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## Book of Abstracts: [WG] Islam and Media

### **Position and Rights of Non-Muslims in Islamic States: Perceptions by Different Muslim Groups in Northern Sudan** *Osman Ali* – University of Khartoum, Sudan · [osmanmohamedosman@yahoo.com](mailto:osmanmohamedosman@yahoo.com)

The paper is supported by field data from Shendi Province, which could be described as a miniature representation of at least Northern Sudan. It sheds light upon the position and rights of non-Muslims in Islamic states as perceived by different Muslim groups in Shendi Province. It looks in depth at the ways in which these Muslim groups view and interact with non-Muslims. Attempts are made to relate the behaviour of Muslims to non-Muslims to the ways these groups understand and interpret the Islamic texts. It also addresses the issue of religion and national constitution and the position and rights of non-Muslims when a Muslim group is the real political force behind the state government.

### **Multiculturalism, identity and freedom of speech: Islam and the Geert Wilders Case.**

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Representations of British Muslims in the British media are partly a reflection and result of the post-modern crisis of identity which has destabilised the project of multiculturalism in the UK related to wider political processes. However, the media also has a role in the formation of identities by providing a location for the articulation of particular values and priorities in relation to contested issues. Much has been written about the representation of Islam in recent years (Said, 1981, Poole, 2002, Richardson, 2004) and whilst the dominant discourses centre on terrorism and conflict, particularly in relation to global Islam, cultural relativism focusing on difference is a common feature in the coverage of British Muslims. This paper aims to show how, in the political climate of the UK post 7/7, debates about multiculturalism, identity and freedom of speech in relation to Muslims have played out in the public sphere through an examination of the British news media coverage of the Geert Wilders case. Wilders, a far right Dutch MP, was refused entry to the UK in February 2009 for inciting racial hatred. He was invited to the UK by a British UKIP peer who wanted to show his anti-Islamic film, *Fitna*, in the House of Lords. In this paper I will examine news media (newspaper, broadcast and Internet) coverage of this event to demonstrate the struggle around identity taking place amongst various social, political groups in the UK. I will show how Islam, in particular, is currently central to these discursive debates and how different groups' interpretations of the event attempt to assert ideas of 'Britain' and 'Britishness'. The representation of this case shows us how conservative groups use such events to criticise liberal policy and 'double standards' in relation to issues such as freedom of speech whilst reinforcing Christian values and the link between Christianity and the state. The case provides, for them, an opportunity to criticise government, liberalism, multiculturalism and the values of equality and diversity. For liberal groups, the case allows for the defence of the liberal values of freedom of speech and other liberties which can result in an exclusive liberalism in their critique of religion. This paper examines all these issues in their complexity and considers the consequences for Muslims living in the UK whose voices are largely excluded from these debates.

### Representation of the Gaza News in the media

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The main theme of this article is focus on the media activities during the Gaza war. We used content analysis method for distinguishing the media activities of Islamic & western networks. For access to this aim we analyzed news coverage of Islamic networks such as Aarabiyeh & Western networks such as CNN. An impartial international investigation into allegations of serious violations of the laws of war by Israel during the recent fighting in Gaza is essential to establish key facts and to recommend mechanisms for holding violators accountable and providing compensation to victims. For the most part, the mainstream media reported on the conflict as a "tit for tat" between two equal opponents, with the blame resting squarely on the Palestinian side. The Israeli government's narrative was accepted as fact, even as Israel barred journalists from the battlefield. Woefully missing were context and in-depth analyses of the invasion, a lack of willingness to ask tough questions and corroborate information. The media also seemed to ignore the fact that Israel turned Gaza, a region twice the size of Washington, D.C., crowded with 1.5 million people, into the largest open-air prison in the world. At the end of Israel's invasion, more than 1,300 Palestinians, including hundreds of women and children, had been killed. More than 5,400 were injured. The Red Cross reported "shocking" scenes of children left by their mothers' corpses and said: "The Israeli military failed to meet its obligation under international humanitarian law to care for and evacuate the wounded." In these conditions we faced with the different actions of the media that Islamic networks reflected the facts of Gaza war But western networks hid some aspects of real war. Aims: The main aim of this article is based on distinguishing the structure of news broadcasting during the Gaza war with the emphases on the reversing human right. The study of the subjects in the news coverage of Islamic & western networks. The study of the sources in the news coverage of Islamic & western networks. The study of the styles in the news coverage of Islamic & western networks. The study of the proportion of reversing human right reflected in news coverage of Islamic & western networks. The study of the orientation of networks about reversing of human right in news coverage. Method: 1) Content Analysis Method 2) Documents & Archival Method Techniques : 1) Categorical & Evaluative Techniques. 2) Descriptive Index Card Writing. Analysis Unit : Each news. Population : 2000 news Sample : 400 Unit . Duration : 2 weeks.

### Image Analysis of the Arab Community in Romania

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The main objective of this paper is to present the conclusions of a research which aimed to identify the spread image of the Arab community living in Romania, focusing on the news published by the most important daily newspapers in Romania and using research instruments specific to imagology. In the first part of the paper I present the image analysis of the Arab Community, the way it is spread in the Romanian newspapers, focusing on the representative results and their corresponding risks and vulnerabilities. In the second part I concentrate on the conclusions of the research and its limitations. The research focuses on three Romanian important daily newspapers ("Jurnalul National", "Ziua" and "Evenimentul zilei"), for a period of one year (1 January -31 December 2007), using a set of four image indicators: Human Dimension of the Members of the Arab Community, their Professional Dimension, the Efficiency of the Arab Community and their Involvement within the Society - the Relationships with the Community. Each indicator includes related sub-indicators: the human dimension: moral, family oriented, polite, generous, courageous, good neighbors, hospitable, friendly; the professional dimension: intelligent, educated, professionals, correct/respect the laws, diligent, proactive, good employees, good employers, rich, influent, skilled negotiators; the efficiency of the Arab community: adaptability to the socio-political climate, good collaboration with the authorities, adaptability to the economical climate,

adaptability to the cultural climate, good relationships with mass-media, significant turnover, they encourage investments, they sustain the fight against terrorism; the involvement within the society - the relationships with the community: they sustain humanitarian actions, sponsor cultural activities, participate in cultural/scientific events, sponsor sport contests, organize cultural events related to Arabic tradition, promote Arabic cultural centers in Romania. The results are based on the references to all these indicators and sub-indicators that I found within the articles presenting information about Arab people living, studying or working in Romania. The result of the research is that the general character of the spread image is slightly positive. Based on these results, according to the articles published by the three Romanian newspapers, the Arabs in Romania are family oriented, rich and influential, fully adapted to the economic environment. On the other hand, they disobey the law, they do not have a good relationship with the authorities and do not support the fight against the terrorism. Thus, although the image is slightly positive, still, the Arab community could face a couple of risks and vulnerabilities. First of all, the character of the image could easily oscillate. Second, the indicator the Efficiency of the Arab Community is very visible, while for the indicator involvement within the society - the relationships with the community there were not many articles related to this. Thus, it could be interpreted that the Arab community is not so much interested in having relationships with the Romanians.

### **Western Media Amid Growing Religious Extremism in Pakistan: Non-Muslim Perspective' in United States of America, Germany, Australia and United Kingdom about Islam and Muslims**

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Since 9/11, social science researchers are tracing linkages between the extremist action by certain disgruntled Muslim youth who had conducted the gory incidents in the United States in 2001 and the growing incidents of violence by similar kinds of Muslim extremists even now. There has been a series of terrorists attacks in Muslim and Non-Muslim world ostensibly conducted by Islamic militant groups, generally known as 'Jihadis', 'al-Qaeda' or now 'Taliban'. Taliban among them are reportedly happening to be more violent as they have conducted series of suicide bombing largely in almost all major cities of Pakistan. Taliban Islamists' instigated acts of suicide attacks are widely reported in local, Western and International media. A serious nation-wide debate on the role of Pakistani media on the coverage of the violent incidents necessitated some sort of media outlet agreed control not to show mutilated bodies. But this could not be checked in western and international media. So, this study will examine the change in perception of Non Muslims in West about Islam and Muslim and role of western and international media while covering the incidents of violence in Pakistan. This study will get answers of these fundamental questions by exploring how the 'Non Muslim perspective' in Germany, Australia, U.S.A and U.K about Islam and Muslims is being developed amid growing Religious Extremism in Pakistan. This study will analyze the relationship between growing religious extremism in Pakistan and change in perception of Islam and Muslim in the minds of Non Muslims from different Western countries and role of Media. This research will collect detailed quantitative data about attitudes of Non Muslims about Islam and Muslims and then will be analyzed in the light of the actual incidents of violence instigated by 'Taliban Islamists' in the name of Islam and vivid rejection and condemnation of these incidents by the faithful Muslims. The study will explore relationship between Western Media portrayal of religious extremism and building perspective of Islam among non Muslim population. Moreover, this study will investigate the extremism and further inquisitive about its impact on the Western world. The research will examine xenophobia of culture and social identity of West in existence of growing religious extremism. The study will analyze the level of reported danger posed by the religious Extremism for western culture and social identity. This study will examine whether, and to what extent, fear of Religious extremism affects attitudes toward Islam in western countries. All these queries will be analyzed with data collection from a web survey of Non Muslims. The study will collect data from western countries including United States of America, Australia, Germany and United Kingdom. This study will also give a comparative analysis of to what extent media in these selected countries portrays image of Islam and Muslims as extremists.

### **The Rise and Fall of the Public Sphere in Muslim Society: Media and Malaysia**

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The Constitution of Madinah proclaims the rights of citizens to free speech and to question and criticize decisions that affect their lives. In Habermas' terms, the Constitution creates and protects a true public sphere. However, in Muslim majority societies, Habermas' public sphere is deepened and extended by the legal guidance offered by shari'a and the ulama as well as the media, state officials, political actors, interest groups, citizens and other actors envisioned by Habermas. Malaysia, a secular Islamic state with a majority Muslim population and a long history of repressive rule, offers an intriguing site for study of the public sphere in a Muslim majority society. Economic and political pressures on the Malaysian government have alternately opened and closed the public sphere, thrusting the nation most recently into the international spotlight over the repression of bloggers and disputes over Christian use of the word, "Allah". Malaysia thus offers a grounded context to consider the rich and varied dynamics of the public sphere in Muslim majority society.

### **Practices, Behaviors and Attitudes: Public Opinion Change in the Arab-Muslim World**

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The Modernization of Traditional Societies entails important changes in the communication sphere. The most relevant transformation elements provoke change in the reader's opinions about the news and concerns in direct way different fields of the journalistic activities: the narrative strategies of media stories and the routines of the news making process. News making process is based on the innovation in front of the tradition and the story is based on conflict in front of the traditional society general consensus. Finally, the new media fight the power – the different powers from the state-level to the patriarchal- changing one society where the previous power emanated from the absolutism. The emerging of the Public Opinion Sphere in the Arab- Muslim World started with the emerge of the first Mass Media (press, radio and cinema) that broken the way of thinking of the traditional society during a process very similar to the one produced in the Occidental World. The general, educational and cultural values of the Modernity penetrated in the social groups that had most access to this new media system. After that, the introduction of the audiovisual and digital system is provoking a new phenomenon: the Neotraditionalists movements are using these new "modern" devices in order to expand their opinions and demanding to come back to the mythified and sublimated past. Innovation, conflict and rebelliousness against public power are elements shared by reformists, fundamentalists and neotraditionalists. It is also shared by both religious and secular mentalities. The change of practices in the Public Sphere of Social Communication, in the press, in the Internet and in the audiovisual media (from the cinema to the different television forms), entails the evolution of attitudes and behaviors in the society, the culture and the politics. Political performance is getting more and more media- oriented in the Arab-Muslim World.

### **Among the war of images, the images of a conflict: a look on the Israeli / Palestinian conflict through Avi Mograbi's documentaries**

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Considering the technological advance, which enhances the production of mediatic discourses, and the notion of a "libidinal power" (Castro-Gomez), which seems to be part of our nowadays-society, this article provokes a

reflection upon “the war of images” – which has to do with our up-to-date context, in which one deals with many discourses upon events and facts, if we consider the various means there are for the stories to be told nowadays – and “the images of war” – related to the great variety of ways stories are told. Both aspects, on the perspective of this article, are totally relevant to our representing and understanding such events. By analyzing some of Avi Mograbi’s documentaries on the Israeli / Palestinian conflict, this essay proposes a discussion on the topic of representation. Stuart Hall, on his work about representation and media, starts his reflection with a question that is, for us, an important guide: “how do we represent people which are significantly different from us?”. If one takes for granted the idea that representation is a way of giving meaning to already existent things – therefore a way of re-presenting social, political and cultural events – one can understand Mograbi’s works as a manner of offering some form of sense to the conflicts we all experiment, either through TV news and other means of communication or simply by living in the scene of the conflict, which is the case of Mograbi. Through an esthetic dimension – in this article seen through his documentaries’ narrative structure –, Mograbi builds his view of the conflict by putting on the scene actors / agents and events that re-present the contradictions of the conflict. Thus, by the way he uses the camera and, for example, inserts himself as a narrator, Mograbi presents conflicting images, offering us a chance to “read” that specific event in its various meanings. From the perspective of representation, an ethical dilemma on the production of mediatic discourses, in general, has to do with the function and the ways of representing the other in his/her differences. In this aspect, one of the fundamental gestures is to abandon the I so that the Other can be recognized (Guimarães & Lima). Such a look upon Mograbi’s works guides us not only to a discussion on the documentary as an important form of representation, but also to a reflection upon the issue of the representation of differences and the rights of citizens in Palestinian occupied lands – a very important topic, once, through the western mediatic discourse, they are the other to be represented. This article is included in what Stam calls “multicultural studies of the means”, in which one can include, for instance, the analysis of the representations of the minorities and a critical view on imperialistic means of communication.

### **Image and ideology: media polarizations after 9/11**

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The political and cultural tensions caused by the terrorist episodes of September eleventh, in 2001, cannot shadow the efforts of western media to redefine the Islam as an inverted image of the West since then. International news agencies, as well as the press in many western countries, engaged themselves in operations of semiotic polarizations that opposed a “civilized” Christian culture against the “barbarians” of Islamic world, under the sign of Crusade, as revived by former president George W. Bush. This paper highlights some results of a research that investigates the role of the image as a semiotic and ideological device to determine the limits of the visual representation of the Islamic world in *Folha de S. Paulo*, the most influential Brazilian newspaper. As one of the main outcomes of the research, this paper shows a pattern of visual representation in the photojournalism linking Islam to the signs of menace and violence, which perfectly matches Edward Said’s concept of Orientalism. The use of these stereotypes is regarded as an ideological feature that tries to reduce a complex myriad of meanings, as given by the polissemic structure of images, to inflexible patterns in order to fit to the widespread orientalist expectations of the readers. The theoretical frame of the research is based on the contributions of Ivan Bystrina for a semiotic study of Culture.

### **Bosniaks: Disoriented Role Models for Muslim Europeans**

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This paper explores the revival of Islam in the post-socialist, post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, arguing that - due to its unclear viewpoints on citizenship and state - the local leaders may have squandered a historic opportunity

to turn Bosniaks, i.e. Bosnian Muslims, into role models for the growing population of Muslim Europeans. Bosniaks make up some 40 per cent of the country's 4.5-million population. They embraced Islam some 600 years ago, when the Ottomans conquered the area. After the Austro-Hungarian Empire had expelled the Ottomans from Bosnia at the end of 19th century and, particularly, after Bosnia had become adjacent to the newly formed multiethnic Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later called Yugoslavia) at the end of the First World War, Bosnian Muslims started embracing secularism, which would be later dubbed 'a Bosnian model of Islam'. In the country where religion primarily served as a major ethnic identifier of the Slavic-speaking population, and where adherents of Islamic faith were regarded by the largest ethnic groups (all of whom were adherents of Christianity) as ominous reminders of 500 years of Ottoman rule in the Balkans, Bosnian Muslims - unclear of their own ethnic identity amongst progressively nationalistic Serbs and Croats, with whom they shared the same land and language - started limiting their religious practice to occasional visits to the mosque, observation of religious holidays or important rites of passage, i.e. birth, marriage, and death. This trend further intensified during 45 years of socialist heritage following the end of the Second World War. Ironically, at the peak of secularization and atheisation of Bosnian Muslims in the early 1970s, Yugoslav communist leadership decided to forestall the rise of competing Serbian and Croatian nationalisms within the Yugoslav Communist Party leadership by recognizing Bosnian Muslims as 'Muslims', a separate ethnic nation, while bestowing upon them a name denoting their diminished, almost non-existent religious identity. The fall of communism resulted in the renewed ethnic nationalisms that led to the series of wars in a couple of former Yugoslav republics. Muslims became the main victims of the 'ethnic cleansing' campaigns practiced by the Serbian and Croatian nationalists in an attempt to conquer, divide and annex Bosnian territory into Serbia and Croatia proper. About 80 per cent of some 100,000 people killed in the 1992-1995 Bosnian war were Muslims. In 1993, at the height of the Bosnian war, Muslim political leaders chose a new ethnic name for their nation - Bosniaks. Many applauded this decision, interpreting it as an attempt to discontinue European indifference to the plight of indigenous European Muslims. In yet another bout of irony, as soon as they chose a new ethnic name for their nation, its political and religious leaders started efforts to identify it with Wahhabism, with which Bosniaks were hitherto unfamiliar. This way, instead of capitalizing on European shame over its repeated failure to stop the annihilation of a European nation based on its religion, they turned one of the oldest Muslim Europeans into a 'foreigners' on their own continent

### **Coverage of Women in the Religious Magazines of Pakistan (2000-2009)**

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The research aims to examine which issues relating to Muslim women are addressed by the religious magazines of Pakistan, and how are Muslim women framed, from the year 2000 till 2009. The religious magazines included in the study are the mainstream religious magazines of the major religious schools of thought in Pakistan. The study explores whether the discussions on Muslim women are restricted to topics of veils and patriarchy? Is the emphasis of the religious magazines on the duties of Muslim women alone? Are the religious magazines of Pakistan addressing the difficulties faced by contemporary Muslim women? Are the religious magazines providing guidance to Muslim women to meet the challenges of our time or not? Are the religious magazines providing guidance to Muslim men regarding their duties towards women? The researcher draws her theoretical framework from an Islamic feminist perspective. She intends to look into the diverse debates on the trends of Islamic feminism within the Islamic world which are given different names by scholars, e.g. atheist, secular, Muslim, and Islamic feminism. She intends to analyze the contents of contemporary debates on Islamic feminism. The two methods used are quantitative content analysis and Critical discourse analysis. Through this process it is possible to measure frequencies of coverage, which provide an indication of the importance given by these magazines to the issues faced by contemporary Muslim women. Research questions will be discussed in the light of the quantitative data collected. Correlation tests will be employed to test the hypotheses. Particular attention will be given to analysis and interpretation of results, to dominant, recurring themes.



### **Challenges of Establishing Native Ethnographer's Authority Amidst Discourses of Terror**

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This paper investigates the problems of conducting insider ethnography among Muslims in countries where Muslims are a minority community. It presents an account of the fieldwork conducted in the historically and physically segregated Muslim enclave of Jamia Nagar, in New Delhi, India. The Muslims, who became a minority community in India following the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 into India and Pakistan, have tended to withdraw into themselves and into such urban ghettos as they were cold-shouldered by the Indian state and stigmatized as being untrustworthy by the majority Hindu population. The paper explores how the ethnographer's negotiation of his/her authority as an insider is problematized by the crisis of confidence among Indian Muslims, that is further compounded by the discourses of terror which frame all Muslims as potential suspects. The ethnography was conducted in the particularly trying time of the summer of 2007, when three events dominating the news—the failed attempt to blow-up Glasgow airport, the arrest of an Indian Muslim doctor in Australia as suspect, and the siege of the Lal Masjid by fundamentalists in Pakistan—established an irrevocable connection between Islam and terrorism. The paper argues that the experiences of negotiating the native ethnographer's authority in situations where socio-political conditions were damaging the community's internal cohesiveness, calls for a revisiting of the distinctions between insider and outsider ethnography. The native ethnographer's privileged access to the research community, based on cultural affiliations and trust becomes less assured in conditions of fear for personal safety and life. For example, my informants accepted me as a member of the Muslim community, but not as someone whom they could trust, because they understood that my position as a researcher at an American university entailed that I could move out if the community was targeted by the state's vigilant forces. But, this was an option that my informants could not exercise. In this instance the boundaries between insiders and outsiders in anthropological research have become difficult to define. However, this does not indicate the need for further analysis of the differences between native and non-native ethnographers. My field experiences call for shifting of the debate to the process of establishing the ethnographer's authority. The paper advocates a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of what Murphy (1999) refers to as "productive discomforts of field encounters." The thrust of my argument is that if anthropology is to progress as a meaningful social and cultural critique, which promotes mutual awareness, diversity and tolerance (see Marcus & Fischer, 1999), then ethnographies of contexts of fear, hostilities, and/or suspension of democratic rights must revert to "thick descriptions" of the silences that engulf research subjects and suppress their voices. It proposes that if ethnographical accounts are but one among competing systems of representation (see Marcus & Fischer, 1999), then scholarship making explicit the politics of voids and gaps will be ethnography's contribution to countering political and social injustices.