
A ‘Mémoire’ Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Anglo-American Studies

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ABSTRACT

This Mémoire looks at the reflection of post 9/11 American foreign policy in Hollywood movies. This is important because the popularity of the Hollywood industry has reached the entire world; thus, it has a significant role in formulating people’s views. This work reveals the role Hollywood plays in promoting and propagating American foreign policy, particularly at a time the film industry is censored and backed by various American government departments and agencies. The Mémoire too shows how stereotyped representations of Arabs and Muslims before the advent of the American cinema has influenced filmmakers and has been reinforced by them in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks. By comparing two Hollywood movies, *American Sniper* (2014) and *Rendition* (2007), this analysis stresses the portrayal of the ‘good’ American heroes who fight against the Muslims who are represented as terrorists in the post 9/11 period by American movies industry. Based on this projection of American foreign as well as the portrayal of Arabs and Muslims as villains on the Hollywood screen, this work concludes that Hollywood is an extension of American ideology and government foreign policy.

**Key terms:**

Hollywood movies, American foreign policy, propaganda, stereotypes, Arabs and Muslims
ملخص

RESUME

Ce mémoire est une recherché sur le reflet de la politique étrangère Américaine à travers les films de Hollywood. Vu l’importance et la popularité du cinéma hollywoodien qui touche le monde entier et son rôle significatif et son influence. Ce travail et une méthode d’analyse dans l’optique de mettre une lumière sur

La propagande véhicules dans les logs métrages et comment l’idéologie Américaine

Et principalement l’idéologie militaire véhicules à travers le cinéma sous l’influence

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved family, specially my parents who supported me and consistently encouraged me.
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I am grateful to Allah who gave me the power and the will to finish this work and praise to Allah who makes all things possible.

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List of Abbreviations

CIA: The Central Intelligence Agency
FBI: The Federal Bureau of Investigation
NASA: The National Aeronautics and Space Administration
US: United States of America
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction
WWII: World War II
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Appendix
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Throughout centuries, the US sought to be the leading force in the world; it succeeded to contain the influence of communism by opening its door to help the European nations and middle easterners to recover from the devastation of WWII. The US practices its hegemony in the Middle East through assassinations, interventions, coups and despotism and its interests in the region are motivated by controlling oil prices and expanding its market and promoting capitalist democracy as well as dominating the world economy. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the threat of communism ended. The US appeared as the sole superpower; thus, it needed another enemy to justify its hegemony. It turned its concerns to the Islamic countries under the slogan of global war on terror. Thus, it used the media and Hollywood as instruments to transmit its ideology and to distort the image of its enemy.

Nowadays, the media is the most powerful source of influence on the people’s views. It is a means for educating and informing. Most of our knowledge is derived from visual the media such as movies and TV shows which have the most effects on the audience and target the heart and mind of the viewer. President George W. Bush once said “I learn more from the CNN than I do from the CIA.” The media has a significant role in reflecting and propagating certain policies. The US is a dominant power in the world; its media has a significant role in formulating public opinion and it broadcasts serve the interest of US.

Hollywood is the movie capital of the world; thus, the US used movies as an instrument to transmit its ideology and Hollywood is the mirror that reflects American
Foreign Policy. As the film helps the viewer to see things from the US perspective, there are ethnic groups whose images are demonized and distorted just because they are enlisted in the US’s rogue states. During WWII, the Germans were the shoot of Hollywood; during the Cold War, the Russians took the role of villains; since, Arabs and Muslims became Hollywood’s villains.

When it comes to Hollywood movies involving Arabs and Muslims in suspicious and bad situations, one feels that Hollywood’s depictions are misleading, manipulating and one-dimensional. Paul Silverstein states, “Law enforcement measures, politicians, religious leaders and Hollywood image-makers have contributed in stereotyping Arab Muslim as race” (qtd. in Shaheen). In most movies, like *American Sniper* (2014) and *Rendition* (2007), it shows to the world that Muslims and Arabs are dangerous terrorists; therefore, the US troops as protectors of the world have to intervene in order to fight them. Based on this, this Mémoire shows that Hollywood movies’ depiction of Arabs and Muslims are extensions of American foreign policy and ideology in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

In Hollywood, American foreign policy is commonly reflected and movies serve as a propagandist message to strengthen American power. The aim behind selecting this topic is to see how American foreign policy is projected in Hollywood movies and who censors and supports the making of films. By doing so, this Mémoire seeks to investigate stereotyped images of Muslims as terrorists.

The research questions that rose in this study are the following: How Arab-Muslims are depicted in the post-9/11 era in the movies *American Sniper* (2014) and *Rendition* (2007)? What are the political messages that are transmitted through the content of the movies? How Hollywood propagates American foreign policy?
This research investigates the stereotyped images of Arab-Muslims in the pre-9/11 period and in its aftermath. This work takes into account the analysis of two movies: *American Sniper* and *Rendition*. *American Sniper* is a movie that depicts an American soldier sent to Iraq to protect his brothers-in-arms from the Iraqis while *Rendition* is a movie based on the story of an Egyptian-born chemical engineer who was linked to a violent organization. The aim is to find out whether the misrepresentation of this ethnic group has changed or whether it has been reinforced. Thus, a comparative study is applied to this research.

This research is conducted through two chapters. The first chapter is a general overview of American foreign policy in the aftermath of 1945. In its first section, this research deals with the role of the US during and after the Cold War. The second part tackles the projection and representation of American foreign policy in Hollywood movies as well as the role of the American government, mainly the Pentagon and the CIA in the film industry. The last part shows how Hollywood movies shape people’s opinions, as the movies are a strong means for promoting American culture.

The second chapter investigates stereotypes and sheds light on some ethnic groups whose images were distorted through movies. Then, the chapter discusses the stereotyped images of Arabs and Middle Easterners in movies that have a root in the colonial period. The second section of this chapter deals with the post-9/11 representation of Arab-Muslim characters and the last section of the chapter gives an analysis of the two selected movies *American Sniper* and *Rendition*.
Chapter One

The Impact of American Foreign Policy on Hollywood’s Public Opinions

Introduction

After Japan bombed the American naval base Pearl Harbor in 1941, the US entered the World War II. This marked the shift of American foreign policy from isolation to intervention in other countries’ affairs. Therefore, the US sought to impose its political, economic and military hegemony through the world with key policies like the Marshal Plan and the Truman Doctrine. This way, it achieved its goals in containing communism as well as emerging as the leader of the world. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US received another threat but this time on its land: it was the 9/11 attack that opened a door to a new global war against terror. In this war, the George W. Bush administration engaged in two major military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, in this war only Muslims who suffered discrimination in US as well as mistreatment on Hollywood screen. Hollywood reflected this American foreign policy and therefore movies become a source of support to strengthen US power. Hollywood, with the help of the American government agencies, promotes the bright and the good side of Americans heroes who fight against the evil side represented in the American enemy during wars.

This chapter will discuss how the American foreign policy agenda and ideologies since the Cold War sought to contain the Soviet influence as well as how it
changed from soft power to hard power after 9/11 attacks. How Hollywood and government react to the attacks. The chapter too sheds light on how and why Hollywood has become an extension to American foreign policy and how the American government agencies control the content of films. Movies a strong tool for promoting American policy have deep effects on audiences.

I. Post-1945 American foreign policy

1. Historical background

During World War II, the US with its ally the Soviet Union fought for the defeat of Hitler’s Nazi German. This was the last goodwill between the two superpowers before the outbreak of the Cold War. After their victory, the leaders of the two nations met in Russia and they agreed to divide Germany into four part. West Germany belongs to French, British and American zones while the eastern part became a communist country. The end of the World War II was marked by long international crises, which ended in the cold war (Bragg 3; Fitzgerald 28).

The beginning of the Cold War characterized by the emergence of a bipolar world in which two superpowers dominated the world: The US under the administration of Truman and the Soviet Union led by Stalin. Thus, both of them sought to benefit from the devastation and effects of the WWII on the previous powerful nations in (Germany, Japanese, France and Britain) to expand their territories. As a result, the world divided between the US and its allies and the Soviet Union and its proponents. However, the conflict between the US and the Soviet Union was waged in the absence of guns and direct fighting; instead, the war relied upon
propaganda, military support and aid to other nations. Therefore, the Cold War was a war of ideas and politics (Totman 34).

The tension between the US and the Soviet Union reach its peak when both of them sought to impose their ideologies and hegemony around the world. When Truman succeeded Roosevelt in 1945, he lacked the knowledge and experience of foreign policy especially in diplomatic relations with Britain or Soviet Union. Unlike Roosevelt who had experience in dealing with international affairs, particularly his useful relationship with Stalin. Therefore, Truman adopted a severe policy toward the Soviet Union and his administration was characterized by a firm stance against communism. In 1945, he announced his doctrine, which aimed at limiting the expansion and the influence of the Soviet during the Cold War as well as supporting the nations threaten by communism. In fact, the Truman Doctrine was a reaction to the revolution in Greece and Turkey. The Soviets established supporting regimes throughout Eastern Europe and blockaded the areas of Berlin they occupied (Bragg 10; Fitzgerald 32-33).

The US foreign policy in this era was interventionist; this means that the US policy during that time built around giving foreign military and economic aid to allies, as well as stationing troops and becoming involved in foreign wars. Therefore, President Harry Truman set a policy of containment that aimed at limiting the expansion of communism. Containment meant “Soviet influence and Communist ideology should be contained within the areas occupied by the forces of the Soviet Union at the end of World War II” (Leffler 2). Later on, another plan was proclaimed by the US Secretary of State George Marshall, in which US helped and financed the economies of the European regions that were devastated from the WW II, it gave
them ‘$13 billion’ in order to prevent the spread of communist in those areas. Marshall claimed that only the US has the ability to save the world from the effects of wars: “Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos” (Bragg 10; Fitzgerald 31). The economic boom in the United States as well as the Truman Doctrine gave them the right to intervene anywhere on the globe.

It seems that the hysteria of communism within the American society continued especially in the early 1950 that was known as “the red scare” due to the threat posed by communism and Soviet spies inside the US. Senator McCarthy in a speech accused many government workers of being communists. Congress established the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to investigate a communist espionage in the US. Thus, McCarthyism is a practice built on unfair investigative techniques, which resulted in accusing hundreds of Americans, some of them were jailed and others lost their jobs; among them were the Hollywood blacklisted screenwriters, actors and directors. McCarthy reputation was tarnished and “the Senate decided to formally censure him for abusing his powers and using unfair tactics in targeting innocent government official” (Bragg 101). Harry Truman sent a telegram to McCarthy:

This is the first time in my experience… that I ever heard of a Senator trying to discredit his own Government before the world… Your telegram is not only not true and an insolent approach to a situation that should have been worked out between man and man – but it shows conclusively that you are not even fit to have a hand in the operation of the Government of the United States. (‘Cold War Quot’)}
The inability and the weakness of the previous colonial powers to continue their dominance in the third world as well as many part of the Middle East regions resulted in the decline of colonization and independence of these regions; therefore, it paved the way to the US and Soviet Union to fill the vacuum (Bragg 3). The US foreign policy in the region was motivated by the following reasons: the security of Israel, the free access to oil and the containment of the Soviet expansion. In addition, the US intended to ensure control of Arab oil prices and prevent the Soviet influence at the same time. So, the US adopted the Eisenhower Doctrine which is an American foreign policy 1958-59 which aimed at giving economic and military assistance to any Middle East country that may be threatened by communism. This plan has implicit goals as William Blum states: “no one would be allowed to dominate or have excessive influence over the Middle East or its oil fields except the Unite State, and that anyone who tried would be, by definition, communist” (3).

According to Yaqub, the US emerged as a dominant power in the Middle East; therefore, it attempted to overthrow the nationalist Egyptian leader Jamal abed al Nasser because he opposed Western imperialism and Zionism as well as he called the Arab leaders to be neutral in the Cold War. The US moved against the nationalist Arab leaders because they wanted their economies to be independent from foreign controls as well as they free themselves from the colonial impact on their society and culture (174-49).

Moreover, the American intervention in the Middle East and other nation’s affairs was an instrument to strengthen its power and expand its political and economic hegemony over the rest of the world. For instance, its interventions in Iran
in 1953, when Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh planned to nationalize Iran’s oil fields. He was removed from office by the CIA with the help of the British intelligence agency because his plan would have had a bad effect on American and British interests. Iran’s oil company was an important source of British revenue; therefore, in order to displace the Iranian prime minister, the Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced that Mossadegh was “increasingly turning towards communism.” The fear of the spread of communism in Middle East led the US government to plan a coup against Mossadegh. After Ayatollah Khomeini succeeded, Shah a tyrant leader who was backed by the US, the relations between Iran and US deteriorated; it is the first Islamic country demonizing the US and calling it the “Great Satan” (Bhattacharya 8; Totman 53).

After World War II, American foreign policy was perceived as promoting peace and democracy; therefore, it was forced to rely on military action or intervention in other’s affairs only when it was threatened by demonic enemies. In fact, the intervention of US in other wars since the Cold War was motivated by economic and military self-interests; it has no intention to spread democracy, freedom and civil rights as it claims. However, its purpose was expansion, greed and imperialism (Bragg 3). The United States sought to “maintain its hegemony through the threat or use of military force” (Chomsky 8). The history of the US contradicted its innocent purposes to spread democracy around the world; it humiliated human rights and then blamed others for their violations. For instance, when the Iraqis experienced the brutal action and torture on the hand of American troops, the US justified its action in the region as a tool to protect its interests from the terrorists.
In addition, the US kept silent about the crimes of Israel toward the Palestinians and supported the autocratic regimes in the Middle East. American foreign policy in the region aimed at creating economic and political instability in order to ensure its military interference. According to Dreyfuss, the US sought to maintain those countries as puppets under its hand, or plunge these countries into chaos and or instability. In addition, Harry L. Myers states that “the United States has in this time, identified key interests in the region that have seen involvement based on diplomacy, aid, culture, education, espionage, subversion, and the projection of military power” (8). Chomsky too criticizes American foreign policy; he states that the US is always ready to support the tyrannical leaders when it comes to its interests.

To sum up, the aim of American foreign policy toward the European nations was no longer an innocent help, to those region to recover or revival their economies from the damage of World War II. However, the US sought to prevent the influence and the expansion of communism to European and the third world as well as to be the leadership of the world, in fact the American hidden purposes was to control the European economy, expanding its markets and promoting the American capitalism as well as culture (Gimbel 1).

2. The American Foreign Policy in the Post 9/11

11 September 2001 is an unforgotten event in the history of the United States; that day imprinted in the Americans minds. The attack on the World Trade Center was imputed to Osama Bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda who denied responsibility. He states that the US has enemies “from Russia to Israel and from India to Serbia.” He added that “perhaps it was the American Jews, who have been annoyed with President
Bush ever since the Florida elections and who want to avenge him” (Brunn 12). As a response to this unprecedented event, the US government under the administration of George W. Bush declared a war against terror. In fact, the war targeted Muslims and Arabs. The latter had been deeply affected by the 9/11 specially those who live in the United States. They suffered depression isolation and sadness and they stopped performing prayers in mosques due to the increased hostility toward them as Americans associated the attack with Muslims not with terrorists. The “war on terror” is not only a political concept; it has also an ideological dimension because terrorism has been linked to Muslims and Islam, and as a result, it has been built a new ideology based on the connection between the Middle Eastern countries and terrorism, fear and hate (Khatib 18; Jiménez 5).

Shaheen states: “when one ethnic, racial or religious group vilifies, innocent people suffer” (Reel Bad Arabs 1). Both the American government and the media play an important role in forming a bad image of Islam among Americans and the rest of the world. Shaheen argued that the US government has had a hand in ensuring that Hollywood sends a negative image of the Arabs and Muslims to the audiences around the world: "Filmmaking is political," he explains. “Dehumanizing stereotypes emerging from the cinema, TV, and other media help support government policies, enabling producers to more easily advance and solidify stereotypes” (Guilty, n.p). The Bush administration witnessed harsh policies and racist views toward Arab Americans and Muslims who live there. Bush contradicted himself when he delivered a speech immediately after 9/11 describing the war against terrorists as not against Muslims. Later on in 2006, he stated that “we are against Islamic fascists” (qtd. in Shaheen). Other politicians targeted Arabs and Muslims as the enemy of the US: the American representative Virgil Goode said: “I fear that we have more Arabs and Muslims in the
United States,” Through his speech, he linked the Arabs and Muslims to the terrorists attacks. Another American politician harshly targeted Muslims by saying that in order that the United State prevents such attack; it should threaten to destroy Mecca and Medina (Shaheen *Guilty* n.p). Shaheen noted that “film producers were called upon to serve the country in the “war on terror” and make patriotic films” (1). The American war against terrorism started in Iraq and Afghanistan in order to “securing the nation” (Khatib 19).

After 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration declared a global war against terror, which became known as the Bush Doctrine. This doctrine justifies the invasion of countries that sponsor terrorism and Afghanistan was used as a pretext to defeat the Taliban regime. In fact, the US’ plans to intervene in Afghanistan was set prior to 9/11 attack; thus the events accelerated the Americans opportunities in the region and this because of the strategic and significant location of Afghanistan as well as the natural gas resources of the region. Afghanistan was merit to be a base for American military operations. The invasion of Afghanistan was followed by the invasion of Iraq in 2003, which was justified by Iraqi’s possession of Weapon of Mass Destruction. Both the American government and the media showed Saddam Hussein’s regime as a threat to American and Middle East interests and peace (Cakmak 5).

In the post 9/11 period, the US demonstrated hard power toward Afghanistan and Iraq. Hard power is the use of a military force or direct coercion; it also includes the use of political, economic and diplomatic sanction against countries that sponsor terrorism and possess weapons of mass destruction. for instance at the level of economic sanctions, the US states passed “Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003” that aimed at imposing sanctions against Syria, thus the US prevented exporting its products to the region because the president Bashar Al- Assad
supports Suddam Hussein as well as Hamas and Hezbollah which the US consider as terrorist groups. The US policy toward Iran consisted of containment and harsher sanction as well as isolation because Iran too is considered as a sponsor of terrorism possession of WMD and hostile toward Israel (Totman 35-148). Chomsky sees that the problem of US with Iran is that “Iran does not follow orders. It’s trying to maintain its sovereignty” (par. 4).

After the president, George W. Bush declared war against terror; then, suddenly Muslims were viewed as terrorists through Hollywood lenses, as Sheen states: “Film producers were called upon to serve the country in the “war on terror” and make patriotic film” (1). Hollywood presented the Muslims as lacking humanity as well as terrorists and hijackers who are ready to sacrifice their life in the honorable name of Allah, thus these stereotypes image create Islamophobia among the audience. It reached its peak in the aftermath of 9/11 in which bearded men and veiled women were received as threat of US peace and stability. Pretty Persuasion (2005) depicted a Palestinian veiled Muslim girl as unwelcomed among her classmate, one of the protagonists mocks her hijab and seeing her as a terrorist girl tended to bomb and kill (Shaheen, Guilty). Islamophobia and racism toward Muslims grew from the stereotypes representation of Arabs as barbarian ignorant in the American media during the Arab-Israel war in 1967.

II. The projection of American foreign policy in Hollywood

Hollywood movies are the source from which the Americans get to know who their enemy is. The US has to present its enemy as the ‘other’, the evil side against the good American side through Hollywood lenses in order to achieve its Propaganda (Totman 2). The enemy of the US is always the evil as reflected in movies. Whether
countries that are allies or enemies to US are portrayed or reflected as such in Hollywood movies. This reveals how the American government worked together with Hollywood to defeat or distort the image of its enemy. Jack Valentine of the Motion Picture Association of America said: “Washington and Hollywood spring from the same DNA;” he reveals how in the last 20 years, there has been a consistent collaboration between the US Department of Defense and Hollywood film studios (qtd. in Shaheen, *Guilty* n.p).

1. The representation of American Foreign Policy in Hollywood

At the start of World War I, the American movies had prevailed over the world. President Woodrow Wilson regarded the movies as a major tool for American foreign policy. The national association of the motion picture industry sent a message to Wilson telling him that movies could serve for national propaganda. Therefore, Wilson declared that films would serve as a weapon in presenting American’s plans and goals. Then he established a committee known as the Committee on Public Information or Creel Committee. It was created to influence American citizens to support US participation in World War I. This Committee used various propaganda tools such as movies, magazines, cartoons…etc. That committee too promoted a good vision of the presidency; in addition, that committee censored the Hollywood production to the extent that it prevented films that promote negative images of the United States. Wilson told Samuel Goldwyn, a Jewish producer, to produce films that sympathized with the France war in order to gain a good relation with the French (Watanabe and McConnell 175).

In the Cold War era, the Russians were portrayed as villains and the movies served as anti-communist propaganda. Film stories presented the virtue of capitalism
and democracy but promoted the Soviet communist dictatorship (Shaw). Hollywood was affected by ‘the Red Scare’ during the McCarthy era because McCarthy turned his attention to the film industry which resulted in the ‘Hollywood blacklist’ of people who worked in the film industry. They were prohibited and fired from their jobs; thus, he destroyed a countless careers in the entertainment sector. In the 1950’s, science fiction movies were often allegories about different aspects of Cold War politics. The movie *Invasion of the Body-Snatchers* was interpreted as a reference to the McCarthy era hysteria. Invaders from Mars were depicted as communist infiltrators. The *Day the Earth Stood Still* is another film as; it was a simple fantasy that observed some higher supernatural power that would come to try to sort everything out (BBC, For those too). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US appeared as the sole superpower; it needed another enemy to justify its power and dominance. As Show states:

[H]istorians have begun to set the American films industry's cold war role in a wider, international context, by, for instance. Highlighting Hollywood’s willingness to export American ideals in line with the US State Department’s wishes. However, this celluloid ‘cultural diplomacy’ has yet to make serious inroads into mainstream Cold War historiography, while only few scholars have taken a the lead from the revelation of Hollywood-State Department collaboration to search for potential links between the film industry and other government agencies during the conflict. (1)

Hollywood with the help of various American government agencies rewrites the history of the Cold War according to their interests. the distortion of facts in the content of movies misleads historians. After the 9/11 attacks, the US used the pretext of fighting terrorism in order to justify its invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq but in fact
what the audiences receive from the American movies is the distorted image of Arabs and Muslims who were portrayed as terrorists.

The Hollywood screen reflects mirror of American foreign policy; it plays an important role in strengthening American power abroad. “Demonizing the enemy is so common during times of war” (Alsultany 15). For example during the World War II, “the US mobilized its military and economic power, as well as its military power to defeat its Axis powers. It also waged a forceful propaganda war to bring the world to its side, even using the talent of Hollywood” (Evera 11). Films played an important role in forming public opinion; they portrayed the American heroes work together in fighting the German and Japanese enemies. The majority of movies presented anti-Nazi and anti-Hitler themes. When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, the Japanese-Americans become the target of discrimination, harassment and government surveillance. Therefore, they lost their jobs and homes and they were sent to camps where the majority of them died and others were killed. Hostility toward Japan was due to its alliance with Nazi-German; thus, Hollywood started to produce movies that mistreated them. The same case happened after the 9/11 attacks when George W. Bush declared war against terror; and then, suddenly Muslims were viewed as terrorists through Hollywood lenses (Fitzgerald 20).

The Hollywood screen seems to serve as camera lenses that pictured the American government. Through movies, it is possible to see American foreign policy as well as American relations with other nations. For instance, Arab and American relations shifted from positive to negative. According to Shaheen, the Arab image in the U.S. became more negative after World War II for three reasons: the U.S. support for Israel in its conflict with the Palestinian people; therefore, Saudi Arabia imposed its oil embargo against the US. The Arab oil embargo of the 1970’s that resulted in
higher oil prices and the Iranian revolution that caused the capture of American hos-
tages (Guilty 181). The reaction of the US to these events is reflected in the movies. When Hollywood received the green light to produce films against Arabs, the image of sheiks shifted from the lazy and rich men who is keen on white skinned western women to the image of a corrupt oil tycoon and, then to the terrorist whose purpose is to damage American economy and stability (Alsultanay 21).

Moreover, in the 1976 film Network, for example, one of the scenes in the film presented a broadcaster in television news calling for the American people to stand against the selling of America to the oil-rich Arabs (Shaheen 177). While after the creation of the state of Israel which was supported by US, not surprisingly, the Palestinians became victims of Hollywood. They were presented as terrorists killing innocent children while the Israeli just want to live in peace, “Never do movies present Palestinians as innocent victims and Israelis as brutal oppressors… No movie shows Palestinian families struggling to survive under occupation, living in refugee camps” (Shaheen 187). For example, the Sword of the Desert (1949) depicted the land of Palestine as never been inhabited by Palestinians as well as the land was without population. This served as a propaganda message for the Zionist myth that showed Palestine as unpopulated. Another film Black Sunday (1977) depicted Palestinians as terrorists killing Americans in their lands (Reel Bad Arb 187). Hollywood’s purpose is to make Americans sympathize with Israel and damn the Palestinians. Not only movies promote the ambitions of Israel, the print media too has hand in such a propaganda An article by Israeli writer Amos Elon in the New York Times Magazine said that “Israel [is] at the mercy of blind forces” (qtd. in Welty). That kind of talk simply reinforced U.S. view of Israel as a victim.
1. The Relation between Hollywood and American Government Agencies

The relationship between US foreign policy and Hollywood is not a simple coincidence. The Bush administration has used the dramatic stories of the Hollywood industry as an invisible tool to broadcast its ideas in order to make people support its foreign policy. After 9/11, Hollywood and Washington worked together. For example, the *Sum of all Fears* a film about nuclear terrorism, reflected the Pentagon cooperation with the film industry. It provided Hollywood producers with military equipments, weapons and even the majority of its soldiers participated in the filming process. This assistance aimed at presenting a positive image of the US army (Fraser 182).

Through centuries, the Pentagon sought to promote the U.S. military presence around the world is depicted to mass publics. The film industry has a long partnership with the armed forces: military public relations offices typically review movie scripts in exchange for access to bases, equipment, stock footage, and expert consultation, all needed for "authenticity." The deep patriotic and militaristic content of most combat pictures, however, is rarely determined by stringent Pentagon controls over how producers, writers, and directors do their work, but flows from the larger political and media culture that is the repository of imperialist ideology. So attached are many Hollywood filmmakers to the combat spectacle with its enduring assumptions of superpower benevolence that they rarely wander far from the "bipartisan" foreign-policy consensus (Boggs sec. 2).
The movie is taken from Tom Clancy’s novel of the same name, the story of the novel visualizes the acquisition of Palestinian extremists of Israeli nuclear bomb, which they transformed it to micro-bomb and exploded it in one of the American cities. It is common misconception that the movie was done as a reaction to the September 11 attacks. However, the movie filming finished in June 2001, The US department intervene in the filming process the scenario changed from in presenting Arabs as terrorists to European neo-Nazis because the council on American-Arab relations feared that as in the novel, movie promotes a negative image of Islam and Muslims. The release of the movie coincided with the 9/11 attack (Valentine 92).

In 1996, the CIA announced its collaboration on Hollywood production; today different agencies of the US government have offices connected to Hollywood like the FBI and NASA. These have less power on Hollywood unlike the Department of Defense, which has dominance over the movie industry to the extent that the Pentagon always intervenes in the changing of the script; this power is due to the assistance provided by the Pentagon to filmmaker. The documentary *Hollywood and the Pentagon: a Dangerous Liaison* reveals the mutual relationship between Hollywood and the Pentagon. If Hollywood studios and filmmakers want to benefit from the military’s equipment to portray war stories, the government must censor and modify the scripts of movies (Alford, Graham 1-2).

David Rob tackles the relations between Hollywood and the Pentagon; he explains: “[t]he only thing Hollywood likes more than a good movie is a good deal” (384). The filmmakers go hand in hand with the Pentagon, each one receiving a benefit from the other. The Pentagon provides Hollywood producers with money and equipments like weapons and airplanes in order to depict the American military as heroes and savers of the world. What the viewers receive in the movie is not the desire
of the director but the powers that controlled the Hollywood industry in order to promote about America’s armed force. The Pentagon censors and shapes the movies, i.e.: it plays the role of the director, and it directs the making of the scene, since it is the source of finance to the movies. The film *Top Gun* (1986), the U.S. Air Force allowed producers to use its jets and military facilities in return for showing the U.S. Air Force and Navy as superior (Valentine 95).

Hollywood movies have become an extension of American foreign policy and as propaganda tools to reinforce the existence of the US as a leading force of the world. The film *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012) is a recent productions showing how today the movie industry promotes US foreign policy. The film reflected the dramatic assassination and torture of Osama Ben laden at the hands of CIA. However, the truth about his death is not as the film portrayed it. Bin Laden suffered from the Marfan syndrome, which caused his death, and the CIA wants to amuse the audience and hide the truth about its failure to capture the leader of Al Qaeda. In addition, *Argo* received a rewarding Oscar for the best movie; it is propaganda about the terrible truth about Iranian hostage crisis and aimed at calling the Americans to prepare for war against Iran (Lévesque; Pieczenik).

To sum up, the portrayal of Hollywood for terrorism is reflected in two people: The villain men who are presented as Russians, Germans, Japanese and Arabs; however, the hero is American men who save the US soil from evil anti-American foreigners who threaten its security. Through such depiction, the US represented as benevolent power that sought to spread peace around the world.
III. The influence of movies on public opinion

1. The promotion of American culture in movies

Movies, as part of the mass media, do have effects on public opinion. Generally, people sit in front of television watching movies just to kill time, entertain or simply to relax from the stresses of life. However, sometimes what the viewers receive from that screen may affect their behaviors, attitude and even their interactions with others. Today, people imitate blindly the way the stars act, talk and even their dresses. According to Wanwarang Maisuwong survey, which analyzed 30 movies and their cultural impact on the audience, two third of the total surveyed people adopted the lifestyles represented in the movie to their life. In addition, the majority of people adopted the American accent and included it to their daily life (7).

Nowadays, the world has become an American material possession in which the US is seen as the only superpower that succeeded in conquering the world; it promotes and imposes its cultural hegemony through books, movies, television shows, music, sports and food. As Maisuwong states: “To be global is to be American” (4); in fact the world is never seen as globalized but Americanized: “may be global cinema does exist, but it doesn’t exist instead of an American cinema. What we identify as global cinema is really nothing more that Americanisation [sic] of culture, globally” (qtd. in Ibbi 6). The TV shows and the film industry are the key elements in promoting American culture abroad, they projects democracy, freedom, equality and the virtue of the American way of life as well reinforce the American image as a utopian land that respects all races. It is not surprisingly that people admired American food, clothes and fashions; Maisuwong observes survey that:
The world audience became consumerist overnight after watching movies, for example, the culture of eating low carp food in American movies caused the popularity of McDonald’s, KFC, pizza, and so forth. Hollywood movie is the American medium, it has influences to the movie industries in several countries as well. It is called Hollywoodization in which the Hollywood affect the movie industries in Asia to adopt the production style, dressing, or even imitate the name of Hollywood, as such Bollywood the name of Indian movie. (2)

The US sought to promote its capitalist and liberal ideas to the world through Hollywood lenses. The effects of American movies can be seen in the adoption of American culture. This kind of adoption with other cultures Maisuwong called cultural imperialism that spread through movies to eliminate the local culture. Film is a language of power since it directs and leads actions of the people. According to the cultivation theory, people absorb all the values and messages received from movies and then they adopt them to their life: “mass media and television viewership place influence on viewers in shaping concepts of social reality” (Wing Tung Lai, Cheuk Wun Chung and Nga Sze Po 1). People confront with different cultures from movies because they “seen as a global medium” (Maisuwong 1). In fact, the US promotes its cultural imperialism through movies.

Hollywood is the capital of the film industry in the world; it is an American instrument, so the access of Hollywood to the world is the access of America. Hollywood has a powerful tool to mainstreaming American culture and values, and it too has the ability to convince the audience in believing what they receive on the big screen. In fact in the age of globalization the movies spread fast and people are inspired by the utopian land where there are democracy, equality and freedom, “But
reality did not mirror Hollywood” (Vanhala 87). There is a need for viewer to be able to differentiate between information and misinformation, truth and fabrication received from mass media or movies. The promotion of American culture through the Hollywood screen is an intention of America to imperialize the world through soft power (Maisuwong 2).

2. The Effects of Hollywood on People’s Views

Movies are seen as a global tool that conquered the world, they have a power to shape people’s view and the audience judges the American lifestyle according to what they see at the Hollywood screen. During the Cold War, Hollywood filmmakers promoted the virtue of capitalism, democracy and pro-American values while demonizing communism and the Soviets. David Rob in Operation Hollywood: How The Pentagon Shapes And Censors The Movies states that since the Americans have never experienced a war in their land, thus they took much of their knowledge about war from films which give them the impression that these films are historically factual. However, Hollywood has always been misleading and biased in its representation of the events. According to Shaw during the Cold War, the cinema was a powerful weapon, what people heard or saw on that big screen could have a great influence on their view about the Cold War. Movies at that time served as a source of anti-communist propaganda. The Iron Curtain (1948), the first Hollywood Cold War movie, represented the Cold War as a conflict between two isolated superpowers. The film presented an ugly image of the Soviet Union and presented the Russians as oppressed citizens while communism restrains progress and freedom. White Nights another American movie made during Cold War era, depicted the good and generous
American character as opposed to negative communist system. These movies influenced the Americans and the world in forming a bad image of communism. However, Hollywood used its power to promote capitalism around the world. Films always implicated ideologies; thus, there is no innocence in the content of movies (Shaw 1-10).

The stereotyped images in the content of movies that repeated each time, reveal the intention of Hollywood to imprint a negative image on the audience’s minds. As Shaheen states: “For more than a century Hollywood, too, has used repetition as a teaching tool, tutoring movie audiences by repeating over and over, in film after film insidious images of the Arab people” (Reel Bad Arb 172). When people used to see a distorted image of Arabs and Muslims in movies, it will imprint their minds. This is the impact of the media on people’s attitudes. Some political scientists suggest that the media is like a magic bullet, which affect people by the information they receive, i.e.: the media do have influence on public attitudes. The images that are left behind may often play a contributing role in how viewers shape their beliefs and opinions about certain countries, events, and people of various races, such as Arabs. Hollywood films do influence the Americans in formulating and stereotyping other cultures; millions of people have grown up believing that they know Arab and Muslim culture through what they receive through Hollywood lenses (Elayan 8).

There is evidence show that terrorists take some ideas from movies, terrorists too imitated what they saw on the screen. For instance, The Battle of Algiers (1965) reflected the real life conflict between Algerian FLN rebels and the French army; it too impacted terrorists as well as the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Tamil Tigers,( militant organization of Sri Lanka) and the Black Panthers (revolutionary black nationalist and socialist organization active in the United States from 1966 until
1982). They used the movie for training their members. “the Battle of Algiers depicts the inner workings and dynamics of an insurgent struggle and the alleged effectiveness of urban terrorists” (Riegler). Shaheen too refers to this point, he states that the terrorists and insurgents using Hollywood movies that violated Arabs and then post it on the website in order to attract the extremists and to kill American soldiers (Guilty n.p).

The increasing demand for American films in the Middle East may encourage the filmmakers to keep producing such stereotyped images of Arabs. Hollywood succeeds in making Arabs believe what it presented as an ugly nation. In addition, this appears in the Arab media that imports such movies, which are viewed by the Arab audience to the extent that they admired watching American movies (Reel Bad Arabs 3). The influence of Hollywood crossed the American borders as Totman shows that “The impact of Hollywood is not just restricted to American audiences” (8). Hollywood may convey a negative impression about America when movies present violence, sexual themes and illegal behaviors. The viewer could perceive an ugly image of the US. On the other hand, movies depicted America as a utopian land. In both cases, whether the US is presented in an attractive or a bad way, movies are only used for profit not for showing reality (Totman 9).

Hollywood is an American instrument, so the access of Hollywood to the world is the access of America. People thought that America is the land of dream, democracy and equality; this is the result of the influence of Hollywood movies that promote America as a utopian land. The success and domination of Hollywood in the world market make it as an imperialistic tool that affected the audience ‘subconscious’ mind. Films are selling the ‘American dream’; the power of Hollywood could change people’s lives and conditions. Hollywood films have a
major influence on the American public, and millions of people have grown up believing that they know Arab and Muslim culture through what they view on the big screen (qtd. in Elayan 8).

Conclusion

Hollywood projects American foreign policy; it seems clear that the American government used movies to communicate its policy to whole world. Hollywood movies are a propaganda tool that glorified the US as a nation that promotes the virtue of democracy. However, the image of states that are considered as enemies to the US is distorted. During the Cold War, the USSR was portrayed in a negative way while the end of that War marked the emergence of US, as the sole dominant military and political power. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the threat of communist ended and the US emerged as superpower that succeeded in defeating its Soviet antagonist. Therefore, it needed another enemy in order to justify its global hegemony; it turned its concern to the Islamic countries under the veil of Global War on Terror. The representation of pro-American characters in all movies is heroic and very idealistic. Muslims portray as greedy brutal terrorist. Hollywood as a powerful industry, it shapes people’s opinions, therefore, what the audience received from American screen; it might have a negative effect on their views.
Chapter Two:

The Post-9/11 Arabs Images in Selected Hollywood Movies

Introduction

The stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims have existed before the advent of cinema; the image of the Arab does not exist in vacuum. However, the historical roots of the Arab stereotypes dated back to the the European colonialism in the Middle East, the orientalist writing contributed to the stereotyped representation of Muslims Arabs in Hollywood movies. Arabs and Muslims represented as the cultural other, uncivilized. It seems that not only Arabs victim of stereotypes, the motion picture reflected misrepresentation of different ethnic groups who suffered racism on American land as well as on its big screen. The stereotypes images reinforced the superiority of US over other’s culture who presented as inferior.

After the 9/11 events, several cinematic production associated Arab Muslims with a terrorist attack, they depicted as religious fanatics who used Islam to justify their brutal actions as well as the rise of misconception Jihad in Islam which represented American sniper (2014) and Rendition (2007) are movies that reflected how Hollywood perceived the Arabs in the aftermath of 9/11 attack.

This chapter will discuss the definition of stereotypes and the stereotypes images of different racial group in American screen (Hispanic, blacks, Arabs). The chapter too shed lights on the depiction of Arabs Muslim character in the post 9/11,
thus this research provides an analysis and the images of Arabs character in American sniper and Rendition.

I. The Representation of Arabs and Muslims in Hollywood

1. Stereotyped Images

‘To believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same’ (Merriam-Webster). i.e. to generalizing about person while ignoring individual differences, this what we call stereotypes. Cultural differences often tended to construct boundaries between societies and make inappropriate judgments about others or think stereotypically as a result of misinformation about the other culture that perceived from mass media “One reason for stereotypes is the lack of personal, concrete familiarity that individuals have with persons in other racial or ethnic groups. Lack of familiarity encourages the lumping together of unknown individuals” (qtd. in Berry 11). Generally a false assumption become a common knowledge for instance westerns think that all Muslims are terrorists, all Egyptian women are belly dancers, all Russians are criminals and other million of racial stereotypes resulted from watching movies. When the stereotypes repeated in media, it becomes a common knowledge.

When it comes to films involving Arab and Muslim characters, Hollywood has proved to be unfair, manipulative, misleading and biased. Professor Paul Silverstein states “Law enforcement measures, politicians, religious leaders and Hollywood image-makers have contributed in stereotyping Arab Muslim as race” (qtd. in Guilty). Stereotypes gained power and credibility due to the overuse by societies. It becomes a norm that should be followed. “A stereotype is the creation of a biased opinion or view- an individual will take the behavior of one person and state that all people
belonging to that particular group, be it an ethnic, religious or social group, behave in the same manner” (qtd. in Elayan 14).

According to Lippmann stereotypes is a “distorted picture or image in a person’s mind, not based on personal experience, but derived culturally.” He too states that the creation of stereotypes is driven by social, political, and economic motivations, and since the stereotypes are passed from one generation to another, they can spread and resistant to change. Historically, state actors have mobilized stereotypes in service of the social process that Lippmann calls “the manufacture of consent.” For instance, in times of war or economic hardship, governments have used stereotypes to reconfigure ethical landscapes and construct new boundaries separating protagonists (the “in-group”) from antagonists (the “out-group” or “enemy”) This kind of binary opposition authorizes members of the in-group to tolerate or even rationalize harming members of the perceived out-group (Lippmann 9-10). Lippmann summarized stereotypes in the following steps:

1) Acquired second-hand: people absorb stereotype from a mediators not from their direct interaction with the groups being stereotypes, people visualize pictures of other cultures inside their minds that is contradicted reality, this resulted in mass media for instance the more movies repeated the stereotypes the more it perpetuated in the audience heads.

2) Erroneous: all stereotypes are false.

3) Resistant to change: stereotypes can changed only if people stop envision pictures on their head, fiction they have created.

4) Simple: they are far simpler than reality
According to Lippmann the society as well as individual categorizes people with a set of characteristics and then creating a picture in their minds that relates to fiction not reality (Galician 35).

Arab and Muslims were not the only ethnic groups who suffered from their distorted image through Hollywood lenses, motion picture in earlier time stereotypes blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans. During the eighteenth at a time when the Asian immigrated to US, they portrayed as evil villain, submissive, unfriendly Chinese and Japanese as’ the yellow peril’ and Russian ‘the Red Menace.’ As Shaheen states: “Americans of Japanese descent were displaced from their homes interred in camps; for decades blacks were denied basic civil rights, robbed of their property, and lynched, native Americans too, were displaced and slaughtered” (Reel Bad Arb 174).

Through Hollywood storytelling, the audience can easily noticed the Stereotypes images of different ethnic groups that marginalized and presented as culture other, for instance African American, Asians, Arab/Muslims, Latin Americans, those ethnic and racial groups presented as antagonist who play the role of the villain and evil enemy, on the other hand the protagonist is a white, handsome, has a special, moral and physical superiority and intellectual skills (Schatz 212). In fact this distinguished characteristic of the hero creates superiority and hegemony over the other ethnic group as well as the audience will sympathize with the good guy and demonize the antagonist. The more these racist images repeated in movies the more it perpetuated in minds and thus “those stereotypes become widely share, leaving little to no room for individuation and diversity” (Houghton 9).

Latino refers to the Hispanic Americans who are American citizens, their racial background from Spain; there are three largest Hispanic groups in US: Mexican
American, Puerto Ricans and Cuban Americans. The history of US with this racial
group summarized in the conflict between US and Mexican due to the expansion of
territories as well as Spanish American war in 1898 too caused by the acquisition of
territories Latinos generally depicted “as poor, uneducated, lazy and violent with
limited language skills” (Popelková 11), in fact this stereotypes images resulted in
misperception of other’s culture and judge them without any direct interaction or
experience with those racial groups. Although filmmakers claims that the movies are
just stories narrated by actors and has nothing to do with reality, but in fact the
stereotypes images that repeated in films reinforced the audience to believe what he
received from that big screen (Berg 212).

There are six stereotypes about Latinos that appears in American movies,
according to research conducted by Popelková states that Latinos stereotyped with set
of characteristics as “dirty, unshaven, violent and treacherous man with a heavy
Spanish accent, scars, scowl and little intellect”(211), the harlot, the male buffoon, the
female clown, the Latin lover and the dark lady Although Latinos are nowadays the
largest minority in the United States they keep being portrayed as a homogeneous
group of uneducated immigrants, gangsters, drug dealers, criminals and inferior
workers. As the analysis of the national surveys showed the stereotypes are not only
far from true but they also have negative impacts on the public opinion about Latinos
(Berg 211-217).

African Americans also targeted of Hollywood stereotyping. They were
depicted as ignorant thieves and gangsters. The motion picture contributed in
imprinting and the dominant culture’s image of African Americans as sub-humans,
worthy of no respect. Hollywood continued to propagate this image to its audience e.
African American characters, in keeping with the dominant stereotypes, were portrayed as incompetent, child-like, hyper-sexualized, and criminal. Even the role of African Americans that is seen as positive such as loyal servants, mammys and butlers, it reinforced a belief that the proper social position for Blacks was that of a servant who was devoted to his/her White masters. The Civil Rights Movement saw the shifted image of African from negative to positive (Berry 9; Meiloud 19).

2. The History of Arabs And Muslims through Hollywood Lenses

The first contact between the Arabs or the orient and the Europeans dated back to the colonial period, in the aftermath of World War II the colonies of Britain and France declined, thus the US approached the region and dominates it as its predecessors did. The stereotypes of Muslims inherited from European Orientalists’ tradition of colonialism. European and discursive colonization of the Muslim world constructed a binary representation between the West and the Orient, Islam and Christianity, Arabs and European. Unfortunately, these divisions remain pervasive in discourses, cultural conceptions, and power structures. Colonialism built boundaries between the west and east as well s it creates hostility and racial division that continue to shape contemporary views and behaviors against Arab Muslims (Said 4; Fawal 19).

Shaheen examined films released between 1896 and 2001, he discovered that Hollywood dehumanized and depicted Arabs as villains in more than 900 movies; the majority of the marginalized Arabs are Egyptian, Palestinians, Saudis who called them sheiks and maidens. Arab women were depicted as Harem girls and antagonist enemy for American women (172). The Sheik by Edith Maude Hull, the movie
depicted Bin Hassan kidnapsthe western hero and tries to make her one of his concubines. At the beginning, she refused submitting to him because he is savage and desert-sheikh. Suddenly she starts loving him just because she discovered that he is a European origin not an Arab. “The implicit message is that an Arab male is never really worthy of genuine love”. In fact, it is not surprisingly; if Hollywood films did not present an Arab person live ordinary life like the American one. Movies depicted the Arabs as having numbers of maidens. This misrepresentation and stereotypes make the audience associate slavery and sexual abuse of women to Arabic culture (Meiloud 16).

The Arab men are presented as dark-skinned slaves, barbaric warriors who are keen on women. The Arab women are obedient and sexual, opposite to Diana, a white-skinned American woman who is not sexually. Nonetheless, the Sheik is not an Arab. He has lighter skin, no beard and his origin is European. This hint reveals to the audience that the Arabs are not capable of governing themselves, so they need a westerner to lead and educate them. Shaheen states:

Think about it. When was the last time you saw a movie depicting an Arab or an American of Arab heritage as a regular guy? Perhaps a man who works ten hours a day, comes home to a loving wife and family, plays soccer with his kids, and prays with family members at his respective mosque or church. He’s the kind of guy you’d like to have as your next door neighbor, because—well, maybe because he’s bit like you. (Shaheen, Reel Bad Arabs 2)

Shaheen explains that Arabs and Muslims were rarely depicted as ordinary peaceful people like American one; however, they were depicted as fanatical and homicidal
terrorists. He too asserts that the depiction of Arabs as inferior and dangerous, it constructed the superior self of Americans.

Hollywood is the most powerful film industry in the world, with its misleading and unfair representations of Arabs and Muslim, it pushes the audience to generate his thought and views that the entire Arab world is the place of terror. The stereotypes image of Arabs and Muslims are deeply rooted in American cinema as shaheen in his states: “from 1986 until today, filmmakers have collectively indicated that all Arabs as public enemy #1-brutal, heartless, uncivilized religious fanatic money-mad cultural 'others' bent on terrorizing civilized Westerners, especially Christians and Jews” (Reel Bad Arb 172).

The stereotypes image of Arabs and Muslims have not come from vacuum. Hollywood filmmakers take it from the pre-excising Arab caricature by European artist and writers in the eighteenth and nineteenth. During the colonization of the Middle East by European power, writers presented the good intention of the colonizer in saving the colonized land from ignorance and freeing women from oppression (Shaheen). For example Arabian Nights (1942), Road to Morocco (1942) and Harum Scarum (1965), these Hollywood films were taken from the previous writing and stories by Europeans about Arab lands that inhabited by cultural other (Khatib 14).

The westerns see the orient as the other as Khatib states the contribution of Edward said Orientalism (1978) to the depiction of the Middle East in American cinema. Said’s work shows how the construction of the orient in westerns eyes as weaker, uncivilized, savage and the western as civilized, moral and industrious, the east is seen as the ‘other’ inferior to the west. In 1999 the American film the Mummy depicting Arab characters in a bad way and make fun of them while American ones as
civilized “being composed, acting logically and bravely in the face of a mummy that accidentally comes back to life” (Khatib 18). The West uses Orientalist discourse that constructs two different worlds in order to justify the West’s control over the East and thus the East were portrayed in need of Western guidance. Since Easterners were incapable of defining itself. Even in the early silent films the distorted image of Middle East was the same, such as *Fatima* (1897), *The Sheik* (1921), and *The Thief of Baghdad* (1924), portrayed the region as exotic and desert land inhabited by genies and strange people, Arab characters dehumanized. These films reveal how the American cinema sees the orient as the other. Through Hollywood’s lenses, Arab and Muslims commonly viewed as ominous cultural others and routinely portrayed as uncivilized and fanatical (Alsultany 20-24; Khatib 18-19).

1. **The post 9/11 Representation of Muslims in Movies**

2. **Positive Images of Muslims and Arabs in American Screen**

The post-9/11 attacks created a fear that also motivated American Muslim advocates to take increasing control of their own Hollywood image. Efforts on this front are examined through the work of four key organizations whose collaboration with Hollywood has spawned a subtle but significant change in the post-9/11 terrorist subgenre by explicit dissociation of the religion of Islam from terrorism. Evidence of this change is presented through examination of five post-9/11 films: *Civic Duty* (2006), *Home of the Brave* (2006), *Body of Lies* (2008), *Traitor* (2008), and *Unthinkable* (2010). Though a critical step towards more accurate portrayal of the religion of Islam, yet it is still not the norm for Hollywood movies. Furthermore, while the restraint from vilifying Islam is certainly a small step in the right direction, Muslim characters on the screen remain overwhelmingly terrorists (Alalawi 18-20).
Semmerling in his book "Evil" Arabs in American Popular Film attempts to challenge the stereotypes image of Arabs and call for the audience to distinguish between Arabs who live outside their border and Arabs whose image were distorted by Hollywood filmmakers. He too asserts that the misrepresentation of Arabs in American screen served to stabilize Americans’ feelings of superiority and control that started to increase after the oil crisis in the seventies (Nice) Arabs are perceived as violent, killer, lazy, just love money, oppresses women. The viewer has never seen a regular Arab lives an ordinary life as the American one through Hollywood lenses (Shaheen, Guilty). The siege (1998) opens with bombing of Khobar Towers holding US troops stationed in Saudi Arabia and reflecting a 1996 bombing of US barracks, the film Suspected Arab terrorist. It shows how terrorism can be used to justify racism against Arabs and Muslims (Kellner 18). Hollywood tries to take advantage of its popularity over the world through distorting the image of Arabs and Muslims.

It seems that prior to 9/11 Arabs and Muslims have been the only suspected of terrorists action, the extremists or terrorists are not belonging to Islam any more, in all religions, nations and even inside one family, there is a bad and good guy. In fact Hollywood says the opposite, only Islam and Muslims who harshly criticized and distorted. The Jewel of the Nile (1985) this film deformed the image of Muslims and even Islam, a bearded dangerous men carried a Quran in one hand and a weapon on the other hand whereas a peaceful men represented as non Muslim. This dehumanizes depiction used as a tool to justify the killing of Muslims and Arabs (Alwan 17).

The Arab channels who encourage Hollywood filmmakers to present a distorted image of Arabs and Muslims due to the increase demand of American movies and TV show, nowadays Arabs admired watching film (Shaheen, Reel bad
Arab 23). If Hollywood benefits financially from Middle East in exporting its production, it will continue producing movies that stereotype Arabs. If the Arabs themselves did not care, thus who care? Another factor that makes the stereotypes still presented in Hollywood. After World War II Hollywood emerged as powerful film industry in the world, at that time the Middle East seen as less exporting of movies, preventing demand for films did not cause a financial loss to Hollywood. Even immigrants who live in US compose of African Americans alongside immigrant Muslims each preoccupied with disparate priorities. James Baerg, the Director of Program Practices at CBS, proclaims, “The Arab stereotype is…an easy thing to do. It is the thing that is going to be most readily accepted by a large number of the audience” (qtd. in Shaheen Guilty n.p).

3. The Distorted Image of Islam through Western Lenses

After the 9/11 attack, the words like Jihad, terrorists, Islam have become the most used in American media, these words has been misrepresented, Muslims appeared as bearded religious fanatical carrying weapons in one hand and Quran on the other hand, their eyes shined with hate, they shoot and killed innocent people. The extremists terrorists were depicted in media, particularly, on Hollywood screen as jihadists. They justified their personal ambitions and their brutal action to their duty to Islam. In fact the media coverage, particularly, movies linked the extremist terrorists group to Jihad, the word was translate in English as a holy war which according to non-Muslims means: “using force to impose Islam on others, rather than a legitimate self-defense” jihad in Islam goes beyond war, as the Islamic scholar Ibn Al Qayyim argued that jihad is not just waging of war: Jihad against hypocrites or disbelievers as prophet (peace be upon him) states : “A man asked the prophet “which jihad is
best?!” the prophet said, the most excellent Jihad is to say the word of truth in front of tyrant” Jihad against devil .i.e., fighting against the corrupt desire that the Satan provokes, and Jihad of the self in which people strives to learn and call others in Islam (Kabbani 205-207).

The word Islam derived from Silm i.e. peace, Islam prevented killing innocent people and the Quran states: “Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely” (Qur’an: 5:32). Jihad in Islam limited by conditions as the Allah Almighty says: “Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but do not transgress, for Allah does not love transgressors.” (Qur’an 2:190), this verse from Surah Al-Baqarah indicates that, the first motivation of jihad or holy war should be for the sake of God not for material benefits, the believers required to fight back in case of self defense. They prohibited killing women, children, old men, mutilation of the dead bodies of the enemy and destruction of fields. Even the word sword does not appear in the Quran unlike Christianity the word appeared 200 times (Aydi 2-5).

According to Muslim Women Leagues, is that by the coming of Islam, it prohibited female infanticide or killing children immediately after they born in the pre-Islamic Arabia known as age of ignorance and the Quran states: “Hence, do not kill your children for fear of poverty: it is we who shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily, killing them is a great sin” (Qur’an 17:31).

Hollywood filmmakers called to produce films on war against terror in the aftermath of 9/11, but this time the image of the enemy has already demonized and stereotyped in American screen. The post 9/11 movies confirmed the stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims as terrorists. The film The Point Men (2001) represents the victim
Israelis killed the terrorist, murderer Palestinians. (Shaheen) in fact, the representation of terrorists on Hollywood screen reveals much about the American policy in the aftermath of 9/11 against its new villains, the government with the cooperation of media attempted to shape people views across the world to think about their trajectory event. “They hate us for our freedom” speech delivered by President Bush, his words legitimizes and justified racist policy and the targeting of Arabs and Muslims. In The Essential Killing, the whole film focus on depicting a brutality of Muslim character called Muhammad escaped from American prison. Muhammad is a sacred name in Islam, the name of our prophet peace be upon him. Shaheen listed movies that addressed the situation in post 9/11. In fact, what Hollywood presented is not a war against terror; it seems that it is a war against Arabs and Muslims (Alsultany 18-19).

Even the religion of Islam misrepresented through Hollywood lenses, the misconception of Islam as a religion associated with violence and terrorism has become a common repeated scenario. A terrorist carrying a weapon in one hand and holds the Quran in the other, and the quoting a verses from the Quran before they committed suicide. This distorted narrative stories perpetuated in the audiences’ minds the idea that terrorism exists in Arab communities instinctively and people in that area are raised to be this way, and mostly because it is in their religion or what commonly been used as “Jihad” duty (Alwan 15-22).

The American perception of Islam comes from different sources. The educational system that provided students with the history and civilization of Muslim world, it tackles only the attitudes and mistakes of Muslim rulers as well as the autocratic rulers as a representative of Islam that has nothing to do with Islam. In addition to that, Hollywood filmmakers linked Islam to terrorism, holy war, they represented Arabs prayed and after that bombing and killing innocent people. This
kind of depiction paved the way to the rise of racism, fear and misunderstanding of Islam in foreign communities, as Bhattachary states “The media, both visual and print, as well as the educational system and Hollywood movies have not been fair in drawing an objective image of Islam.” (18) The author too comments that Islam has nothing to do with such aggressive behaviors:

The problem with this kind of depiction is that it results in the stereotyping, and since Hollywood movies are aired repeatedly on television, the stereotypes are imprinted in the minds of public who watch this movies but do little study or reading on the subject. The image, thus, get perpetuated with repeated viewing. Television channels like to cover sensational news …the public is shown pictures of terrorist attacks, Hamas supporters shouting slogans, Saudi sheikhs sitting in conference as oil prices skyrocket, children clad in terrorists grab etc. (17)

The media tended to cover the weaknesses and wrong things done by Arabs and Muslims and linked it to Islam, in fact Islam is free from everything related to violence and bloodshed as well as film industry creates negatives stereotypes of all Muslims. For example, after 9/11, a few hundred Palestinians celebrated and it was shown all over the American media while million of Palestinians held 5 minutes of silence in honor of the victims but they ignored from broadcasting. Pro-Obama protests got huge media coverage, but the tens of thousands of Muslims around the world that held memorials were largely ignored. Muslim leaders and clerics all over the world convicted the attack but got little or no press. “The problem is the Cold War is over and the media is looking for another bogeyman” (Bhattachary 20). In fact
these distorted images used to demonstrate that the US is a victim of terrorism and thus it have to justify its military aggression against the Arab Muslim world.

I. Representation of Arabs and Muslims in Hollywood

Movies: Analysis of *American Sniper* and *Rendition*


*American sniper* is a Clint Eastwood’s blockbuster movie starring Bradley Cooper, it adopted from a book *American Sniper: the Autobiography of the Most Lethal Sniper in U.S. Military History*. It is a memoir based on the real life of the US SEAL Navy Chris Kyle who served his country in Iraq war, he “recorded the most career sniper kills in United States military history from 1999 to 2009” In fact the Chris killed around 250, 160 officially confirmed by the Department of Defense. *American sniper* has been nominated for six Oscars for best film, actor, screenplay, editing and picture and sound, it became a major success, with a worldwide gross of over $547 million (Wedlock 1-2).

Next we see Kyle as an adult. The movie starts with the flashback to the adulthood of Kyle who was taught by his father how to hunt. After he grows up, he sees news coverage of the 1998 US embassy bombings. He decides to join the SEALs. He qualifies for special training and becomes a U.S. Navy SEALs sniper. Then after the 9/11 attacks, he decided serve his country; therefore, he deployed to Iraq. The audience may leaves with the impression that Iraq was involved and responsible for the attacks. Chris at the end of his four tours of duty in Iraq, he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (Estawood; Giroux 203).
The first scene of the director immediately the director intended to start the movie with Azan and integrate it with of tanks and, then it appears images of soldiers carrying weapons and entering brutally the Iraqi’s homes. The American soldier hero Chris Kyle who joined immediately SEAL, after he watched TV coverage of the 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. After 9/11 attack he sent to Iraq, he lies on the rooftop with his gun and shots Iraqis who approaches the American troops. His first shoot is an Iraqi child carried a grenade with his mother approaching American troops, Iraqi woman with her child who they depicted as militants.

In fact the American Sniper is a pro-war propaganda film that glorified the US soldiers during wars as well as promotes the superiority of US SEAL, the beginning of the films reflected how the training US Navy SEAL soldiers are hard, talented as well as reflected the superiority of the US military. The movie depicted Chris as hunting and shooting Iraqis one after one like animals, at the end of his four tour in Iraq he earns the nickname of legend because he killed hundreds of people, Giroux sates that:

Kyle is portrayed as unstoppable and unapologetic killing machine, a sniper who is proud of his exploits. Kyle is a product of the American empire at its worst. This empire steeped in extreme violence, willing to trample over any country in the name of the war on terrorism, and leave in its path massive amounts of misery, suffering, dislocation and hardship. (205)

The American soldiers in the film depicted as extraordinary patriots who confused between their family and duties to serve the land from a terrorist’s threat. “American soldiers are more than just soldiers; they are husbands, fathers, sons and
daughters, whereas Iraqi militants are one-dimensional” (Mansour). In the movies Kyle joined U Navy Seal immediately after he watched TV coverage of the 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, after 9/11 attack Kyle is sent to Iraq, although he is a newly married, leaves his wife without hesitation, the presence American soldiers stem from their patriotic duty to their country Iraq to protect his nation from terrorists threat. In the movie Kyle says that the US fought only the Iraqis terrorists who are responsible for the 9/11, but in fact the movie portrayed all Iraqis as militant intended to kill Americans (Estawood; Everest).

One of a particular scene in the movies, the viewer feels that the presence of Americans in Iraq is the as heroes, protectors and even at time victims who saved the Iraqi family whose members are killed by Iraqi militant. When American soldier was killed, the camera lenses close up his face so the viewer sympathize with him and feel that he is a victim of terrorists, on the other hand when Iraqi was killed, his body falling down away, there is no facial expression, thus the audience perceived the dead Iraqis as guilty, savages and evil terrorists and thus they deserve to be killed. The film quotes remarks from the real-life Kyle as saying “I hated the damn savages I’d been fighting ….Savage, despicable, evil — that’s what we were fighting in Iraq” (qtd. in Bader 1).

In American sniper, a movie promotes the outlook that the presences of the US troops in Iraq are an innocent mission to protect innocent Iraqis from the terrorists. In one particular scene Chris and other troops looks for the leader al-Qaeda Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who depicted as brutal tyrant man, he killed many American soldier, one of the family whose father forced by the American troops to lead them to the location of the al Zarqawi, the later killed the father and his child in brutal way. In fact the US
claims that Iraq possessed WMD to justify its invasion, the director Estawood I his
movie show the bright side of US, he didn’t touch the real US war in Iraq, the victims
of the war that caused the death of millions innocent Iraqis, the devastation of Iraq, in
addition the US who declared war on terror, it puts oppressors in power and fueled the
extremist Islamic terrorists (Everest). There is no credibility or the truth about the US
Iraq war, Hollywood movie proved again to be manipulative, distorting reality and
rewrite history according to its interest.

The film draws a direct link between the events of 9/11 and the war in
Iraq, forgetting completely that the war in Iraq had nothing whatsoever
to do with 9/11. Not one of the attackers that day was in any way
connected to Iraq. Thus to connect 9/11 to Iraq is delusional. Not even
the Bush administration made that overt a link. (qtd. in Bader 1)

*American Sniper* starts with Islamic Azan and then immediately it appears
images of tanks and soldiers carrying weapons and entering brutally the Iraqi’s homes
and on the rooftop of Fallujah building where Chris lies with his gun, he shoots an
Iraqi child carried a grenade with his mother approaching American troops, after that
he said that “I never seen such evil as I seeing in Iraq” (Estawood). A government
ministry employee comments on the movie “The sniper, he has a chance to hit the
child and his mother in their foot [during the opening scene] or anywhere without
killing them, but he didn’t because he’s bloodthirsty like the entire American troops.”
Even the mosque that presented Islam doesn’t saved from distorting, movie depicted
mosque as a store for Iraqi’s weapons, and one of the Iraqi militant shoots Americans
through the window of the mosque. Director intentionally merged the call for prayer
with fighting Iraqi mother with her child who they depicted as a militants Chomsky
said. “His first kill was a woman, who walked into the street with a grenade in her
hand as the Marines attacked her village. Chris Kyle killed her with a single shot, and he explains how he felt about it.” The depiction of the Arab women and children as armed fanatics, they all engaged in fighting.

The war in Iraq justified by the American duty to protect their land from terrorist’s threat, all Iraqis (women, children, and elders) were depicted in this movie as militants there are no civilians except for one family who is shown having a sense of humanity but they were eventually killed by Iraqis and not by American soldiers. “The movie demonizes and dehumanizes every single Iraqi (with the possible exception of one family), portraying them as evil terrorists and “savages” who deserve to die” (Everest). The sniper Kyle said “I hated the damn savages I’d been fighting” Chomsky discussed the film during a talk given at a Cambridge, he first describe the hero as a cold-blooded killer, from the beginning of the movie Kyle killed a thousands of Iraqis (Estawood).

Moreover, the director of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in Washington as well as Southern Poverty Law Center statics, states that there was an increased hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims. The increase is correlated with the start of the Ground Zero Mosque controversy, which is surely to intensify with the domestic and global backlash against Arabs and Muslims following the Charlie Hebdo attack. The ADC statistics believed that the intensified backlash against Arabs and Muslims is coincided with the release of American Sniper. Many comments on social media glorified and feel proud of Kyle who is perceived as hero protecting and serve his country from terrorists, facebook, show the hate speeches against Arabs and Muslims, Particularly Iraqis. One Twitter post read: “Nice to see a movie where the Arabs are portrayed for who they really are – vermin scum intent on destroying us,” And other comments honored the American soldiers for killing Iraqis: “I'm proud of
each and every one of you and thank you for your sacrifices!!! I would lay down my life for yours as well, never leave a man behind! Thank you for keeping me and America safe” (“social media”).

2. Rendition (2007)

Rendition a movie directed by Gavin Hood's, it about Anwar El-Ibrahimi an Egyptian-born American chemical engineer who has been living in the US for years and he married to an American woman Isabella, they have a young son, and she is adv pregnant. with another child. When Anwar is in Cape Town, South Africa, for conference, at the same time a suicide attack occurs in North Africa killed a CIA agent and many people. When El-Ibrahimi returns home, he arrested at airport secretly by the CIA and sent to a secret detention, where he interrogates and tortured. Later on his wife with the help of colleague friend , Alan Smith who works as an aide to senator, make investigation to find her husband, but in vain, his name disappears from the passenger list and Isabella hears nothing from him. The senator informed her that her husband has been taken for interrogation because he is connected to terrorist group (Hood; Ebert ).

Anwar El Ibrahimi is suspected of having relationship with terrorist Rashid, they found many phone calls on his telephone records. Anwar confesses the charge against him in order to avoid the pain of torture; he talked with Rashid and gave him information to increase the effectiveness of explosives. He also tells the names of other terrorists, which are names from his soccer team when he was a young man. Douglas Freeman CIA agent who supervised the torture of Anwar eventually realized he wrongly accused. He gets Minister of the Interior out of bed and forces him to sign papers releasing El-Ibrahimi from the torture prison back into his custody. The
movies ends with the release of El-Ibrahimi and returns to his family in Chicago, on the other hand a terrorists group in North Africa, the director didn’t mention where exactly, explodes a bomb on public place (Hood; Ebert).

In Rendition, five Arab Muslim character s appears, the protagonist El-Ibrahimi, Abasi Fawal Egyptian torturer who take charge of investigating the suspected and interrogator and his daughter Fatima and the boy friend of Fatima and terrorists group. Elouardaoui in his research argued that Rendition is one the post 9/11 Hollywood movies that challenges the negative depictions of Arabs, the movie “attempts to offer an image more reflective of the real Arabs” (1). He too comments that the movie distinguish between moderate Muslims reflected in Fawal and Anwar personality and the fanatics who used people’s ignorance to influence them. In fact the movie continued the old stereotypes image of Muslim Arabs as terrorist, cruel and ignorant, the depiction of the mosque as store for weapons and terrorists ‘desires. The the terrorists were showing praying before they committed a suicide attack. Some critic review states that the depiction of Arabs in the movie as victims of the CIA torture. The influence of 9/11 on Hollywood movies can best be summarized by Onwudiwe’s view that movies are representation of what is happening in real life thus, are taking their ideas from what is currently happening in the world (qtd. in Alalawi 3). Alalawi too asserts that:

The film directs the attention of the audience to the practice of torture sanctioned by the government and the manner by which the American law enforcement treats Arabs and Muslims in its ongoing war on terror. However, the film was still guilty of several stereotypes, which was in the same mold as those found in other post 9/11 films. Consider, for example: Aside from Anwar and a girl named Fatima, most of the
Arabs with significant roles in the movie, were depicted to be terrorists, cruel. (4)

Even the film criticizing the American government treatment of Muslims and Arabs in the aftermath of 9/11, and this can be seen in the character al Ibrahimi a Muslim who was mistaken for terrorist. He was tortured by the CIA without concrete proof; however, *Rendition* does not challenge the old stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims as terrorists. All the Arabs characters in the film represented in a negative way, the Arabic women were depicted as “sexy” lady which embodied in Safiya character who was the mistress of the CIA agent and Fatima who run away with her boyfriend, a boy who was a member of terrorists group and at the end of the movie he committed a suicide (Hood; Alalawi 4).

**Conclusion**

The Arabs has been portrayed through centuries in Hollywood in Exotic way which they played the role of villains while American are a good guy, this stereotype image construct a boundaries between the east and the west, it creates the concept of otherness. There are other ethnic groups who were victims of Hollywood stereotypes (Hispanics, blacks, Japanese, Latinos). Those Stereotypes images gained power and credibility due to the overuse by societies, it becomes a norm that should be followed as well as it paved the way to the US to emerge as a leading party. The Images of Arab Muslims didn’t changed, the war on terror that declared by the US seems to be a war against Muslims, Hollywood reinforce the stereotypes images of Arabs in the aftermath of 9/11. Through the analysis of *American Sniper* and *Rendition*, Hollywood passed the message that invading a foreign country is American duty to
save and protect the weak nations as Middle East. In fact *American Sniper* a movies that glorified and justified the presence of US in Iraq to protect the region from the terrorists, the Iraq War as depicted in the movie just war against al-Qaeda, and the only real victims are American soldiers. However, *Rendition* is a propaganda film that glorifies the government and CIA torture as a necessary means to keep America safe. Both in *American Sniper* and *Rendition* the mosque depicted as place for a terrorists desire, when a filmmaker represented such image, they representing Islam as religion that sponsors terrorism and this reveals how the US with the help of Hollywood promote anti-Arabs and Anti-Muslims propaganda.
GENERAL CONCLUSION

It seems clear that the Hollywood representation of Arabs and Muslims is motivated by political and cultural factors, the US interest in the Middle East during the Cold War and American imperialist objectives. Through the cooperation with the film industry, Arabs and Muslims were stereotyped with set of characteristics identifying them with dangerous others as well as the promotion of inequality between the Orient and the Occident. This opened a door to the US to intervene in the region and to exercise its imperialist agenda.

The United States and its mass media, particularly Hollywood movies, have constructed a bridge between the civilized, democratic west and the uncivilized, barbaric primitive east. This binary opposition allows the US to justify its imperialist ambitions in the Middle East; consequently, the region needs the US to protect and save its territory from terrorists. In most post-9/11 movies, Islam is mistreated; filmmakers linked the Islamic faith to brutal actions and terrorism. Jihad as means for paradise is a common scenario that is often repeated on the Hollywood screen; images of terrorists praying and then gunning down civilians are quite usual. The US fears that Islam will be the dominant religion; and to justify its torture and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, Islam is represented under a horrible angle. The US reactionary to the increased growth of Islam is reflected in Hollywood screen in which the distorted images of Arabs and Muslims reinforced in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks.
Through the analysis of *American Sniper*, the message is clear: America is the victim of terrorists that seeks to prevent terrorism from spreading to the whole world through its troops’ interventions in the Middle East. *American Sniper* hides and rewrites the story of the U.S. in Iraq with a fog of imperialist propaganda, myth making, and lies. In *Rendition*, the movie links a Muslim character to a terrorist organization who was taken secretly and tortured by the CIA. It reflects the legitimization of abusing human rights when it comes to the US and its national security. Both movies present the Arab land as a place of terrorists’ activities without referring to any character who lives a normal and peaceful life as the American one. The movies didn’t show the circumstances that turned the terrorists to be in this way; however the only justification that was given is that terrorism is inherited from Arab communities.
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4. References

Appendix: Screen grab from *American Sniper*

Picture 1: shows a mother giving her child a grenade to explode in front of American troops

Picture 2: the movie depicted all Iraqis as Terrorists and engaged in fighting – even children

picture 3: The hero who earns the name of legend because he killed thousands of Iraqis