

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED BOUDIAF - M'SILA

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

N° :.....



DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

STREAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

OPTION: LITERATURE & CIVILIZATION

**The Role of American Media in Spreading
Islamophobia after 9/11
Case Study: Written Press**

**Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Master Degree**

Submitted By:

Hamadi Nasreddine

Belkaid Maamar

Supervised by:

Mr. Thameur Abdellatif

Academic Year: 2016 /2017

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

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Dedication

Words are not enough to express my immense thankfulness, I am sincerely grateful for my parents for their upbringing, sacrifice, education and support along my whole life especially dear mom, to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude and respect.

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Nasreddine

Dedication

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Abstract

This paper seeks to investigate the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the American mainstream media and its role in spreading and promoting Islamophobia after 9/11, whether the picture is distorted and misinformation, and how this influenced public opinion. Recently, considerable attention has been paid to the Muslim community in the US news, discussions and debates which become hyper-visible. This increased interest makes the need for this research project timely. The events of 9/11 have brought Islam and Muslims in the American spotlight, since then, media plays a significant role on public perceptions, it extensively links Islam with terrorism where often lead to disastrous consequences. This paper would provide a profound analysis of mainstream US newspapers' articles to show the power of media on mindset and the biased portrayal of Muslims and Islam which driven and exploited for personal gains. Qualitative methodology would be adopted along this work. The findings highlight that there is a prejudice, misinformation and some newspapers tended to present Islam and Muslims in a negative way, resorting to some stereotypical images that Islam is violent and intolerance, and adopting a double standard policy to depict Muslims constantly as terrorists, and extremists.

ملخص

تهدف هذه المذكرة إلى دراسة مكانة الإسلام و المسلمين في الساحة الإعلامية الأمريكية و دورها في نشر ظاهرة الخوف من الإسلام خاصة بعد أحداث 11 سبتمبر عن طريق تشويه سمعة الإسلام و تغليب الرأي العام من خلال ممارسات متحيزة و عنصرية ضد المسلمين. مع تزايد حدة الانتباه و الضغوطات على المجتمع الإسلامي في الإعلام الأمريكي أصبح ضرورة فتح مجال لبحث و دراسة هذه الإشكالية مما عجل بظهور هذا الطرح. يتناول هذا البحث دور الإعلام في نشر ظاهرة الخوف و كره الإسلام و شرح آليات تأثيره في بناء تشكيل و تغيير الرأي العام بناء على مصالح و أغراض شخصية من خلال تحليل و دراسة عدد من المقالات التي نشرت في الصحف الأمريكية الرئيسية التي تدعي الشفافية و الموضوعية في طرحها للمواضيع و لكن الحقيقة تبين وجود تحيز فاضح و تمييز في المعاملة و نشر معلومات كاذبة و مغلوطة عمدا لتشويه صورة الإسلام و وضعه في قالب سلبي للمجتمع الأمريكي متبنين بذلك سياسة المعايير المزدوجة و الصور النمطية التي غالبا ما تربط الإسلام بالتطرف، العنف والإرهاب

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List of Abbreviations

9/11: September 11th 2001

CAIR: Council on American-Islamic Relations

CBMI: Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia

CBS: Columbia Broadcasting System

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

CIS: Center for Immigration Studies

CNN: Cable News Network

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

ID: Identification

ISIS: Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

NYT: New York Times

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

WDC: Washington District of Columbia

WSJ: Wall Street Journal

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General Introduction

"There are only two forces that can carry light to all the corners of the globe... the sun in the heavens and the Associated Press down here" (Mark Twain). In present era of globalization, majority of people in society depend on information and communication to remain connected to the world, nowadays role of media is not just limited to inform, educate, or entertain people but it became a tool and even a weapon to achieve certain purposes to particular group by enforcing certain issues. There are positive and negative influences of mass media, which must be understood as a responsible person in society, media has the power to shape public opinion, it is significant and influential on people's thinking, perceptions and attitudes toward things in many different ways and it can insert, enforce, neglect or remove certain topics. So "If you are not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing"(Malcolm X).

Undoubtedly the attacks of 9/11 were rich material for media since the incident happens till the decade that follows, the aftermath of the media's impact still resonates over the world especially on Islam and Muslims. The term Islamophobia became widely spread in the globe and around the United States which defining all the kinds of discrimination, negative perceptions of Islam, prejudice, stereotyping and even physical violence, chiefly came from the media portrayal of Islam and Muslims after the events of 9/11.

Irrational fear of Islam and Muslims has increased exponentially over the world especially within the United States due to the depiction and influence of the biased media which excessively links acts of terrorism to Islam and Muslims. Despite some counted efforts by media to depict fair and objective portrayals of Muslims but the dominant portrayal tend to

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be negative in fact in many different ways which contribute to distort the real image of Islam. Therefore, falsify the public perceptions of the religion and its followers.

This research attempts to reveal the policy and ideology created by the written press against Muslims and the flagrant biases of the American mainstream media in depicting Islam and Muslims as extremists and terrorists. This work sheds lights on the fabrication and the falsely allegations of the American journalists and their advertising campaigns against Muslims, and their double standards, as well as to illustrate the role of media in spreading negative representation against Muslims in a manner that creates personal hate and prejudice in the hearts and minds of international viewers.

The findings of this research would be very helpful for those who are fair minded looking for the truth in providing a proper guidelines for more fair news coverage. It is hoped that this study would open up the eyes of the policy makers to reform a group of a fair, straight, and non-bias journalists in their profession. Also it would be beneficial for intellectuals, students, and scholars of media, politics and religion studies.

Although fear and hatred of Muslims is as old as Islam itself, but the term “Islamophobia” is a relatively recent neologism that is used to draw attention to a normalized prejudice and unjustified discrimination against Muslims. The term has been popularized because of the resurgence in the post-Cold War and specifically post-9/11 United States.

This thesis is going to analyze and address the problematic of Islamophobia in the post-9/11 in the US mainstream media; American Islamophobia emerges as a distinct, contemporary phenomenon with deep historical roots through the American Media.

The departing point of this study is the phenomenon of Islamophobia that has increased exponentially and the prejudice against Islam and Muslims after the events of 9/11, so the main questions should be asked are:

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-Why is Islam portrayed differently than other religions?

-How is the US media promoting and propagating Islamophobia?

-Why do American media always link individual acts to the whole religion? And question is Islam really religion of peace after any acts of terrorism related to ‘extremist Muslims’?

-Do the American media really apply a double standard measurement in presenting Islam comparing to other religions?

A qualitative research method is the most appropriate approach of the chosen focus. It provides more in-depth exploration and analysis. Articles will be analyzed to establish whether the expected themes are apparent or not. It helps to confirm whether there is any pattern of bias and prejudice towards Islam and its followers, the examination of language will play a pivotal role within this study, However, qualitative research, by its nature, implies a degree of bias and personal opinion. Individual’s preconceptions, societal values and cultural influences can lead to bias, and it needs to be taken into consideration. To minimize the risk of bias, this study will also refer to the findings of some of the most influential works within this field. Analytical approach method will also be employed in order to help substantiate findings.

Unquestionably, the role of media in promoting Islamophobia has been widely discussed and debated long before 9/11; this controversial has been undertaken by numerous researchers, journalists and students in their books, articles and academic dissertations.

This topic was treated before in Tlemcen University under the title of “The Impact of 9/11 on Islam in the USA”. This dissertation focuses on the existence of Islamic religion in the United States and North America, involving the structure of Muslim society and the liberty of religions in America. Then, it treats the facts behind the attacks of 9/11.

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Additionally, it tackles the American perception and attitudes towards Islam and Muslims after this event, the research aims at answering the questions that reputedly link Muslims and terrorists, and tries to solve the problem of misunderstanding Islam.

Another research has taken this topic in the University of Central Florida entitled “Before and After 9/11: The Portrayal of Arab Americans in US Newspapers”. This research attempts to show the status of Arab Americans whether members within or out of the community after the events of 9/11. This study analyzes the articles of the main US newspapers USA Today, the New York Times, and the Washington Post by making a comparison between the portrayal of Arab Americans before and after 9/11. Then, it shows the media tendency toward minorities and the negative stereotypes and prejudice that has increased dramatically in the aftermath of 9/11.

Chris Allen in his book *“Islamophobia”* has discussed the historical evolution of the term Islamophobia by looking to its origins, definition, and its impact in the wake of the attacks of 9/11. He takes into consideration the role of media, the contemporary position of Muslims in the world and whether Islamophobia is a continuum of an old anti-Muslims sentiments and Islam hatred or it is completely a modern concept, this book has reopened the old debate of Islam and the West and has questioned the compatibility of Islam and the American view of modernity.

Those studies have dealt with the subject in a general manner. The first focuses on Islam in post 9/11 in social scene neglecting the role of media in perpetrating Anti-Muslims sentiments. The second discusses the portrayal of Arab Americans in Newspapers with less care to the Muslim community; whereas the latter has tackled the issue of Islamophobia globally with little mention to the American media impact. All those aspects have been taken into consideration in preparing this research, the study will cover all the angles surrounding

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Islamophobia origins, impact, role of media in the aftermath of 9/11 providing a new dimension to the study which is the double standards of the American media concerning Islam and its followers regarding violent acts and terrorist attacks within the United States.

This research project is divided into two chapters. The first chapter “Historical Background of Islamophobia: Meaning, Origins and Impact” is devoted to give a historical overview of the Islamic roots in America, and the rising phenomenon of Islamophobia and its evolution, then it discusses the factors that fueled this issue and its impact on the US Anti-Muslim hostility, negative stereotyping, anti-Muslim legislation and the rise of Islamophobic media. The chapter ends by mentioning the contributors and promoters of Islamophobia.

The second chapter “The Portrayal of Islam and Muslims in Mainstream US Media after 9/11” goes more precise by focusing only on the role of the media post 9/11 in distorting the image of Muslims, misinformation and misrepresentation of Islam, through analyzing several articles in the major American newspapers. Additionally, it tackles the media strategies and tools to spread and promote Islamophobia through manipulating the facts, hiding the truth and the double standards. Finally, this chapter suggests some sorts of solutions and remedies to stop or at least to reduce this phenomenon.

Chapter One:

*Historical Background of
Islamophobia: Meaning, Origins and
Impact*

Introduction

The fear and hatred of Muslims is as old as Islam itself. According to Gottschalk and Greenberg, the term Islamophobia has been used since the post-cold war in order to draw attention to a normalized prejudice and unjustified discrimination against Muslims (11). First of all, the chapter will start by giving some historical background of the existence of Islam in America when the first Muslims arrived to this new discovered country and how these people were so beneficial to the European explorers in order to do their trips overseas. Secondly, it will try to go deeper dealing with this phenomenon which is Islamophobia by exploring its origins and how it became a worldwide issue. Then, it is going to move to some historical factors that fueled Islamophobia in the United States including several examples like Salman Rushdie Affaires, and the events of 9/11.

Furthermore, this chapter will discuss the impact of Islamophobia in America by exploring some important points as negative stereotypes, Anti-Muslim legislation and Islamophobic Media, as well as to see how all these factors could change the Americans' mindset towards Muslims.

In the end, the chapter will show the forces that contribute and promote in the increase of the hostility between the Muslim world and the west whether intentionally or ignorantly from both sides also it will go deeper by demonstrating some figures that share a common hatred toward Islam and Muslims. These figures contribute and work to spread Islamophobia whether officials or social activists or Media coverage.

1-The roots of Islam in America:

The existence of Islam in the United States of America started a long time before the discovering of the New World, A better proof of the Muslim presence in America before 1492 comes however from the pen of Christopher Columbus himself. In 1920, the well known historian Leo Wiener of Harvard University mentions in his book "*Africa and the Discovery of America*" that Christopher Columbus knew that there was a Mandingo¹ presence in the New World. Through the Caribbean Ocean, Muslims from West Africa had spread to South America as well as North to parts of Canada. In support of his remarks, Wiener puts forward agricultural, linguistic and cultural evidence.

Cyrus H. Gordon is another recognized American historian who proved beyond all doubt that Muslims in West Africa had traded on the American continent long before Columbus arrived. Gordon shows that they left traces of their presence by referring to the 8th century Arab coins discovered not far from the coast of Venezuela in the southern Caribbean. The historian concludes by summarizing the facts of his study: "It seems, therefore, that a Moorish² boat, having left Spain or North Africa, crossed the Atlantic Ocean about the year 800"(105).

In modern era, the first significant Muslim migration wave to America is an indisputable fact, nearly Ten Million Africans were brought to the American coasts against their will in the late 1700s and the 1800s, an estimated of 10 to 50 percent of them were Muslims. American slavery completely refused the basic humanity of Africans, dissolving their religious affiliations, and forced conversion to Christianity was widely spread. Many Muslim slaves strove to preserve their religious and cultural heritage even after conversion. Among the Muslim slaves in North Carolina, Omar Ibn Said in his autobiography has described his

¹ a member of a people of western Africa in or near the upper Niger valley

² the inhabitants of North Africa.

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struggle with enslavement and imprisonment that he was a Muslim before being sold into slavery and his owners had converted him to the Christian belief, the Mosque who took his name in Fayetteville, North Carolina on southern Avenue stands as a testimony to the legacy of the first American Muslims, a legacy that stands to educate contemporary Islam in America. (Manseau)

The next large number of Muslims immigrated to the United States was during the 20th century from different Muslim countries when the US opened the doors to immigrants from the whole world which gave a chance to anyone around the world to come to the United States with his immediate family. America has put a premium more on skills and family ties than on the origins. Indeed, by time, making the US population more diverse became an objective in itself; this wave has included large numbers of Muslims and others. The numbers of Muslim immigrants started to increase rapidly in the late 1960s according to an analysis conducted by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS). Moreover it shows that, among countries with large Muslim populations, Pakistan has been the leading sending country of immigrants over the last decade, directly followed by Bangladesh, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Egypt.

CIS shows that, this Muslim population chooses to immigrate to the United States for many reasons, as refugees, escaping tyrant dictators, violent regimes, persecution, poverty, civil wars, and looking for better opportunities. Muslim families from the Middle East, South Asia, and North Africa, where they see America as the land of democratic freedom to express their views. Some others seek for education. By the 1990s, U.S. universities and colleges attracted over half a million foreign students, many of whom chose to stay in the United States, where facilities of life are available and more beneficial for their profession, independence, self-sufficiency and opportunities. On the other hand, other category of religious Muslim population which has particular importance in spreading Islam in the United

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States decided to remain in America to spread Islamic beliefs and change it into a majority Muslim country. Also they found several other advantages such as US residency, and Freedom of expression that permits them to write or broadcast whatever they wish.

The establishment and residence of some Muslim students, immigrants within the United States seems to be bothering and disturbing to some white Americans which gave the opportunity to new hatred sentiments towards Muslims and led to multiple kinds of racism, prejudice and discriminations against Muslims based on religious patterns taking this ideology from the bias media coverage.

2-The Rise of Islamophobia

After centuries of expansion Islam has reached every corner in the globe, the history of American and European interactions with Muslims around the world is long and complex. Over time, geopolitical events, wars, conflicts over lands, holy places and security threats posed by violent extremists have defined and engendered Western narratives that portray Islam as the source of violence and extremism. By the waves of Muslim immigration to Europe and the United States Muslims and Islam occupied more attention in the minds of the western leaders and ordinary citizens, this closer proximity has come with costs. The coexistence within the western society was unstable and full of tensions which led to an incomprehensible hatred towards Muslims and misinterpretation of Islam due to the falsely allegations that hyped-up to the Islamic faith.

In recent years, anti-Muslim prejudice in the West has increased exponentially becoming manifested in physical attacks, mosque vandalism, government restrictions, Quran burning, and even fatal shootings. In the last decades, this increase in prejudice and

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discrimination has prompted discussions about what to call this new troubling phenomenon. These sentiments became widely known as Islamophobia.

Islamophobia, according to Oxford English dictionary is defined as dislike or prejudice against Islam or Muslims, especially as a political force, the term is needed after discrimination and prejudice against Muslims in Western societies.

Dr. Edward W. Said American Palestinian born, professor of literature at Columbia University characterizes Orientalism in part as the Western depiction of Arab cultures as inferior or even dangerous to the civilized west. This philosophy is believed to be the foundation for modern day term Islamophobia.

Despite that the word Islamophobia has entered public lexicon recently, but its origins date back earlier in the first years of the twentieth century. It emerged as new coined word in the 1970s, and it became prominent in the 1980s and 1990s and reached public prominence recently after the attacks of 9/11 in USA.

It is not known who really coined the term Islamophobia, when, where, and with what particular purposes and concerns, but one of the earliest appearances and definitions of the term was archived by two French works discussed “Islamophobie” in the context of western colonization of Africa. The first example is an article by Maurice Delafosse entitled “L’état Actuel de l’islam dans l’Afrique Occidentale Française” in 1910. It has talked about how Muslims were treated and perceived by the French colonizers in North Africa. It depicted the majority westerners’ beliefs and views towards Islam and Muslims.

The second appearance was in a book “*la vie de Mohammed prophete D’Allah*” by Etienne Dinet a painter who was a convert to Islam and his fellow Algerian intellectual Sliman Ben Ibrahim written in French in 1916 and published two years later. They used the

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term “Islamophobie”, but it appears that Dinet and Ben Ibrahim were not using the term in a way that depicts the contemporary understanding of the word. (Allen 05)

Other writers used the word Islamophobia to describe prejudice against Muslims in French and other European languages in the twentieth century, but it was not until the later years of that century that the term gained ascendancy in English language. Edward Said’s use of the word in 1985 is considered to be among the first instances of its appearance, albeit briefly in an article entitled “Orientalism Reconsidered” in an academic journal, *Race and Class*, arguing the orient histories, cultures, societies, the relationship between power and knowledge, and the role of the intellectuals in developing their countries.

The term entered into common usage with the publication of a report in 1997, by the Runnymede Trust, Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (CBMI), under the chairmanship of Professor Gordon Conway entitled “Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All” which defined as:

...dread or hatred of Islam and, therefore, fear or dislike of all or most Muslims. Such dread and dislike have existed in western countries and cultures for several centuries. In the last twenty years, however, the dislike has become more explicit, more extreme, and more dangerous. It is an ingredient of all sections of our media, and is prevalent in all sections of our society.

The report has pointed to prevailing attitudes that incorporate radical beliefs such as Islam is monolithic and cannot adapt to new realities, Islam is retarded and it has no common values with the other faiths, Islam as a religion is inferior to the West. It is barbaric, and violent. Islam is a religion of extremism and supports terrorism. Islam is a radical political ideology.

Chapter One: Historical Background of Islamophobia: Meaning, Origins and Impact

Garner and Selod has indexed the term's use in academic articles from 1980 to 2012 and had found that between 1980 and 1989, Islamophobia appeared in the title of just one work, and it was included within 50 pieces. The period between 1990 and 1999, witnesses 24 uses included the term in their titles while it appeared within the works of 287. The turning point started after the events of 9/11. Usage of the term Islamophobia in articles has increased rapidly year after year, more than 500 texts used the term as titles, with more than 6,000 articles from 2010 to 2012 alone. (See Table 1)

3- Factors that Fueled Islamophobia

The American Islamophobia is an entirely new contemporary phenomenon, it is argued that clear historical factors in the genesis and development of this phenomenon have roots from the earliest period of contact between Christian Europe and the newly emerging Islamic world, through the seventh to the tenth century. Geography played a role in the initial conflict. As well as some contemporary incidents that have put more fuel on the fire.

3.1. The Crusades

In their work on Islam in America, Ba-Yunus and Kone observe that the civilizations ringing the Mediterranean Sea have often been on less than friendly with each other; this was true before the advent of Islam as well. The Mediterranean continued to be a place of conflict between surrounding peoples. At first, the East-West conflict that took place as a result of the Arab expansion in the seventh century was chiefly political, economic, and cultural. The specifically religious conflict between Islam and Christianity would not develop until later with the Crusades in the tenth century. Edward Said summarizes the period in "*Covering Islam*", stating that real world events made of Islam a considerable political force. For

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hundreds years, great Islamic armies and navies dominated vast lands in Europe, conquered and colonized its bases. The Islamic expansion eventually spread into Spain, France, and the Balkans, for six hundred years, the Muslims ruled Spain and they were at the gates of Vienna.

This contact between Islam and the West is inevitable; it seems that Europe's early encounters with Islam, at least, can be classified as a clash which left psychological scars.

Jane I. Smith, author of works on Islam in America, states that:

centuries of encounter between Islam and Western Christianity, including the endemic growth and spread of the frontiers of Christian territory, as well as the long, drawn-out battles and skirmishes² of the Crusades, left on both sides a legacy of misunderstanding, fear, prejudice, and, in some cases, hatred.(10)

This means that the American colonizers most of them were puritans and have Christian concepts, they took their stereotypes of Muslims along with them. These European roots continue to influence American Islamophobia today; BaYunus and Kone state that "most Americans, being descendants of European immigrants, grow up with a folklore in which negative images of the people, cultures, and religion of the Middle East persist."(110) However, American Islamophobia has its own unique contributing factors and one important historical factor in the emergence of American Islamophobia is the world view of the Puritans who settled in the New World beginning in the sixteenth century. Their beliefs and way of life are foundational to American secular and religious thought and the American self-image, as well as America's attitude toward "others," including Muslims and Arabs. In particular, Puritan beliefs have had a lasting impact on American Islamophobia specifically; they held the conviction that they were the Chosen People of God. This covenant had two aspects: first, God had blessed the Puritans with the divine right to their New World colony. Second, with

² An episode of irregular or unpremeditated fighting, especially between small or outlying parts of armies or fleets.

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this gift came the obligation to act ethically, establishing God's will on earth; this included a special missionary obligation to the rest of the world.

In the New World, this would mean evangelizing to the Native Americans. Abroad, particularly later in the nineteenth century, American Protestants' focus would expand to Muslims and Arabs in general. Thus the belief in being a Chosen People gave the Puritans the divine right to found their colony in America, but also obligated them to evangelize others. These were fundamental aspects of American belief which would help later for shaping contemporary American perspectives on Islam and Muslims.

3.2. The Iranian Hostages' Crisis

Another factor which played an important role on the American mindset against Muslims is the Iranian hostages' crisis after the Iranian revolution against Shah. November, 1979 thousands of young Iranian students swarmed the U.S embassy in Tehran, capturing the 66 Americans and held for 444 days as hostages, the students wanted the extradition of the Shah from America who were transferred to the US to receive medical treatment of his cancer. Then, Khomeini interfered and supported the students' actions, soon after the Iranian government canceled all its military treaties with the US and the Soviet Union in order to avoid any potential intervention. Those acts made the US president Jimmy Carter to cut all diplomatic relations with Tehran and put sanctions on Iran. In April 1980, eight American servicemen were killed in an attempt to rescue the hostages. Khomeini dictated some terms for the hostages' release including the unfreezing on the Iranian assets and the returning of the late Shah's wealth. The hostages were not released until the moment the president Ronald Reagan took the oath of office, on January 20, 1980 who signed an agreement with Tehran to unfreeze the Iranian assets and release the hostages. (CNN Library)

3.3. Salman Rushdie's Affair

The Satanic Verses and Khomeini's fatwa was an essential event in shaping public opinions and how Muslims and Islam have since been known and understood; it was merely one of the most controversial issues in the late of 1980s and the 1990s. The Satanic Verses was first published in 1988 in UK; the novel was interpreted by many Muslims as blasphemous due to its analogue stories denigrating the prophet Mohammed (Allen 41)

According to McRoy, the debate on this novel was based on the controversial elements that has been used within the novel, including the use of the name Mahoud, considered to be a derogatory term for the prophet Muhammad used by the English during the Crusades; the use of the term Jahilia, indicating the 'time of ignorance' before Islam in the holy city of Mecca; the use of the name of the Angel Gibreel (Gabriel) for a film star, the name of Saladin, the great Muslim hero, for a devil, and the name of the wife of Muhammad Ayesha for a fanatical Indian girl who leads her village on a fatal pilgrimage. Moreover, the brothel of this city was surrounded by whores having the same names as Muhammad's wives.

Ayatollah Khomeini took the matter and issuing a fatwa by the death sentence and he insisted that it is the duty of every Muslim around the world, in a broadcast on Iranian radio in the 14th February 1989, Khomeini stated:

I inform all Muslims in the world that the author of the book, the Satanic Verses, which is against Islam, the Prophet, and the Qur'an, and all those who have published it knowingly are condemned to death. I call on courageous Muslims to execute them as soon as possible wherever they may be. (Allen 42)

The book and the fatwa caused a global consequences, many protests had taken place in Bradford UK, Bombay, Kashmir, Dacca, and Islamabad manifesting against this book which

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led numbers of Muslim countries to ban importing, translating, and selling this book including India, Bangladesh, South Africa, Sudan, Sri Lanka, later on Kenya, Thailand, Tanzania, Indonesia, and Venezuela. For the media the death sentence on Rushdie reinforced those perceptions and stereotypes that were already exist getting more suspicions to the fundamentalist Islam. (Netton)

3.4. The Terrorist Attacks of 9/11

The last major event and the most important one is definitely, the tremendous attacks of September 11th 2001, it has been considered as the turning point and the shift of the East-West relations, the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and on the Pentagon near Washington has brought more attention to the small population of Muslim-American communities than they could have ever dreamed. As the dust settled the people's views remained scattered. Unfortunately, the appearances of Muslims men were quite obvious, and the women scarves, or Hijabs, became easy to spot, so they were targeted for hatred. For months following the attack, Muslim women were forced to hide in their homes to avoid harassment and violence and those that chose, or had to, go into public would wear their scarves in a manner that could not be recognized as being affiliated with their religious beliefs, and men were avoiding any direct contact or debates. Furthermore, after 9/11 Americans continued their harsh views and opinions about any person who resembled the images that the media portrayed as the enemy (Middle Eastern clothes and beard). Within days after the attacks every news channel was bringing images of what the hijackers looked like.

From these images, Americans turned their fear and hatred on to anyone who closely similar to these faces, the Council on American Islamic Relations CAIR reported that it has received over 300 complaints about harassment and assault against Muslims in just three

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days, which was nearly half of the number of similar incidents was reported throughout the previous year. ‘Go back to your country!’ is the most famous phrase used against Muslim families, aside from the verbal and physical attacks and abuse. In fact, the harshest phase was the first nine weeks following 9/11, after which the number of attacks decreased due to many reasons, including the important intervention of law enforcement agencies to stop the violence., the final conclude that American people can be attributed to what they read in their school text books about America’s history and role in the world and to what they see in their media. (CNN)

According to what have been said above, the fear of Islam and Muslims started a long time in the United States and increased gradually by such factors and events which gave the actual meaning of Islamophobia. Therefore influenced the political, social and religious scene within the United States which led to several violent acts against Islam and Muslims.

4-The impact of Islamophobia in America

The United States has a long history of discrimination and prejudice that has led to a lot of struggles and negativity for a lot of minorities, currently the nation holds discriminatory attitudes and practices towards many minority communities, mainly derive from ethnic, religious, racial and gender prejudices. Since the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001 the Muslim community has been under strict scrutiny. After the terrorist attacks, Muslims across the nation were immediately looked suspicious, accused and being watched by the American government. During this time America was essentially seeing a rise in Islamophobia that would eventually hurt innocent Muslim Americans. Those prejudices and discriminations can be distinguished in different patterns and manners. (Brooklier)

4.1 Anti-Muslim Hostility and Hate Crimes

Anti-Muslim racism has been a feature in the American culture for long periods from the first Muslim comers till nowadays, it has taken different forms at different times “closed views suggest that Islam is used as strategic, political and military advantages as opposed as being a sincere and honest religion. Muslims are seen to be instrumental in using Islam as a political or ideological weapon” (Allen 72). Acts of violence were committed in the name of Islam and the ignorance of the real faith of Islam have undoubtedly led to negative public perceptions of Islam and Muslims in the United States, and have certainly fueled Islamophobic reactions.

Dr Abduljalil Sajid Imam and Chairman of the Muslim Council for Religious and Racial Harmony UK has defined anti Muslim hostility as violent language and physical attacks on Muslims in public places, vandalism on mosques and desecration of Muslim cemeteries, discrimination in recruitment, employment practices, and workplace, bureaucratic delay in responding to Muslim requests for cultural sensitivity and healthcare and in planning application for mosques, lack of attention to the fact that Muslims are also affected by poverty and social exclusion.

The statistics of FBI hate crimes based on religious motivation. The years before 9/11 assaults against Muslims were considered low ranges between 21 and 32 hate crimes, but the terrorist attack of 9/11 was dramatically a turning point in the lives of the Muslim community within United States with an increase reached 481 attack in 2001 as a response to the terrorist events, there have been between 105 and 160 incidents per year since then, but it still height comparing to the years before 2001, until 2015 which was the second highest level since reporting began in 1992,

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The latest FBI annual hate crime report shows a sharp increase in the number of hate crimes with attacks against Muslims increasing the most. In one year, anti-Muslim hate crimes in the United States rose 67%, from 154 incidents in 2014 to 257 in 2015. Another report drawn by CAIR shows a significant increase in destruction and vandalism of mosques from 9 incidents in 2014 to 31 incident in 2015. (See Table 2)

The Islamic mosques were also targeted by several attacks by anti-Islam protestors; Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) in cooperation with the University of California Berkeley have recently provided a statistics showing the mosques' vandalism from 2009 to 2015, the report highlights crimes against mosques including destruction, vandalism or property damages by disparate ratios between 2009 and 2014, whilst 2015 has witnessed the highest proportion by 31 incident. (See Table 3)

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) said that it found the FBI hate crime report terrible and by alarming rates. In a statement released, CAIR Government Affairs Director Robert McCaw said "We witnessed a sharp jump in anti-Muslim incidents nationwide last year, with that spike in Islamophobia continuing through 2016 and accelerating after the November 8 election." (Ansari)

4.2. Negative Stereotyping

The negative image of Muslims and Islam has deep historical roots, since the Middle Ages and the crusades. A long list of foreign events have made Muslims more visible in the American society. This view has been triggered by the influx of Muslims immigrants to the western countries, the Iranian revolution, Salman Rushdie's affair various hijackings, hostage taking, and acts of terrorism. And therefore, they are now facing more stereotyping than previously. (Sajid, Allen). Those practices can be classified as follows:

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The religion of Islam is often unfairly presented as hateful and violent and was spread by the sword, it is considered as a threat to the western civilizations, and the Koran is a bloodthirsty book which gives more opportunities for extremists to act aggressively and being terrorists.

Muslims hate Jews and Christians: this belief is also widespread among Americans, many people think that Muslims are extremist group that has hatred attitudes towards non-Muslim communities, this idea leads to another idea that Muslims are instructed and guided to believe that Jews and Christians are to be hated and killed in the name of Islam and in the name of God. Bernard Lewis' article "The Roots of Muslim Rage" discussed the clash of civilizations theory in which he claims that Islam and the west are in a state of clash because Islam inherently divides the world into the house of peace (Islam) and the house of war (the rest of the world). Lewis argues that Muslim extremists problematic not because they misinterpret Islam, but rather because they have interpreted it correctly, and they will remain in a state of conflict and struggle with the western Christian European cultures including the United States.

Muslims hate Jesus Christ: some Christians claim that majority of Muslims hate Jesus, and do not give him the respect that should be given; Muslims reject the idea that Jesus Christ is the only God's begotten son, and was crucified and died on the cross, Islam teaches that Mohammed was superior prophet to Jesus because he brought God's final revelations to mankind. (Arberry)

Women inferiority and oppression: westerners strongly believe in the women inferiority in Islamic societies by treating her as a second class human, women are harshly oppressed by men in the Islamic law and face many different discriminatory attitudes particularly the Hijab or head covering. (Abu Lughod).

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Gottschalk and Greenberg claim that Arab and Muslim women are generally portrayed at stereotypical extreme either as objects of desire or objects of oppression; However women are rarely portrayed as normal human and self determining.

Muslims are anti-modernity: the perception that Muslims oppose modernity is that the people of the Islamic faith are reactionary and opposed moving forward technologically and ideologically, Muslims are seen unwilling or incapable of adapting modernity as it is defined by the technological and ideological standards set by the United States and Western Europe, that's why majority of Islamic countries are considered as third world and developmentally are behind the west, but the dispute is over whether Muslims or Islam to be blamed (Spencer)

Muslims support and promote groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS: this is the harshest stereotypes about Islam and Muslims, majority of westerners and Americans think that Islam encourages extremism and terrorism through the interpretation of the holy Koran. Samuel P. Huntington has used Islamic fundamentalism to demonstrate the clash of civilizations between western and Islamic cultures.

4.3. Anti-Muslim Legislation

Mr. Donald Trump recently has banned citizens of seven Muslim countries. Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Syria, Somalia and Yemen from entering the United States, but this is not the first time that America has banned immigrants of certain groups.

Long time before 9/11, people of Islamic faith faced restrictions and prohibition of entering United States. In 1942 Ahmed Hassan a Yemeni and first Arab Muslim who asked for citizenship was denied naturalization and the court said: "It cannot be expected that as a class they (Arab is term used synonymously Muslim at that time) would readily intermarry with our population and be assimilated into our civilization." in the late 19th and early 20th

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century numbers of Muslim immigrants were expelled away at U.S. ports; even Christians who were suspected of being Muslims secretly were also prevented from entering the United States. (Beydoun)

Following the Iranian hostages' crisis, during which the US embassy in Tehran was stormed and 52 Americans were held hostages for more than a year, soon after the American President at that time Jimmy Carter banned Iranians from entering the country and cut diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1980.

Council on American-Islamic Relations CAIR introduced reports in 2013 "A Brief Overview of the Pervasiveness of Anti-Islam Legislation" and in 2016 "Confronting Fear: Islamophobia and its Impact in the United States" showing the anti-Muslim legislation in the United States, the bills or amendments that have been introduced and the states that have ratified those bills to become laws. (See Table 4)

4.4. Islamophobic Media

Media is a prime influence on people's perception toward variety of topics; it plays a significant role in shaping public opinions politically, economically, socially, religiously and other issues. The majority of people depend on media to remain linked to the world and being knowledgeable of what is happening in the world. Allen Noted:

the role and impact of the media is one that contentious and debatable... to try and explain the media's role therefore remains difficult... the media continue to play a major role in the formulation and establishment of popular perception in the public sphere. (96)

Clint Wilson and Felix Gutierrez show that The American media usually covers minority related issues from the perspective of "us" versus "them" minorities in America are

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usually depicted as a threat to the existing social order in the United States. Native-Americans were the first to attract negative attention due to their resistance and uneasy relationship to white settlers. Similarly, African-Americans, Irish immigrants, Chinese laborers, and Mexican immigrant workers have received lots of media attention at times when their presence was problematic in relation to white-Americans' ideologies, values and goals. (136-139)

According to Amjad Ali, Islamophobia has existed in the media since 1979 when American hostages were captured in Tehran; the American news brought the public's concern to a fever pitch. It seemed that instead of a number of individual Americans, it was the whole nation that was being captive by Iran because it was an election year. Thus the media hype that surrounded this crisis served to heighten Islamophobia in the West generally and in America particularly, since this time American media started building a sort of patriotism amongst readers, listeners and viewers when covering stories relating to East-West issues. (20)

The levels of anti-Islamism in the mainstream media have reached unacceptable heights, whereby Muslims and Arabs are portrayed even in Hollywood movies as backwards, extremists, terrorists, and violent barbarians, obsessed with sex, women and money. (Said), another scholar Sajid says that the film industry was more effective in the portrayal of Arabs and Muslims in a manner that creates hate and prejudice in the hearts and minds of international viewers. (13)

Undoubtedly the attacks of 9/11 in United States were definitely a turning point and a shift in American media coverage to everything related to Islam and Muslims. Due to 9/11, there have been many negative perceptions about Islam and Muslims, anti-Muslim figures and organizations have dominated the American media since 9/11 by depicting massive fears and dangers that these people can supposedly cause. Islam has been the spotlight since September

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11th and there has been a violent stigma attached to their religion including those who claim they continue to plot to overthrow the US government. (Bail. 855)

When people repeatedly see something in the media, they begin to take those ideals for themselves as a truth, majority of people in the United States have not even met persons who are Muslims, yet there is still this bias towards “them” by “us” immediately thinking they are some extreme suicide bomber terrorist.(Bail. 870)

5- Contributors and Promoters of Islamophobia

Nothing comes from vain. Undoubtedly, there are forces contributing in increasing the hostility between the Muslim world and the west whether intentionally or ignorantly from both sides. Contributors and promoters of Islamophobia are not new emerged persons, but rather can be traced to long before 9/11.

According to Dr Amir M. Ali founder of the Institute of Islamic Information and Education US, the real enemy of Islam those who are working in the name of Islam and claim to be Muslims but have little or nothing common with Islam and Muslims. Pseudo-Islamic Cults, groups misinterpret the Islamic teachings and Quran and take it to the extreme level; Dr Amir mentioned some of the well known cults

5.1. Islamic Cults

Ahmadiya Movement in Islam also known as Qadiyanis, the nation of Islam, the blind following of sheikhs, imams, murshids and mullas, those groups have radical beliefs and practices far away of the real Islam claiming to be Muslims but not perform the tenets of Islam as they call themselves “non-practicing Muslims” whereas there is no such term in Quran or Hadith collections, also there are who replace the Quran and Hadith by writings of

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their sheikhs and leaders despite that the fact that Quran and Sunnah are the primary sources of Islamic guidance, and absolutely there are who took interpretation of the Quran to the extreme level and act violently and aggressively by the name of Jihad to everyone who dare to oppose them whether Muslims or non-Muslims, which led to these contemporary extremism and terrorism creating misunderstanding of Islam, therefore contributes to Islamophobia

5.2. Socio-Political Leaders and Hatred Organizations

There are many figures who contribute and work to spread Islamophobia whether officials or social activists. They share a common hatred towards Islam and Muslims. The 2016 US presidential election revealed that Islamophobia still exists and it was a winning strategy for the current president Donald Trump. Khaled beydoun, an associate professor at the University of Detroit stated after Trump had won the election:

Islamophobia won resoundingly tonight. Instead of the first female president, the United States got its first Islamophobia president... He delivered what the market demanded, and doubled down on his anti-Muslim rhetoric. He fed the Islamophobia his loud and angry base demanded, and as indicated by election results, a sizable portion of the silent, white majority. Trump won because he was willing to deliver Islamophobia in the blatant and brazen terms his Republican peers and predecessors would not fully commit to.

A lot of American Muslims today are afraid of what would happen and what Trump presidency will bring. Trump has also said he would certainly implement a federal database to register America's estimated three million-plus Muslims and would not hesitate in asking Muslim-Americans to carry a special form of ID noting their faith. (Hasannov)

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The second leader who contributed harshly in spreading and promoting this phenomenon is definitely the former president George. W. Bush who led America entering to unnecessary wars. Democrats and anti-war argue that Bush administration manipulated the intelligence and misled the American people to war on Iraq by propagating and convincing the US public opinion that Iraq was involved in the attacks of 9/11, possessed weapons of mass destruction, and represented as a growing threat to the US national security, a campaign supported by the power of the American news media, in which, they have exploited pre-existing negative stereotypes of the Muslim community worldwide. (Morgan 83)

Other promoters of Islamophobia are those figures and institutions who use Islamophobic materials to advance their own agenda and serve their interests. This category included individuals seeking public office. CAIR in a report conducted in 2010 “Islamophobia and its Impact in the United States: Same hate New Target” have identified some social activist figures who mainly exploit this phenomenon to gain self benefits. Daniel Pipes is considered as the grandfather of Islamophobia in America. His contributions to anti-Muslim intolerance cannot be overlooked, he once said:

western European societies are unprepared for the massive immigration of brown-skinned peoples cooking strange foods and maintaining different standards of hygiene... all immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes but Muslims are more troublesome than most. (19-20)

Another figure is Pamela Gellar who self identifies as “racist Islamophobic anti-Muslim bigot” along with Robert Spencer, she is the co-founder of the group Stop the Islamization of America, she posted an image of the prophet Muhammad as a pig, another image headlined “piss be upon him” showing one of the controversial Danish cartoons of the prophet and mocking the phrase of peace be upon him. Additionally, her fellow Robert Spencer uses an

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intellectual strategy by tackling the Islamic texts and principles that do not fit him; Spencer has referred to the prophet Muhammad as conman³.

5.3. Media Coverage

In this era of technology, societies depend on the media for getting instant information. This over dependence gives the media an unparalleled power to form public opinions and a certain mindset. It also moulds the ways, how different segments, especially ethnic minorities in a given society interact with each other. This exercise has been very vivid, when comes to look at the tone and style of debates being carried out concerning the presence of Muslim communities in the United States. In this context, media not only provides tainted information, resulting in the production of prejudices but also is responsible for promoting these prejudices by twisting the facts, distorting the image of Islam, and repeating these. This has affected the process of mutual integration of a large number of Muslim groups living in the United States. High unemployment, social marginalization, lack of a dialogue and rise in Islamophobia are the net results of this one-sided media coverage.

America is one of the nations that enormously influenced by the media. Both old and young have access to media systems and devices. Young people who lack sufficient skills and qualifications to understand the globe, they rely heavily on the media what make them an easy target to be manipulated and misled. The American media both directly and indirectly play a crucial role of the spreading and preserving of negative image of Islam and its followers by the choice of the content of their articles and TV programs, especially by mentioning the ethnic origins or religious affiliation if the crime is related to a Muslim. Edward Said has stated:

³ A man who cheats or tricks someone by gaining their trust and persuading them to believe something that is not true.

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“It ought to go without saying that the media are profit-seeking corporation and therefore, quite understandably have an interest in promoting some images of reality rather than others. They do so within a political context made active and effective by an unconscious ideology, which the media disseminate without serious reservations or opposition. (49)

The coverage of the events of 9/11 needs to be placed in the context of Islamophobia to understand how it relates to and contributes to the hatred and discrimination of the Muslims. Said argue that the expected from the mainstream US media is to portray a clear image to the world that the United States were the victims in each alleged attack and depicted as the good guys, liberty defenders and democracy spreaders, knowing that most of the world’s media depended on the American media as their source of knowledge.

Conclusion

This theoretical chapter has covered all the key aspects of the study; it started with the roots of Islam in the Americas. Then, it explored the rise of Islamophobia, first use of the term, evolution and its contemporary concept. Next, it moves to the historical factors that fueled Islamophobia starting by the Christian European conflict after the Islamic expansion in the early centuries, then in modern era with the Iranian hostages' crisis and its aftermath, Salman Rushdie's affair and Khomeini's fatwa, beside these, the attacks of 9/11 which is the most significant factor that has put Islam and its followers in the top of the canon.

Additionally, this part has described the impact of Islamophobia in America focusing on the anti-Muslim hostility, negative stereotyping, anti-Muslim legislation and the rise of Islamophobic media in post 9/11. Furthermore, this chapter has revealed the contributors and the promoters of Islamophobia within the US, from one hand, the stray Islamic cults and their falsely extremist practices, on the other hand, the social, political leaders and hatred organizations, finally, the major player in this phenomenon the media.

This theoretical results need to be proved and examined, and this is going to be discussed in the next chapter by focusing on the influence of the media and its role in shaping public opinion through providing several data books, journals and articles published in the mainstream newspapers in the American scene.

Chapter Two:

*The Portrayal of Islam and Muslims in
Mainstream US Newspapers after 9/11*

Chapter Two: The Portrayal of Islam and Muslims in mainstream US Newspapers after 9/11

Introduction

Following the events of 9/11, the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the American media has moved from bad to worse, Islam was positioned by side of terrorism, Muslims became targeted, this chapter attempts to provide an analytical description of articles, columns, essays...etc of the mainstream newspapers in the United States by scholars, journalists, and intellectuals to show the responses of the US press after the attacks of 9/11 and their coverage of the event in relation to Islam and Muslims.

First of all, the chapter starts by a look on the power of the politicized media on the mindset and how the media is able to shape, construct and change public opinions to the favor of particular side at the expense of another using some strategies and tools to reach their goals. Then it describes the response of the US newspapers about 9/11 and its aftermath, it shows the coverage of the events and the negative representations of Islam and Muslims along the decade that follows the incident.

Additionally, it tackles the role of the mainstream media in manipulating the facts and hiding the truth after the voices that rise from highly educated class of scientists, physicians and journalists who assume that 9/11 was an inside job. Next it reveals the complicity of the US corporate media to spread and publicize the propaganda of 'War on Terror' to convince public opinion and the world community to go into war in Afghanistan then Iraq to gain public support and avoid criticism.

Last not least, it illustrates the US media bias and the double standard measurement concerning terrorist attacks before and after 9/11, it shows the process of promoting Islamophobia and anti-Muslims sentiments by the treatment of the media in many terrorist incidents within the United States, and how the media depicts the perpetrators regarding

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violent acts when they are Christians and the complete different portrayal when they are Muslims.

Finally, the chapter suggests solutions and remedies for Islamophobia based on initiatives of scholars, authors and politicians; they provide suggestions and strategies to end or at least to reduce this outrageous phenomenon.

1- The power of Media on Mindset

The world has witnessed the powerful tool of the global media in the second half of the twentieth century; it has been one of the major sources that defined the events happening around the world in all domains, and has enabled the world to break through the barriers of differences. The traditional role of mass media is informing, educating, and entertaining. Meanwhile, with the revolutionary evolution of communications, an unprecedented opportunity has been created to share and exchange information for knowledge around the world, the media can bring change in behavior and attitude of the people by emphasizing certain issues, the media has turned the affairs into a war of words actually, today's wars in the battle fields are the actions of what were designed, discussed, and persuaded through the media in molding public opinion.

Happer and Philo brought a significant article on "The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change" discussing the influence of mass media on both, the level of individual through construction of public beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral changes; and at the governmental level in terms of policy actions. They illustrate the conditions in which people accept or reject a message from the media especially when they are aware of the subject matter, and then they discuss the ways in which attitudinal shifts facilitate changes on the policy level. In the final process they concluded that the media play a facilitating role of the policy actions by repetition and reinforcement of certain messages and the absence of proposed alternatives

The producers of media including social and political institutions provide specific selective topics and issues to the audience designed to serve some interests and benefits of certain groups such as lobbyists, those producers can limit the information oriented to the

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people, they can emphasize or remove certain issues from the public discussions whenever they want, they have the ability to shape and change public perceptions regarding issues through the recurrence and reinforcement of particular messages by the repeated exposure of the subject matter, Happer and Philo have stated:

“...we found a relationship between the prior exposure to information, often related to strength of attitude, on the subject and the degree to which the information impacted on beliefs and opinions. Those who had been least exposed to either subject were most open to adjusting their views and conversely those who arrived at the groups with most exposure were least likely to have their opinions changed by the new information”.(332)

Framing is the term used to refer to how an incident is portrayed in particular news coverage, it is the manner of depicting events in terms of words, visuals, tone and emphasis through identifying the problems, diagnoses the reasons, making judgments and suggesting solutions. The term terrorism is one of the most repeated and contested term in the contemporary political and media scene, the events of 9/11 has shifted the media framing of terrorism from a minor threat to a ‘War on Terror’, media coverage of international terrorism created a new stigma of ‘Otherness’¹ based on religious affiliation. Significant questions arose about how far media journalistic standards adopt balance, fair, objectivity and truth in cases of political conflicts and acts of violence. The most common frames used by the American mainstream media are linking Islam and Muslims with terrorism (Powell, Sultan)

Islam entered the contemporary U.S. news cycle initially because of connections to oil, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and terrorism; thus, all of the major stories, and

¹ being or feeling different in appearance or character from what is familiar, expected, or generally accepted

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what the audiences in the West know about Islam and Muslims, is connected to control of the resource of oil, war, and terrorism.(Powell 92)

From the US media, have one ever heard about Jewish terrorist, Hindu terrorist or Buddhist terrorist? When was the last time Christian terrorist has been heard? Big No! Actually the war on terror is only targeted to Muslims and Islamic countries (Sultan)

Repeated coverage of Muslims as terrorists in the media leads to the belief that they are terrorists in fact. Therefore, discrimination and hatred derives from that source against the Muslim world. They name this phenomenon the Agenda-setting theory where mass media agenda-setting causes an issue to be considered of highly value and importance to the public. The more people have exposure to news media, the more likely they are attached to the issues that are covered in news regularly. Thus, media has a significant influence in changing public perception. (Amiri)

Murad Alazzany and Wong Bee Eng in their analytical study “Islam and Muslims in the New York Times: Two versions, Two camps” discussing the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the New York Times, using the Critical Discourse Analysis approach, they found that Islam and Muslims were classified in two versions: moderate and extremist Islam under subcategories of Islam and violence, modern Islam, extremist Islam, and modern Muslims versus extremist Muslims. These topics identified the main themes that dominated the representation of Islam and Muslims in the New York Times directly after the events of 9/11. They wanted to understand “how hidden ideologies permeate linguistic structures, and how various thematic concepts seep into the whole discourse.”(35) The selection of the words has a significant influence on the mindset of the audience through playing on a sensitive tender of the people’s emotions and tendencies.

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Alazzany and Bee have shown the media strategies and tools adopted to portray a dichotomy of Islam and Muslims camps as peaceful and violent, in their analysis extremist Islam is portrayed as a threat in the New York Times, fundamentalism of Islamic society is represented as backwardness adopting a strategy of intimidation, using terms such as extremists, militants, radicals which served to create fear and hatred towards Islam and Muslims

The mass media plays a crucial role in the enhancement or destruction of certain groups by the images people see on a daily basis. Therefore, most Americans form their opinions of other cultures or people based on what they read in print, hear on the radio, see in films, television, and on the Internet. Edward Said in his book "*Covering Islam*" following the Iranian Hostage Crisis, points out that the American media and its experts have failed to understand and explain the Arab and Muslim world to the American public, the media controls and filters information selectively to determine what people learns about Islam and therefore misrepresent the real Islam.

The West with limited understanding of Islamic history has identified a new enemy, "radical Islam", a stereotype common to Western belief, portraying Muslims as fundamentalists or potential terrorists. Some of these ideas that the Westerners have developed about Islam are due to the mass media of the West. Reporters who cover the Muslim world have very little details about it and therefore, develop a distorted image of Islam that Western culture adopts and believes.

The war planners of the United States used media as an important instrument of their war agendas in order to gain public support since people are strongly influenced by the mass media. Important amount of the effectiveness of disinformation in making the public ready for aggression is the fact that some Americans believed that Saddam Hussein had a hand in the

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events of 9/11. Immediately after the events, the majority of them believed this by the time of the invasion. This was the misinforming result of the coordinated efforts of the war makers and media producers.

2- The Portrayal of Muslims and Media Reactions post 9/11

The attacks of September 11th, 2001 on the World Trade Center in New York and on the Pentagon near Washington DC were a devastating blow to not just the US national security but to the American pride and the American identity as a whole since the targets were symbolic icons to the United States of America; The World Trade Center as a symbol of capitalism in the heart of New York financial district while the Pentagon symbolizes an icon and the center of the US military power. The attacks brought a change in people's understanding of terrorism because of the shock and destruction that was caused on both physically and emotionally. These events provoked unprecedented media responses around the globe and within the United States in particular.

Violent acts provide huge material for media outlets and it gives the offenders a significant way to display their terror and their causes, so the media needs terrorists as much as terrorists need the media. Over the past several years, the American media has produced huge amount coverage of 9/11 and its aftermath with considerable financial resources and some public supports using the events of 9/11 to gain self benefits whether politically or ideologically, the coverage of these events needs to be placed in the context of the matter of Islamophobia. The focus is going to be on the written press and newspapers to show the bias treatment of the American press from the very beginning of the incident till the decade that follows, Islam has been in the spotlight since the events of 9/11, negative representations of Islam and Muslims increased exponentially and became popular to associate and link Muslims with terrorism and violence in the pages of the newspapers.

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2.1. The New York Times

The most respected and well known daily newspaper in USA and abroad, it is considered as the most prestigious newspaper in the world, with many prizes that has won. The New York Times has dealt with the events of 9/11 with impartiality as they claimed, but the bias treatment can be found in numerous articles that were published by NYT, the headline of the front page the day next 9/11 was: “U.S. ATTACKED; hijacked jets destroy twin towers and hit Pentagon in day of terror”. The writer N. R. Kleinfeild immediately has ranked the events as “the worst and most audacious terror attack in American history”, he depicted the attacks as a new day of infamy, soon after he points out that the highly sophisticated operation and well planning needs well trained members to get used to modern jetliners and the history of US with such attacks led many officials and experts to indicate to Osama Bin Laden the Islamic militant.

According to Ervand Abrahamian a historian of Middle Eastern, professor at Oxford University, a teacher at the City University of New York, Columbia University, and member in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the NYT soon after 9/11 has launched a new section “A Nation Challenged”, it was published daily along the next four months intended to look for the roots, causes and consequences of 9/11 by dozens of articles with controversial and debatable titles like ‘Yes, this is about Islam’, ‘This is a religious war’, ‘Jihad 101’, ‘The one true faith’, ‘Dictates of faith’, ‘Defusing the holy bomb’, ‘Barbarians at the gates’, ‘The force of Islam’, ‘Divine inspiration’, ‘The core of Muslim rage’, ‘Dreams of holy war’, ‘Mosque and state’, ‘Word for word: Islam’s argument’, ‘The deep intellectual roots of Islamic rage’, ‘The age of Muslim wars’, ‘A head-on collision of alien cultures’, ‘Feverish protests against the West’, ‘How Islam and politics mixed’, ‘Survey of the Islamic World’,

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'Faith and the secular state', 'How Islam won, and lost the lead in science', and 'Two views: can the Koran condone terror?'(531)

Thomas Friedman American Jewish author, journalist and columnist has published several articles in the NYT tackling the issue of 9/11 in relation to Islam. In his article "War of Ideals" he defines the Islamic world as a threat, enemy and source of terrorism; he claims that he had received a letter from Saudi Woman begging for help from the religious authoritarians and the intolerance teachings of the government that paralyze their lives, he continues that hateful sentiments are being taught in mosques and Muslim schools, and in order to prevent such plots and tragedies he suggests, to fight those Islamic traditional teachings in public with implications that Islam needs to be modernized and westernized. This creates fear, suspicion, and mistrust of Muslims and promotes Islamophobia in the US.

Another piece of writing was published in the NYT entitled "This is a Religious War" written by Andrew Sullivan, English born, American writer and editor, he declares that 9/11 was only the beginning of a new epic war and this surely represents a part of Islam and cannot be denied or ignored, it is a war of fundamentalist Islam against all peaceful faiths that seek freedom and modernity, he claims that Islam and Quran have some extreme teachings regarding those who are non-Muslims and unbelievers, he states:

Most interpreters of the Koran find no arguments in it for the murder of innocents.

But it would be naïve to ignore in Islam a deep thread of intolerance toward unbelievers, especially if those unbelievers are believed to be a threat to the Islamic world. There are many passages in the Koran urging mercy toward others, tolerance, respect for life and so on. But there are also passages as violent as this:

"And when the sacred months are passed, kill those who join other gods with God

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wherever ye shall find them; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush.

There was an interview with Huntington, the New York Times journalist asked whether the crisis has proved his horrible predictions in his book “clash of civilizations” years ago, he replied that Bin Laden had accelerated the clash in which he was not surprised that the hijackers were well educated since they were encouraged by cultural hatreds, nor he was surprised by the violence because the bloodshed has direct relation to Islam, and what strengthen his arguments are the division and tensions within Islamic territories exemplifying by the conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya and Kashmir at that time (Abrahamian 532).

2.2. The Wall Street Journal

The largest circulation newspaper in the United States, published daily based in the New York City, derives its name from the Wall Street, the heart of the financial district in Manhattan.

According to the Islamophobia Studies Journal, Suad Joseph and Benjamin D’harlingue, has discussed “The Wall Street Journal’s Muslims: Representing Islam in American Print News Media” by analyzing number of articles were published in the WSJ before and after 9/11.

Roger Scruton’s article entitled “Islamofascism” is a comparison between Islam and Nazi fascism, Scruton that we should be grateful to the French writer Maxine Rodinson for coining this term that enable people to notify our common enemy, according to Scruton “all of ‘us’ are under threat by Islamic terrorism, regardless of ‘our’ politics, left or right, liberal or conservative, capitalist or communist. He adds, Muslims are not part of this ‘us,’ for Muslims are, in the end, sympathetic to terrorism” (154), he describes the Islamic psyche as

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monolithic, dogmatic, dangerous, temperamental, intolerant, and even animal-like accusing Islam of presenting all the trappings of fascism. He claims that majority of Muslims do not approve terrorism but there are other majorities and majorities, "...it is right to respect people's beliefs, when these beliefs pose no threat to civil order" (155) but recent incidents led many people to question where exactly Muslims' position in such matters.

2.3. USA Today

American daily newspaper distributed in all 50 states, it is also printed in Europe, Asia, Pacific and Canada with an international edition, it is considered among the widest circulation newspapers in United States, it is widely read and has a significant impact on the US citizens from its foundation.

Nabeel Qureshi Pakistani American author and columnist, in an article written in the USA Today under the title of "The Quran's deadly role in inspiring Belgian slaughter: Column" after Brussels airport and subway attack in 2016, the writer tried to awaken the Americans and warn them from the radical Islam in his subtitle "Western recruits for jihad are inspired by the literal interpretation of Muslim sacred texts. This is what we must fight" he claims that most Muslims are more likely to be radicalized than other religions, he describes Muhammad's prophetic Career by starting with peaceful teachings then moving to more increasing violence based on the teachings of the Quran questioning the interpretation of chapter 9 (Surat Eltawba), he says:

Surah 9 is a command to disavow all treaties with polytheists and to subjugate Jews and Christians (9.29) so that Islam may "prevail over all religions" (9.33). It is fair to wonder whether any non-Muslims in the world are immune from being

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attacked, subdued or assimilated under this command. Muslims must fight, according to this final chapter of the Quran, and if they do not, then their faith is called into question and they are counted among the hypocrites (9.44-45). If they do fight, they are promised one of two rewards, either spoils of war or heaven through martyrdom. Allah has made a bargain with the *mujahid* who obeys: Kill or be killed in battle and paradise awaits (9.111).

This article brought more attention of westerners since the writer used to be Muslim (convert to Christianity), he spreads more misinformation about Islam and misinterpretation about Quran in which he made a distorted image about Islam and Muslims, thus he contribute widely and promote Islamophobia

2.4. The Washington Post

The Washington Post is a newspaper, published in Washington DC seems to be continuing the hatred sentiments toward Islam even decade after 9/11, in an article written by Michael E. Miller entitled “ Random act or Islamist terrorism? Questions linger as Ohio restaurant reopens after machete attack”, the writer has opened his article by this words ‘four victims, hundreds of stitches, several nearly severed fingers, one corpse and no clear answers‘ he describes an attack of a Muslim immigrant on an Israeli restaurant in Columbus Ohio questioning the real intentions of the attacker and the radical belief that stands behind him, he claims that the FBI had previously investigated the doer for alleged radical Islamic threats four years ago, he said that the attacker has yelled ‘Allahu Akbar’ and attacked the customers with a machete in the restaurant.

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Regardless to the fact that the incident is quite violent and unacceptable but such depiction and stereotype is designed to maintain and extend the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims by using offensive words such Islamist terrorist and radical Islam.

2.5. The New York Post

Another respectful newspaper, highly circulated in New York and surrounding areas, the little sister of NYT which is the New York Post, this journal has talked a lot about 9/11 and its aftermath in relation to Islam and Muslims, the following article was published by Jonathan Foreman Anglo-American journalist titled “Arabia vs. the World” in the year before the Iraq war talking about the role of Arab countries in preventing any military actions in Iraq, he surprisingly wondered, why the Arab League decided to stand by the side of Saddam Hussein and against the United States, as a response Foreman asked and hoped of bringing all the giants America, Russia, China and some European States in a multicultural anti-Islamist alliance bringing into the scene the events of 9/11 that have been committed by Muslim extremists, then he reminds Russia and China for their long struggles against fundamentalist, Islamic militants through history. Additionally, he claims and accuses Muslims from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia of funding terrorists and extremists in Kashmir and other rebellious movements elsewhere in the world using their oil wealth.

3- Media Manipulations and Hiding the Truth

The attacks of 9/11 drove a sharp knife straight into the heart of America and into the pride and status of the most powerful nation in the world, the ambiguity, unclear picture and the irrational official story of the government, and for many other reasons the events have provoked and inspired a lot of people to start investigating the world major events that shape

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and change the destination of all humanity. For many Americans and others around the world the events of 9/11 were essential and great wake-up call to search for truth. By looking deeply with skeptical mind and critical eye, the picture would be clearer than it has been shown.

A few powerful and rich individuals who seek for the 'New World Order' to fulfill their agendas of world conquest have revealed their true identity through the monstrous deception of 9/11 to trick the world in general and the Americans particularly. Fuerza an independent writer and researcher, he wrote a book "*Masters of Deception: Zionism, 9/11 and the War on Terror Hoax*" questioning the real responsible of the 9/11 tragedies putting all the blame on the Israeli Zionism with collusion of the American high officials and mainstream media.

The Guardian has released an article by Christina Asquith in 2006 "Who really Blew the Twin Towers" based on the essays and journals of the association of 'Scholars for 9/11 Truth' which is an organization formed by a group of around 75 US professors, physicians and engineers determined to prove that 9/11 was a hoax. Asquith shows the story of the professor of physics Steven Jones who confirms that 9/11 was an inside job based on hundreds of scientific proofs saying that this play had been planned long before 9.11.2001. She added that the association strongly believes that federal official and the secret CIA station have participated in the attacks of 9/11 by the complicity of the controlled media because they wanted the United States to have a portion in the Middle Easter's oil, and to install a military base to be as near as possible from Tehran

Numerous publications have been released by the association of 'Scholars for 9/11 Truth' exposing falsehoods and revealing the facts, James H. Fetzer the head of the organization has published an article "Mounting Evidence of 9/11 Video Fakery: New Proof of Media Duplicity, Scholars Claim" accusing television broadcasts of CNN, CBS and FOX News of manipulating the facts and fake videos about the plane that hit the Pentagon,

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according to the scholars there was a delay between the event's occurrence and the broadcasting of live footage which creates more chances for image manipulation. Fetzer strengthens his argument by quoting from Mr. Morgan Reynolds former chief economist in the department of labor during the Bush administration when he says that "video fakery may have been used to hide the absence of planes that hit the buildings"

Fetzer has published another article "Purdue 9/11 Simulation exposed as fraud Media covers up hoax and conceals crimes" Purdue simulation done by Purdue University Indiana which is a computer simulation and animation of 9/11 in which, they claim that the buildings have fallen because of the effect the jetliners and the fire. Fetzer has argued the collapse of the twin towers under such circumstances refuting the government's 9/11 commission report that the planes hit the towers causing fire that weakened the steel bases and led to the collapse of the buildings, he guarantees that the damage that brought the buildings down cannot be caused by a hit of plane or its fuel because the towers were designed to withstand and resist the harshest conditions possible of nature, weather or such accidents, and scientifically the steel bars cannot be melted in such temperature. Fetzer put all the blame on the Guardian and the New York Times of publishing articles about 'the Purdue Simulation' without critical analysis, he considers it as tragic that the media abdicated its responsibilities toward the readers as a reliable source of information

"*9/11 Finding the Truth*" a book of compilation of articles by Andrew Johnson, focused around the research and evidence compiled by Dr. Judy Wood, Johnson has brought a massive amount of proofs and evidences from all the angles physics, engineering, media...etc surrounding 9/11 rebutting the official story of the government. Regardless to the irrefutable scientific proofs that have been discussed in this book, he mentions the media manipulations

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and video fakery hiding all the stories that do not suit for their allegations, he accuses the mainstream media of choking with a way or another truth seekers, he said:

“When considering daily news report, how often do we stop and think, how accurate is this information? What is the source? Or how has this or that conclusion been drawn? Is the information complete? There are two expressions that are pertinent to the thrust of what I am saying, do not believe what you read in the papers...” (03)

Another book was published on the light of this controversy by an American historian, author and journalist Webster G. Tarpley entitled “*9/11 Synthetic Terrorism made in USA*” discussing the conspiracy theory proving that 9/11 was an inside job, he further criticizes the American media generally and the New York Times in particular for its non-objectivity coverage towards such events and problems, he shows the role of media in supporting and standing by side of certain political agenda (Bush administration) by particular system of propaganda. “...of course the fact that one reads something in the New York Times guarantees nothing these days” (40)

It was the media who started first pointing out allegedly to the Islamic terrorism by accusing Bin Laden and al Qaida. Furthermore they went further when they begin questioning the tenets of Islam as a peaceful religion.

All these publications of books, articles, essays, journals and letters providing huge numbers of irrefutable evidences and proofs that 9/11 was certainly an inside job, but the controlled corporate media still deny all this certitude and putting all the responsibility on Osama Bin Laden and the Islamist terrorist al Qaida and unprofessionally continue its

tendentious campaign against Muslims and Islam as the main source of extremism and terrorism by adopting a double standard measurement policy.

4- The Media's Hypocritical Bias and Double Standards

April 19, 1995 a bombing attack on Alfred P. Murrah, federal office building in Oklahoma City, USA killed 168 people and hundreds were injured, minutes later media reporters speculated that 'Islamic extremists' or 'Arab radicals' were the potential doers, then federal officials proceeded on the theory of terrorist attack.

April 20, 1995 the New York Times came out with a possibility that the attack had been committed by Islamic militants like those who bombed the World Trade Center in February 1993, based on some witnesses, investigators have suspected a Middle Eastern men who were seen driven away from the area shortly before the bombing (Johnston)

Surprisingly, soon after, Timothy McVeigh a white Christian man was arrested and later linked to the attack leaving no chance to support or even to claim the idea of Muslim's responsibility in the bombing. David Johnston has written an article in the NYT "Terror in Oklahoma: The Overview; Oklahoma Bombing Plotted for Months, Officials Say" the writer has discussed the Oklahoma City bombing saying that the attack was carefully planned and deliberately timed in 'the second anniversary of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's tear gas assault on the compound of the Branch Davidian sect in Waco on April 19, 1993' he said that the reason was an extreme anger of Mr. McVeigh over the deaths of more than 80 people in the fiery assault in Waco by FBI agents two years earlier. He has been charged for the bombing of the Federal building. The surprise and the notice here that the writer has never mentioned a word such terrorist, extremist, or radical even though the casualties reached 168

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including children under age six and 680 others were injured, in contrast he talked about McVeigh's achievement and career as an infantryman² during the Persian Gulf war, rather he reminds by his awards and medals for his service, and the most important thing that obviously can be noticed is that the writer has never mentioned his religious affiliation and has never considered him as a radical or terrorist neither discussed or opened a debate on the religion or the teachings of Christianity.

Another sample of the double standards measurement of the mass media and the official authorities is represented in the incident that happened recently in Oregon US, when an armed group calling themselves Citizens for Constitutional Freedom has occupied the entrance of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge by guns and weapons protesting against the abuse of federal authority against the Hammond family who were sentenced to serve five years in prison, and to force Washington to release its holds on large tracts of Western land. The government has dealt with this protest carefully to avoid any possible struggle or clash between them, the protest was ended days later. The NYT coverage of the incident completely different than it should be since the protesters have used arms and weapons. An article written by Kirk Johnson et al "Cautious Response to Armed Oregon Protest" the writers have described the occupiers as anti-government protesters and the Officials in Washington downplayed the situation, taking a kind of wait and see mode, avoiding any contact that might be gone wrong.

The same incident has been taken by the Washington Post "Armed men, led by Bundy brothers, take over federal building in rural Oregon", written by Carissa Wolf et al. the same bias coverage was depicted, they have described the incident as a group of anti government activists led an armed standoff and occupy a federal wildlife refuge in Oregon showing

² A soldier belonging to an infantry regiment

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enough signs and hostility to react against any violent response from local police or any other government forces, one of the protesters left a goodbye video for his family, and other said that he did not come here to shoot but he came here to die, if the government would attempt to remove them forcibly, Ammon Bundy one of the heads leading this protest said “If a standoff resulting in violence occurs, it would begin on the government’s side” his brother Ryan adds “telling the Oregonian that the group doesn’t want to resort to violence but will not rule it out if authorities attempt to remove the occupiers from the property”

But the question that should be asked was “What if the Oregon Protesters were Blacks or Muslims? Debate Ensues” an article written by Katie Rogers in the NYT, she questions what if the armed men were Muslims or blacks, what would happen? Some others wondered why the media and the authorities did not call the armed occupation as a form of terrorism or this stereotype applies only when it comes to Muslims or non-Christian minorities, the authorities were also criticized of the lack of force that should be used, comparing to past similar incidents. If armed Muslims occupied a federal building, threatened police and other authorities’ forces, recorded martyrdom videos definitely they would be called terrorist, likewise with black Americans, they would be called anti-police, thugs and militants.

CNN has published an article in 2010 under the title of “Study: threat of Muslim-American Terrorism in US exaggerated” CNN has shown a study released by researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University that the Muslim-American terrorism has increased since 9/11. They marked a list of 136 individuals categorized as Muslim-American offenders had been radicalized in the US. The list includes arrested, convicted, wanted or killed offenders in relation to terrorist activities since 9/11.

Omar Alnatour has published an article entitled “Muslims are not Terrorists: A Factual look at Terrorism and Islam” in the Huffington Post based on the FBI’s report of terrorist

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attacks in the United States between 1980 and 2005, the report shows that 94% of all terrorist attacks in the US during this period were committed by non-Muslims, it means that any terrorist suspect is over nine times more likely to be a non-Muslim than a Muslim. Additionally the same report has shown that there were Jewish acts of terrorism based on their religious passions higher than the Islamic ones. The notice is the disparity of coverage in mainstream media between the two, Muslims are depicted as terrorists, extremists and radicals, and media starts rising questions about Islam “is it really religion of peace?”, “does Islam promote tolerance?”, whereas if the perpetrators are whites or non-Muslims, the depiction changes and the description is different such as ‘lone wolf’ or ‘mentally unstable’ and the questions become “how are we getting so used to this?” or “is it time to talk about gun control?”

There are no justifiable grounds and rational evidences of blaming Islam as a religion of separate actions have done by individuals who are misled or have been manipulated by some counted figures who pretend to represent Islam. Alnatour concluded by:

“When a drunk driver causes a car accident, we never blame the car manufacturer for the violent actions of that driver. This is because we understand that we cannot blame an entire car company that produces millions of safe vehicles just because one of their cars was hijacked by a reckless person who used it to cause harm. So what right do we have to blame an entire religion of over 1.6 Billion peaceful people because of the actions of a relatively insignificant few?”

The media plays well its role by the focus only on the attacks that are perpetrated by Muslims, but what about the other faiths? Do they have the same coverage? Do they just go neglected? Or the media purposefully turns a blind eye? The media double standards are quite apparent in the American press scene, serving one side at the expense of the other side, along

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the decade that follows 9/11 raising discrimination and hatred sentiments towards Muslims which absolutely promote and extend Islamophobia

During his presidency terms, president Obama has addressed the US nation 25 times on the subject of gun violence or domestic shootings. After Oregon's incident when a gunman opened fire killing nine people and injuring seven others, Obama said that the shooting became a too routine in daily life, and then he asked media establishments to count the number of the American who were killed by a terrorist attack and compare it with the number of Americans who have died by firearms. Quickly CNN has conducted a research and the results were astonishing, from 2001 to 2014, they found that 440,095 people died by gun shootings within the US. Whereas, during the same period, the number of American citizens within the US or abroad who were killed by terrorist attacks was 3,412. (CNN)

So, for every American life died by terrorism, more than one thousand deaths by firearms inside the US, but surprisingly none of these incidents were called a terrorist attack or questioned his religion because the white shooter is considered as loner, mentally disturbed or under pressure, and never be called as a terrorist. (What a logic they have?) Contrary, when the shooter is Muslim, no questions would be asked, direct generalizations and assumptions as a terrorist fueled by his inherent, violent, intolerant faith

The systematic prejudice is quite evident in the narratives of the mainstream media concerning white acts of violence; Anthea Butler associate professor of religion and Africana studies at the University of Pennsylvania has argued the whiteness supremacy over the mass media after another fatal shootings at a church in Charleston, South Carolina where nine African Americans were killed during a Wednesday praying by the hands of a white Caucasian young man, the major media avoided any word near of terrorism, their explanations of the suspect's actions lay on mental illness, sick, victim of mistreatment and

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he was considered as a loner hateful person, even the official authority has adopted the same bias when an FBI agent talked to CNN that the suspect probably has some mental issues.

Butler has criticized the double standards of the media saying:

U.S. media outlets practice a different policy when covering crimes involving African Americans or Muslims. As suspects, they are quickly characterized as terrorists and thugs (if not always explicitly using the terms), motivated purely by evil intent instead of external injustices. While white suspects are lone wolves.

What do you call a couple who espouse an extremist, anti-government ideology and kill two policemen and a civilian, draping one of their victims in a flag associated with a political movement? Paul Farhi journalist and reporter has wondered after a young couple fatally shot three people including two police officers. The Miller couple shouted about revolution and anti-government sayings, carrying a flag which symbolizes the Tea Party Movement³.

The first shorthand depiction would lay on the hypothesis of terrorist attack but the media denied to use the potential label. Majority of the portrayals denounce the act and have dealt with the issue in a very careful way and selective words putting the incident in the place of firearm event and individual violent act, but “Without a doubt, if these individuals had been Muslim, it not only would be called ‘terrorism’ but it would have made national and international headlines for weeks,” said Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the CAIR in Washington, and since the shooters are whites, it is just a day story comes and goes.

³ The Tea Party is a grassroots movement that calls awareness to any issue which challenges the security, sovereignty, or domestic tranquility of our beloved nation, the United States of America. From our founding, the Tea Party represents the voice of the true owners of the United States: WE THE PEOPLE. <https://www.teaparty.org/about-us/>

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A brief comparison between this incident and other similar one would clarify the entire puzzle and show the flagrant biases of the American media. San Bernardino California a Muslim couple Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife Tashfeen Malik opened fire in a holiday party killing 14 and injuring 21, soon after the investigators said that the suspect was in touch with international terrorism subjects, and media has revealed that he was in clash with his Jewish co-worker (who was named among the victims) over religion and Islam, journalists started questioning whether the attack was fueled by religious backgrounds. Dozens of articles were published by the US media and newspapers investigating the very little details about the suspect and his wife.

Despite the fact that both incidents are similar and were considered as a firearms violence and aggressive acts, but the official authority treatment and the media coverage was completely different, the first incident was depicted as an anti-government revolutionists and cop-killers, whereas, the latter was portrayed as a potential terrorists and was suspected of being linked to more than one terrorist organizations.

5- Suggestions, solutions and remedies to end Islamophobia

Unquestionably, the aftermath of 9/11 has intensified the troubling issue of Islamophobia in the United States, which increased the degree of hate speeches, incidents of violence against Muslims, media biases, and legislating anti-Muslim laws. Discrimination and bigotry have worsen the lives of Muslim Americans especially the young generation of sixteen and seventeen years old who know nothing about 9/11. However, they feel that they are not welcomed in their country due to the practices of prejudice by some citizens, politicians, and mass media. Regardless to the typical problems and obstacles that face any

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American citizen in life like poverty, education, health care, unemployment... etc, along with these difficulties, Muslim Americans are suffering extra issues of bigotry, discrimination, assaults, exclusion, segregation and bias treatment in every where work places, schools, institutions, politics and of course media, which led all the Islamic community in US to call for stopping this anti-Muslim hatred sentiment and this phenomenon needs a cure and must be ended as soon as possible.

Many scholars have initiated a strategies and procedures to eliminate or at least to reduce Islamophobia, Dr. Mohamed Nimer an assistant professor at the American University in Washington, DC, the School of Professional and Extended Studies in his book *“Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism: Causes and Remedies”* has suggested several strategies to fight this old renewed phenomenon, first thing is interfaith dialogue and public discussion which is a key feature to overcome Islamophobia because dialogue would open channels for better understanding of Muslims and the real tenets of Islam, Nimer has insisted on avoiding the discussions over world domination whether Quran or the Bible showing that both Islam and Christianity have the same Abrahamic roots, then he emphasized on Muslim participation and engagement in social life as well as in the political scene, firstly he addressed all the immigrant Muslims and American Muslims to be a good ambassadors of Islam and reflect the best possible image of Islam in US to depict the real character of Muslim that should be, secondly in politics by nominating and electing officials who are capable and can defend the Muslim community’s rights and to increase their voice whether in local assemblies, house of representatives, congress, or in presidential.

Nathan Lean researcher, writer and scholar of the Middle East, in a Forum entitled *“Islamophobia in America: Causes, Challenges and Solutions with Nathan Lean”*⁴ he

⁴ Rumi Forum <https://youtu.be/qpWKSJVfnzg?t=1262>

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criticizes the mass media of depicting a distorted image of Islam by generalizing the acts of violence or terrorism on the whole religion and all Muslims which is definitely not true, and he asks the media to stop the falsely allegations which hyped up to the Islamic faith such terrorism and extremism as well as with double standard measurement.

To reduce Islamophobia he suggests on the Muslim community to identify clearly and make a better understanding of controversial terms such as jihad, fundamentalism and Shariaa law to the American public to eliminate any falsely definitions of bias mainstream media, involvement of Muslims and Scholars in the media discourse to provide positive image about Islam and Muslims should be broadcasted. Documentaries, emissions, lectures, articles...etc about the impact of Islam on world science through history would be appreciated, mentioning successful samples of the Islamic achievements within the US through portraying the contributions of doctors, scientists, lawyers, and even ordinary citizens in the American scene. He has concluded with pessimistic tone about the future of Islamophobia in the US short term as well as long term under the current foreign policy, and the current double standard corporate media.

The role of journalist is to provide information but it needs to be true and reliable, Gabriel Arana has published an article entitled “Islamophobic Media Coverage is out of Control: It Needs to Stop” he says that the duty of journalists is to dispel myths and disprove misinformation, not perpetuate them. to reduce Islamophobia, he addresses the media producers to provide true and correct information of Islam to the audience and do not spread misinformation, he describes the mainstream media as fear mongers and at the head Fox News which exploit any terrorist attacks to perpetuate prejudice and fuel anti-Muslim sentiments, and it needs to stop. Arana has criticized the media producers for asking

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provocative questions such as ‘is Islam a violent religion?’ he said that they are not merely asking the question for the sake of the question, in fact they are promoting the fear of Islam, and it needs to stop.

All the good deeds Muslims are doing go invisible and get ignored whereas barbaric, violent acts of the very limited who claim Islam would dominate the public discussion for weeks and probably for months, and it needs to stop

Arana has mentioned the policy of media producers, instead of bringing specialists, scholars and credible sources to talk about religion, Islam, migration...etc, the mainstream media purposefully gives persons who are ignorant or have limited knowledge about such issues a rigid platform and a great opportunity to spread and expand their misinformation, he exemplifies by giving the anti-Muslim activist Pamela Geller the opportunity to reach millions of people by her racist discourses to talk about migration instead of discussing the subject matter with specialist from the Migration Policy Institute which is the most reliable think tank on migration issues.

Conclusion

The analysis of several newspapers articles has asserted the use of islamophobic attitudes when reporting Islam and Muslims after 9/11, the central themes of hatred, bigotry and prejudice against Muslims were quite obvious within this study, the American media has placed Islam and Muslims in a negative light which fueled Islamophobia in social level as well as political level.

The main concern of this paper is to show the distorted image, the generalization, and the double standards that characterize the American mainstream media's portrayal of Islam and Muslims providing samples and concrete evidences which proved these violations. They injected the public opinion by a strong soporific and they inserted an ideology that Islam is always linked to terrorism.

This chapter has brought concrete evident results that the biases of the US media still exist, the double standards still exist, and prejudices and discriminations against Muslims are widely spread.

General Conclusion

The focus of this study is the rising Islamophobic climate within the American media, it is a quite disturbing issue which costs many Muslim Americans their freedom and their rights, the media has played a significant and crucial role in spreading and promoting these prejudices and discriminations instead of removing them which led to anti-Muslim hostility, hate crimes, and negative stereotypes along the decade after 9/11. The aim of this dissertation is to show the biased media portrayal of Islam and Muslims after 9/11, its contributions in boosting Islamophobia and the impact of this phenomenon on social structure order, political scene and religious issues.

As it is explained and illustrated above, this thesis has explored the historical existence of Islam in America and the first Muslim comes to the new world, then the foundation of Islamophobia around the globe and its evolution through decades until it gains the current contemporary understanding of the concept after the events of 9/11, next it has described that the existence of Muslims within the US was full of tensions and was not accepted as quiet as other religions due to many factors that led to disturb the coexistence of the Islamic followers, and therefore, has fueled the anti-Muslim sentiments starting by the influence of the crusades, the Iranian hostages crisis, Salman Rushdie's *Affair the Satanic Verses* and Khomeini's death sentence Fatwa , and the most particularly the attacks of 9/11 and its aftermath, Additionally, this study has mentioned the promoters and the contributors of Islamophobia from the stray Islamic cults to the social and political leaders until the biased media coverage, showing the tremendous impact of this phenomenon on the lives of the Muslim Americans whether on social, political or economic aspects.

Media has a fundamental role in societies. It is considered as a mediator between particular society and the rest of the world, the power of media is significant on constructing

General Conclusion

public opinions towards certain issues. The attacks of September 11th has brought a complex emotional, political, social and economic impact on the Muslim community in US, media has reopened the debate of the status of Islam in modern era and has repeatedly labeled Muslims as terrorists and violent radicals, this study has asserted that the US media contains bias practices, discriminations against Muslims and misrepresentation of Islam through the analysis of numerous articles in the major newspapers of the American press (the New York Times, the Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and the New York Post) , the double standards of the American media in portraying acts of violence is completely evident regarding Muslims or non-Muslims perpetrators which influenced the lives of millions of people within the US, ending by some suggestions of solutions and remedies to end this awful phenomenon.

Through the analysis of the selected articles, the findings of this research confirms the expected hypothesis of the role of American media in spreading and promoting Islamophobia after 9/11. It indicates that Islam is portrayed differently comparing to other religions, the negative attitudes and stereotypes against Muslims are strongly and consistently linked to the American media discourse post 9/11.

Furthermore, the excessive link of Muslims as terrorists and extremists cannot be overlooked in the American press especially the New York Times and its double standards attitudes; they were clearly unfair and unbalanced in the portrayal of Islam and Muslims, the examined articles reveal the manipulation of the facts and misinterpretation of the Quran's teachings, moreover, the NYT has marked Muslims as threat, and Islam as backward and it is in urgent need to be modernized and westernized.

In brief, the American newspapers framing after the attacks of 9/11 has worsened the picture of Islam and Muslims to the Americans, and has strengthened the negative perceptions

General Conclusion

toward Muslims, and has reproduced an old new form of racism based on religious affiliation, and still resonates nowadays or it would be higher after the election of Mr. Donald Trump who would open the gates of hell for the Muslim community in the United States, which seems an interesting topic for further studies.

While this thesis offers several significant findings to the literature, there are some limitations to this paper as well. Firstly, there is no full access to the newspapers' websites to get the desirable articles to be examined which would be beneficial and could provide extra information to support the thesis statement. Secondly, the research project seems to be enormous and forked, and every newspaper needs and should be examined alone as one separate study. Finally, the study has little mentioned the current situations of the Muslim community in US which sounds a great opportunity for future expansion to develop new studies in all aspects of life whether political, social, economic or religious.

Hopefully, readers would look for more than just one source of information in order to establish one's opinion about issues instead of duplicating a journalist's one. The true art is being well educated and well informed in order to draw right conclusions and provide a truth worthy opinion

Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past

-George Orwell-

Appendices

Table 1: Articles with Islamophobia ‘in title’ or ‘anywhere in article’ found using Google Scholar.

Years Covered in Search	Islamophobia in Title	Islamophobia anywhere in the article
1980-1989	1	50
1990-1999	24	287
2000-2009	296	5650
2000	5	102
2001	11	114
2002	11	202
2003	10	230
2004	51	409
2005	26	524
2006	53	749
2007	43	1030
2008	50	1070
2009	36	1220
2010	77	1430
2011	67	3050
2012	81	1760
2010-2012	225	6240
1980-2012	556	12,227

Steve Garner and Saher Selod, “The Racialization of Muslims: Empirical Studies of Islamophobia,” *Critical Sociology Journal*

Appendices

Table 2: FBI, U.S. Hate Crimes Based on Religious Identity of Victims 1996-2015

year	Anti-Islam	year	Anti-Islam
1996	27	2006	156
1997	28	2007	115
1998	21	2008	105
1999	32	2009	107
2000	28	2010	160
2001	481	2011	157
2002	155	2012	130
2003	149	2013	135
2004	156	2014	154
2005	128	2015	257

Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism/California State University, San Bernardino;
 Brian Levin [Compilation: Author] & Graphs by Kevin Grisham

Table 3: crimes on houses of worship (mosques) 2009-2015

Year	Mosques targeted for crimes
2009	10
2010	18
2011	13
2012	14
2013	13
2014	09
2015	31

Confronting Fear: by the University of California, Berkeley and Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

Table 4: Anti-Islam bills by year

Year	Total bills or Amendments introduced	States in which Anti-Islam legislation was introduced	States where Bills became Laws
2011/2012	78	31	Arizona, Kansas, South Dakota and Tennessee
2013	36	16	Oklahoma, North Carolina
2014	14	11	Alabama, Florida
2015	31	17	Mississippi

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