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Questions of War: Notions of Jihad and Terrorism in Leila ABOULELA's *The Kindness of Enemies* (2015)

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for **an M.A. Degree in English Literature and Civilization**

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Dedication

First of all, I would like to thank my parents and family, a special thought for my mother, who even

in pain and through health issues has preserved and guided me. To my closest friends and to all

those who supported me.

At last but not least, I would like to thank my husband, father of my son, who I know for sure will

always be there no matter what.

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Abstract

The present paper commits to the study of Leila Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies* (2015). In this regard, the novel is analysed by putting emphasis on the historical and the contextual frame presented in this "multi-period" novel which shifts between contemporary and historical subplots. This dual timeline approach lets the reader discover the story of Imam Shamil, who was an important figure of Jihad in the 19th century, through this protagonist the reader can understand the significance of beliefs when leading a warfare, but most importantly the reader projects himself in a timeline where Jihad carried a meaning which promoted honour, dignity and faith. Consequently, the research work attempts to examine the primary values of Jihad at that time. However, throughout the contemporary plot, a contrast is put to light and let place to the parallels and the differences between the present and the past. In fact, via the protagonist Natasha and the other characters, the research work attempts to compare and examine the ideological stance Jihadism conveys in a post-9/11 world. Thus, the study undertakes the analysis of the systematic assimilation of Jihad with terror, then highlights the impact of stereotypes and misrepresentations of Arabs and Muslims in the Western world.
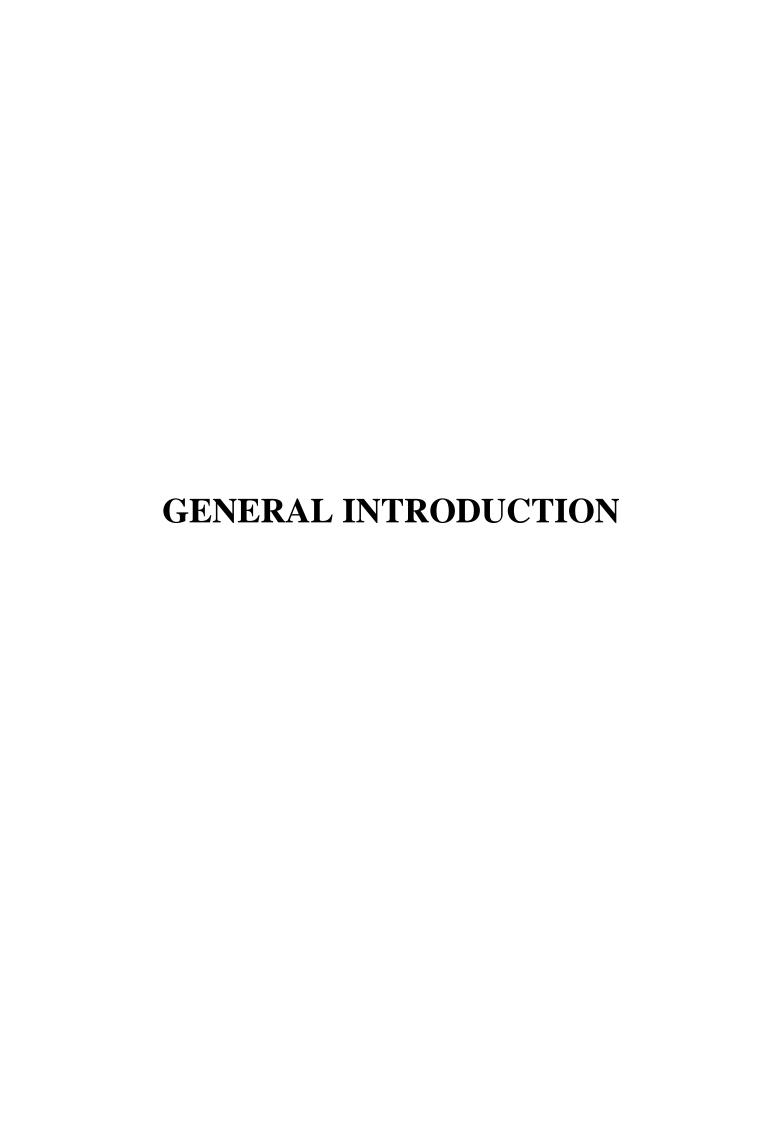
Key words: Jihad, terrorist attacks, media representation, new-historicism, post-colonialism.

Table of Contents

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Jihadism, Islamism, Terrorism; for a lot of people there is no clear distinction between these words. The negative connotation of this terminology represents a major issue in today's vision of Islam in the whole world. The systematic association of these terms leads to a frustration within Muslim communities. In the article *Islamic terrorism, backlash, and the assimilation of Muslim immigrants in western countries,* it has been shown that evidence for a backlash after the 9/11 attacks was supported by the data on hate crimes against Muslims. The Data on anti-Muslim hate crimes collected by the FBI showed a dramatic increase in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. With only four months remaining in the calendar year after the incident, the reported total number of hate crimes against Muslims increased 1,600% from 2000 to 2001. The survey showed that the number of hate crimes against Muslims decreased after the surge following the 9/11 attacks, but settled down to a yearly mean of 139.5 incidents after 2001 compared with 23.3 prior to 2001. (Eric Gould, Esteban Klor n. pag.)

The misunderstanding of the above terms merely records a set of observable social and political phenomena, which allow terrorists and Islamists to be brought closer together; alliances, ideological convergences, common enemies, shared revolutionary and financial aims, and so forth. Thus one can observe, that on the one hand, Marxists and capitalist militants who have turned to terrorism, have drawn closer to Islamist milieus, to the point of converting to Islam in the form of al Qaeda and advocating an Islamic-revolutionary organisations against the Jews and the Crusaders. On the other hand, Islamists rallied to the flag of the "Third World", then to that of anti-globalisation, before giving in to post colonialism and de-colonialism and to call for the destruction of Western democratic societies, accused of systemic racism. Thus, one can conclude that it is only a vicious circle, a hunt of power, where the only victims are innocent citizens and populations to whom we

tell what needs to be heard. Allie Kirchner points out that "By focusing on the narrow concept of jihad used by terrorists, the U.S. media has inadvertently reinforced the link between terrorism and Islam within the American consciousness" (Kirchner).

Back in time, writers substituted for the binarity opposing Centre and Periphery the reversibility of a multilinear world and the emergence of a "third space" of identity and culture, to cite Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994) "The third space, though unpresentable in itself, constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that attest that cultural meaning and symbols do not have a primordial unity or fixity, and that the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and reinterpreted" (Bhabha 37).

In the study of Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978), which has been well received by critics yet not unanimously accepted by everyone, it has been concluded after a systematic study of orientalism that this "science" has created an imaginary geography as well as its representations, and has designated the East (1):

> Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles. In contrast, the American understanding of the Orient will seem considerably less dense, although our recent Japanese, Korean, and Indochinese adventures ought now to be creating a more sober, more realistic "Oriental" awareness. Moreover, the vastly expanded American political and economic role in the Near East (the Middle East) makes great claims on our understanding of that Orient. (2)

For Said, the knowledge accumulated by the three tendencies of this field of research (imperialist Occidentalism, romantic exoticism and specialized scholarship) has been an instrument of domination used by Westerners for political purposes. "To say simply that

Orientalism was a rationalization of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was justified in advance by Orientalism, rather than after the fact" (40).

However, the media hounding around the tragedy post-9/11 attacks attested of the double condemnation and the social hardship that the Arabs were subjected to. The violence and inhumaneness behind the attacks are not questionable, nevertheless, the direct impact on the world's view of the Muslim community is no less than unfair and irrelevant. Anglo-arab writers have never been so involved but also confused. Whether from Europe in general or from Britain in particular, from the United States, passing by Africa, South East Asia and the Middle East, authors from the diaspora had the heavy and restful task of turning to literature to present an alternative to their stereotyped reputation in the Western media.

As such, some of the writings after the tragedy of the 9/11 attacks and the media representation of Arabs and Islam have changed the thematic orientation of the fictional novel, which this time openly addressed the assumptions that fundamentalism and prior to it, imperialism, have spread about Arab Muslim culture, which in fact reinforced the dominant public rhetoric which assimilated Islam with terror.

Arabs are consistently represented as a brutal enemy in entertainment media. Research finds Arabs are portrayed in entertainment media as repressive corrupt, violent, and extreme (El-Farra, 1996; Ghareeb, 1983; Oh, 2008; Pippert, 2001; Shalecn, 2001, 2004). Arabs are often cast as enemies of the West, intent on destroying the American way of life (Hamada, 2001; Shaheen, 2001). Shaheen finds Arabs frequently represented as "bad guys" and rarely portrayed as heroes. Lind and Danowski (1998) supports these findings, revealing Arabs are often associated with terrorism and aggression.

After the 9/11, there emerged a new genre, the "terrorist novel," a narrative which explores the motives and ideas behind the socio-political and psychic act of terrorism.

"This is the type of terrorist narrative that critic Margaret Scanlan, for example, investigated in her study *Plotting Terror* (2001) as well as Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2008), which together with *The Attack* (2006) and *The Swallows of Kabul* (2005) forms a trilogy" (Senoussi Mohammed) :

> In The Sirens of Baghdad, Yasmina Khadra takes us further into the realm of human destructiveness. It is indeed a chilling tale that describes the descent of a young Iraqi student into the abyss of horror and terror. Khadra brings the reader inside the mind of an unnamed terrorist-to-be, an Iraqi Bedouin, radicalised by witnessing the death of civilians and the humiliation of the population by the American forces in the Second Gulf War. Forced to leave the University of Baghdad after U.S. bombing closed it, the protagonist, a young man from a tiny desert Iraqi village, gets back home, and there three major events transform him.(502-503)

According to Baelo-Allué, Sonia Don Delillo's *Falling Man* (2007) has been one of the most influential 9/11 novels written to this day, even though it did not meet the expectations of reviewers when it was published. It is necessary to bear in mind that 9/11 can be understood both as a psychic/personal trauma and a cultural/collective one since it was a wound not only in the mind of those directly affected by the tragedy but also in the nation's sense of identity. Despite DeLillo's previous interest in cultural issues, he chose to write a 9/11 psychic rather than cultural trauma novel. The novel reflects the effects of traumatic memory and ponders the advantages and shortcomings of psychic trauma novels in the representation of traumas that affect society at large. (63)

Another example of literary works that have tackled the subject of hybrid identity and stereotypes about Islam, Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma*. In fact, Muslims in *My Name is Salma* selectively deal with Islamic laws. They observe Islamic injunctions at their own convenience and for their personal purposes and not because these injunctions deserve following. Each person's level of belonging to Islam depends on the benefits or disadvantages

they stand to gain in return, hence, if following Islam brings some advantages, they follow it while they reject it if takes away some benefits. From a conservative Muslim identity in Hima, Salma's identity in England evolves to a semi-practising Muslim. For Faqir Muslim" identity has a broad meaning. A Muslim could be conservative, semi-practising or nominal. The semi-practising Muslim could observe Islamic teaching in one regard but ignore it in another (80).

According to Andrew Vic Onyango in his study, *Identity Formation in Fadia Faqir's Novel My Name is Salma*:

> The novel portrays Islam in certain respects as a personal issue as Salma and other Muslim characters have their own way of practising Islam and do not have to prove their being Muslim to other people. As a result, the adoption of an Islam identity is dependent upon individual perspectives. (81)

Amongst the anglo-arab female writers who experienced diaspora and hybridity, Aboulela Leila. Hence, the research conducted will be based on one of her works.

In this regard, this paper will analyse Leila Aboulela's novel, *The Kindness of Enemies* (2015), a captivating story of a challenging period in history and an important investigation of what it is to be a Muslim in a post-9/11 world. The story happens in 2010 when Natasha, a half Russian, half Sudanese professor of history in London, is researching for her thesis the life of Imam Shamil, the 19th century Muslim leader who led the anti-Russian resistance in the Caucasian War. When shy, single and introvert Natasha discovers that her favourite student, Oz, is not only descended from the warrior but also possesses Shamil's legendary sword, the Imam's story comes vividly to life. As Natasha's relationship with Oz and his alluring actress mother intensifies, Natasha is forced to confront issues she had long tried to avoid that of her Muslim heritage. When Oz is abruptly under arrest at his home one morning on suspicion of radicalization, Natasha understands that everything she idealises stands in jeopardy.

In an article on the issue of citizenship and the rights of individuals "Derechos Degente," the Latin American expert Ileana Rodriguez sees civil society as a set of organisations representing socially marginalised groups, without rights to legal citizenship but with strong cultural citizenship. Rodriguez also argues that the public sphere should serve as an open forum for debate on the constitution of the public sphere starting from major perspectives; history, identity, ethnicity, class, nation, and relations with the state. These perspectives are inseparable because they refer to the positions taken by protesters and raise the question of the place accorded to the voice of subordination in the societies of the Americas (223).

On the same track Aboulela pours ink to denounce the stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in the West through her narratives. Her work aims to expose the truth about Muslims abroad and encourage Westerners to put an end to their negative image of Islam. Aboulela discusses the concepts of individuality, jihad and hybridity by illustrating social experiences through her well-chosen characters. In fact, throughout Natascha Aboulela stresses out the unfairness and the judgments towards the immigrants, the process of acculturation and hybridity. Similarly, Ossama provides a realistic illustration of the issues a Moslem faces in the Western World and the systematic association of word Jihadism with Al Qaeda and Terrorism. Her novel emphasizes every aspect of the deconstruction of cultural identity, through each protagonist Aboulela presents an issue, she reports the reality of the marginalized.

In this regard, the paper will structurally be divided into two chapters. Initially, the first chapter will analyse the historical context of the novel, based on the notion of Jihad and the extent to which it has weighed on Muslims who live in the West. Then the same chapter will present the significance of Jihad as a spiritual quest in the novel both in the 19th century and nowadays. Finally, the chapter will give an insight of what it is like to assume a religious

and cultural identity as a migrant and a Muslim. The second chapter will focus on the media impact and influence in propagating stereotypes about Islam and Arabs, especially after the attacks of September 11th 2001 in the USA and July 7th 2005 in Britain.

As a matter of fact, to correctly analyse the work, a historical analogous and a comparative study will be applied to distinguish between the conventional conception and denotation of Jihad and its contemporary symbolic and significance for Muslims. Then, the research will attempt to investigate and outline the true connotation of the concepts of Jihad and Sufism. The writer herself calls for a more investigative way of exploring the depth of change between cultures, spaces and time. New historicism predominantly and post colonialism are the most appropriate approaches to be used for the analysis of the historical background of the novel.

As mentioned above, the present research will attempt to investigate themes judged important to discuss in the novel. Such as Jihad, mysticism, hybrid identity and diaspora.

With regards to the issues stated above, the strategy that will be adopted to investigate the major themes of the novel consists of putting into light Muslims' struggles with stereotypes and misrepresentations. Then, the complex of hybrid identity in a world where immigration is considered a political and social issue will be investigated. Finally, the research will attempt to explain the importance of dealing with cultural and religious differences to eradicate hate, fear and racism. Accordingly, the paper will present the different perceptions of Islam. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions need to be answered. Predominantly, is the British modern society able to accept cultural and religious differences? Then, what is the impact of stereotypes on the Muslim community in particular after the 9/11 events? In addition, what are the genuine values transmitted by Islam?

CHAPTER I

Historical framework of the novel: Jihad and its Overtones

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Introduction

The present chapter examines the historical context of the novel by highlighting the characteristics and the values transmitted by the protagonist Imam Shamil, an important historical figure, symbol of honour and bravery. Indeed the chapter analyses the importance of faith and mysticism during the 19th century and in the contemporary world, especially after the 9/11 attacks. First, the chapter highlights the genuine meaning of Jihad in the past and the present time. Then, the chapter presents the positive message Islam conveys as well as the morals it advocates. To conclude, the significance of the quest for cultural and religious identity for Arabs and Muslims is put to light subsequently to the stereotypes, assumptions and representations the West has built about the Orient.

For Majed Aladaylah "Leila Aboulela is an Arab novelist, a true diasporic, voicing the dialectsof being distanced from home and exhibiting solidarity to newer cultural spaces.Displ acement creates a physical estrangement and thereby compels the diasporic to enter the inevitable process of negotiation" (173).

However, before analysing the novel of Aboulela, it is important to retrace her academic and personal prospectus, and most importantly her writers' experience and achievements to better understand the purpose of her productions and the message she conveys in her work.

Leila Aboulela was born in 1964 in Cairo and was raised in Khartoum. She studied economics at the University of Khartoum and then went to England to obtain a Master's degree in statistics at the London School of Economics. She worked as a research assistant while starting to write. She has published several short stories in anthologies and broadcast them on the radio, and one of her short stories, "*The Museum*," won the Caine Award for

African Writing in 2000. Her collection of short stories, "Coloured Lights," was published in 2001.

She is also the author of several novels: *The Translator* (1999); *Minaret* (2005), which tells the story of Najwa, an aristocratic Sudanese woman forced into exile in Britain; *Lyrics Alley* (2010), set in 1950s Sudan and based on the life of her uncle, a poet and songwriter. However, the novel which the present paper will analyse is *The Kindness of Enemies* (2015) in which she negotiated, from her own perspective, the issues of belonging, cultural differences and homelessness:

> It is important to stress that a variety of positions with respect to feminism, nation, religion and identity are to be found in Anglophone Arab women's writings. This being the case, it is doubtful whether, in discussing this literary production, much mileage is to be extracted from over emphasis of the notion of its being a conduit of "Third World" subaltern women. (Nash 35)

In her novel, *The Kindness of Enemies* , Aboulela persuasively addresses crucial themes of identity, jihad, and Sufism through carefully chosen characters who tell a story across two analogous historical narratives; one set in contemporary Scotland and Sudan, the other in 19th century stately Russia and the Caucasus under Shamil; the prodigious warrior who confronted the Russians in ferocious encounters. The progression of the plot centralizes on Natasha, the protagonist, whose life was disrupted when she decided to study the history of Oz's Jihadist ancestry. Oz is unfortunately arrested on suspicion of Islamist radicalization. The story is based on real events where the actions of Natasha, Oz and his mother Malak are totally escalated.

In terms of geography, the Caucasus is the region situated between the Black and the Caspian Seas. It spans over the three nation-states, namely Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. This region is culturally diverse, dialectically and by ethnic territories that are divided into

the North Caucasus which is part of the European continent, and the Southern part belonging to the Asian continent. For the historical background, Islam was the chief religion in the North of the Caucasus, especially in the two regions of Dagestan and Chechnya. "Although this explains why Azerbaijan and Iran follow Shia Islam, it is important to note that, in the middle of the nineteenth century, half of the population of contemporary Azerbaijan was still Sunni." as mentioned in the book *The Caucasus*: An Introduction (Coene 120).

Nevertheless, the Caucasus endured alienation by the Islamic "ummah" as reported by Mikael Khodarskovsky. The people replied to the Russian intrusion; they advocated confrontation rather than submission (2). The Russian established several policies in order to make the north of Caucasus a part of Russia, beginning with the system of divide and rule in which they tried to make disagreement between the elite and the locals. Then other directives among which the process of acculturation of elites and Russification (2).

The failure of the Ottoman and Persian empires to overcome the region and their gratification in gathering dues and servants built the foundations for the Russia, which was willing to embrace the Caucasus in order to attack its North. Russian extension into the North Caucasus turned into a violent land confiscation in the mid-18th century. In fact, the Russians sent back the natives, sheltered the indigenous refugees and imposed Orthodox Christianity. Meanwhile, the Russian government's policy of Christianisation pushed the natives away from the imperial bosom of Russia into a deeper embrace of Islam. Nevertheless, the overwhelming pressure made of the North Caucasus a colony, forcing Imam Shamil's tenacious resistance to Russian colonisation.

According to R. Bastianello, Shamil was a prodigious combatant who fought Russian forces in the region. "The Imam was popular in Britain, mainly in the course of the Eastern War (Crimean), he opposed the Russian invasion in the Middle East. If it is true that Sheik Mansour and his inheritor, Sheikh Shamil, were religious frontrunners, it is also true that they

understood the political significance of Islam, which established a social parity base and unity of purpose, surpassing ethnic particularism, class differences and the characteristic tribalism." (2). She adds, "Moreover, the Russian conquest not only had no adverse effect on the expansion and influence of Islam, but it made it a form of passive resistance" (2).

Before embarking on the analysis of Sufism, it is first necessary to define the concept. Sufism is the inward aspect of the Islamic faith that a believer must obtain; it is the spiritual path towards mystical union with God. Muslims cling to and follow Sufism, and seek to find the truth of the divine, love and knowledge through direct personal experience in their actions and deeds towards God.

In an interview with C.E Rashid Aboulela legitimates the importance of using the two religious views in her fiction works because for her, the internal, proper development of her characters is not a Christian dominant religious or irreligious model unlike the story of the Sufi explorer (Islamic Individualism pp. 620-621). She proclaims that for her, Sharia and Sufism are correlated as they are complementary to each other.

The author presents Sufism through her historical portrayal of the Imam as a Sufi ancient forerunner and through Malak a devoted believer in the contemporary period. In fact, religious mysticism uplifted the Imam leader and the upland fighters which made them counter the Russian expansion in the nineteenth century, "Too numb to fear the enemy, they feared instead their own mystical weakness" (37).

Via Malak, Aboulela illustrates how she leans on her Sufi background and how to overcome the state she is put in. In other words, how it has touched nowadays British society. She adopts religious morals and the position of self-discipline and withholds by joining a Zikr seminar where she submerged herself in religious moral knowledge. "the Zikr had sounded like a repetitive song in chorus, a chant of 'la ilaha illa Allah' accompanied by a

movement that increased in rapidity until it reached a climax then stopped to restart again with a different phrase, 'astaghfir Allah' or peace and blessings on the Prophet Muhammad" (176).

However, Shamil's downfall was the result of his pride and high self-esteem as his belief in the spirituality of his teacher weakened. He gave everything back to the holiness he did not believe in. Jamel El Dine assumed that Shamil began to believe in his own abilities and that he said to himself, what this dervish understands outside mysticism (365). In those challenging moments of spiritual faith, Jamel El Dine gave in to the circumstances and stopped praying for Shamil's triumph, so he was finally defeated:

> Without spiritual support, nature took its course. Without blessings, without miracles. One and one made two and an object thrown up in the air fell down; a man couldn't see in the dark, fire burned and bodies needed food. Without blessings, without miracles, the physical laws of the world govern supreme and those strong in numbers and ammunition sooner or later must defeat the weak. (365)

One can deduce from the above-mentioned quote that the return to religiousness and Sufism are essential principles to hold on to. When Shamil began to move away from these principles and give way to pride and high self-esteem, he lost the benediction and protection that came from this spiritual aspect of Sufism. Thus, his faith collapsed and he was finally unable to overcome the struggles; a circumstance that gave the Russians the opportunity to seizure him and put an end to his opposition.

1. The Connotations of Jihad and a Positive Report about Islam

One of the most discussed topics is the stereotype of Islam as an extremist religion that calls for jihad and terrorism. Muslims living overseas are mostly affected by this one-sided and erroneous opinion of the Islamic religion, and some Muslim writers in the Diaspora took a self-protective stance to present the actual image of Islam, and the significance of Jihad. In

a podcast with the *Arab Weekly* Leila Aboulela, speaks of the correct definition of Jihad, "I was interested in him fighting jihad from a Sufi aspect. This kind of jihad is different from what we see practised by ISIS and al-Qaeda" (1).

Islam has a major argument which is Qur'an in which the values of peace, compassion, and dignity are taught. The Jihad of today is understood as a single meaning by Westerners, however, in the Islamic teaching it actually conveys peaceful principles. The war which is presented by the terrorists as a jihad in the name of Allah does not fit today's historical context.

In the novel, the author introduced historicity to put light on nowadays circumstances, to make the distinction between today's Islamist extremist organizations and the spiritual peaceful significance of Jihad. She praises Jihadism as an inner quest, as exemplified by the protagonist Sheikh Shamil, a respectable icon who contended the opponent's attacks in the Caucasian in the 19th century and who used of the word Jihad which means defence of the homeland. Therefore, she clarifies that the Imam, as a jihadist, engaged only for defensive reasons, so that his people could live in peace and practise their religion freely instead of being oppressed.

The main characters discussed the meaning of jihad. In fact the question and the answer about the main issue can be depicted from the title, what does it mean to be an enemy? Malak stressed out the royal support that Queen Victoria had attributed to Shamil. Thus, Shamil and his supporters opinions, religiousness and Sufism founded political Islam; traditional and passive. "Al-Qaeda was a modern phenomenon, with no patience for Shamil's traditional spirituality and utter contempt for the choices he made at the end of his career" (175).

Furthermore, Malak is convinced that Jihadism is an inner quest that needs a spiritual master such as Imam Shamil, who was fighting to secure his homeland, his family and his people from the rough Russians. She told her son "the door to true jihad has been closed for a long time." Because "Jihad needs an Imam and there is no Imam now." (23). Later on she clarifies: "Jihad is not for land or wealth, not for power and political matters, but it is to follow the values of Allah and the rules of Sharia". Malak highlights the fact that "not all Muslim wars are Jihad. No suicide bombers or attacks on civilians." (23). According to her, if Imam Shamil was still alive "He would have seen through these militants – that they "fulfil neither a contract nor a covenant. That they call to the truth but they are not its people". He would have gone after the hate preachers who say to the young men of this day and age, 'go out and make jihad' " (Aboulela 176).

"For Aboulela, the fact that his political actions were guided by spirituality, it resulted in disciplined politics and a strong sense of determination. It is an important portion that the novel seems to convey equally to contemporary jihadists, whose resistance is described as no more than terrorism" (Mazhoud 11).

As such, some of the writings after the tragedy of the 9/11 events in USA, and the 7/7 attacks in Britain have been influenced since the media representation of Arabs and Islam have changed the thematic orientation of the fictional novel, which this time openly addressed the assumptions that fundamentalism and prior to it, imperialism, have spread about Arab Muslim culture, which in fact reinforced the dominant public rhetoric which assimilated Islam with terror.

However, the concept of Jihad can be viewed from linguistic and theological point of view as the denotation of the concept of jihad in Islamic law is made based on the Qur'an. Etymologically, the word Jihad, from the Arabic, Jaahada; furnished an effort, which literally means worked passionately.

Nonetheless, Jihad is a pillar for Muslims as it takes a spiritual dimension. However, for John L. Esposito there is a "new" jihad globalization which is exploited internationally to mobilize individuals and political and social movements, mainstream and extremist. (126). Radical Islamic organizations fighting against the West are increasingly spreading, as a consequence innocent Islamic states are destroyed by West under the pretext of "bombing" the terrorists.

The expression of the "Centre versus the Empire" shows the literary implication of authors from the periphery support the marginal, the one who has long been described as savage and foreign. Thus, to give a voice to the subaltern. By subaltern" Spivak means the oppressed subjects. Or more generally those "of inferior rank" (283). She goes on to add that "in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak." (287).

The notion of subalternity is not to be neglected, indeed, the "subaltern" has been defined widely and differently by numerous academics, however, for Gayatri C. Spivak, subalternity is defined as a space of difference where "discursive regimes locate/imprison the body or voice of the marginalized" (Schur, 457). In Spivak's words, "everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern a space of difference. Now who would say that's just the oppressed? The working class is oppressed. It's not subaltern" (Spivak 35).

The Kindness of Enemies recalls a living Islamic narrative by presenting the sharp subjects of Jihadism and Sufism. The concepts are considered in a contrastive frame that narrates two places, two periods, and two narratives. In the past the protagonist, a historical figure, fought back Caucasian Russians, with strong convictions, he embraced Sufism and engaged in Jihad, a term associated with radicalism. The author thus conveyed a constructive vision of Islam through his novel and contributed to the deconstruction of

stereotypes and to describe Jihad as part of Muslim devotion, a pillar in shaping identity. Sadia Abbas in her work *Leila Aboulela, Religion, and the Challenge of the Novel*, highlighted the literary objectives of Aboulela:

> Together these responses point to the historical intrigue of Aboulela's novels, which lies in the way they simultaneously inhabit at least three moments in the history of Islam. It is hard to imagine the current role of an increasingly global and political Islam without Salafism, and Salafism, in turn, is hard to understand without the waves of reform—comprised of an emphasis on Qur'anic interpretation (ijtihad) and, paradoxically, on the revival of the purity of the earliest Muslim societies—which have periodically swept a range of Muslim contexts since the eighteenth century.18 The increasingly restrictive project of Islamization in which the Sudanese government has been engaged since the 1980s is part of the longer dure´e of this brand of the religion.(451)

2. The Quest for Identity in *The Kindness of Enemies*

Lately, the question of identity has been the subject of lively debate in cultural studies and postcolonial criticism. Aboulela is one of the authors who have discussed the issue of identity as one of the most prominent topics in her literary work. The central impasse stressed out in her controversial is that of peculiarity and individuality.

The primary definition of identity found in a dictionary is "who or what someone or something is, or the characteristics, feelings or beliefs that distinguish people from others" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). However, the definition of identity has been the subject of numerous studies, mainly in the field of sociology, but so far there is not a universal definition. Identity is a vague, debated and evolving concept. One major reason for this is simply that it is considered to be an intangible term.

A person owns various identities, such as that of a teacher, a mother, a friend, etc. (Hooti & Arejmand 40). Hence, Arab Muslim immigrants in the diaspora find themselves between two different cultures, that of natives and that of Westerners. Therefore, identity construction becomes very problematic for them. In this context, by hybridity, Homi Bhabha means the positioning of a person between two different cultures. He refers to "any mixture of Eastern and Western culture" (Singh). Bhabha believes that a new hybrid identity or subject-position emerges from the interweaving of elements of the colonizer and the colonized challenging the validity and authenticity of any essentialist cultural identity (Meredith 2). Rufel Ramos claims that within the third space, the colonizer and the colonized negotiate their cultural difference and create a culture that is hybrid (3).It is an "interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative" space (Bhabha 103). Hybridity results in what Bhabha calls the "revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity" (Bhabha 112).

Thus, Natascha the principal character of the novel is disoriented by her heterogeneous origins what lead to the sentiment of wandering and predicament. In this sense, Majed Aladayla argues:

> Moreover, it abandons the unresolved contradiction, conflict and struggle within Self and Other. In this sense, narrative representation has explicated identity matrixes, questions of belonging, transcultural spaces, hybridity, old reminiscences, construction of new desires and knowledge by shattering the walls of change. Thus, narrative culture has forced the diasporic writer to face on one hand nativity and originality, on the other hand, adapted identity. Consequently, the migrant writer raises issues of identity crisis, cultural dislocation, up rootedness and cultural displacement. In this way, the tension of the hyphen-culture for diasporic writer is expressed in terms of geographical, social, historical, communal, cultural, racial, and individualistic contexts and values, since any conflict to assimilate totally within a different culture involves contradictions and paradoxes of the mother culture. (172)

Even more, for Dizayi, Saman Abdulqadir Hussein " identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty " (43). In this sense, the identity of the central character Natasha is defined by two pillars, the notion of difference in religion, origin and culture, and the notion of rootlessness, imbalance and floating. These traumatic encounters are a key part of her psychology and awareness:

> The two sides of me that were slammed together against their will that refused to mix. I was a failed hybrid, made of unalloyed selve. My Russian mother who regretted marrying my Sudanese father. My African father who came to hate his white wife. My atheist Mother Who blotted out my Muslim heritage. My Arab father who gave me up To Europe without fight. I was the freak. (Aboulela 55)

In her book the professor and writer Santesso points out that on the one hand, the religious community attracts Muslim migrants in which they erase of the notion of segregation in Britain. Nonetheless, as they relate to transnational community, and that community grows in strength, the culture itself attracts ever-increasing hostility (Mirze, Santesso 9).

Home longing and nostalgia for her country and culture inspired the British Sudanese writer Leila Aboulela to write about her homeland and religion. Most of her literary works are marked by the cultural gap faced by Muslims in the West, she addresses central themes such as identity, belonging and hostility.

Aboulela tries her best to deconstruct the fabricated image of Africa in the West's eyes by adopting a protective defence. Her main aim in writing is to present the authentic image of Islam as an essential pillar for Muslims and to provide information about Africa and Islamic culture. Thus, she incorporates her return to her country mainly in most of her novels. Accordingly, Yousef Awad states:

Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies* oscillates between the past and the present and depicts how Muslims have historically undergone and survived hardships and troubles. By focussing on the experiences of a British Muslim family with roots in the Caucasus, Aboulela's novel appropriates history to comment on the present. Malak, a 21st century British Muslim, draws on the legacy of her great grandfather Imam Shamil, who spearheaded a 19th century Sufi Jihadist movement in the Caucasus. She is inspired by his insights and visions to cope with a British version of McCarthyism. Malak relies on Sufi teachings and principles of self-control and self-constraint to resist overwhelming and devastating socio-political hostilities in the wake of an anti-terror investigation that has involved her son and tainted her career as an upscale British citizen. (87)

Geoffrey Nash claims that Aboulela, by refiguring the conventional narrative of the migrant from the periphery who joins the metropolis and must necessarily shed her faith, and by being in conversation with Tayib Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*, shows a dedicated commitment to and respect for works that might be categorized as Muslim writing while also participating in a solidly Western tradition (Hashem, 192-193).

In her novel, Aboulela also makes vivid Sudan throughout her principal character's youthful memories. The Sudanese author has judiciously picked her protagonists as references to her own identity and background. In fact they foremost happen to be Sudanese. Plus, she dedicated two sections of her novel to Sudan. During her trip to Sudan, Natasha notices that the city of Khartoum was different and transformed over the years but she still looked for landmarks, consequently, she says, "I needed to see the alphabet railing, that façade that entered my childhood and changed me. Crossing one street after the other, I was unfit and my memory was playing tricks on me." (200).

Sudan was a British colony ruled by the joint British and Egyptian empires between 1899 and 1955. Aboulela designates Sudan as "a valid place" to contest "stereotypical images

of famine and war" (Chambers 87).Sudan's colonial history is marked by the Battle of Omdurman (1898) between the Anglo-Egyptian force run by Lord Kitchener and the religious leader known as the Mahdi. Later, fierce civil wars have marked Sudan's recent history. However, Later on ferocious civil wars have shaped the recent Sudanese history.

A lot of writers from the diaspora produce at the heart of the event, they explore some experiences that are related to their genuine life. Aboulela considers topics linked to her own life course through her principal figures who reflect some of her traits in terms of identity and personal life. Her individuality is a blend of being Egyptian and Sudanese, growing up in Sudan and finally settling in Scotland.

The author also presented Natascha as her mirror in the narrative to reflect parts of her identity. Among their shared traits, besides Natasha's mixed nationality (Sudanese and Russian), the novelist and the protagonist also undergo the consequences that hybridity involves. As a matter of fact, in an interview, Aboulela notes that she was inspired by British newspaper articles that reported that under new anti-terrorism legislation, university staff would be required to provide information about Muslim students vulnerable to radicalization (330).

Aboulela emphasizes the confusing question of the surveillance of radicalism, in this regard, she concedes that it frightened her as she has children, "once you gotten to be a parent, you get into the propensity of stressing around them."(1), she completes, "what she has experienced and gone through can happen to any parent" (1); referring to motherhood through Malak. "They go through phases. He went through a phase, I remember, of believing all these conspiracy theories about 9/11 – that it wasn't Muslims that did it. I argued with him then, I talked him out of it, or at least I thought I did" (Aboulela 146).

The character of Natascha is made heterogeneous as the author thinks that the circumstances of her psychological warfare are unclear at the moment. There is an element of not being beyond uncertainty about how one is going to act is going or what one will say. There are changes of decrees here every day (Chambers 1).

Leila Aboulela expressed herself about her perception of the labelled "Muslim Writers" in an interview Contemporary Women'sWriting with C.Chambers, she states:

> I read all of her novels; Ahdaf Soueif, I've read her books as well. But I think that many of these writers prefer to be considered nationally, as a Pakistani writer or an Egyptian writer. I feel an affinity to them, except that maybe in my books the Muslim ingredient is a bit more prominent. I do feel that I'm like them: I'm a Sudanese writer, they're Pakistani, Egyptian, and soon. But for me, instead of having Islam as part of the culture, I'm consciously presenting it as a faith. There are a lot of Muslim writers and they're writing different sorts of Muslim novels, but maybe in my case this religious element is heightened .Having said that, there are many distinctively Muslim writers at the international level. I admire the work of the French-Algerian Faiza Gu'ene, Afghan-American Khaled Hosseini, Saudi Rajaa Alsanea, Pakistani-American Mohsin Hamid, and Egyptian Alaa Al Aswany. They are a younger generation of writers who include Islam in their work much more than their predecessors did. (94)

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to highlight the meaning of Jihad in the novel as well as in history, in addition, it analysed the significance of cultural, individual and religious identity. Moreover, the chapter has put in place a contrastive study to compare between the two time periods and the negative connotation the term Jihad "gained" over time. The chapter highlighted the importance of the use of words throughout history and the impact of

stereotypes on a community. In fact, the systematic assimilation of Jihad with terror and radical Islamism reinforces separatism and promotes social and religious racism.

Chapter II

Media Representation after the 9/11 Terrorist attacks:

A double Jeopardy for Arabs and Muslims

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Introduction

The present chapter examines the media backlash after the 9/11 events and how Muslims and Arabs dealt with the prominence of the stereotypes and the prejudgments due to their origins or religion. Then, it highlights the principle causes of Islamophobia and the concept of hybridity and transnationality through the exploration of diasporic literatures. Besides, it deals with the consequences of globalization and the distorted image of Islam after the terrorist attacks in America and in Britain. Finally, it analyses the contest strategy and the way British Muslims encounter Terrorism.

The attacks of 11 September 2001 led to the outbreak of the war against terrorism, in particular Islamist terrorism by international networks such as Al Qaeda. Muslim fundamentalists thus became the new enemies of the West. By attacking the symbols of its power, the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon have shaken the United States at the very heart of what constitutes its identity. Allievi assumes "The ensuing hunt for Allah's fools, however, has given rise to verbal blunders that suggest an amalgamation of Islam, Islamism and terrorism, with a certain hint of Islamophobia." He adds "There is in the background to the fear of Islam what seems to me to be a long-lasting trend in Western societies, increasingly manifested in recent decades: the generalisation of the social construction of fear, its systematic spreading, its omnipresence in the media, its political exploitation."(Allievi pp.18-27).

1. Media Representation of Arabs and Muslims after the 9/11 Attacks

According to Claire Chambers "the literary ricochets after the September 11th events in literature were decisive for contemporary British fiction, since that, many critics have analysed the previously unheeded questions of the depiction of Islam in contemporary British literature in a more abysmal and nuanced way"(176).

"The Empire writes back to the Centre" is an expression introduced by Rushdie Salman who ironically, in the model of "The Empire Strikes Back" referring to the famous TV show, pointed out the resistance of the former British colonies and their ultimate goal to revise their history by writing back from the periphery and within Britain. This expression can be applied in the case of the post 9/11 events, as the Arab community, authors included, required intention and demanded to the media to carefully choose their words as they were undergoing a double jeopardy between mourning and feeling ashamed. In this sense, Ashcroft et al in their seminal work *The Empire Writes Back* (2002) claim that "more than three- quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism" (1).

John J. Zogby, reveals the results of a poll of Arab Americans realized between October 6 and 10 2001. The poll commissioned by the Arab American Institute Foundation (AAIF) has demonstrated that 60% of the 508 surveyed were worried about the "long-term effects of discrimination" (2) against them because of the September 11 attacks. As well as, the fact that only 20% of those surveyed said that they had personally faced discrimination because of their Arab American background, however, 45% said that they intimately knew someone who experienced discrimination after the attacks because of their Arab American cultural origins. Namely, almost half of the Arab community admitted that they had experienced physical or psychological violence since September 11.

In Great Britain, this prejudice increased after the 7/7 attacks against the public transportation system in 2005. In fact, on July 7, 2005, four British-born Muslims launched terrorist attacks on London's public transport system, 52 people were killed and more than 600 left injured. These attacks were considered by observers as one of the worst terrorist incidents in recent British history. As part of Britain, Scotland was one of the nations that supported the warfare on terrorism. Indeed, it imposed legislations that deeply affected the Muslim community in Britain.

The event of September 11 was and remains a sombre memory not only for the United States of America (USA) but for the whole West, including the United Kingdom. In 2001, El Qaeda committed a series of airline hijackings and suicide attacks against the United States. These events marked a turning point in the vision of Islam in the Western world, as this group of extremists distorted the reputation of the religion and of Muslims.

In her book, *Muslims in Britain*: An Introduction, Gilliat-Ray explains that the acceptation of Islam in Britain can be retraced till the eighth century (5). The book investigates Islam and Muslims from the early Middle Ages through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, until Muslim traders, sailors, labourers and scholars began to settle in Britain in the 1840s (26).

Nowadays, the enlargement of the Muslim community in Britain can be noticed, as recorded in 2011 census figures, England and Wales experienced an increase in the number of settlers in 2011 regarding the Muslim population, from 1.55 million in 2001 to 2.71 million in 2011, and thus, Muslims represent 4.8% of the population. Furthermore, there are 77,000 Muslims in Scotland and 3,800 in Northern Ireland, making the Muslim population larger than all other non-Christian faith groups combined (Census 16). Muslims born in the United Kingdom and living in Great Britain make up about 47% of the population (Awad 73).

As Alsultany contends, "government and media discourses" on the "War on Terror" are inextricably interrelated and together form a "hegemonic field of meaning" premised on "they hate us for our freedom" (7). This discourse "provided the logic and justification needed to pass racist foreign and domestic policies and provided the suspicion needed for many citizens to tolerate the targeting of Arabs and Muslims, often without any evidence that they were involved in terrorist activities" (7). Alsultany, in response to a conservative film critic who was concerned that humanizing the terrorists in films such as *Syriana* blurred the moral difference between terrorist and those who fight terrorism and raised sympathy for the terrorists, points out that "viewer responses suggest that for most the dominant message remains the same: the United States is at war against terrorism because Arabs and Muslims are a threat" (38). She views the impact of these "simplified complex representational strategies" (14) to being limited to circumventing accusations of racism for the writers and producers with the aim of maintaining the largest viewership possible. These viewers generally "take away the message that Arabs and Muslims are a threat to U.S. national security despite a few Arab and Muslim characters that are against terrorism" (Alsultany 38).

In her novel, Aboulela also portrays the prejudgment and discrimination faced by Muslims in Britain in their daily lives under the excuse of fighting terrorism, leading to feelings of frustration and alienation. In fact, Pauly Robert J, Jr establishes that the inaccurate perception of Islam as a radical religion has consistently fostered deep divisions between the Muslim's majority and minorities in the UK. (119). Accordingly to Benguesmia and Refice:

> The image of Islam has always been distorted in the West. However, terrorist attacks that have been adopted by extremist claiming to be Muslims, as well as The attacks of September, have worsened the issue, millions of Muslims have considered the events a turning point in their lives, especially immigrants living in Western countries, these latter took advantage of the opportunity to justify aggressive actions against Muslim individual.(27)

As a matter of fact, Muslims abroad, especially in Britain, suffer from a negative image and the violence against them is increasing daily. The British now have a biased image of Muslims, Muhammad Anwar shares his point of view since the 9/11 and the emergence of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda and its affiliates, "there has been an intensification of anti-Muslim attitudes in Britain which has sometimes led to attacks on people and property, and has also marked direct religious discrimination" (31). Anwar clarified that for many British Muslims, religious and racial discrimination and violence is a reality of life (40).

The contemporary spread of the term Islamophobia dates from 1997, following the publication of the *Runnymede Trust* report in Great Britain; *Islamophobia A Challenge for Us All.* This report, produced by a think tank committed to the issue racial equality received a wide response, giving it a public and political recognition (Allen 15). From then, Islamophobia was discussed, criticized and analysed, as a phenomenon but also as a sociological concept.

"Hateful rhetoric against Muslims gives people permission to discriminate against them, whether overtly or more subtly," said Kevin L. Nadal, PhD, in a 2015 article published in *Qualitative Psychology*. In this sense, in the book *Islam and Political Violence: Muslim Diaspora and Radicalism in the West,* it is assumed that:

> Not only is this assumption disconnected from the reality of Muslim lives, it glosses over the diversity of beliefs and practices that make up the Muslim population. It is an often overlooked fact that Muslims are divided along ethnic and sectarian lines. They are also divided between those who consciously practice Islam and those who do not. The broad-brush depiction of Muslims as a homogenous entity, paints all Muslims as religiously devout, and (almost naturally) governed by Islamic principles. This simplistic view does not allow for the vast numbers of Muslims who were simply born into a Muslim culture and treat Islam as a pillar of their identity and heritage not the source of a political ideology. (3)

Historically, the systematic hostility towards Islam is deeply rooted in Western thought. Essentially Christian in nature, it originated in the spirit of the Crusades, flourished during colonial expansion and, after a period of latency, resumed with the "war on terror." The word "Islamophobia" which illustrates it, is about a hundred years old.

On August 30, 2010, *Time* ran the headline: "Is America Islamophobic?" investigating this what was described as an unprecedented phenomenon. In 2010, the *New York Times* devoted a long portrait to Ms Geller, who portrays herself as an anti-Muslim racist. The newspaper did it again on 31 July with David Yerushalmi, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish priest presented as the organisational and financial coordinator of the American Islamophobic movement. This movement favours two recurring themes. Firstly, the idea that the allegiance of Muslims to the American homeland is "deceptive" or "illusory" because it is impossible, secondly, the idea that their ambition is dominating, with the hidden will to impose Muslim law, the Sharia, on the whole world.

The attacks of 11 September 2001 have undoubtedly changed the perception of the Muslim religion in the eyes of the American population. Nevertheless, there are older factors that have influenced American's view of this religion. Indeed, according to two experts in the field, the author Fawaz A. Gerges and Professor Maria do Céu Pinto, there is a dominant culture in the United States known as "anti-Muslim." (4), Mustafa Buyukgebiz declares:

> Since the 2001 attacks, American Muslim communities have been challenged by opinionated political and legal discourse. Suspicious glances and a feeling of illegitimacy submerged the population. The historical context, media and political practices are factors that influenced Finally, it can be noted here that American obsession of national security haunted in September 11, 2001 after 60 years from Japanese Pearl Harbour attack of 1941. The feeling of invincibility of Americans was

damaged harshly for the second time and Islamophobia emerged as a social, political and even an economical need in the Western civilization. Fear of Islam was exploited by various social groups and even governments. All these reasons of Islamophobia increase violence and hatred against Islam and Muslims. Eventually, Islam emerged as a new common enemy of the Western civilizations after Communism and Osama Bin Laden replaced Yosef Stalin as the leader of the brand new enemy of imperialism. Islamophobia among the American society. (234)

As a result, amid countless British authors, L. Aboulela, seek to uncover the truth and give the right perspective on Islam and the accurate values of Jihad. The novelist supplied us with a comparative viewpoint between the genuine delineation of Jihad through Shamil's destiny and course in history, and the present misconception of Jihadism made-up by the Western world, and by Islamist radical political parties. In her work on *The Kindness of Enemies*, Chainez Mazhoud analysed how Aboulela treated the themes of exile and immigration in addition to the stereotypes the Westerners have built about Islam, Muslims, Arabs, and Jihad, she declares:

> The perception of Jihad in the contemporary time doesn't fit the real meaning of Jihad. After the 9/11 attacks, Jihad has become equivalent to terrorism and to the violent Islamist radicalism. Jihad in the western's eyes, is the order to kill every non-Muslim, for which essentially is not true. Instead of ignoring these negative discourses about Muslims and Arabs, Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies* alert the problematic of jihad in the west, its real meaning and its affection on British Muslims individuals pointing out some incidents of discrimination against Muslims exposing the prejudice of certain individuals, and revealing the catastrophic consequences of negative discourses about Arabs and Muslims. (46)

The association of Islam to terror and Muslims to terrorists is the result of the Islamophobic impulse after the post-9/11 tragedy, it all originated from the orientalist representation of the "Other" in the eyes of the West. Orientalism as defined by Said is more than appropriate to explain the logical sequence of the events: "the corporate institution that deals with the East by making statements about it, allowing opinions about it, describing it, teaching it, regulating it, governing it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the East" (3).

However, political, social, and cultural conflicts that September 11th has depicted existed before September 11, 2001 and before previous terrorist attacks. In fact, to point out the primacy of the attacks is also to admit a neglected historical analysis, as if centuries of systematic stereotyping of Eastern culture have been erased from history. In this sense, if the 9/11 events have changed everything in terms of the representation of Arabs and Muslims, then what was Edward Said writing about in his *Orientalism*, and prior to it in *Orientalism and the October War: Broken Myths* (1975), as a matter of fact, as mentioned above he critically presented the myths about Arabs in an Orientalist discourse, he has demonstrated how this discourse has marginalized and distorted the image of Arabs. Furthermore, Said showed how institutions promoted orientalism by presenting myths as facts supported by a so-called "scientific" study. As he notes "the representations of Orientalism in European culture amount to what we can call a discursive consistency, one that has not only history but material (and institutional) presence to show for itself" (273).Later on, he adds, "As I said in connection with Renan such a consistency was a form of cultural praxis, a system of opportunities for making statements about the Orient" (273).

"We must not forget that the orientalist's presence is enabled by the orient's effective absence"(Said 208). He encourages the eastern scholars to encounter "the dogmas of orientalism" (301) by taking control of their own culture. Said states:

my argument is that history is made by men and women, just as it can also

be unmade and rewritten, so that "our" east, "our" orient becomes "ours"

to possess and direct. And I have a very high regard for the powers and

gifts of the peoples of that region to struggle on for their vision of what

they are and want to be. (Said)

The fostered knowledge that the West has built about the Orient dates back to the colonial period (15th century/ late 19th century), the dominance of imperialism back then facilitated the establishment of a policy of mustism. Indeed, the fragmentation of the Arab culture has gone through the process of displacement of identity and a process of erasing a collective cultural memory and this goes through morals, religion, affiliation, language, and so on. Naturally the postcolonial novel carried a response that confronted the West to its obsessive and possessive ways about the "Other." Again, Said argues:

a complete Orient suitable for study in the academy, for exhibition in the

museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for the theoretical

illustration of anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial and historical

aspects of man and the universe for example economic and sociological

theories of development, revolution, cultural figures, national or religious

character. (7-8)

Accordingly, the relation between power and knowledge in the case of the Orient forms a set of practices to reinforce the "Other's" pre-conceived misrepresentation. As a result, diasporic narratives have been increasingly produced over the last centuries by Anglophone authors who, in the wake of all the events since the beginning of colonialism, felt the need to discuss issues of hybridity, acculturation and as pointed out by Mohanty Chandra Talpade in an interview:

We too recognize the frustration of critical race scholars who try to point out the

injustice of representations in a "post racial" society where race can be discussed only

in the context of its contemporary irrelevance. This is the frustration born from trying to analyse a systemic demonization of Arabs and Muslims (or other racial, ethnic, and/or religious groups), only to be confronted with a handful of seemingly complex and robust "proper" representations. (Mohanty, part 75)

Said maintains "The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences (1).Hence the dire need for works by Leila Aboulela and other hybrid writers to redefine the orient and to dismantle the stereotypes created by its machinery. In fact, this "machinery of colonialism" produces assumptions about the racial and cultural traits of the Occident and the Orient. On the one hand, people from the Occident are "rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, and capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion; whereas those from the orient are none of these things" (Said 49).

Reportedly, the confusion is palpable when it comes to separate Arabs from Islam, and after the 9/11 attacks this fostered dichotomy was reinforced by categorizing and assimilating automatically Islam with terror.

As a matter of fact, a global disorientation and frustration settled as the suicide bombing of an "other" extremist ideologist has taken the lives of innocent people and has completely tainted the reputation of a related community. Indeed, the Islamist extremists who promoted radical terrorism, "Jihadism" and suicidal violence have become the subject matter of public opinion, media discourse and of global politics in the rhetoric of Western governments.

The American media had a major impact on the public rhetoric as it acted as the voice of a grieved population. Nevertheless, the strategies used by media to point out the good and the evil, but also the in-between victims, was not as positively perceived since they played to card of sympathy. In her book, *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation*

after 9/11 (2012). Alsultany presents, "the simplified complex representational strategies" (Alsultany 14), in fact, she inspects the rarest compassionate portrayals of Arabs and Muslims (4). One can conclude that despite the Islamic world and Muslims post-9/11 events have been portrayed more considerately, the media sphere's observations have had practically comparable impact on the population to earlier Orientalist productions and writings. Alsultany clarifies:

> These seemingly positive representations of Arabs and Muslims have helped to form a new kind of racism, one that projects antiracism and multiculturalism on the surface but simultaneously produces the logics and affects necessary to legitimize racist policies and practices. It is no longer the case that the Other is explicitly demonized to justify war or injustice. Now, the Other is portrayed sympathetically in order to project the United States as an enlightened country that has entered a post racial era. (Alsultany 16)

Nevertheless, the Islamophobic equation of Muslim and terrorist in the Western media, preceded by the Orientalist otherization of Arabs or Muslims, has been an important part of a process which Khaled Beydoun explains as "dialectical Islamophobia" (29):

> For all the above reasons, the sovereign right to kill is not subject to any rule in the colonies. In the colonies, the sovereign might kill at any time or in any manner. Colonial warfare is not subject to legal and institutional rules. It is not a legally codified activity. Instead, colonial terror constantly intertwines with colonially generated fantasies of wilderness and death and fictions to create the effect of the real.43 Peace is not necessarily the natural outcome of a colonial war. In fact, the distinction between war and peace does not avail. Colonial wars are conceived of as the expression of an absolute hostility that sets the conqueror against an absolute enemy. (Mbembe 25)

Debating the figure of the suicide terrorist, one can point out "suicide terrorism" as an exclusively Islamic way of destroying the enemy and gaining a place in heaven. However, the exploring of the geopolitical context of development of "suicide terrorism" demonstrates that terrorism has less to do with religious beliefs and with Islamic mysticism, it is the responding to imperial politics in colonies and post colonies. Khaled Beydoun concludes "dialectical Islamophobia, shapes, reshapes, and endorses views or attitudes about Islam and Muslim subjects inside and outside of America's borders. State actions legitimizes prevailing misconceptions, misrepresentations, and stereotypes of Islam and communicates damaging ideas through state-sponsored policy, programming, media or rhetoric, which in turn emboldens private violence against Muslim" (40):

> Islam is the youngest, fastest growing, and perhaps most controversial of the three monotheistic religions. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States (henceforth, 9/11), Islam and Muslims started to come to the forefront of the Western media, albeit not for very positive reasons. Because Osama Bin Laden cited religious motives for his criminal attacks, a debate started brewing in the Western media over the true nature of Islam and whether or not it justified or even encouraged violence, particularly against non-Muslims. Many media outlets referred to the 9/11 terrorists simply as ''Muslims,'' which fuelled stereotyping of Islam and did nothing to help stop the verbal and physical attacks taking place against Muslims in the U.S. at the time. (Rasha Abdullah 1)

2. Contemporary Diasporic Writings

In terms of history, diaspora designated an abandoned spreading of a large group of people from their aboriginal land to others, such as the propagation of Jews. Academics had not been able to categorize or to explicitly define the term as the connotation of Diaspora has reformed over the times. Lately, many types of diaspora have been nuanced depending on its causes; colonialism, slavery (trade), immigrations.

However Diaspora can be used in different categories like history, literature, sociology, religion. In fact, some diasporic groups keep patriotic and political connections with their motherland. Other assets that may differentiate between other Diasporas are interactions with other cultures, and a social hardship in the process of adaptation in the country of destination.

The diasporic writers may consider going back to their homeland for multiple purposes or spontaneous needs such as the continuous hunt for their origins, heritage or simply to crystalize their history. In fact for these writers the process of constructing cultural identity passes through home-longing and reliving memories. They write in the background of their native country cultural practises and simultaneously acculturate and get acquainted to the hosting land. Such fiction acts as a bridge across numerous ethnicities and cultures, which facilitates the relationships, the interactions between diverse populations, and paves the way for positive globalization. The pursuit of identity, nostalgia, the investigation of the roots, a sense of guilt and a feeling of in-betweeness have always been there in the consciousness of the writers.

Even so, Martin Braumann has emphasized the classification of the word, "The idea of Diaspora has been celebrated as expressing notions of hybridity, heterogeneity, identity fragmentation and (re)construction, double consciousness, fractures of memory, ambivalence roots and routes, discrepant cosmopolitanism, and so forth."(324). Later on, the term has gained a broader connotation which comprises a range of groups. In his noticeable book *The Global Diasporas,* Robin Cohen has described four stages of Diaspora:

First, the classical use of the term, usually capitalized as Diaspora and used only in the singular, was mainly confined to the study of the Jewish experience. The Greek Diaspora made an off-stage appearance. Excluding some earlier casual references,

from the 1960s and 1970s the classical meaning was systematically extended, becoming more common as a description of the dispersion of Africans, Armenians and the Irish. In the second phase, in the 1980s and onwards, as Safran notably argued, Diaspora was deployed as „a metaphoric designation‟ to describe different categories of people – expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities tout court‟. Given their number (certainly now over 59 one hundred), their historical experiences, collective narratives and differing relationships to homelands and host lands, they were bound to be a more varied cluster of diasporas than the groups designated in phase one. The third phase, from the mid-1990s, was marked by social constructionist critiques of „second phase‟ theorists, who, despite their recognition of the proliferation of groups newly designated as Diasporas and the evolution of new ways of studying them, were still seen as holding back the full force of the concept. Influenced by postmodernist readings, social constructionists sought to decompose two of the major building blocks previously delimiting and demarcating the diasporic idea, namely „homeland‟ and” ethnic / religious community”(1)

Later on Cohen adds:

By the turn of the century, the current phase of consolidation set in. The social constructionist critiques were partially accommodated, but were seen as in danger of emptying the notion of Diaspora of much of its analytical and descriptive power. While the increased complexity and de-territorialization of identities are valid phenomena and constitutive of a small minority of Diasporas (generally those that had been doubly or multiply displaced over time), ideas of home and often the stronger inflection of homeland remain powerful discourses. (2)

Extensively, Diasporic writings are the expression of a "metaphysical" migration and the place for the articulation of otherness based on cultural crossbreeding, the permanent negotiation of an identity where everything is played out in between, from the affirmation of

35

a difference to the appropriation of a dominant culture. Diasporic writing is thus, at various levels, a writing of displacement, of uprooting towards a desire to re-anchor, spatial, cultural and literary "territorialization". In its questioning of the relationship to oneself and to others, these successive journeys across the ocean, urban migration, and geographical boundaries are less national than racial, social and cultural, it affects self-awareness and the process of identity construction; they question the attachment to land and provoke uncertainty. (Duboin)

Nowadays, globalization is marked by interacting and multinational actions that wipe away boundaries. Simultaneously, globalization initiates to cultural homogenization, but also to access to recognized diversity and the closure of identity. In this sense, postcoloniality seems to be progressively disappearing to let place to a globalized transculturality, and where writers themselves are becoming itinerant and pluralistic figures. Hence, it encourages correlations and influences identity in an extensive world where folks drop their attitudes and increase them all at the same time.

However, the notion of identity can take many dimensions. For Stuart Hall we must understand the concept of identity as a "production." In fact, it is a sequential process of representations and important experiences. He adds "identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past." (225), in this sense, Hall stipulates that it is the only way we can correctly recognize the disturbing character of the colonial experience:

> In terms of colonialism, underdevelopment, poverty, and the racism of colour,
> the European presence is that which, in visual representation, has positioned
> the black subject within its dominant regimes of representation: the colonial
> discourse, the literatures of adventure and exploration, the romance of the
> exotic, the ethnographic and traveling eye, the tropical languages of tourism,

travel brochure and Hollywood and the violent, pornographic languages of

ganja and urban violence. (232-233)

In an interview with Klaus Stierstorfer on *Diaspora and Home*, Homi K. Bhabha stated his opinion on the significance of terms and the exaggerated connotation they can communicate:

> What is being iterated or articulated around the concept of home are certain needs, certain interests, certain passions and affects, which actually then create that life-world, that existential comfort that you associate with home. But it seems to me that we have, to use a word I very rarely use, "essentialized" iteration, in terms like diaspora, or movement, or migration. You know, it seems as if everybody were migrating now. That is exaggerated. There are life worlds that are made for specific reasons, and they have many geographical and temporal locations. And that, I think, is both the trajectory of home, and the continual tension of home. (16)

2.1 The "9/11 Narratives"

The productions of writers of Muslim or Arab origin intending different perspectives on the events of 9/11 were not put into light and generally did not receive sufficient media attention. The phenomenon of the "fictionalisation of memory" among young Muslims in the diaspora, the attachment to an "imaginary Islam", has been exploited since the 9/11 events to facilitate a sense of persecution of their group identity. The emerging genre known as "Muslim writing" functions as a powerful and creative platform to respond to the systematic demonization of Muslim communities and the construction of diverse, complex and conventional maps of Muslim identity. (Ahmed et al.) "Neo Muslim writing" (Nash), such as Leila Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies*, is a challenge to create a positive and nuanced image of Muslims in response to widespread stereotypes of Muslims as fundamentalists.

However, the emphasis may be on another important element of migratory writing, which is the representation of cultural and religious identity as a form of diaspora, which seems to underline the key element of Muslim writing as a literary form for analysing the hybrid existence of Muslims that includes the type of identity reflected in the 9/11 events, namely the identity of resistance as a form of contemporary Muslim existence in the West. Still, since 11 September, this migratory status has been exacerbated by religious fundamentalism, which radicalised it in many ways, while simultaneously emphasising Muslim identity, thus clearly distinguishing Muslim identity from non-Muslim identity as such. In fact, in the past, post-colonial writing was characterized by concepts such as exile, migration trauma, immigration, assimilation, diaspora or globalization, which together represented a "migrant state" (Said 2008).

The presentation of the Other is a central theme in post-colonial studies, of which Islamic writing as it is constructed is part of. Gayatri Spivak and Edward Said, the most important critics in this field, assumed it. To illustrate, Spivak demands constant criticism so that the other does not become an object of knowledge. She also constantly argues that representation can never be truly objective. These basic concepts became clear between 2001 and 2007, when many "9/11 narratives" represented or referred directly or indirectly to Islam and Islamic fundamentalism in post-9/11 English novels.

2.2. Globalization and Hybrid Identity

Hybridity has evolved and changed through time, there have not been a formal or pragmatic definition attributed to hybridity. The dynamic of the concept has been explored in different fields, in the postcolonial field it referred to compound identity and the dominant relationship established between the settlers and the colonized.

However, speaking of identity, the concepts has been addressed way before the issues of hybridity. Frantz Fanon has denounced the damaging consequences of colonialism on the colonized identity. As pointed out by Scott Morrison "They are physical manifestations of the

interaction between the colonists and colonized, but redefine themselves, as best they can, in alignment with their Native, rather than transplant, ancestors"(50).

The emergence of issues within migration, race, and ethnicity in parallel with the rise of questions about modernity and traditions, as well as religion and multiculturalism. Hybridity became strongly associated with identity, in this regard, investigations attempt to explain the changes this latter undergo within a diversity of circumstances.

On the one hand, Frantz Fanon puts into light the consequences of the relationship between the colonizer and the native, as he points out the damages it provokes during the process of the construction of identity. On the other hand, Said, establishes the relation between the Orient and the West in a post-colonial critical study where he denounces the representations of the Orient in the Western world.

Homi K. Bhabha (1949) also applied the term hybridity in post-colonial discourse to refer to ways in which colonized people have resisted the power and authority of the colonizer. Bhabha thought up the term "the third space", which is another level of resistance between striking cultures; a liminal space which "provides the terrain for elaborating policies of selfhood particular or mutual that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative signs of collaboration, and contestation"(The Location). "In this "in-between" space, new cultural identities are formed, transformed, and are constantly in a state of becoming. This third space decomposes the colonial binary thinking and opens a liminal road for re-articulation and negotiation" (50).

In the academic work, *Hybrid Identities and Muslim Faith in Leila Aboulela's Novels: Minaret and The Translator*, it has been concluded:

> Globalization and immigration have both played a major role in constructing and
> shaping cosmopolitan societies, which encouraged the creation of a literature that
> encompasses various themes including migration, Diaspora and race. However, in the

atmosphere of intercultural exchange that has shaped the postmodern world; the notion of hybridity has adopted a multitude of uses, and have been employed to express different meaning in different fields of study, starting with linguistics, racial theory, postcolonial theory and finally cultural studies.(8)

2.3. The Image of Islam after the 9/11 attacks

The global image of Islam has changed after the events of September 11th and it is only natural to note the fear and confusion of the American citizens but also the citizens of the world after this tragedy. For many, the vision they had of Islam as a religion of peace dissipated under the smoke of the collision. However, the gloomy atmosphere and the negative tension which dominated did not guarantee a peaceful future for Islam as attested the article *Islam in America Post 9/11*:

> Muslim organizations and individuals suddenly came under scrutiny. Several prominent and trusted American Muslim charities such as the Holy Land Foundation and the Global Relief Foundation were shut down by the American government, charged with having ties to terrorists. Muslim Student Associations on college campuses across the country came under secret surveillance by American police. Muslims continue to be singled out by federal security. The FBI continues to closely monitor Muslim communities at mosques. While the federal agents often work collaboratively with Muslim community members, investigations are not always transparent. Many Muslims are eager to work with local and federal agents, while others are frustrated by the lack of privacy they are able to maintain. (n.pag.)

In the real life, not all Muslims are Arabs and not all Arabs are Muslims, and the equation applies equally to Muslims who are not necessarily "terrorists."

As summarized in the article, *Arab and Muslim Americans and Islam in the Aftermath of 9/11*, the violence and the reactions fuelled as half of the population stood in a double jeopardy "The terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, fuelled widespread concern and speculation about mounting Islamophobic sentiment among Americans in response to the events. To monitor developments in opinions about Muslims and Arabs (both living in the United States and abroad) and attitudes toward the Islamic faith, survey organizations began to assess more regularly Americans' attitudes on these topics"

However, the amalgam is complex, because in the end there is a fine line between Islam and Islamism; we are moving from a theology to an ideology, that being said, it is easy to observe for those who make socio-politics that when adding an "ism" to a concept, it quickly converts to a political subject. The military response the U.S government undertook after the tragedy was not less violent and aggressive. In fact, there was no time to make conclusions or to investigate the reasons behind the attacks. Contrastively, everything was clear and confused at the same time, in this sense, Daniel Pipes declares:

> Even less could they have understood that a paradigm shift took place on September 11, whereby terrorism left the domain of criminality and entered that of warfare? This change had many implications. It meant no longer targeting just the foot soldiers who actually carry out the violence but the organizations and governments standing behind them. It meant relying on the armed forces, not policemen. It meant defence overseas rather than in American courtrooms. It meant dispensing with the unrealistically high expectations of proof so that when reasonable evidence points to a regime or organization having harmed Americans, U.S. military force can be deployed. It meant using force so that the punishment is disproportionately greater than the attack. It also meant that, as in conventional war, America's military need not know the names and specific actions of enemy soldiers before fighting them. There is no need to know the

precise identity of a perpetrator; in war, there are times when one strikes first and asks questions later. (59-60)

Indeed, the response of the American government did not stir up fire. A sense of patriotism and thirst to avenge the innocent people killed during the attack was enough to displace certain written democratic values and thus make way for the implementation of a plan to first of guarantee the immediate safety of citizens but also not to miss the opportunity to show the enemy that it has attacked stronger than him as conveyed in the same above-cited article published by the University of Harvard:

> Politicians have also added fuel to the fire of anti-Islam sentiments in the United States. Former Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich identified *sharia* as "a moral threat to the survival of freedom in the United States." U.S. Congressional Representative Joe Walsh from Illinois said that there were "radical" Muslims in American neighbourhoods that "try to kill Americans every week." Within less than two weeks after Walsh made that statement at a town hall meeting in suburban Chicago, eight incidents of hate crime, primarily mosque defacements, were reported within the area. Representative Peter King of New Jersey chaired a series of congressional hearings beginning in 2011 to investigate the radicalization of American Muslims. The tone of the hearings coupled with the scrutiny King received for convening them underscores the tension that still exists in how Americans understand Islam and the Muslim community in the United States. (n. pag.)

2.4. The Contest and the Encounter of Terrorism in *The Kindness of Enemies*

The themes of Jihad and Terrorism were addressed in the novel in order to make a clear distinction between the peaceful jihad and the radical and fundamentalist Islamism that some ideologists promote in order to achieve political interests and implement a system of terror.

In fact, Aboulela describes the confusion and sense of sharing that British Muslims feel as a result of the accusations and suspicions levelled at them due to the multiple terrorist

attacks committed in the world and in the United States, subsequently the novel also presents the dilemma of British Muslims in the McCarthyism era. In his brilliant work about the theme of contest, Y Awad states:

> One of the main challenges encountering Muslim communities in Britain is the precarious position they occupy in the War on Terror. Following a series of terrorist attacks on various European metropolitan spaces in which Muslim extremists were involved, Muslim communities in Britain have come under pressure. In Britain, the introduction of CONTEST has deepened the grievances of British Muslims and intervened with their daily experiences as British citizens. CONTEST is organized around four work streams, each comprising a number of key objectives: *Pursue*, *Prevent*, *Protect* and *Prepare*. Of the four, *Prevent* has a great immediate bearing on the daily lives of Muslims in Britain. (75)

The reality of British Muslims is hard to imagine because they are undergoing a double punishment when for them as citizens they only want to live in peace and be Muslims without necessarily being categorised as such. For most British Muslims it is preferable not to discuss their beliefs fearing to be judged or misjudged, despite the pride toward their culture and background, they would prefer that no one knows who they are. At the beginning of the novel the protagonist Natasha, who has Muslim origins, stated:

> If I had been Dr Hussein, the girl wouldn't have asked me if I were Muslim. And yet still I would have had to explain the non-Muslim Natasha. Better like this, not even Muslim by name. Many Muslims in Britain wished that no one knew they were Muslim. They would change their names if they could and dissolve into the mainstream, for it was not enough for them to openly condemn 9/11 and 7/7, not enough to walk against the wall, to raise a glass of champagne, to eat in the light of Ramadan and never step into a mosque or say the shahada or touch the Qur'an. (Aboulela 21)

The Kindness of Enemies tackles the subject of terrorism and jihad, but primarily focuses on the experience of "ordinary" British Muslims who, under the tensions and repercussions of the violence behind the attacks, have found themselves in a form of ideological contestation of something they do not control. C. E Rashid, speaking of Aboulela, assumes "This does not come as a surprise if one takes into account Aboulela's tendency in her novels to represent "the lives and dilemmas of ordinary Muslims" (Rashid 622).

> the analysis of the novel shows that hybridity is a way of bridging different cultures and therefore, a way of tolerance and coexistence. The analysis also reveals Leila Aboulela's expertise as border subjectivity in implanting religious belief onto the novel without excluding her English-speaking reading public. She negotiates controversial issues related to her culture and religion as a Muslim with the aim to facilitate a better understanding of their real meaning and remove the misconceptions about them. Thus, she attempted to re-educate western readers of non-western cultures and to eliminate the obstacles that might stand in the way of productive negotiations and cross-cultural interchange. (Maha Alsawy)

Aboulela wanted to send a clear message through her novel which is that British Muslims are not sufficiently referred to in 9/11 narratives as observers, but are always presented as actors and victims of their own ideology. In this sense for Awad "Aboulela's novel contributes to the representation of the dilemmas of British Muslims under anti-terrorist legislations and it vividly depicts this tension through dramatizing the experiences of Oz, Malak and Natasha." (78)

However, Aboulela through her novel explores the different connections between each character and his way of living and experiencing religious and cultural racism. She also conveys that there were different types of Jihadism, and the comparison made through the

character of Shamil's way he admitted his defeat excavates the major turn the concept of jihad carries out in the Islamists nowadays' way of dealing with contest and difference. To explain this statement Natasha assumes in an international conference on Suicide, Conflict and Peace Research "I wanted to compare Shamil's defeat and surrender, how he made peace with his enemies, with modern-day Islamic terrorism that promoted suicide bombings instead of accepting in Shamil's words, 'that martyrdom is Allah's prerogative to bestow'. How did this historical change in the very definition of jihad come about?"(Aboulela 250).

From the above quote, on can conclude that through her characters Aboulela conveys that the British Muslims are the first to contest and condemn terrorism, and that they are conscious that they are leading a different battle, a jihad of peace of which non-Muslims have not fear. Again, the contest is a call to encounter Islamophobia and put an end to the systematic association of Islam to terror. However, the government should know better who and how to CONTEST.

Awad has perfectly summarised how Leila Aboulela depicted the suffering Muslims have been subjected to. Indeed, the fact that she went through the experiences of a typical British Muslim family and put to light their positioning restored a certain justice as they are more important to talk about in the fictional novel than the fundamentalists who promote terror for political purposes. Hence, *The Kindness of Enemies* is a title that says a lot about the manner one treats an antagonist, in this sense, the historical and the contextual background of every event, fictional or non-fictional, is significant to recognize the distress of every presumed enemy:

> Aboulela's novel shows the devastating repercussions of the haphazard implementation of CONTEST on British Muslims. The novel also attempts to reflect on history to find answers to pressing questions that confront both British Muslims and British security authorities. Aboulela draws on the history of a British Muslim family with roots in the Caucasus to present two different realities that Muslims have

undergone over the past century and a half. In other words, Aboulela depicts how Muslims in Britain have become suspects and are deemed as a threat to the country's national security following the increasing terrorist attacks in the US, Europe and the rest of the world. Overall, Aboulela's novel valorises the dilemma of British Muslims in a British-style McCarthy era. (72)
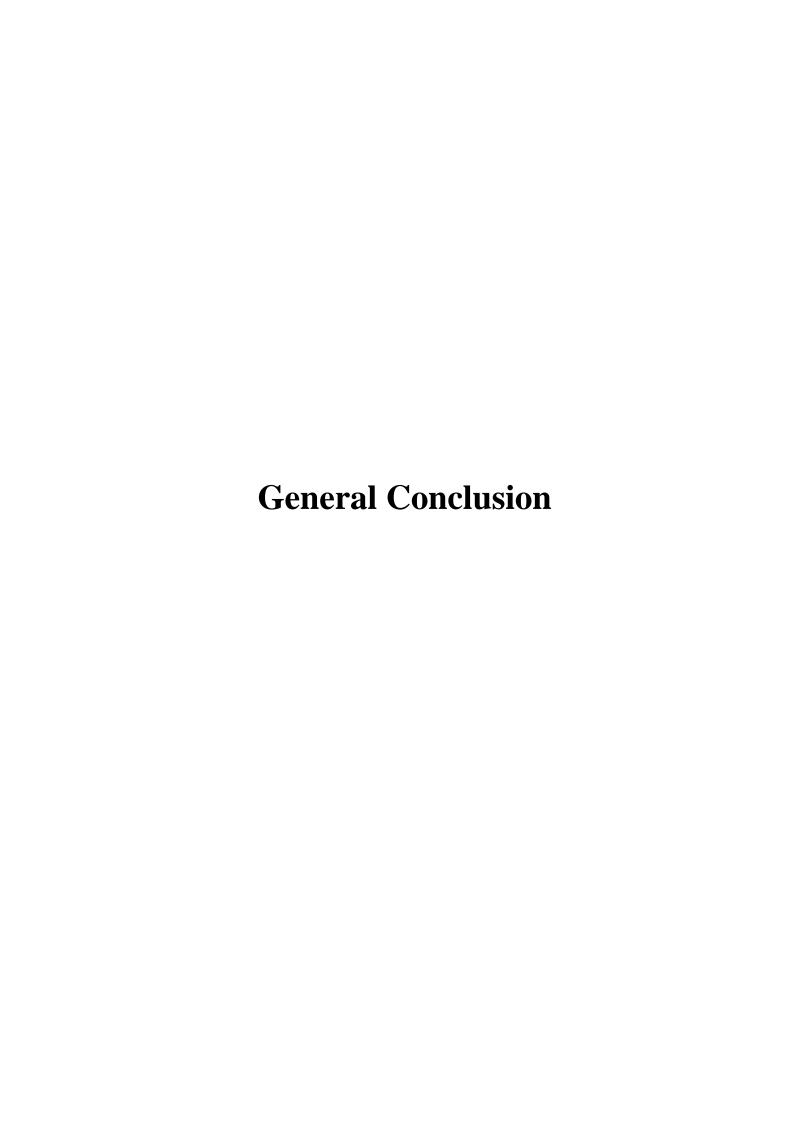
Conclusion

The present chapter first analysed the representation and the portrayal of Muslims, Islam and Arabs in the media after the September 11th attacks. Thus, the concept of Islamophobia was also discussed as it represents a major aftermath of the terrorist attacks.

Secondly, the chapter highlighted the importance of diasporic writing in the construction of cultural and religious identity. Indeed, the chapter analysed several points and concepts, including the "9/11narrative", a genre that emerged after the attacks and which was important for migrant writers as they were able to give their own perspective on the events and thus preserve their origins and culture, and in order to counter stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam in general.

Consequently, another point was developed in this chapter, that of the distortion of the image of Islam in the West. Leila Aboulela's being one of the authors who have sought to challenge stereotypes and provide a global view of the peaceful religion of Islam conveys, and what peaceful jihad really means for Muslims around the world, consequently the concept of CONTEST has been treated in a way that highlights the mind-set of ordinary British Muslims during and after the attacks. Indeed, Leila Aboulela emphasized the importance of collecting Muslims' opinions and views as they

were stigmatised by the government, the media and most importantly by themselves; in the sense that they were doubly condemned for something they did not ask for.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present research analysed Leila Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies*. The work paper objective is to highlight and address the difficulties encountered by Muslims and migrants in the Western world because of their origins or religion. Subsequently the major themes of mysticism, hybridity and identity have been addressed in this work. The problematic of the research has been embodied within the exposure of the stereotypes and the negative representations Islam suffers from especially after the 9/11 attacks.
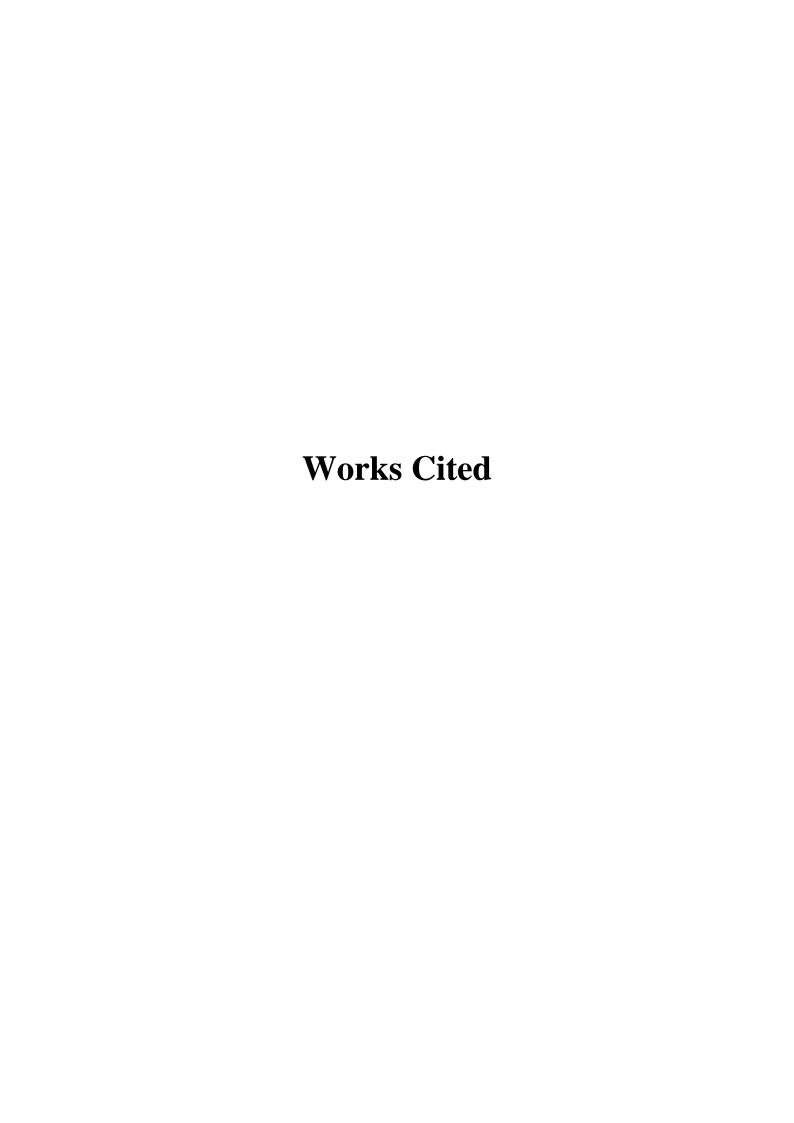
Thus, the research highlighted the reaction of the British Muslim writers, such as Leila Aboulela, who decided to respond to judgments through their fictional works. The dissertation has been divided into a general introduction, two chapters and a general conclusion. The general introduction summarised the whole work and gave a perspective of Islamophobia in the West, as well as the problematic of equating the word Jihad with terrorism.

The first chapter examined the historical context of the novel and exposed the actual standards of Islam additionally to the original definition of Jihad as viewed by Muslims. The second chapter covered the representations of Muslims and Islam in the media after the 9/11 attacks. The chapter examined the impact of stereotypical representations of Arabs and Muslims in the United States, Britain and other countries.

At the end of this study and in regards of the analysed works, it is first of all important to underline that this humble study has discussed a significant and up-to-date subject.

Indeed, this research has tried to answer the questions raised in the above problematic. The question of coexistence and the complexity of hybrid identity are subjects that will require continuous analysis due to the dynamics of their notions. Having said that, despite the dramatic events that the world observes today, on account of literature there will always be an open door to hope and

enthusiasm. In conclusion, Leila Aboulela's work, *The Kindness of Enemies*, is full of debate and themes to be analysed in order to develop new approaches to the fictional British novel and to enrich the theories of primarily new-historicism then post-colonialism which are key theories to understand today's words and world.

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Résumé

La présente recherche s'engage à analyser l'ouvrage de Leila Aboulela, « *The Kindness of Enemies* ». À cet égard, le roman est analysé en mettant l'accent sur le cadre historique et contextuel présenté dans ce roman « multi-période » qui passe d'une sous-intrigue contemporaine à une sous-intrigue historique. Cette double approche chronologique permet au lecteur de découvrir l'histoire de l'Imam Shamil, qui était une figure importante du djihad au XIXe siècle. Grâce à ce protagoniste, le lecteur peut discerner la valeur des croyances lorsqu'on est à la tête d'une guerre, mais surtout, le lecteur se projette dans une ligne du temps où le djihad a un sens qui promeut l'honneur, la dignité et la foi. Par conséquent, le travail de recherche tente d'examiner les valeurs primaires du Jihad à cette époque. Cependant, tout au long de l'intrigue contemporaine, un contraste est mis en lumière et laisse place aux parallèles et aux différences entre le présent et le passé. En effet, à travers le protagoniste Natasha et les autres personnages, l'étude tente de comparer et d'examiner la position idéologique que le djihadisme véhicule dans un monde post-11 septembre. Ainsi, l'étude entreprend l'analyse de l'assimilation systématique du Jihad à la terreur, puis met en évidence l'impact des stéréotypes et des fausses représentations des Arabes et des musulmans dans le monde occidental.

Mots clés : Jihad, attentat, représentation médiatique, néo-historicisme, post-colonialisme.