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Hollywood's Representation of Arab Muslims: A Semiotic Analysis of the Movie "Body of Lies"

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in English (Linguistics)

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DECLARATION

We, hereby, declare that this dissertation, entitled “Hollywood's Representation of Arab Muslims: A Semiotic Analysis of the Movie Body of Lies". has been undertaken by us for the requirements for Master Degree in English (Applied Linguistics) under the supervision of Mrs. Amira METIDJI. We also declare the materials of this research are the pure outcome of our investigation and do not incorporate any substances previously written or published by other researchers except those indicated in quotations, citations or in the reference list.

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, most Gracious and Merciful

All Praise to Allah who gave us health, patience, and strength to accomplish this work successfully.

I proudly dedicate this work to the symbol of love and purity, my dear parents who encouraged me with their prayers and advice.

To my lovely little brother Islam.

To my other brothers, Faris and Sid Ahmed.

To my sister Soumia and her daughters Nour Al- yakine and Tasnim.

Special thanks to all my classmates and dear friends especially Youssra, Yasmine.

Imane Belkacem

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious and Merciful
I address praise to Almighty Allah who gave me the patience and strength to finish this journey.
I dedicate this humble work to:
My beloved Father, who has been a constant source of support and encouragement during the challenges of completing this study.
To my dear Mother for her endless trust and prayers.
To my sisters and brothers, for their love and support.
To my lovely nieces and nephews.
To my beloved thesis partner Imane.
To all My dear friends especially
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Abstract

Nowadays, cinema is considered as one of the most famous entertainment tools in the world. When talking about cinema, one must shed light on Hollywood, which is the most popular film industry in the world, and it transmits hidden ideologies within its movies and can influence people's perceptions and change their opinions about a specific group of people depending on how they are being represented in those movies. This dissertation aims to investigates how Hollywood depicts Arab Muslims using the movie "Body of Lies" as a case study. Based on the qualitative descriptive method, the researchers analyzed eight scenes employing Barthes' theory of visual semiotics which consists of three levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth, to examine the different signs and unveil the ideologies embedded in each scene. The study's findings revealed that three main ideologies in regard to the representation of Arab Muslims are transmitted through Hollywood movie "Body of Lies".

Key Words: Arab Muslims, Hollywood, Barthes's theory of semiotics, stereotypes, ideologies.

ملخص

تعتبر السينما اليوم إحدى أشهر وسائل الترفيه في العالم. عند الحديث عن السينما، لا بد من تسليط الضوء على هوليوود، التي تعتبر أكثر صناعة سينمائية شهرة في العالم وتتطور باستمرار بسبب شعبيتها الواسعة، تنقل هوليوود أيديولوجيات مخفية من خلال أفلامها، التي يمكنها التأثير على تصورات الناس وتغيير آرائهم حول مجموعة معينة من الأشخاص اعتمادًا على كيفية توظيفهم في تلك الأفلام. تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى التحقيق في كيفية تصوير هوليوود للعرب المسلمين من خلال تحليل فيلم "جسد الأكاذيب" الذي يعتبر دراسة حالة. حيث قام الباحثون بتحليل ثماني لقطات مختارة من الفيلم اعتمادا على نظرية بارث حول التحليل السيميولوجي والتي تتكون من ثلاثة مستويات للدلالة: الوصف، والتحليل التضميني، والأسطورة، لفحص العلامات المختلفة والكشف عن الأيديولوجيات الكامنة في كل مشهد.

كشفت النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة أن الفيلم الأمريكي "جسد الأكاذيب" ينقل ثلاث أيديولوجيات للمشاهدين.
الكلمات المفتاحية: العرب المسلمون، هوليوود، نظرية بارث للتحليل السيميولوجي، الصورة النمطية، الأيديولوجيات.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Ferdinand De Saussure' Semiotic Theory……21

Figure 2: Ronald Barthes 'Semiotic Theory…….....25

Figure 3: Scene 1: The movie "Body of Lies" ……36

Figure 4: Scene 2: The movie "Body of Lies" ……40

Figure 5: Scene 3: The movie "Body of Lies" ……...….43

Figure 6: Scene 4: The movie "Body of Lies" …… ……...45

Figure 7: Scene 5: The movie "Body of Lies" ……50

Figure 8: Scene 6: The movie "Body of Lies" …….……...53

Figure 9: Scene 7: The movie "Body of Lies" ……...56

Figure 10: Scene 8: The movie "Body of Lies" …….….60

Table of Contents

Declaration……I

Dedications……..……II

Acknowledgements…….……IV

Abstract…….……...……V

الملخص…… VI

List of Figures…….....VII

Table of Contents….....VIII

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study.....1

2. Statement of the Problem.....2

3. Objectives of the Study.....2

4. Research Questions 3

5. Research Hypotheses 3

6. Significance of the Study 4

7. Dissertation's Layout.....4

8. Definition of Key Terms.....5

Chapter One: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Introduction.....8

1.1. Overview on Hollywood.....8

1.2. The Influence of Media.....10

1.3. What is Stereotype?.....11

1.3.1. Representation of Arab Muslims in American Movies.....12

1.4. What is Ideology? 14

1.4.1. Language, Power, and Ideology 16

1.4.2. How does Media form Ideology? 18

1.5. Overview on Semiotics… 19

1.5.1. Ferdinand De Saussure' Semiotic Theory.....20

1.5.2. Charles Sander Peirce' Semiotic Theory.....21

1.5.3 Ronald Gerard Barthes'Semiotic Theory.....22

1.5.3.1. Denotation …….23

1.5.3.2. Connotation……24

1.5.3.1. Myth……...24

1.5.4. Semiotics and its Role in Movies…….....25

1.6. Previous Studies.....26

Conclusion 29

Chapter Two: Research Methods, Procedures, and Data Analysis

Introduction.....31

2.1. Research Design.....31

2.2. Corpus of the Study… 32

2.3. Data Collection Procedures 34

2.4. Data Analysis Procedures.....35

2.5. Data Analysis……36

2.5.1 Figure 3: Scene 1…….....36

2.5.2. Figure 4: Scene 2……..…….....40

2.5.3. Figure 5: Scene 3…….....43

2.5.4. Figure 6: Scene 4…….....45

2.5.7. Figure 7: Scene 5…….……50

2.5.8. Figure 8: Scene 6…….……53

2.5.9. Figure 9: Scene 7…….……56

2.5.10. Figure 10: Scene 8……..…….……60

Conclusion. 62

Chapter Three: Discussion of the Results, Pedagogical Implications, and Further Suggestions

Introduction.....65

3.1. Discussion of the Result.....65

3.1.1. Summary of the Findings.....65

3.1.2. Reconnecting Findings to the Research Question.....69

3.2. Pedagogical Implications and Limitation of the Study….....72

3.2.1. Pedagogical Implications of the Study….....72

3.2.2 Limitations of the Study.....73

3.3. Further Suggestions.....74

Conclusion 74

General Conclusion.....76

Reference List 80

General Introduction

General Introduction

This general introduction makes the foundation of this dissertation. It is dedicated to present the study's background and stating the research problem. Besides, it encompasses the research objectives, questions and hypotheses, followed by the significance of this study, the dissertation structure and concludes with the definitions of certain key words that are related to the topic.

1. Background of the Study

Cinema is considered as the most famous entertainment medium in the world, especially the Western media. Hollywood, located in Los Angeles California, is one of the greatest film industries in the world. Over the years, Hollywood movies have captivated audiences of all ages and different countries and cultures, as it is producing different genres of movies such as: action, science fiction, documentary, thriller, and fantasy. The influence of Hollywood movies spread out of the American borders, transmitting American customs, ideas and culture to people around the word. They have a great impact on the viewers' minds. In this regard, Maisuwong (2012) proposed that "the movies have a high ability in capturing imagination, shaping, and directing the sense of what was real, true and preferable, because movies contain both motion picture and sound" (p.1).

Arab Muslims are often being portrayed in several Hollywood movies, especially after the events of September 11, 2001. One notable example is the movie "Body of Lies", directed by Ridley Scott and released in 2008, is one of the prominent American movies that deals with the representation of Arab Muslims. The application of semiotic analysis theory offers a valuable approach to examining such films and

understanding how characters are represented. Moreover, Semiotics aims at the interpretation of signs, mainly images, by different societies and cultures. Roland Barthes is one of the leading figures in the domain of Semiology. He introduced his theory of visual semiotic analysis for the analysis of signs.

2. Statement of the Problem

The representation of Arab Muslims in American media, mainly during the period of post-9/11, raises noticeable concerns regarding the permanence of stereotypes and the cultural biases in the portrayal of Arab Muslims in movies like "Body of Lies". This has been a subject of much debate and criticism; however, there is a lack of in-depth analysis concerning the application of Barthes' semiotic theory to interpret the images and meanings associated with Arab Muslim characters in such media representations. By addressing this research problem, this study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the representations, semiotic analysis, and ideological interpretations in the portrayal of Arab Muslims through movies by selecting Barthes' semiotic theory as a tool of analysis because most of the researchers do not apply the mentioned model as a linguistic tool to reveal the ideologies embedded in Western cinema.

3. Objectives of the Study

American movies are very popular and have considerable influence in the whole world. The primary objective of this research is to identify the impact of the American movies in shaping cultures, in addition to analyzing the portrayal of Arab Muslims in Hollywood cinema, focusing on stereotypes, biases, and the representation

in the selected movie "Body of Lies ". As a result, this research aims to expose and shed light on the hidden ideologies transmitted by Hollywood company through its movies, by applying Barthes' semiotic theory in analyzing the eight chosen scenes of the movie mentioned above.

4. Research Questions

Based on the previous objectives, this study aims to address the following questions:

Main question:

• To what extent can Barthes' semiotic theory be applicable in analyzing the image of the Arab Muslims represented in the movie "Body of Lies"?

Sub-questions:

• How are the Arab Muslims represented in the movie "Body of Lies"?

• What are the main embedded ideologies regarding the movie's portrayal of the Arab Muslims?

5. Research Hypotheses

To address the research questions, this work suggests the following hypotheses:

Main hypothesis

• Barthes' semiotic theory of analysis can be relevant to reveal the different ideologies in the movie "Body of Lies ".

Sub-hypotheses

• Arab Muslims are being represented from a negative perspective in the movie "Body of Lies".

• There are diverse ideologies conveyed through the movie “Body of Lies.”

6. Significance of the Study

The present research provides an analysis of the representation of the Arab Muslims in the movie "Body of Lies", offering insights into how media affect people and shape perceptions of the addressed audiences. By applying Barthes' semiotic theory, this dissertation demonstrates the value of semiotic analysis in unveiling ideologies transmitted by American media to the world. Therefore, this research is expected to be useful for both researchers and readers. The present dissertation provides researchers with more knowledge about Semiotic analysis and the way to apply it in analyzing motion-pictures. Furthermore, this research gives contribution to the ones who are concerned with the studies related to media, stereotypes, and ideologies. For readers, this project helps them to understand profoundly the construction of ideologies in similar cinematic works.

7. Dissertation’s Layout

The present study consists of a general introduction, three chapters and a general conclusion. The introduction begins with a general background of the study, followed by research problem, objectives of the research, research questions and hypotheses, significance of the study, in addition to the layout of the dissertation and definition of some key terms.

The first chapter is entitled “Literature Review and Theoretical Framework”. It gives a review of Hollywood company, the influence of media, definition of

stereotype, ideology, then it deals with the representation of Arab Muslims in American movies. It then tackles the theoretical framework which includes an overview of semiotics taking into consideration de Saussure, Pierce, and Barthes theories. In addition, it sheds light on several previous studies that are relevant to the scope of the research.

The second chapter focuses on the research methods and data analysis. It includes the research design and the corpus of the study, followed by the data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and the setting. Furthermore, it presents the analysis of eight selected scenes of the movie “Body of Lies” using Roland Barthes' theory of visual semiotics.

The last chapter is devoted to the discussion of the results, pedagogical implications, and further suggestions. It tackles a summary of the findings while also connecting them to the research questions. Furthermore, the last chapter highlights the study's limitations and offers further suggestions to students for future research. Finally, the dissertation closes with a general conclusion that wraps up everything related to the study.

8. Definition of Key Terms

Cinema: The definition of cinema encompasses the film industry and the art of making movies, often referring to both the business and the creative process involved in producing motion pictures. Additionally, cinema can also denote a place where movies are shown to an audience, commonly known as a movie theater or cinema hall. (Collins English Dictionary, 2024)

Hollywood: is a district in Los Angeles synonymous with the American film industry, encompassing both the physical location and the broader concept of the film industry itself. (“Hollywood - Definition, Meaning & Synonyms,” n.d.)

Terrorism: is the calculated use of violence to create fear in a population and achieve specific political objectives. It involves acts of violence or threats that target innocent civilians to influence policies or regimes. Terrorism can be practiced by various groups, including political, nationalistic, religious, or revolutionary organizations, as well as state institutions. The term has evolved over time and is characterized by its intent to generate fear and achieve goals through violence when direct military victory is not feasible. (“Memorializing the Victims of Terrorism,” 2021)

Chapter One: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter One: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This chapter serves as the primary foundation of the research. It is divided into two sections. The first section introduces a general overview about Hollywood, the influence of media, definition of stereotype, the representation of Arab Muslims in American movies. Then, it proceeds with the definition of ideology and how media forms ideologies. The second part of this chapter provides an overview on semiotics along with de Saussure, Pierce, and Barthes theories. Finally, this chapter reviews some previous studies that were found to be relevant to the scope of this investigation.

1.1 Overview on Hollywood

Cinema is considered as the greatest and most popular public entertainment art in the world. Callimanopulos (1983) stated, “Cinema has emerged as the most alluring and expensive communication's medium of the century. No other art form has been disseminated so effectively or has appeared to transcend so many national and cultural boundaries” (As cited in Film and the Third World, 2010, para. 1)

When talking about cinema, one must mention the Hollywood Company, which is the epicentre of the American film industry. It is a powerful medium that has captivated audiences worldwide for over a century through the magic of storytelling, visual imagery, and sounds. According to Bird (2023), the American film industry, often referred to as Hollywood, is well-known worldwide the world for its dominance and control controlling of a large portion of the global entertainment market. It consistently produces successful movies and fosters some of the most talented actors,

directors, and filmmakers. He suggested that the critical elements that contribute to the thriving American film industry are: talent and creativity; high production values; distribution and marketing; financial backing and investment.

Hellerman (2023) ascertained that the Nestor Company, which is the first movie studio in Hollywood was established in 1911. By the 1920s, Hollywood had become the centre of the American film industry. In this regard, Metz explained, "By 1917, the classical Hollywood cinema was organized around a studio system. The industry evolved into an oligopoly, the control of an industry by a small number of companies. Besides, Maher (2022) claimed that more movies were made in the 1920s and 1930s than pretty much any other decade ever, and the Golden Age of Hollywood began to falter by 1948 and fully came to an end by the 1960s. However, nowadays, Hollywood still holds the highest ratings in the world.

Kolmar (2003) stated that Columbia Pictures is one of the largest film producers and distributors globally and a member of the “Big Five” American movie studios. The studio has produced a total of 245 movies since its inception in 1924, and the other largest film studios are: Walt Disney Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Legendary Entertainment, and Twenty-First Century Fox.

Hollywood company captivates a large number of viewers either children or adults, from different countries and races as it is the biggest and the most popular film industry in the world. Thus, it may influence them whatever their ages and races are.

1.2 The Influence of Media

Media is considered an instrument that is more powerful and flexible than any other means of communication. When talking about media, one must shed light on American movies, which are not only viewed in America but also by the massive audience around the world. Silver (2007) emphasized that for more than a hundred years, the oligopoly of Hollywood studios comprising Universal, Paramount, M.G.M., United Artists, Fox, Columbia, Warner Brothers, R.K.O., and Walt Disney has dominated the world of cinema, influencing millions of fans around the world (p. 01).

Boggs & Petrie (2000) said in their book, "The film is a unique art production and has a strong influence toward its viewer because it combines paint, technology, music, literature and drama, and becomes interesting to be watched" ("The Art of Watching Film," p.2).

American movies influence people both positively and negatively. The positive impact is entertaining people because of the diversity of movies' genres that captivates people of both genders and all ages, such as action, comedy, fantasy, thriller, horror, and science fiction movies. They also help the EFL learners improve their listening skills and master the American accent. However, American movies may influence the audience negatively by changing their beliefs, personal views, and sometimes even personalities. In this regard, Maisuwong (2012) argued "The movies have the ability to capture imagination, shape, and direct the sense of what is real, true, and preferable because they contain both motion picture and sound" (p. 1).

Maisuwong (2012) stated that media is a powerful and influential source of ideas; it has a significant role in shaping visual perspectives. By watching movies, the viewers get the pseudo-involvement with the scenes depicted in the movie; they sense the reality and the possibility that the movies can move the audiences, which refers to the strong relationship between movies and audiences (p. 4). He added that according to his survey, some audiences are affected by ideology and value culture; otherwise, those ideologies and values that are contained in Hollywood movies can alter the attitudes and thoughts of some people. For instance, it appeared that America was the worst during World Wars, but after watching the movies about World Wars, some people changed their opinions about America, which has been depicted as a hero, and other countries, which were bad and killing others brutally (p. 7).

Therefore, as movies are part of the media, they have the power to change opinions about nations and groups of people, either positively or negatively, depending on the way they have been portrayed in the movie. Arab Muslims are among the groups of people that have often been stereotyped in American movies.

1.3 What is Stereotype?

"Stereotype is a set of idea that people have about what someone or something is like" (cambridge dictionary, n. d). It is used to classify the attitude and behaviours of different groups broadly. It also can be assumptions that are held about a social group.

Stereotypes have determined consequences for societies at all levels. They not only affect the group being stereotyped, but also have an impact on the person who believes and applies stereotype. For instance, tagging an entire race, nation, sex,

profession, etc., with one label is a fixed preconception that distorts reality and denies people their diversity and individuality. In contrast, people who apply stereotypes tend to fall prey to misjudgment and deprive themselves of "the opportunity to discover the common humanity they share with others" (Lippman, 1992, p. 50). Lippman pinpointed the causes of stereotypes and highlighted the human tendency to instrumentally accept stereotypes as "pictures in our head". What people know about themselves, and the rest of the world, is not what they have actually experienced but rather what they have been repeatedly told to be true (p. 9).

1.3.1 Representation of Arab Muslims in American Movies

The attacks of September 11 have dramatically shifted the spotlight of mainstream media and Cinema to Arab Muslims is covering their socio-cultural norms. The cinema developed a new theme of War films that usually projected Muslims as adversaries. Hassan stated that The American depiction of Arabs and Muslims through media was associated with the views of different western authors who have enlarged the United state's scope in the portrayal of the Middle eastern groups. In other terms, the western media is dominated by the united state's negative and complicated Oriental spots, and the best example on that is Hollywood Filmmaker's projection of Arabs Muslims stereotypical image (Hassan, n. d). Ideally, filmmakers ought to be allowed to exercise their creative freedom without the constraints of censorship. However, denigration and demonization of an entire religious, ethnic or national group is not only unjust, but also dangerous and insidious.

Shaheen (2003) studies more than 900 movies in which Arabs appeared, he found out that 95% of those movies portrayed the Arabs as villains and dangerous mentions (p.28). Shaheen (2015) explained:

> I am not saying an Arab should never be portrayal as the Villain. What I am saying is that almost all Hollywood depictions of Arabs are bad ones. This is a grave injustice. Repetitious and negative images of the reel Arab literally sustain adverse portraits across generations. The fact is that for more than a century produces have tarred an entire group of people with the same sinister brush. Hundreds of movies reveal Western protagonists spewing out unrelenting barrages of uncontested slurs, calling Arabs: “assholes,” “bastards, camel-dicks,” “pigs,” “devil-worshippers,” “jackals,” “rat “Rag-heads,” “towel-heads,” “scum-buckets,” “sons-of-dogs,” “Buzzards of the jungle,” “sons-of-whores,” “sons-of-unnamed goats,” and “sons-of-she-camels. … other movies contain the word “Ayrab,” a vulgar Hollywood epithet for Arab that is comparable to dago, greaser, kike, nigger, and gook. (p. 7)

As previously stated, Shaheen classifies Hollywood’s Arab characters into five major categories: Villains, Sheikhs, Maidens, Egyptians, and Palestinians.

According to Alghamdi (2015), the media creates images of Islam and Muslims as "Other." They are described as extremely violent, sexist, militant, and undemocratic (as cited in Kiran et al, 2021).

Likewise, Eijaz (2018) asserted that Hollywood has the most significant market; its representation of East and Muslims has always been despicable. Muslims are rarely

articulated in a binary fashion. There are usually negative associations, where Islam is shown as monolithic and Muslims as fundamentalists. Hollywood cinema has stigmatized Muslims as dangerous, pre-modern and uncivilized people which is informed by certain biases and is contributing to prejudgments and stereotypes towards the Muslims and Islam. The representation of Muslims in Hollywood films directs the orientalist discourses about Muslims.

The images of the East are represented in a darker shade throughout the history of Hollywood. They are signified as the social, political, and economic apprehension of capitalism. Extensive rise in Islamophobia must be devoted to media for reflecting such images (Alalawi, 2015)

El-Amine (2005) pointed out that the racist caricatures projected and reinforced in Hollywood films have played a significant role in developing negative associations with Arabs and Muslims. She proposes that Islamic menace "has replaced the red menace, and the 'evil empire' of the cold war has become... 'evil doers' of the Arab and Muslim world" (El-Amine, 2005, para. 2).

She further suggested that Arabs in movies are portrayed as being terrorists, fanatics, dirty, irrational, violent, and, above all, disposable; the fictional world of Hollywood does not stop with films; even the news media uses the same stereotypes and images" (para. 18, 19).

1.4 What Is Ideology

Ideology plays an important role in our lives. It is a system of systematic ideas and concepts based on human life and culture. The term ideology does not have only

one definition; it was defined in various ways. It was first coined by the French Enlightenment aristocrat and philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy in 1796. According to him, "ideology is based on the notion of genesis" (Althusser, 1971, p. 171). Karl Marx made different statements about ideology and tackled various aspects. Marx asserted that human knowledge, beliefs, and behaviours reflected and were shaped by the economic relationships that existed in society (Williams 1985, Marx and Engels 1970, Marx 1977, as cited in Gee, 2008, p. 27). "By the term economic relationships, he meant something fairly broad, something like the relationships people contracted with each other in society in order to produce and consume wealth." (Gee, 2008, p. 28)

On the contrary, Louis Althusser (1971) introduced another meaning of ideology that differs from the ones mentioned above. In Althusser's view, ideology is fundamentally practical and material. He rejected the abstract meaning of ideology; for him, ideology exists in social apparatuses. These social institutions have the capacity to enforce certain beliefs, habits, rituals, and customs. According to Louis Althusser, these ideological apparatuses belong to the state. They are divided into two kinds: repressive state apparatus (RSA), which includes the army, police, and courts. Those devices function to prevent violence. The ideological state apparatus (ISA) includes the church, school, and family, which function to support the state ideology; both of them are necessary to keep labour in the interest of the state.

Moreover, van Dijk (2000) argued:

> Ideologies, on the other hand, are belief systems that are only shared by specific (ideological) groups of people, and are typically not shared and taken for

> granted by the whole sociocultural community. In other words, they embody beliefs about which there are differences of opinion, and that hence are typically persuasively attacked and defended among members of different ideological groups. Thus, whereas ideologies may be beliefs that are taken for granted and presupposed within the own group, they are not so across groups and in society as a whole. This implies, as it should, that as soon as ideological beliefs are accepted and taken for granted by all members of a community, by definition they are no longer ideologies but will count as knowledge in that community. Conversely, and for the same reason, what once counted as generally accepted belief, and hence as knowledge, may later by challenged by special groups of people and thus come to be seen and used as an ideology, as is typically the case of religion. (p. 177)

Based on what have been said earlier, ideologies are belief systems that are shared by specific groups and not universally accepted by the entire sociocultural community.

1.4.1 Language, Power, and Ideology

Fairclough stated that ideologies are regarded as a form of power, which constitutes and maintains power relations through generating consent or at least acquiescence, power through hegemony rather than through violence or force. Hence, the media upholds a significant place in every society. Media is also considered as the power of a state which reflects the current situations through various mediums, such as newspapers and movies. Movie producers depict an image of society through words to produce different ideologies. This case is observed through semiotics on verbal and

nonverbal use of language. Cinema in any society shows the issues based on the relative ideology of that society. (As cited by Nusrat et al. ,2020, p.25).

In addition to language and ideology, power is another fundamental concept in critical discourse studies. Van Dijk (1995) explained social power as a form of control of one group by another. For the dominant group's interests, such control can be extended to the dominated groups' behaviors and minds, and that is the dominant groups' ideology to control people's thoughts.

Language plays a major role in the ideological process, and ideology plays a major role in shaping communities. It affects people's beliefs, opinions, and personalities. Van Dijk (2000) explained the role of ideologies, highlighting their crucial relation to language, discourse, and power:

> One of the crucial social practices influenced by ideologies is One of the crucial social practices influenced by ideologies is language use and discourse, which in turn also influence how we acquire, learn, or change ideologies. Much of our discourse, especially when we speak as members of groups, expresses ideologically-based opinions. We learn most of our ideological ideas by reading and listening to other group members, beginning with our parents and peers. Later, we 'learn' ideologies by watching television, reading text books at school, advertising, the newspaper, novels, or participating in everyday conversations with friends and colleagues, among a multitude of other forms of talk and text. Some discourse genres, such as those of catechism, party rallies, indoctrination, and political propaganda, indeed have the explicit aim of teaching ideologies to group members and newcomers. (p. 9).

The quotation above highlights the crucial relationship between language and ideology. It emphasizes how people learn the majority of their ideological beliefs by reading and listening to other members of their surroundings, starting with their parents and friends. Then, they absorb ideologies through several kinds of media outlets, including books, newspapers, marketing, television, and literature. Eventually, that is a practical way adopted by the ruling class in order to preserve power. That is to say, language, ideology, and power are interrelated concepts.

1.4.2. How Does Media Form Ideology?

As culture is the smartest way to control people's minds, Cole (2020) claimed, "Cultural hegemony refers to domination or rule maintained through ideological or cultural means. It is usually achieved through social institutions, which allow those in power to strongly influence the values, norms, ideas, expectations, worldview, and behavior of the rest of society" (What is Cultural Hegemony, para. 1). Media contributes to forming ideologies and conveying hidden messages to audiences, as it is a part of the social institutions that have been mentioned in the quotation above.

According to Macdonnell (1988), ideology continues to become important when the media interferes, as it plays an important role in the creation of the ideological vision of the world. Even political discourse is ideologically influenced, media documents often contain ideological elements (p.59).

Consequently, the American film industry, Hollywood, which is the biggest film industry in the world, has the power to form ideologies, influence people, and alter their opinions and beliefs. Through the use of motion pictures, many hidden messages may be transmitted to the world. In order to analyze and decipher those

ideologies, the semiotics analysis theory will be used, as it is the most congruent theory for this study. More details will be provided in the next section.

1.5 Overview on Semiotics

"Semiotic awareness was initiated by Augustine (c. 397 AD) and Poinsot, then followed by John Locke in 1690 and Charles Sanders Peirce, who discovered the categories of semiotics, realism, and idealism (1867–1914).". (Andi & Syafri, n.d.)

Moreover, semiotics started as an academic investigation of the meaning of words (linguistics), then moved into examining people's behaviours (anthropology and psychology), and evolved to become an inquiry into culture and society (sociology and philosophy). It subsequently moved to assisting with the analysis of cultural products (films, literature, and art-critical theory), and finally it became a methodology for researching. ("What is Semiotics?" 2021, p. 1).

The article "Semiotics" summarized that semiotics is the study of the use of symbolic communication; it includes signs, logos, gestures, and other linguistic and non-linguistic communication methods. The word semiotics derives from the ancient Greek term semeiotikos, which describes the action of interpreting signs (p. 1).

One of the broadest definitions is that of Umberto Eco, who states that semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign (as cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 2).

Chandler (2007) declared:

> Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech but of anything which 'stands for' something else. In a semiotic sense,

signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects. Contemporary semioticians study signs not in isolation but as part of semiotics' sign-systems' (such as a medium or genre). They study how meanings are made and how reality is represented. (p.2)

The quote mentioned above demonstrates that semiotics is the study of everything that "stands for" something else, including things that we in common speech refer to as "signs." Signs can be words, images, gestures, sounds, or things with a semiotic meaning. Contemporary semioticians study signs as components of semiotic sign systems, and they investigate the construction of meanings and the representation of reality.

1.5.1 Ferdinand De Saussure' Semiotic Theory

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist and philosopher (1857–1913) widely regarded as the father of modern linguistics (structuralism) and one of the founders of the discipline of semiotics, defined semiotics as follows:

"A science that studies the life of sings within society is conceivable. It would be part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology. I shall call it semiology (from Greek semeion "sign"). Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them" (Danesi, 2004, p. 3).

Ferdinand de Saussure proposed that signs are composed of two elements: the first element is called the signifier, which refers to the image or the sound that is associated with meaning. The second part is the signified; it refers to the concept or meaning that the sign refers to. Saussure's theory emphasizes the arbitrary nature of

the relationship between the two previous elements, which means that there is no inherent connection between the two but that they are determined by cultural conventions and social agreements. (Moxley ,2023).

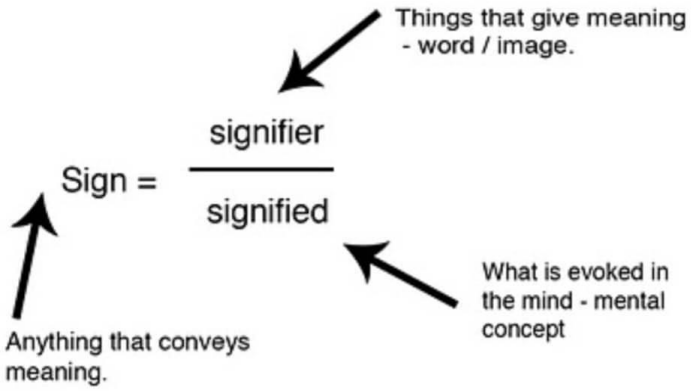


Figure1. *Ferdinand De Saussure' Semiotic Theory (Saussure, 1916, p.66).*

1.5.2 Charles Sander Peirce' Semiotic Theory

Charles Sander Peirce (1839–1914), a scientist and philosopher best known as the earliest proponent of pragmatism. "In the Peircean sense, symbols are based purely on conventional association" (Chandler, 2007, p. 38). In the Peircean sense, symbols are based purely on conventional association, and they are being interpreted according to ‘a rule’ or ‘a habitual connection’. Peirce thus characterizes linguistic signs in terms of their conventionality in a similar way to Saussure. (As cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 39)

Additionally, Atkin (2006) stated that Peirce's model is triadic, classifying the sign into three elements:

1. The object: it determines the sign; Peirce's notion of determination is by no means clear, and it is open to interpretation.
2. The representamen: the form that the sign takes; that element of the sign is responsible for signification as the "sign vehicle.".
3. The interpretant: the sense made by the sign. Peirce believes that by using certain features of the way the sign signifies its object, to generate and shape our understanding.

Therefore, Peirce, in his model of analysis, distinguished three types of signs:

1. An icon: which is a sign that refers to an object that has almost the same characteristics as the representamen, such as a picture of a person.

2. An index: which shows evidence of what is being represented, for instance smoke is an index of fire.

3. A symbol: which has no resemblance between the signifier and the signified. Symbols are learned culturally, such as numbers and alphabets.

1.5.3 Ronald Gerard Barthes'Semiotic theory

Ronald Gerard Barthes was a French philosopher, linguist, essayist, critic, and semiotician. He was the first one who apply ideas of semiotics to visual images, advertisement, motion pictures …. etc. He made significant contribution over many fields such as literature, philosophy. However, he extended de Saussure's concepts of the sign to object, images, practices, treating them as components in a language which communicate and establish meaning with society. Besides, Barthes focused on the interpretation of signs, mainly image by different societies and cultures. His semiotic

theory emphasizes on how signs and photographs represent different cultures and ideologies in different ways.

"The concept Mythology is the meaning of objects through sentences or meanings that often appear concerning these object" (Shoimmah & Indah, 2021, p. 186). The quote mentioned above stated that mythology refers to the interpretation of objects through the sentences or meanings that often appear about them.

According to Barthes (1957), semiology is the science that examines meanings in forms. It places less emphasis on content and more on signification (p.110). Additionally, Barthes is known by his essay "The Death of The Author" (1976), in which he argued against traditional literary practices of relying on the author's intentions and biography to definitely explain the ultimate meaning of a text.

Barthes also applied denotative and connotative in encounters in signification orders (Mazidah, 2018). Roland Barthes distinguishes two types of the signs' analysis, namely verbal and non-verbal signs. The verbal sign is like the text of the poster, such as the title, the names of the actors, the date of the movies' releasing and many more. The non-verbal signs are the images of the poster which support the verbal signs in order to make the poster as interesting as the package of advertisement (Isfandiyary, n.d, p.03). Thus, his approach is divided into three orders of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth.

1.5.3.1 Denotation

Denotation is considered as the initial order of signification that conveys a signs' literal meaning. Barthes uses the term non-coded iconic message to refer to the

literal recognition of identifiable object in a photograph, regardless of societal norms. (Cobley, 1999, p. 49). Otherwise, “Denotation tends to be described as the purely literal, obvious or common- sense meaning of a sign. (Chandler,2007). For Panofsky, the denotation of a representational visual image is what all reviewers from any culture and at any time would recognize the image as depicting. (Panofsky, 1970).

1.5.3.2 Connotation

Connotation is the second order of signification which uses the denotative sign (signifier and signified). According to Chandler, connotation relates socio- cultural and personal associations (ideological, emotional, psychological etc.) of the sign. However, the concept of connotation, based on paradigms and syntagms, it is a crucial aspect of language usage (Chandler, 2007).

1.5.3.3 Myth

Generally, myth refers to false belief. The word myth derives from the Greek mythos, which has a range of meanings from ’word’ through ’saying ’and ’story’, to ’fiction’ (Moxely, 2023). Chandler (2014) claimed that signs reflect major culturally variable myths, which are concepts that underpin specific worldviews such as masculinity, femininity, freedom, individualism, and so on. Barthes (1972) identified a myth as a type of speech but not any type because ’language needs special conditions in order to become a myth’.

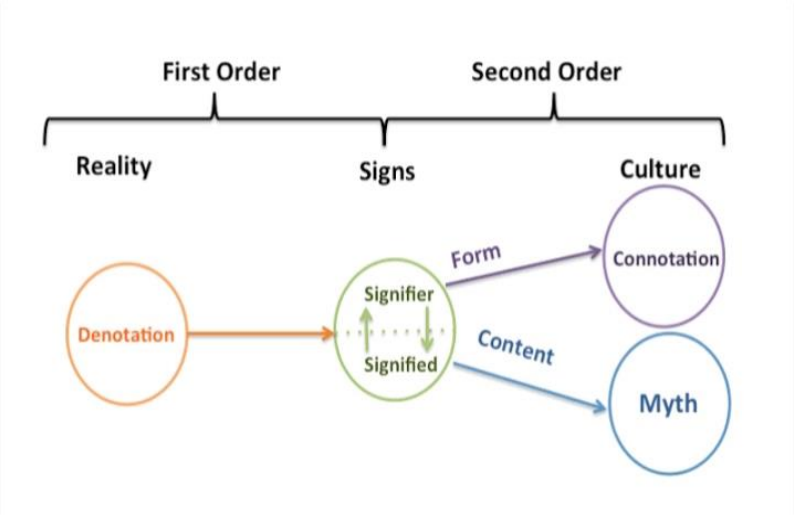


Figure 02. *Ronald Barthes' Semiotic Theory*

In this research, Barthes's semiotic theory will be applied to analyze the hidden messages through the movie "Body of Lies" by using three levels: denotation, connotation, myth.

1.5.4. Semiotics and its Role in Movies

As discussed earlier, a sign can be anything with a meaning, from colours of items, to items themselves. From wording to the physical object, anything can be a sign. Filmmakers have taken this study and applied it to their storytelling, enhancing subtle details that in turn, add more information to either the develop of the character/s or to the story itself. The role of the study of signs is an influencer in filmmaking today. As filmmakers strive to engage audiences on a deeper and reflective scale. Thus representation. This is how film represents or reflects and manipulates this reality in order to convey their message or meaning. Filmmakers use film language or techniques to bring out this representation. Be it in the characters wardrobe, the setting of the story, the colour of the set, actor movement etc. These subtle particulars can

represent society or a relay a message. A location in the story or setting could represent a certain part of society or a certain religion so on and so forth. It all depends on the filmmaker's intention. It is the work of the production design, the director, cinematographer, art director, hair makeup and wardrobe departments that bring about these hidden messages into films. Extensively using different film tools as mise-en-scene or the setting of the story. A mise-en-scene is a fancy way of saying everything the audience sees within the frame. With proper use of mise-en-scene and filmmaking tools, filmmakers are able to create worlds that are visually attractive and worlds that are meant to reflect a society and its era. Everything or anything in a movie can resemble or reflect the cultural or societal norms and use those subtle items or camera movements etc, to furthermore tell the story and enhance it. Using two films as examples that make use of these great features. (Semiotics in Films: Theory and Examples, 2022)

1.6. Previous Studies

This research draws on some thematically similar previous literature related to the influence of Hollywood movies and the representation of Arab Muslims. The reason behind referring to those related studies is to show the differences between the present study and the other studies.

For instance, a study by Maisuwong entitled "The Promotion of American Culture through Hollywood Movies to the World" was published in the international journal of engineering, research, and technology in 2012. The paper discusses the promotion of American culture through Hollywood movies as a form of cultural imperialism, potentially impacting the sovereignty and identity of other nations. It

analyses 30 Hollywood movies from 2001–2010 to identify critical cultural values and political messages communicated to global audiences. Explores how Hollywood movies influence societal values and perceptions, potentially leading to the erosion of local cultures. Focusing on seven different cultural perspectives in the movies: freedom of expression, nationalism, sexuality, language, lifestyle, values, and ideology. This study finds out that Hollywood movies are used as a tool to promote American culture globally and that they can influence societal values and perceptions, focusing on seven different cultural perspectives: freedom of expression, nationalism, sexuality language, lifestyle, values, and ideology.

Nusrat, Kashif, & Aemen 's article, entitled "Ideological Representation of Muslims in Hollywood Movie 'Kingdom.' The study investigates the biased representation of Muslims in Hollywood movies, particularly focusing on the kingdom post 9/11, using Critical Discourse Analysis. It revealed how Muslims are depicted as terrorist through manipulated language, reflecting the negative portrayal in Western films. Fairclough's 3D model was utilized for data analysis, involving context analysis, text production processes, and text interpretation and analysis. This study aims to analyze the ideological manipulations and representations of Muslims in Hollywood movies.

Moreover, the work made by Fawal (2013) in Canada University, under the title of "The Representation of Islam and Muslims in popular media: Educational Strategies and to develop critical media literacy " examined the representation of Muslims in American popular culture; especially Hollywood movies production. He discussed the impact of the biased portrayals shaping Western perceptions of Islam

and Arab Muslims. This study found that Arab Muslims received negative coverage in American popular culture, mainly in Hollywood movies, with consistent stereotyped associations with violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, and extremism.

Besides, the dissertation entitled “Hollywood’s Representation of Arabs and Muslims at the Aftermath of the Cold War; Case Study: Navy Seals (1990) and True Lies (1994) submitted by Sahad Mouhouche and Ouchaou Hakim for a Master's Degree in English, in the University of Tizi-Ouzou, discusses the role of the media in perpetuating false images of Muslims and the influence of Western commercial products on culture. The aim of this research paper is to explore the misrepresentation of Muslims in Western media; in order to achieve this purpose, this paper relies on Edward Said's theory of Orientalism (1978) to analyze the representation of the Middle East in American popular movies during the 1990s. This study reached the conclusion that Hollywood, through movies like Navy Seals and True Lies, distorted images of Muslims and Arabs, contributing to the negative perceptions of these groups globally. The relation of this research to the study being conducted is that they tackled similar themes but different types of analysis.

Another study entitled “Ideological Representations of Muslims in Hollywood Movie the Kingdom: A Study of Critical Discourse Analysis” by Aasia Nusrat, Farah Kashif, Arfa Aemen published in COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Sewanee: The University of the South (Vol. 1, Iss: 3, pp 63-71) discusses how Hollywood movies like 'The Kingdom' depict Muslims as terrorists through biased representations and manipulated language. It highlights the challenges in countering negative stereotypes when media portray Muslims in a sensationalized and

exaggerated manner, making it difficult to present the true picture .Fairclough's 3D model was employed for data analysis, involving context analysis, text production processes, and text interpretation and analysis .Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was utilized as a research tool to examine the content of 'The Kingdom' movie, focusing on the descriptive, discursive, and social practices levels of the model . The analysis using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) reveals how dialogues in the movie contribute to the biased portrayal of Muslims, emphasizing unequal power relations in texts and the manipulation of audience.

A look at the previous studies makes it clear that the researchers used different approaches to investigate the impact of western media and the representation of Arabs Muslims through it. None of the aforementioned studies employed Barthes' theory as the principal research methodology, the thing that the present dissertation tries to offer. Therefore, the researcher's contribution in this field is to apply Barthes' theory of analysis in semiotics on the selected movie "Body of Lies" to highlight the hidden ideologies embedded in the chosen scenes of the movie.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided the literature review on the field of media mainly Hollywood, drawing its relation to ideology and highlighting the concept of stereotype and how Arab Muslims were presented in Hollywood movies. Then, it tackled a general overview of semiotics including the theories of de Saussure, Pierce, and Barthes. Finally, this chapter concluded with a discussion of some previous studies that were determined to be relevant to the scope of this examination.

Chapter Two: Research Methods, Procedures and Data Analysis

Chapter Two: Research Methods, Procedures and Data Analysis

Introduction

The fundamental objective of this study is to highlight the ideologies which are embedded within the movie "Body of Lies" by applying Barthes' semiotic analysis. This chapter of the dissertation focuses on the methods and procedures employed to conduct this research. First, it deals with the selection of research design within the adopted research method. Then, it presents the corpus of the study, and the data collection procedures. Furthermore, it demonstrates the data analysis procedures followed by the setting.

Furthermore, this chapter represents an analysis of eight selected scenes from the movie "Body of Lies"; the eight selected scenes are analyzed separately by using Barthes's analytical theory of visual semiotics. The first part of the analysis covers the denotative meaning of each scene individually, while the second part processes the coded message underlying scenes' connotative meaning. The final step of the analysis delves into the mythical level of the eight chosen scenes.

2.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the strategies and methods that researchers employ to carry out their research and reach valid and reliable results. It also can be defined as a framework of methods chosen by a researcher to combine various components in a logical manner. Besides, it outlines the steps and procedures to be followed to address the research questions or objectives effectively.

This study is based on qualitative descriptive research. This type of research method involves gathering information about prevailing conditions or situations, analyzing and interpreting data, and identifying trends and relationships, it can help the writer collect and analyze the data for this study deeply. Moreover, this method is used to describe and interpret the results and explain about the signs expressed in the movie" Body of Lies". Gay (2006) argues that qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual data in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon. In other hand, Bogdan & Bicken (1982) stated that qualitative research is a research which investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials (p. 27). Furthermore, the purpose of qualitative research is focused on promoting a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon. In this case, the writer collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data and then described it.

2.2. Corpus of the Study

The corpus of this study consists of one movie which is entitled " The Body of Lies". It is a 2008 American spy action thriller film, directed and produced by Ridley Scott, written by William Monahan, and starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Russell Crowe and Golshifteh Farahani in the lead roles, set in the Middle East. The movie starts by a speech of Al-Saleem, the leader of the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization, in which he pledges revenge on America for its war against the Muslim world. Roger Ferris, a CIA operative, is tasked with a secret dangerous mission of assaulting Al-Saleem and his terrorist group. He is assisted in this by Ed Hoffman, the head of Central Intelligence Agency, who manages operations in innovative and strict ways. Initially, Ferris travels from America to Iraq in order to gather information about the

terrorist groups in that country. Then, he moves to Jordan, where he meets Hani Salaam, an intelligent and mysterious Jordanian intelligence officer. They cooperate together in order to arrest Al-Saleem and his terrorist group by exploiting Omar Al-Saddiqi, a wealthy and successful architect but involved in terrorist activities. During these events, Ferris meets a Jordanian nurse named Aisha, and soon became close friends. Aisha is later kidnapped by Al-Saleem, who sends Ferris a letter saying that he can save her if he comes to Al-Saleem alone. When Ferris goes to rescue her, he is severely tortured by Al-Saleem and his terrorist group because he is American and does not share the same religion with them" Al-Islam", labeling him an infidel. They were about to kill him, suddenly, Hani Salama and his men raid the location, they arrested Al-Saleem's group, and rescue Ferris. Due to the efforts of CIA, Al-Saleem is overthrown, and peace prevails after the elimination of the extremist terrorist organization.

In this respect, the choice of the movie is not random, but based on specific motivations and selection criteria. The researchers chose the movie" Body of Lies" because it is a well-known movie that focuses on the image of Arab Muslims. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researchers watched the movie several times focusing on the prominent scenes. The researchers found that the present movie constitutes a significant corpus for analysis from a semiotic perspective. In order to help the readers get more details on the movie, the following technical card is presented:

Tittle	Body of Lies
Director	Ridley Scott
Producer	Donald De Line, Ridley Scott
Starring	- Leonardo DiCaprio (Roger Ferris) - Russell Crowe (Ed Hoffman) - Mark Strong (Hani Sallam)
Editing	Pietro Scalia
Production Company	Scott Free Productions
Release date	October 10, 2008
Runtime	2 hours and 3 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English

2.3. Data Collection Procedures

The movie used in conducting this study were downloaded from the well-known Egyptian website EgyBest. The website contains nearly all the international movies and famous series, all are available to watch and download for free.

Focusing on the scenes that contain signs to be analyzed, that were collected in some steps: At the beginning, the researchers watched the movie “Body of Lies” carefully and repeatedly to find out the signs in it. After that, they filled the note taking

sheet and the video viewing log to mark the signs that exist in the movie. Finally, the researchers did some documentation by capturing relevant scenes in the film.

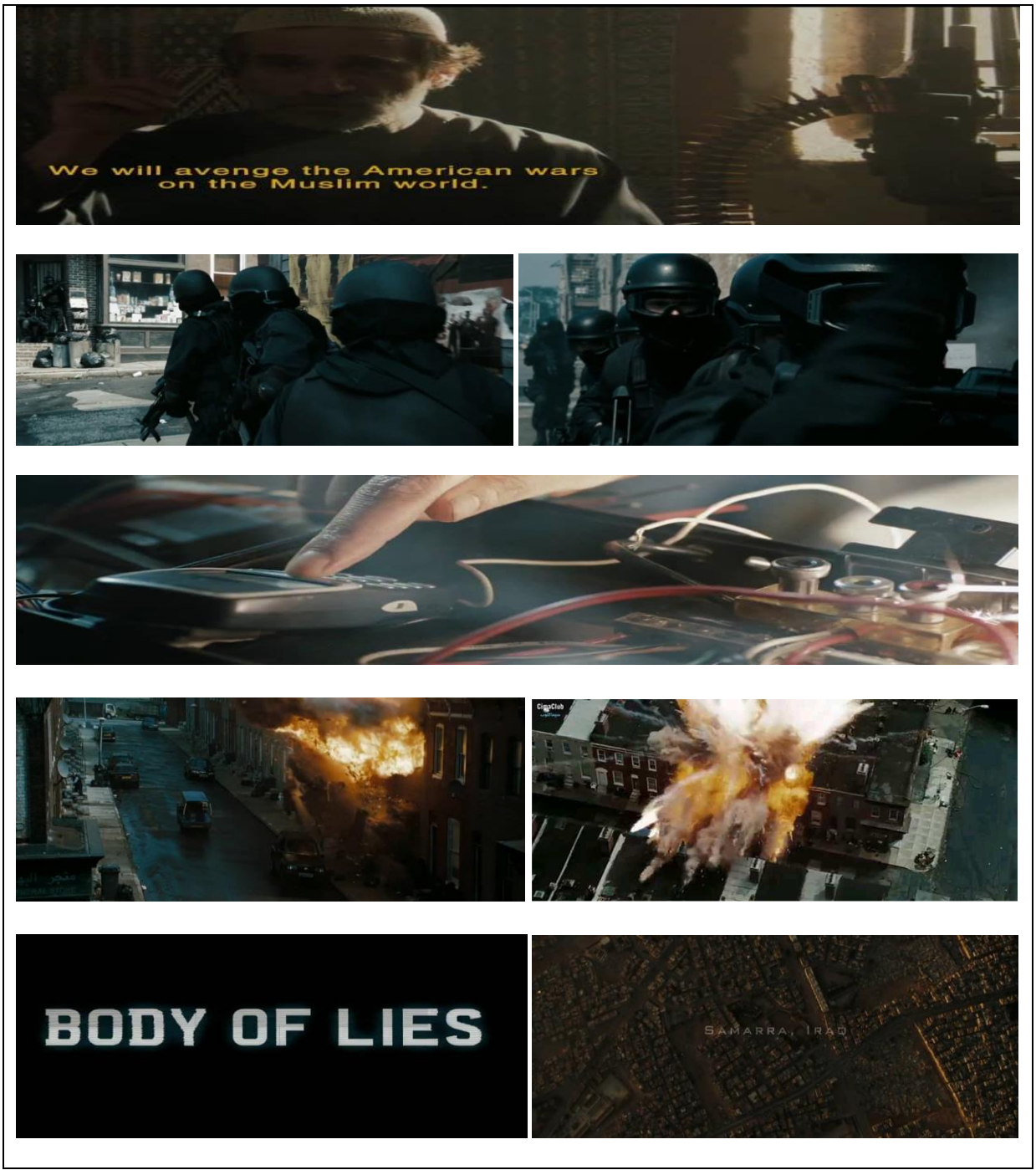
2.4. Data Analysis Procedures

Semiotics as a field of study has a variety of theories that can be applied to analyze data. Because of the researchers' interest in analyzing a movie, they chose to employ Barthes' theory of visual semiotics as the framework for this study. Barthes' semiotic model is a useful framework for analyzing media messages and decoding the meanings behind them, as it enables a close examination of the visual elements used in images such as colors, composition, and framing, and how they contribute to the overall meaning of the image. Hence, Barthes' semiotic model attempts to uncover latent ideologies that might not be immediately visible to the viewer's eye. Barthes' semiotic model is a useful framework for analyzing media messages and decoding the meanings behind them. Furthermore, this chapter represents an analysis of eight selected scenes from the movie "Body of Lies"; the eight selected scenes are analyzed separately by using Barthes's analytical theory of visual semiotics. The first part of the analysis covers the denotative meaning of each scene individually, while the second part processes the coded message underlying scenes' connotative meaning. The final step of the analysis delves into the mythical level of the eight chosen scenes.

2.5. Data Analysis

2.5.1 Figure 3. Scene 1

Time spotted: (00:01:00-00:03:02)



Denotative Level

In a semi-dark place, there is an elderly man called “Al-Salim” wearing a black *Qamis* with a white *Taqiyah* on his head, and he has a black beard and short black hair. Also, there is a Kalashnikov and bullets behind him. He is talking in Arabic, saying, "Just like we blew up the oil tanker in the Sheffield neighborhood of Manchester last week, we will be ready for another British operation; we will avenge the American wars on the Muslim world."

On the other hand, there is a group of security men, wearing black masks and carrying weapons, running around a building in the Manchester district, which is densely populated with Asian residents, for the purpose of assaulting three Muslim nationals in Britain. Then they enter the building where there are many electronic machines and suicide bombing devices and repeat “Allah is greatest” three times. Then, one of them says "In the name of Allah," and presses the bomb button so that the building explodes. After that, the debris scattered from the building due to the explosion, and people started screaming.

At the end of this scene, a title for the movie "The Body of Lies" appears on the screen with a black background and a white script. After that, a picture labeled in English "Al-Samara, Iraq" appears.

Connotative Level

- This scene evokes themes of vengeance, fanaticism, and terrorism. The elderly man named "Al-Salim" represents a figure of authority within a militant group, dressed in traditional Arabic attire that symbolizes the Arabic culture. His speech, “We will take revenge on the war America is waging against Islam,” signifies his religion, which is Islam, it further fosters the notion of retaliation against Western powers perceived as aggressors in the Muslim world.

- The presence of a Kalashnikov and some bullets next to him depicts strong equipment and readiness for confrontation.

- The group of security men wearing black masks and carrying weapons signifies anonymity and violence. Their actions of assaulting Muslim nationals who live in Manchester city and triggering a suicide bombing reflect extremism and indiscriminate destruction.

- The setting of Manchester, a city with a varied population, adds to the tension and underscores the global reach of terrorism. The mention of specific locations, such as Manchester and Sheffield, anchors the narrative in real-world events, heightening the sense of urgency.

- The title of the movie, "Body of Lies," is colored in black and white, the black color signifies evil while the white color indicates good. Evoking the themes of espionage, deception and manipulation. The inclusion of "Al-Samara, Iraq" further contextualizes the scene within the wider geographical landscape of conflict and warfare in the Middle East.

- Overall, the connotative analysis undercovers the underlying themes of dread, disorder, and consequences of ideological fanaticism depicted in the scene.

Mythical Level

- The role of the Muslim Sheikh is to advocate for acts of aggression toward others, such as violence, killing, and plans to carry out terrorist operations targeting innocent people, and to entrench these ideas in the minds of young Muslims to make them bloody, obey his orders, and follow them without thinking. Al-Salim is a Muslim Sheikh who aims to kill Americans and non-Muslims throughout the world, carrying the speech that he says this in recognition of the Muslims' responsibility for other operations that preceded the bombing that occurred in Manchester, Britain. Besides, Al-Salim's speech signifies that Arab Muslims are aggressive and violent, and they like killing innocent people without mercy; however, the first scene shows America as a hero that always tries to bring peace and defend goodness.

- The title of the movie "Body of Lies" appears immediately after the bombing that was carried out by the Muslim terrorists. Indicating that despite the fact that Arab Muslims claim peace, faith, and piety, they are liars and hypocrites as they commit crimes, terrorism operations, wars, and insecurity.

2.5.2 Figure 4. Scene2

Time spotted: (00:18:43 -00:24:02)








Brother, can you help me?

Search him.










Denotative Level

Most of the events in this scene take place in Samarra, Iraq. A vehicle is carrying two people, Ferris (a CIA agent) and Bassam (an Arab Muslim), along with luggage on top. It is moving towards the terrorists' location. Then, Ferris is hiding behind a large rock and takes out a scope to look through it. He saw a man burning some documents and CDs in front of stone-built houses. At the same time, he speaks through his earpiece to Bassam, telling him to get ready. Furthermore, Ferris changes his clothes, wearing *Qamis* and *Taqiyah*, and walks towards those people. He starts speaking to them in Arabic and asks one of them for help. On the other hand, his Arab friend Bassam holds a weapon (Kalashnikov) and hides behind a rock in order to protect him.

One of those people, named Mehdi, wants to search Ferris. Bassam shoots Mahdi and killed him. Ferris and Bassam start fighting against those terrorists; many of them die. Later, when Ferris gets into one of those houses, he finds a man holding a bomb in his hand, looks at him, saying:"Good deeds from God's grace," and throws the bomb. After that, Ferris kills him and escaped. While a group of terrorists are attacking Bassam and Ferris and chasing them by their trucks, Bassam is driving the car, holding a map, and talking to the American intelligence agency on the phone for assistance. When two American helicopters arrived, one of them fires a rocket towards the car. As a result, Bassam dies, an assistance team comes to take Ferris before the car exploded.

Connotative Level

- Iraq’s desert has stone houses with tables, traditional bombs, and gas bottles, all represent the country’s poverty.
- CIA agent Ferris is dressed like a Muslim (*Qamis* and *Taqiyah*), this indicates that he is pretending to be an Arab Muslim.
- When Ferris points his gun at the man who holds the bomb, and kills him, that demonstrates Ferris’bravery in carrying out his mission to the end.
- The presence of U.S. planes in the sky reflects America’s power, weaponry development, and quickness of response to a distress call, as well as its protection and concern to its citizens.

Mythical Level

- Bassam’s withdrawal indicates that Muslims are cowards, as his call for assistance implies that Muslims are always turning to Americans for support.
- The fact that Ferris remains alone and unprotected demonstrates the American people’s bravery and courage in confronting terrorists and murder in order to achieve their purpose.
- "Good deeds from God’s grace," this speech depicts how the name of Allah is always associated with violence and killing acts, whereas the explosion was for God’s sake, and the Islamic religion is just about violence.
- The using of the Arab Muslim character (Bassam), who travels with CIA agent Ferris, and fights against his fellow countrymen, alludes non-loyalty, a lack of patriotism, and the weakness of Muslim personality and their fondness of America.

2.5.3 Figure 5. Scene 3

Time spotted: (00:52:50-00:54:50)








Denotative Level

Ferris, the American CIA agent, is in the car with Ed, the head of the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States. They are wearing formal clothing on a mission in order to find out some information about Karami, the agent of Hani Salama, the head of Jordanian intelligence.

Ed is relaxed and careless, unlike Ferris, who looks very worried and anxious while he is talking about the leader of the Islamic terrorist organization, “Al-Salim,” or

as he is called, “Karim Al-Chams,” who lived in Syria, was from a middle class, and his family members were killed by the Syrian president, “Hafez Al-Assad." Then he moved to live in Saudi Arabia, where he studied physics and engineering. Ed describes Al-Salim to Ferris as a person who just pretends to be a Muslim and a believer; he says, “He is only a citizen just like you.”

In this scene, Al-Salim is leaving the mosque after finishing his prayers, riding his private car with his personal companion, where he is tightly guarded.

Connotative Level

- In this scene, Al-Salim is performing prayer inside the mosque with the general public. This indicates that Al-Salim is a pious Muslim person who fears God and applies the obligations of Islam.

- In contrary, Ed and Ferris were talking about him as if he is a hypocrite person who prays in the mosque, but at the same time he kills innocent people and forms terrorist groups within Western countries. Their speech indicates the dishonesty of Al-Salim

Mythical Level

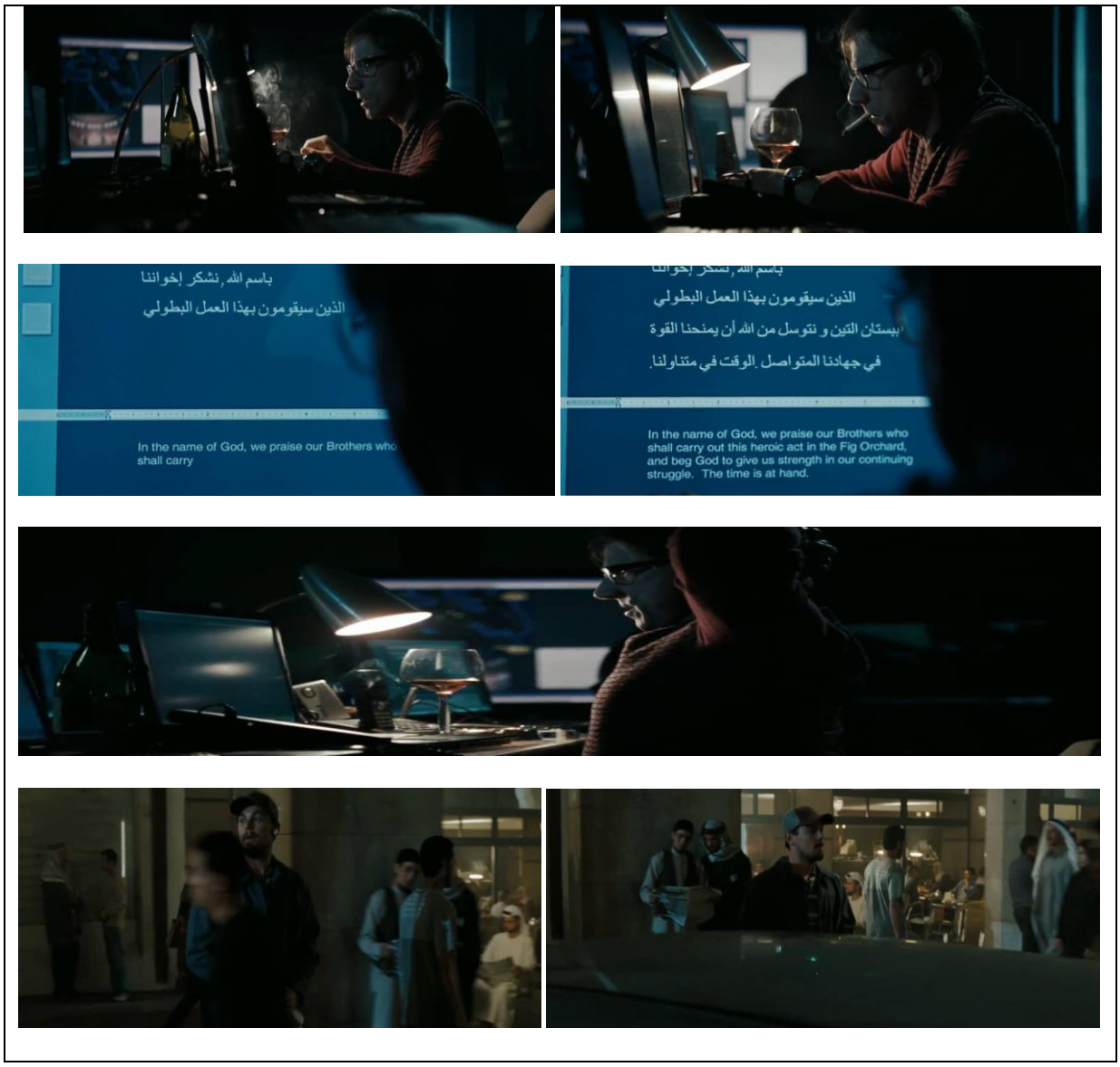
- In this scene, Al-Salim is employed and portrayed as a pious person who fears God and applies the obligations of Islam ; however, in fact, he incites young people to murder and commit violence, in addition to forming terrorist groups inside Western countries. This transmits the idea that Arab Muslims pretends to be pious, believers, and honest, but they perform terrorists’ operations and spread violence and fear in the world.

• Furthermore, in this scene, several notions are conveyed to the viewers that Arab Muslim Sheikhs are murderers, uncivilized, malevolent, and their main goal is to take revenge on America and Europe.

2.5.4 Figure 6. Scene 4

Time spotted: (01:22:43- 01:24:50)





Denotative Level

The events of the beginning of the scene take place in the office of the head of the intelligence agency in Amman, called “Hani Salama.” The latter is conducting a personal interview with a CIA agent named "Ferris”. They are collaborating together to investigate a person and collect information about him. Who is a Jordanian architect named “Omar Al-Saddiqi,” in addition to another person who works as a lawyer, trying to figure out the relationship between him and the architect Omar Al-Saddiqi.

Hani Salama is moving around his office and talking to Ferris. While Ferris is sitting in the chair, he contemplates a collection of photos of Omar Saddiqi and the Egyptian lawyer, those pictures show the two of them sitting with a group of girls wearing revealing clothes in nightclubs. Then Hani Salama gives Ferris other photos that show both of Omar and the Egyptian lawyer shaking hands and exchanging conversation.

Hani Salama is taking his lighter and cigarette, saying: "The photograph was taken last week in the Coyclone Club in Dubai. One is Al-Masri, a lawyer and a low-level al-Qaeda financer; if that is not a contradiction, the other is a Jordanian, an architect named Omar Saddiqi, with no known terrorist ties. Now, the question I ask myself is: What are they doing together? Is this Saddiqi more than he claims to be? He travels a lot; he builds mosques and shopping malls; at the very least, he bears examination by us, or by we."

Ferris asked, "Where did you get these?" Hani answered with a very sharp look: "A friend in Saudi intelligence." Then He negotiates with Ferris to cooperate together and works with him, and Ferris agrees to his offer.

Ferris calls a friend of him named "Garland" who lives in the United States of America and is a controller in computer technologies. Garland is sitting in a dark office from which only a computer is seen and an electrical lamp installed on top of the computer, he is writing a forged letter dictated by Ferris from Al-Saddiqi's fake e-mail address. This letter is an intelligence plan to implicate Omar Saddiqi with the terrorist group, especially Al-Salim, and hold him responsible for a fake and false

bombing of an American military base in Incirlik, Turkey, to make it appear that Omar Al-Saddiqi is responsible for the terrorist act and belongs to the terrorist group.

Then the content of the fake message appears on Garland's computer screen, and it is as follows:" In the name of Allah the merciful, we praise our brothers who shall carry out this heroic act in the fig orchard, and beg God to give us strength for our continuing struggle".

The letter was written in such a way that it appeared that Omar Al-Saddiqi was the one who wrote it and thanked the terrorists for that terrorist act. Garland is saying: "Now, that is absolutely delightful Arabic!"

On the other hand, some people are walking in the streets at night in Amman city, wearing the Omani dress consisted of a white *Qamis* with a white Arabian *Ammama*; others are sitting in the cafe; while a man is reading a newspaper under the light of the lightpost, and two others are standing on the walls in the darkness away from the light.

Connotative Level

- The clothes of the men who are walking on the street, which are the white *Qamis* and the white Arabian *Ammama*, depict the culture of the Arabian Muslim country “Jordan”.

- The Coyclone Club located in Dubai indicates that nightclubs can be found also in Muslim countries.

- Hani Salama's sharp look when asked by Ferris about the source of the photos signifies his strictness and that he is a leading figure.

- Sending a message through a fake e-mail address as if it was written by Omar Al-Saddiqi indicates the professionalism expertness of the American CIA.

- The dark office that Garland is sitting in depicts ambiguity, while the darkness of Oman streets signifies poorness.

Mythical Level

- The pictures of both the architect Omar Al-Saddiqi and the Egyptian lawyer sitting with women who wears disrespectful and scandalously clothes indicate hypocrisy. Omar Al-Saddiqi and the Egyptian lawyer are employed in this way in the movie to send an implicit message to the viewers that Muslims pray in mosques and show people that they are faithful, honest, and respectful, but in fact, they are hypocrites and liars.

- The Coyclone nightclub located in Dubai shows that the Arab Muslim countries also have nightclubs and disrespectful places. This demonstrates an attempt to convey the idea that the Muslim businessmen invest in suspicious properties in the Islamic communities in order to make money from the West.

- The dialogue between Ferris and Hani Salama, who speaks about the Egyptian lawyer in a bad way, tries to convey a negative image about the Arab Muslims, that they are involved in betrayal, espionage, deception, and alliance with the West against their Muslim brothers, through the character of Hani Salama and the Saudi who gave him the pictures.

2.5.5 Figure 7. Scene 5

Time spotted: (01:24:51- 01:30:43)



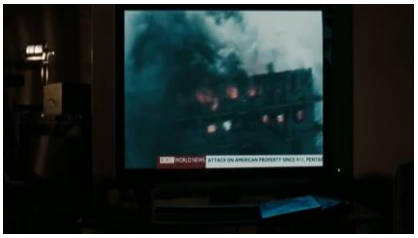













Denotative Level

A military helicopter is flying at night, heading to land at an American military air base in Incirlik - Turkey. This helicopter carries fake corpses that are planned to be placed in the place that will be blown up later by American intelligence.

Soldiers are seen transferring these fake bodies from the military helicopter to armored vehicles and then to the base headquarters. Meanwhile, Ferris has agreed with his ally "Brad Canlon," an American intelligence officer in Ankara, to manipulate the engineer Omar Al-Saddiqi into coming to Turkey for a job interview, ultimately

leading him to be involved in the planned bombing. Brad Canlon is responsible for receiving Omar Al-Saddiqi and ensuring his presence in Turkey.

Soldiers are opening the corpses bags to be placed at the site of the explosion; one of them is in the helicopter, waiting for the order to detonate. After a few minutes, he presses the bomb button and the explosion occurs.

In Al-Salim's house, children are playing Ping-Pong, and Al-Salim is reading an Arabic newspaper. Suddenly, his companion calls him and points to the television to watch the news of the bombing of the Incirlik base, then, Al-Salim surprisingly puts his glasses down. Hani Salama is astonished as well, and he puts the glass of wine out of his hand after hearing the news of the explosion.

While Omar was working in his office, he has received many e-mail messages from the Muslim Brotherhood expressing their gratitude to him for his success in planning the terrorist bombing operation. After reading those messages, he becomes very astonished, as he was not responsible for that operation and had no involvement in planning it.

Connotative Level

- This scene delves into the themes of manipulating, deception, and the consequences of the military actions. The use of the secret missions and the fake corpses illustrates the discreet nature of the military interventions and the length to which intelligence may go to achieve their goals.

- Besides, the manipulation of Omar Al-Saddiqi demonstrates the difficult ethical issues and moral compromises often inherent in espionage and intelligence work.

• Al-Salim and Hani Salama' reactions of surprise and astonishment to the news of the bombing further indicate the shock and trauma triggered by acts of violence, affecting both for those directly involved and for onlookers.

Mythical Level

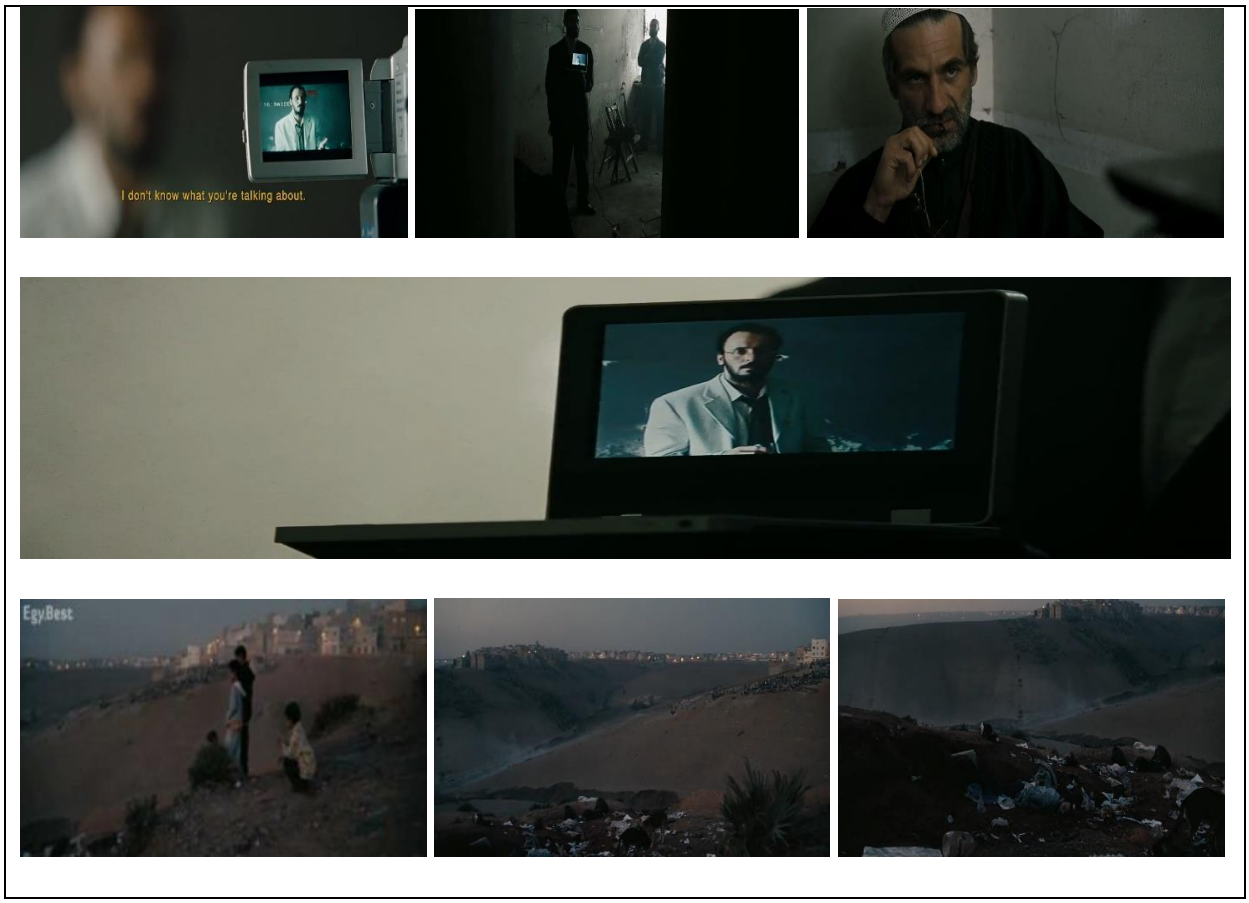
• The deception of Omar Al-Saddiqi indicates that the Arab Muslim are oblivious and unintelligent as the events unfold before him but he does not notice anything.

• The fake letters are written in Arabic and all start with *"Basmala"* (In the name of Allah), accompanied by images of weapons and Quran held by individuals covering their faces with scarves and black masks. In those letters, Americans are referred to as the great devil that must be executed wherever they are found, to rid people of their evil, with the belief that Allah rewards them for these actions. This belief and the Arabic language with the content of the letters represents the religion of these individuals who are rejoicing in the explosion and terrorist act, which is an insult to Muslims that they rejoice in acts of killing and sabotage.

2.5.6 Figure 8. Scene 6

Time spotted: (1:33:35-1:35:19)





Denotative level

In a dark room, in a building that looks dirty, deserted, and garbage in everywhere. Four men are present; the first is Omar Al-Saddiqi, a Jordanian engineer who is a pious Muslim with a beard. He sits in a chair facing a camera that is operated by the second member of the terrorist group and records the accused man's statements. Besides, he is suspected of carrying out terrorist bombs in Turkey that damaged a place known as "the House of War." Whereas, the third man is asking Omar Al-Saddiqi about the terrorist bombing, and the fourth one is Al-Salim, who is sitting in the next room, watching the camera recording.

The dialogue is between only two people, the accused Omar Al-Saddiqi and one of Al-Salim's men. It is in the Jordanian dialect with the appearance of English translation at the bottom.

A high place looks like a hill, far from the city. Four vagrant kids, two of them are standing and the others seated, are watching the city from a distance, with the sunset in front of garbage dump and stray dogs.

Omar Al-Saddiqi is thrown there. However, this scene is accompanied with horror music, and the prayer of Maghrib simultaneously.

Connotative Level

- Darkness signifies confusion, ruin, confinement, and mystery.

- Omar Al-Saddiqi's personality indicates that he has a high social status in Arab Islamic society.

- Horror music presents fear and discomfort, while also creating a tense and anxious atmosphere.

- The way that children appear in front of garbage indicates that they are impoverished, and they live in difficult conditions.

Mythical level

- Muslims are dangerous people who violate public laws and they are attributed of terrorist acts, maintaining the idea that Muslims are terrorists.

• The investigator’s character appears appreciative to Omar Al-Saddiqi for his bombing of the war house in Turkey, stating, "The sheikh blesses you," while the house of Islam rejoices. This indicates a hidden message warns viewers of Muslims, who are dangerous and merely pretend to be peaceful, honest, and devout.

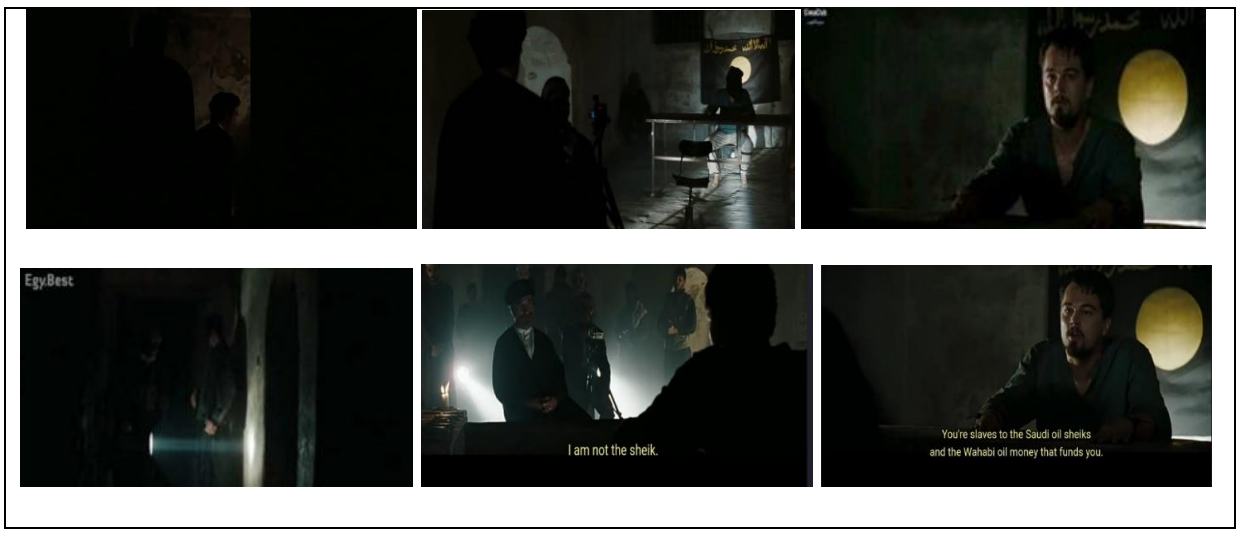
• Horror music presents an atmosphere of terror, discomfort, and distress to the viewer when watching anything that is Islamic or Muslim-related content.

• The dialogue is in the Jordanian dialect rather than standard Arabic. This is an indication of the distortion of the Arabic-Muslim language, so that foreign viewers do not think about learning Arabic, or even acquiring some vocabulary from it.

• Children appear in front of garbage dumps beside stray dogs, under tough conditions of poverty and lack of hygiene. This demonstrates how Arab Muslim countries violate children’s rights, and neglect to protect them from harm and keeping them safe.

2.5.7 Figure 9. Scene 7

Time spotted: (01:46:00-01:51:35)



Denotative level

Al-Salim is wearing a black *Qamis* and *Amama*; he enters the place of torture. It is very dark, with iron doors and narrow passageways, and it looks like a prison.

Ferris is seated in a chair and puts his hands on the table. His head is covered with a black bag. Behind him is a black cloak with "There is no God except Allah, and Mohamad is the messenger of Allah" written on it in yellow Arabic script, with a white circle in the middle.

A camera is placed to film Ferris, with a group of men in Islamic clothing behind Al-Salim; some of them are masked and armed. Al-Salim orders one of his men to grab the black bag from the head of Ferris, and he sits next to him. Then, Al-Salim begins the dialogue mockingly, addressing Ferris:"Sallam, CIA." Ferris responds with a greeting in Arabic:"Peace be upon you, Sheikh." Al-Salim confidently and mockingly retorts:" I'm not a sheikh … I'm his servant ". Additionally, he gives Ferris hints about the punishment he will receive for lying and organizing the terrorist attack under Omar Al-Saddiqi's identity.

Al-Salim shows trust and total conviction that what he is doing satisfies Allah. On the other hand, Ferris provides evidence that Al-Salim's actions contravene what is revealed in the Holy Quran. Moreover, Al-Salim defends himself and his belief by reciting a verse to Ferris from the Holy Quran without mentioning the *Basmala* (in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful). He reads the verse in an artificial language as a person who is not proficient in Arabic and who speaks it hard,

saying, "Do not say that those slain in the cause of the cause of God are dead, they are alive."

Ferris comments on the recitation of the verse and says that Al-Salim misinterpreted the Holy Koran. He is mockingly, saying, "You are fucking slaves, you are slaves to the Saudi oil sheiks and the Wahabi oil money that funds you."

Ferris looks at one of Al-Salim's men, then he recalls that Kareem works for "Hani Salama"for the Jordanian intelligence.

Connotative Level

- Ferris' calling to Al-Salim (Al Sheikh) indicates that Al-Sheikh is a prominent national figure among his companions.

- Al-Salim's catchword "CIA "signifies that the intelligence apparatus is ineffective and that his group is smarter and more adept in planning.

- The answer of Al-Salim stating that he is not Al-Sheikh, implies that there is only one person under its authority, and is referring to the Prophet Mohamad, Peace be upon him. It also indicates that Al-Salim is following the guidelines of prophet Mohamad as outlined in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

- Ferris's audacious replies to Al-Salim shows that the American individual is courageous and steadfast in his struggle to the end.

Mythical Level

- The dark hideout where Ferris is imprisoned inside demonstrates that the terrorists often use hidden and dark places as their hideout, because they work secretly.

- Using the fixed camera in the middle of the room while Ferris is sitting, conveys the idea that terrorists rely on cameras to film and document the victim’s murder, as well as to instill fear and horror in the minds of onlookers.

- Ferris insults Islam and Arabs by cursing Al-Salim, saying:"I consider you all fucking", and his facial features shows self-confidence, and contempt for Arab Muslims.

- The Arabs are disclaimers; they rely on oil as their sole source of income without striving to find other alternatives, saying:" I consider you slaves to oil!". He further adds" You are Arab oil slaves, and you will disappear as soon as the oil runs out".

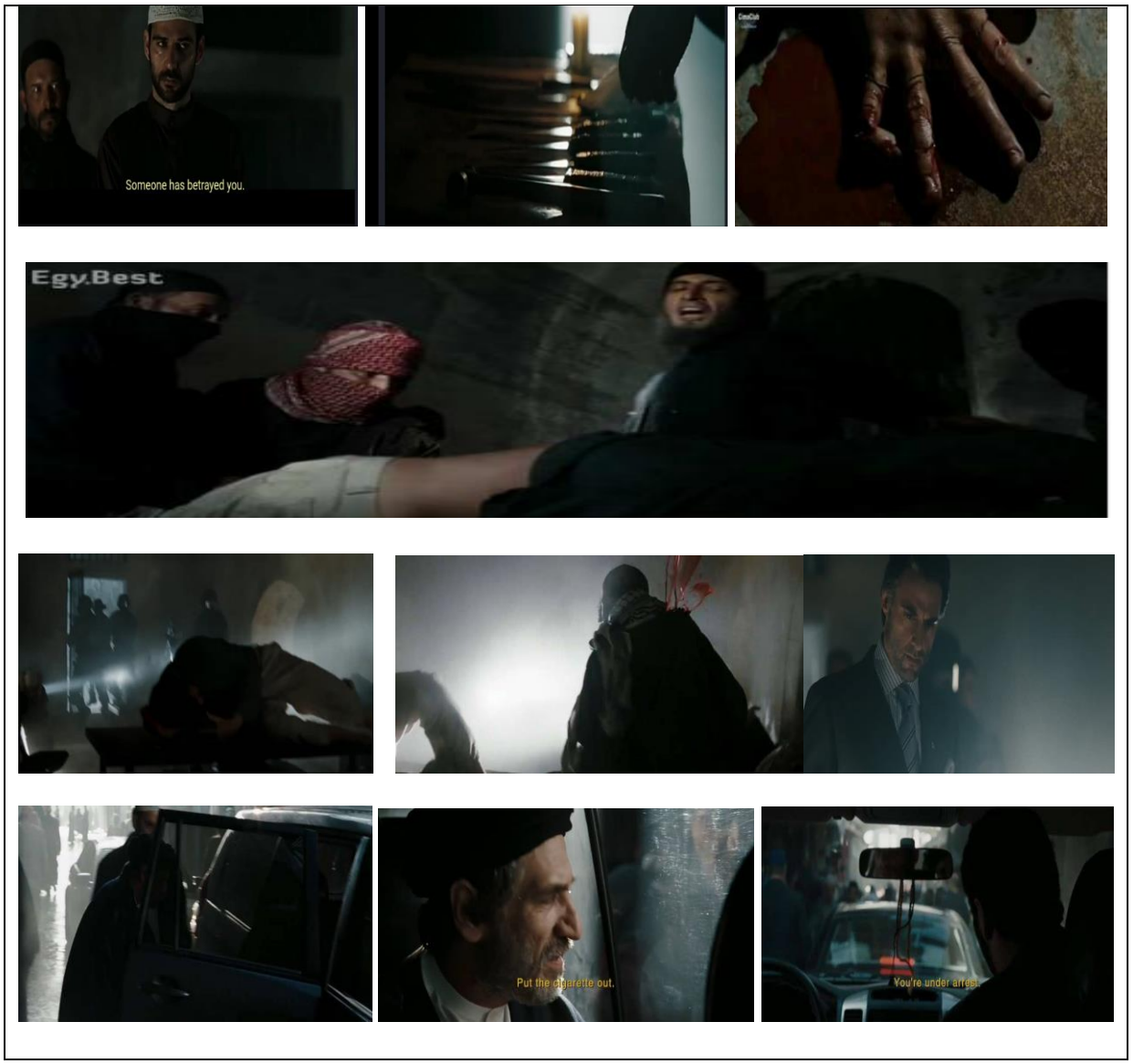
- The Arabic language is ignored through the dialogue between Al-Salim’s group. In this case, the viewer will assume that the terrorists speak Arabic.

- The Holy Quran is distorted by Al-Salim’s misrecitation of the verse, and his misinterpretation of it in order to convey the idea that Muslims do not understand the Quran undermines Muslims’s religious beliefs.

- Islamic attire of Al-Salim’s terrorists men leads foreign viewers to form a stereotypical mental image that the terrorist appears to be Muslim based on his attire. Thus, all Muslims must be terrorists.

2.5.8 Figure 10. Scene 8

Time Spotted: (01:51:37-01:55:20)



Denotative Level

Ferris is surprised when he looks at Karami standing with Al-Salim's men. Then, Ferris is smiling; and narrates the story of Karami, saying, "Someone has betrayed you, he works for the head of Jordanian intelligence, which means he works for us." Al-Salim laughs and turns to his men, explaining to them what Ferris is saying. Moreover, the sounds of laughter are loud.

A table covered with black drapery contained many different knives, a hammer, and sharp tools. After that, Al-Salim is carrying a hammer, and he cuts the finger of Ferris.

Ferris screams from the severe pain. However, Al-Salim goes to Ferris, saying, "Welcome to Guantanamo!". He orders his men to slaughter him, while he is going out with some of his men. Al-Salim's men torture and assault Ferris, beating him severely. Then, they carry him to a table while he struggles against them.

One of Al-Salim's men takes a large knife and prepares to slaughter Ferris, saying: "I would advise you to pray, Mr. Ferris." As one of Al-Salim's men prepares to slaughter him, the others loudly chant "Allah is the greatest" with great enthusiasm. Suddenly, Hani Salama storms the place with his security forces, killing Al-Salim's men. Whereas, Al-Salim is riding his car and orders the driver to put out the cigarette. The driver is turning to him and is saying, "I'm Marwan Sekiya, an officer for Hani Salama; you are under arrest."

Thus, Al-Salim's facial expressions convey a sense of shock and loss, suggesting that his group has been crushed by American and Jordanian intelligence and that his fate is sealed.

Connotative level

- The word "Guantanamo!" in AL-Salim’s dialogue signifies that terrorist prisons are similar to Guantanamo’s prisons in Cuba, which are the most well-known prisons ever known in human history, and are renowned for their barbarism around the world.

- Ferris does not divulge the agent's name; he keeps the conclusion to himself, and only provide Al-Salim with hints, indicates the wisdom of the American individual in resolving crises and controlling their emotions even in the most difficult situations.
- A black bag, hammer, knives, handcuffs, and other tools present the equipment that are used in the torture and cause pain to others.
- The sound of bag extraction, shouting, and hammering indicates violence and torture.
- The sound of spitting presents uncivilized behavior and disrespect.

Mythical Level

- The character "Karami" represents the idea of betrayal because he seems as a traitor and works for both terrorism and security. It also conveys a hidden message for the viewer that Arabs betray their homelands and religion for their own purposes.
- Terrorists' use of the expression "Allah is the greatest,"may confuse the foreign viewers and encourage them to associate Islam with terrorism.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methods and procedures followed in this research. The researchers adopted a descriptive research design, which explores Barthes' theory of analysis on the selected corpus by using a qualitative approach. The researchers have clarified the data collection process and have explained analysis of the selected scenes that the study went through. Additionally, the chapter applied Barthes's visual semiotic theory to analyze eight scenes from the movie "Body of Lies". The analysis focused first on describing the denotative level of each scene, followed by the

connotative level placed in each scene. Finally, the analysis uncovered the mythical level that each scene hides.

Chapter Three: Discussion of the Results, Pedagogical Implications and Further Suggestions

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Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings presented in the previous chapter, providing a summary of the findings concluded from this study as well as reconnecting them to the research questions. The data gathered from the selected scenes is discussed relying on Barthes' approach to visual semiotics, which consists of three levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth. This chapter also proposes a set of pedagogical implications and recommendations. In addition, it highlights the limitations that the researchers faced while conducting the study. Finally, it includes some further suggestions to recommend to other researchers so that they can conduct similar studies.

3.1. Discussion of the Results

3.1.1. Summary of the Findings

This section attempts to discuss the data that have been analyzed in the previous chapter through the application of Barthes three levels of signification. According to the findings, the eight analyzed scenes contained several notions regarding to the representation of Arab Muslims, which can be summarized in the following points:

- The title " Body of lies" reflects the movie's content, which depicts the Arab Muslim as a liar, a selfish person who seeks to his own interests only. And the Arab Muslims are devoid of Islamic principles, ethics, and human virtues as they are cunning and deceitful to their own countries, primitive, and backward.

- The duality of good and evil is employed in the movie, through showing the Muslims perspectives on America, their hatred towards it, and their efforts to destabilize it. And highlighting that America gives Muslims financial assistance and yet they respond to it with violence and killing.
- The movie represents another contradictory duality, between the impoverished Arabic environment and the sophisticated American environment. The Arabic environment is characterized by barren desert, narrow alleys, stone houses, and inhabitants with Bedouin features wearing traditional, dirty, and shabby clothing, which indicate primitiveness, poverty, backwardness, and low living standards. In contrary, the movie depicts the prosperous image of the American environment with clean streets, towering glass buildings, elegance in decor details, with clean and respectable clothes, which signify modernity and civilization. Thus, the movie conveys a misconception about the life and culture of Arab countries.
- The Arabic language was used in the movie in a clumsy manner and incorrect pronunciation, to promote the idea that Arabic is complex difficult, and not eloquent language, suggesting it is unsuitable to be a global language. Meanwhile, the movie employs Islamic symbols such as Quranic verses and the call to prayer to give a religious tone, leading to the conclusion that only Muslims are associated with terrorism and violence.
- The movie represented Muslim women in a negative way, as it appears that they do not adhere to the Islamic principles. Aisha appeared unveiled in front of Ferris, in addition to engaging in a forbidden relationship with him, and this gives a false stereotype about Arab Muslim women as this behavior contradicts Islamic principles.

- Ferris’s description of Muslims as not being unwilling to negotiate is an indication of rigidity, intolerance, and closed-mindedness, it demonstrates a lack of acceptance of others who differ in religion and ethnicity, and this contribute in distorting the image of Muslims.
- The frequent occurrence of terrorist acts in various countries demonstrates the spread of danger worldwide, considering Islam a threat to the world in order to instill fear of Islam (Islamophobia).
- The movie promotes the idea that terrorism is not limited only to the ignorant and illiterate Muslims, but also affects intellectuals, Arab Muslims supports violence and terrorism operations regardless of their educational levels and cultural backgrounds, like the architect Omar Al-Saddiqi and the Egyptian lawyer, despite their culture and knowledge, they engage in terrorist activities. In the movie the leader of the terrorist organization called " Al-Salim" has studied chemistry in the university, this transmits to the viewers the idea that Arab Muslims also study chemistry and physics for the sake of developing nuclear weapons in order to threat innocents and kill non-Muslim people.
- The Arab Muslim is being portrayal as an ugly terrorist with a beard, dirty, and incompetent. The Islamic attire represented in the movie reinforces a stereotype in the non-Muslims viewer's minds that anyone wearing such clothing is a terrorist. However, this notion is incorrect, misleading, and has no basis in reality.
- Arab Muslims are presented as cowards, weak, and stupid individuals who are pleading for America’s assistance to protect them.

- Muslims are described as ridiculous in terms of their lifestyle, environment, and attire, and having weak planning skills.

- Muslims are considered as worshipers of money, and can buy them, and sell their principles and religion in order to get money.

- Through this movie, the filmmaker's perspective emerges, which carries some kind of superiority over Arabs and Muslims, as he employs the character of Bassam, the Muslim Arab who accompanies the CIA agent Ferris and fights against his countrymen. It also includes other ideological meanings indicate the lack of loyalty, and patriotism.

- The filmmaker abased the sanctity of the Quran and its stature among Muslims through the weak manner of reciting a verse from the Quran. It is an attempt to highlight the idea that America is aware of the content of other religions and that its culture is broad and open to all religions without discrimination or exception.

- The noble character of the Prophet Mohamed (peace upon him) is insulted by suggesting through Al-Salim's statement that only one person obeys him, referring contextually to" the Messenger of Islam, Mohamed (peace upon him)," the filmmaker aimed to convey a message that terrorists people like Al-Salim, consider Islam and the prophet of Islam as their reference and role model.

- American individual who is smart, loyal, brave enough to confront challenges until the end, through his dialogue with Al-Salim and his bold responses, as well as his wisdom in managing crises. Despite his capacity to cause harm, he showcased his humanity, rejecting violence and killing.

- The capacity and the expertise of America in uncovering terrorist hideouts and its awareness of everything happening through satellites and American intelligence, which possesses the information and maintains a database about people from all over the world, enabling it to navigate into the global scene with vigilance.

- The movie reflected the filmmaker's ideology and orientation despite his attempt to hide it. It bilked the recipient audience, especially Muslims to gain their sympathy with the protagonist Ferris and to justify his presence in the Middle East. He is trying to raise his subjectivity by identifying and allocating terrorist groups to a particular intolerant group of Muslims, namely the Wahhabi movement, which promotes armed Islamic fundamentalism and the spread militancy and hatred. He described them as " slaves of oil".

- The portrayal of the Muslim child was distorted by depicting him late in the day among garbage, stray dogs, and dirt.

3.1.2. Reconnecting Findings to the Research Questions

The previous discussion of the main findings obtained from the analysis of the movie "Body of Lies", through the application of Barthes' theory of visual semiotics, helps the researchers to answer the main research questions addressed in this study.

Main question:

- To what extent can Barthes' semiotic theory be applicable in analyzing the image of the Arab Muslims represented in the movie "Body of Lies"?

Barthes theory of visual semiotic analysis can be applicable in examining the different signs and revealing the ideologies embedded in the movie "Body of Lies", as the researchers could extract certain ideologies depending on the three level of signification: denotative, connotative, and myth through analyzing different signs including pictures, gestures, and sounds.

Sub-questions:

- How are the Arab Muslims being represented in the movie "Body of Lies"?

Arab Muslims are represented in a negative way in the movie “Body of Lies” because they are stereotyped as terrorists, barbaric, uncivilized, and aggressive people who pretends to be pious and honest, but they are violent and like killing non-Muslims and take revenge on Western countries and America particularly. Also, they are depicted as liars, hypocrites, coward, dependent on America for support. Furthermore, Muslim children are negatively depicted as being brought up reckless and irresponsible. In addition to the other characters like non-loyalty, lack of patriotism, weakness of personality. Consequently, the image of Arab Muslims is distorted by the American cinema through this movie.

- What are the main embedded ideologies regarding the movie’s portrayal of the Arab Muslims?

The main ideologies embedded in the movie “Body of Lies” regarding its portrayal of the Arab Muslims are the ideology of Othering of the Arab Muslims, the Muslim terrorist trope, and the ideology of the Oriental gaze.

The ideology of Othering of the Arab Muslims refers to the stigmatizing and marginalizing of Arab Muslims by portraying them as the “Other” in society. This phenomenon is often perpetuated through media representation, for instance, in the movie “Body of Lies”, the Muslims are represented as fundamentally different, alien, backward, inferior, corrupt and dangerous. As a result, the Arab Muslims are dehumanized and marginalized. Accordingly, they are represented as the dangerous Other who threatens Western values and security.

The ideology of the Muslim terrorist trope involves the inaccurate and harmful stereotypes about Islam and Muslims. In this movie, the Muslims are represented as violent, brutal, and holding extremist beliefs by employing some Arab Muslims characters such as: Al-Salim, who always argues people about violence, killing, and terrorist acts; the members of Al-Qaeda terrorist organization, who enjoyed torturing Ferris and cutting his fingers; in addition to Omar Al-Saddiqi who is involved in terrorist activities despite his high educational level and well cultural background. As a result, the movie reinforces the idea that Arab Muslims support violence and terrorism.

In addition to the ideology of the Oriental gaze, in this respect, Hepler and Muscato (2023) argues that the Oriental gaze is often associated with Edward Said's concept of Orientalism, for him, it is the notion that much of Western depictions of Asian cultures and societies are excessively simplistic, stereotypical, and offensive. Orientalism is the tendency of creators to show Asian cultures from Western perspectives. The main assumptions of orientalism are: Asian countries are societies that have maintained the same cultures and never change throughout history; Asian countries need and want external intervention from Western countries.

In the movie “Body of Lies” the Middle East which is represented as a mysterious, exotic, and ancient, the Arabic environment is characterized by barren desert, narrow alleys, stone houses, in addition to the ancient and dirty places that have been showed in some scenes. Further, the characters are depicted as unmodernized, uncivilized, and irrational. Accordingly, the movie perpetuates the idea that the Middle Eastern Arab Muslims belong to an inferior culture, contrasting it with the perceived superiority of Western cultures.

The ideologies of Othering of the Arab Muslims, the Muslim terrorist trope, and the Oriental gaze, in “Body of Lies,” work together to create a deeply ingrained set of beliefs about Arab Muslims and the Middle East. Unveiling these ideologies is crucial for understanding how Hollywood representations shape broader stereotyped narratives about Arab Muslims.

Therefore, the results obtained support the researchers’ main hypothesis regarding the applicability of Barthes’ framework to the analysis of motion-pictures of the selected scenes depending on the levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth. Meanwhile, the findings of this study confirm the research second sub-hypothesis which is related to the way Arab Muslims are being depicted in the movie being analyzed. Furthermore, the findings support the third sub-hypothesis, which is concerned with the main ideologies transmitted to the viewers.

3.2. Pedagogical Implications and Limitations of the Study

3.2.1. Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its practical application, mainly in raising awareness against such movies which try to distort the image of a specific

marginalized group of people. By critically examining the portrayal of Arab Muslims in the movie “Body of Lies”, the result of the current study confirm that the Arab Muslims are being stereotyped negatively in this movie, as being terrorists, barbaric, and uncivilized. This depiction can significantly shape public perceptions and change their opinions towards Arab Muslims, in addition to the spread of the notion “Islamophobia”. Thus, this research helps to develop the critical thinking to not accept all what is displayed, but to think and criticize mainly in entertainment scopes where ideologies are exhibited in a way that is thought to be common sense.

Another implication is that this study serves as a useful reference for researchers studying topics related to cinema and movies in different cultural contexts, by providing a clear methodology and analysis. In addition to that, as the studies related to the semiotic analysis are not widely discussed topics in universities and have not received any attention from researchers and scholars as well, thus, this research can be used as an example to help with the background knowledge for other researchers who are interested in analyzing motion-pictures and unveiling ideologies.

3.2.2 Limitations of the study

Researchers often encountered various obstacles and challenges while conducting research. These can include constraints related to time and data gathering. First of all, the time allotted to the current study has been inadequate to look at all sources and studies for sufficient discussion of the work. However, researchers have to be careful when interpreting the movie’s signs and characters to avoid subjectivity. On the other hand, the lack of resources, researches, and theses related to the topic being discussed are few, either in Arabic or other languages.

3.3 Further Suggestions

Researchers suggests some points to future researchers who would analyze movies using semiotic theory of analysis:

- Future researchers should conduct quantitative studies using representative samples. Therefore, researchers can systematically collect data from a large samples of Hollywood movies, this can include variables such as; the number of Muslim characters, and filmmakers'intent, which are essential for understanding the representation of Muslims in Hollywood Cinema.

- For researchers who would analyzing the movie " Body of Lies", they should read the novel of the same name by David Ignatius as it can provide additional insights into the characters, themes that may not be fully explored in the movie.

Conclusion

This last chapter tackled the research findings stated in the previous chapter, providing summary of the study's findings and drawing them to the research questions. The data obtained from eight scenes of the movie " Body of Lies" using Barthes' semiotic theory, which involves three levels of significations. This chapter supplies a number of pedagogical limitations and recommendations, besides to limitations and suggestions for further studies.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study focused on the representation of Arab Muslims in Hollywood movies. The dissertation analyzed a set of scenes from the movie “Body of Lies” in order to unveil the ideologies embedded in the movie regarding Hollywood representation of the Arab Muslims, relaying on Barthes’ theory of visual semiotics.

This research paper is written to explain how the West’s distortion of Arab Muslims in the mass media and mainly in Hollywood is large. The primary purpose behind conducting this research is to apply Ronald Barthes’ theory of analysis to the eight scenes of the mentioned movie. The researchers aimed to uncover the ideologies transmitted to the viewers through each one of the selected scenes. Three questions were raised at the beginning of this research. The first question examined the extent of Barthes’ theory applicability in unveiling the ideologies embedded in the selected scenes of the movie “Body of Lies”. The second question focused on how the Arab Muslims are represented in the movie "Body of Lies". Furthermore, the third question was related to the ideologies embedded in this movie. The present dissertation consisted of a general introduction and three chapters. The general introduction was about an overview on the topic being discussed. Additionally, it contained the main components of the research which are: the research problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions and hypotheses, the significance of the study, the dissertation’s layout, and definitions of some key terms. The first chapter was entitled “Literature Review and Theoretical Framework”. The first section of chapter one dealt with an overview on Hollywood company, the influence of media, definition of stereotype, ideology, and the representation of Arab Muslims in American movies.

The theoretical framework covered an overview on semiotics taking into consideration de Saussure, Pierce, and Barthes theories. At the end, it reviews some previous studies that were found to be relevant to the scope of the research. Additionally, the second chapter offered a semiotic analysis of eight scenes selected form the movie “Body of Lie”, based on Barthes’ theory of visual semiotics. In this regard, the study went through three main levels during the analysis of the selected scenes. first, it described the denotative level of each scene separately, then translated the connotative level contained in each one of the scenes and lastly extracted the mythical level that each scene concealed in order to unravel how Hollywood consistently transmits ideological beliefs to viewers. Finally, the third chapter discussed the findings resulted from the analysis of the eight scenes selected from the movie "Body of Lies" and reconnect them to the research questions. The chapter also proposed a set of pedagogical implications and recommendations, as well as it presented the limitations of the study by supplying some suggestions for future research.

This study attempted to answer the research questions stated previously in the introduction by analyzing the eight scenes selected from the movie “Body of Lies” relaying on Barthes’ semiotic theory. These questions were answered based on the data analysis and findings. It can be said that Barthes’ theory of visual semiotic analysis can be applicable to uncover the ideologies embedded in the movie “Body of Lies”. Additionally, Arab Muslims are being represented from a negative perspective in that movie, they are stereotyped as terrorists, barbaric, uncivilized, and violent. Moreover, the ideologies transmitted through the movie “Body of Lies” are the

ideology of Othering of the Arab Muslims, the Muslim terrorist trope, and the ideology of the Oriental gaze.

As a result, this work confirmed the validity of research hypotheses by proving the relevancy of Barthes' theory of semiotic analysis to reveal the ideologies embedded in the movie "Body of Lies".

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