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# Muslim English Literature

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# Redefining Jihad in Leila Aboulela's *The Kindness Of Enemies* (2015)

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## ABSTRACT

Edward Said's Orientalism highlights how Islam and Muslims in the East were framed and highlighted negatively in Western countries, creating prejudice and a negative image of their culture, rituals, and religion. Arguably, the 9/11 and 7/7 tragedies have increasingly raised sentiments against Islam. Moreover, Muslims and Jihad are seen as terrorists, violent, and suicide bombings. This research aims to undermine the negative images of Jihad by examining Leila Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies* through its characters lived post-9/11 and 7/7. The method used in this study is Close Textual Analysis with the framework of postcolonial studies followed by secondary sources from scientific journals, video lectures, and books. The results found that the novel reveals the meaning of Jihad that developed after 9/11 focused on the character of Oz, who understands that Jihad is a great activity and is closely related to war. Moreover, stereotypes against Muslims have left Muslims limited free space to show their true selves. Furthermore, this research finds that Jihad should be an internal struggle for the individual against lust and away from evil temptations.

**Keywords:** 7/7, 9/11, al-Qaeda, Jihad, Orientalism, *The Kindness of Enemies*

## INTRODUCTION

The level of crime related to religion and race post-tragedy of terrorism also impacts the formation and changes in perceptions of Islam. Factors such as increasing public solid opinion, excessive suspicion of Muslims; increasingly loud media reports; government laws impacting civil rights; disproportionate search operations against Muslims (D. Hussein) have left Muslims in the UK living in the shadow of hatred and fear. Arguably, Hussain and Bagguley stated that people tend to blame the media for the emergence of a sense of 'other' because of the securitization, racism, and Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings. (Hussain and Bagguley). These realities are reflected in Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies*, which is arguably presented by the protagonist who has gone through real experiences as Sudanese-Scotland and other Muslim characters living in Scotland.

*The Kindness of Enemies* (2015) tells a story with two different time settings parallel between the mid-19th century and the 21st century in 2010. This research focuses more on the 2010 setting of the protagonist, Natasha Wilson, a half Sudanese and a half Russian professor of history who lives in Scotland researching Imam Shamil, the leader of anti-Russian resistance in the Caucasian War in the 19th. The research brought her together with a student, Oz, or Osama, a descendant of Imam Shamil. Oz invites Natasha to see Imam Shamil's sword firsthand in his house and befriend Oz's mother, Malak Raja. Oz is also writing a thesis about the types of weapons used in Jihad. He downloaded the al-Qaeda

training manual illegally and sent it to Natasha, leading to his arrest by the local police. The story highlights how Muslim characters in the post-9/11 and 7/7 eras coexist with the shadows of stereotypes formed by acts of terrorism which also affect the meaning of Jihad. The novel also explores the meaning of Jihad, which is trying to be reinterpreted by the characters. Moreover, it aims to show again how Islam interprets the meaning of Jihad contained in the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad SAW's hadith, and the opinions expressed by Islamic scholars.

The narrative in *The Kindness of Enemies* spotlights multiculturalism, religion, identity, and politics experiencing dynamics after the bombings of 9/11 and 7/7 carried out by the terrorist group al-Qaeda that their teachings refer to the writings of Sayyid Qutb of the Egyptian writer and prominent Islamic theorist Ibn Taymiyah (Burke et al.). They believe that non-Muslims, called the infidels or apostates, are people who deviate from the teachings of Islam and must be executed, either by suicide bombing or what they believe is Jihad which distort the concept of jihad "for personal gain, which digresses from the original teachings of Islam" (Djohar). The result of this teaching "gave rise to a counter-Jihad scene consisting of more confrontational, chaotic and unpredictable movements in Western democracies" (Goodwin). Acts of terrorism led by extremist Islamic groups backfire against Muslims labeled as communities that spread fundamentalist ideas, especially in Western countries where Islam is a minority religion.

In *The Kindness of Enemies*, the influence of the West on the perception of Jihad is found, which makes this research use the theory of orientalism in discussing the topic. There are many reasons to influence one's thinking, ranging from the family environment, education, and others. Orientalism, in this case, is interpreted as a means provided to involve imperial thought concerning literary production that is carried out and is a way to carve imperialism in a solid form. It also relates to the affirmation given to the cultural, moral, mental, racial, and intellectual assumptions of the inferiority of Eastern society that are kept in the minds of Western readers, as Said quoted, "They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented," (Said, *Orientalism*). In this case, Oz, born and raised in Britain, has his own perspective on Jihad, which he believes is an activity that normalizes the use of weapons. This thinking is not much different from Western people's perception that Jihad is a religious activity related to violence. Dauda revealed that sentiment towards Islam after 9/11 impacted Muslim life (Dauda).

This study also aims to present the definition of Jihad in the Al-Qur'an and Islamic scholars' books. The thing that makes this research different from other studies is that no previous studies highlight the meaning of Jihad and break the stereotypes of *The Kindness of Enemies* by applying Orientalism. Moreover, this research straightens Jihad's meaning known post-9/11 by showing the significance of Jihad contained in the Qur'an and etymologically and terminology. Therefore, it is essential to address how important it is to raise the issue of how the meaning of Jihad is redefined in this novel through the characters. Moreover, applying the theories and analysing the novel is to reach the significances of this study which are to provide another source from literary work to investigate the lousy stereotype against Jihad.

## METHOD

This research is based on the analysis of the novel *The Kindness of Enemies* and secondary data to study the degradation of Jihad described in the story and previous studies, as researched, understood, and documented by various national and international researchers

and scholars. In this study, the type of research applied is qualitative research which aims to answer questions related to understanding the meaning and experience of the dimensions of human life and the social world (Fossey et al.). To achieve the research objectives and see the research object used, the method applied is Close Textual Analysis. This method involves understanding the language, symbols, and other elements present in the novel to obtain information in which the text can “reflect or perhaps challenge the historical, cultural, political, the ethical context in which they exist” (“Textual Analysis”). Along with qualitative type and CTA method, this research engages with postcolonial study, specifically Orientalism by Edward Said.

The first procedure in this research is to critically read the novel entitled *The Kindness of Enemies* multiple times. In addition, underlining, highlighting, and writing important notes are also carried out during the reading process, after finding all the supporting materials and topics collected as evidence and research objects. This research applies the theories of Orientalism in describing the research findings by connecting and critically analyzing the text. Furthermore, this research uses scientific journals, videos, and articles related to Jihad, ISIS, 7/7, and 9/11 as secondary sources.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Jihad in *The Kindness of Enemies*

The confession of the Al Qaeda terror group leader, Osama bin Laden stated in a videotape released by the Qatari newspaper, Al-Jazeera, that they are behind the 9/11 and 7/7 terror acts have become a “global concern of international and state security” (Moniruzzaman). In this case, the media who update the news about the terror acts suggest the public keep their distance from Islam and Muslims around them. Thus, the most misunderstood concept of Jihad is now equated with terrorism. The concept has increasingly gained a particularistic identity in Islam due to many terrorist activities around the world in recent years by extremist Islamic groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS, allegedly in the name of Islamic Jihad.

In *The Kindness of Enemies*, the narrator deconstructs the stereotype of Islam as religion spreads hatred and is closely related to terrorism by exploring the concept of Jihad and how Jihad has been manipulated for political gain. The novel uses its Muslim characters as a medium to reveal the true meaning of Jihad and shows how contemporary Western perceptions of Jihad “had a profound and traumatic effect on the lives of Muslims in the West” (Alsawy). The trauma effect that the narrator describes is through the character of Osama, called Oz, a British citizen who is also Natasha's student who downloads documents related to al-Qaeda and sends them to Natasha using an e-mail address with the name The Sword of Imam Shamil. It is at the heart of the novel's contemporary plot as the police arrest him for his activities. This changes Oz's life and affects him psychologically. Not only Oz but also affects Natasha's life and career because she is also suspected of being involved in terrorist activities. This incident shows that any discussion of Jihad, even for research or learning purposes, was described by the narrator as complicity in criminality by the authorities at the time. This perception was adopted in policies after 9/11 and 7/7 because “Muslim youth in the United Kingdom were constructed as threatening, different, untrustworthy and dangerous” (Lynch).

Considering that this novel was set in 2010, the characters explicitly state the changing meanings of Jihad. The most vocal voice of concern due to the change in meaning is Malak Raja, a devout Muslim. Her son, Oz, either his thoughts have been contaminated by radicalism because he thinks that “if someone hits us, we need to hit back,” (8) whether he



shows pride because they are descendants of Imam Shamil, a leader Islam carried out Jihad in the 19th century. "It's for getting us power over our enemies. Jihad is not something we should be ashamed of" (10) shows that Oz adopts the idea that Jihad is an activity that uses weapons to attack the enemy and is glorified in Islam. He also disagrees with the opinion that Jihad is a struggle within the individual, "Limiting jihad to an internal struggle has become a bandwagon for every Muslim pacifist to climb on" (8–9). This novel shows that in post-9/11 and 7/7, Jihad became a topic whose meaning was debated. It is described that Oz thinks that Jihad is a natural activity if using weapons and through war. Through the character of Oz, this novel shows a change in understanding of the meaning of Jihad in post-9/11 and 7/7 Europe, which is closely related to violence.

Oz's perspective makes us look at the purpose of Al-Qaeda in carrying out the attacks on 9/11. In February 1988, Al-Qaeda, through Al-Quds Al- Arabi, an Arabic-language London newspaper, released a fatwa that they called on all Muslims, including Muslim leaders, youth, and soldiers, to kill Americans and plunder their money because America supported them (Lawrence). This fatwa was believed to be the initial propaganda of Al- Qaeda behind their attack on the World Trade Center, which was to arouse the spirit of Muslim youth to attack the American government. From the agenda, causing other acts of terrorism such as the 7/7 bombing of a double-deck bus and subway station in London in 2005 when the wounds and trauma after 9/11 had not fully healed. Moreover, this novel makes the character of Oz someone who shows his radical thinking and Malak as someone who shows the true meaning of Jihad according to Islam. This is shown when Osama cut off the head of a snowman he made in their yard with a sword left by Imam Shamil that their family had.

"He had built five snowmen so crudely that they were almost columns. None of them was taller than him. He was holding the sword in his hand, the same one I had held yesterday and imagined to be Shamil's. His coat was open, his scarf covered his mouth, and his woollen cap was low over his eyebrows. His feet were deep in the snow, and with the sword, he swung away at the snowmen. One after the other – hacking, thrusting, lopping off their unformed heads." (15)

In a way, Osama believes that Jihad is an activity that uses weapons, as he said when he invited Natasha to his house to see the sword left by Imam Shamil, "Come over and see our sword. A real one that was used for jihad," (6). Oz's view of Jihad is in line with his understanding that 'jihadists' are people who carry out Jihad with weapons; this he said when Malak asked what if their neighbours saw what Oz did with Shamil's sword, "They'll think I'm a jihadist." (16). the British government anticipated these understandings in dealing with the radicalism spreading among British youth.

The novel provides two opposing images in describing the view of jihad. The first portrait highlights the life and resistance of Imam Shamil who used Jihad to defend his land and people from the Russian invasion, and the second depicts contemporary terrorist attacks against innocent civilians. The live images of the two portraits clearly illustrate the sharp contrast between the two situations. with the character of Malak which emphasizes the character of Imam Shamil as an Islamic leader who fights against the brutality of the Russian empire. However, the fact that Queen Victoria supported Imam Shamil in his jihad, which Natasha said, provoked a conversation between her, Malak, and Oz. Natasha remarks, "Did you know that Queen Victoria supported Imam Shamil? His picture was on the front page of the London Times with a call for the English to be," (8) which was later not entirely accepted by Oz. Still, he also did not deny the fact. Oz, a second-generation immigrant, sits at the crossroads of recruiting contemporary jihadists in the West. But the novel seems to go to

great lengths to downplay the threat posed, as well as the threat he feels. This lack of threat clouded the stakes.

The anticipations made by the British government started from the school to the university level. Natasha is a lecturer tasked with caring for students suspected of being "vulnerable to radicalization" at the university she teaches. This agenda is done to "prevent radicalization and by extension another terrorist attack" (141) which facilitates teachers with training and guidelines in conducting 'spy' in the campus environment. When Oz was arrested for downloading files related to al-Qaeda, Natasha, who is in charge and met Oz before the arrest, was obliged to write a report "every conversation you've had with Oz Raja. I want every e-mail he sent you and every paper he's ever submitted in your course" (143) warned by Iain, Natasha's co-worker. The latter would then be handed over to the police for investigation. Seeing the planning and handling of the spread of radicalism on campuses shows that the British government is serious in addressing this issue to prevent the spread of radicalism among children and young people.

The government's suspicion of the spread of radicalism and terrorism among Muslim youths in the UK is constructed because of foreigners residing in the UK and British citizens who have foreign ancestry. Lynch argued that the "Muslim youth population, due to their heritage, their assumed vulnerability to radicalization into terrorism and the profile of the 9/11 perpetrators" (Lynch) became the focus of suspicion. These suspicions underlie the arrest of Oz, who downloaded the "al-Qaeda training manual from the US Justice Department website" (167) to complete a thesis he was writing about weapons used in Jihad. This arrest also supports that Oz is a character in this novel who thinks that Jihad is the same as fighting with weapons. With a bloodline heritage with Imam Shamil, who carried out Jihad intending to defend the territory and Islamic values, Oz still uses the term jihad with weapons even though times have changed to modern.

Youth who adopt radical ideas and behaviors and participate in terrorism are considered youth self-development (Venhaus). The participation process is strongly opposed, such as engaging in revolutionary ideas and behavior. These participation processes in radicalism are indirectly linked to the process average of self-development of Muslim youth. The loose association of post-9/11 radicalization with all Muslim opposition thoughts and actions led Muslim youths to engage in low-level activism, ranging from supporting violence as a legitimate strategy for political change to being directly involved in supporting democratic political systems that some are classified as potentially radical or radicalized and are automatically linked to terrorism (Husain). Other political activism, such as public protest elsewhere, will be seen as a process of radicalization that starts from complaints and protests then ends in violence because of its vulnerability to being infiltrated by radical agents (Moskalenko and McCauley). Therefore, what Oz did can be suspected as a radical movement. Moreover, he downloaded documents belonging to a banned organization. The username he used to send an e-mail containing the thesis he wrote was "SwordOfShamil," which further showed his pride in heritage and the sword used by Imam Shamil.

The misleading meaning of Jihad existed long before the 20th century. However, this novel focuses on post-9/11 and 7/7, which has turned Jihad into a religious activity filled with violence. In her discussion with Oz and Natasha, Malak stated, "Ever since 9/11, jihad has become synonymous with terrorism" (8). Not only Jihad but Hezbollah and Hamas movements are also seen as dogmatic and fanatical movements considered by Orientalists to build a closed fanatic Islamic system that undermines co-existence and tolerance in the West and closes the door for non-Muslims in Islamic society (Said).

The effects of 9/11 and 7/7 are conveyed through a conversation between Malak and Natasha, showing how “violence only breeds violence” (I. N. Hussein)—starting from Oz, who used another name as his nickname to avoid his real name, namely Osama Raja. As is known, after the tragedy of 9/11 and 7/7, Osama's name was closely related to Osama bin Laden, the founder and leader of the al-Qaeda group. Steps to change the name as a manifestation of a sense of alienation and fear. Natasha also changed her name even though it was long before the tragedy of 9/11 or 7/7. The name change from Natasha Hussein to Natasha Wilson was made when she first came to London “in the summer of 1990, fourteen years old, just as Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait” (4). Wilson's name is the name of her Scottish stepfather. The change in the names of the two characters illustrates how violence can affect innocent people who are forced to hide who they are.

In addition, in the case of Natasha, the name change that she did was a way to fit her into society. Because the first time she introduced herself as Natasha Hussein, the reaction she got from her classmates was just laughter, “From the safe distance of the future, I joined my classmates in laughing out loud.” (5). The rejection reaction at the beginning of the meeting caused trauma to Natasha into adulthood, “now the mention of my father's name stalled me, I teetered on the brink of the usual revulsion” (6). This issue shows that the dominance of Europe as a host country for Muslim migrants can eliminate or fade identity as Said argues that “the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures” (Said). Of course, the post-9/11 situation made Muslims even more, cover up their identity, “Better like this, not even Muslim by name” (6). Because only by name, Muslims will be seen as 'different' from the West.

Another major impact of the 9/11 and 7/7 tragedies on Muslims is “Many Muslims in Britain wished that no one knew they were Muslim. They would change their names if they could and dissolve into the mainstream, for it was not enough for them to openly condemn 9/11 and 7/7, not enough to walk against the wall, to raise a glass of champagne, to eat in the light of Ramadan and never step into a mosque or say the shahada or touch the Qur'an” (6).

The thoughts that lead to radicalism are anticipated by the British government, trying to break the chain of radicalism in the school environment towards living Muslims in Europe and America, changing names, and limited space to move and show their identity as Muslims. Indeed, Muslims live in the shadow of fear due to the terrorist incident. They choose to completely cover up who they are as a preventive measure to protect themselves. They become victims of what they do not understand, let alone participate in the crime. In this novel set in the time in 2010, and the two acts of terrorism that occurred in 2001 and 2005 changed the public view. Especially the people of Europe about the meaning of Jihad which made 'title' in two acts of terrorism, through the character of Oz, this novel depicts a teenager who understands that Jihad is an activity carried out with weapons to gain power over the enemy.

### **Redefining Jihad**

From the changing meaning of Jihad post-9/11 and the stereotypes that follow it, discussed in *The Kindness of Enemies*, to the urgency to realign the meaning of Jihad, which is synonymous with terrorism as the West knows it. Through Malak, this novel reveals much about the meaning of Jihad that is applicable in this modern world. The Jihad that seeks the inner peace and internal struggle of each individual is emphasized by Malak Raja. If Oz views

that Jihad as an activity that uses weapons, then Natasha reveals Jihad as resistance with the research she wrote. It refers to the focus of her research, which looks at the Jihad carried out by an Islamic leader in Chechnya, Imam Shamil. The Jihad, which is redefined by this novel, is in line with the Jihad proposed by contemporary Muslim scholars, namely the Jihad that prioritizes inner peace. In addition, the purpose of Jihad carried out by previous Muslim leaders was to expand and protect Islamic territories, in contrast to the goal of 'jihad' carried out by al-Qaeda, namely rebuilding the caliphate and attacking non-Muslims.

The essence of jihad changes over time because it follows the needs of the ummah from being defensive to being offensive. Suppose Jihad at the time of the Prophet (PBUH) was carried out to maintain and expand the Islamic territory in the past. Similar to the Jihad carried out by one of the Islamic leaders, Imam Shamil, who made Jihad a defensive measure to protect the Caucasus area from Russian attacks. Such as the research that Natasha did, "Jihad as Resistance – Russian Imperial Expansion and Insurrection in the Caucasus" (5), makes it clear that the purpose of Jihad is resistance. The change in the meaning of Jihad, which was initially defensive, has metamorphosed into an example of Islamic extremism covered by the media with many suicide bombings, blowing up civilian buses, and killing civilians who became their list of abominations (Said, *Orientalism*).

The research that Natasha is writing reflects the Jihad Imam Shamil conducted, "Every fight Shamil fought was on the defense. He was protecting his villages against Russian attack" (9). Malak's argument about Jihad supports this understanding carried out by Shamil and Jihad known post-9/11, "This type of jihad is different from the horrible crimes of al-Qaeda" (9). In her research, she wants to compare how Shamil accepts defeat and makes peace with his enemies with modern terrorism that promotes suicide bombings and other acts of terror rather than accepting what Imam Shamil says, "Martyrdom is Allah's prerogative to bestow" (310). Over time, the meaning of Jihad has experienced a dynamic that adapts to human needs, no longer being interpreted as a defensive activity and using weapons. Still, Jihad can be carried out in various ways. Moreover, as defined by contemporary scholars such as Yusuf al-Qardhawi, Jihad also calls for Jihad that starts from oneself, namely against lust and the temptation of evil (Qardhawi). Because the big problem that arises amid humankind today is the crisis of spirituality in which Jihad within oneself can become the main foundation of religion.

Moreover, Malak also says that the understanding of Jihad starts from oneself, which she believes is a struggle that exists in every individual, "Jihad is an internal and spiritual struggle" (8). This understanding is in direct contrast to the post 9-11 jihadist journalistic framing, which "covered examples of Islamic extremism" (Said). As a Muslim and a Sufi follower, Malak understands that Jihad is basically how individuals deal with the struggles that exist in themselves and their hearts. This understanding is in line with Jihad in Sufis. Sufi is a branch of science, and as a science, Sufi/tasawwuf studies how a person can get as close as possible to Allah (Sahib). Bagir wrote in his book that the hard Jihad is to cleanse the heart from lust (Bagir). Because lust always tries to divert people from the truth, it plunges people into humility.

Advances in science and technology, the dominance of rationalism, empiricism, and positivism have brought people to modern life where secularism is the mentality of the times and spiritualism is anathema to everyday life. The change in the period has made the intentions and goals of religious leaders not entirely for religion but have been interfered with by other interests. It makes the Jihad carried out by al-Qaeda intending to rebuild the caliphate, which is considered no longer applicable. This understanding is what Malak tries to straighten out when Oz insists on holding on to his knowledge of Jihad, "Listen Oz, the door of Jihad is closed. Jihad needs an imam, and there is no imam now. Jihad is for upholding the values of Allah; it's not for scoring political points, it's not for land, it's not for rights, it's not for autonomy" (10).

Because it is inward in humans, unlike a visible enemy, and appears latent at any time, the Prophet's (PBUH) resistance to this passion is called the akbar jihad, the great Jihad (Sahib). Thus, the Jihad defined by Malak as an internal and spiritual struggle practised by Malak is the real big Jihad. In practising her Jihad, Malak made her religion and faith her base when Oz was detained by the police, "If I didn't have my faith, I would go mad." (214–15). by attending zikr and reading the Qur'an Malak shows her form of effort to deal with the struggles involving herself and her son. Because in such an unfavourable situation, bad possibilities might be present in Malak's mind and heart. However, some people will think this idea is fundamentalism, such as an Orientalist and fanatical anti-Muslim, Daniel Pipes, who argues that Islam "offers a vanguard ideology; a complete program to improve man and to create a new society; complete control over that society," (Said). This novel articulates the experience of Malak, who is not a victim or fugitive of Islam but is willingly committed to his faith.

Post 9/11 and 7/7 left a wrong impression for Islam and Jihad, which influenced the dynamics of Muslim life in Western countries especially. Rodman argues, "Much of the Islamic world is rent by social divisions, frustrated by its material inferiority to the West, bitter at Western cultural influences, and driven by its resentments" (Said). These changes to Islamic life result from forming the image of Islam by the media. As Rodman also argues, "Islam as it is covered and (mis)represented in Orientalist thought and media stereotypes" (Said, *Covering Islam*). Western media that often negatively preach Islam and associate Jihad with bloodshed are denied by this novel as said, "What we are ashamed of is what is done in its name. Not every Muslim war is a jihad. Not suicide bombers or attacking civilians" (10). Terrorist acts carried out by al-Qaeda do not have a concrete basis, both in terms of implementation and goals.

However, this novel raises the history of Imam Shamil's struggle in Chechnya and compares it with what al-Qaeda did. The Jihad carried out by Imam Shamil follows what is contained in the Qur'an, *Jihad fi Sabilillah* which means Jihad in the form of fighting to defend oneself from enemy attacks that try to destroy Islam. While what al-Qaeda extremist organizations do is quite different, "Unlike Shamil and his highlanders, radical Islamist organizations were inspired by Hegel and Marx, their inner workings ticked along the lines of Trotskyist parties in their suppression of dissent and critical opinion." (215). in voicing



their disdain for Western countries, al-Qaida carries out actions that are in no way reflective of Islam. There is no al-Qaeda behavior that takes the example of Imam Shamil's struggle. Malak also emphasized that in her dialogue, "Al-Qaeda was a modern phenomenon, with no patience for Shamil's traditional spirituality and utter contempt for the choices he made at the end of his career" (212). The beautiful and meaningful essence of Jihad is tampered with by suicide bombings, killing civilians, and destroying state facilities. In an interview with *The Arab Weekly*, Aboulela, the author of this novel, also states, "I was interested in him fighting Jihad from a Sufi aspect. This kind of Jihad is different from what we see practiced by ISIS and AL-Qaeda. Imam Shamil was eventually exiled in Moscow. He didn't fight until death. He accepted peace, and he accepted he lost the war." (El-Zobaidi) By comparing the two 'Jihad' carried out by Imam Shamil and al-Qaeda, you will see a very contrasting difference between them.

However, Oz, who initially had thoughts leading to radicalism, showed his disapproval of Malak and Natasha's opinion which emphasized that the door to Jihad with weapons was closed. Natasha shared the statement, "The mufti of Bosnia said that Muslims shouldn't use the word 'jihad' and Christians shouldn't use the word 'crusade'" (18). According to the scriptures, she wanted to emphasize that any resistance that uses religion as a shield cannot always be associated with religious activities. Malak and Oz support this opinion hears it makes sense, "Well, I shall use it" (18). Oz's acceptance was not entirely carried out because his curiosity about the 'Jihad' carried out by al-Qaeda overcame him until he downloaded banned files related to the organization.

Nevertheless, the experience of Oz being arrested by the police was a turning point for both his understanding of Jihad and his psychological state, "this changes Oz's life radically and affects him psychologically" (Alsawy). After his release, he was traumatized, left college, and lost faith in the British government. Then, he changed his e-mail username, which was initially Sword of Shamil, to Osama Raja. The change shows that what happened to him made him no longer want to be associated with matters relating to weapons and Jihad at the same time, Oz began to reflect on what he had done had crossed the line, "I started to think of myself as a student, not a criminal." (280). The events that happened to Oz seemed to remind him that al-Qaeda is a threatening organization. The British government closely monitors anything related to the organization. His understanding of Jihad, which he initially believed to be Muslim resistance with weapons, became loosely covered by trauma, what he felt.

In this sense, the meaning of Jihad, which is attempted to be redefined in this novel, is indeed Jihad proposed by scholars and follows Islamic teachings. Through characters living in the post-9/11 era trying to fight stereotypes formed from remnants of the chaos created by al-Qaeda. Malak believes that Jihad is an internal and spiritual struggle. We as a people must make religion and faith our place to find inner peace. Moreover, through research written by Natasha, Jihad is resistance against enemies of Islam. They are trying to destroy Islam, such as the Jihad carried out by Imam Shamil in the 19th century. Malak and Natasha's efforts to redefine the meaning of Jihad have slowly changed Oz's view, which

initially had pride in Jihad carried out with weapons. Through these two characters, Jihad in contemporary narratives reopens the true meaning of Jihad.

## CONCLUSION

The 9/11 and 7/7 bombing tragedies are related to the purification of religion, the textual meaning of scriptures, and hatred of things outside of religion. In Edward Said's Orientalism, Islam and Muslims are often associated with violence, terrorism, and extremism. The notion of Jihad after 9/11 and 7/7 also became an activity known as a holy war and promoted suicide bombings. However, this research finds that this novel uses the character Oz to show the radical thinking who thinks that Jihad is carried out with weapons. That perspective finally led to Oz being detained by the police for downloading illegal files related to al-Qaeda.

The outside stereotypes raise the characters' urgency to straighten the true meaning of Jihad in Islamic teachings. Malak and Natasha help try to straighten Oz's perspective on Jihad. Malak defines Jihad as an internal and spiritual struggle where Jihad must be interpreted by starting from oneself. Natasha also interprets Jihad as resistance by looking at the Jihad carried out by Imam Shamil, a Muslim leader from Chechnya. The Jihad carried out by Imam Shamil was solely to protect the territory that Russia and Islamic traditions were trying to seize. The Jihad that Malak and Natasha seek to redefine is very different from the Jihad carried out by al-Qaeda, which promotes suicide bombings and other acts of terrorism. After what Oz has been through traumatizing him and slowly loosening the understanding of Jihad with the weapon he originally believed. When Oz was arrested on charges of involvement in terrorism it was not a mistake, rather the enthusiasm of his youth was misplaced.

Even though future research aims to analyze the perception of jihad and terrorism in the United States, the United Kingdom and other Western countries, correcting negative views on Islam, Muslims and jihad is still very important. Future research may explore the novel *The Kindness of Enemies* more deeply through different lenses, methods, and approaches in order to find more diverse results and understandings. It is also useful to deepen the knowledge about the challenges of Muslim life in Europe and the United States as a study of prejudice against Muslims.

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