

REPRESENTATION OF JIHAD IN *RENDITION* (2007)

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Gaining the Bachelor

Degree in English Literature



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Final Project Statement

I certify that this research is originally my own work. As the sole writer of this graduating paper, I am responsible for the content of this research. Other researchers opinions or findings included in this research are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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MOTTO :

You Only Live Once, Love yourself, Love myself, Peace!



DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper to:

My beloved parents

My sister, My brother and My sister in-law

My lecturers

My lovely friends

English Literature Department

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REPRESENTATION OF JIHAD IN *RENDITION* (2007)

Thalytha Aqila Kharisma Nadia Hassany

ABSTRACT

This research aims at reading the portrayal of jihad manifested in the character of Khalid in *Rendition* (2007). Jihad in Islam is more direct to do good deeds through wealth and soul not revenge. The contrasting meaning shows that Khalid's character becomes an image of jihad which reduces many values of jihad in Islam. The researcher uses a representation theory with constructionist approach from Stuart Hall to analyze the problems in this film and a qualitative method to analyze the data obtained from the film. The results of the analysis found representation of jihad. The film is the influence of 9/11 attacks which have a notion of terrorism acts and radical Islam carried out by fundamentalist Islamic groups who brought jihad as their ideology in their life. There is misinterpretations of jihad in the Qur'an which is found in the application of language, meaning, and understanding thus giving the impact on American society who has a trauma with 9/11 attacks. They believe jihad is negative acts and dangerous acts for them.

Keywords: *Film, Terrorism, Jihad, Representation.*

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan kepada penggambaran jihad yang dinyatakan kepada karakter dari Khalid di *Rendition* (2007). Jihad dalam Islam lebih mengarahkan manusia untuk melakukan perbuatan baik melalui harta dan jiwa bukan dengan membalas dendam. Makna yang kontras itu menunjukkan bahwa karakter Khalid menggambarkan jihad sehingga mengurangi banyak nilai-nilai jihad dalam Islam. Peneliti menggunakan teori representasi dari Stuart Hall dengan menggunakan pendekatan kontruksi untuk menganalisis masalah dalam film ini. Peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis data yang terkandung dalam film. Setelah melakukan analisis, peneliti menemukan representasi jihad. Film ini adalah pengaruh dari tragedi 9/11 yang memiliki gagasan tindakan terorisme dan Islam radikal yang dilakukan oleh kelompok Islam fundamentalis. Kelompok tersebut membawa jihad sebagai ideologi dalam kehidupan mereka. Ada penafsiran yang salah tentang representasi jihad yang berbeda dengan konsep jihad dalam Al-Qur'an yang ditemukan dalam penerapan bahasa, makna, dan pemahaman sehingga menimbulkan dampak pada masyarakat Amerika yang trauma dengan serangan 9/11 dan menganggap jihad merupakan sebuah tindakan negatif dan berbahaya untuk mereka.

Kata kunci: *Film, Terorisme, Jihad, Representasi.*

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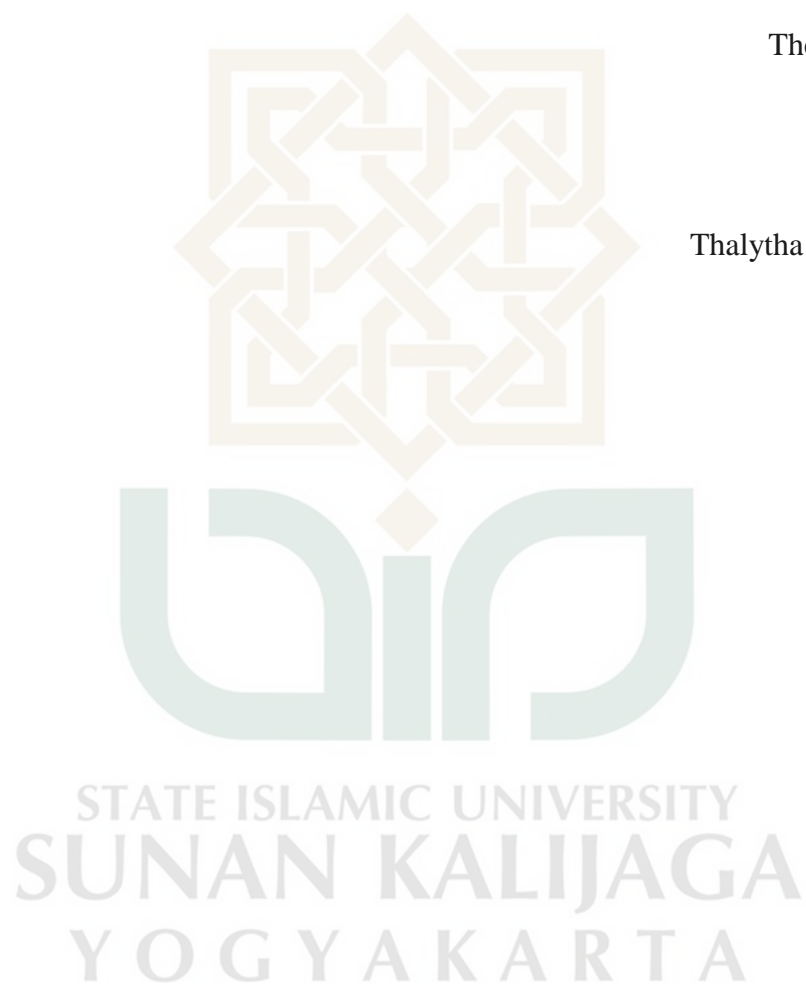


TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER	i
A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT	ii
NOTA DINAS	iii
APPROVAL.....	iv
MOTTO	v
DEDICATION	vi
ABSTRACT.....	ix
ABSTRAK	x
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	xi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of Study	1
1.2 Research Question.....	4
1.3 Objectives of Study	4
1.4 Significance of Study	4
1.5 Literature Review	4
1.6 Theoretical Approach.....	6
1.6.1 Representation Theory	6
1.6.2 Film Theory.....	10
1.7 Methods of Reseach	11
1.7.1 Type of Research.....	11
1.7.2 Data Sources.....	12
1.7.3 Data Collection Technique.....	12

1.7.4	Data Analysis Technique	12
1.8	Paper Organization.....	13
2	CHAPTER II: INTRINSIC ELEMENTS	14
2.1	Theme.....	14
2.2	Summary of Plot	14
2.3	Plot	19
2.4	Setting	22
2.4.1	Setting of Place	22
2.4.2	Setting of Time.....	26
2.4.3	Setting of Social Condition	27
2.5	Character and Characterization	29
2.5.1	Round Characters	29
2.5.1.1	Khalid El-Emin	29
2.5.2	Flat Characters	31
2.5.2.1	Anwar El-Ibrahimi	31
2.5.2.2	Corrine Whitman	32
2.5.2.3	Abasi Fawal	32
2.5.2.4	Alan Smith.....	33
2.5.2.5	Fatima Fawal.....	34
3	CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS.....	36
3.1	The Concept of Jihad	36
3.2	Representation of Jihad	40
3.2.1	Act of Terrorism.....	41

3.2.1.1 Hatred.....	45
3.2.1.2 Bombing.....	47
3.2.2 Radical Islam.....	51
3.2.2.1 Suicide as Sacrifice.....	57
3.3 The Impact of Jihad on Humanity.....	60
3.3.1 Aware to Muslim.....	61
3.3.2 Islamophobia	67
3.4 Misinterpretation of Jihad	72
3.4.1 Jihad verse in Qur'an.....	72
3.4.2 Suicide law	74
4 CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION.....	77
4.1 Conclusion	77
4.2 Suggestion.....	78
REFERENCES.....	79

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LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1. Cape Town, South Africa	22
Fig. 2. Chicago, United States.....	23
Fig. 3. North Africa.....	24
Fig. 4. Washington D.C	25
Fig. 5. North Africa society.....	27
Fig. 6. Khalid El-Emin.....	30
Fig. 7. Khalid's characterization	30
Fig. 8. Abasi Fawal	33
Fig. 9. Fatima Fawal	35
Fig. 10. Sign of WTC.....	42
Fig. 11. Dixon	45
Fig. 12. Hand Grenade	50
Fig. 13. Terrorist image.....	52
Fig. 14. Victims.....	55
Fig. 15. Anwar	56
Fig. 16. Khalid	57

Fig. 17. Doctrine	58
Fig. 18. Suicide	59
Fig. 19. Secret Office	63
Fig. 20. American Domination.....	63
Fig. 21. Discrimination	66
Fig. 22. North Africa as Civilians	70
Fig. 23. March Preparation.....	71

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Literature is a work from a writer's imagination based on the experiences and feelings that match with the circumstances to make a work. Olaofe Isaac Ade and Oyeniyi Okunoye in *An Introduction to Literature and Literary Criticism* conclude that literature is an imagination which expresses thoughts and feelings based on life experiences using effective and captivating words that also promotes recreation and revelation of hidden facts (2008:3). However, literature is permanent expression in words (written or oral) arranged specifically in a certain form and produced by thoughts, feelings, ideas or other special aspects of human experience.

Different from the argument above, Adi said in *Fiksi Populer* that many of authors describe that literature is 'imaginative' writing which imagination refers to fiction (Adi, 2011:15). Literature can also be non-fiction work in an argument with some non-fictional work which is entering category of 'literature' (Adi, 2011:15). Despite a number of definitions of literature, it can be concluded that literature is related to the human condition either fiction or non-fiction. The interesting part of literary works is literary works exist to entertain readers or audiences. They can make any representations of the meanings of the literary works. They are allowed to interpret the literary works they read or watch from any perspectives.

Film is one of the most popular literary works produced from human imagination and a large number of films have been produced to entertain people. The story of a film is created in such a way to attract the interest of the audience. Film is adapted with the audience's expectation that many stories in the film cannot be experienced in the real life, but most films adapt issues in the society. According to Adi, many people watch films to escape from their daily lives to entertain themselves, especially in this 21st century (2011:69). Although films are for public entertainment, films contain messages that the producers want to deliver to the audience.

Films can impact the audience from the message contained in the story. According to Andrew, audiences will instinctively shape the film to representation of something familiar to them no matter what appears on the screen of film that is called realist (1984: 47). Even though each person has his/her own representation through the film, there is an impact to the audience about his/her opinion on the film from the visual, the act and the dialogue, either the film is accepted or just merely a fiction.

Films are available in a wide range of genres; one of them is thriller. One of the thriller films is *Rendition*. *Rendition* is an American abduction thriller film released in 2007 directed by Gavin Hood. He is an actor and a director. He begins his career as an actor. His first role is in *In Desert and Widerness* (2001) film in South Africa. Many of his film productions use Africa as the setting and story background and one of that is *Rendition* film.

The reason of choosing this object is because the film tells an interesting story about jihad. Based on the story, the act of terrorism is derived by the Muslim act. The film shows that Islam is seen as a forceful religion. The film shows that Jihad is a holy war.

For the example, jihad is shown as revenge. It is an act by one of the characters in one of the film scenes named Khalid who wants to kill Fatima's father, Abasi Fawal. Abasi has killed Khalid brother. Khalid and his brother are Muslims and they join an Islam community. In their community, there is a master speech talking about jihad understanding in the verse of Qur'an in surah An-nisa: 75.

" وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ....."

(النساء:75)

"Why did you not fight for the cause of God? And for the oppressed. The men, the women and the children? [00:38:46--> 00:38:50]

Based on the speech above, the researcher interests in analysing about why this film interprets the verse of holy Qur'an known as jihad. Islam has a different concept of jihad from the film. Jihad, in Islamic perspective has the strong basis, the Qur'an and Hadith. According to Arake, jihad in the Qur'an did not do as force action neither war nor terrorism. One of the verses of the Qur'an says *"And those who believe and emigrate and jihad in the way of Allah, and those who give a place of residence and give help (to the Muhajirin people), they are the ones who truly believe. They get mercy and noble sustenance (Qs. Al-Anfal: 74)"* (2012: 191). Based on the verse, the concept of jihad is to put more emphasis on

good deeds through wealth and soul. Thus, there is a contrary meaning between the concept of jihad in *Rendition* film and in Islam. This film shows that jihad portrays through Khalid's behavior. He becomes a Jihadist figure which reduces many values of jihad. This prompts the researcher to analyze *Rendition* film.

1.1. Research Question

Based on the background of the study, a research question has formulated: How is the portrayal of jihad as seen through Khalid in *Rendition* (2007)?

1.2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to discuss the representation of jihad in *Rendition*.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This research signifies to understand how Hollywood film represents jihad in its reductive way. This research proves that reduction causes a negative stereotype of jihad.

1.4. Literature Review

The writer found some researches that are related with the object *Rendition*. The researches are:

The first is a thesis written in 2013 by Jay William Reid from Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in the University of Adelaide entitled “Discourse of Film Terrorism: Hollywood representation of Arab terrorism and counter-terrorism, 1991-2011”. This thesis observed the representation of Arab terrorism and counter-terrorist from the Hollywood perspective in 1991-2011. The

researcher used Orientalist theory by Edward Said to examine how the discourse of Arab terrorism is created through the interplay between media text and how this problem represents in the real world event. The researcher uses Hollywood action film released between 1991-2001 and 2001-2012 as the object because the researcher interests in analyzing the representation of Arab terrorism pre-9/11 and post-9/11 tragedy, and one of the films to research is *Rendition* film. The researcher has figured out that the representation of Arab terrorists shift comical pre-9/11 to serious post-9/11, with a framing personified Islam as the root cause motivation of terrorist attacks. Representations of female Arab terrorist only appear post-9/11, where their Arab upbringing and their femininity merge Arab to establish them as a double treat to Western society. Lastly, the figure of the Arab counter-terrorist is portrayed consistently pre- and post-9/11 and maintains strong Orientalist influences as creating internal conflict.

The second is a journal written by Noura Alalawi in 2015 entitled “How Does Hollywood Movie Portray Muslims and Arab After 9/11? Content Analysis of *The Kingdom* and *Rendition* Movies”. The researcher has observed the Hollywood movies, such as *The Kingdom* and *Rendition* Movies. The researcher focus on how the Hollywood films have depicted the Muslim community and how Arabs has depicted in the Western media in general and in Hollywood movies, especially how these portrayals and stereotypes have changed after 9/11 attacks. The researcher also wants to involve the analysis of both movies to find out how Hollywood portrays Arabs and Muslims after 9/11. To find the answer to the research question, literary review employs where the author looked into numerous

article and studies that aims at explaining the situation on how Hollywood films is depicted the Muslims community after September 11th attack. The researcher realized that most of the movies' scenes with regard to the language they used, the places where the scenes of both movies took place and other minor details such as how the directors narrated and articulated the different events and scenes with different Islamic symbols.

However, the two researchers mentioned above does not have the same issue that wants to be discussed by the current research in spite of analysing the same object. Moreover, the current research focuses on the representation of jihad in *Rendition* film. Thus, the current research has not been discussed before.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

The researcher uses two theories to analyse the paper, namely representation theory and film theory. Both of the theories are to explain the problem based on the research question.

1.6.1 Representation Theory

The researcher uses the representation theory by Stuart Hall for data analysis. In his book, *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practice*, representation theory is concerned about the process the members of culture go through when they produce and exchange meaning using language (Hall, 1997: 15). In other words, representation is about the relationship between language and culture; both of them can be used to produce and exchange the meaning.

Representation is the production of meaning through language. as what is stated by *Oxford English Dictionary*, representation has two meanings:

1.1 To represent something is to describe or to depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or portrayal or imagination: to place a likeness of it before us in our mind or in the senses.

1.2 To represent also means to symbolize, stand for, to be a specimen of, or to substitute for.

The definitions above suggest that representation is related with the meaning in our mind and the symbol of something. Both of them are related from the word ‘*represent*’ to get the meaning. However, meaning comes if the language and representation are produced by the meaning through language.

To recognize the meaning through language, it must have the concept and language to know the meaning that refers to either the ‘real’ world of object, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events. People can communicate if they have the same concept and language. People can communicate because they broadly share the same conceptual maps and thus make sense of or intepret the world in roughly similar ways. That is indeed the reason why people need to have the same culture to communicate because people need to build up a shared culture of meanings and thus construct a social world (Hall, 1997: 18). However, concept and language are a system of representation to know the meaning but the culture is also an important thing

factor for the communication. This is because culture is sometimes defined as ‘shared meaning or shared conceptual maps’ (Hall, 1997: 18).

According to Hall, shared conceptual map is not enough. People are able to represent or exchange meanings and concepts, and they can only do that when they have access to the shared language (1997: 18). Language is the second system of representation to the process of constructing meaning. Sharing the conceptual meaning is needed to translate into a common language, so the concepts and ideas can be correlated with certain words, spoken sound or visual images. The general term used for words, sounds or images which carry meaning is called *signs* (Hall, 1997: 18). Sign is organized into language, and it is the existence of common languages which enable people to translate their thoughts (concept) into words, sounds or images, and then use this process with language, to express meaning and communicate thought to other people (Hall, 1997: 18). However, sign is for representing the concept and the conceptual relations between them which people is carrying around in their heads and together they make up the meaning system of culture.

The meaning process in culture is two related systems of representation. First, it gives the meaning to the world by constructing as set correspondences or a chain of equivalences between things, people, objects, events, abstracts, ideas, people’s system concept and conceptual maps. Second, it depends on constructing a set of correspondences between people’s conceptual map and set of signs, arranged or organized into various languages which stand for or represent those

concepts. The relation between things, concepts, and signs is called 'representation' (Hall, 1997:19).

According to Hall, representation theory has three approaches to explain the meaning through the language: reflective approach, intentional approach, and constructionist approach (1997: 24). First, in reflective approach, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world and it is sometimes called as 'mimetic' (Hall, 1997: 24). Second, the meaning of intentional approach is in the representation based on the speaker or the author who imposes their unique meaning on the world through language (Hall, 1997: 25). That approach is the representation argued of meaning and the opposite case. Third, in constructionist approach, the meaning that is constructed uses the representational systems-concept and signs. This approach is recognized by the public and social character of language because to construct the meaning of representation neither the individual use of language can fix the meaning.

Among the three approaches, constructionist approach uses to conduct data analysis because this approach is the most appropriate approach for the problem of the research. Besides, this approach has the most significant impact on cultural studies in recent years. Constructionists express the idea by saying that all signs are 'arbitrary'. 'Arbitrary' means that there is no natural relationship between the sign and its meaning or concept. Sign cannot fix meaning, but it depends on the relation between a sign and concept which is fixed by a code. Code can stabilize meaning within different languages and cultures (Hall, 1997:

27). However, according to what has been explained before, representation is about the production and the exchange of meaning, so using this approach can get a clear understanding as to the meaning of jihad represented in *Rendition* film.

1.6.2 Film Theory

The current research also employed film theory as supporting theory to analyse the scenes in the film. To collect the data, the researcher needed to look on the picture on the film. There are two methods used to analyze a scene, *mise-en-scene* and cinematography. First, *mise-en-scene* is the world of film because it is supposed to make films like a real world. At the same time as a film portrays, the experience of living in the real world is by how the way people react and response. *Mise-en scene* establishes a film's world through its visual style, it helps to divide its categories (Villarejo, 2007: 29). According to Villarejo, there are six components of *mise-en-scene* to wit: setting (set and props), lighting, costume, hair, make-up, and figure behavior (2007: 29). Second, cinematography is the framing technique to notice what elements are included or excluded in the camera. Besides the elements of *mise-en-scene*, the elements of cinematography should be noticed too, since everything "put in" to a given shot is recorded by a camera (Vallirejo, 2007: 36).

According to Heiderich, cinematography is the art of visual storytelling and can control what the viewers see (or do not see) and how the image is presented. Because audience watch a film through the shot of camera, they can interpret the film by looking at the cinematography. The camera, in turn, is placed

to include some elements and to exclude others (to leave an offscreen space or implied space). Filming by camera is for framing the profilmic event, giving camera distance, changing camera angle to make some setting, action, and event (Villarejo, 2007: 36).

There are seven cinematography aspects that are used in framing picture to film analysis. The first is the extreme long shot, which can barely distinguish the human figure. The second is the long shot, in which humans are distinguishable but remain dwarfed by the background. The third is medium long shot, or plain American, in which the human is framed from knees up. The fourth is the medium shot which moves slightly to frame the human from the chest up. The fifth is the medium close-up which is slightly closer and sees the human from the waist up. The sixth is the close-up which isolates a portion of human (the face, most prominently). The last is the extreme close-up which sees a mere portion of the face such as an eye, the lips (Vallirejo, 2007:36).

1.7 Research Methods

1.7.1 Type of research

The research used a qualitative method. Qualitative method is characterised by its aims, which relate to understand some aspects of social life, and by its method which (in general) generates words, rather than number, as data for analysis (Patton and Cochran, 2007: 2). This analysis does not use statistic data, but a descriptive method is used for analysis. The analysis of the current research discusses the problems from the command data and the issues which appear in the film.

1.7.2 Data Sources

The researcher used primary data and secondary data. The primary data are data that are obtained by the researchers directly. Meanwhile, secondary data are obtained by the researchers from existing sources. *Rendition* film and the script of *Rendition* film serves as the primary data. The secondary data, however, are the supporting sources that relates to the issue of the research, such as information on the Internet, journal articles, and books.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

To collect the data needs several steps. First, the researcher watches *Rendition* film to understand more deeply about the storyline of the film. Second, the researcher searches about jihad depicted in the film which sees from the scenes, actions, dialogues, and camera angle. Finally, the researcher makes some variables to classify the data based on representation theory. The variable is a sign, dialog, and action for the portrayal of jihad in the film. For the supporting data, the researcher reads from book, journal, and internet to help getting the meaning of the variable.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

The researcher takes several steps to analyse the data. First, the researcher classifies the data based on the *mise-en-scene* and cinematography of the film. Second, the researcher classifies the portrayal of jihad in the film by representation theory through the sign, action and dialogue. The researcher classifies the representation of jihad in the film with jihad in Islam law for getting the contrast meaning.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research paper consists of four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of the research. It consists of background of the study, problem statement, and objectives of the study, significance of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, research methods, and paper organization. The first chapter gives general information about the research. The second chapter consists of the intrinsic elements of *Rendition* film. The third chapter discusses the analysis of the data. The fourth chapter consists of the conclusion of the research. This chapter shows the results of the analysis that give answer to the problem statement.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

After the analysis of the film by employing representative theory, the researcher concludes that *Rendition* film portrays jihad as an act of rebellion, violence in religious purpose. The film represents jihad as the act of rebellion toward America with sacrificing their life in the name of God such as the act of terrorism by hatred and bombing. This film views jihad from the influencing of 9/11. It makes an impact of toward American society life viewing Muslim and Islam religion. This film represents jihad as same as radical Islam act by fundamentalist Islam group because the film compares the suicide bombing done by Khalid is same as the 9/11 attacks done by Islamic group, Al-Qaeda. Both of the tragedies target Muslim as the crime of the attacks by doing a jihad act. Jihad represents same as the act of terrorism because both of them do violence, sacredness, bombing and radical action.

Rendition shows how American more awareness toward Muslim immigrant in America. They discriminate Muslim in the previous place because of their negative stereotype about Muslim. This film shows almost all of American having the same stereotype toward Muslim and Islam. They consider that most of Muslims apply jihad in their life because they hate American who have different believe and social culture and want to destroy Islam countries.

There are misconceptions about Islam in the film that rise negative stereotypes about Islam. Jihad in Islam opposes acts of terrorism which are to attack people who do not have fairly feeling happy just to achieve one goal. According to Shaykh Yusuf Abdallah al-Qardhawi, he says that Islam is a religion that visits, occupies human beings in high places, and considers attacks on innocent people as a big mistake. Even at the time of war, Islamic forces suppose to kill opponents of the forces that attacked them (as cited Permata, 2006: 231). Therefore, Islam is sacred which cannot be made an excuse to do a necessity in order to carry out the commands of Allah SWT. Religionists agree to use religion by sneaking because Islam represents a religion that is peace-loving and jihad is a higher worship to achieve a good goal for a Muslim.

4.2 Suggestion

The issue of jihad is still interesting to be discussed in this world. A lot of people put forward their opinions about jihad and come out of the true meaning of jihad. *Rendition* is one of the many literary works that discuss the same issue. The current researcher who used representation theory to analyze the film hopes other researchers discuss the issue of jihad to use other theories, such as postcolonial theory, orientalism theory, deconstruction of theory and others to get a broader and more specific view of jihad.

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