

## Lords of Terrorism in the Contemporary Novel

Mohammed Ahmed Abu Adel

Faculty of Law || Alyamama University || Riyadh || KSA

**Abstract:** This paper explores the psychological secrets of the terrorist character in the novel "Confessions of a Terrorist", which rebels against the stereotypical view which is unable to grasp and control the phenomenon of terrorism to eliminate it, or at least reduce its dangers. This novel has a unique view of the character of the terrorist which is showed through a new and different perspective. The novelist tries to expose the failure of traditional strategies that are ineffective in stopping the growth and spread of terrorism. The language of excessive violence in dealing with terrorists, its use under pretext of getting rid of the opponents and the lack of sincere intention are counterproductive, usually forgetting the language of dialogue as a means to finding a common ground to find a solution. This novel differs from the books and novels published in non-Arabic languages because it adopts a neutral and non-politicized view. Western societies need to know the reality of terrorism revealed by the novel. The reason is that these societies are prejudiced by the western media films and what they hear and watch on TV. Therefore, this paper is keen to truly examine the ideological content that the novel poses for this kind of terrorism.

- The paper is divided into three main axes: 1. Arab Terrorist from a westerner standpoint. 2. Western terrorism from the standpoint of an Arab Terrorist. 3. Culture of dialogue and tolerance.

**Keywords:** politics, Intellectual security, counter-terrorism, Peace study, Literary Criticism.

## أرباب الإرهاب في الرواية المعاصرة

محمد أحمد أبو عدل

كلية القانون || جامعة اليمامة || الرياض || المملكة العربية السعودية

الملخص: يسر هذا البحث العوالم النفسية لشخصية الإرهابي في رواية "اعترافات إرهابي"، هذه الشخصية التي تتمرد على النظرة النمطية غير القادرة على استيعاب ظاهرة الإرهاب والسيطرة عليها وصولاً إلى القضاء عليها، أو على الأقل الحد من مخاطرها. ما يميز هذه الرواية أنها تعرض شخصية الإرهابي من منظور جديد ومختلف. كما يحاول الروائي أن يفضح فشل الاستراتيجيات التقليدية غير الفعالة في وقف نمو الإرهاب وانتشاره. وتؤكد الرواية أن لغة العنف المفرط في التعامل مع الإرهابيين، واستخدامه أحياناً تحت ذريعة التخلص من الخصوم وعدم وجود نية صادقة، كل ما سبق يؤدي إلى نتائج عكسية في رحلة القضاء على الإرهاب، فضلاً عن تجاهل لغة الحوار بوصفها وسيلة ناجعة لإيجاد أرضية مشتركة والتوصل إلى حلول. تختلف هذه الرواية عن الكتب والروايات المنشورة بلغات غير عربية؛ لأنها تبني وجهة نظر محايدة وغير مسبقة. تحتاج المجتمعات الغربية إلى معرفة حقيقة الإرهاب التي كشفت عنها الرواية، بعيداً عن أفلام الإعلام الغربي وما تسمعه وتشاهده على شاشة التلفزيون؛ لذلك، يحرص هذا البحث على فحص المحتوى الأيديولوجي الذي تطرحه الرواية لهذا النوع من الإرهاب.

- الورقة مقسمة إلى ثلاثة محاور رئيسية: 1. (إرهابي عربي) من وجهة نظر غربية. 2. الإرهاب الغربي من وجهة نظر (إرهابي عربي). 3. ثقافة الحوار والتسامح.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سياسة، دراسات السلام، الأمن الفكري، النقد الروائي، مكافحة الإرهاب.

## Introduction

The novel is the voice of the oppressed and the history of the forgotten people. Unlike the traditional documentation that exalts the victor only. The novel, as an unknown soldier, works in secret and seeks to document the history indirectly.

In its pages the truth dwells, and the novelist (Richard Jackson)<sup>(1)\*</sup>, free of the restrictions the academic books have, expresses his thoughts; because he has a high human sense that elevates him from materialism, shortcomings, and preconceived ideas. Further, he explores the facts that are absent or ignored without bias or prejudice.

This novel created its narrative form that differs from that of this literary genre, and suits the nature of the topic it addresses, the writer is keen to make the reader believe that what he is reading is a fourth draft of a dangerous secret dialogue between a British security officer and an Arab terrorist, this idea is reinforced by this phrase "SANITISED COPY" at the bottom of each page, and a third voice in the form of handwritten comments.

The dialogue between them is an audio recording transcribed by the MI6, with the deletion of what they see as inappropriate for the public on the pretext of the existence of technical problems led to the interruption of sound, and they were worried that the original recording might go viral. The novelist opens his work with an aesthetic technique by which he lists some information such as:

The file number, type, source, date, location, characters, and finally the typist and translator, whose names are hidden in black to impress the reader with the secrecy of the document he is about to read<sup>(2)</sup>.

In addition, contrary to the reader's expectations, he resorts to use irony in naming this novel "Confessions of a Terrorist" in order to stir his curiosity to discover the mysterious traits of the terrorist character which he thinks are as horrific as the stereotypical image he watches in movies. These Confessions reveal serious, shocking, and profound secrets of the human psyche. This title is successful in attracting the readers' attention to the duality of "confessions, terrorist", as the two sides urge each reader to read the novel. This is reminiscent of the novel "Jean-Jacques Rousseau Confessions"; it is human nature to love voyeurism to the secrets and mysteries of the others.

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(1)\* A New Zealand professor specialized for more than ten years in peace studies, founder and editor-in-chief of the Journal of Critical Studies in Terrorism, follows the phenomenon of terrorism, which has become a threat to global peace, so he wrote his novel "Confessions of Terrorist" based on a rich experience in which he depended on many of his interviews with persons involved in terrorist cases, and intelligence officers.

See: Jackson, R (2015): "Confessions of a Terrorist" (2nd. Ed), London, Zed Books Ltd.

See also: Jackson, R (2015): "Terrorist Confessions.". translator: Mansour Al-Omari, (1st.ed). Italy, Mediterranean Publications, Milan. In word of publisher which is located on back cover of the novel.

(2) See Jackson, R (2015): "Confessions of a Terrorist". 4-5.

The deliberate selection for a well-educated character is for many reasons, the most important of which is its eloquence which reflects its education and culture; such role requires discussing unique and profound notions. So, he chose Yusuf's Character as a non-ordinary convincing one to justify the sophistication of this role.

## Preface

Approaching terrorism from a contemporary novelistic perspective, especially in the Arab world, is uncommon; instead it continues to be approached theoretically in many contexts including the legal and political ones.

The outset of the third millennium has witnessed important initiatives, foremost of which was the conference held by the University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud in Riyadh titled: 'Literature in combating terrorism' (2012), as well as a book previously released by the critic Jaber Asfour titled: "Countering Terrorism: Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature.(2003) "

Unfortunately, the academic studies of terrorism still lack an objective portrayal of the terrorist mentality, and there may be (rethink use of word) a wide range of impressionistic diagnoses that are misleading in pursuit of remedy and solution.

Jackson here explores the terrorist's mentality and his psychological realms, more than his aggression and violations. For understanding the sentimental and intellectual components of the terrorist as well as his true motives, in order to control his subsequent behavior, and redirect it again.

The novelists are experts as well as being Creators, they are thinkers preoccupied with reflecting on current affairs, thus they design contents that focus on stylistic devices as much as content quality.

This paper uses critical, analytical, and descriptive approach which studies the epistemic and knowledge content of this novel, responding to the affirmative question of which the critic Al-Ghathami began his book cultural criticism by saying: "Is there anything else in literature other than its poetics?"<sup>(3)</sup>

Yes, this other thing is what this paper is about in the first place, and thus it seeks to turning the tide: Instead of concentrating on the "poetics", especially aesthetic effect and stylistic devices, it considers the knowledge content, but this does not mean denying the role of the art form in presenting the content in a unique and innovative and aesthetic style.

It is noteworthy that the paper manipulated the plot of the novel, rebelled against the sequence of the events, and changed them without exposing them early, so that it astonishes the reader the same way the novel does with its readers.

The novel presented the two voices simultaneously, and in an overlapping way, although the accused's voice (Yusuf's) was more present, but the paper intended postponing it, and devised its own

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(3) Al-Ghazzami, A (2005): "Cultural Criticism: A Reading in Arab Cultural Patterns". (3rd. Ed), Beirut, The Arab Cultural Center, p14.

plot, which was unusual in critical studies. Furthermore, what prevents us to enjoy reading critical studies exactly like our enjoyment in reading a novel! In order to avoid the direct and boring nature that most of the academic studies generally have.

I was as cautious as the novelist in reviewing the characters, in order not to personally influence any of them. This did not mean that I was totally convinced, but this was for the necessities of academic objectivity and plot. Thus, the reader, after examining the two voices according to the characters' perspective, will decide "who is the real terrorist".

### 1- (An Arab terrorist) in the Western perspective!

The paper presents the voice of the investigator (Michael) in this section, and it presumably represents half the truth; while he deliberately delays the voice of the terrorist suspect to the second section of this research in order to measure the change in the reader's perspective when viewing each voice separately! However, the study does not support any of the views displayed, but is intentional on being neutral.

The reader will agree that the terrorist is guilty to the core, or at least he automatically aligns himself to the first voice at the expense of the second one, especially when the accusations of the first voice stand uncontested.

The study initially seeks to examine the stereotypical manifestations of the terrorist's image in the western's mentality, as exemplified by the British investigator (Michael) who interviews the terrorist (Yusuf), who is an Iraqi professor of Egyptian origin.

(Michael) opens the interrogation with the question:

"What was it, would you say, that turned you into someone willing to murder other human beings for an ideology...for a belief system? Why would someone like you do this, because frankly, from your background, as you say, you just don't seem the type? What do you think made you into a terrorist?"<sup>(4)</sup>.

This question is not only a personal question, but also a preoccupation of the mindset of Western society, which wants to know the real motives that make a well-educated person kill innocent people,

Here, Michael uses intimate, non-aggressive and unfamiliar language in this kind of interrogation with highly dangerous individuals.

The purpose is to get the suspect to confess; to make him feel secure when he is interrogated, that he is not really a terrorist, just an alleged one.

Adding, "You just don't seem the type?" The reason for using such an admonishing and compassionate tone may be the officer's sympathy with the terrorist, without justifying his acts.

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(4) Ibid, p. 27.

But the investigator does not find Yusuf's words convincing, he begins to interrogate him by recounting the motives that he knows make others commit these extremist acts of subversion, he says:

"professor, we know what radicalization is. I can give you chapter and verse. It is when individuals advocate the use of extreme violence to realise a political goal or to enforce an extremist ideology. It is when a young lad from Shepherd's Bush or Bradford goes from wanting to play football in the park with his friends to wanting to kill as many innocent civilians as he can on a commuter train... and blow himself up in the process all because he wants to turn Britain into an Islamic state, or bring about some medieval version Caliphate in Europe"<sup>(5)</sup>.

This is what the civilized world does not see as an acceptable logical behavior that a human may willingly carry out a suicidal attack, causing many innocent casualties; In order to achieve elusive political goals, such as gaining leverage and power, or to impose religious beliefs on their civilized societies, through following bloody strategies,

Furthermore, there is no culture in the whole world that accepts submission, obedience, and acquiescence to a deviant doctrine, no matter what human and material losses are incurred. Does this not urge such extremists to reconsider their reckless policy of inflicting as much harm as possible on other communities? For the purpose of imposing ideologies that they see as ideal, and that those societies desperately need it!

For instance, whatever the need and desire of these societies is to eat honey, they will not accept it nor relish it if it is blended with blood, and furthermore such a policy will only increase the aversion and reluctance of these societies to eat honey, not to accept it and be satisfied with it.

The investigator then moves towards a review of other personal reasons that have made Yusuf resort to terrorism and extremism. What comes to his mind is that the distant past, and life conditions have affected his personality, and made him perpetrate such atrocities in his life later. Decent education and broad knowledge of psychology are precisely among the most important requirements of any investigator in order to be proficient in his work; to understand the suspect, and to identify the motives of criminality, whether psychological or otherwise; so he asks:

"...can you honestly say that you had a normal childhood? That you never had any bad experiences growing up which might have influenced who you are today...experiences which might have affected you negatively? Egypt's not exactly Sweden or Switzerland. I can't imagine that you didn't see some terrible things during your childhood... experienced some injustices...tragedies. Egypt is not kindest, most fair-minded society, I imagine... and anyone who experienced that would be affected by it... damaged, even... traumatised at the very least."<sup>(6)</sup>.

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(5) Ibid, p. 37-38.

(6) Ibid, p.p 74-75.

A type of solicitation followed by the investigator, so that the suspect is induced to reveal the psychological causes of violence and extremism, like the environment in which he lived, and to pretend that he is not blaming him, and he attributes it to external causes he has experienced.

The investigator acts according to a plan to convince the suspect to confess. After listing the direct and indirect causes of terrorism, he moves on to the next stage of persuading the suspect of the absurdity of his own extremist strategies, not to change his mind in order to become moderate and return to his normal life; - he is not in a rehabilitation session - but to confess the schemes and the names of the other members of the group; Michael says:

“The point I am making is simply... if you keep persisting with a strategy that doesn't really work, which has such a poor record and, clearly, a very low probability of success... is that really rational? ... The simple fact of the matter is, terrorism doesn't work. The State... the society you're fighting... it's just too strong... And randomly murdering people like that just makes everyone hate you.”<sup>(7)</sup>

The investigator indirectly calls for a change in the extremist strategy to a fair and ethical one; according to his point of view, this strategy has failed in various respects. First: it is immoral; it causes a large number of civilian deaths. Second, the small number of the extremists and their weak potential as measured by the potential of the state and society. Finally, it spreads hatred and aversion against them. In this way, the investigator tries to prove the absurdity of the brutal strategy used by the Arab terrorist and his group, using the questions that “Questions are among the most potent communication tools persuaders can use. All persuaders must know how and when to ask questions and be able to use them to control the direction and pace of a meeting, negotiation”<sup>(8)</sup>.

This kind of question also expresses respect for the other by engaging him and taking his opinion of the information, not dictating or imposing it; this makes him more inclined and able to be convinced of it.

After that, the investigator goes on to talk about the damage inflicted on the terrorists themselves by pursuing the policy of violence and extremism in achieving their objectives and demands, he says:

“You've lost your family, your home, community, seeing your daughter grow up... hearing your wife's voice, you live on the run... hiding... eating bad food... wearing bad clothes... always a few seconds away from death or capture... not knowing how to trust. You're hated and despised, vilified... instead of respected and valued. If you'd chosen a different path... if you'd pursued your struggle through building a political movement, winning international support... you could've been a respected man”<sup>(9)</sup>.

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(7) Ibid, p. 183.

(8) Mills, H. (2000) *Artful Persuasion: The New Psychology of Influence*. (1st.ed). New York, Library of Congress, p 189.

(9) Jackson, op. cit. p. 184.

The investigator tries to influence the personality of the terrorist emotionally by reminding him of his family, the suffering he has endured in his life away from them, and the distorted image that has been pictured in the minds of the people about him, He then suggests an alternative that would relieve him of his suffering and enable him to fulfill a claim--if right--in legitimate and humane ways.

In addition, he speaks about his experience with the cruelty of psychological torment he suffered after he accidentally killed a child in the Iraq War; owing to blurry vision, he thought that the boy, Samir, was the man who carried out the terrorist bombing which killed his comrades, while the boy was letting off fireworks, Michael thought they were explosives, so he quickly shot him dead.

He describes the extreme subsequent impact on psychological stability:

"Sometimes, I feel so depressed... That one tiny moment... a few seconds of your life in a faraway land... has spoiled my relationship with my children. I can hardly look at them... or talk to them... without seeing little Samir and feeling my guts tighten. It's pretty shit, I can tell you... I can't sleep either. I lie awake... sometimes for days at a time. And when I do sleep, it's broken... full of awful dreams. And don't say 'What about medication?' I've tried everything, believe me. Nothing works"<sup>(10)</sup>.

Perhaps this explains why a large number of American and British soldiers have committed suicide after returning from the war on Iraq, others are being subjected to psychological rehabilitation sessions in order to continue their normal lives, and forget the horrors of what they have committed, seen and suffered in that war.

After the impartial display of the first point of view, it seems that Michael's character in his voice appeared positive. He is the hero who fights terrorism inside and outside his country, away from his family, his wife and his children, and offers his life for peace to prevail over mankind and his country, and anxious for the lives of innocent people.

This is manifested in his remorse and sadness over the unintentional killing of the child, and he has suffered a psychological struggle, and thought of suicide to get rid of his psychological suffering, and he also appears in the image of a preacher and a guide by proposing alternatives to the terrorist so as to change his extremist path for peaceful ones.

Finally, character of the victim; the terrorist, in cold blood and without feeling the slightest remorse or clemency, kills him and his comrades at the end of the novel.

The reader is surprised when the novelist, with no warning or logical justification, alters roles, as the plot of the novel reveals that Officer Michael is, in fact, kidnapped and interrogated by Professor Yusuf, not the other way around.

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(10) Ibid, p.p 274-275.

This confounds the expectation of the reader, and brings about a quantum leap in events, it amazes the reader and unleashes his imagination for what might happen later in this radical coup in the major event.

Michael is bait that the CIA has easily provided to this terrorist gang, in order to discover their plans in his own country through recording and tracking devices that were hidden in his clothes<sup>(11)</sup>.

## 2- Western terrorism in (the Arab terrorist's perspective)

It is unfair that if two parties disagree, they refuse to listen to each other's arguments and proofs. This reminds us of the Arab proverb: "If a man has lost one of his eyes, then You should not accept his claim until you listen to his opponent, who may have lost both of his eyes," From this standpoint and in the interest of scientific objectivity, we are now reviewing the voice of the Arab terrorist which may satisfy our curiosity and unquenchable thirst for knowing the ulterior motives behind his transformation to terrorism. Furthermore, it may answer the serious questions posed by the interrogator, to know whether his words can reveal the elusive mystery about his true motives for committing his brutal crimes against innocent civilians. In fact, the suspect's initiation is shocking and unexpected because he is supposed to defend himself by recounting his arguments and proofs to acquit himself, but he does not care.

Believing that defending himself is recognition of his crimes, or knowing that the best offense is a good defense, he denies the allegations of the interrogator by attributing terrorism to some Western governments, he says:

"You know... some might even argue, given the fear your government rains down on millions innocent people in, in, in... Iraq, and, and... Afghanistan... Pakistan, Libya, Yemen, Somalia... and all those other countries where you drop five-hundred-pound laser- guided bombs or send guided missiles down the chimneys of people's houses like Christmas presents... where you, ah, shoot people from helicopters while they walk down the street... maybe I should call you the terrorist... someone like me ever will. [...] not to mention the fear that every young Muslim man, innocent or not, constantly has of being tortured in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo... or, or, or being picked up and beheaded by one of these death squads your people trained in Iraq... Who is the real terrorist here?"<sup>(12)</sup>.

He clears himself by heaping the charges against the west, as if to say "if you consider me a terrorist, for assaulting some innocent civilians in your countries, it is a fortiori that your government-- which claims humanity--is stigmatized by terrorism because it occupies fragile states in the Middle East, attacks their own safe people, threatens their security, and exercises the most heinous forms of murder and torture against them.

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(11) See Ibid, p 304.

(12) Ibid, p 8.



Before the terrorist reveals the secret of his deviation and extremism, he specifically accuses the Western governments and their leaders when he refers to the religious motive as a cause of the Iraq war; he says:

"-And what about your Tony Blair? Did you not call him a religious extremist? He blindly followed his, ah... faith... declared war in the name of it... destroyed hundreds of thousands of lives... devastated a whole region. For what? A complete mess! It achieved nothing, as all the experts predicted. Bush was the same... God spoke to him directly, did you know that? Told him to run for president... to attack Iraq"<sup>(13)</sup>.

The paradox is that the terrorist (Yusuf) uses cynical language to undermine the accusations of the interrogator which he attributes, in one of his hypotheses, to extremist religious motives. So, do the religious motives alleged by the two leaders, Blair and Bush, justify their war on Iraq, which claimed "hundreds of thousands of lives?" Is it not right to consider such a war as terrorist extremism? Because they tried to depict this war as a holy one in order to justify it, and to gain national and international support, but it left huge casualties!

(Noam Chomsky)\* said that the duo Blair and Bush were disappointed about not finding nuclear weapons in Iraq, so they made up a new pretext to save their faces: working for the spread of freedom and democracy. A divine mission, Bush claimed, entrusted to him to invade Iraq<sup>(14)</sup>! The extrapolation of reality proves that this invasion was not only terrorism because it had taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent people, but also because it paved the rise for the terrorist organization ISIS, which occupied one third of Iraqi territory, and spread to one third of Syrian territory<sup>(15)</sup>.

What first comes to mind when committing terrorist acts are the personal motives of the suspect, either religious ones influenced by extremist or retaliatory ideas as a result of the loss of close friends,

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(13) Ibid, p 34.

\* Chomsky, Noam (1928– ). American linguist and philosopher, A political activist, a Jew of origin, studied linguistics, mathematics and philosophy. He received his PHD in 1955 and received an honorary PHD from Chicago University.

-See Honderich, T. (2005) "The Oxford Companion to Philosophy". (2nd.Ed). New York, Oxford University Press Inc, p139.

-And see Boqrra, N. (2009) "*Basic Terminology in Textual and Speech Analysis (A Lexicological Study)*" (1st Ed). Jordan, World of Modern Books - World Book House, p 164- 165-166.

(14) See Chomsky, N (2015) "*Culture of Terrorism*"(2nd Ed) London, Pluto press, p xii.

-See Honderich, T. (2005) "The Oxford Companion to Philosophy". (2nd.Ed). New York, Oxford University Press Inc, p139.

And see Boqrra, N. (2009) "*Basic Terminology in Textual and Speech Analysis (A Lexicological Study)*"(1st Ed). Jordan, World of Modern Books - World Book House, p 164- 165-166.

And see Shaaban, H (2017) "*Extremism and Terrorism: The Problematics of Theory and Practical Challenges*" (1st Ed) Alexandria, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, p27.

Shaaban mentioned that Bush Jr. hinted also that the invasion of Iraq as a continuation of the Crusades for the purpose of enlightenment.

(15) Ibid, p.p 70-71.

family members, or others? But the professor surprises the interrogator by telling him he is a Christian not a Muslim, yet he does not believe in Christianity or any other religions:

“You know I am a Christian by birth, do you not? A Copt... like the former secretary-General of the United Nations Boutros Boutros-Ghali? I am certainly not a secret Muslim. To be honest with you, I am not very religious at all. No, no, no. I do not go to church... I do not pray... it has been many years since I read the scriptures or heard a priest give a sermon... humanity... justice... that is my confessional faith. And I never emailed Osama... and the truth set me free, as it says in the holy Bible. The truth turned me into an activist... radicalised me, if you still want to use this word. The truth of what your government... and what other Western governments... did”<sup>(16)</sup>.

It was not expected that the professor be motivated by human motives, not religious ones. Moreover, the character of the Arab terrorist, who is portrayed in the West as a monster or ogre, is driven by a noble principle and empathy with the suffering of his brother, regardless of his racial, religious or intellectual affiliation. The extremist religious ideas are not the professor's trigger for adopting violence. He reveals the secret of his transformation to violence by attributing it to the wrong policies of Western governments, and their violations of human rights in developing countries.

Investigator thinks that vindictive motivations created professor's aggression. But professor surprises investigator that vindictive reaction of Britain and United States after September 11, 2001, drove both of them to invade Iraq and Afghanistan and murder more than Million innocent people in these developing countries pretext of countering terrorism, spreading freedom and democracy. Instead, Iraq and Afghanistan got worst.

Last wars of United States in Middle East led many political scholars to criticize using military procedures only. Thus they invite to depend on (soft power) more than hard power (Military); because they believe that “Soft Power” weapons are stronger than military weapons, and pen is mightier than the sword. (Donald) refers to Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) who says: “the ink of the scholar is holier than blood of the martyr”, and invites to avoid violence, to use – for instance – translation to and from Arabic language; in order to understand mentality of Arab and their culture, then invest this knowledge to combat terrorism.<sup>(17)</sup>

Thus, the boundaries of truth fade between the terrorist and the interrogator, and the reader is puzzled with whom he should sympathize, each of them carries noble goals! Which one is right? Both! Why are they fighting then? There is a missing link to this fact. The terrorist character alleges that the cause of the fighting is to defend the sovereignty of his country which has been violated by foreign forces, while

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(16) See Jackson, op. cit. p 11.

(17) See Donald J. Kochan. The Soft Power And Persuasion Of Translations In The War On Terror. Volume 110. Winter 2010, Number2, West Virginia, p. 546-547-549-551.

the interrogator claims that his state is working to stop the sources of terrorism in its own countries (i.e. in those countries). The reality, however, is that his government's actions have led to the proliferation of terrorist cells and spread them until their own states are in danger; this government is like a surgeon who wants to eradicate a malignant disease, but he is surprised that the process itself is a cause of the outbreak of the disease, by waking the dormant cells in the whole body. In this way, these actions are like opposite parallel lines that cannot meet at a point of agreement; the professor says:

"You accuse me of being a, a... a fanatical jihadist who kills innocent women and children! I am serially going to burn in hell, according to you. I say that you are a, a... a godless atheist who rapes and burns entire countries in the search for your oil supplies, and you are the one who is going to burn... hopefully in a cauldron of burning oil!"<sup>(18)</sup>.

These two opposing voices represent two views of the Western and Arab cultures. The difference between them reflects the insurmountable gap between the two cultures. Each side accuses and blames the other, acquits itself, and seeks excuses that its terrorist transgressions are for peace and humanity, but the noteworthy question is that: can anyone of the two sides be judged wrong and the other right? It is not necessary if two opinions disagree to judge that one of them is right and the other is false, the two opinions may be mistaken. But the question is: how can two proper opinions be disputed? The truth is relative. On the one hand, this means that the military interventions of the super powers in the developing countries, and the resulting hundreds of thousands of victims under the pretext of achieving global security, are unacceptable, especially after the utilitarian political ends of these interventions are reflected in the interests of those states in gaining influence and seizing the economies of the developing countries. On the other hand, the individual reactions to these international violations, for instance, a group of individuals kill innocent civilians in those countries as a means of pressuring their governments and deterring them from their unjust policies, are unacceptable as well. The Holy Quran says: ﴿No bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden<sup>(19)</sup>﴾. It is unjust to harm a civilian owing to the fault of his government.

"... even when Osama bin Laden wrote his letter to America, no one read it... instead, everyone says they do not know why he is attacking America... they do not understand what he wants! The fact is, no matter what we do... even if we stop the armed struggle... we can never explain our point of view... except in a room like this!"<sup>(20)</sup>.

The real motives of terrorist acts committed by certain individuals or groups from the Middle East are being obscured; their disclosure means the condemnation of superpowers for wars waged by them,

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(18) Ibid, p 216.

(19) The Holy Qur'an [Al-Israa-15], see: King Saud university, <https://quran.ksu.edu.sa>

(20) Jackson, op. cit, p 58.

and the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent people under the pretext of spreading democracy and freedom. It should also be noted that the existence of lofty goals of the terrorist acts cannot in any way justify and legitimize them, "the means is a part of the end, and they are interdependent. There is no honest end without an honest means"<sup>(21)</sup>.

With this offensive tone, the terrorist (Yusuf) sets out to talk about the cause of his transformation to violence, referring directly to the fact that the brutal attacks by some super powers on his country and interference in its affairs are a major reason that influenced and changed his personality. We find him, when the interrogator asks him who has given him the right to kill people, replies angrily:

"What? [...] What gave the right? What gave you the right to go around the world slaughtering people of, of, of every race, every creed? No, no... this is it. This is the point. I started to realize that I do not need your permission to resist. If you are somehow allowed to kill however you choose... women, children... Africans... Arabs... well, I am allowed to resist you. It is my right, no, my duty to resist you...

... You know the thing that angered me the most was the, the... the open, sheer hypocrisy and double standards displayed by Western governments. The way they are always lecturing other countries about the importance of liberty, democracy, civilised behavior, human rights... they are doing the complete opposite!"<sup>(22)</sup>.

The question of Michael, a representative of a super-power, to Yusuf, who belongs to a developing country although his extremist beliefs do not represent it, is reminiscent of another similar question, which was mentioned in the story of the Thinker (Naum Chomsky) in his remarkable book about the ironic paradox of this particular era, entitled: (*Pirates and Emperors of international terrorism*), it says:

"Augustine tells the story of a pirate captured by Alexander the Great, who asked him "how he dares molest the sea." "How dare you molest the whole world?" the pirate replied: "Because I do it with a little ship only, I am called a thief; you, doing it with a great navy, are called an Emperor."<sup>(23)</sup>.

Perhaps what drives Western governments to falsify the facts and fabricate the humanitarian goals of their interventions in the Middle East is the fear of losing popular support for their policies if human losses and violations against vulnerable peoples are revealed. They also interpret the killing of one of their soldiers in those countries only as a human act, sacrifice and martyrdom to liberate a vulnerable people, while the Arabs see it as an occupation, and a blatant aggression on the sovereignty of a nation and the will of a people. Further, what the West sees as extremism, terrorism, violence, and criminality, the Arab regards it as a kind of self-defense, resistance, jihad and armed struggle.

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(21) Shaaban, op. cit. p24.

(22) Jackson, op. cit, p 63.

(23) Chomsky, N (2003) *"Pirates and Emperors Old and New International Terrorism"* (2nd. Ed) New York, South End Press, p3.

The main reason for the exacerbation of the phenomenon of terrorism and its proliferation, despite the efforts made in combating it, is ignorance of the psychology of the terrorist and its internal worlds; he is still seen as an endemic that they dare not examine closely for fear of infection. The terrorist says sarcastically about the ignorance of the competent authorities in dealing with the likes of him:

“It is amazing, but it is patently to anyone with even half a brain that they have never, ah, corresponded with, let alone actually met, someone like me. They have no intimate knowledge of their subject. To them, terrorist is an abstraction... not a person with a history, a will of his own. It is as if they get their knowledge from newspapers. Or maybe they just watch those terrible Hollywood films, Ha!”<sup>(24)</sup>

Regardless of the fact that the novelist uses a new and unique way to deal with terrorists through examining the depths of the their psyche in order to understand the real motives behind the atrocities that are being committed by talking, not negotiating, with him to know his hidden intentions, it is common for terrorists to suffer various forms of torture in search of any details that reveal their plans without caring for what is most important, which is to address the problem at its roots, and to look for the solution to eliminate the phenomenon. Can't this phenomenon be managed in a civilized way? Not only because these extremists are misled human beings, but also because trying to fight violence with violence is like trying to put out fire with oil. What counter-terrorism solutions lack is that they do not emanate from the consciousness of the terrorist himself and the personal suffering he has experienced? This makes the proposed actions far from the crux of the problem, i.e. what are the goals of his subversive work that harms societies? His actions are usually attributed to inaccurate motives, such as racism, nationalism or religion, etc. And this obscures the ability to find solutions that take into account the real needs of such persons, which may be legitimate and just, but which they seek to achieve by illegal means, such as violence and terrorism:

“I was just saying that these scholars... these experts in the mind of others, it is clear... well, they have never struggled with the question of violence... personally, I mean. They have never faced a choice about how to respond... looking directly into the face of inhuman oppression...blood flowing in the streets... in their own neighborhoods! I mean they don't know! They don't know what it is like... the, the... the struggle, the contradictions...how should a man respond to protect his family... his community.”<sup>(25)</sup>

Such a gap between theoretical thinking and the practical reality of the phenomenon is what makes the efforts of counter-terrorism experts come to nothing. The foregoing shows the existence of an ideological conflict between two different thoughts that is borne by the novel. firstly, the interrogator who represents the civilized party who grasps for a rational explanation of the fact that some people blow

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(24) Jackson, op. cit. p.25.

(25) Ibid, p26.

themselves up and claim many innocent lives in his country, Britain. Secondly, the suspect who is arrested on charges of terrorism, and travelled to Britain to carry out some of those conspiracies.

When talking about the duality of executioner and the victim, the phenomenon of terrorism first comes to mind. However, the strange thing about the novel is that the terrorist figure appears in the victim's position, not the opposite; not a relationship between a victim and an interrogator, but a victim with a person who has pushed him to this extremism in objection to the policies of super powers that waged wars and Killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people.

What is called for in this novel is a close look at this phenomenon through one of its representatives, a terrorist who claims rationality, and does not kill innocents, he says:

"I can only say that my group... then as now... chose only to target those who were involved directly in the fighting somehow... like the soldiers who were fighting... the armed mercenaries... the militias... the politicians who gave the orders. You could say, actually, that I am trying to follow your own Western 'just war' theory, as it is called"<sup>(26)</sup>.

As Michael claims integrity and adopts a human principle in his struggle, this terrorist claims to have a similar human principle in his war against the West, not intended to revenge, but to defend his country and the oppressed. He refers to the term of the just war created by the West that permitted the killing of the enemy in the event of war, but Interrogator Michael objects to this approach by saying:

"States can't be terrorists, Professor. They have a right to use any means to protect their national interests and the security of their citizens, including force... violence, as you call it. [...] How exactly is the use of torture equivalent to planting a bomb on a pub or in a street? It's private groups that commit acts of terrorism. States can go to war, or perhaps engage in repression. But not terrorism."<sup>(27)</sup>.

This principle does not only represent Michael, but his government also believes in it. Is it really not permissible to criminalize the major Powers on wars that they are waging against other countries under the pretext of protecting the security of their citizens? The argument is false and unconvincing due to the killing of a large number of soldiers who belong to the super powers. It is a principle refuted and questioned by the Thinker (Noam Chomsky). He sees it as one of the basic characteristics of the failed state, he says:

"One is their inability or unwillingness to protect their citizens from violence and perhaps even destruction. Another is their tendency to regard themselves as beyond the reach of domestic or international law, and hence free to carry out aggression and violence"<sup>(28)</sup>.

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(26) Ibid, p148.

(27) Ibid, p 252.

(28) Chomsky, N (2006) "Failed states: The abuse of power and assault of democracy" (1st .Ed) New York, Henry Holt and Co,p1-2.

The course of events proves that such states do not care enough about the lives of their citizens and soldiers lost in those wars, and also about the lives of the citizens and soldiers of the weak countries who are supposed to have the right to peace and security as the citizens of the major states! Terrorism is terrorism, whether it is carried out on a large scale by States, or on a small scale perpetrated by individuals and groups. The Qur'an states: "That was why we wrote for the Children of Israel that whoever killed a soul, except for a soul slain, or for sedition in the earth, it should be considered as though he had killed all mankind; and that whoever saved it should be regarded as though he had saved all mankind."<sup>(29)</sup>

Yusuf is aware of what might be a motive for others such as personal vengeance, religious extremism, ethnic fanaticism, and other non-human motives that are used to recruit and attract adolescents. The novel, however, depicts him as a liberal character suffers from bitter experience, and is not influenced by external thoughts, and, in his view of the West, he bears no grudge against the Western people, but rather he is enraged at the violations committed by their governments; he says:

"And to be honest, I have hardly met an Englishman I did not like... including you, Michael. I find British people to be so, so... so, ah, polite... friendly... interesting.

The truth is that there is so much I love about your culture and your people. What angers me is not your culture or your values, but your actions... your foreign policies... all your wars and invasions... all the wicked governments you support... all the weapons you sell... your complete lack of honour..."<sup>(30)</sup>.

He respects people of Europe, but he criticizes the policies of their governments, and this shows that he is not racist or a religious fanatic. The origin of this hostility is historical not human, created by the violations committed by the American and British governments, and continue to reverberate and recur in our contemporary history, such as depriving peoples of their right to self-determination, supporting some tyrannical governments that are torturing their peoples and committing genocide in which hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians die, and overthrowing some democratically elected governments because they are incompatible with their interests.

The suspect ends his dialogue with the interrogator with the fundamental question of the novel: Who is the real terrorist?

After presenting the second viewpoint impartially, it turns out that the Arab (Yusuf), as appeared in the novel, is a person who enjoys a broad culture, and is beset by a humanitarian issue that is to defend the oppressed peoples all over the world who have been invaded by major Powers that spread corruption in their countries. This shows that his cause is not personal, because it is not limited to his quest to protect his own country.

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(29) The Holy Qur'an [Al-Maaida-32], see: King Saud university, <https://quran.ksu.edu.sa>

(30) Jackson, op. cit. p.p 98-99.

Moreover, Yusuf exposes the rhetoric of falsehood and hypocrisy among senior politicians in the aggressor states claiming humanity, and the great impact of their decisions on the violation of human rights, which angers him and ignites in his heart the desire to avenge all the innocents who have been imprisoned, insulted, tortured and killed. His fight against the West - despite his admiration for its civilized peoples – is only a protest against the brutal wars decided by its leaders and governments against the weak peoples.

If Yusuf has received support and sympathy for his cause in supporting the oppressed, the way he has pursued it will not be satisfactory to all individuals owing to the insufficiency of its usefulness, because he wants it to be a means of exerting pressure on those major Powers to stop the spread of their evil in the developing countries, but the leaders of those countries will not heed this; they are indifferent to their war deaths, either from their own soldiers or from the citizens of the states against which aggression is committed. On the contrary, they will have a reason to increase their violations under the pretext of combating terrorism in order to achieve their expansionist political agendas and their economic and authoritarian ambitions, in the absence or lack of awareness of the Western public of the real motives of persons like Yusuf. To recap, the culture of dialogue, acceptance of the other and the propagation of the discourse of tolerance should be adopted as peaceful, civilized and alternative solutions.

### **3- Culture of dialogue and tolerance:**

A dialogue is a discussion of great significance. Without proper dialogue two parties cannot reach a common ground. Both parties need the opportunity to explore a particular subject or solution to a problem in order to really benefit from it. People possess preconceptions which do not allow them to make any correction or alteration in their way of thinking. Although they may be listening, they are listening not to discover or hear the truth, but to draw the other party's attention to talk about or convince them of their own ideas. Although, a party may seemingly approve of what is being said with words of courtesy and support, it is not always felt.

Any dialogue would bring divergent views closer unless they are cornered in the controversy and intransigence of opinion. What happens between the interrogator and the suspect in this novel is not an interrogation that imposes brief, swift answers. On the contrary, the interrogator allows the suspect to express his opinions freely without any fear in order to extract information. Thus, this novel is a search for the true motives of terrorism in Arab and Western viewpoints, i.e. individual, group or State motives.

Furthermore, the intellectual and ideological dispute is attributed to the different points of view from which each party examines the terrorism phenomenon. Ineffective dialogue and its lack of basic



ground rules, should be of which are the necessity of openness to the other, accepting being equal to him as well as the need to start this dialogue in which truth is not based on personal whims.<sup>(31)</sup>

Hence, the absence of a culture of dialogue and tolerance is the evil trigger in today's bloody conflicts, and the dominance of the culture of exclusion is the reason for the aggravation of this problem:

"All our hope is to limit the time span in which humanity suffers from these bloody conflicts, which are increasing in number year after year. Also the propagation of the culture of "coexistence" may be the protective serum that addresses some critical situations of human groups' suffering, but this "suppressed" suffering has not yet exploded. The culture of coexistence is a key factor in preventing already bloody conflicts as if it were a "preventive" measure, and it may also turn into a "treatment" as if it were a type of medicine or balm after the war is stopped in one way or another"<sup>(32)</sup>.

Terrorist acts are growing just like the mechanisms of combating them; they, like a virus, develop their forms and change their nature in intelligent and dangerous ways, just as the defensive and therapeutic means have evolved. This requires a breakthrough in the mechanisms to combat them stemming from an understanding of their developing nature.

The novel presents two characters with opposing viewpoints that each one tries to justify, and understand the motives behind their hostility. However, it ends without any convergence of views between the characters despite the seeming acceptance of the other and giving ample opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts, and also relative calm prevailed between the two characters who had met in an interview room, if they had met elsewhere, one of them would have killed the other. However, they were talking knowingly so as to get as much information as possible about each other. This leads to the following question:

Why is there this knowledge and ideological divide between the two parties of the Arab and the Western perspectives?

The main reason lies in the instinctive temptation of human nature, which calls upon every human being to approach and try things from his own perspective, and in a personal belief that what one sees from this angle is right and beyond is false. Moreover, the truth cannot be revealed or grasped by a single-dimensional look, it needs another to appreciate the existence of a side of the truth that one sees while the other misses. Accordingly, every human being is held captive to his personal vision of a single dimension, not surrounded by what the other sees, nor does he bother to think about that blind spot. From here, in my estimation, the controversy arises.

The absence of the principle of dialogue is also noticeable; the novel is overshadowed by sterile and futile controversy. The two parties lack a culture of dialogue that values the other's motives, and

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(31) Jumaa, H (2008) "Culture of Dialogue with Others" Journal of Damascus University, Volume 24, No. 3- 4, p12.

(32) Milad, H (1998) "Accepting the Other: Think, Convince and Practice"(1st Ed) Cairo, Beirut, p 11.

attempts to be open to his different opinions and gives him the opportunity to express his views in a respectful dialogue without rancor or malice, i.e. respect for the same person regardless of his ethnic, religious, or intellectual affiliation. It is stated in the Holy Quran: "And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend."<sup>(33)</sup> And in the same sense Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) you have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well' and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile"<sup>(34)</sup> All revealed books call for tolerance and kindness, and the renunciation of hatred and violence, so where have human beings acquired their aggressive culture if they embrace the religions of their creator?

To conclude, the paper does not adopt any of the two points of view, and does not accept anything from them but what agrees with common sense, so that each side can examine, understand and deal with the other's point of view in a human way. Such as identifying psychological, religious and national reasons, and avoiding extremism in reactions and brutal exercises of claiming rights.

## Conclusion:

The paper concludes with the following outcomes and recommendations:

- This novel is a rebellion against the preconception of the terrorism phenomenon. It carries a message, to the westerner first but also to the Arab, that the so-called Arab-Muslim terrorist radicalizes his behavior, commits crimes and kills only in reaction to foreign interventions and wars waged by the European governments against his country and other oppressed countries which have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.
- What the novel does is that it brings us closer to two cultures. We examine them through two characters which the narrative, in a deep and expressive style, succeeds in bringing them into the imagination of the reader. Unlike the traditional approach, the novel has brought together two opposites and conducted a comparison-like process of the motives of each of them to commit murder and adopt terrorism. Surprisingly, the reader feels the greatness and legitimacy of the goals of each individual, not governments, but the problem lies in the radicalization of the means and mechanisms to achieve their purposes.
- The problem of this age is reflected in the pursuit of military solutions that have proved to be a resounding failure, without adequate attention to peaceful options.

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(33) The Holy Qur'an [Fussilat-34], see: King Saud university, <https://quran.ksu.edu.sa>

(34) Matthew 5:38-41, see: <http://bible.oremus.org/?q=248890859>

- Most efforts to fight and prevent international terrorism reveal the worsening of the problem and the doubling of the killing, as the military options of the major powers led to further killing and destruction, and to the decline and regression of developing countries after those major powers intervened in the affairs of those countries under the pretext of combating terrorism. Efforts and strategies in the fight against terrorism, therefore, need to be reoriented and modified so as to eliminate and reduce the damage of terrorism without taking a heavy toll of human lives.
- When can terrorism be defeated? When the major powers intend to confront it on the basis of fair and human ends that are not confined to their national interests alone without caring for peace for all mankind, and when they are keen not to shed the blood of any human being regardless of their affiliation.
- The fact is that selfish self-interests attempt to avert any danger to their countries without giving the security of other states any importance, and to ignore the human losses of the developing countries in combating terrorism that would develop this phenomenon, not the other way around.
- This paper includes a call to bring the Arab and Western views closer in this regard. Each side admires and is convinced of what has been written about his point of view, but few accept the other's point of view. The reason is that the nature of human beings dictates that if he is right, the one who disagrees with him is necessarily mistaken. This is an erroneous fact; if two parties disagree about a particular fact, it does not mean that one is right and the other wrong, it means that both are probably right according to the different angle through which they perceive that fact.
- When humanity in its absolute sense is the object of dialogue without being blindly dependent on any racial, intellectual, religious or other affiliations, this dialogue must lead to convergence at a common point for all parties, where disagreement is precluded because the goal is the same. However, the reality is different; this supposed idealism in the dialogue does not exist between the two interlocutors. Bigotry to opinions and the preference for personal interest dominate, and what is supposed to be a profound dialogue turns into futile controversy.
- The novel follows a different path and seeks to get closer to the restricted zone. It indirectly calls for the counter-terrorism authorities to have more direct contact with individuals who possess this belief, so that they might understand their underlying motives. These motives may be like Yusuf's ones who does not fight driven by euphoria of getting money, power or even religion, but fights and sacrifices in order to support the oppressed on earth, to lift their sufferings and to punish their executioners.

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