

# Conversion Narrative As The Maintaining Identity Of Muslim Women Convert In America

Zulfi Zumala Dwi Andriani

Pratiwi Retnaningdyah

Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Program Pascasarjana,  
Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia

**Abstract:** *The event of 9/11 gives the big impact on American, especially to American Muslim society. the issue of conversion become all the rage in United States, since some people more curious to know about Islam. Each convert deals with different experience of conversion and some of them record it in the form of conversion narrative. in this article, I will explore one of conversion narratives entitled Daughters of another Path (Experiences of American Women Choosing Islam) by Carol L. Anway as the object of the analysis. The result of the analysis reveals that Conversion narrative has two significance, firstly for American women converts and secondly for the reader. For American women convert, it can be a communication tool and mediation, which creates personal and cultural meaning. In terms of communication, conversion narratives are a tool to communicate the personal stories of converts, it also became the way to maintain their identity among American society. While for the reader, Conversion narrative can give clearer understanding about women Muslim convert who have chosen Islam.*

**Keywords:** *Conversion Narrative, Identity, American Muslim Women*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The issue of Islam in America is closely related to the separation between Church and State. This was a philosophic and jurisprudential concept for defining political distance in the relationship between a religious organization and the State. Thomas Jefferson proposed the separation between Church and State in America to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802. Jefferson considered religion to be the relationship between man and his God, so the State has no legitimate power to control people's religion. This issue was brought out to the development of Islam in America. Muslim Americans have a paradox in expressing their identities, such as wearing Hijab in the workplace or the public School. Although, recently, Islam is multiplying, and Islam is considered the fastest-growing religion in America. So there are some adaptations between American culture and the development of Islam. However, the concept of separation between Church and State also provides a place for Islamic diversity that is not offered by countries other than America.

One of Muslim community in America is Muslim converts, the phenomenon of conversion to Islam firstly recorded around nineteenth century. Bowen listed three period of conversion to Islam in America during nineteenth century especially white American convert. The first period happened from the beginning of century until around 1850. During this period, the conversion to Islam in America is still rare. The conversion during this period occurred mostly by the marriage to Muslim. the second period of conversion to Islam lasted from around the 1850s until 1890s was the impact of increasing religious movement in America. this movement then motivate many American people in growing the desire learning religions including non- Christian religion. the third period was the most prominent one, the famous white American convert in this period was Alexander Russel Webb. Webb was regarded the first American white converts who successfully lead the movement of conversion to Islam among Americans (Bowen, 2015).

Islam is then developed rapidly in America, including the issue of conversion to Islam among American White people.

The event of 9/11 at 2001 was the foremost event in the relationship between Islam and America. According to Curiel (2015), at least there are four big impact of 9/11, the first is political reawakening in which Islam is getting violence and hatred prejudice in most of the Western countries. Since 9/11, Muslims' presence in Europe and America has become a political concern particularly related to the policy of war on terrorism. The second impact is interfaith and curriculum outreach. Thirdly is the media's impact; it can be seen from a load of news about Islam in media. Although there were some misperceptions about Islam in media, it also plays an essential role in giving an alternative picture of Islam. The last impact is conversion to Islam. Post 9/11, conversion becomes all the rage in America, since some people are more curious to know about Islam. Surveys conducted by the Council on American Islamic Relations conclude that 20,000 people convert each year, with women outnumbering than men (Haddad et al., 2006: 42).

Some academic researches indicated that two - thirds of converts to Islam are female (Wohlrab-Sahr 1999b; Wagtendonk 1994; Haleem 2003). since many assumptions in the western context, especially in the United States, Muslim women are not equal to men. However, on the contrary, some religious converts to Islam in the United States are women. There are some reasons women convert to Islam. The first one is married to Muslim men. This reason comes in the first position of the religious conversion of women. The second one assumes that Islam is a kind of women liberation from Western materialism; some are not comfortable enough in the United States culture, which is related to consumerism, dating, and drinking alcohol (Van Nieuwkerk, 2006: 35).

Furthermore, conversion to Islam among American women triggers some challenges such as being misjudged and being misunderstood especially related to the decision of wearing *Hijab* in the public place and the acceptance of the family. American converts have their own challenges in the American society context, this is related to the constructed image which is often depicted in the American media that Islam is not friendly to women. It is contrast to the number of white American women who converted to Islam more than men. Research conducted by Wohlrab-Sahr, identified three reasons women convert to Islam. the first is gender and sexuality, namely women converts assume that Islam is a religion that is friendly to women and Islam recognizes equality between men and women. The second reason is social mobility such as drug and criminality – Islam as a solution to social problems in society, Islam provide a new career and alternative way of life. the last is nationality and ethnicity. Converting to Islam brings a new kind of belonging and community into existence (Wohlrab-Sahr, 1999).

The experience of conversion process among American women convert was recorded in different forms such as videos and memoir both online and offline. This kind of recorded experience then is called by conversion narrative. Hartman (2003) defined conversion narratives as a text narrated on conversion and concerned with intellectual, psychological, or spiritual transformation. Stromberg (2008) also added that the conversion narrative's significance is to depict the gradual changes and transformation identity of convert through language. This assumption is also supported by the assumption

by Wohlrab-Sahr (2006) that conversion narratives tell about the particular experience of conversion, and it implies missionary. From those definitions, it can be inferred that conversion narratives are a kind of writing which deals with the experience of religious conversion. There are many forms of conversion narrative, such as memoir, testimonies, autobiography, and any text related to conversion.

This article is going to focus on analysing the book entitled *Daughters of Another Path* (1995), this book was written by Carol Anway, a mother whose daughter named Jodi converted to Islam and married to Iranian man named Reza. the conversion of Jodi has changed the family life of Anway and his husband, she needed a long process to reconcile herself in accepting Jodi's conversion. after fourteen years of Jodi's conversion, Anway collected some stories of American-born women who converted to Islam. Anway distributed 350 questionnaires across United States and Canada. Soon, Anway began receiving many personal stories about conversion. the personal stories ranged from the process of conversion, the decision of conversion and the consequences being a Muslim convert among American society. In this book, Anway also wrote about her daughter conversion to Islam and the story about Anway's acceptance process on her daughter's conversion. through publishing this book, Carol hoped that the reader will gain clearer understanding of American-born women who converted to Islam, how and why they converted and the strength that choosing Islam as their path (Anway; 2).

This article will focus on seeing how American women who convert to Islam show their identity, both personal identity and social identity through their personal stories recorded in the book *Daughters of another Path*. This changing identity was seen after American women decided to convert to Islam. secondly, this article will also look at how American women convert reconcile their identity as Muslims and their identities as Americans.

This article begins with discussing the overview of religious conversion, and the changes of personal and social identity consequences as Muslim converts. It follows with the explanation of the methodology used in this research. the following section is result and discussion, and the last section is conclusion.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Religious conversion in this article means the changing faith from the previous religion to Islam. In his book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James defined conversion as to be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual, or sudden, by which a self-hither to divided and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities. In this work, William James used two keywords in explaining the conversion process, namely religion and religious experience. Based on the pragmatism theory, James defines religion as a human's feelings, actions, and experiences privately. While religious experience is also subjective, this is related to one's experience and appreciation of religion (James,

1902). it can be inferred that, according to William James, religion is very personal, and this is related to the experience and consciousness of each individual.

Similarly, religious conversion is also discussed by Edwin Starbuck, who researched the relationship between adolescence development and conversion. Starbuck reveals that conversion is characterized by more or less sudden changes of character from evil to goodness, from sinfulness to righteousness, and from indifference to spiritual insight and activity. From Starbuck's perspective, religious conversion internalizes mental and spiritual, resulting in changes in convert character (Starbuck, 1899).

Religious conversion is also motivated by social factors, such as mix marriage of different religions. This factor becomes the first motivation of conversion as it stated by Wohlrab-Sahr, who distinguishes three reasons for conversion, notably conversion to Islam; gender and sexuality, social mobility and nationality, and ethnicity. Gender and sexuality deal with the answer that Islam provides equality between men and women and Islam has a positive value to women. Social mobility is related to Islam provide an alternative way to counter social problems that happened in society, such as drugs and criminality. The last is nationality and ethnicity, in which conversion to Islam brings unity among different ethnicities and nations (Wohlrab-Sahr, 1999: 80).

Another apparent reason that motivated the occurrence of conversion is a political reason, such as the event of 9/11 in America. While Islam and Muslims in America have to face negative attention and treatment following 9/11, in contrast, there is increasing interest and curiosity of Western people about Islam (Haddad et al., 2006). The increase of media publication about Islam has also risen. The representation of Islam in media is both negative and positive, but it has an impact on American people to know more about Islam.

The increasing of eagerness about Islam among American lead them to study about Islam. it causes the higher rate of conversion to Islam especially among American women. Conversion to Islam triggers two different consequences, they are the changing of personal identity and the changing of social identity. Religious conversion cannot be separated from the discussion of identity, namely, identity transformation. As it is stated by McGinty (2006) that conversion is related to the transformation as well as continuity of self in which the spiritual thing should be integrated with the inner self and performed publicly. Similar to this idea, Bourque also reveals that there are three identity changes during the conversion process

- ✓ how to see yourself as a Muslim,
- ✓ how to live as a Muslim, and
- ✓ how to present yourself to others as a Muslim.

It means that conversion is interconnected to the changes of identity both personal and social (Bourque, 2006).

In the discussion of conversion, the personal stories of converts plays a vital role in telling the story of conversion. There are some published conversion memoirs, to name a few are *Becoming Kareem: Growing Up on and Off the Court* (2017) by Kareem Abdul Jabbar, this memoir revealed the story of Kareem's boyhood in New York who fascinated so much about basketball until the announcement of his conversion to Islam. Another memoir about conversion is *Yes!*

*I converted to Islam and Here is Why* (1999), which is written by Muhammad Haneef Shahid. It is a compiled testimony of some converts to Islam. The significance of the testimonies in this memoir is to verify the authenticity of Islam based on converts' arguments and to share the insight of converts in learning Islam.

The writing of personal stories which takes part on conversion is then called by conversion narratives. Conversion narratives are a kind of writing which deals with the experience of religious conversion. There are many forms of conversion narrative, such as memoir, testimonies, autobiography, and any text related to conversion. Moreover, McGinty (2006), through her anthropological research on women conversion to Islam, mentioned that conversion narratives are transitional phenomena. It means that conversion narratives have the function as the communication tool and mediation, which creates personal and cultural meaning. In terms of communication, conversion narratives are a tool to communicate the personal stories of converts. The function of mediation is to bridge the gap between the inner change of self-converts and their social milieu.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative research. This research's object is in the form of quotes and sentences taken from the book written by Carol Anway Anderson's *Daughter's Another Path*. Collecting the data is reading a book comprehensively and classifying quotes and sentences according to research objectives. Which is related to maintaining identity among American women converts.

In analyzing the data, I apply the narrative inquiry approach; firstly, by reading the book many times, classifying the data based on the research questions, and the data is already in hand to be analyzed. I began to analyze how American women converts maintain their personal and social identity through their personal stories in the book *Daughter's Another Path*.

### IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this part, I provided some results followed on discussion related to maintaining identity among American women convert as recorded in the Carol Anway's *Daughter's Another Path*. I divided the analysis part into two sections; the first part is the finding of some consequences of being American Muslim converts, since it influenced to the changing of identity. The second part denotes to the reconciliation and acceptance process of being Muslim in the American society context.

Carol Anway Anderson's *Daughter Another Path* is the book about experiences of American women choosing Islam. the book was getting inspiration from the experience of Carol Anway's process in accepting her daughter's conversion to Islam. Her Daughter, Jodi married to Iranian man named Reza and soon converted to Islam. According to Carol Anway, this experience was a time of grief and adjustment for her family. When finally, she and her husband can accept the conversion

of Jodi, Anyway began to collect some personal stories about conversion to Islam through distributed 350 questionnaire. From the distributed questionnaire, Anyway got fifty-three women responded representing diverse region across North America.

## WOMEN IN ISLAM

The position of Muslim women in America took special attention since it was related to some dimensions such as the identity, the complex perception of wearing hijab in public places as well as the Western image toward Muslim women. The image of Muslim women constructed among the Western community sometimes has been distorted and uncompleted. In popular media such as Television and Radio, Muslim women are depicted as passive victims of masculine dominance (Hadad, p 33). The image of Muslim women especially in the American context then influenced the perception some American Muslim converts in understanding Islam, as it told in their respond documented in the *Daughter's Another Path*. After being a Muslim, some women have some shifting ideas about the image of women in Islam.

The only obstacles that have been placed in my way as a Muslim woman have not been

From Muslims or Islam, but from the society in which we live. One often feels like a fish swimming upstream in America, like constantly explaining hijab. I have been denied jobs because of my hijab and have been otherwise openly discriminated against. Nonetheless, I am truly grateful for hijab. it is liberating in a sense that pro- Era women will never know. I feel honored to represent Islam in such a powerful way as to be recognized as Muslim whenever I venture out (Anyway; 78).

The respond above indicated that there is a shifting idea about the image Muslim women among American Muslim women convert. Religious conversion needs a long process, even from the childhood experience. The converts take some learning process on Islam and the inner self-conflict before taking decision to convert. in the learning process of Islam, women convert read many references about Islam, it can be from book or translated *Hadits* or *Al Qur'an*. They have special concerns on Islamic view toward women. *Hadits* is namely anything that the Prophet said or practiced on His Daily life. One of the books of Hadith that Muslims refer to and also studied by most women converts is Hadith by Al Bukhary. One of the Hadith narrated by Al Bukhary and giving a deep impression to women converts is related to the relationship between women and men in the perspective of Muhammad's prophet

"The best among you is the man, who treats his wife and children affectionally and humanly. As I am the best among you, follow my action" (Al bukharly).

The shifting ideas on women's image in Islam among American women converts have two strong influences on American women converts, firstly, they increasingly have a strong grip on the idea that Islam is a women-friendly religion. Secondly, they can represent the image of a moderate Muslim woman in American society. This is very important to provide an Islamic discourse that is friendly to women in the midst of the onslaught of issues about Islam is a religion that curbs

women's freedom, as it is widely understood by American society.

## PRACTICING ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES

The stage of consequences is the stage of transformation for religious converts. It referred to how far the changes of converts after the conversion process and how converts reconciled those changes publicly. Some changes which were performed by some converts are about feeling, thought, as well as patterns of behavior. Rambo said that the consequences stage of conversions is determined in part by the nature, intensity, and duration of the conversion (1993;145). There are five pillars of faith in Islam, and they are taking *shahadah*, praying, fasting, giving alms, and Hajj. The changes in daily life among converts were also related to the practicing of those five pillars. The converts begin to perform Islamic rituals and applying Islamic teaching in their daily life. Praying was becoming one of performing Islamic rituals for converts. So, it cannot be denied that there were such changes in daily life among religious converts, starting from the shift in the belief which then manifested into religious practice.

The hardest part is praying. I do it phonetically in Arabic, and I am afraid I am pronouncing it wrong and that my prayers won't be accepted as a result. But I know that as long as I try and have good intentions, God will understand. Praying in Arabic and not knowing the Qur'an and Hadith like I should have been the hardest part for me (Anyway; 70)

Fasting is also another challenging experience for women converts, since fasting during Ramadhan month is obligation for every Muslim. During the *fast of Ramadhan*, every Muslim must abstain from dawn to sunset from food, drink, and sexual activity (Esposito, 2011.p 21).

Fasting during the holy month of Ramadhan was the hardest practice I have encountered. Before my first fast, I was worried that I would not be able to do it because fasting is easy when you are doing it for God.

A few times my throat was extremely dry or I had a headache and wanted to take medication, but I abstained. I thought about Imam Husain (Pbuh) and his followers (peace be upon them) who were martyred thirsty in the desert of Karbala. I thought about homeless and poverty-stricken people who did not know when or if they will have another meal (Anyway; 72)

Being converts means transformation of a new people in different beliefs. In the beginning, there was an adaptation period in practicing Islamic rule and teaching, so each convert had different time to pass this phase based on their readiness to perform the changes privately and individually as well as how far the convert's understanding about Islam. The commitment to practicing Islam believes in Allah as well as practicing all of His commands. Secondly, believing that Islam is a way of life, it is stated clearly in ruling about how people live as an individual and social group. Thirdly was related to the personal experience of the converts since each of them has a different perspective of seeing Islam.

## WEARING HIJAB

The issue of *Hijab* was also taking place in the discussion of religious conversion, especially for women. The wearing of

*Hijab* is related to the decision to perform the identity of Muslims publicly. Since the wearing of *Hijab* was connected to the religious symbol, it becomes the sensitive issue among American society. Most of women converts' understanding about the wearing of *Hijab* was based on the interpretation of Al Qur'an *Surah An Nur ayah 31*.

"and tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private part (from illegal sexual act) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity to see their way or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress live veil, gloves, headcover, apron, etc) and to draw their veils all over juyubihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosom) and not reveal their adornment except to their husband, or their husband's fathers, or their sons, or their husband's son's, or their brother's sons or their sister's son's or their Muslim women (their sisters in Islam), or the female slaves whom their right hand possesses"

Wearing *Hijab* means performing the Muslim identity publicly, and many people will recognize the Muslim identity easily. Each convert has to confront different responses from her colleagues related to decision of wearing *Hijab* and it needs a strong commitment to responding to it. Moreover, America's value that separated between religion and government also brings the issue of wearing *Hijab* became sensitive. Wearing *Hijab* is such a kind of performing religious identity in public. It is often associated with religious matter that leads to political issues such as the event of 9/11.

Wearing *hijab* was easy, but people were always asking me if I had some sort of disease. They seemed to assume that I had lost my hair and I was covering up my baldness. Then after I explained about the religious reasons and significance of wearing *hijab*, they would say, "you mean I can never see your beautiful hair again?" it was as if my personal choice of practicing my own religion was taking away one of their pleasure or privileges and they did not approve of that!. They missed the point (Anway; 74).

Based on the personal stories noted in the Anway's *Daughter's Another Path*, most of American Muslim converts has their different challenges dealing with wearing *Hijab* publicly. Some other said that they have to bear patiently their family and their close relatives' respond toward their *Hijab*. the acceptance of the changing appearance especially wearing *Hijab* took a long process among family member of women converts. They have to explain in detail about Islamic view about *Hijab*. some women convert also said that the decision of wearing *Hijab* is the gradual change, firstly they wear long skirt and long shirt without covering their hair to change their previous costume. Then gradually, when they are ready, they put the *Hijab* to cover their hair.

Fatima Koura's research (Koura, 2018; 125) on the *Hijab* and the American Workplace, through interviewing 35 women wearing *Hijab* in the United States, mentioned that there was the media's influence on shaping the perception of Muslim culture primarily related to the wearing *Hijab* in the workplace. Moreover, the participants' reason for wearing *Hijab* in the workplace represented the autonomy in publicly expressing their religious identity. Although there was still a discrimination report on religious practice and the wearing of

religious symbols in the workplace, this condition did not influence Muslim women to continue wearing *Hijab*.

The highlight of this part was the commitment, and the consequences of being Muslim in the conversion to Islam could be different for each convert and the strong commitment in wearing *Hijab*. Wearing *Hijab* in a social context is not only defined as a headcover for a Muslim woman, but it also becomes a social identity for Muslims.

## MARRIAGE LIFE AND RAISING THE CHILDREN

Based on Wohrlab Sahr's research who identified the reasons of women converts to Islam, it resulted that marriage to Muslim man is the first reason women convert to Islam. some women convert married to Muslim man who came from foreign country mostly from Muslim dominated countries such as happened to Anway's daughter, Jodi. Jodi married to Reza, Iranian man and she converted to Islam. Some women converts say in the book *The Daughter Another Path*, their marriage with Muslim men are not all good, there are also those who have bad experiences, such as sexual violence and are only used to get a green card (permanent residence card) in America.

On the other hand, the married life of women converts with Muslim men has its own challenges, these women must learn to be Muslim and the same time married to a man from another country, they have to incorporating many new elements into the family. The women indicate a blend of American culture, the husband's background tradition, and an effort to interpret all these islamically.

There is a blend- no shoes in the house, the manner of washing after using the toilet, answering the phone assalamu alaikum (the common greeting among Muslims)- these are mostly Islamic customs. We eat Persian foods about 75 percent of the time (Anway; 127)

Several respondents in the book *Daughter another path* said that their married life was happy. Some of them met and became acquainted with their future husbands through arranged marriages which are usually arranged by the Muslim community. Some others meet and get acquainted in person usually takes place on campus. Like what happened to Jodi and Reza who met on campus and then got close to each other and got married. The decision to marry among American converts often faces obstacles from women's families, some consider that marrying a Muslim man, especially one with Middle Eastern citizenship, is not good for their daughter. On the other hand, they are still afraid that their daughter will be taken to a Middle Eastern country which for some Americans is an unsafe country. This is as stated by Anway in his book about the feeling of fear and loss of her daughter Jodi when she was about to marry Iranian Man, Reza. But slowly Reza can show that he is a good man, and has a strong commitment about Islamic values to his family.

Moreover, in some families of American women converts they mix Islamic teaching, the culture of the husband's country of origin and American culture. This mixing of cultures is also applied to the parenting style. Where children adopt a mixture of two parents' cultures while practicing Islamic values. The blended culture of course requires effort, mutual

understanding as well as mutual respect for two different culture.

My husband and I try our best to raise our children by the tenets of Islam. It is very difficult, however, once the children reach school age. they are exposed to so much that we would rather them not know about at young age. Alhamdulillah, however, we have two hijab-wearing daughters, so I don't feel we are doing so badly. I hope my children will always feel free to come to me for supports with any Islamic question. In turn, I expect them to listen to any guidance I may offer (Anway; 134)

In raising the children, women convert have a strong commitment to installing Islamic values into their children. This is understandable because in America, which is very plural, the installing of Islamic values should firmly rooted, it is taught at home and it becomes a shared responsibility for husband and wife. Parents also ensure that their children will have a strong commitment to practicing the teachings of Islam. At home, parents teach their children about prayer, reading the Qur'an, manners, cleanliness etc. most of the convert women said that there was not much difference between parenting when they were young and how they parented their children except the emphasis on Islamic principles.

#### BUILD AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIP AMONG AMERICA SOCIETY

The transformation of convert was also related to the relationship with non- Muslim, especially toward the converts' family and friends who were non- Muslim. As like any other religion, Islam's mission is calling all humankind to worship the one true God. Islam is a missionary religion. Muslims consider that their religion was the true religion and invite all people to be part of it. However, Islam was also apparent on the concept of brotherhood, in which other people, as well as people from other religion, have the right. The basic principle of Islam that Islam teaches Muslims to respect and honor for other's right in creating a harmonious living in society (Khan, 2003 p 232). This basic principle is then developed into the idea of pluralism and tolerance (Esposito, 2011 p 94).

One of the consequences being Muslim convert is the changing of social relationship including the family, friends, and wider society. Furthermore, being a Muslim in American society would have different oasis as like as being Muslim in the country in which Islam is a majority religion. Since Islam is minority religion in America, Muslim women convert have to adjust between American culture and the habit of practicing Islam. Social habits between Muslims and non-Muslims are different, some women convert said that they have to keep in mind some guidelines related to workplace, in the family, in public places and as a friend.

Stress usually comes up when we visit my parents. Since we eat only Muslim slaughtered halal meats, we are reluctant to eat anything, so we would bring our own food. Even though we have explained the Islamic method of slaughter, I feel that they are uncomfortable with us bringing our own food. They thought this was another rejection, as if their food was not good enough for us or was unclean. However, when they come to visit in our home, they eat whatever I cook and we

seem to have a much happier and less stressful time (Anway; 147)

One of the adjustments made by women converts is regarding Halal food, which is regulated in Islam. when deciding to convert to Islam, women converts must adjust to not eating pork or drinking alcohol which is prohibited in Islam. So, they have to adjust when they meet non-Muslim family and friends, they also have to explain the rules of halal food to them. One of the adjustments is to bring their own processed food from home during family gatherings, so that they have food that is separates from the others. This is a way to respect each other, convert women do not feel isolated and can still gather with non-Muslim families, but still consistently practice Islamic principles.

Moreover, women convert must adapt in celebrating holidays which are very different from Islamic religious holidays. American holiday may be very difficult for the families of the Muslim converts and for Muslims in general. Office parties featuring alcohol, dancing or flirting relationship and all these are unacceptable to Muslim. some women convert said they refused to come to the celebration party, some others have modified the celebration in order to be with family.

My children have the best of both religions. My parents and in- laws make a big deal about Christmas. We accept their gifts and explain the concept to our boys. They don't serve us pork or alcoholic beverages. My family is my life. no problems. (Anway; 149)

Tafjel (1981) defined the social identity as the knowledge that one is a member of a group, one's feelings about group membership, and knowledge of the group's rank or status compared to another group. As a Muslim, women convert was been transformed her identity both personally and socially into another social group. Since Islam also contained two identities; personal and social identities, socially, that is to become a collective identity together with other Muslims who represent a religious group with the same norms and values. In this context, women convert should adjust their self to build tolerance and maintain relationship between their personal identity as a Muslim while still getting engaged socially with their non-Muslim family and friends. this relationship is actually the uniqueness of being Muslim convert in America, they have to make reconciliation and adjustment between their commitment in practicing Islam and their American culture.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Conversion narrative is the personal stories collected from converts which narrated about the conversion process, the struggle of identity transformation and adjustment. Moreover, conversion narrative also has the significance in depicting Islam from American women converts, as it collected by Carol Anway in her book, *Daughters of Another Path*. Conversion narrative has two significance, firstly for American women converts and secondly for the reader. For American women convert, it can be a communication tool and mediation, which creates personal and cultural meaning. In terms of communication, conversion narratives are a tool to communicate the personal stories of converts, it also became

the way to maintain their identity among American society. While for the reader, Conversion narrative can give clearer understanding about women Muslim convert who have chosen Islam. the reader not only can learn about the Islamic way in their daily lives but they can see how to relate to these Muslim women.

## VI. SUGESSTIONS

As it told by Anway (1995) in her beginning of the book that she hoped this book can be an opportunity to cross over a brief time to understand about Muslim converts both their approach and their commitment to Islam. The research on kind of conversion narratives in the form of novel or poems can also be interesting to be done, to dig out more the studying of conversion presented in the literary works.

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