliest instances in the novel of its epistemological struggle. In the case of the RAA and the Safe-X, the data is self-validating: as long as it is expressed in the form of logs and stored and accessible, then it can be acted upon. Sara, on the contrary, is aware that there is no record that is not different with the reality that it maintains pushes to be. It is not the fear of language that makes her hesitate, but it is the fear of being caught in the institutions. When acculturated into the system, even provisional self-description can be deprived of its context and even prove against its author. That dream she logs soon after, where a historical photograph has been publicly misclassified, supports the same argument: it is not such a small slip of the clerical finger that it can disorganize the meaning of the people and petrify into reputation.

Lalami then finds this knowledge in an extended history of bureaucratic categorization. The growing data capture of the OmniCloud is correlated by Sara with the growing data surveillance by empires: “Not for the first time, she’s reminded of the dusty colonial censuses she consulted when she was writing her dissertation at Berkeley . . . Now it is her turn to enter the census, one digital step at a time, leaving traces she never intended to leave” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 38–39). The data regime is provided with a genealogy in this

passage. OmniCloud and the RAA are by no means entirely novel technologies; they carry with them an older logic on the basis of which populations are rendered legible by means of counting, tabulation and classification. It is to become manageable and abstractible to be entered into the census. This term, the leaving of traces she did not ever mean to leave, is particularly indicative in the sense of its factoring likening the ordinary life to the permanence of archival remains. Datafication is not just technological, but political. By presenting the legibility per se as a power, it recreates the older forms of domination.

Meanwhile, the fantasy of the omnipotence of the archives is denied by the novel. Sara remembers that being an archivist, she was taught that human error is an inevitable component of any record-keeping program, and false information might turn into authoritative. “by virtue of its presence in the records” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 80–81). It is among the most crucial things that Lalami teaches. This is because an archive does not necessarily have to be an accurate one but it must be an official one. Error once noted, gains legitimacy in an institutional manner. This is once more criticized when Sara recalls the Historical Records Survey:

“There are still gaps in the national archives because the HRS was abandoned. . . . If a record collection of the magnitude of the HRS . . . can’t provide a completely accurate portrait of the past, why should she believe that the database maintained by the RAA is reliable? It’s an automated archive, but like ancient archives it, too, must have gaps” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 113–114).

The ultimate fantasy of complete encryption of data is directly criticized in this novel. But, as large as the archive itself may be, it has a shaping which is by omission as much as by accretion. There are still lives which have not been read completely; there are records some of which have vanished; and there are records which are confused. Predictive authority is reliant on the illusion of completeness and when its illusion is burst, its judgments become uncovered to the fraudulent tone of inevitability.

This epistemological attack has reached its climax when Sara hears when the line between data and truth are declared with astounding clarity:

“ ‘The data doesn’t lie.’ ‘It doesn’t tell the truth, either.’ . . . Like a fortune-teller reading tea leaves, the algorithm made up stories as it was going along, until it found one that was plausible enough to please its audience” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 315–316).

The interpretive centre of this novel is this exchange. Sara makes no refusal to the existence of data, but she questions its promotion to truth. When Lalami says that data does not speak,

he means that there is no data to speak. It has to be chosen, organized and read and the power of the algorithm is specifically to make fragments into narrative. It is particularly economized that the analogy to the ability read tea leaves by a fortune-teller kills algorithmic judgment of its claim to scientific status. This system does not find truth; it builds the plausibility. The narration under institutional authority is what is a prediction by the state. *The Dream Hotel*, therefore, does not merely consider the archive to be a mere location of information, but as a location of struggle amongst reality itself. At stake is not just privacy, but also a right to challenge the narratives that institutions have of us.

9.4 American Muslim Ethical Subjectivity: Memory, Prayer, and Accountability

The fact that the novel has broken the fiction of algorithmic truth does not only have an alternative form of reading that is based on memory, responsibility, prayer and contextual interpretation. The fact that Sara is a Muslim American is not a showy origin. It provides the ethical vocabulary with which she opposes the process of mechanical decoding and reclaims personhood to datafication. This moral condition is initially laid down in the novel by the sense memory. The topic of Sara being Muslim is not expressed in a declarative manner; but rather it is expressed in the affective realm of food, smell and care:

“The oatmeal is gray and gritty; to get through it she has to cast about for a memory, and feed on it instead. A plate of fluffy beghrir, lavender honey in a dipping bowl, a pot of mint tea, a breakfast her mother used to make for her on mornings when she needed a little cheering” (Lalami, 2025, p. 18).

This memory is sustenance, and is a counter-archive. Contrasting with the deprivation of Madison, Sara invokes a Moroccan domestic space, organized by a nurturing and emotional perception. It is a matter of fondness, not as a decoration. The conservation of a given self that goes beyond institutional capture is a thing. Biometrics, calories and routine can be registered by the system the affective density of home cannot. Lalami extends this counter-archive by the mention of Sara of her memory of her mother Faiza, who still lived in Los Angeles, as she followed “stories from home” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 158) and related their historical complexity. This is the same line of reasoning that the novel displays in the care that it takes over naming; in losing the musicality of Hussein in the mistranscription of its name, the violence of bureaucratic reduction comes to light. Food memory and Arabic naming therefore emerge to be identification that goes beyond institutional legibility. That

moral framework is made clearer with the help of the father of Sara whose mentality is formed by the sense of duty, culpability, and consequence:

“As for Sara’s own papa, every letter he writes is a variation on the same themes: he urges her to eat well, exercise, and rest; to work hard and keep out of trouble . . . Responsibility—and its corollary, blame—were the principles on which he built his life” (Lalami, 2025, p. 71).

This text is important in that it demonstrates that in the novel there is accountability preceding the state usurping its language. The RAA and the Safe-X also claim to be responsible scientists, merely in an authoritarian and administrative way. Conversely, the ethic of the father comes about through the family, nurturing, loss, and moral gravitas. The interdependence between the concepts of responsibility and blame aids in the understanding of the sensitivity of the former and self-critical attitude of the former towards the latter. More to the point, it reveals that her sense of self is relational in the first place, that is, it is determined by the ties of kinship and responsibility as opposed to the liberal self-sufficiency. Lalami does not imply that the father is correct; instead he wants one to understand that within the novel a moral life is already organized by the relationships of obligation that go beyond the calculations of algorithms.

The ethical aspect of Muslims is closest to the Friday praying scene, when the prayer turns into a haven and disciplinary exercise:

“She wasn’t a prayerful person, in her life before, but as her detention dragged from days to months, she began to hunger for the numinous...After the *Fātiha*, she recites Surat al-Falaq, and then *al-Ikhlāṣ*, her enunciation slow and clear” (Lalami, 2025, p. 145).

Prayer here provides Sara with such a mode of meaning that cannot be captured by an algorithm. Instead of rendering the self-visible, Quranic recitations nurture towards an inward focus and interpretive humility. This is decisively contrasted with the RAA: where the institution interprets dreams as evidence in the here and now, prayer is one that trains Sara to a sense of modesty in approaching the meaning.

This difficulty is made explicit when Sara remembers about prophetic dream traditions:

“And oneiromancy, too, she thinks. After all, Abraham had a vision that God commanded him to sacrifice his firstborn son . . . Joseph dreamed that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to him . . . Muhammad saw himself enter Mecca as a pilgrim” (Lalami, 2025, pp. 145–146).

Such references put dreams in an Islamic context where they can have meant indeed. But the history of the past does not call predictive detention validated by the novel. It has the

contrary effect. The meaningful dreams are posed as uncommon, morally grave and interpretively challenging. The very fact that Sara acknowledges that the concept of premonition can only be helpful because it is such a rare occurrence directly attacks the state in an effort to industrialize the process of dream-reading. The opposition to algorithmic literalism at *The Dream Hotel*, then, is not so much about opacity as it is an ethical hermeneutic based on memory, prayer, humility and accountability.

9.5 From Isolated Detainee to Relational Moral Self

This is what this ethical hermeneutic brings about in the last move of the novel. It does not bring Sara back to an independent liberal individuality. Instead, it reconstructs her as a relational moral (self) the freedom of which cannot be separated or dissociated with other people. Throughout the story, safe-X and the RAA strive to atomize the women, to break down each of them to a personalized risk profile and to cut off solidaristic ties. The conclusion refutes the rationale proving that freedom deprived of relationship is morally the null and the political aspect a dicey game.

This transformation starts even prior to the release of Sara where she understands her plight is not in isolation. As she waits in line, she realizes that she has not been able to see due to her so preoccupation with her case “how much she has in common with the other detainees,” specially the communal “vulnerability” imprisonment has uncovered in them (Lalami, 2025, pp. 227–228). This is a point at which the orientation changes. Sara does not realize the meaning of detention as a wrong concept of her life anymore as a single bureaucracy that has to be remedied. Rather, she turns to perceive it as a state of collective precarity created by confinement as such. By depriving the women of privacy, dignity and interpretive control, Madison deprives them of their interdependence which is now being seen in a new way. It is through degradation that relationality gets into the novel, however, not sentimentality. It is the material basis of moral recognition that is composed of the body, the uniform and the remnant of the institutional contamination.

It is also explicitly political as Sara appeals to people to refuse together. We must switch off the conveyor belt, and she repeats, “We have to stop working” (Lalami, 2025, p. 231). These summarized expressions sum up the motion of moral enlightenment in the novel to solidaristic action. Freedom is no longer something that Sara envisions as something that can be won by following directions, not being caught, or doing a good job

before the authority. She now realizes Madison as a profit-making system which can exist thanks to the self-labour of detainees. This symbol of a conveyor belt is particularly important as it makes detention one of the cycled systems that has developed into processing bodies, violations, hearings, and extensions. The ability to say no is exactly ethical due to domination being a system. That the novel does then shift towards shared vulnerability to shared disruption.

The last chapters bring this out explicit that release does not re-establish the individual independent state. Sara experiences the “joy of being free” as previously “tainted” by the ones yet remaining behind, even as Toya dictates that “the only way to get the others out was to keep on doing it” (Lalami, 2025, p. 330). It is not the freedom then which is closure or personal recovery or a clean re-entry into ordinary life. It comes in the form of incomplete duty. This is heightened in the text when it describes how Sara and Toya were liberated due to the ability to cause disruptions what was considered normal. It is not just a question of detention as an abuse, but also of making it normalized as a standard practice. Liberty will thus be irreconcilable with breaking such a routine.

This argument is taken to the extreme in the final pages. Sara comes to understand that “isolation is the opposite of salvation” and that “freedom isn’t a blank slate”; rather, it “can only be written in the company of others” (Lalami, 2025, p. 330). These lines counteract this modern concept of freedom as being safe distance between them and those of the system who remain so. The violence of confinement is not the only violence that the concept of confinement brings about; it also produces the disconnected individuals. Freedom makes no opposite lesson when it is answerable to others, as the release of Sara actually teaches. Lalami brings this ethic by the sense of the sudden gesture of the father. Since his risk score is minimal, he presents Sara with his phone, thus bearing part of the hit that she is likely to experience by getting in touch with Toya.

This scene is not big but conceptually resolute. There is risk which should be kept isolated and punished by the institution, but this is voluntarily distributed in a protecting act. The last piece of learning presented in the novel is a logical extension of that turnaround: Sara is informed that she is not alone, that she does not have to be. This statement is the last correction to not only the surveillance logic but also liberal individualism of the novel. The self that emerges in the conclusion of *The Dream Hotel* is

neither a bit of data nor an independent person who is unattached to other people. It is a relational subject, which is realized by solidarity, care, memory and shared exposure.

When coupled together, these final scenes make freedom turn out to be an individual flight into a people's movement. As the novel starts, Sara attempts to demonstrate that she is not representative of what an algorithm claims that she is on a person-to-person level. She concludes her realization that freedom cannot be bought, one point or one file and one innocent soul at a time. It has to be chased after, by others, and even at the actual expense. It is in these ways that *The Dream Hotel* then completes by redefining the moral subjectivity as relational, risky and unfinished.

10. Discussion

The Dream Hotel is not a novel of surveillance, detention, of predictive technology, but it is a novel of epistemic conflict. In its essence, it enacts a bombardment of contesting who is at right to define the human subject. The school of thought embodied by the RAA, the Safe-X and Dream saver assumes that data is self-evident truth, dreams are clear manifestations of latent criminality. It is in this system that the self can be legible insofar as it is aggregated, correlated and predicted. But Sara Hussein is against that reason. Having been through such an experience, she has found that human truth is not data-minable since the mediators of life include memory, love, family history, biography, and purpose. That is why the conflict between privacy/surveillance that is central to the novel is more than that. More essentially, it is whether the subject will be indicated with an algorithmic prediction or be contextually interpreted. The novel therefore unveils that the biggest threat to a datafied world is not secrecy but the fact that the rights to define oneself is challenged and defeated by the impositions of institutional discourses.

Posthumanity is not presented by *The Dream Hotel* as a death of the human or disappearance of the interiority in a technological situation. Instead, it demonstrates that posthuman conditions bring about the new struggle between what can be still taken as an ethically intelligible self, at all, when the subjectivity becomes scattered across biometric machines, behavioural archives, dream-recordings, and predictive settings. Lalami did not reach his success by accepting the idea that the decentred subjectivity is something that presupposes the termination of the moral agency. Rather, it is the decentralized morality of situated interpretation, reflective judgment, relational responsibility and refusal of allowing

technical systems to claim monopoly of meaning that is mobilized in the novel. The institutions which read and manage Sara undoubtedly decanter her subjectivity, but this does not eliminate ethical life. Quite the contrary, it shows that sovereign individual is a magnitude that does not belong to the moral agency but is more of the exposed subject who is answerable to others and attempts to challenge the conditions in which she is read.

Another intervention that the novel makes to the American Muslim literary criticism is also notable. Media stereotyping, popular suspicion, conditional belonging, Islamophobia and the politics of visibility have all been rightly considered as a subject of scholarship regarding American Muslim representation. These issues are maintained by *The Dream Hotel* but expanded by posing the question of the effects at the time when Muslim subjectivity is introduced to the regime where even the inwardness can be securitized. It is no more a question of misrepresentation; it has become an issue of overreading via technical systems who are declaring to have access to the unconscious, to the risk and to the intention of the future. The reaction of Lalami is not limited to the fight against discrimination in a districting way. The novel, however, promotes the promotion of an ethical mode of reading that is based on memory, prayer, family history, contextual interpretation, and joint accountability. The study reveals that the subjectivity of American Muslims in contemporary fiction is not only a subject of surveillance and representation, but also something that it is possible to call moral, a subject that cannot be overread according to algorithms and will not be reduced to data.

11. Conclusion

This research has contended that *The Dream Hotel* is shifting away to the datafied self to the moral self. Lalami demonstrates that the surveillance and predictive systems reconstruct Sara Hussein as a tracing profile, records and risk. But the novel claims that there is no way that data can substitute history, and memory, purpose, context, and moral interpretation. It critiques predictive governance, then, not just because it has been so, but as it assumes that predictability through technology is the circumstance of being true. Concurrently, the novel does not go back to a liberal-humanist paradigm of sovereign individuality. Posthuman systems still influence Sara but after all her moral agency still exists in a different form: contextual reading, opposition to literalism, awareness of the error and incompleteness in the archives. Lalami has therefore revamped posthumanism in

that, by revealing, technological dispersal does not involve ethical emptiness. This revision is pegged on American Muslim ethical vocabulary of the novel. The family obligation, prayer, Quranic recitation, memory, and strong spirit are the interpretive resources with the help of which Sara opposes the overreading of algorithms. *The Dream Hotel* consequently takes American Muslim literary criticism past the elements of seeing and into the engaging concept of moral epistemology and politics of the interpretation. Finally, the novel indicates that the big fight of the future will not only be associated with information and forecast, but also whoever possesses the power to decide what a human being is.

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