"Because they are Muslim they must be doing wrong?"
'Islamophobia' in Yussef El Guindi's *Language Rooms* (2010)

Assoc. Prof. Ayman Ibrahim Elhalafawy
Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Kafrelsheikh University

Abstract

In the aftermath of the September attacks, it has been widely discerned that several Western literary works have shaped – and at times distorted- the perception of Islam, offered a mediated version that transcends reality, and featured Islam in the consciousness of international readers in a negative manner: Islamic culture is backward, Muslims are prone to violence and Islam promotes terrorism. Within the framework of postcolonialism, this paper discusses 'Islamophobia' in Yussef El Guindi's play *Language Rooms* (2010). As an Arab American writer, El Guindi tackles the prejudices of the Western world against Arab Americans after the 9/11 attacks. Accordingly, the paper is divided into two main parts. The first part tends to be an introductory theoretical one. It begins by surveying the history and development of 'Islamophobia' in literary studies. The second part of the paper focuses on El Guindi's *Language Rooms*. This part provides a comprehensive analysis of the play in order to find out how 'Islamophobia' is reflected in it. Hence, the play reflects failure in Western circles to properly understand the nature of Islam and Muslims considering them a source of fear, threat and violence.

 Keywords:

Since the advent of Islam in 622, the West's perception of Muslims has been overwhelmingly negative. After being unable to initially accept Muhammad as a prophet or the authenticity of his revelations, there still remains bitterness between the Christian West and the Muslim East. This is partly due to fact that the two cultures offer opposing truths derived from the same source (Gerges 74). To Christianity, Islam is a major rival and it represents a significant challenge. Deriving from this Christian attitude, Islam has, since the middle ages, been presented as a menace to Western Civilization and this media-driven image has become embedded in Western culture (Agha 221).

The Western writers' conception of Muslims is based on religious and political prejudices. Islam is considered as a hostile religion and Muslims are viewed as terrorists. In the middle Ages, the view of Islam has been shaped by

the ancient writings informed by the pre-Islamic accounts of the Arab people. Afterwards, the view of Islam has been built on personal experiences in the literary works. These works, unfortunately, reflected a prejudiced viewpoint about Islam and Muslims.

A noticeable change in the prejudiced view of Islam is shaped by England's new policy concerning its relation to the non-Christian people. In addition, the appearance of the translations of the holy Qur'an provides a new chance for interpreting and understanding Islam. This leads to the appearance of some remarkable non-biased attempts to defend Islam and Muslims in the literary works.

The present paper aims, firstly, to provide a theoretical framework that illustrates the history and development of 'Islamophobia' and how it becomes a main issue in modern literature. Secondly, the paper examines El Guindi's play *Language Rooms*. Furthermore, the present study aims to trace the important aspects of 'Islamophobia' and how it has affected the play's main characters.

This non-biased literary outcome seeks to establish a link between both the Christian and the Islamic cultures. For example, the Prophet Muhammad's Holy Journey to Heavens is largely foreshadowed in William Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality". In a similar manner, S. T. Coleridge provides, in his *Kubla Khan*, the exotic spiritual beauty of the Islamic culture, adding to it the narrative in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Barbeau 118). However, the nourishing effect of the spirituality of Islam embraced by the romantics of the early 19th century could not last so long.

The era of postmodernism witnessed a radical change in the Arab and Muslim identity. One's identity is no longer perceived as an inherited construct but rather as something flexible that changes as one moves through a mixture of the different cultures and ideas that one encounters. Colonizers, unfortunately, have destroyed main principles of the religious cultural traditions of the colonized.

Edward Said presents his ideas of what he calls "cultural imperialism". According to him, this imperialism is achieved by culture not by force. Each race affirms its superiority by culture and civilization. So, we find that in the postcolonial literature, the Orient is presented as uncivilized and inferior, while the West is presented as civilized and superior. Said declares, in his book

Orientalism, that the written accounts on the Orient by the West only depicts Western desires which reveal the East as an exotic place. So, the Orient is not an actual place, rather a "system of representations framed by political forces that brought the orient into Western learning, Western consciousness, and later, Western empire"(202). Said's explanation is important for Arab-American writers in contemporary literature who tell stories about their colonial heritage.

Vital attributions have been brought to the postcolonial theory by Homi K. Bhabha, a postcolonial critic in cultural studies, such as identity, race and colonialism. Bhabha   attacks the tendency of Western peoples, who consider themselves to be the 'cultured' or 'civilized'. Bhabha, as a leading voice in postcolonial and diasporic studies, is highly influenced by Western theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan and Michael Foucault. In his *Nation and Narration* (1990), Bhabha argues against the tendency to describe the Third World Countries in terms of a homogenous identity. He has also made a major contribution to postcolonial studies by pointing out that there is often ambivalence at the site of colonial dominance. In *The Location of Culture*, for instance, Bhabha uses concepts such as mimicry, interstice, and liminality to argue that cultural production is always most productive where it is most ambivalent.

Bhabha's work (1983) focuses on the failure of colonial attempts to "whitewash" colonized peoples through the unintentional creation of a "third space" through mimicry of Western culture. The fact that mimicry is unable to exactly re-produce the Western culture creates a new culture from which colonized people may resist and subvert Western domination. For Bhabha, the postcolonial identity emerges from the interweaving of elements of the colonizer and colonized. This identity is positioned in-between the colonizer and colonized. Bhabha refers to the in-between space as the third space. Thus, the third space is a way of describing a cultural productive space containing new forms of cultural meaning and production.

By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the literary representation of Islam tends to be unbiased. This representation remains unbiased until the Second World War, when The United States of America starts presenting false stereotypical representations of Islam that serve its political and economic policy in the Middle East. The United States has been viewing Islam within a mixture of an economic framework, related to the

energy supply especially oil price and a political framework related to the Iranian Hostage Crisis, and the resurgence of 'radical nationalism' in the Islamic world (Laboni, 82).

In the 21th century, Muslims are literary represented as terrorists and barbarians and the prejudices against them have increased especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The American media announces that the attacks of 9/11 are a reaction of the Muslim fundamentalists against Western culture. Such perspective of Islam paves the way to the rise of 'Islamophobia' in the United States and in other Western countries.

The concept of Islamophobia is a rather new concept in the public debate and is thus useful since it combines several different characteristics into one. Zaki Badawi explains that a group of Muslim scholars, including him, coined the term "Islamophobia" to warn against the escalating Islamophobic episodes, which is in essence equal to acts of racism and discrimination, but the term was used after to mean somehow different meanings by different groups. In fact, the suffix "Phobia" can be defined as being a mental or psychological state in which a person suffers from a specific fear. In the light of this definition, the term "Islamophobia" comes to be identified as the fear from Islam and Muslims so that the hostility toward Islam and Muslims is a normal reaction to that fear.

In English, this word appeared firstly in an article by Edward Said in 1985, where he refers to the association between Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, criticizing the writers who do not recognize that "hostility to Islam in the modern Christian West has historically gone hand in hand" with Anti-Semitism and "has stemmed from the same source and been nourished at the same stream" (Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered" (90). The next mention of this word was in the *American journal Insight* on 4 February 1991, to put the finger on the hostility of the government of the Soviet Union towards its own Muslim (The Runnymede Trust Report).

The word has increasingly been used since it comes to be known in the publications of international organizations. Today, the word Islamophobia is widely used in the UK by media and people as well (Malik, 2005). As a matter of fact, the word was more common word in Europe than in the United States. In 2007, it was used hundreds of times in *the Guardian* but only twenty-six occasions in *the New York Times* (Cesari, 2006). Since 2011, Isalamophobia has become a commonplace term in the United States. Gradually, 'Islamophobia'

provides and draws the attention to a "normalized prejudice and unjustified discrimination." Undoubtedly this term will elicit the same unease and even backlash among some of those whose notion of normal comes to be different (Gottschalk and Greenberg 11).

It can be considered as "merely the figment of a paranoid or politically motivated imagination; or constructed out of a desire to perpetuate a siege mentality and sense of victimhood against Muslims, or to put an end to legitimate criticism, or to engage in lazy abuse" (Richardson, 3-4). Combined of the two words of 'Islam' and 'phobia', 'Islamophobia' encompasses the fear of the so-called "creeping *Sharia*" or Islamic laws (Considine1). This 'phobia' has been originated by the West to depict Muslims, or 'the other', as having barbarous, hideous and aggressive nature that may destroy the Western civilization. The West has framed 'Islamophobia' as a strategy to justify its violence, racism and discrimination of the Arab and Muslim peoples. According to the West, 'Islamophobia' involves prejudice and fear of Islam without any realistic knowledge or experience of Islam. Thus, the term evokes a great deal of cultural intolerance structured against Muslims all over the world.

Consequently, after the attacks of September 11, American Muslims are categorized as threat for the American security. All Arab-Americans were suspected and it becomes a stigma to have an Arabic name. This leads to the uprising for 'war against terror'. In addition, the American Muslims have been violently marginalized and deprived of their civil rights. American Muslims find themselves divided between their Muslim identity and their rights as American citizens. American Muslims considered these attacks just as a hideous misrepresentation of Islam and that 'Islamophobia' is constructed against people who are truly innocent. Therefore, the Arab American literary production has been directed to change the stereotypical representation of Muslims after the September 11 attacks.

Yussef El Guindi is a talented Arab-American writer. El Guindi was born in Egypt in 1960. His grandmother is the actress and publisher Rose Al-Youssef, his grandfather is the director Zaki Toleimat, and his uncle is the well-known writer Ihsan Abdel Koudous. El Guindi left Egypt when he was 3 years old to travel to London to be raised there after president Gamal Abdel Nasser had applied nationalism (Smith, 1).His works are influenced by his Egyptian origin as well as his life in America. Consequently, his plays are written from an

immigrant's point of view, as they study the conflicts of ethnicities, cultures and politics that encounter the Arab-Americans (Hamos 1). Being an immigrant has not only shaped El Guindi's life, but has also controlled his works. He declares that his primal responsibility is to explore the journey of an immigrant from an Arab and Muslim perceptions (Arlin, 2).

El Guindi writes many plays and won many theatre awards. Among his famous plays are, *So Unlike Me (2003), Finishing School* (2003), *Such A Beautiful Voice is Sayeda's* (2005), *Back of The Throat* (2005), *Language Rooms* (2010), *Pilgrim Musa and Sheri in the New World* (2010), *The Ramanaya (*2012), and *Threesome* (2015).As an Arab American playwright, El Guindi's focuses on the Arab/Muslim experience in the United States. In particular, his plays deal with the complex issues of traumatic experiences faced by immigrants especially second-generation Arab Americans.

Language Rooms presents the stereotypes associated with Muslims immigrates in the United States. The paly revolves around an Egyptian American Muslim, Ahmed, who struggles to prove his loyalty to the U.S. Nasser and Ahmed, both Arab-Americans, work in the United States as translators and interrogators. Michael Jim Najjar describes them saying:

> For Nasser and Ahmed, two voluntary recruits working in a foreign war prison interrogating Muslim detainees, there is a clear sense that no matter how much they work to become a part of the fabric of the nation they are defending, the hegemonic power structure around them will not allow them to simultaneously proclaim allegiance to their heritage/faith and to their country.24 Ahmed later finds that, despite being on the "right" side of the war on terror, he is a victim of growing suspicion based on his allegiances and sympathies. (113)

This is the setting for "*Language Rooms*," a dark comedy lighting up the stage at The Den Theatre exposing the stereotypes associated with immigrants to the United States. Despite his Arabic roots, Ahmed loves the U.S. He works for a Homeland Security detainment facility and is considered the best at his job. However, rumors begin to grow putting his patriotism into question, leading Ahmed to do whatever it takes to prove he is not an enemy. As an Arab-American, Ahmed's loyalty to the American has been suspected. Najjar writes in this respect:

Ahmed later finds that, despite being on the "right" side of the war on terror, he is a victim of growing suspicion based on his allegiances and sympathies. Ahmed's dilemma is one that represents the Arab/Muslim condition in the United States in the post-9/11 situation where they are considered by many in America, in the words of Mustafa Bayoumi, "enemies living among us".(113)

Kevin, his Afro-American boss, asks Ahmed "how do we become who we are, our loyalties, our bonds, to family, and country. How do you break that and build it up again. You come from an arts background, you know what I'm talking about"(El Guindi 16). Afterwards, Ahmed realizes that he is accused of being a spy.

The situation becomes difficult when Ahmed's father, Samir, is brought in as a captive and Ahmed is made to interrogate him. Samir starts telling his story of migration from Egypt:

I'm thinking...how do I break this news to my wife. That I applied for a visa for all of us to emigrate… Anyway, I tell her. Straight out… We can emigrate to America. Here's the letter. We're always complaining about our life here and how my job as an engineer doesn't bring in enough money. (11)

When Ahmed loses his temper and shows his aggression against his Arab and Islamic heritage, he is forced into an isolation suit and box that earlier appeared in an expressionistic dream sequence. Referring to this, Najjar writes:

After Ahmed interrogates his father, Samir, and realizes that he is not, in fact, a terrorist, Kevin informs Ahmed that the real concern was not with the father at all, but rather with Ahmed's allegiance to the war on terror. Kevin sees Ahmed's hatred towards his father as more than a filial matter. After Kevin explains this, he informs Ahmed to wear an isolation suit and enter an isolation chamber…El Guindi creates this stage device in order to represent this interminable spectrality onstage. (139)

Then, Kevin continues the interrogation. Ahmed often distances himself from his colleagues; that is why he is suspected to be a spy. He tells Kevin that "We've done nothing wrong…   What do we have to do with that? We're providing valuable, non-partisan information. We don't do politics"(15).

However, Kevin does not believe Ahmed. He continues his interrogation: " Have you done everything in a law-abiding manner, with the best intentions?... Have you used that skill set unique to you, your ability to worm your way into the confidences of others and then betray that trust, have you used that only to good purposes?" (15). Kevin becomes more ironical concerning Ahmed's Islamic identity and this is clear when he asks Ahmed: "Is there *anything* you've done that if I was your Imam you would feel the need to confess? Unload. And by doing so, feel lighter" (15).

Youssef El-Guindi explores how Arab American Muslims violently transformed into the 'other' as exemplified by Ahmed, the main character under suspect. El-Guindi reflects how his Muslim characters are firmly dehumanized and deprived of their civil rights and how they are seen as a threatening enemy. El Guindi asserts his view when Ahmed exclaims:

> I'm...being accused of being a spy? For my government? For whom I work? Against you? Who also work for the same government? Are you - ? Is that - ? Is that what you're accusing me of, sir?... I am *not* a spy, sir… I love the people I work with and would never betray them, never. (19- 20)

El Guindi 's reflection of 'Islamophobia' is evident when Ahmed becomes a target for suspicion because of his Muslim father, Samir. This is clear when Kevin asks Ahmed "How's your family? …Your father?...When was the last time you spoke with him?"(21-22). Samir is an Egyptian immigrant and grocery-store owner accused of funneling money to terrorist organizations. Thus, as demonstrated by Kevin above, the play suggests the failure of the West to recognize the Muslims' culture and identity.

The play is built on the post September 'Islamophobia'. Ahmed, like his father, is shocked to find himself accused of possible ties of terrorism because

of knowing Muslim characters. As the interrogation proceeds, Kevin proposes to reveal evidence, if it ever be an evidence.

> KEVIN: This is a high-value prisoner. He can fill in the missing pieces of that mystery sheikh. It turns out he used to be the Imam in your area, strangely enough. One Fareed Al-Rawi. Another additional reason you should handle this. Perhaps a few teenage memories might be triggered. This prisoner made calls to Al-Rawi's home, as well as wire transfers on his behalf.

> AHMED: This is the name of my old street.

> KEVIN:You don't even have to worry about proving where your heart belongs in this case. I know where it belongs. Just get the information and you'll both be home free. (37)

The whole situation reveals insecurity and fear of Muslims and Arabs. Through the whole play, nothing is revealed to be a rational proof for any terrorist trends. However, all prejudices against Ahmed are raised on the basis of his religion. These American prejudices against Muslims can be reflected in Nasser's confession:

> What separates us in their eyes is very little. You go on about how American you feel, but they don't see it that way. That's why I go overboard and act the back-slapping fool you take me for. You think I don't seethe when they make the jokes they do? Putting my mother and religion into the mix? We are who we translate to them. We can't put on the disguise of the enemy as a tactic *because we're already wearing it*. The language itself puts us in enemy territory. (31)

In an encounter between Samir and Ahmed, Samir seems proud of having a son with such an "important job" and confused why that son abandoned him years before. He reminds his son with his national identity and religion advising him to be proud with his roots:

> Back home, you have the safety of family, you have history; here? Who are you? You are nothing except running and trying to make it.

My wife and I, we say, one day we will go back. But you can't. You have hit the ball and all you're trying to do now is stay in the game. And you think: why? Why did we put ourselves in this position? And where - where is all this milk and honey we were told was here? (24)

Samir has come to America imagining it a fertile land for his dreams. However, after the attacks of 9/11, Samir's attitude towards the U.S. has changed considering it a fragile land. The American authority builds its assumption of accusing Samir on the basis of his knowledge of a Muslim neighbor. It seems that the Americans use whatever they may find as evidence against Muslims:

AHMED: How did you end up here then?
SAMIR: Because I spit in the same neighborhood as the people they arrest. Am I responsible for everyone on our street? (43)

The interrogation continues to reveal   a hidden disgust, cynicism, racism and aggression towards Arab-Muslims in America. This obviously underlies Kevin's against Muslim Americans so that he denies their right to be part of the American nation: "When I interrogated some of those same black nationalists I did the same thing. Went on and on about the white man's boot on our neck, and the power structure and how it was stacked against the black man" (34).

Realizing his situation, Ahmed is irritated by the manners of the interrogator and he tries to take refuge in his American citizenship. He goes to the extent of refusing his father's Arabic and Islamic roots mocking his choice of traditional clothes. In this manner, El Guindi intends to show the audience how an Arab-Muslim American is viewed within the frame of American culture. This Islamophobic attitude is clear in the conversation between Ahmed and his father:

AHMED: When you insisted on wearing your gallebeya, that long dress, like you were oblivious that we were in a country that might find that odd. And cringed when you opened your mouth and out came that thick accent when you could hardly speak English… what a fucking Arab. What a goddamn hideous weirdo Muslim is this? Is that my father blind that his son is dying watching him act out like a

performing buffoon? Or were you just quietly giving the middle finger to everyone? (63)

Samir becomes more conscious of what American people think of any Arab-Muslim when they are informed of any sign of accusation. But he insists to defend Muslims as being not so harmful to the American nation. He says:

And tell them how I insisted you speak only English. I didn't want to hear Arabic from you until you could speak whole English sentences. Are these the acts of a man who hates the country he lives in? These are the facts they need to know. Coming from you they will believe it. (43)

Mostly Significant, El Guindi reveals the domination of 'Islamophobia' in the Western culture by considering the Muslims as a threat. This Islamophobic attitude can be summarized in Samir's words "because they are Muslim they must be doing wrong?" (53). Samir wants to unravel the thoughts inside any Muslim of being treated negatively by the American government because of social prejudices based on religion.

Despite of loving America at the beginning of the play, Ahmed ends up hating it because of 'Islamophobia':

I could end up hating the country I came from and then even hating the country you raised me in for making me feel that way. Really - your fucking dreams. You *are* the enemy. You were growing up, and here you are again, still the enemy. You *are* the enemy. You are the fucking enemy. You and your fucking dreams of life in America! (65)

These last words said by Ahmed reveal how good Muslim citizens are maltreated by the American institutions because of religious prejudice. Ahmed is left completely morally and humanely destroyed. Indeed, El Guindi's portrayal of Ahmed's collapse proposes that the West's failure to comprehend the Islamic culture away from the prejudices put for Muslims drive many innocents to the brink of frustration. El Guindi dramatizes how an Arab American Muslim, like Ahmed, is forced to admit that he participates in a terrorist attack.

To sum up, El Guindi's Language *Rooms* is a realistic dramatization of 'Islamophobia' and the prejudiced framework put for Muslims by the West. Because of considering Islam as a danger and threat, Arab-American Muslims are getting more marginalized in a country they have long considered their homeland. El Guindi, successfully, pictures the American discrimination for Muslims as a hateful and destructive minority. Muslims have been dealt with in a very hostile way and are categorized by the West as terrorists. If the Western people could free themselves from Islamophobia, they could have found that Islam is a rational religion that preaches peace and tolerance to the whole humanity.

Works Cited

Agha, O. H. "Islamic Fundamentalism and its Image in the Western Media." *Islam and the West in the Mass Media.* Ed. Kai Hafez. USA: Hampton Press, 2003. Print.

Arlin, Marcy." Artist, Immigrant: Yussef El Guindi." *Theatre CommunicationGroup,AmericanTheatreMagazine,Artsearch*(TCG Circles).http://www.tcgcircle.org/2012/03/artist-immigrant-yussef-el-guindi/.Accessed 7 Nov. 2016. Web.

Barbeau, Jeffrey. "Romanticism and Islam" *Review of Borrowed Imagination: The British Romantic Poets and the Arabic-Islamic Sources*. In *Journal of Romanticism* 1 (2016): 117–22.

Badawi, Zaki. "Terminology Background." The Sixteen General Conference of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs. Britain, 2004.

Bhabha, Homi K. *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.

_____. "Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism." *The Politics of Theory: Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature.* Ed. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, Margaret Iverson, and Dianna Loxley. Colchester: U of Essex, 1983. Print.

_____. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Bohata, Kirsti. *Postcolonialism Revisited*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004. Print.

Cesari, Jocelyne, et al. "Securitization and Religious Divides in Europe. Muslims in Western Europe After 9/11: Why the Term Islamophobia is more a Predicament than an Explanation". Submission to the Changing Landscape of Citizenship and Security, 6th PCRD of European Commission, 1 June, 2006. www.libertysecurity. org (accessed 20 May 2016).

Childs, Peter (ed.). *Post-colonial Theory and English Literature: a reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999. Print.

Considine, Craig. "The Racialization of Islam in the United States: Islamophobia, Hate Crimes, and "Flying while Brown" In *Religions* 8, 165. August 26, 2017. Print.

El Guindi, Yussef. *Language Rooms*. New York: Abrams Artists Agency, Leah Hamos, 2012. Print.

Gerges, F. A. "Islam. Enduring Myths and Changing Realities. Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588.73 (July 2003): 74-135. Print.

Gottshalk, Peter and Gabriel Greenberg. *Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008. Print.

Hamos, Leah. "Yussef El Guindi." The Playwrights' Database, http://www.doollee.com/PlaywrightsE/el-guindi-yussef.html. Accessed 6 May 2017. Web.

Laboni, Fatema Begum. "Representation of Islam in Western Media and Literature" in *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences.* Daffodil International University DIU Retrieved from:http://dspace.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd:8080/handle/20.500.11948/979/discover?filtertype_0=dateIssued&filter_relational_operator_0=equals&filter_0=2015&filtertype=author&filter_relational_operator=equals&filter=Laboni%2C+Fatema+Begum, 2015. Web.

Malik, Maleiha. "Islamophobia myth", *Prospect*, no. 107, 20 February, 2005.Print.

Najjar, Michael Jim. *Contemporary Arab American Theater and Performance in the United States* (Ph.D). USA: University of California, 2011. ProQuest. Web.

Richardson, Robin. "Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism—or what?—Concepts and Terms Revisited." In *Service Training and Educational Development*. Available online: http://www.insted.co.uk/anti-muslim-racism.pdf (Accessed on 27 February 2018). Web.

Runnymede Trust Report . Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia. Islamophobia: a challenge for us all, London: Runnymede Trust, 1997.www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/islamophobia.p df. (accessed 20 May 2016).

Said, Edward. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. London: Routledge Kegan Paul, Ltd, 1995. Print.

-------. "Orientalism Reconsidered". *Cultural Critique*, No. 1 (Autumn, 1985), pp. 89-107. Print.

-----------. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. Print.

_____."A Clash of Ignorance" in *The Nation*. https://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/(Oct.4, 2001). Accessed on January 23, 2018. Web.

_____. Covering Islam: How the Media Determines How We See the Rest of the World. New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1997. Print.

_____. "The Anglo-Arab Encounter" in Said E. W. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002. Print.

Smith, Dinitia. "For Arab-American Playwrights, a Sense of Purpose."*TheNewYork.*14Feb.2006.http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/11/th eater/newsandfeatures/forarabamerican-playwrights-a-sense-of-purpose.html. Web.

"هل لأنهم مسلمون فهم بالضرورة مخطئون؟"
الإسلاموفوبيا في مسرحية يوسف الجندي "غرف اللغة" (٢٠١٠)

أ.م. د/ أيمن إبراهيم الحلفاوي
قسم اللغة الإنجليزية-كلية الآداب-جامعة كفر الشيخ

المستخلص:

شهدت فترة ما بعد هجمات الحادى عشر من سبتمبر عام ٢٠١١ موجة عارمة من الأعمال الأدبية فى الغرب، أخذت تصب جميعها فى اتجاه واحد ألا وهو تشويه صورة الإسلام فى وعى القراء وضميرهم، ليس فقط على المستوى العالمى، بل أحيانًا على شكل تقديم صورة سلبية مبالغ فيها عن الإسلام، صورة لا تمت للحقيقة بصلة، تمثلت فى رجعية الحضارة الإسلامية، وميل المسلمين الدائم للعنف، وترويج الإسلام للإرهاب. وكردة فعل لتلك الموجة، اتخذ العديد من الكتاب الأمريكيين كيوسف الجندي (١٩٦٠-) ذوي الأصول العربية المسلمة مسئولية تصحيح المفهوم المسبق عن المسلمين كمصدر عنف وعدائية، حيث أثاروا ـ ضمن الإطار الدرامي ـ تساؤلات حول سبب اعتبار مجموعة من الناس "معزولين" على أساس الجنسية أو العرق، وما يترتب على ذلك من توفر استعداد للعنف لديهم، إذ تتناول مسرحيته "غرف اللغة" (٢٠١٠) هذه القضية. ينقسم البحث إلى جزأين رئيسيين، فيبدأ الجزء الأول بإطار نظرى عن تطور مفهوم "الإسلاموفوبيا" وعلاقته بالدراسات الأدبية والنقدية، أما الجزء الثانى من البحث، فيتناول تحليلًا لمسرحية يوسف الجندي "غرف اللغة"، وكيفية تناول يوسف الجندي لقضية "الإسلاموفوبيا" في تلك المسرحية، حيث تعكس تلك المسرحية فشل الغرب في فهم طبيعة الإسلام والمسلمين باعتبارهم مصدرًا للخوف والرعب والعنف.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الإسلاموفوبيا؛ عربي أمريكي ؛ العنصرية ؛ الصورة النمطية ؛ الجندي ؛ "غرف اللغة"