



Religious Stereotypes of American People Towards 9/11 Conflict in *Body of Lies* Film (*Stereotip Agama Orang Amerika Terhadap Konflik 9/11 dalam Film Body of Lies*)

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: 4 August 2025 Revised: 14 August 2025 Accepted: 15 August 2025 Keywords: Religious Stereotypes Islam Sociology of Literature Kata Kunci: Stereotip Agama Islam Sosiologi Sastra	This study examines the portrayal of American religious stereotypes of Islam in the context of the 9/11 conflict as depicted in Ridley Scott's <i>Body of Lies</i>. Using the theory of stereotypes and Swingewood's sociology of literature, the research explores the relationship between factual and fictional realities. The analysis focuses on the film's characters, plot, and setting to uncover how stereotypes are constructed and challenged. Findings reveal that the film conveys religious stereotypes through figures such as Al-Saleem, jihadist groups, and violent narratives linked to Islamic symbols. Simultaneously, it offers a critique of Western—particularly U.S.—policies via characters like Ed Hoffman and Roger Ferris, who engage in deception, manipulation, and covert operations. Notably, the character Hani Salaam is portrayed as a rational, honest, and principled Muslim, serving as a narrative counterpoint to negative depictions. Overall, <i>Body of Lies</i> presents a complex interplay between reinforcing and contesting religious stereotypes within a post-9/11 sociopolitical framework. Abstrak Penelitian ini mengkaji penggambaran stereotip keagamaan Amerika terhadap Islam dalam konteks konflik 9/11 yang ditampilkan dalam film <i>Body of Lies</i> karya Ridley Scott. Dengan menggunakan teori stereotip dan sosiologi sastra Swingewood, penelitian ini menelaah hubungan antara realitas faktual dan realitas fiktional. Analisis difokuskan pada tokoh, alur, dan latar untuk mengungkap bagaimana stereotip dibangun dan dilawan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa film ini merepresentasikan stereotip keagamaan melalui tokoh seperti Al-Saleem, kelompok jihad, dan narasi kekerasan yang dikaitkan dengan simbol-simbol Islam. Pada saat yang sama, film ini mengkritik kebijakan Barat—khususnya Amerika Serikat—melalui tokoh seperti Ed Hoffman dan Roger Ferris yang terlibat dalam kebohongan, manipulasi, dan operasi rahasia. Tokoh Hani Salaam digambarkan sebagai Muslim yang rasional, jujur, dan berprinsip, menjadi penyeimbang narasi terhadap citra negatif Islam. Secara keseluruhan, <i>Body of Lies</i> menampilkan interaksi kompleks antara penguatan dan perlawanan terhadap stereotip keagamaan dalam kerangka sosio-politik pasca-9/11.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Stereotypes are social constructs formed from shared beliefs within a society about the characteristics of certain groups, such as religion, race, or gender (Manstead & Hewstone, 1996). In a global context, stereotypes about religion—particularly Islam—have become a highly relevant issue, especially in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 (9/11) tragedy (Mirza, 2022; El Sarah & Adi, 2024; Lajevardi et al., 2024). The attacks carried out by the extremist group Al-Qaeda not only changed international security policies but also triggered a wave of Islamophobia and the spread of negative perceptions of Muslims in the Western world (Kean, 2002).

The stigma against Islam as a violent religion is reinforced by Western media, which often associates Islam with terrorism (Shaheen, 2009). Research by Ahmed and Matthes (2017) shows that Western media consistently frames Islam in narratives of extremism, using words such as “radical,” “jihad,” and “militant” that reinforce the association between Islam and violence. This representation shapes public perceptions that Muslims are a threat, widening the social divide between Muslim and non-Muslim communities (Samaie & Malmir, 2017).

This stereotypical representation is also very strong in the world of cinema, especially Hollywood. Films are a cultural medium that not only convey entertainment but also construct social perceptions (Alsultany, 2013). In the film *Body of Lies* (2008), the narrative of the war on terrorism is depicted through American eyes, where antagonists are always associated with Islamic names and symbols, such as the character Al-Saleem. The dialogue, setting, and visuals in the film indirectly convey that violence is an inherent part of Muslim identity. This supports the findings of Ramasubramanian et al. (2023) that stereotypes in the media can reinforce social inequality and exacerbate prejudice between groups.

Although various studies have discussed stereotypes of Islam in the media and films, most have not examined in depth how these stereotypes are formed through narratives in post-9/11 films using a sociological approach to literature. Furthermore, existing studies often focus on media discourse or policy analysis, without considering fictional representations in films as forms of social reflection. Therefore, there is a research gap in linking the portrayal of religious stereotypes to social and historical contexts through a literary approach.

This study using approach by Swingewood's Sociology of Literature, which examines the relationship between factual reality and fictional reality, to analyze how the film *Body of Lies* reflects American society's religious stereotypes of Islam in the context of the 9/11 conflict. This approach allows for an exploration of the relationship between fictional texts (films) and the social and historical conditions of the society that produced them.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the stereotypical portrayal of Islam by American society in the aftermath of 9/11 in the film *Body of Lies*. This study also aims to identify narrative elements in the film that reinforce or challenge these stereotypes through dialogue, scenes, and characterization. The results of this study are expected to expand understanding of how stereotypes are formed through cultural media, as well as contribute to efforts to educate the public to be more critical of biased representations in popular media.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with a Sociology of Literature approach developed by Swingewood (1972). This method was chosen because it is able to reveal how literary works or films reflect the social and historical realities of society at a particular time. In this context, the film *Body of Lies* is analyzed as a reflection of American society's view of Islam after the events of 9/11. The qualitative approach was chosen because the primary focus of the research is on meaning, narrative, symbols, and representations that cannot be measured quantitatively but rather through in-depth interpretation of the text and visuals in the film. As explained by Moleong (2005), qualitative methods allow researchers to understand social phenomena holistically based on their context.

This study uses a sociological approach to literature to examine the relationship between fictional works (films) and the social reality that underpins them. The concept of social-text serves to interpret how the narrative in the film represents religious stereotypes that have developed in American society. Meanwhile, the concept of script-reality is used to compare the representation in the film with real events and dominant

narratives in post-9/11 society, in order to reveal the extent to which the film reinforces or challenges these stereotypes. The primary data source for this study is the film *Body of Lies* (2008) by Ridley Scott. The film is analyzed from various aspects, including dialogue, characterization, visual scenes, and plot. To obtain data, the researcher conducted a comprehensive re-screening of the film and read the film script, then noted all narrative and visual elements containing indications of stereotypes toward Islam or Muslims.

Data analysis in this study includes several steps, namely interpreting visuals, scenes, and dialogues in the film *Body of Lies* through character depictions, storylines, and settings presented in the film. Furthermore, these depictions are explained and interpreted, then linked to social reality to draw generalizations as research conclusions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In *Body of Lies* (2008), the depiction of characters, plot, and setting reflects clear religious stereotypes of Americans toward Islam, particularly in the context of the 9/11 conflict (Mustakharoh et al., 2025). The film assigns antagonist roles to characters with Arabic names, such as the terrorist leader Al-Saleem, whose name is linguistically linked to Islam. This naming reinforces a symbolic association between Arab identity and terrorism.

The protagonist, Roger Ferris (Leonardo DiCaprio), a CIA agent, is portrayed as the moral and capable figure who resolves the conflict, reinforcing the notion of Western—specifically American—superiority. In contrast, Arab or Muslim characters are positioned either as threats or as secondary to American-led intelligence efforts.

The plot focuses on a mission to capture Al-Saleem, using strategies and operations marked by distrust and manipulation. Scenes set in Middle Eastern locations further strengthen the association between these regions and terrorism. Through these narrative elements, the film aligns with post-9/11 media patterns that depict Islam and Muslim identities predominantly through a security and threat lens.

Overall, the findings indicate that the film reinforces negative religious stereotypes by portraying Muslim characters primarily as antagonists and framing the American protagonist as the solution. These portrayals reflect and perpetuate broader U.S. societal narratives about Islam in the post-9/11 era (Mustakharoh et al., 2025).

3.1 Portrayal of character

Body of Lies presents complex character portrayals, with some characters replicating existing stereotypes, while others challenge or dismantle them. This creates a dynamic landscape of representation, where characters are portrayed both negatively, conforming to post-9/11 stereotypical narratives, and positively, showing humanity and nuance. This analysis will sort out how these positive and negative portrayals contribute to the formation or deconstruction of Americans' religious stereotypes of Islam.

Post 9/11, the most dominant stereotypes about Muslims are that they are terrorists, have links to terrorism, or at least sympathize with it, and are portrayed as violent. The media's tendency to portray Muslims negatively can be seen in the entertainment industry. The media consistently presents Muslims in narratives that portray them as a group with hostile intentions towards the West (Shaheen, 2009).

In the Film *Body of Lies*, this is consistent with some of the characterizations of Muslim characters, where Muslims are often presented as terrorists, perpetrators of violent and cruel acts. This is found in the portrayal of the Antagonist character in the Film, named Al-Saleem.

Al-Saleem is portrayed as the leader of a terrorist group responsible for numerous bombings in Europe and America. He is a symbol of the stereotypical “radical Muslim” in the post-9/11 Western narrative. Al-Saleem is portrayed as fanatical, violent and hateful towards the West, using holy verses and jihadist rhetoric to justify his violent actions.

This is illustrated in the opening scene of the Film where Al-Saleem's monologue of threat and retribution against the vengeful West represents a collective narrative of revenge for alleged aggression against the Muslim world.



Figure 1. Al-Saleem's monologue scene (Scene 00.01.00-00.01.31)

Al-Saleem:

وَكَمَا فَجَّرْنَا النَّاقِلَةَ الزَّكَابِ الْحَشَّةَ فِي الْأُسْبُوعِ الْمَضِيِّ. سَوْفَ نَقُومُ لِحَزْبِ لِعَمَلِي بَرِيطَانِيَا. سَوْفَ نَنْتَقِمُ مِنْ حَرْبِ امْرِيكَ الَّتِي تَشُنُّ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ. وَ قُلْ لَهُمْ فِي الْمِرْصَادِ أَيْنَ مَكَانُ

سنضرب عشوائياً عبر أوروبا ثم أمريكا. لقد نزعنا، والآن سوف ينزفون

"As we destroyed the bus in Sheffield last week. We will be ready in Britain. We will avenge the American wars on the Muslim world. We will come at them, everywhere. We will strike at random, across Europe and then America. We have bled, and now.... they will bleed."

In this scene, Al-Saleem threatens the West and America for what they have done to Islam. From Al-Saleem's statement that he will attack, it can be interpreted that Al-Saleem is a character who does not hesitate to provide terror to everyone he considers does not believe in his religion or can be referred to as infidels. Especially countries that he considers to have provided resistance to their beliefs, namely countries in Europe and especially America. The dialogue says that they *"We have bled"* which can be interpreted that they feel that so far they have been attacked and injured so they try to take revenge and this will happen regularly and continuously. Al-Saleem's dialog is in accordance with the existing reality where people perceive Muslims as a source of global threat. Sides and Gross (2013) explain that after 9/11 many Americans tend to have a negative view of Muslims. They see Muslims as hostile, dangerous and threatening.

This stereotype is then reinforced through the depiction of the scene where Al-Saleem is watching the news, namely the bombing that occurred in Amsterdam.



Figure 2. Scene of Al-Saleem watching the news broadcast of the bombing at the Amsterdam Market (Scene 00.44.04-00.44.07)

Amsterdam Police Chief: "Terrorist threats are real, present, deadly and persistent."

In this scene, the news media is broadcasting the bombing at the Amsterdam Market. The news media report mentions that the bombing was carried out by terrorists. When the terrorists are mentioned, the scene is immediately moved to Al-Saleem who was watching the news at the time. The words emphasize that terrorism is a very dangerous thing, and the message is emphasized by Al-Saleem's appearance when the text comes out. This emphasizes that Muslims, represented by Al-Saleem in the scene, are dangerous terrorists. This kind of portrayal reinforces the stereotype of Muslims as potential terrorists. In reality, the majority of Muslims do not engage in violence. This portrayal reflects post-9/11 American media bias, as explained by (Shaheen, 2009) that Hollywood often portrays Arabs and Muslims as enemies or threat.

In his acts of violence, Al-Saleem uses holy verses and jihad rhetoric to justify his actions. As illustrated in the following dialog:

Al-Saleem: "But the Koran's sayings You Speak Arabic, no?"

وَلَا تَحْسِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

"Do not say that those slain in the cause of God are dead. They are alive, but you are not aware of them."

"They are alive..."

"...but you are not aware of them."



Figure 3. Scene of Al-Saleem misinterpreting the Quran verse in front of Ferries (Scene 01.49.34-01.49.48)

In this scene Ferries tells Al-Saleem that what he did was only for personal or group interests without thinking about the fate of his brothers who he made martyrs in the name of jihad. Then the words were refuted by Al-Saleem by mentioning the verse of the Koran which he interpreted as an appeal or justification for his extremist actions. In context, it can be interpreted that Al-Saleem took the Qur'anic verse that justifies the actions carried out by the martyrs. Meanwhile, what the martyrs did was an act of terrorism. Thus, Al Saleem takes the Qur'anic verse and justifies acts of violence and terrorism. This dialogue reinforces stereotypes, where this verse is portrayed as evidence of the inherent violence in Islam, without providing the correct context or interpretation. Samaie and Malmir's (2017) analysis explains that post 9/11 the tendency of the US media is to associate Islam negatively. words such as "Radical", "Violent" and

“Extremist” often appear as calocations that reinforce the association between Islam and Muslims with violence and extremism.

The peak of stereotypes displayed in this Film is the scene of Ferries' execution to be carried out by jihadists as follows:

Lieutenant: (In Arabic)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 قَاتِلُوا أَيْمَةَ الْكُفْرِ فَإِنَّهُ لَا إِيمَانَ لَهُمْ. هَذَا هُوَ إِدَاءُ الْكُفْرِ وَ الْمُلْجِدِينَ
 أَنْصَحُكَ بِصَلَاةِ الْعِبَارَاتِ. لَا دَاعِيَ لِلْعَصِيَانِ
 أَنْتُمْ كَانْتُمْ سَاعَةً حَقًّا
 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

“In the name of God, the gracious, the merciful. Fight the infidels. They have no beliefs. This is the punishment for the non-believer. I would advise you to pray there is no need to resist. The times has come. Bismillahirrahmanirrahim God is great, God is great.”



Figure 4. The scene of the execution carried out by Muslim youths against Ferries (Scene 01.54.01-01.54-30)

The young Muslim man said a prayer before killing Ferries. As his religion, in this case Islam, justifies the killing, he said a prayer to ask for blessing. It can also be interpreted that in Islam killing people who do not believe in Allah is justified and those who do not believe can be killed. This representation is the most dominant stereotype of Islam after 9/11 where Islam and Muslims are perceived as the other. Since the 9/11 attacks, the American media has often portrayed Muslims as brutal, cruel, inhuman, and horrible. Muslims are then categorized as a race that is feared by the American society, because their teachings are considered to contain elements of hatred, evil, and violence.

In the Film *Body of Lies*, the depiction and formation of stereotypes is not only done by the Muslim characters, but is supported by the depiction of stereotypes by American characters. The character is named Ed Hoffman who is Ferries' superior. Hoffman is portrayed as a rude, impatient, and dismissive figure who makes important decisions from behind his desk in Washington D.C. while carrying out daily activities far removed from the reality of the battlefield. Hoffman helped reinforce Americans' religious stereotypes of Islam, especially in the frame of the “War on Terror.”



Figure 5. Ferries interaction with Hoffman via telephone (Scene 00.48.40-00.48.46)

Hoffman: “Europe just got blown up, boy. Okay? No body knows where the next bomb will go off. There are 75 dead in Amsterdam.”

This scene reveals a tense conversation between two characters on the phone, Hoffman and Ferries. The setting is an interior space. The lighting is dim, and conveys an atmosphere of gloom or urgency. Hoffman delivers the grim news to Ferries, stating that Europe has just been blown up and that 75 people have died in Amsterdam. A widespread terrorist attack or major catastrophic event has occurred in Europe, resulting in many casualties and making sure about the next threat. In this scene Hoffman warns Ferries that the terror will continue. Although not directly mentioning Islam, Hoffman's statement, when juxtaposed with the context of the narrative in the film regarding the terrorist acts committed by the Al-Saleem group, can reinforce the stereotype that terrorism is a phenomenon inherently associated with Islam.

9/11 was a significant turning point in the history of the United States, which triggered a wave of anti-Islamic sentiment that is often referred to as Islamophobia. After the 9/11 attacks, negative perceptions of Muslims in America continued and were reinforced by various factors, one of which was public policies that routinely targeted and discredited Muslims. As in the scene and dialog against Hoffman as one of the interested parties because he is the head of the CIA's Middle East division and Ferris' boss. In his dialog, he emphasizes that the bomb attacks that have occurred in Europe are terror and threats carried out by Muslims.

Furthermore, in the characterization of Roger Ferris, he is portrayed as a CIA field agent working in the Middle East to hunt down a terrorist network led by Al-Saleem. Ferris is portrayed as a person who is very dedicated to his work, but still has a human side. He tries to understand the local culture, speaks fluent Arabic, knows Quranic verses, and treats his Muslim colleagues with respect. In some scenes, he shows discomfort with the harsh methods used by his superiors and gets frustrated when manipulative strategies only make the situation worse. Ferris often finds himself in a moral dilemma between following the orders of his superiors and following his own conscience. As a Western character, he serves as a symbolic mediator between the strategized Western world and the conflicted Eastern world. His character reflects the image of the West trying to be fair, but still bound by the system and the great powers it represents.

One of the scenes that illustrates how Ferris dismantles existing stereotypes is during her interaction with Nizzar. Nizzar is described as a smart person and has a high degree, namely S3. And he doesn't want to be a martyr. Nizzar said that he did not want to be a martyr and die in vain, so he asked Ferris for help to help him. The following dialog is conveyed by Ferris.

Ferris: "So you don't wanna kill the Jews and the crusaders, huh?"



Figure 6. Ferris interaction with Nizzar (Scene 00.12.01-00.12.07)

In this scene and dialog, Ferris is portrayed as having an understanding or assumption about the motivations of certain groups, specifically related to the concept of martyrs and their targets.

Ferris dialogue implies that everyone who commits martyrdom has Christians and Jews as their targets. The line "So you don't wanna kill the Jews and the crusaders, huh?" suggests that Muslims take pleasure in killing Christians and Jews. This reflects a generalization that often appears in post-9/11 narratives, where extremist actions are attributed to all religious groups. This dialog shows that not all Muslims share the same trait of terrorism. In reality, this dialogue shows that not all Muslims share the same trait of terrorism as in the depiction of Nizzar whose goal is not to be a martyr and die in vain. This is important to highlight in the context of literary sociology, because literary works (in this case, film dialog as a form of narrative) can be a medium for constructing or deconstructing stereotypes. Post 9/11, many Americans view Islam through the lens of suspicion and fear, often equating all Muslims with extremism. Ferris's dialogue, while seemingly prejudicial, also opens a space to challenge such stereotypes by implying that not everyone conforms to the assumptions made. This shows how popular narratives can subtly reflect and at the same time challenge simplified views of religious identity.

The next character portrayal is Hani Salaam. Hani Salaam is the head of Jordanian Intelligence and one of the most interesting characters in the film. He is portrayed as highly intelligent, elegant, and decisive. Hani speaks calmly but authoritatively, and he highly values trust and integrity. He strongly rejects all forms of dishonesty and always demands honesty from anyone who works with him, including Ferris. Hani represents a modern, professional, and highly educated Arab world a stark contrast to the stereotype of radical Muslims in the film. However, he is still portrayed as firm and harsh, even manipulative at times, showing that power in the East is complex and cannot be viewed in black and white terms. Hani's character demonstrates that not all Muslim characters in this film are extreme.

Hani's character in her dialog represents a point of view that rejects the use of violence, especially torture, as a means to an end.

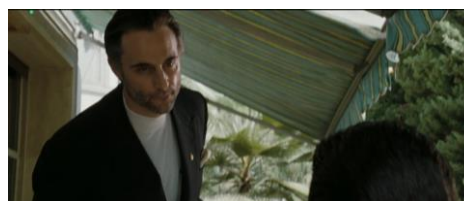


Figure 7. Interaction scene between Ferries and Hani (Scene 00.32.12-00.32.17)

Hani: "Torture doesn't work"

Hani emphasizes that torture is useless. Because of the stereotype that Hollywood has instilled in Middle Easterners and Muslims that they are violent (Shaheen, 2009), they do not hesitate to commit atrocities in order to get what they want. From the dialog, we can get the message that Hani does not like torture to get information. The events of 9/11 significantly shaped the American public's perception of Islam and Muslims. Post-tragedy, there was an increase in negative stereotypes that associated Islam with terrorism and violence. Hollywood Films often reinforce these stereotypes by portraying Muslim or Middle Eastern characters as violent and willing to commit extreme acts. However, the reality is much more complex. Muslim communities in America and around the world condemn acts of terrorism and do not support violence. Hani's dialogue is seen as representing an attempt to debunk such stereotypes, highlighting that individuals should not be judged on the basis of generalized prejudices.

3.2 Portrayal of Plot

The narrative begins with brutal bombings in Europe and America associated with radical Muslim groups, sparking a storyline about Islamic terrorism.



Figure 8. Scenes from the Manchester bombing incident (Scene 00.01.45-00.02.50)

The scene begins with the storming of a terrorist base in Manchester, England. However, because the terrorists knew they were under attack, they went on a suicide boom. The incident destroyed the residences and buildings around the terrorist base. Before the suicide bombing, Al-Saleem recorded a monologue calling for revenge against the West and America.

The next bombing took place in one of the shopping centers in Amsterdam. Before the bombing occurred, a man in a cap was picking up a glass that was thought to be a pile of garbage. After picking up the glass, he saw a paper inside that said “اليوم سوق الورد” (Noorder Markt).



Figure 9. Scene moments before the bombing incident (Scene 00.42.08-00.42.13)

Shortly after getting the paper, it seemed to signal that the next bombing would be in a shopping center in Amsterdam.



Figure 10. Scene of the bombing incident at Amsterdam Market (Scene 00.42.27-00.42.39).

The scene begins with an image of a busy and peaceful flower market, filled with people moving about and enjoying the day. However, the tranquility is suddenly broken by a crucial detail that signals danger, a man walking casually through the crowd while holding his cell phone. This man is actually a terrorist, and the cell phone he is holding serves as the trigger (detonator) for the bomb that has been planted in the market. This tense moment is built up as the audience, or at least some of the characters who suspect him, realize something is wrong just before the explosion. His calm actions but focus on his phone is a danger signal that is missed until it is too late.

Shortly after, a massive explosion occurred, destroying the entire market area. Cameras vividly show the horrific aftermath of the blast: casualties poured in, debris was scattered everywhere, and mass panic set in.

The bombing left at least 75 people dead and hundreds injured. The scene was designed to show the brutal impact of terrorism and the modus operandi of modern terrorists who utilize everyday technology such as mobile phones to launch stealthy attacks in crowds. The Amsterdam bombing is one of a series of terrorist attacks carried out by the Al-Saleem network in Europe.

The plot then involves Ferris going undercover and working with Jordanian intelligence to dismantle Al-Saleem's network. Tension mounts with confusing intelligence operations, betrayals, and manipulations. Ferris is faced with a moral dilemma between loyalty to his mission and his own humanity.



Figure 11. Interaction scene between Hani and Ferris at the GID complex in Jordan (Scene 00.33.53-00.34.04)

Hani: "I have one rule if we are to cooperate my dear. Never lie to me. Understand? Never lie to me."

In Jordan Ferris was authorized by Hoffman to replace Holiday as chief investigator, because Holiday was deemed incompetent. After that Ferris met with Hani Salaam, head of the GID (General Intelligence Department) to signify a cooperative relationship in capturing Al-Saleem. Hani emphasized Ferris not to lie in this cooperative relationship. Finally Ferris and Hani worked together in monitoring a location that was thought to be the headquarters of a terrorist group located in the city of Amman, Jordan.

The reality of the 9/11 attacks in 2001 drastically changed the global security landscape and prompted increased collaboration between international intelligence agencies in the fight against terrorism. The events of 9/11 revealed the urgent need for accurate and reliable information sharing between countries to prevent similar attacks in the future, in line with Hani's emphasis on the prohibition of lying in intelligence cooperation.



Figure 12. Scene of Ferris and Skip watching over a terrorist base in Jordan (Scene 00.34.40-00.35.22)

In this scene when Ferris was watching the place, Ferris saw a teenage boy approaching one of the members of the terrorist group. Skip explained that it was an agent deployed from the American headquarters to infiltrate the group on Hoffman's orders. The cover was finally blown and the terrorist members immediately fled to provide information that their location was known. Ferris without hesitation immediately chased the person and killed him. In the process Ferris was bitten by two dogs. Ferris was afraid that Hani would be angry because he had not been honest with him by organizing a side operation that Ferris himself did not know about.

The next day Marwan picked up Ferris and took him to meet with Hani. Hani confirms Ferris' actions in killing the man and makes up a story that the man died in a robbery, which is a common occurrence. Ferris is taken inside by Hani and shown the punishment process given to the agent who almost ruined the whole plan. Hani insists that this is punishment not torture.



Figure 13. Scene of Hani showing punishment to Ferris (Scene 00.41.28-00.41.34)

Hani: *"This is punishment, my dear. It's a very different thing."*

Ferris asked about the torture given to the people in the room and Hani replied that it was not torture. Hani emphasized that punishment is different from torture. He does so when someone has made a mistake not merely to torture him. Hani is a person who is not careless in his actions and he knows what he is doing.



Figure 14. Interaction scene between Hani and Karami (Scene 00.45.43-00.47.50)

In this scene Ferris is picked up by Hani to meet with terrorist members he knows. In the desert they meet with Karami. Hani gave a bribe to Karami by providing assistance to Karam's parents with the aim that Karami helped him in capturing Al-Saleem. and Karami agreed. In the context of the post-9/11 phenomenon, this depiction reflects real-world tactics in counterterrorism, where intelligence agencies often use methods such as asset recruitment, incentives, or bribes to gather information and track targets in their efforts to understand and combat complex extremist networks.



Figure 15. Hoffman's scene suddenly finds itself at the Ferris Apartments in Jordan (Scene 00.49.06-00.49-30)

This scene shows After returning to the hotel, Ferris was surprised by Hoffman's arrival in Jordan. Hoffman came to meet Hani so that he could use Karami to capture Al-Saleem, but Hani did not agree.

Hoffman, who was selfish, tried to get Karami in his own way. He tried to capture Karami by assigning Skip, as a result they failed to capture Karami.



Figure 16. Scene Skip and his gang follow Karami (Scene 00.55.03-00.56-00)

This scene shows Skip and his gang following Karami. After Karami realizes that he is being followed by Skip and his gang, a chase ensues between them. However, Karami manages to escape from them. Skip also fails to carry out Hoffman's mission.

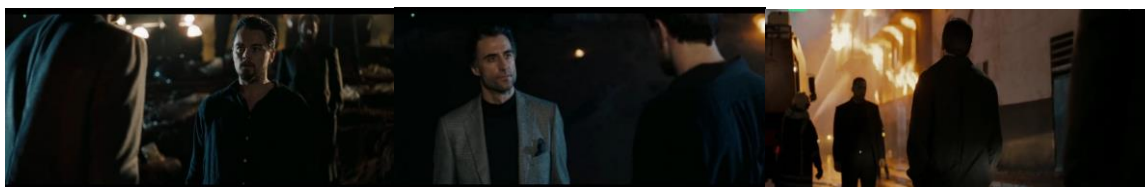


Figure 17. Scene of Hani expelling Ferries from Jordan after the terrorist headquarters fire incident (Scene 01.01.09-01.03.41)

In this scene Ferries is invited by Marwan to the Amman Terrorist headquarters which was burned down because of the previous incident. He was taken to meet Hani; Hani was furious because he felt he had been deceived by Ferries and expelled Ferries from Jordan.



Figure 18. Ferries and Hoffman's interactions regarding the creation of a fake terrorist to lure Al-Saleem out of hiding (Scene 01.04.23-01.07.02).

Ferries: We made it appear that there is another terrorist operation out there just as effective as his own. I mean, how would Al-Saleem react to that kind of challenge to his status? What would he do?

Hoffman: Well, he would get paranoid. He might rejoice. Maybe both.

Ferries: Exactly. But either way. Trying to get in contact with them, right? Which would be us.

Hoffman: That would be us. You're a devious SOB.

This scene shows Ferris, who has returned to America, meeting with Hoffman, and he is furious because Hoffman has betrayed Ferris and Hani Salaam's trust. Karami is Hani Salaam's confidant (the head of Jordanian intelligence) and an important source who can only be accessed because of the good relationship between Ferris and Hani. When Hoffman secretly ordered his team to arrest Karami without Jordanian permission, he undermined diplomatic cooperation and destroyed the trust that had been painstakingly built. As a result, Hani completely severed ties with Ferris, as he was deemed to have betrayed him.

After holding a conversation with Hoffman, Ferris came up with the idea of creating an engineered terrorist organization to lure Al-Saleem out of hiding. In this scene, Ferries proposes a cunning strategy to Hoffman: create the illusion of another terrorist group comparable to Al-Saleem. Ferries asks how Al-Saleem would react to a threat to his dominant position, and Hoffman predicts that Al-Saleem would be angry, or even happy, or both. The key point, as Ferries explains, is that Al-Saleem would certainly attempt to contact this new group. This is where the core of the plan was revealed: "To be us," said Hoffman, realizing that they themselves would pose as the rival group.

This brought him together with Garland who was a CIA member friend of Hoffinan. Ferris finally managed to create a terrorist organization led by someone named Omar Sadiki.



Figure 19. Scene of Ferries and Garland's interaction about Sadiki (Scene 01.08.53-01.09.33)

Garland: "His name is Omar sadiki. Hes's Jordanian. an architect. most of his commissions come from islamict charitable groups who also send money to jihadist. he's got every jihadist signifier...Except he's."

This scene profiles Omar Sadiki, a Jordanian architect. Omar Sadiki is described as having the characteristics of a jihadist, and most of his commissions as an architect come from Islamic charity groups that also channel funds to jihadists.

Then in the next scene Ferries made a message that was sent to the terrorist network on behalf of Omar Sadiki.



Figure 20. Fake messages created by Ferris (Scene 01.24.14-01.24.40)

Ferris: "In the name of God, we praise our brothers who shall carry out this heroic act in the Fig Orchard, and beg God to give us strength in our continuing struggle. The time is at hand."

Showing Ferris writing fake jihad messages. In terms of plot, this is part of the complication and manipulative strategy. Ferris, as a non-Muslim character, uses Islamic religious language to infiltrate extremist networks. The setting in this propaganda room shows how violent ideology is constructed. The next scene shows how Ferris plans to create a fake bombing on behalf of Omar Sadiki. The scene takes place at an American military base in Incirlik, Turkey.

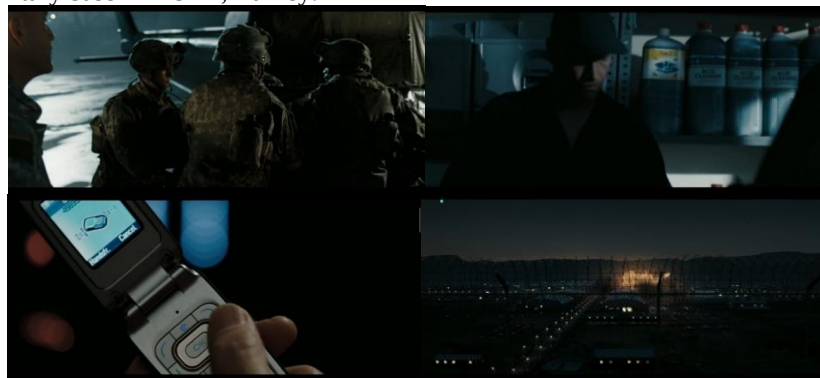


Figure 21. Scenes from the fake bomb attack on the US Military base in Incirlik, Turkey (Scene 01.24.58-01.26.46)

This scene shows how the manipulation of the bombing carried out by the Americans who accused the Muslim Omar Sadiki of being the culprit. This scene shows a series of actions where this bombing has been arranged in such a way that the victims inside the military base are fake corpses.

Body of Lies (2008), which shows how Ferris creates a fake terrorist organization and staged bombings to lure Al-Saleem out of hiding. The plot involves creating a profile of a Jordanian architect named Omar Sadiki who is portrayed as having jihadist characteristics, even though in reality he does not. Ferris, a non-Muslim character, even uses Islamic religious language to create a fake jihad message, demonstrating the manipulation and construction of violent ideology in the film. The fake bomb attack itself is staged in such a way that the victims are fake corpses, with the aim of blaming Omar Sadiki, a Muslim.

The result of a "terrorist" attack on an American military base in Incirlik, Turkey. With this attack, Al-Saleem was provoked and finally tried to contact Sadiki.



Figure 22. Jihadist Interrogation Scene of Sadiki under Al-Saleem's supervision (Scene 01.34.19-01.34.55)

This scene shows Sadiki being arrested by Al-Saleem and immediately interrogating him. Sadiki said that he did not know about the bombing. Sadiki said that he had been set up by an American client (Ferris). Sadiki explained that the American (Ferris) looked like a Muslim. Al-Saleem is seriously watching the interrogation. A jihadist who was interrogating Sadiki said that don't worry because the jihadists

really appreciated Sadiki's bombing actions. However, Sadiki still denied that he was the perpetrator of the bombing.

The tension reaches its peak when Ferris himself is captured by Al-Saleem's group and tortured. Aisha, Ferris's friend, is kidnapped, and Ferris asks Hani for help, but Hani is still angry because Ferris lied to him. Ferris then asks Hoffman for help. After Ferris is captured and tortured by Al-Saleem, he is rescued by Hani Salaam and his troops. The story ends with the capture of Al-Saleem, and Ferris decides to leave the CIA, fed up with his superiors' manipulative tactics.



Figure 23. Al-Saleem's interrogation scene and the violent action against Ferris (Scene 01.47.55-01.52.37)

In this scene Ferris is taken for interrogation by Al-Saleem. When Ferris asked Al-Saleem about Aisha, he said that Ferris had been deceived and betrayed by his partner. At that moment Ferris saw Karami's figure in the room and told Al-Saleem that there was an intruder in this room, the person worked for Ferris, so indirectly Al-Saleem also worked for him, Ferris laughed and spat in Al-Saleem's face. Al-Saleem, who was angry at this act smashed Ferris's two fingers with a hammer.



Figure 24. The scene of the execution carried out by Muslim youths against Ferris (Scene 01.54.01-01.54-30)

In this scene Al-Saleem turns on the video camera and orders Ferris to be killed and recorded. In this scene when Ferris is about to be stabbed with a knife, a special forces group storms in and kills everyone, then Hani Salaam appears.

The narrative involving the “terrorist group” led by Al-Saleem and subsequent events, in which Ferris becomes the target of interrogation and violence, reflects the general portrayal of extremist groups in Western media. The scene where Ferris is picked up by “Muslim youths” and then taken to a remote location to be interrogated by Al-Saleem, who then orders his murder, reinforces the narrative of danger and violence associated with certain elements of Islam. The film's portrayal of the “false attack orchestrated by Ferris” at the beginning, followed by actual threats and violence, further blurs the lines and may contribute to perceptions of deception and hostility.

This cinematic representation, particularly the interrogation and violence scenes, and the general portrayal of “Muslim youth” and “terrorist groups” as perpetrators, can be seen as a reflection of the anxieties and stereotypes that emerged in American society after the 9/11 attacks. The 9/11 attacks caused significant changes in public perception, with an increase in the association of terrorism with Islam. This often results in stereotypes of the entire religion and its adherents, ignoring the great diversity within the Muslim world and the peaceful nature of the majority. Through its specific storyline and visual cues, the film contributes to the ongoing social dialogue about identity, threats, and the often problematic representation of complex realities in popular culture.



Figure 25. Al-Saleem's arrest by Jordanian Intelligence (Scene 01.55.10-01.55.16)

In this scene Al-Saleem who came out before the incident casually got into a car, it turned out that the car was driven by Marwan, a subordinate of Hani Salaam. Marwan said “You are arrested for terrorism”. In reality, the events of 9/11 did trigger a wave of Islamophobia and negative stereotypes against Muslims in the United States and other Western countries.

3.3 Portrayal of Setting

3.2.1 Time Setting

The film *Body of Lies* is set in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, specifically around the early to mid-2000s. This is evident from the political situation depicted, such as the increase in intelligence operations against terrorist groups in the Middle East and the intensity of the work of intelligence agencies such as the CIA in combating global terrorism. The timing of the film is highly relevant to the global narrative unfolding at the time, particularly the tensions between Western nations and the Islamic world.

3.2.2 Atmosphere setting



Figure 26. Interrogation Room and Torture of Ferries by Al-Saleem Group (Scene 01.47.50)

This image shows a dark and gloomy scene inside a room that appears to be the hidden headquarters of the Al-Saleem terrorist group. In the center of the image, a heavily bearded man, Al-Saleem, wearing a dark robe, stands with his back to the camera, recording or monitoring something. In front of him, slightly to the right, there is a video camera mounted on a tripod, pointing toward Ferries, an American CIA agent sitting behind a desk. Ferries, who is seated, is wearing a head covering that obscures his face, and behind him hangs a black flag with Arabic calligraphy in yellow or gold lettering reading:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

The overall atmosphere is very tense and gives the impression of kidnapping, interrogation, or the making of propaganda videos.

Such depictions, which visually link Islam to violence and extremism through the use of certain symbols, significantly contribute to the negative stereotypes held by some Americans toward Islam. In reality, the majority of Muslims worldwide, including in the United States, are peaceful, law-abiding individuals who uphold the values of tolerance and compassion. However, limited media coverage and representation, which often focuses on the actions of a small number of extremist groups, has created a biased narrative. These stereotypes often overlook the cultural diversity and interpretations within Islam, as well as the positive contributions of Muslims to American society. As a result, many Muslims in the United States face discrimination, prejudice, and even violence, solely because of their religious beliefs, which are fundamentally different from the image portrayed in extremist propaganda. The terrorist acts committed by extremist groups do not reflect the teachings of Islam or the views of billions of Muslims around the world.

3.2.4 Place Setting

The film shows several regions in the Middle East, such as Iraq and Syria, which are depicted as areas of terrorist operations and locations for the capture or surveillance of terrorist suspects, and especially Jordan, as a tense and risky center of intelligence operations. The city of Amman, the capital of Jordan, serves as a key setting where interactions between CIA agent Roger Ferris and Jordanian intelligence chief

Hani Salaam take place. In addition to the Middle East, the film also features locations in Europe as part of the escape routes or movements of suspected terrorists. On the other hand, Washington D.C. The settings in the film *Body of Lies* are spread across various strategic locations that represent the global scale of the conflict depicted in the story. in the United States serves as the strategic control center for this global operation, where character Ed Hoffman carries out instructions remotely using surveillance technology.



Figure 27. Jordan (Al-Saleem terrorist network headquarters) (Scene 00.34.37)

There is a white building with Arabic writing and a picture of a book on the front wall on the front porch there are also several people selling. Also visible in the front is a man driving a cart pulled by a donkey. He is carrying vegetables on the cart. There is also a group of children playing in the front yard of the building. There is a building with books and Arabic writing on the top and bottom. It represents the Quran. This implies that the people of the Middle East are Muslim.

The portrayal in this data, which implies that Middle Easterners are Muslim, indirectly touches on the area of stereotypes. There is a tendency among some Americans, especially those who have had little exposure to diversity in the Middle East or Islam, to assume that all Middle Easterners are Muslim, and that Islam is a monolithic religion without diversity in interpretation or practice. This stereotype often overlooks the existence of Christian, Jewish, and other religious communities in the Middle East, as well as the various sects and traditions within Islam itself.

Furthermore, depicting a building with Arabic writing and an image of a book associated with the Quran, implying that people from the Middle East are Muslim, can reinforce the view that Islam is the only dominant and homogeneous religion in the region. In reality, the Middle East is a region rich in cultural and religious diversity.

Such stereotypes can originate from various sources, including the media, lack of education about the region, or limited personal experiences. The impact can be significant, ranging from cultural misunderstandings to discrimination.

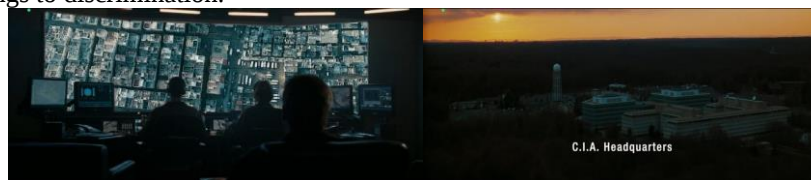


Figure 28. Langley, Virginia (CIA Headquarters) (Scene 00.16.13)

This data depicts the CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia, as one of the main locations. This suggests that most scenes related to intelligence operations and decision-making take place in or around this facility, with a large screen display showing a bird's eye view of the city, implying remote monitoring or operations. The CIA headquarters itself serves as the nerve center for many of these operations, where large amounts of intelligence data are analyzed to identify threats, track terrorist networks, and plan responses. The need for real-time information and the ability to monitor situations in the field remotely has become crucial.



Figure 29. Balad, Iraq (Terrorist Headquarters) (Scene 00.18.43)

Balad, Iraq, is portrayed as a very dangerous and unstable location, a base for terrorist groups. The depiction features a devastated and run-down environment, with badly damaged buildings and dusty streets that create the impression of a long-abandoned and unsafe place. The dominance of the militants is obvious, with suspiciously armed and traditionally dressed characters, suggesting that the terrorist group has complete control over the area. The constant threat is also felt in the military attack scenes between the terrorists and the American military, which emphasizes that for anyone who is not part of the terrorist group, the place is a

death trap. The Film specifically positions Balad as a location for terrorist operations, as well as a hotbed for extremist activity. In *Body of Lies*, Balad is represented as a symbol of chaos and the threat of global terrorism, a lawless place completely controlled by the enemy, designed to induce fear and tension in the audience.

3.2.5 Social Setting

The social setting in this film depicts the tension between Western and Eastern cultures, as well as the biases and stereotypes that have developed in American society toward the Islamic world. The film presents a social reality rife with prejudice, particularly toward Muslims, who are generally associated with violence and terrorism. On the other hand, the film also highlights the humanity of Middle Eastern society, such as Jordanian intelligence officer Hani, who demonstrates professionalism, ethics, and moral complexity.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

Film *Body of Lies* It depicts Americans' religious stereotypes of Islam after 9/11, and dominantly reproduces negative stereotypes of Islam and Muslims, especially through the character of Al-Saleem, who is portrayed as an extremist, and the Middle East, which is visualized as a slum full of conflict. American characters Ed Hoffman and Ferries, who are CIA agents, reinforce this image through manipulation and fabrication that discredits Muslims. However, the film also includes criticism of American policy, such as in the case of Omar Sadiki, an innocent Muslim who is falsely accused of being a terrorist. This shows that stereotypes about Islam are not merely a cultural issue but also the result of systematic political strategies. The character Hani Salaam appears as a representation of an ethical and principled Muslim, balancing the narrative despite his limited screen time. Thus, the film is not entirely Islamophobic but contains moral ambiguity that can be interpreted as a form of criticism. This aligns with Swingewood's theory that literary works or films not only reflect reality but also convey ideological messages and open up more complex interpretive spaces for society.

4.2 Suggestions/Recommendations

Further research is recommended to compare representations of Islam in various films produced both before and after the events of 9/11, with the aim of identifying narrative patterns and shifts in portrayal over time. In addition, future researchers may explore the third aspect of Swingewood's theory, which focuses on the relationship between literature and the writing process, to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. It is also expected that future studies in Indonesian literature will become more diverse by incorporating a sociological approach to literature, enabling a broader examination of the role and function of literary works within society.

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