INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Although news media has been part of media studies for decades, it has recently started to change the ways in which the media package their products in times of national crises (Carr, 1999; Heyboer, 2000). Generally, in times of crisis, people want information. They turn to news sources to find out what is happening and to help them figure out what might happen. Particularly, media research in the Middle East need to concentrate on examining how news media frame national crises news so that it works effectively on interpreting the violent and security related events, which has become a necessity in the escalation of violent perpetrations in some Arab areas. On September 11, 2001, for instance, continuous television coverage of the most horrifying terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York began immediately after the first plane hit the first building. This can help understanding how news media can cover a crisis of unprecedented magnitude. According to Sewell (2007: 1-6):

> "It is in the agency's interest to provide as much information as possible at
> the beginning of an issue, rather than see a 1-day story spread over a week as
> the press gathers more information on its own. Departments must realize that
> it often is best--and important in the eyes of the public--to publicly confess
> and repent sins in a timely fashion".

In fact, the contemporary emphasis on news media in times of crises has become a by-product of a changing political and media environment, where most Arab outlets are controlled by governments. Also, modern private media ownership has aggravated an atmosphere in which news professionals are eagerly aware of competition with official media, resulting in an emphasis on popularity ratings that serve to increase the company's profits (Downie and Kaiser, 2002). The packaging of developing stories such as terrorism news, war against terrorism or Arab Spring, for instance, serves as a persuasion tool in the hands of governments and as a marketing tool for independent

media organisations. With such organisations being under increasing pressure to provide information to audiences as quickly as possible, to gain popularity and increased ratings (Lasica, 1997: 64).

In recent years, it has taken on a new significance as Arab media organisations emerged as active players in covering unfamiliar incidents in the Middle East. They have turned to the "breaking news" phenomenon as a tool to distinguish coverage in an increasingly competitive arena that challenges official Arab media, and terrorism news coverage, for instance, have become a dominant frame in shaping television news coverage. The characteristics of terrorism news in the media of many Arab countries are distinct for many specialist observers. Information is presented with language which emphasises national unity, safety and loyalty to governments, without reference to any opposing view or detailed analysis of the incidents, perpetrators or the public views. Most content is shaped around governments' views, and packaging is highlighted with notable graphic packages and dramatic official statements. In this regard, the audience may understand that other stories are being pushed aside in favour of the official view. This qualifies the rumors and different visions to spread at a critical time (Carr, 1999; Miller and Perlmutter, 2004).

As Neal (1998) argues, when the social order is seriously disrupted, people usually want more information than the media can provide. During crises, people rely on the media for news that may provide ways to survival. Also, the media can perform as a platform for the public and authorities voice. According to Graber (Graber, 1980: 228), they look to the media for information, explanations, and interpretations.

According to Iyengar and Kinder (1987), media audiences believe that terrorism stories are more important than other parts of a newscast because such stories can signal danger in their lives. However, the way in which terrorism stories are treated requires closer examination in order to identify what content and whose voice dominates such news; and, most importantly, what impacts it makes on individuals. When the media is concentrating on governments, reporters often present at

government headquarters, and coverage abandons a detailed analysis of reasons behind the perpetrating terrorism. Journalists and broadcasters use event-based coverage. The event-driven nature of terrorism stories provokes fear and, therefore, prompts viewers to seek adherence to their government in order to guarantee stability (Carr, 1999). However, do journalists and broadcasters realise the impact of such coverage on media audiences?

Despite the prominence of terrorism news in modern media coverage, researchers have failed to adequately explore the content and effects of such coverage on media audience in Arab government-controlled environments. There have been very few earlier studies that can help researchers identify the content of terrorism news in Arab countries, in particular Saudi Arabia and its coverage of terrorism, or its audience response to such news.

Media effects research is intended to provide insight into the ways media persuade individuals to think and behave (Harris, 1999). However, we know very little about audience response to terrorism news in Arab states affected by the different national crises, where the events of terrorism represent one. Modern Arab media news audiences have greater opportunities than ever to be exposed to terrorism news, because that particular type of coverage has gained prominence in recent years due, in large part, to the growing competition posed by opposing online sources and independent Arab media.

As terrorism news is considered one of the most recently packaged materials in the Arab media, it is significant that we understand the influence of such coverage on its national audiences. In an age of increasing competition among globalised media outlets, an understanding of terrorism news ultimately serves to help understanding the potential for audience manipulation by media sources. One is led to believe whether the stories are based on 'the truth' or just a means to generate audience fear, preventing their views from diversifying their belief and trust in the government. If by terrorism *news* people are conditioned to respond in a particular way, namely to

perceive the information as being a threat to the stability of their political system, their true interests may not be served. In such cases, the media would not be fulfilling their responsibility of serving the public good. Whether or not a story is truly breaking is an issue to be explored in future research. For now, studying Saudi Arabia, the history of its political system, its relationship with the Saudi religious system, terrorism and the national media will identify the elements of terrorism news. It will not be easy to delve deep into the system and organisations, and it will be hard to analyse the thoughts of people in a closed polity such as Saudi Arabia, but it be completed as far as practicable.

Political Context and Rationale for the Study

State-owned media producers tend to control the media, and the impact of terrorism news on media consumers is rarely studied in the Arab world, namely Saudi Arabia. The nature of the terrorism news, its producers and its impact on the media audiences is significantly unclear. Additionally, it is important that media studies focus on the cognitive psychology of terrorism news media. Despite the increase of mass communication studies that consider cognitive psychology theory (Lang, Bradley, Chung, and Lee, 2003: 650-655), scholars argue that not enough investigation has been made about the ways people negotiate messages and how agents can affect audience assessments and responses to the content. Thus, through this study, we will aim to investigate Saudi Arabia in terms of its history, establishment and the various political, economic and social conditions that may affect the outputs of its national news of terrorism.

Terrorism coverage in the Arab media has emerged recently to become vitally important for governments, media producers and the audience. In the age of 21st century global Islamist terrorism, the media face significant challenges in defining their role and responsibility in the public sphere. Initially, a study of the relationship between the media and the government raised the question of whether the media

served public interest or were merely disseminators of government propaganda. Emphasising terrorism news in the time of terror, national reform globalisation, and most importantly the "Arab Spring", has pushed Arab governments and media producers to re-think coverage content.

According to Arblaster (1977: 413-424), the concept of terrorism involves a challenge to legitimacy of the state, and therefore, it cannot and should not be discussed without reference to the concept of legitimacy. As democracy and freedom of press are questionable in many Arab states, as most governments control the media content, it is time for governments to re-examine their position in order to allow for more press and expression freedoms and media independence, or at least alternative views through their media. This will help to bring useful information to the media audience without using the old fearful and persuasive methods, and will consider people's participation in news coverage of their national issues. As the old blackout method is no more applicable in a globalised world, research in this field is significant as the examination of the present political, economic and social issues can strengthen the concept of real change. This stresses the idea that legitimacy is vital for any reform, war on terror or any kind of violent activism.

Ideology of Islamist Terrorism

The impact of Islamist terrorism news on Middle East audiences may be considered tremendous, but the influence of the official coverage of terrorism in the national media is thought to be more critical. Before we examine the methods used by the Saudi media in presenting the issue of terrorism and its perpetrators in Saudi national news, we need to study the political, economic and social conditions that have contributed to evolving terrorism in the Middle East in general, and in Saudi Arabia in particular, and how these factors can affect terrorism news production. Also to be examined will be the ways people perceive or react to terrorism coverage through their national media. While many critics around the world believe that Islam is the

reason behind terrorist operations carried out by Islamist groups, it is important to examine the link between Islam and the terrorist groups, and historical reasons which have led some Muslim groups to resort to violence as a refuge for promoting their objectives.

In order to achieve this aim, this study will be divided into eight chapters. These are:

1. Terrorism or Political Violence in the Middle East?
2. Islamist Terrorism in the Middle East.
3. A Case Study: Saudi Arabia and Islamist Terrorism.
4. The Contemporary Media Landscape in Saudi Arabia.
5. Framing Terrorism News.
6. Framing Terrorism in the Saudi Media and the Public Response.
7. Methodology.
8. Findings.
9. Conclusion: Discussion.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided according to the following chapters and subheadings:

> *1. Terrorism versus Political Violence – The Middle East Scenario*

This chapter will investigate how radical Islamism developed in the Middle East and Arab states, to become a source for active Islamist terrorism. The objective here is to study Islamist radicalism and its perspective, as well as the impacts of the political, economic and social transformations through history. This will lead to investigating the roots of clash between Muslim countries and the West, where many radical groups consider the Western countries as an engine for disorder in the Middle East. The chapter will be divided into the following sub-sections:

- Historical background to Islamist terrorism in the Middle East
- Islam and the West as seen by the radicals
- The global community and war on terrorism
- Increasing religious-ethnic disintegration
- Escalating regional discontent
- Islamic terrorism in the Arab Gulf region
- Summary.

Since global terrorism stems from the Middle East, examining the correlation between regional problems and Islamist terrorism is of great significance. Therefore, we will the roots of rising terrorism that may stem from the historical, political, cultural and economic problems of the Middle East which have been considerably affected by other factors. The type of terrorism perpetrated by al-Qaeda appeals to the individuals who seek to act in an idealistic way. According to Krueger (2007), it is important to examine the reasons that motivate individuals to be members of terrorist groups, drawing reasoning from the terrorists' own backgrounds, economic, social, and political conditions in societies from which they came.

2. *Islamist Terrorism in the Arab World*

As many terrorist groups are using Islam to justify their deeds, this part aims to study the ideology that puts Islam as a guiding reference for these terrorists. The purpose is to identify the distinction between Islam and Islamism, and between religion and ideology. In this process, we will examine the history of the Islamists' view of the world (local and international) and the major ideological schools that represent their strategy. This will lead to studying the relevant theories which explain the Islamist's adoption of violence. These theories can contribute to understanding the possible reasons behind the increasing radicalism and perpetration of terrorism in the Middle East. The sub-sections will be divided on the following:

- Terrorism: A General Definition
- Islamist Fundamentalism

- Islamist Terrorism
- Theories that explain the reasons behind Islamist terrorism: clash of civilisations, frustration-aggression, social identity theory, and psychopathology theory.

3. *A case study: Saudi Arabia and terrorism*

The main reason for choosing Saudi Arabia for my this study is because we believe that many factors have united together to breed a new wave of religious radicalism in the Middle East. This chapter will examine the history behind the rise of Saudi Arabia, its government and nation. We will explore the ways in which the government have united with the religious establishment in order to control the newly established country. The main argument here will aim to identify whether this unification has affected the ideology and actions of a whole nation. The sub-sections will be:

- Saudi Arabia and the history of terrorism
- Wahhabism and the misinterpretation of Islam
- Saudi educational curricula and religious extremism
- Saudi's internal situation (political, economic and social) and the
- rise of terrorism
- Other factors related to unsolved political problems in the Middle
- East
- The Saudi Government and religious establishments
- US war against international Islamist terrorism
- The terrorists' use of the media.

4. *The contemporary media landscape in Saudi Arabia*

The main argument in this chapter is that although Saudi Arabia's media (both public and private) are very extensive, the country and the nation do not actively benefit from their existence. This part will examine the types of media outlets available in the Saudi scene and also the type of media coverage each outlet provides. Additionally,

we will focus our exploration on identifying the degrees of free expression and speech that are allowed through the Saudi media. The sub-sections will include:

- Middle East media: ownership and policy in a terrorised global age
- Ownership of the Saudi media and its policy
- Television broadcasting in Saudi Arabia
- Freedom of expression and freedom of the media
- Public opinion and freedom of expression
- Types of programmes broadcast before and after the rise of
- terrorism
- The official call for reform and the new media policies adopted to
- fight active terrorism
- Are the latest media procedures useful to counter terrorism?

By studying the environment in which Saudi media has historically evolved, the kinds of political, economic, and cultural forces which have shaped the operation and content of Saudi media, we can predict the type of news frames that the Saudi media will produce.

5. *Framing Terrorism News*

In order to examine the coverage of terrorism in the Saudi media, it is worth examining the concept of news framing in general, the different hypotheses of framing, and the impact of framing on the cognition of the audiences and their response to such media coverage. This will help deciding the best theories that can help conducting the empirical part of the thesis. This will include the following sub-sections:

- Research on framing terrorism.
- Understanding psychological response to terrorism news.
- The mediated message in a globalised world.
- The relationship of governments and the media in the rise of
- terrorism.

- Framing terrorism news.

- Iyengar's hypothesis explained.

- Language of terrorism coverage and the public response.

- News framing and audience perceptions.

- Terrorists' use of the media.

6. Framing Terrorism in the Saudi Media and the Public Response: Methodology

This part of the dissertation consists of an explanation of the conducted empirical study that integrates the concept of the thesis. It aims to explore the ways the Saudi media frame terrorism news. Our general empirical goal is to investigate how Saudi mass media frame terrorism news amid the government's control of media. We also aim to investigate the types of audience response to the official coverage of terrorism news. This may lead to the idea that the audience understanding of disseminated messages may not be up to the expectations of the sender. Additionally, we will try to ensure the validity of the information that will result from the content analysis. Finally, we will look at the extent of freedom of speech in the press, the Internet and television. This will include:

- Research questions

- Hypothesis

- Aspects of text which will be examined to identify key cues

- Methodology: Sample

- Coding

- Coding scheme.

- Reliability check

7. Findings

In this empirical chapter, we will examine the ways in which the Saudi media deal with the issue of terrorism. Our data here will examine the ways in which the Saudi public deal with the new media in order to express their views over their internal issues, given that the Saudi media are often seen as part of a closed circuit

(government-media). The content analysis, will look at the content of three major media in Saudi: the press, the television and the Internet. We have prepared a coding sheet that supports interpreting the meanings of each news item, forum post or reply.

- Content analysis of Saudi media (Internet, press, television): this will include analysis of the official Saudi media and media used by the opposition, including the Islamist opposition). We will set our analysis according to the following categories:
  - Internet analysis: news item title, web site, date, type of post (post – reply), number of forum members, number of readings, number of replies (content codes).
  - Press analysis: news story title, newspaper title, date, type of story (original story – reply), news source, length of news story (content codes).

Using the results of the content analysis of the Saudi media, this chapter will develop an analysis of how the Saudi media deal with the issue of terrorism in Saudi Arabia. It will identify the types of news frames the Saudi media are using in producing terrorism news. Additionally, it will reveal the reasons why the new media and other regional media are attracting the public Saudi voice, as an alternative means for raising public debate above the limitations of Saudi mainstream media.

The study will describe and evaluate the ways in which the rhetoric and messages of terrorist and fundamentalist groups are represented in the media – in their transmission via journalists and editors of mainstream media, and in their direct use on the internet and by some broadcast outlets.

8. *The conclusion*

At the end of the empirical work we will offer a discussion, which will include the following sub-sections:

- Recommendations for improving Saudi media coverage of terrorism
- news through the Saudi media.
- The democratic option.
- Limitations of Research.
- The need for reform in general, and, specifically reform in the media
- sector.

Applications in Research

Investigations of framing have greatly focused on political coverage (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Gamson, 1992; Gamson and Lasch, 1983; Iyengar, 1991; Price and Tewksbury, 1997). Common political frames include the Fighting Frame, a conflict-based reporting approach that pits one story participant against another (Richards and King, 2000). However, in terms of framing terrorism, there are few experiments that have examined terrorism coverage and its effects on the media public (Norris, Montague and Just, 2003). Therefore, establishing terrorism news frames is an important first step in establishing the ways in which the Saudi media audience psychologically process and respond to such coverage.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

The literature suggests that the presence of frames in the news coverage of terrorism has the ability to shape the ways in which viewers interpret and respond to such events (Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 1991; McLeod et al., 2002; Scheufele, 1999). Frames influence cognitive assessments by supporting the audience in determining information and providing structure over how people should think about the reports they see (Shah et al., 2004: 102-120). To that end, we propose the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of terrorism coverage through national Saudi news media, in terms of content and issue coverage? (episodic vs. thematic)
2. What are the dominant frames of responsibility in Saudi national media coverage of terrorism?
3. How does news production frame the responsibility for terrorism, and what are the implications of the nature of terrorism coverage on Saudi national news media for citizen participation in the Saudi reform process?
4. What are the levels of freedom of speech that each media outlet provides for public discourse, and how do the public interpret terrorism news in their local news media, and what are their reactions towards terrorism news?

The goal of the study is to highlight that Saudi citizens have imperfect information about terrorism incidents, its roots and motives, and also the actions of the Saudi Government. Thus, we will develop the main themes and assess the empirical evidence. This analysis will identify and examine the mechanisms through which development of the Saudi media has been captured, and establish the constraints on its capacity to perform a watchdog role.

Summary

Terrorism news has been part of the media landscape for decades. In recent years, however, it has taken on new significance as Arab media organisations are responding to such crises carried out by Islamic groups in the Middle East. These organisations have turned to the breaking news phenomenon as a tool to distinguish coverage in an increasingly competitive arena and to challenge official Arab media. Terrorism news has become a dominant frame in shaping television news coverage.

This study aims to determine the degree to which terrorism coverage prompts viewers to adopt a sense of connection, curiosity and belief that terrorism news is realistic in its coverage and important to people's lives, and how the public respond to such news. Once terrorism frames in the Saudi media are determined, the effects reflected in the empirical part of the thesis will be examined via audience response to terrorism stories reflective of those characteristics. Testing the proposed model should provide a better understanding of the adopted ways in treating a national crisis, and the effects of terrorism news on Saudi media audiences.

Chapter One

Terrorism versus Political Violence – The Middle East Scenario

Historical Background to Islamist Terrorism in the Middle East

In order to assess the effectiveness of any Arab media in the rising wave of terrorism, it is essential to study the circumstances that surround Arab media in general. As is known, the media plays a major role in consolidating national unity, political security, and stability. Therefore, this chapter aims to examine the obstacles that affect the performance of Arab media during the current terrorism threat in the Middle East region. This means an examination of the political, economic and social conditions that may affect the quality of Arab media performance amid the violent actions.

Over the past 50 years the Middle East has been a hub of tension and insecurity. Traditionally, threats to global peace and security ensued from wars and crises among regional states, which thereby engaged the international system; these included the Arab-Israeli conflict, Lebanon civil war, Gulf War, and Iraq's war. The 9/11 incident has presented a new approach to dealing with terrorism that stems from this part of the world. Since current global terrorism stems from the Middle East, examining the correlation between regional problems and Islamist terrorism is of great significance. Generally, the roots of Islamist terrorism have been linked to issues of the Middle East.

Therefore, it is important to consider the unique political, economic, cultural, and religious characteristics which frame Islamist terrorism on the one hand, and the approach of the global system in dealing with these issues on the other. From this point, this chapter will also focus on the global community's policies as a main contributing factor to the development of new Islamist terrorism. The questions this chapter aims to study are: "Why has new Islamist terrorism appeared in the Middle East?" and "Can current policies of the global system, as led by the US, ignore the

threat posed by the new Islamist terrorism?" This will lead to examining the approach itself, and whether it has been a threat to, or an opportunity for, global security.

In order to answer these questions a hypothesis will be developed later in the chapter. First, the roots of the rising terrorism are found in the political, cultural, and economic problems of the Middle East, which have also been considerably affected by the conduct of the international community. Second, as a consequence of the global system's policies, the concepts of stabilisation and democratisation – which are essential to any political and economic transformation and thus to the eradication of terrorism – have diverged in the region to the extent that accommodating them in one context is largely inconceivable.

This chapter is organised into three parts. The first compares the characteristics of old and new Islamist terrorism. The second part will review the roots of hatred in the way the Islamists look at the world, as well as current US and Western influence in the Middle East (including the Gulf region). The final part will explore the role of global systems policies, in the region, in relation to new terrorism.

In fact, terrorism has always existed throughout history, but Islamist terrorism has taken a new international dimension with its own specific interpretation, and so has increased its importance in the global community. September 11 has undoubtedly marked a turning point in terrorist activities. Old terrorism had internal or regional dimensions, functioning in specific time and space, and having less negative impact on the international community. In contrast, new Islamist terrorism operates beyond national and regional borders, has a global impact, and constitutes a direct threat to global peace and security. International security, long affected by wars and tensions among nations, is currently endangered by an underground, complex and unconventional power (Perl, 1997).

Unlike old terrorism, this new wave of terrorism has no single, nationalistic, or state-sponsored feature. It occurs in many countries and is supported by a global network.

Islamist terrorism originates from the Middle East, its driving force is Sunni Islamic radicalism, and its representative is al-Qaeda. They aim to destabilise international security; to de-legitimise Western hegemony and values, and to create a new balance of power between the West and the Islamic World. As Behr (2002) notes, international terrorism is characterised by the trans-border coordination of attacks and their planning, the erection of an internationally networked infrastructure, international fundraising and financing, international trade in weapons and materials, and the recruitment and training of terrorists on a global scale.

As a result of these aims and features, new Islamist terrorism is more violent and less tolerant. Its origins are extremism and hatred, which is caused by dissatisfaction in the political, cultural and economic aspects of the international community's policies in the Middle East region. The type of terrorism, perpetrated by al-Qaeda, appeals to the hearts and minds of individuals to act for an idealistic end. According to Hassan (2004), current suicide attackers fight for their faith and most importantly Allah's (God's) satisfaction. They completely believe they will be blessed by God by perpetrating such violence. New Islamist terrorism is a tactic supported by a worldwide network. In this sense, no eradication of today's terrorism will succeed unless the root causes of its emergence and the motives of its adherents are identified and treated.

According to Krueger (2007), it is important to examine the factors which motivate individuals to be part of terrorist groups, drawing reasoning from the terrorists' backgrounds, and the economic, social and political conditions in the societies from which they come. In terms of the Middle East, new Islamist terrorism stems from a collective sense of historical injustice, political dependence, and a widely spread sense of social humiliation caused by the global powers and their allies. As Vertigans (2007) argues, if Islamist terrorism is to be fully understood and ultimately defeated, it has to be acknowledged as a multi-faceted phenomenon caused by varying combinations of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological factors. These political, cultural and psychological intricacies operate cumulatively to trigger the

central line of global terrorism. Therefore, without solving the existing problems in the region, no eradication of new Islamist terrorism is feasible.

Islam and the West as seen by the radicals

Since the incident of 9/11 in 2001, the two subjects of new terrorism and Middle Eastern studies have come to the fore as two major components of international security studies. In order to answer why new terrorism has emerged in the Middle East, it is worth examining many contributing factors. Although the remarkable historical, political, cultural and economic characteristics of Middle Eastern societies has provided a platform to regional issues, the policies of the global community have also played a major role for the development of new Islamist terrorism. According to Kent and Nicholls (1977), although the murderous hate (which later leads to terrorism) begins in childhood and its origins are deeply repressed, it is potentiated when young people, already loaded with hate, are kept together for lengthy periods in economic, political and personal frustration.

In Huntington's (1993) article "Clash of Civilisations", he argued that in a post-Cold War world, the crucial distinctions between people were not primarily ideological or economic, but cultural. In this sense, world politics was being restructured along cultural lines, with new types of conflict and cooperation replacing those of the Cold War. The civilisation with a particularly large number of boiling pots were Muslim countries, where bloody ideologies and borders form a great danger to world peace. However, the September 11 incidents, and the widespread realisation of the existence and aims of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, created a new dimension by which its roots and causes would be examined. This part of the thesis aims to examine these, but it is first necessary to explore the historical, and particularly Islamist, background to the 9/11 events. It will also be appropriate to analyse the great changes in power relations between Muslim nations and the West over the past two hundred years.

For centuries, and specifically between the 8th and 18th centuries, Islam was the most powerful civilisation on earth, in terms of spread and creativity. It began in the 7th century when Arab Muslims, bearing the prophecy of Mohammed, burst out of the Arabian Peninsula. Within a decade they defeated the armies of two great empires to the north, those of Christian Byzantium and Sassanid Persia. As Shinnawi (2002) notes, a great new cultural and economic nexus came to be developed which was able to draw on the knowledge and commodities of lands from China and India in the East to Spain and Africa in the West, as well as those of the West Asian lands in which it was based. This new civilisation commanded a good number of the world's major cities and settled agriculture. In this region there was one shared language, religion, and law. As Wallertein argues (1974: 67), it is considered the first world system, one which preceded that of European capitalism. He notes that the distinctive feature of a capitalist world-economy is that economic decisions are oriented primarily to the arena of the world-economy, while political decisions are oriented primarily to the smaller structures that have legal control. The states within the world-economy are unlike the early Islamic model in leading civilisation, where politics and economy are combined and applied in a successful way.

There were great cities in the Muslim world, from Damascus, Baghdad, Cordoba, Cairo, Persia, Turkey, Isfahan, Bukhara, Samarqand, and Delhi between the 8th and 17th centuries. As Turner (1997: 5) notes, there were great achievements in scholarship and science, in poetry and prose, and in the arts of the book, building and spiritual insight, which are precious legacies to all humankind. By then, Muslims considered themselves as leaders of human civilisation. However, the odd crusade and defeat in Spain left deep scars in the Muslims who lived after these eras. Also, over the last two centuries the Islamic world has been deeply affected by Western influence, driven by capitalism and supported by military power.

The symbolic moment, when the leader's standard passed explicitly to the West, was Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. From this time, Western armies and Western

capital overran the lands of the Muslims. The British dominated India and South East Asia, and the British, French, Germans, and Italians divided their rule on North, East and West of Africa. On the other hand, the Russians took control of Central Asia, while the British and French controlled Western Asia. By the 1920s, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Central Arabia, and the Persian region were under Western control. The last Ottoman caliphate, which represented the symbolism of Muslim leadership, had been abolished in the early 20th century. According to Lewis (2004), Muslims became worried that the holy places of Islam, Mecca, and Medina would fall into the hands of the "infidel" – in reference to the West. The Muslim communities, which for so many centuries had the power, had a good reason to believe that history, if not religion itself, were handed to the power of the West for ever.

Also, the 20th century did not seem do any better in changing the latter extremist view. The transformation to a world of nation-states was a global phenomenon taking place. In late Ottoman time, some groups were already acting as minorities, as the Ottoman state was attempting to create a unified national identity. However, although this transformation was a long drawn-out process, Anderson (1987) notes that a crucial turning-point was reached directly after the First World War, when the establishment of the League of Nations required recognising nation-states as an only internationally legitimate state form. In the Middle East this ensured that opposition to the newly-installed European rule took on a nationalist character which fitted with the nation-state form, and in this situation some minority identities were highly politicised.

However, the emergence of modern Turkey in the early 1920s and the independence of other Arab states to that of the Muslim republics (of the former Soviet Union) in the 1990s, could suggest decolonisation of the Muslim world. Yet, for many extremist Islamists this seemed to be mere fake independence. More often, they stressed that Western rule was merely replaced by ally Muslim leaders with secular Western values, while Western capital and culture came to be even more destructive to their Islamic values and standards. This challenge has brought many Muslims to become

pessimistic about any Islamic future. In fact, such opinions are not shared by all Muslims, but have come to be shared by enough radical individuals to represent a real threat to their own leaders and the world as a whole. Kepel (2004) notes that these Muslims, who are more commonly known as fundamentalists in the West, are more appropriately known as "Islamists". Additionally, Shaw (2001) suggests that Islamist activism represents the main opposition to the leadership of many contemporary Muslim states, many of which have relations with the USA and Western governments – among them are Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Algeria, Tunisia, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, and the Palestinian Authority.

Moreover, the lack of psychological awareness on the part of the US and the West, in dealing with main regional issues in the Middle East, is a major cause that helps radicalise Muslims – not just in the countries concerned, but also across the Muslim world. There were conflicts among the Muslim minorities in the Balkans and Chechnya, and it is known that the Muslim majority in Kashmir are oppressed by Hindu forces. They are held down by India's brutal rule, and the people of Iraq suffered from a US powerful existence. Many people in the Middle East believe that the Muslim and Christian people of Palestine have suffered from the great injustice of the Israeli occupation for over fifty years. These are all complicated problems, and from the perspective of many radical Muslims, they symbolise injustice and oppression. The latter express a world order in which Muslims are weak and powerless, and in which Muslims must organise to fight, as radicals believe. Osama bin Laden's deputy, Ayman Zawaheri, wrote that he hopes to spend whatever is left of his life in serving the cause of Islam in its ferocious war against the tyrants of the new Crusade – in reference to the West.[1]

There are three marked developments which accompanied the transformation of Muslims in the 19th and 20th centuries. They represent basic instruments in the long-term motivations to the events of 11 September. Firstly, Muslims have long suffered a

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[1] Al-Sharq Al-Awsat Publishes Extracts from Al-Jihad Leader Al-Zawahiri's New Book. *A Look back to the Past*. Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, 2.12.2001.

series of feelings from an intense sense of loss, through to a deep bitterness and severe anger, at their powerlessness in the face of the West. In the Indo-Pakistan region, where 350 million Muslims live, there has been a frustration among the people since the Mughal Empire lost power in the 18th century. This frustration and anger also grew due to the new competition for power, which brought rivalry because this was mostly a Muslim area that was greatly exposed to the rule of the West. According to Wiktorowicz (2005), the rejection of Europe, both as a dominating power and as a model of progress, was a rich topic for many of the ideologues who called for fighting against Western influence.

As the USA replaced Europe in the hegemony of the Islamic world, the country became the focus of hate and resentment, which were all the greater because it affected the lives of supposedly free peoples. According to Algar (1981: 182), Ayatollah Khomeini's howl of rage in 1964, when the Iranian Government granted US citizens extraterritorial rights in Iran in exchange for a huge loan for the Iranian regime, affected many Muslims. They felt weak in the face of Western monopoly, from the military attack on Alexandria in 1882 to the occupation of Palestine in present time. Such feelings were no less strongly held in the Arab world. According to Akbar Ahmed, as quoted in Hillenbrand (1999: 590), the memory of the Crusades remains in the Middle East and Muslim minds of Europe as aggressive, religious attacks that are hard to forget.

Also, the return of the European colonisation in the 19th and 20th centuries to the Middle East did not help in promoting a different perception of Europe in the Muslim minds. Additionally, the Israeli state has come to be seen as a modern version of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem, which was established by what Sayyid Qutb, leader of the second phase of the Muslim Brotherhood, described "the Crusader spirit which runs in the blood of all Westerners".[2] In his pronouncements, Osama bin Laden, along with his fellow Islamist leaders used this image to inject hatred into Arab and Muslim

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[2]   Ibid. p. 602.

minds. In February 1998, bin Laden, along with other prominent Muslim figures, announced the now famous formation of the World Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders. As Garrison (2003: 39-52) notes, Osama bin Laden stated:

> "The rule to kill Americans and their allies - civilians and military - is an individual duty for any Muslim ... to liberate the al Aqsa Mosque [in Jerusalem] and the Holy Mosque [in Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim…".

The second development is that of an increasingly active pan-Islamic awareness in the Muslim communities since 1800. There are reasons for this pan-Islamic feeling which comes from Islam itself. Muslims believe that they are one community "umma", created by God's revelation to man through Mohammed. As Gibb (1963: 173-176) notes, this revelation tells them that they are the best community produced for mankind, and they believe that it is a special blessing on them. The brotherhood of all those who belong to the community, in total equality before God, is a strong belief widely celebrated in their daily rituals. A concern to cherish and sustain the community against all forms of segregation is the underlying spirit of the *shari`a,* (Islamic law), and 20th century political developments were seen as a Western plan to destroy the unique community of Muslims.

Scruton (2002) argues that Islamic thought is in direct contradiction with the idea of a nation state, as the concepts of citizenship and nationhood are products of Enlightenment and Christian theology. According to Keddie (1994: 463), in the Christian world there have always been two authorities – secular law and divine law. Yet, Muslim tradition does not make such a division and all come under Caliphate rule. Thus, for a devoted Muslim it is not easy to accept that secular and divine law may, at some stages, contradict. If it is not easy for Muslims who live in the West to accept the distinction between secular and divine law, some are also in direct conflict with the laws of the countries they live in.

This may be a reason for some Muslims feeling separated or oppressed and finding it hard to identify with host countries. For instance, if countries such as the UK conduct an illegal war on a Muslim nation, British Muslims are driven into an even greater identity crisis. As Oliver (2006) notes, the amount of anti-war and anti-Danish cartoon demonstrations in London, for instance, clearly shows who the British Muslim community supports. While the demonstrators stayed within the legal framework of the UK, the suicide bombers of 7/7, who were born and raised in England, chose to support their Muslim "brothers" of the Islamic *umma* in Iraq (and elsewhere) through more extreme means. When one combines this notion of justification, the alienation of diasporic communities, and the political goals of al-Qaeda, one can see that the "War on Terror" constitutes a good method for causing more disaster.

The third development, and one which is considered the most important, has been the worldwide movement of the Islamic awakening since the 18th century. This has been expressed in many different ways through various social, economic, cultural, and political circumstances. All of the Islamic organisations which have gained attention through the events of September 11 have their roots in this revival and its thoughts. However, the basic concern of this remarkable act has been the revival of Islamic communities from within – an internal struggle and not an external one – and its main feature suggests returning to the first Islamic principles. In the spread of Islam from West Africa to China and South East Asia too many concessions were made to local religious practice, which compromised the monotheism of God's message to humanity through Mohammed. This revival movement commands going back to the first "pure" principles, abandoning much of the medieval superstructure of learning, and concentrate on the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed. This is in order to attempt to resemble perfection of the Muslim community. Tunisian author and scholar Al-Gharbi (2005) presents a darker image, indicating that, as a nation, Muslims still adhere to the principles of the Bedouin tribes that existed before the advent of Islam. He states:

"We still insist that we are always the victims, and that we are always blameless. Our history is angelic, our imperialism consists of blessed conquests (*fotuhat*)**,** our invaders (*ghuzza*) are liberators, our violence is holy jihad, our murderers are *shahids*, and our faulty understanding of the Quran and daily violations of the rights of women, children, and minorities are tolerant religious law (*shariya*)."

At the same time, there was an attack on all ideas of the intercession of God's mercy, as represented by praying to shrines of saints. In the late 18th century, the concept that man alone was responsible for his fate, and that he must act on earth to attain it, spread to many parts of the Muslim world, particularly Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. According to Robinson (1999: 13-27), this represents a shift in emphasis over the forms of Muslim piety from another to current worldly Islamist activism.

In the contemporary history of the Middle East, Great Britain and the United States were seen as responsible for shaping the policies of the international system. The ethnic boundaries of the region were drawn in accordance with the requirements of British foreign policy in the first half of the 20th century. These British policies have created unreasonable territorial divisions and the end result is the establishment of artificial countries.[3] As a consequence, no distinctly Arab or non-Arab state can be found today in the region without serious problems. With such policies, the second half of the 20th century witnessed various wars and crises, and more ethnic and religious fragmentation in the region. Benjamin et al. (2003) note that the outcome was the enduring existence of regional governments which, by enjoying the support of the global community, have been able to neglect their national demands for political openness, fair distribution of power, and a competitive position in the globalised economy as prerequisites for any democratisation process.

After British withdrawal from the region in 1971 came the United States, and with that came more complexity. Yom (2005) notes that to secure US national interests, the

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[3] Up until 1971, Britain was (for centuries) the most influential state and the representative of the global community in shaping Middle East issues.

requests of the people from the Middle East for democratisation have long been sacrificed in order to achieve stability in the region. Over the past three decades, US policies aimed at preserving stability have contributed to the terminating of any possibility of democratisation. These stability-preserving policies have been based on two strategic objectives, the control of energy sources and the termination of the Arab-Israeli peace process. According to Cordesman (1988), in achieving the first goal US foreign policy manifested itself in two primary ways: support of ally regional systems and a military presence.

After the first Gulf War in 1991, arms transfers and diplomatic and economic maintenance systems continued to play a major role in securing regional governments in order to strengthen regional stability. Through this support, local governments were empowered enough be able to engage in more internal repression. Opposition groups were not allowed to compete in an open political process and there was no democratic distribution of power. As Zunes (2001) remarks, minority extremist Muslim movements are often rooted in legitimate grievances voiced by underrepresented and oppressed segments of the population, particularly the poor. Also, the US is increasingly identified as having political, social, and economic forces that are responsible for their misery. Therefore, as a result of this policy, many Arabs currently believe the US to be guilty of delaying the creation of political openness. Over the past few years, demand to establish real parliamentary systems have been foiled. The result is the emergence of radicalism on the one side and the creation of a specific "power-base" on the other, which in turn has promoted and encouraged a new wave of extremism in the Middle East.

Additionally, in the early 1980s US regional policy its part in creating the initial conditions for radicalism to develop. For example, the US stood by Sunni radical groups in Afghanistan, against the Soviet army, as a means of limiting the influence of the Islamic revolution in Iran. As Hibbard and Little (1997) argue, the result of that policy is al-Qaeda and new Islamist terrorism. The supportive US policy towards the Taliban in Afghanistan in the mid-1990s provided al-Qaeda with the opportunity to

organise, recruit, and train operatives in preparation for terrorist activities around the world. Moreover, US support for regional systems has created a new "powerbase" which by its nature undermines progress towards democratisation. According to Rahman (2000), the result of these supportive policies means the world has witnessed the existence of what they call "unusual political systems", along with distinctive closed power circuits in the region that are monopolised, unbalanced, and offer privileges to those who are loyal to the core of these systems. With the existence of these kinds of powerbases, there is less opportunity for the advancement of the democratisation process. Such a process could only happen at the determination of those in power, not by the will of the people.

In terms of US military presence, the first Persian Gulf War enabled the establishment of several permanent US military bases. This presence has continued and has become a significant component in the forging of political alliances between the US and various Middle Eastern systems. Although these governments were grateful for this strong US presence during the 1990s, it is now felt that the American intervention was not in accordance with international laws, nor did it apply self-determination or the advancement of human rights. Instead, it only protected US access to, and control of, energy resources and was totally self-determined to preserve stability in the region. As Habermas (cited in Corbett, 2004) argues, "political terrorists fuelled by religious fundamentalism don't misunderstand modern values, they reject them". Baudrillard might also agree that, in a sense, "terrorism is a clash of triumphant globalisation at war with itself". Habermas clearly points out that, "violent fundamentalism arises because modern societies have failed to inspire alternatives that compensate for the loss of traditional ways of life" (Baudrillard 14, cited in Corbett, 2004).

Also, Derrida (Derrida 111, cited in Corbett, 2004: 111) suggests that, while maintaining its ties with its American "protector", "client", and "boss", Saudi Arabia fuels the hotbeds of Arab Islamic Fanaticism, if not all terrorism, in the world. This suggests that US policy has already contributed to causing this new wave of religious extremism by creating dissatisfaction, distrust, and a popular negative reaction against

US military presence and intervention. Ironically, this escalation in tension and violence has itself become a major hindrance to further democratisation. As Saikal and Schanbel (2003) note, any transition from autocratic and closed systems, to open and democratic ones, cannot be realised without pain.

In terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and in order to preserve Israel's stability, US policies have always favoured Israel as the counter-weight to Middle East power. Over the last decade, the United States has not simply been a mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict, as US policy has created immense resentment due to diplomatic, financial, and military support for the Israeli regime. Also, this is considered a humiliating attitude towards the Palestinians. In addition, the failure of the US to be a fair mediator suggests that the feeling of Muslim "*ummas*" toward it are rapidly worsening. According to Sloan, Sutter and Yost (2004), many or most young Arabs consider the US a hyper-power that sustains failed secular leaders in their regions, underwrites Israel's brutal occupation, denigrates Islam, and utilizes its force as an instrument of humiliation. This increasing Arab disappointment is thought of as the principal cause to the move towards radicalism and over attempts to establish rights through armed struggle or terrorist perpetration.

As the war in Iraq highlighted, some group divisions were more politicised and radicalised, and Sunni Muslims felt the need to wage Jihad to support their suffering brethren (Saddam Hussein supporters) and to restore the lost credit of Muslims. At present, Muslim public opinion expresses its concern about the US-led war on terror and its threat to Islam. In many opinion polls conducted and released by the Pew Research Centre (2007), the Muslim public expressed their concern about the US-led war on terror and its threat to Islam. A negative view of US policy among Muslims has previously been confined to countries in the Middle East, but has now increasingly spread to other parts of the Islamic world. Therefore, these issues, in addition to many others, can significantly affect the success or failure of the war against terrorism.

International terrorism, with its leading al-Qaeda ideological organisation, has never seen better circumstances. The "War on Terror" has fuelled terrorism and created anxiety in Western societies, resulting in a heightened sense of global instability. Therefore, as can be seen, al-Qaeda is not simply a devilish enterprise of mindless killings but a political enterprise with no state and no army. As with any other political group, it has political aims and strategies to achieve its goals. Additionally, the "War on Terror" has greatly helped al-Qaeda achieve its goals by motivating discussion, dissent, alienation, and radicalisation in multi-ethnic communities in Western Europe. Western militaries act to legitimise terrorist ideologies and/or activities in the eyes of some minorities in Western societies, and can lead to Western self-criticism, demonstrations, pressure groups, and incidents such as the 7/7 London bombings (carried out by British citizens).

The Global Community and War on Terrorism

Apart from the components that contributed to the emergence of new Islamist terrorism, the main question now is whether the current confrontation of terrorist activities has resulted in the eradication of, or at least a reduction in, the terrorism threat to global security. Thus, are the current policies a continuation of previous ones or has fundamental change occurred? With the events of September 11, a global debate emerged over how terrorist threats should be treated, as a priority of global peace and security. In fact, confronting Islamist terrorism has become a cornerstone for the foreign policies of many national governments. It has become a source of pressure when applied to so-called rebel spots, where certain groups reside and regard the existing order as a threat to their systems, and thus are unsympathetically questioning the current international system. The war on terrorism has already gained legitimacy and justification among the global community. Today, nation states consider war on terrorism to be their obligation to help the movement for security. Consequently, as the representative of global well-being and as the major victim and

target of new terrorism, the US has come to dominate the scene with the new rhetoric of eradicating terrorism deeds by prioritising democratisation processes.

From the perspective of the US administration, future 9/11 type scenarios can only be avoided through liberalisation and democratisation of Middle Eastern states.[4] This was a major rationale used by the US Government to mobilise public support for carrying out wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The justification for starting a war on terrorism was based on eradicating al-Qaeda terrorist activities in Afghanistan, and the subsequent war in Iraq was justified by the excuse of denying terrorist access to weapons of mass destruction. From this point of view, removing the Taliban and Saddam regimes, as the two sources of the new active terrorism, constituted a great effort by the US to establish stability and security in the Middle East in particular, and the world in general.

Irrespective of the objective behind on-going discussions of the US administration on the necessity to democratise the Middle East, Windsor (2003: 43-58) argues whether this type of democratisation would effectively work in the region. The main questions she poses are: what will the global community gain by conducting long occupation wars; how far will the international system's proposal of dealing with new Islamist terrorism lead to effective results; whether the world has become a safer place and is ready for any democratisation process; and whether the operational and organisational forces of terrorists have already declined. Keyhan Barzegar (2005: 114) notes that as a result of the policies of the global system, the concepts of stabilisation and democratisation, which are essential to any political and economic transformation and thus to the eradication of terrorism, have diverged in the region to the extent that accommodating them in one context is largely inconceivable.

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[4] Democratisation in the Middle East, as the only solution for security and peace in the region, is expressed in the US Greater Middle East Plan. For information see, Wright, R. and Kessler, G. (2004). Bush aims for Greater Mideast plan. *The Washington Post*, 9 February.

New Islamist terrorism, as Lesch (2002: 82-91) argues, operates through persuading the thoughts and hearts of its believers and utilising life as a weapon. It also discusses mistreatment of the Muslim region by the global community. In this context, it is viewed that the foreign presence in the Middle East region, and conducting the current types of wars against terrorist activities, has counterproductive results. Thus, it is not considered easy to use military solutions for political and cultural problems. The current problems in the Middle East require identifying and then solving regional difficulties. In order for the international community to remain safe, the Middle East must become stable and politically, economically, and socially secure.

 This is a huge undertaking with at least two very complicated components for global governance. First, committing to remove existing political systems in the region; this may destabilise the closed power circuits in regional states and inevitably lead to more radicalism, and ultimately terrorist activities. The result is again instability and the undermining of democratisation. Another good component is that governments will adopt the reformative option, but the question here is: how much reform can Middle East governments accept and apply? Second, the Palestinian crisis should be resolved as this appears to be the most powerful fuel for new Islamist terrorism.

The consequences of conducting wars on new Islamist terrorism are threefold, these are: insecurity is extended across the world; religious-ethnic disintegration is increased; and the dissatisfaction in the region's countries is increased. Assuming the existence of insecurity and chaos will furnish the best conditions for terrorist operations, US strategies have intensified insecurity in the region. War was followed by a heavy military presence in Iraq and not only resulted in an unsafe Iraq, but increased instability and violence in the region. The underlying fact is that the first current priority of Middle Eastern people is security, not political reform. In other words, citizens in the region are now concerned about their needs, through security, their future and better economic conditions, rather than the increasing rhetoric about promoting freedom and democratisation. As a result of the self-contradictory conduct

of the international system, no other region in the world is more averse to the concepts of democracy and the globalisation process than the Middle East.

Today, Arab nations of the region are wary of the current US policies. As history shows, Arab Muslims have always resisted foreign hegemony, particularly those of non-Muslims. Surely, the more extensive existence of the US and the West in the Middle East will bring more violence and resentment in Arab public opinion. As a result, no place in the world will be safe for Western citizens.

Increasing Religious-Ethnic Disintegration

The war on terrorism has surely escalated religious, ethnic, and identity related fragmentation at regional, national and global levels. At the global level, while terrorist threats stretch from the Middle East and the Arab world, the division between Islam and Christianity is widening and becoming more complicated. As the West is the place of many religious Muslim minorities, these given unsympathetic situations will breed more anxiety and tension between the two worlds.

In this context, Muslims currently feel insecure and insulted in the West. Engulfing the two worlds, Islamic terrorism is increasingly searching for more divergence between Muslims and the West. At the regional and national levels, the almost three-year war on terrorism has neither made the region safe nor led to agreement. On the contrary, waging wars in multi-ethnic countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq has intensified ethnic and religious fragmentation and, hence, provided breeding grounds for terrorist activism.

Escalating Regional Discontent

As the US enhanced its new and direct existence in the Middle East, regional regimes have started to obstruct the policies set out by the international community. As an

immediate result of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the current US administration did not hide its objective to change the regimes in Iran and Syria. The behaviour of the US in dealing with these two strong opponents has contributed in considering these countries as threats, rather than strategic opportunities in the war against terrorism. As an obvious reality, the most significant principle for Middle Eastern political systems is protecting their existence. As for other Arab allies, the situation has become increasingly critical, and unlike the past.

The current US strategy declares that there is no place for authoritarian corrupt political systems and no place for any kind of blackout. This leads to the divergence between stability and democratisation which comprehensively demonstrates itself here. Ironically, in the current Middle East any effort toward political reform equals insecurity, and insecurity equals increased terrorist activism (such as in the case of Iraq). The paradox here is that democratisation of the region requires stability and security to be the first priorities. As the Iraqi political scene indicates, any further attempts to advance the regime and change policy will, in the short-term, lead to more insecurity, the engagement of the global community, and ultimately the spreading of extreme Islamist terrorism.

Islamist Terrorism in the Arab Gulf Region

Many critics believe that, like in other Middle Eastern countries, the Arab Gulf states face a wide array of problems which could lead to domestic instability and political violence. Demographic and economic issues are at the root of many grievances which Gulf citizens express about their political systems. In the 1970s, the Gulf states, flush with billions in petrodollars, created expansive welfare states and provided their citizens with free education, health care, and other benefits. Any citizen receiving a college degree was guaranteed a high-paying, official job. Gulf economies have since declined or stagnated, yet population growth in the region has increased to almost 4 percent per year in the past twenty years. As a result, Byman and Green (1999: xiv)

note that the large youth populations of the Gulf expect high-paying, undemanding government jobs while governments have fewer resources with which to satisfy them.

Additionally, the rampant corruption and conspicuous consumption of the ruling class have worsened regional issues. According to Hollingworth and Mitchell (2005), the excesses of the ruling class has also generated a kind of resentment because Gulf citizens have been put under a lot of pressure. Unfortunately, the Gulf ruling class have taken few steps to liberalise their economies, improve education, reduce corruption, or otherwise increase opportunities for steady economic growth. Political and social issues compound the anger that stems from demographic and economic concerns. Generally, citizens have little influence over decision-making and no way to ensure that government officials are held accountable for their actions in a region whose politics is dominated by a closed circuit of elite members.

A rapidly changing society also causes unrest. Many traditional citizens of the Gulf states are suspicious of social change and seek to preserve the ways and mores of their ancestors. They are upset by the perceived sexual promiscuity, drug use, and other modern evils which they fear are seeping into society. Thus, Sokolsky notes (2003: 42):

> "Domestic social and economic woes, such as drugs, support for extremist Islamist movements engaged in terrorism, and the increasing popularity of religiously defined political activist movements, are growing".

The United States is a focal point for much resentment generated by the above problems. Many Gulf citizens believe that Washington exercises extensive control over the Gulf's governments and opposes reform for its own political and economic benefit. The US support of Israel and, to a lesser extent, its hostility towards Iran generate resentment. Also, many Gulf citizens, especially in Saudi Arabia, are angered by the large US presence in the region. The radical Saudi Islamists oppose

the existence of any non-Muslim forces on Saudi soil. Saudis normally question the cost of buying US arms at a time when the kingdom's own economy is currently stagnating.

Although political alienation, economic stagnation, and unwanted social change are common problems in the Gulf, they rarely lead to violence. Discontent may be widespread, but few Gulf residents actively oppose their governments, and even fewer use violence to do so. However, a range of issues could politicise certain groups in a violent manner, leading them to use violence rather than peaceful means to express their grievances and promote instability. These issues include dissatisfaction with the political system, a desire to defend their traditional ways of life, and the glorification of violence. Political alienation is widespread and significant in the Gulf. Gulf political systems are exclusive, the ruling families monopolise decision-making and, despite petitions and the formation of token national assemblies, many Gulf citizens correctly believe they have little or no influence on decision-making. However, if moderate members conclude that peaceful political action will bring nothing then they may resort to violence.

Small groups of individuals, but a good number to perpetrate political violence, may also resort to violence in response to governments oppression on the opposition. In many Gulf countries, governments regularly oppress political opposition, including that of fairly moderate groups which do not seek to use violence to advance their agendas. Individuals who are threatened with exile, jail, or worse might chose to disappear and keep a low profile in order to survive. Also, the rapid transformation of society is another common problem in the Gulf. Terrorists in other parts of the world, particularly those with religious or ethnic agendas, often take up arms because they see their traditional way of life under attack. The inflow of oil wealth, and sudden exposure to the West and the broader Muslim world, has dramatically changed the Gulf. In turn, the traditional way of life in the Gulf, which was present a mere 40 years ago, is now considered to be largely gone. Therefore, bitter responses have been promoted from those who most cherish the old order.

Politicisation can also occur when violence is glorified in the Gulf. At an intellectual level, and often in practice, both Arab nationalism and political Islamism have embraced the use of violence – sometimes justified as a necessary instrument of politics and preserving identity, and reinforced at a popular level. Fighters in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iraq and elsewhere are praised and considered heroes – a glorification that legitimises violence and increases the status of those who use it. Despite this potential for instability, Gulf opposition movements are hardly organised and Gulf political systems use a variety of measures to hinder anti-government and anti-US organisations. The most effective form of political organisation in the Gulf occurs through religious channels. Islamist radicals, those who seek to use violence to advance their political agendas, often exploit the network of mosques and prayer groups – although area systems carefully monitor most religious activity, particularly potentially oppositional activity. This lack of organisation limits more dangerous forms of political opposition, such as a systemic terrorist campaign or an insurgency.

When individuals cannot organise, it is far more difficult for them to train and gather intelligence, both of which are necessary to attack well-guarded institutions. Creating a climate of dissent is difficult because governments security services will suppress local groups quickly, and it is even more difficult for opposition groups to work systematically with foreign militaries. Due to this lack of organisation, political opposition and violence often occur spontaneously. Individuals frequently act with little planning, without well-defined objectives, and without coordinating their actions with other like-minded individuals. Such actions can still lead to the deaths of US and Gulf citizens, but they are not likely to topple area governments or pose an immediate threat to US operations.

In fact, Gulf states are hardly threatened by any internal and organised opposition and appear secure for the foreseeable future. They have already crushed the different "storms" of Arab nationalism and are yet fighting Islamic radicalism. Although issues abound, Gulf leaders have shown success at repressing and placating their citizens and preserving their hold on power. This picture is not completely rosy, however, as

Gulf systems will never be able to prevent all forms of political violence. Violence by certain groups will remain a constant issue, and unorganised groups, while far less dangerous or politically effective than organised groups, may still attack US or governments personnel and facilities.

Many of the problems facing Gulf states are not easily rectified and some factors, such as opposition to social change, are simply beyond the control of almost all governments. Alleviating other sources of resentment, such as economic problems and political exclusion, will require drastic changes in the way the ruling families govern. Completely eliminating foreign-backed political violence is also beyond the control of the Gulf states. Effective solutions to Gulf political violence will have to take these factors into account. Moreover, solutions must be altered to fit the particular needs of each state.

Summary

As Sayres suggests (2007: 33-78), while global terrorism is often pictured as the fanatical and mindless killing of innocent people, it is founded on political, cultural, economic and ideological grievances. Scruton argues (2002) that Muslims in the Middle East are largely contemptuous of the political systems that govern them, and often blame the West for installing them. While globalisation, for the West, means free trade and prosperity, its opponents, including al-Qaeda and its followers, suggest a loss of cultural identity. As Coker (2002: 25) argues, for disaffected people in many parts of the world the loss of identity has caused a turn towards ideology. It is unrealistic to solve a deep cultural-political issue by military means. Thus, the war on terrorism, as Gordon (2007: 53-66) suggests, cannot be achieved through traditional military means, but rather it can be won politically with long-term plans. The main roots and causes of new terrorism stem from the problems of the region and the policies of international governance. According to OECD (2003), stability and democratisation are necessary for eradicating new terrorism that has emerged. In in the present case of the Middle East, any plan toward democratisation will require stability and security, on the one hand, while any stability will require democratisation, which can be challenging to most systems.

Therefore, international guidance is required to help creating a peaceful region, in which democratic change can occur. In contrast, the almost long global presence in the Middle East has intensified insecurity and fragmentation, and thus fuelled more terrorist perpetrations. The current heavy military presence leaves no opportunity for such developments. Additionally, any change in the region must come from within the societies. No instance of a democracy, imposed by foreign forces, have been achieved in history without offering an understanding to its regional characteristics and needs. Therefore, to have a stable, democratic and prosperous Middle East will require fair and just global governance, working with all the regional communities, not by just one power. Whereas conducting the present war on terrorism may, in the short–term, lead to some achievement in stopping or reducing terrorist activities, it will cause

more conflict in the long-term. Viewed in this light, there is no place that could have been more appropriate for the emergence of terrorist activities than in the Middle East. In other words, new Islamist terrorism could have been a response to the ruin and misery prevalent in the Middle East.

Chapter Two
The Ideology of Islamist Terrorism

Introduction to the Case

What is currently regarded as terrorism has existed in one form or another, and in various degrees of viciousness, through history. Yet, the 20th century has witnessed dramatic changes in the use and application of terrorism. Terrorism became the main characteristic of many political movements, extending from the extreme right to the extreme left of the political arena. The evolution of technology and electronic detonated explosives and weapons has given terrorists a new dangerous capability and impact. Al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks on the US brought these dangers to the minds of Americans and the rest of the world. They drew attention to terrorism's most latently violent and paradoxical variant, including identity, nature, and the perpetrators' motivations being due to the sake of religion. The 9/11 attacks highlighted just how dangerous the mix of terrorism and religion can be. In addition, the perception that Islam stands as a key reason behind active terror, in the eyes of the West and people around the world, will be explained.

The series of terrorist strikes launched since 9/11, whether by al-Qaeda or its affiliates, in places like Bali, Spain and Saudi Arabia, has solidified the thought of connecting Islam to terrorism and violence. These attacks highlight the threat posed by Islamist terrorists and have put the religion of Islam under severe criticism. However, while this reflects a wider phenomenon of Muslim extremists resorting to terrorism in pursuit of their aims, they are the bloodiest expression of a phenomenon which extends far beyond Islam. This kind of terrorism can very much identify with Herman and Peterson's (2001) definition of terrorism:

> "A calculated violence, usually against symbolic targets, designed to deliver a political or religious message".

It can also be considered as a tactic which exceeds the teachings of Islam in general. Ahmed (2003: 46-53) argues that regardless of the motivations of the perpetrators, such acts of violence against innocent civilians are seen as terrorism and that whatever their motivations are it "makes no difference".

Asked in 1998 about rumours that his organisation was seeking to obtain chemical or nuclear weapons, al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden replied:

> "Acquiring weapons for the defence of Muslims is a religious duty. If I have indeed acquired these weapons, then I thank God for enabling me to do so. And if I seek to acquire these weapons, I am carrying out a duty. It would be a sin for Muslims not to try to possess the weapons that would prevent the infidels from inflicting harm on Muslims".[5]

The psychological effect of terrorism is uppermost in terrorists' minds, and the way they act is interesting to note. Often, despite its perception of spreading fear, the primary intent of terrorism appears to kill rather than frighten. This has been contended to have been the case with the Sept 11 attacks on the US London bombings on July 7, 2005. Guided by the political aspirations of al-Qaeda, these violent acts seemed to have been partly motivated by anger (for what the perpetrators viewed as actions by the West and America against Muslims) and a desire to harm large numbers of people. The political motivation is strongly argued by Pillar (2001: 13-14) as a prerequisite of terrorism, although he considers that criminal activity is not only always perpetrated by terrorists, but can often have political repercussions of its own. As Pillar states:

> "Terrorism is fundamentally different from these other forms of violence, however, in what gives rise to it and in how it must be countered, beyond simple physical security and police techniques. Terrorists' concerns are

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[5] From a 23 December 1998 interview with *Time Magazine*. Cited in Frontline. (2001). *Osama bin Laden v. the U.S.: Indictments and Statements* [online]. Available at: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/binladen/who/edicts.html [Accessed 1 August 2012].

macro concerns about changing a larger order; other violent criminals are focused on the micro level of pecuniary gain and personal relationships. "Political" in this regard encompasses not just traditional left-right politics but also what are frequently described as religious motivations or social issues".

Ideology of Islamist Fundamentalism

Looking at the radical Islamist movement, it is a fairly modern phenomenon and part of a wider prominence of religion that is invading the moderate Muslim world, which exists in a symbiotic relationship with other trends. It aims to represent the characteristics of Muslim history, and is a reaction to the severe crisis of modernity converging with the rise of charismatic prophetic leaders. Since the late 1970s, there have been some arguments that the Sunni part of Islam, particularly after the Iranian Islamic revolution in 1979, has been suffering a crisis of identity. This is due to the crumbling of the Islamic civilisation in the modern age, which has left Muslims with a profound sense of alienation and injury. Margolin's (1977: 273-4) psychology research, which examines aggression and violent behaviour, argues that much of the terrorist behaviour is a response to the frustration of various political, economic, and personal needs or objectives. As we witness, challenges confronting Muslims, such as failures of development projects, entrenched authoritarian systems and the inability to respond effectively to the Israeli occupation in Palestine, have induced a deep frustration and anger that, in turn, has contributed to the rise of many fundamentalist movements – or as most observers prefer, "political Islam". Roy (1999: 7) notes:

"The militants are a pure product of globalization and the New World Order – using dollars, English, cellular phones, the internet, and living in camps or hotels".

However, the fundamental cruelty and corrupt morality of the radical groups' attacks came as a shock not only to non-Muslims, but also to Muslims too. As Abou El Fadl (2001) notes:

> "The extreme political violence we call terrorism is not a simple aberration unrelated to the political dynamics of a society. Generally, terrorism is the quintessential crime of those who feel powerless seeking to undermine the perceived power of a targeted group … terrorism is also a hate crime, for it relies on a polarized rhetoric of belligerence toward a particular group that is demonized to the point of being denied any moral worth".

The basic Islamist ideology calls for a religious reform and a political vision that includes a social movement to protest, and a search for a unified Muslim identity against current globalisation and world order. According to Ameer (2000: 11-28), fundamentalism is the spearhead of religion that engages in a counterattack on the secularism which reduced its power over recent decades. It is formed though different forms of movements and views which offer Islam as a complete way of life and a viable alternative to Western secular ideologies. Its main objective is to bring modern societies under Allah's sovereignty, rule and law, exactly as revealed in scripture. According to the Islamist fundamentalists, bringing Islam to its former glory can only be achieved by clearing society of the un-Islamic teachings and practices, by returning to Islam's original trusted sources (the *Quran*, God's written revelation through Mohammed, and *Hadith*, the divinely inspired traditions of the Prophet's sayings and deeds).

Most fundamentalist movements are seen to be united around the goals of Islamising the total social and political system of their societies, and establishing a revived authentic world-wide Islamic state based on *Sharia* (the all-encompassing law ordained by God for humans, and based on the *Quran* and *Hadith*). The differences between the many fundamental movements stem from arguments over how best to achieve these goals and over whether to emphasise a global programme, or focus on

achieving power in a specific state as the first step such as in Afghanistan or Iraq. The fundamentalists strongly contrast with the traditionalists in the way they emphasise the state. They support the idea that the state is the main tool for implementing the fundamentalist vision of a God-pleasing state under *Sharia* and as the guard for its survival. According to Guazzone (1995: 10-12) the fundamentalists aspire to captivate the state and its joints of power, either legally, within a democratic framework, or violently by force. Also, Salwa Isma'il (1992: 1-2, 89-92,112-116) remarks, that while the fundamental groups are minor groups within most Muslim societies and states, their insistent and emotionally felt discourse has greatly affected simple Muslim minds.

The concept of the world as a battle ground, where the power of good and evil are fighting against each other, as part of a persisting universal fight going on everywhere and at all times, is well known to most prophetic religions. However, these are mainly the characteristics of radical groups within them. According to Caplan (1987: 18-19), the fundamentalists consider history as a universal fight between good and evil, and will use absolute binary dichotomies to describe the opposing leagues. Juergensmeyer (1993: 156-160) argues that although this rhetoric stresses the main battle is spiritual, it is fought in the personal spiritual and moral domain, as well as in the circle of ideas, worldviews and ideologies. As Harrison (2001) notes manipulation of the concept of warfare, to move followers into activism, can easily blur the distinctions between terms that symbolise moral and spiritual battles – such as *Jihad* – and their reinterpretation in specific contexts to legitimise the violent struggle excused by an "ends justifies the means" ideology.

Thus, Islamist fundamentalism offers a radical reinterpretation of the traditional Islamic concepts, and its discourse on the subject of battle. All this serves to mobilise believers, warn them against those identified as enemies, and encourage them to train, organise, and actively participate in the supposed war. According to Rapoport (1993: 430-431), the fundamentalists' methods include withdrawing from society temporarily and into an isolating separatism, while others actively engage in socio-political affairs

to transform society. Both responses are forms of fight, whether they are considered defensive acts against attacking evil forces or offensive acts to invade enemies and change the world. Also, fundamental Islamists view history in dialectical terms as a continuous spiritual battle, part of a great cosmic and spiritual confrontation between God's forces of good and Satan's forces of evil. Every Muslim who takes part in supporting the truth is under target and, therefore, becomes a member in this battle. The seemingly commonplace fight of believers in this world are seen as reflections of higher struggles in the spiritual and heavenly realms.

There are many fundamental spiritual leaders of thought for the Islamist groups. The basic ideas of Islamist jihad stem from three main sources; Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab, an 18th-century preacher in the Arabian Peninsula, revived the definition of *tawhid* (one God). He believed there were no real believers, except for those who followed his ideas. Accordingly, he tried to attract people to his thoughts by preaching, and if they wouldn't listen then he was permitted to kill them. His notion of jihad was not directed solely against unbelievers, but also against other Muslims. One of the first things he did when he had enough followers and the official support of the then Ibn Saud was to head off to Iraq's Najaf. With his commands, the Wahhabis (his followers in ideology) burned the holy shrines of Prophet Mohammed's family members in a clear sign of hatred against any kind of Islam that did not follow his preaching (Reetz, 2006).

Also, Egypt's Hassan Al-Banna (1906-49) had a very different notion of where this jihad should be directed. He supported the idea that a Muslim must practice Islam correctly in order to truly worship God and that most of the world had deviated from true Islam. He also believed that preaching was the best method to win over other Muslims, while saving violence for the non-Muslim occupiers. He founded the Muslim Brotherhood, which quickly began to resist the British occupation of Egypt. However, before carrying out any form of violence against British powers, the British left peacefully. Al-Banna believed that jihad should also be directed against the government, as long as it co-operated with the British Empire. Also, Al-Banna

legitimised violence against what he called the "agent rulers". Although he was assassinated by the government, his teachings were already recognised. This means that throughout the 1950s and 1960s the Egyptian Government had to put an end to these radicals, who fled to other Arab countries including Syria, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia to carry on their activities from there. Yet, Al-Banna's followers maintained the idea of fighting the occupation as their main target in life.

Another ideologue of the Islamist ideology was Egyptian Sayyid Qutb. He was a major ideologue of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood during the 1950s and 1960s. writing In his book *Milestones: Ma'alim fil Tariq*, he tried to reinterpret moderate Islamic concepts in order to legitimise taking power from the state force. His effort of reinterpret the Islamic teachings was the main factor that sparked the rise of the radical Islam. Qutb assumes a real fight in this world between the powers of good and evil: between Muslims who are believers and those who are not. He suggests that the true believers should fight and endure pain, not for the reward but because it is their sacred duty towards God. He sees this world as a battle ground, with angels supporting the believers in their fight against unbelievers, and this battle is not restricted to earth but stretches into all of space and time. As there are only partial triumphs in this world, the final triumph of good is guaranteed. While believers do not always win and often undergo defeat, distress and martyrdom, there is no reason for losing hope, as God eases and encourages them. According to Qutb (1990: 137), worldly victory does not carry much weight in God's scales. He states:

> "Real triumph is not limited to immediate victory…in Allah's market the only commodity in demand is the commodity of faith. The highest form of triumph is the victory of soul over matter, the victory of belief over pain, and the victory of faith over persecution".

Also, Islamist fundamentalists emphasise the importance of the encounter in the realm of ideas. This means that two discordant world views contest over the hearts and minds of people in order to lead the world and humanity. One is the Islamist

fundamentalist set of forms, which is centred on Allah and his absolute disclosure; the second is the Western secularist-humanist view, which is based on humans and their motives and desires. This conflict spreads through all levels of the society. Additionally, Islamists emphasise the battle against *jahiliyya;* traditionally understood as the pagan state of ignorance in pre-Islamic Arabia, but reinterpreted by Qutb to mean any contemporary system not based on the original holy sources of Qur'an and Hadith and not operating under *Sharia*.

Qutb redefined *jihad* to reflect the permanent battle between the Islamic system and all existing *jahili* paradigms. The concepts of the two systems can never exist in harmony, so there is no chance of settlement or coexistence. The truth is one that is not separable. Also, he believes that all that is not true is inevitably not true, and thus the mixing of truth with falsehood cannot happen. Qutb argues (1990: 111-113) that Islam refers to complete submission to God and his law, while *jahili* systems are "a deviation from the worship of One God and the divinely ordained way of life".

According to Ahmad (1997), the Pakistani fundamentalist preacher, writer and Amir of the Tanzim-i-Islami movement in Pakistan, which is an offshoot of the better known jama'at-i-Islami, attacks all kinds of *jahiliyya,* the mythical *jahiliyya* of un-Islamic folk-religion and the *jahiliyya* of secular-materialistic atheism, with its principle tolerance. In this hostile encounter, the strongest weapon is the Qur'an, and the main challenge, is to remove the ideological realm from all atheistic constituents and reconstruct the Islamic belief in an existing idiom. As Israr argues, while the Qur'an is the true guide and motivator, its teaching can only be effective when coupled with Islamic activism.

Radical writers always stress the revolutionary nature of Islam. They view it as a revolt against the existing conditions and the depraving influences while searching for a new social and political order. According to their vision, Prophet Mohammed is portrayed as a revolutionary leader, and his message is explained as a revolutionary ideology still powerful to destroy evil and attain powerful change in the modern

world. Also, Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi (1983: 94), the famous Pakistani fundamentalist scholar, writer and lecturer, who was rector of the Nadwatul Ulama Seminary in Pakistan and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, considers Islam as a revolutionary religion with the ability to transform contemporary society and culture – just as it has changed society in the past. Qutb (1996: 309-311) and Nadwi share the idea that true Islam can never accept the status quo but must always struggle in its current degradation and fight to gain total rule. The aim of the Islamic programme (*manhaj*) is to guide humanity towards greater freedom and creativity, while putting an end to restrictions and distress.

Also, Abul A'la Mawdudi, one of the biggest founding thinkers and advocates of contemporary Islamic radicalism, and founder of the Pakistani Jama'at i-Islami, portrays Islam and its past and present leaders as a contemporary-style revolutionary party engaged in a revolutionary battle (*jihad*) to rule and lead the world. He states (1997: 3, 8-9):

> "Islam is a revolutionary ideology which seeks to alter the social order of the entire world and rebuild it in conformity with its own tenets and ideals. 'Muslims' is the title of that 'International Revolutionary Party' organized by Islam to carry out its revolutionary program. '*Jihad*' refers to that revolutionary struggle and utmost exertion which the Islamic Nation/Party brings into play in order to achieve this objective….There is no doubt that all the Prophets of Allah, without exception, were Revolutionary Leaders, and the illustrious Prophet Muhammad was the greatest Revolutionary Leader of all".

According to Shepard (1987: 362), Islamic radicals tend to use absolute Manichaean binary dichotomies such as God versus evil, truth against falsehood, and light versus darkness. They see humanity as divided into two opposing leagues, believers and unbelievers, with no neutrality possible. While all fundamentalist discourse is dominated by a cosmology of the battle of good against evil, extreme groups concentrate on conspiracy theories, eliciting a hatred for specific perceived enemies

which can legitimise outbursts of violence. Saiedi (1986) argues that by labelling everything in the contemporary West, as well as the non-fundamentalist regimes and society in Muslim states as corrupt and evil, radicals turn them into fair targets for violent attacks. According to Qutb, the world is divided into two camps: one of God and one of Satan. He believes that man faces a choice he cannot escape and must then voluntarily submit to God's moral laws in Islamic *Sharia*. He believes there is only one God and one truth, and all else is false and untrue. There is only one law, which is God's law, while all other laws are mere human caprice. There is only one genuine system that is Islam and all other systems are *jahiliyya*. Both Mawdudi and Qutb lay much stress on explaining the boarder of dispute between Islam and *jahiliyya*. According to Saidi (1986: 173-195), Qutb states:

> "Islam cannot accept any compromise with *jahiliyya*, either in its concept or in its modes of living derived from this concept. Either Islam will remain, or jahiliyya; Islam cannot accept or agree to a situation which is half-Islam and half-*jahiliyya*. In this respect Islam's stand is very clear. It says that truth is one and cannot be divided; if it is not the truth, then it must be falsehood. The mixing and coexistence of the truth and falsehood is impossible. Command belongs to Allah, or else to *jahiliyya*. The *Shari'ah* of Allah will prevail, or else people's desires".

With the same concept, Mawdudi (1982: 53-54) explains that Islam means submission to God, while disbelief *(kufr)* means the refusal to comply with God. In this sense, God loves Muslims but hates kafirs. Muslims find God's forgiveness and kafirs do not. Muslims will go to *jannah* (heaven) and kafirs to hell (*jahannum*). Both leagues consist of human beings, but Muslims recognise and obey their one God, while kafirs neither recognise him nor obey him. Also, Ibrahim, Abdul Maajid and Darbaalah (1997, pp. 199-201), who are followers of the Egyptian Shaikh Omar Abdul Rahman (imprisoned in the US for involvement in the first bombing of the World Trade Centre), and linked to the radical Egyptian Islamist group al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, state that Islam clearly describes "the position of the party of Allah as opposed to the party

of Satan". It authorises complete hatred, enmity and roughness towards infidels with whom there can be no conciliation.

Bin Laden (2001), the Saudi leader of the al-Qaeda radical Islamist group, who was believed to be behind most of the recent anti-western terrorist incidents, including the bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar as-Salaam in 1998, the September 11 attacks in New York (2001) and the London 7/7 bombings in 2005, said that the world is split into two camps: "one of faith, where there is no hypocrisy and one of infidelity". The camp of faith that is the Muslim league, and the league of infidelity which led by the US under the banner of Christianity. The Western interpretations of Samuel Huntington's (1997: 30-31) "clash of civilisations" may or may not have a direct relevance to this study, but he notes that the psychologists generally agree that individuals and groups define their identity and put themselves in the face of opposition to the others. At the time when war becomes a split factor in a society, the existence of a common enemy helps to establish the identity and harmony between the people. This may be consistent with what the leaders of many radical Islamist groups, such as Osama bin Laden and Indonesia's Emir Abu Bakar Bashir, when they openly declared such a conflict in civilisation and social identity terms.

Islamist Terrorism

The blurring of religion and politics, which is a characteristic of religious terrorism, is argued to express itself in two forms. The first of these is the politicisation of religion, which attempts to apply political solutions – in the form of political violence through terrorism – to religious problems. It is, in this case, religion-covered terrorism that is more religious than political, although this can change with the political imperative becoming the more controlling. However, the second type of expression of religious terrorism attempts to bring religious answers to political problems in the form of terrorism. Such attempts involve efforts to justify the violence, and attract and motivate terrorists through religious rhetoric. Therefore, religious terrorism is

considered more political than religious, and can also change with the religious imperative becoming more dominant.

While it is the end which set the religious terrorists apart from their secular counterparts, their means are also remarkable and tend to be less limited and results in higher levels of violence. As Hoffman (1995) argues, religious terrorists are their own constituency and "execute their terrorist acts for no audience by themselves". This might be true were it not for the political considerations also rooted in the judgment of terrorists mainly driven by religion. Al-Qaeda may have wanted to kill a lot of people in attacking America on Sept. 11, 2001. This is not to say they considered it revenge for what the US have inflicted on the Muslim world, but they also aimed to gain a publicity coup for themselves in warning the world of what they were capable of. As such attacks indicate, "the terror imposed by the religious terrorists is not an end in itself",[6] but it is a means towards a bigger goal. As the US National Commission on Terrorism (2000: 2) explains:

> "Today's terrorists don't want a seat at the table; they want to destroy the table and everyone sitting at it".

In addition, those whose terrorism is of a religious nature see themselves as answerable only to God (or their idea of God), and their activities as divinely authoritative. So, they operate within different moral, political and practical use of violence than secular terrorists. Far from being their own audience, religious terrorists' ultimate supporter is God. Therefore, religious terrorists cannot be simply considered as irrational madmen, because just as terrorism often resides in the eye of the beholder so too does rationality. To religious terrorists, their acts are imminently rational, stated and known, or are taken by them to be through the will of God. Given all of this, it is worth examining the difference between Islam and Islamism. Thus, it comes

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[6] This notion is put forward in Malik, S.K. (1979). *The Quranic Concept of War.* 1st ed. Lahore: Wajidalis. Cited in Bodansky, Y. (1999). *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America.* Rocklin, Calif.: Forum, p. xv.

down to two concepts: faith (Islam) on the one hand, and ideology (Islamism) on the other.

Islam was born in the year A.D. 610, when the prophet Mohammed received both his divine mission and God's commands for a new religion – primarily stressing the belief in one God. Muslims believe their faith is continued religion from Judaism and Christianity, where every single aspect of religion is explained. This encouraged Muslims, in the early Islamic history, to move geographically in order to spread God's complete message. The Islamic culture was, then, the world's most advanced with science, literacy and technical achievements. After fleeing Mecca as a refugee in A.D. 622, Mohammed returned there and became its ruler for eight years. As early as the year 715, Muslim conquerors had built a vast empire, whose borders reached Spain in the west and India in the east.

However, Islam's "golden age" did not last forever; at the beginning of the 13th century, Islamic rule had weakened and the Christian world was already becoming superior. Nonetheless, for some five hundred years to come Muslims were mainly unaware of what was happening in the Christian world. Muslim leaders were not, then, ready to change their conditions. In 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Egypt, a main land in the Muslim world, and had it put under French control without great military resistance. This was another cause that assaulted the majority of Muslims, as they witnessed their lands come under the Western control. In consequence to modern setbacks, some Muslims adopted a radical ideology (known as "Islamism") in order to fight their local enemy and the Western power – with the hope that they would rebuild a stronger Muslim world. However, according to many critics, Islamism is equal to fascism and Marxism-Leninism.[7]

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[7] See for instance: Daniel Pipes, "Militant about "Islamism": Daniel Pipes wages "hand-to-hand combat" with a "totalitarian ideology". Harvard Magazine, January-February (2005). Available at: http://harvardmagazine.com/2005/01/militant-about-islamism.html [Accessed 22 August 2012].

The methods of many Islamist thinkers like Mawdudi, for instance, have been compared to that of Mussolini's fascist movement in Italy. According to Choueri, (1993: 108-116), Mawdudi was known for his admiration of Hitler and Nazi Germany. Like those systems, Islamism rejects capitalism and liberalism, and aims for their overthrow; they are hostile to numerous countries. They feel that local Muslim governments in such states as Algeria, Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia are executing the West's commands in repressing their movement. In Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Sudan they see the West "actively crushing the noble Islamist efforts to create a correct Islamic society". Islamists feel themselves encircled and frustrated by the West. High on their list of enemies is the United States, which, according to Islamist belief, intends to strip off Muslim resources, take advantage of their labour, and destroy their faith. It is also widely claimed that the US and its media have united to promote the "new world order".

Kepel (2002) argues that Islamism is not a reaction against poverty because its leaders are often quite modern people, i.e. Osama bin Laden. Also, Krueger and Maleckova (2003: 119-144) note that the occurrence of hate crimes is largely independent of economic conditions. While Islamism appeals mainly to those who are rich, educated and powerful, those who are less empowered by money and education are only followers to such Islamist phenomenon. According to Merari (1990), there are no unified features of terrorists. For instance, most, but not all, suicide bombers are aged between 16 and 28. Most are male, but 15 per cent are female and that rate is rising. Most come from poor communities and have poor education, while some can have university degrees and come from wealthy backgrounds.

For instance, Pipes (2000: 87) notes that many Islamist leaders in Turkey and Jordan were engineers. He further argues that traditional Islam aims to show people how to live in harmony with God's will, whereas Islamism aims to establish a new political order. Moreover, Islamist leaders know more about sciences and technology, and use them to achieve their goals. Therefore, the religion of Islam does not seem to be the one motive behind the violent and terrorist perpetrations of these groups.

Baudrillard (2001) argues that no ideology, no cause – not even an Islamic cause – can account for the energy that feeds terror. He notes:

> "It (energy) does not aim anymore to change the world, it aims (as any heresy in its time) to radicalize it through sacrifice, while the system aims to realize (the world) through force".

He further states:

> "When the situation is thus monopolised by global power, when one deals with this formidable condensation of all functions through technocratic machinery and absolute ideological hegemony, what other way is there, than a terrorist reversal of the situation … It is the system itself that has created the objective conditions for this brutal distortion. By taking all the cards to itself, it forces the Other to change the rules of the game".

Thus, as long as the number of terrorists increases, as they believe the system may collapse in response to their multiple challenges of death and suicide, terrorism and risk will remain and the world be at risk. In fact, we have already wrote a section on the psychology of terrorism, but as the work developed, we felt that it was not essential to the logic of this thesis. Therefore, we had to remove it in order to keep within the word limit.

Summary

This part of the study looks at the terrorist activism from different historical and psychological perspectives. As some may see these acts as a mere response to a questionable divine message, the radical thinkers stress the revolutionary nature of Islam that entitles them to act against their targeted enemies, It was an opportunity to examine the deeper factors that fuel the perpetrations that fall under the term of "Islamist terrorism". It is an attempt to uncover the historical, psychological and intellectual causes that contribute to the emergence of terrorism as a serious regional and global issue. As many Western researches helped in identifying the causes of clash and violence, there are extreme Islamist ideologues who believe that violence is a savior of Islam and Muslims from the control of religion enemies and *Umma*.

According to the Islamist view, terrorism is as a practical Jihadist revolt against the existing conditions and the depraving influences in searching for a new social and political order. Therefore, this part of the study puts the reader in front of the events that influenced the thinking and psychology of the militant groups that see terrorism as an effective means to bring back power to the hands of Muslims. This way of thinking did not only influence the Muslim regions in threatening peace and progress, but on the whole world instead. Additionally, unveiling these factors can help in finding ways of dealing with a fatal ideology of an unfamiliar phenomenon through the media.

Chapter Three
A Case Study: Saudi Arabia and Islamist Terrorism

Saudi Arabia and the History of Terrorism

Whilst there have been previous studies concerning other Islamic countries in which terrorist groups are based, the case of Saudi Arabia is interesting. Unlike other governments in other Muslim countries, Saudi politics centre around religious legitimacy and to the commitment of the royal members to the religious teachings of Mohamed bin Abdul Wahhab. Preserving the system's religious legitimacy is as important today as during the first rise to power of the Al Saud ruling family. According to Commins (2006: 276), much of Saudi political stability is shaped by popular perceptions of the aspect of the system's commitment to Wahhabi Islam, rather than the elections and pluralism which shape legitimacy by Western standards. Even the most reform-minded technocrats, businessmen, and members of the royal family will normally make Islamic values part their decision-making, speeches, laws, decrees, and public life.

Unlike other Muslim countries, Saudi Arabia does not face major political challenges from the mix of progressives, democratic reformers, human rights advocates, Arab socialists, Marxists or other secular political movements which shape the political debate in many other Arab countries. Saudi Arabia has political advocates in all of these areas and some are considered as active as individuals. There are many progressive Saudi individual businessmen, academics, journalists and technocrats who actively seek evolutionary reform. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia is one of the few countries in the world where the vast majority of politically conscious adult citizens are more conservative than a conservative system.

According to Reinhard (2002: 181), while the Saudi government has faced serious challenges from Nasser and Arab socialism in the past, there is little evidence that

such movements retain any political strength today. Modern Saudi society is focused on the values of puritanical Islamic beliefs of Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab. While there are elements of Arab nationalism in the Saudi belief structure, they are bound by the traditions ingrained in Saudi society. As a result, most advocates of reform must work through the Saudi royal family, the government, and the kingdom's technocrats. These elite have led virtually all of the kingdom's efforts to modernise and reform Saudi politics and society. Saudi ruling challenges come, instead, from an Islamic environment that the rulers themselves have created, shaped, and maintained. Algar (2002) argues that, over the decades, Wahhabi ideology has been enhanced by Saudi wealth and this fed into such movements as the Taliban.

Wahhabism and the Roots of Terrorism

Today, Saudi society is, and has been for several hundred years, built on the values of 'Wahhabi' Islam, one that is related to Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab. Wahhabism, as many critics note, is an ideology that is strict and harsh in its insistence on public observance of the fundamental principles of Islam. The fortunes of the Wahhabi brand of Islam became a matter of political fortune. This dates back to the mid-18th century when a local tribal leader in central Arabia, Mohammed bin Saud, gave refuge to a Muslim scholar from a nearby village; the individual had been expelled from the village for preaching an Islamic orthodoxy that criticised local practices. That scholar was Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab and his strict interpretation of Islam found favour with Mohammed bin Saud.

Commins (2006) argues that Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab (1792) is considered to be the first modern Islamist fundamentalist. He made the central idea of his reform to be: that every idea added to Islam after the third century of the Muslim era (about 950 CE) was false and should be eliminated. According to Zuhur (2005), the reason behind his extremist stance, and a primary focus of his efforts, was a number of common practices he regarded as regressions to the days of pre-Islamic polytheism.

These included praying to saints, making pilgrimages to tombs and special mosques, venerating trees, caves and stones, and using votive and sacrificial offerings. In contrast to such popular superstitions, Abdul Wahhab emphasised the unity of God (*tawhid*). This focus on absolute monotheism led to him and his followers being referred to as *muwahiddun* or "*Unitarians*". However, he denounced everything else as heretical innovation.

According to Choueiri (1990), anyone who did not adhere to the Wahhabi vision of orthodoxy was a fair target. Any opposition to Abdul Wahhab's thoughts would be branded as as *Kharijeen*, the contemporary equivalents of the *Kharijites* (In Arabic, the word *kharaja* means "to go out", an equivalent of outlaws). Algar (2002) notes that the Wahhabi-Salafi believers think that all those who differ with them, including Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims, Christians, and Jews, are infidels who are fair targets of ideological, physical assault or extermination.

The fortunes of the Wahhabi brand of Islam became a matter of political fortune when Mohammed bin Saud's tribal leadership and fighting prowess combined with Abdul Wahhab's religious thoughts. The two men became allies and put together a joint plan. In 1745, they planned to wage a jihad (military campaign) to conquer and purify Arabia. According to Delong-Bas (2004), the strategy was simple. Those who did not accept the Wahhabi version of Islam were either killed or forced to flee. The relationship was cemented by family intermarriage, including the marriage of Mohammed bin Saud to one of Abdul Wahhab's daughters.

However, the Wahhabi influence is key, even dominant, across a whole range of Saudi policy, both domestic and foreign. According to the Saudi foreign policy Adviser Adel Al-Jubeir (2003), "the role of Saudi Arabia in the Muslim world is similar to the role of the Vatican". Even as the Saudi state strives to keep the faith "pure" and free of innovation, it invents a new role for itself as the only legitimate authority on Islam. Wahhabi Islam is the only recognised religion in the country and most Saudis are Sunni Wahhabis, with perhaps 1 million or so being Shiite Muslims.

In addition, there is a tension because the strict Wahhabis consider Shiites not to be true Muslims.

Today, Wahhabism is the dominant Islamic tradition on the Arabian Peninsula, though its influence is greatly reduced in the rest of the Middle East. As Osama bin Laden came from Saudi Arabia and was Wahhabi himself, the Wahhabi extremism and radical ideas of purity have considerably influenced him. The adherents of Wahhabi Islam do not regard it as simply one school of thought out of many; rather it is the "only" path of "true" Islam, while nothing else really counts. Even though Wahhabism is a minority position, it has nevertheless been influential for other extremist movements and is supportive to them throughout the Middle East.

The second influence is demonstrated by the strict Wahhabi opposition to any reinterpretation of traditional Islamic law. Although Wahhabism allows for new interpretations when it comes to issues never decided upon by early jurists, many of the fundamental influences of the West do not touch upon them. In fact, many Islamists who follow the radical Wahhabi ideology oppose any attempt to reconcile traditional Islam with modern, Western notions regarding issues such as freedom of speech, family, and religious rights. Hardy (2001) notes that the Saudi Government harsh procedures in order to please the Islamists and avoid extremist threats. Its behaviour was interpreted as a nod to Islamist power and an indication they were dictating the rules of the scene. The result has been that many different restrictions have created notions of extremism in Saudi Arabia, including media policy and production.

So, even though bin Laden was killed during the "War against Terrorism" in Afghanistan, this current war is a temporary concern. In the long-term, it seems that the real issue is the endurance or destruction of the radical Wahhabi philosophy, and the readiness to apply democracy and reform. According to Sulaiman Al Hattlan, a Saudi columnist for the Saudi daily Al Watan newspaper, and a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University:

"Because of the dominance of Wahhabism, Saudi society has been exposed to only one school of thought, one that teaches hatred of Jews, Christians and certain Muslims, like Shiites and liberal and moderate Sunnis. But we Saudis must acknowledge that our real enemy is religious fanaticism"

Wahhabism and Misinterpretation of Islam

Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab encouraged his followers to interpret the holy books for themselves and to act on their interpretations in light of their own understanding, regardless of their understanding of fundamental principles or lack thereof. Anyone who did not profess to this new ideology was considered outside the realm of Islam – an apostate, disbeliever or idolater – thus permitting shedding of their blood and confiscation of their wealth. While this new ideology prohibited many traditional Islamic forms of worship, its followers did not become overtly militant until recently. According to Esposito (2003, p. 317), the Wahhabi mentality asserts that Islam may be reformed by means of the sword.

As Laqueur (2004, p. 410-419) notes, al-Qaeda have provided ethical justification for violence against civilians. He notes that on February 23, 1998, Osama bin Laden released his *Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders,* where he stated al-Qaeda's three major grievances with the United States. These were: first, the occupation of Muslim lands in the holiest places of Mecca and Medina; second, "the crusader-Zionist alliance"; and third, to fragment all the (Arab) states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets, and through their disunion and weakness to insure Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the peninsula". Sageman (2004, p. 20) argues that bin Laden's fatwa became the "manifesto of the full-fledged global Salafi jihad", allowing the jihad to carry "the fight to the 'far enemy'".

In the past, Islam was presented in a peaceful and tolerant manner. The Prophet Mohammed used to present his neighbours and friends who were not Muslims with gifts and flowers. He never held a sword against them or instigated a struggle or fight. Also, there are many events in Muslim history where the Prophet has made peace treaties with non-Muslims. Even in an Islamic state, non-Muslim residents are entitled to enjoy equal rights and the freedom to practice their own faith. "He who hurts a *dhimmi* (non-Muslim) hurts me, and he who hurts me hurts and annoys Allah", says a *hadith* of the Prophet Mohammed. Additionally, the Holy Qur'an mentions repeatedly that there is no compulsion in religion and that all people are free to practice any religion they like.

> "There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path".

Those of the Wahhabi ideology selectively apply verses of the Holy Qur'an to support their objectives, whose basis is to impose its beliefs upon everyone, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. However, they normally quote from the Qur'an and misinterpret the verses according to their own objectives. El Fadl (2002) notes that it is so hard for a morality so blindly convinced that it is the only way of life that it tramples over the rights of others. The Wahhabi belief provides religious and ideological underpinnings to enable militant movements to take up arms against existing governments, which they deem appropriate. Even though these movements are ideological in nature, they will easily resort to an armed struggle as a tool to achieve their objectives. While most governments are able to reconcile and reach a compromise, as one may easily compromise with a moderate Muslim, the extreme Wahhabi groups reject any kind of compromise and insist on their way with no other option.

Those of the Wahhabi mentality use Islam whenever it suits them and likewise, contravene it at their convenience. They issue fatwas that justify the use of terror tactics, such as suicide bombings and attacks against non-combatants in marketplaces, schools, offices, and places of worship. Similarly, they have issued a fatwa

legitimising the use of drug money to finance their campaign, despite the fact that narcotics are strictly forbidden in Islam. According to Hafez (2004), this increased radicalisation produces a kind of "spiral of encapsulation" that gradually isolates Islamist rebels from the broader movement. Such extremism increases moral justification for its cause while inducing a separation from greater society. Hafez also notes that to be successful, organisers of violence align their tactics with cultural norms, symbols, and ethics that provide a moral meaning to their acts of violence. Culture, as he states, provides a "tool kit" of concepts, myths, and symbols from which militant organisations can selectively draw to construct strategies of action.

Saudi Educational Curriculum and Religious Extremism

In return for its agreement to the introduction of "modern" education in the late 1920s, the Saudi Government gave the religious establishment the control of the Saudi educational system; this was in addition to its religious schools and (later) universities. Today, Saudi Arabia has seven universities with branches in all provinces and a total of 150,000 students. Over 70 percent of the curriculum in the four "secular" universities involves religious studies and Arab and Islamic history, whereas only about 25 per cent is devoted to other general subjects (the Aramco-founded technical university in the Eastern Province is an exception). Therefore, religious studies hold a central place in educational programmes for science, geography, and the like. In fact, much of the criticism of the Saudi education system is based on their role in educating the Muslim students who became involved in waging jihad against their government and the West.

In Saudi schools students are taught from an early age about "Jihad for the Sake of Allah" (*Al-Jihad fi sabil Allah*). A textbook for eighth-grade students introduces a *hadith* about a companion of the Prophet Muhammad who asked the Prophet: "What labour is most favoured by Allah? He – the Prophet – answered: Prayers on time; he then asked: what next? The Prophet answered: love thy parents. He then asked: what

else? The Prophet answered: Jihad for the sake of Allah."[8] The textbook interprets the conversation between the Prophet and his companion as "the most important activity is *jihad* for the sake of Allah and the convocation of Allah's religion on this earth".[9]

Another aspect of the Saudi education system has been the teaching of hatred of Jews and Christians. A textbook for eighth graders explains that Jews and Christians were cursed by Allah and turned into apes and pigs. Another lesson explains that Jews and Christians have sinned by accepting polytheism and, therefore, have incurred Allah's wrath. To punish them, Allah turned them into apes and pigs.[10] However, the real meanings of the Qur'anic verse do not specify that Jews or Christians as those who were cursed and transformed into apes and pigs. The verse explains the following:

> "Say: "Shall I point out to you something much worse than this, (as judged) by the treatment it received from Allah? Those who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath, those of whom some He transformed into apes and swine, those who worshipped Evil, these are (many times) worse in rank, and far more astray from the even Path!"[11]

This leads to the fact that many of the Qur'an verses mentioned in the school books were misinterpreted for Saudi school students. A schoolbook for fifth graders instructs the students:

> "The religions which people follow on this earth are many, but the only true religion is the religion of Islam".[12]

Additionally, MEMRI (the Middle East Media Research Institute) has published its translation of a January 2004 report in Saudi Arabia. The study was conducted by former Saudi judge Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al-Qassem and Saudi author and journalist

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[8] *Hadith* Book (Book of Explanation). (1995). Fifth Grade. Ministry of Education Publication, Saudi Arabia, (p. 9).
[9] Ibid. (p. 10).
[10] Al-Ma'ida, verse 59.
[11] Al-Ma'ida, verse 60.
[12] Al Imran, verse 85.

Ibrahim Al-Sakran.[13] It was based on an examination and critical analysis of three curricula for Saudi middle and high schools, Al-Hadith; a general curriculum on Islamic traditions, Al-Fiqh, a curriculum on matters of religious law and ritual; and Al-Tawhid, a curriculum on matters of belief. The researchers found extremely grave defects in the curricula, particularly with regard to attitude toward the "other"; that is, toward anyone whose views are not in line with the Wahhabi Islam that is dominant in the Saudi Kingdom. Although the researchers note that the curricula denigrate and show hatred toward, and incitement against, non-Muslims, the main body of findings shows no less intolerance to non-Wahhabi Muslims. A part of the report states:

> "…there was no attempt to inculcate in the pupils any legitimacy for civil values such as human rights and political awareness, and that there was much less discussion of social issues and civil values than of religious matters. The curricula refer only to clerics as "scholars," and object to using the same term with regard to civil sciences experts. The curricula create a sense of conflict between religion and culture; they denigrate other cultures' achievements and teach that these other cultures and societies are materialistic, devoid of faith, and lacking in the essential foundations of happiness."

The report is an excellent one, as it details the problems in the Saudi curricula and suggests changes. However, many of these changes have already been implemented for the 2004 school year as a part of the new procedures of fighting terrorism.

Thus, because Saudi rulers needed the legitimisation and support of the Wahhabi *Ulama*, they were keen to allow religious leaders to stress their authority in Saudi Arabia in every possible way, including books in the educational system. Additionally, they used the religious leaders against their political rivals in the Arab world and to further the spread of Wahhabi education among various Islamic states, minorities, and groups in Africa, Asia, and even in Europe. This enabled the influence

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[13] Dankowitz, A. (2004). *Saudi Study Offers Critical Analysis of the Kingdom's Religious Curricula*. Available at: http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/1255.htm [Accessed 6 August 2012].

of Wahhabi Islam to reach every corner of the world, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Philippines, Central Asia, Chechnya, Southern Sudan, Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia; and many of the locations which have suffered from the rise of fundamentalist Islam were part of the growth of Wahhabi ideology. Obviously, turning a blind eye to the spread of Wahhabism throughout the world was part of the price paid by the Saudi political leadership in receiving legitimacy from the religious establishment.

Saudi Internal Situation and the Rise of Terrorism

-   The Political Situation

The question over how much Saudi Arabia is ready to challenge a new reformist policy is dependent on understanding the historical landscape of the country's politics. The Saudi Kingdom remains an Al-Saud ("al" means clan) autocracy with 7,000-20,000 princes of varied royal links. The political system of Saudi Arabia is, to a large extent, the one shaped by King Faisal (1964-1975), where the king enjoys absolute power but where the support of the Ulama is central to upholding the legitimacy of the king's rule. However, king's position has grown stronger in comparison to the Ulama during the 30 years of this system. Today, the policy-making system is formalised with a consultative body that has 60 members and includes the most senior princes of the Saud clan. Saudi Arabia has, since 1992, had a written constitution and a bill of rights. The legislature of Saudi Arabia is the "Sharia", which is considered the law of God. However, there have been several new laws during the years; laws that regulate the functions of modern society. And, while these new laws are additions to the Sharia they must not run counter to it.

From 1993, Saudi Arabia became divided into 13 administrative districts – these are administered by appointed governors, from the royal family members, and assemblies of local notables. In larger cities, municipal governments are appointed by local leaders, and towns and villages are governed by councils of elders. Although the

government allowed people to vote for their municipal representatives in 2005, there is still a need for more political reform. However, the current government is more or less staffed by graduates of Western, primarily American, universities in all key and secondary positions. At the top of this modern structure are largely non-royal ministers (key ministries are held by the most senior Saudi princes), who are entrusted with the execution but not the formulation of policy. Yet, alongside the modern government structure is a traditional tribal pyramid of "desert democracy". This patriarchal framework allows access by the lowliest of tribesmen to his sub-tribal sheikh; through him and the tribal coalition's sheikhs to the princely district, provincial governors, and then theoretically to the king. This practice, therefore, preserves the traditional support base for the Saudi monarchy.

While there are no forums for expressing opinions or dissatisfaction with the rulers, opposition exists in Saudi Arabia. Under the surface, cassettes and information through the internet have spread, and acts of violence provide instability. However, the number of people who support these groups is impossible to identify or estimate. These groups are believed to have members so high in society that they expect a change in the system will be to their direct benefit. The opposition grows out of dissatisfaction with the total lack of democracy, as well as the harsh differences in economic power between the social groups. Television cameras occasionally show scenes of lines of Saudi citizens waiting during weekly sessions (*majlis*) to speak to a governor-prince or (theoretically) even to the monarch, to claim justice, request economic help, or discuss other matters. As Saudi Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed (2007) notes, the policy of the Saudi Government did not allow for modern institutions to emerge and act to develop the nation. So, in order to achieve certain collective advantages, many individuals chose to join smaller interest groups (i.e. violent terrorist groups).

This is how a typical patriarchal government maintains the traditional connections and loyalty of its citizens toward the rulers. However, the process of urbanisation in Saudi Arabia has been accompanied by serious changes which have affected the traditional

structure of government (*hukuma*). Since the extended family and tribe members migrated to the urban centres, they no longer live together and have more direct access to central government services. This development, coupled with access to the media and political agitation in the towns, has eroded the government's traditional loyalty system.

-   The Economic Situation and Unemployment

In order to understand the reasons behind the rising violence in Saudi Arabia, it is worth reviewing the country's unemployment rate. It seems quite odd to speak of an unemployment problem among young people, in a country that has invested hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure and oil-related industrialisation since the 1960s. As Minhas (2006) remarks, even though the Saudi sources claim an unemployment rate in the kingdom of about 15 percent, neutral sources estimate that unemployment below the age of 25, which comprises half of the kingdom's citizens, is between 20 and 30 percent. Piazza (2006) notes:

> "The low levels of economic and social development increase the
> appeal to political extremism and encourage political violence and
> instability".

Thus, as the Saudis despise manual work and lack the right amount of expertise, the kingdom's economy would have collapsed without foreign workers and Western experts. Perhaps one key problem of the Saudi populace is traditional Bedouin folkway, which resents any type of manual labour and even occupations that relate to it. The extraordinary degree of contempt for manual labour can be seen in Sunni Saudi society (about 90 percent of the population). This attitude is so deeply rooted in society that, even if an engineer who works with machines wishes to marry, he will be considered somewhat inferior for marriage purposes because his occupation is related to manual labour.

In a television interview with the late Saudi Minister of Labour Dr. Gazi Al-Gosaibi (2004), he stated that the Saudis will have to learn that seeking government jobs for prestige sake is impossible. They should adapt to the fact that the private sector can accommodate a great number of the young job seekers, and individuals should have the will to be trained and contracted.[14] The Saudi Government finds this attitude nearly impossible to overcome when it attempts to bring more of its citizens into the ranks of the employed through its endeavours to expand its economic infrastructure and bring about the Saudi-isation of its workforce. Moreover, Saudi's plans to provide additional workplaces fall far short of matching the rapid Saudi population growth and the overall number of high school and half-skilled university graduates which increases each year.

The majority of the unemployed not prepared to accept most of the lowly jobs that are now performed by a host of foreigners from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Indonesia, and other poor Arab countries (including Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, and Yemen); and there is little chance that this situation will change. However, this factor may prove to be explosive, since the Saudis look down on all foreigners and especially dislike Westerners who hold most of the skilled positions in the country. This haughty attitude toward foreigners stems from the Saudi belief that they are chosen by God, and that all others, even if they are co-religionists, are inferior.

Moreover, the Saudi loathing for Westerners relates to their being Christian and *kafirs* (according to the Wahhabi interpretation). Also, they are seen as representatives of a dominant and successful civilisation with a "materialistic culture", and with superior military-political power and technology that has humiliated the world of Islam. Since the 1950s, America has been considered the foremost representative of this civilisation. In addition to the long-standing dislike for the Americans employed by Aramco and the affiliated oil industries, US military presence in Islam's holy land has

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[14] Television interview with Dr. Gazi Al-Gosaibi, in Idha'at, presented by Turky Al-Dakheel, 1 June, 2004. Available at: http://www.alarabiya.net/Articles/2004/06/01/3949.htm#1 [Accessed 15 December 2006].

turned Saudi antipathy toward Americans into passionate hatred. This is most clearly demonstrated in the rise of the anti-Western, militant Islamic fundamentalism and the support that al-Qaeda's September 11 terrorist attacks received in Saudi Arabia and the Muslim world in general.

It is important to note that the oil era has brought revolutionary changes to Saudi society. The formerly nomadic Bedouin have undergone an extraordinarily rapid process of urbanisation, yet some still maintain the old nomadic life style. In parallel, there have been significant fluctuations in oil income, especially after the Gulf War in 1990 and having the Saudi economy involved in its consequences. By the beginning of the 1980s, the per capita income in Saudi Arabia had surpassed $18,000 annually (some claim it reached over $20,000), but the past twenty years have witnessed a drastic decline in the Saudi per capita income to $13,800 in 2006. According to the CIA, although the entry shows a progress in 2011, as the per capita income increased to $23,000, the per capita figure does not seem to differentiate between the rulers and those close to them, together with entrepreneurs and the poor masses.[15] The legendary wealth and indulgence in luxuries of the Saudi royal princes further skews the gap between rich and poor.[16] Raphaeli (2003) notes:

> "The princes have treated the country's wealth of oil and minerals as their personal domain and made themselves famous for their extravagant life style. Some princes have accumulated enormous personal wealth; with King Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz, the reigning monarch, topping the list with a personal fortune estimated at $20 billion"

However, much of this Saudi wealth was amassed through the "commission system", which required foreign businessmen to use the services of well-connected members of the Saudi ruling class to serve as patrons for their business dealings, both in and

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[15] CIA (n.d.). *The World Factbook: Saudi Arabia* [online]. Available at:
  https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2004.html [Accessed 9 August 2012].
[16] A report on poverty in Saudi Arabia, see: "The Saudi Trap: A Trip through Saudi Arabia and Ways to Combat Terrorism", A special report, *Newsweek* (Arabic), No. 211, 29.6.2004.

outside the country.[17] In this way, a vast wealth exists alongside poverty, but the overall situation of the Saudi citizenry remains relatively reasonable, considering the extensive system of subsidies and welfare services. These include subsidies for basic commodities, electricity, water, and fuel, and grants of plots of land and interest-free, home-construction loans; all of which help to promote internal stability, up to a point.

Other Reasons Related to Unsolved Political Problems in the Middle East

Over the last fifty years, the US has stood beside Israel in every conflict with the Palestinians and the Arabs. There are obvious reasons for that; namely, that America considers Israel its closest ally and the only reliable strategic partner in the Middle East. Therefore, America has provided political support for Israel at the UN Security Council, the General Assembly, and other international organisations. American political support for Israel is widely seen as being unfair and at the expense of the Arabs; consequently, this has generated (and continues to generate) hostility against America in the Arab world.

The presence of US military bases in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and Bahrain – as well as regular military training and exercises in Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco – are viewed as a new American colonialism and a way to strengthen American control over Arab oil. In addition, this new American colonialism is believed to seek control over Arab political and economic affairs in order to secure the American hegemony of the Middle East. America has used these bases on a number of occasions, such as its invasion of Afghanistan, the ten years it enforced the no-fly zone over Iraq, and later to invade and occupy Iraq. Similarly, one frequent claim is that America supports the ruling systems in the region, securing their loyalty to America by training troops loyal

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[17] The ex-Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who was assassinated in February 2005, resembles an example of those businessmen. He became a citizen of Saudi Arabia as a reward from the Saudi Royal Family for the high quality of his entrepreneurial services, and became the Kingdom's business agent in Lebanon.

to the governments and by sharing intelligence. Rami Khouri (2004), a well-known analyst in the region, stated the suspicion succinctly:

> "There is a sense by many ordinary people and politicians that the moves against Iraq are an effort to redraw the map for the strategic interests of the United States and Israel".

Similar arguments have been made by Osama bin Laden. He said that the existence of US military bases in Saudi Arabia, especially near Mecca, violated Islamic law: which forbids any non-Muslims from entering the sacred area. He called all Muslims for *jihad* against the US and stated this to be his primary reason, by saying:

> "The very presence of the United States occupying the Land of Islam in the holiest of places in the Arabian Peninsula where America is plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, and humiliating its people."[18]

Another source of anti-Americanism has been America's support for some Arab governments which are unpopular with their own people. The US provides those systems with a large amount of economic and military aid, which helps them stay in power. Daoud (2001) argues that when the average Arab citizen tries to reconcile his desire for domestic freedom and his feelings of frustration at home, the American supports his government, and the increasing presence of Western culture all make him feel that he is caught in the middle. Adrian Addison and Michael Williams of BBC Radio Channel 4 were able to have rare access to Saudi Arabia. In a series of reports, they explored the political and social situation. They succeeded in meeting with a highly educated active Islamist member who stated the following:

> "I was really very, very happy that Saudi people got involved in the attacks on America," … "Fifteen Saudis were chosen for this mission (the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington), this was no accident - it was a deliberate message to Saudi Arabia and the Americans. We want

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[18] Bin Laden, al-Quds *al-Arabi*, February 23, 1998.

the American government to change their policy on Palestine and we want to cut their strategic relationship with the Saudi government. They should get out of the Middle East and stop propping up these dictatorial regimes".[19]

Therefore, some people think that the US can do much to help the Arab people achieve this goal by solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, withdrawing forces from the region, and linking their aid to reform programmes and the improvement of human rights. It should replace its military aid with economic assistance, uncover Arab system's secret bank accounts in Europe and in the US and press them on to be used in development. The continuation of the status quo, in which millions of Arabs are oppressed and powerless, is the main reason for the Islamisation of the Arab masses, who can only join Islamic organisations or become more religious since political parties, political participation, free press and speech are forbidden. Arab political systems can deny their people democracy, but they cannot prevent individuals from joining Islamic organisations or becoming more religious – as has been happening in Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries.

Saudi Government and the Religious Establishment

The relationship between the Saudi Government and the country's clerics was almost harmonious up until the beginning of the 1990s, after the dramatic invasion of Saddam Hussein's regime. In 1990, 500,000 American service personnel arrived in Saudi Arabia in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Suddenly, Western influences were being introduced into the most religiously conservative country in the world. Half a million American soldiers were on Saudi soil, among them individuals wearing pants and carrying guns – who were seen walking into supermarkets as if they owned the place. This proved to be the breaking point for militant

[19] Addison, A. and Williams, M. (n.d.). *Secret Kingdom - Inside Saudi Arabia* [online]. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/reports/archive/international/saudi_kingdom.shtml [Accessed 8 August 2012].

fundamentalism that rose to the surface and was directed not only toward the ruling Saudi family but principally toward the West, as represented by America. In reaction, radical young religious scholars began to preach against the Saudi Government and the American presence in Arabia and the Gulf. Their sermons won wide circulation through leaflets and cassette tapes that were in great demand by the conservative Saudi population. Part of this trend included the reactivation of extremists such as Osama bin Laden and his local supporters of young Saudis and retired "Afghan-Arab" veterans.

In an interview with Dr. Madawi Al-Rasheed, (El-Tahri: 2003), she stated that Osama bin Laden was a product of the last three decades in Saudi Arabia. From the 1970s to date, there has been an expansion of religious education in Saudi Arabia. There were religious universities being formed and many theoretical theological debates within these universities, about the nature of the just ruler and about the role of Islam in politics. All these kind of new outlets allowed a whole generation of Saudis to be exposed to a new Islamic discourse about politics, religion and morality, as they began to be taught formally in universities or institutions of higher learning.

In fact, the Saudi Government has worked hard, since the establishment of the (third) Saudi Kingdom at the beginning of the twentieth century by Abdul Aziz bin Al-Saud, to win legitimacy by extending authority and favours to the Wahhabi religious establishment. This group not only controls the Saudi judicial system but also tens of thousands of mosques in the country. Indeed, the ruling family's practice of "buying off" religious scholars continued during the reign of King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz (1964-1975), who was assassinated by his nephew after he introduced (religious) television into the country, an act which triggered bloody demonstrations in the kingdom's heartland.

Additionally, the decline of Saudi oil revenues and national income in the last thirty years has greatly affected the satisfaction of the religious scholars and citizens, especially with the reckless increase of the royal family expenses, without considering

raising citizen's wages, especially that the country is known for being the richest country in the world.

US War Against International Islamist Terrorism

The rise of US President George W. Bush has been accompanied by a growing tension between Riyadh and Washington. The Saudi Government has been under constant pressure by conservatives and Arab nationalists, and especially the ultra-fundamentalist elements in the kingdom, to expel the US from Islam's holy land and oppose Washington's Middle East policy. Riyadh has also become increasingly apprehensive of itself, which has resulted in it becoming the target of its own Islamic militants.

With the rise of extremist radical Islam in Saudi Arabia in the recent years, most participants in the murderous September 11 attack were identified as Saudis. Also, thousands of al-Qaeda active members in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria were Saudis and Yemenites, in addition to joining members from other Arab states and Pakistan. Funding for bin Laden's al-Qaeda members and the spreading of international Islamist terrorism came largely from Saudi philanthropists and other wealthy Islamist entrepreneurs.

The US victory in Afghanistan, and its war against the international "Islamist terrorism", has changed the political scene in the Gulf and the rest of Arab-Muslim world. However, the militant Islamist groups (*Mujahedeen*) are still very much alive. Yet, the Saudi system, under the leadership of the moderate King Abdullah, finally decided that they could no longer bear supporting their clerics (Ulama), their *fatwas*, for the sake of their own legitimacy nor. Also, the American policy made it clear that it could no longer tolerate the Saudi double game as it seemed to be.

In fact, King Abdullah helped in stopping Saudi philanthropists from funding al-

Qaeda and other active radical groups. He also ordered the Saudi Ulama leaderships to reduce their incitement against America and the West. Also, he declared that Saudi Arabia would not cooperate with the US in any attack on Iraq, and that US forces should not use Saudi's military bases in any operation against Saddam Hussein's regime in early 2000's. Additionally, King Abdullah requested that Washington would reduce its military existence on the Saudi lands. In face of the rising criticism that the House of Al-Saud cooperates with the US, Israel's main supporter, and the increase of terrorist perpetrations in the kingdom, Saudi government could no longer bear any US military existence in the Kingdom without endangering its own internal safety.

The Terrorist Message and the Media

Although Saudi rulers have committed themselves to serving Islam through the Wahhabi ideology since the first Saudi state, some Wahhabi followers have taken a new direction. Gause (1994) notes that the Wahhabi Ulamas dominated the airwaves in Saudi state media and were sent abroad on proselytising missions. The texts of the movement were reprinted and distributed at state expense, both domestically and internationally. Ironically, a new Wahhabi challenge that made its way has come onto the arena. The development of many unsolved political and economic conflicts, both locally and in the Middle East, have resulted in creating many terrorist groups and networks. The emergence of the neo-Islamist movement in the mid-1980s brought many new Saudi clerics "Islamic awakening sheikhs" to the surface. They became popular among the nation and had many followers, who ended up being terrorists years later. They did not make their way to popularity from official Saudi support given to the Wahhabi clerics, as other tools helped in shaping their public support. Less official means and channels have been used to promote their new message, including the following:

-       The Islamic cassette, leaflet and booklet; produced by Islamist donors and distributed in front of mosques and most public places for free.

- Public religious lectures; where one-to-one communication permitted more intellectual persuasion.

- Religious websites; that promote new perspectives on the rewards of participating in holy wars and jihad (i.e. the Osama bin Laden al-Qaeda website).

- The exploitation of new satellite technology to spread the radical Islamic ideology, by owning and running private television and radio channels in the name of Islam; i.e. Al-majd (*The Glory*) television channel, which is privately owned by Saudi clerics; Safa TV., owned by Shaikh Adnan Al-Aro'oor, Sawt al-Islah (*Voice of Reform*) Radio, owned by Saad Al-Faqih, an exiled Saudi national based in London, Abdelhadi, M. (2002).

Additionally, there are other independent television channels that the Saudi violent opposition use as a tool to reach their target audience. With at least 35 million viewers in the Arab world and elsewhere, Qatar's Al-Jazeera has gained prominence for its exclusives on Osama bin Laden, as well as open debates on taboo subjects – mainly in contrast to the region's mostly censored media. It has contributed in creating tension between countries by airing liberal and critical programmes on Arab politics and systems. Also, some of the latest rows have involved Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

- Extracurricular activities in schools; supervised by neo-Wahhabi followers who use their teaching profession to spread their message in schools.

What distinguishes this neo-Wahhabist message is its unique ability in presenting many of the political, economic and social issues in an Islamist style that pleased many of the frustrated and oppressed audience; a style that was not even used by the existing religious seniors. The adopted seriousness in expressing opposition and rejection to the existing official establishment was enough to allow them to gain genuine popularity over time. In other words, they were able to show loyalty to Islam instead of the state, as has always been present; the matter which precisely satisfied the oppressed nation and put the state in real trouble. This would mean that the alliance between Al Saud and Wahhabism was not successful in leading the nation to

a safe path, and that part of Wahhabism itself has seceded about itself and about its historical ally.

For those who seek to apply democracy or reform in Saudi Arabia, it is also important to understand what Fukuyama (1995: 14) claims. He believes that it is not the mere existence of the democratic institutions that will secure the fate of transitioning democracies. Rather, it will be in the critical realms of civil society and culture that will determine successful transitions.

Summary

Before moving on to study the coverage of terrorism news in the Saudi national media, it is worth examining the history of the political and intellectual situations that may affect the Saudi news media. What we draw from this part of the study is that although there are many media channels owned by the Saudi government, the clerics or businessmen, they all fall under a similar rule, that the media should serve the ruling members, which are the government and the religious establishment. This makes the outputs of the Saudi media, whether state-owned or private, a mere carrier of the dominating bodies' ideology.

Chapter Four

The Contemporary Media Landscape in Saudi Arabia

Middle East Media: Ownership and Policy in a Terrorised Global Age

In modern economies and societies, the availability of information is central to a better understanding and any decisions made by citizens and consumers. In modern societies, citizens require information about candidates to make intelligent voting choices. Also, in economic markets, which include financial markets, consumers and investors require information to select the products and securities they believe will return the most profit. As Simons (1948), Besley and Burgess (2000) and Stiglitz (2000) argue, the availability of information is a crucial determinant of the efficiency of political and economic markets. In most countries, citizens and consumers receive information through the media, including newspapers, television, and radio. Therefore, the media serves as an intermediary, collecting information and making it available to citizens and consumers.

However, the process of globalisation has become a major factor hastening the destabilisation of the control of the state over the media. Also, the Internet has put individuals in charge and it is changing the world. The impact from the Internet has brought new social consequences, including the changing lifestyle of the new economy; this has resulted in new forms of popular culture and a new impact on people's lives. This revolution in human interaction, through the medium of a computer and with the emergence of new languages of expression, has made an impact on how hypertext and multimedia technologies influence society. So, for decades, region governments have maintained a hard grip on public information – newspapers, radio stations, and television broadcasts were nearly all state-owned. These government-controlled media outlets toed the government line, maligned political opponents and blocked critical voices. By applying censorship on the media, the media has become a carrier for one official voice.

However, the advent of blogs has altered the playing field. While some governments such as the Algerian or the Egyptian still own the main printing presses and control the national supply of information, any citizen can access free blogging services. Thus, an individual's voice, even that of a random student at Al-Azhar University, such as Kareem Amer, can reach audiences around the globe (Selah, 2007).[20] Such systems that are used to control are facing a hard struggle responding. In Tunisia, a Web publisher, Zouhair Yahyaoui, was dragged from an Internet café by security forces and tortured into revealing his site's password, after posting a quiz that mocked President Zine Al Abidine bin Ali. Also, in Iran authorities arrested a student, Mojtaba Saminejad, after he condemned the arrest of several fellow bloggers and "insulted the Supreme Leader". Daif Al-Ghazal, an investigative reporter for the Web journal Libya Al-Youm, was found murdered in Benghazi; his fingers were cut off and considered a warning sign to the active online opposition writers.

In some countries, private sector broadcasting has been permitted for some time, but globalisation makes it difficult for the state to monitor audio-visual space. The technological possibilities for transnational delivery of media products are a major factor in creating problems for the old policies to control these emerging technologies. An example is al-Jazeera, a news television channel, which started broadcasting in 1996 from Qatar (in the Gulf region). This new satellite channel was set up with a new policy to support broadcasting programmes that would unveil stories of religion, corruption, and fundamentalism, extremism, and government corruption in the Middle East. This was met with furious opposition from most Arab governments who attempted, among other tactics, to block the satellite transmissions and closed down many of al-Jazeera offices in their country (including Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia).

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[20] Abdel Kareem Nabil Soliman, 22, known as Kareem Amer, is the first Egyptian blogger to stand trial for views expressed on the internet. See: FreeKareem.org. (2009). *Karrem Amer mentioned in Le Petit Journal* [online]. Available at: http://www.freekareem.org/category/kareem/page/4/ [Accessed 11 August 2012].

It is argued that al-Jazeera offers something different among the Middle East's media, as it presents uncensored coverage of issues in the Middle East. It has also become an open forum to a free discussion of Arab politics. However, this venture is still being pursued and the channel continues to encounter many legal and diplomatic problems, with its offices facing closure. For instance, on 19 June 1999 the Kuwaiti Minister of Information, Youssef Mohammed Al-Samait, issued a decree ordering the termination of al-Jazeera's Kuwait office and prohibited the station from reporting from Kuwait; this was due to alleged violations of "professional ethics" (IFEX, 1999). Also, on 8 August 2002 Jordan's Information Minister, Mohammed Adwan, closed the al-Jazeera office in Amman and ordered to revoke its license. The closure order came one day after al-Jazeera broadcasted a popular talk show during which Jordan and the royal family were strongly criticised for their Middle East policies. Al-Jazeera correspondents were also banned from practicing any activities inside the kingdom. As Jaffe (1995) notes:

> "The unprecedented involvement of the 'audience', if indeed that term is appropriate to the "new media" information consumer, raises questions regarding both media uses and effects …Will social barriers between different socio-demographic and interest groups intensify or soften?"

Therefore, the connection between media and communications in this global age is absolutely profound and intense. There is no way of going back on that, with its mixture of beneficial and negative consequences. National governments have an important role in managing the impacts of globalisation. They should not adopt a hands off approach to the impact because it affects the policy, economy and culture of their own country. As Armburst (2000: 22) notes, "Globalisation is predicated on the ability of media to maintain a sense of connection among places, people, and things in motion". This leads to the notion that the blackout policy of some countries' state-owned media would have to find other flexible options, where it is not hidden from the outside world. Such hidden issues can become easily unveiled by other external media sources in a contemporary global age.

Most importantly, terrorism and armed conflicts are two grave challenges threatening both governments and the global community today. By endangering the security of nations and risking the national development process, both terrorism and armed conflict challenge the very bases of civilised democratic societies. Terrorism and armed conflict are, by their very nature, anti-democratic and involve no interest in the generation of consensus-building debate to resolve contentious issues. Therefore, the responsibility falls on governments and the media, the two strong sources of democracy, to help proactively in rooting out the evils of terrorism and armed conflict, and to strengthen the democratic process. An informed citizenry is a major prerequisite for a successful democracy. Any lack of authentic and objective information often generates and spreads baseless rumours which can reinforce the domination of the oppositional forces against a successful democratic system.

It has become the responsibility of both governments and the media to help generate objective information, in particular with respect to crisis situations such as those resulting from terrorism and armed conflict which threaten a civilised society. In these trying circumstances, it is natural for governments, the media and society to feel the need to formulate positions on how to provide objective information on incidents of armed conflict and terrorism, without either conceding an advantage to the perpetrators of terrorist or criminal acts, or impinging on the right of the public to access information. However, where countries lack any form of democracy, it becomes hard for the media to serve the public as it can only present one side of the story, which is the government.

When examining any Arab media, it is important to study the environment in which certain Arab media historically evolved, and the kinds of political, economic, and cultural forces which shaped the operation and content of this media. Also, it is worth exploring the different challenges that the regional Arab mass media confront in the age of globalisation.

Ownership and Policy of the Saudi Media

As media regulation and political and social environments operate symbiotically, this applies to the Arab world as well. Media regulations have been in constant change as a reaction to the changing social and political environments. The first press and publication law in the region was decreed in 1857 by the Ottoman Empire, with the primary aspect of controlling the press in Beirut and Cairo. Many of its provisions, including the banning of criticising the government and religion, still exist in most Arab media laws. Since the early 1960s, most Arab countries, including Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria, and Syria, have undergone a process of modernisation in media regulations, and press freedom was recognised either de jure or de facto. However, profound restrictions against an independent media still exist and most of the media is still owned by the relevant governments, leaving limited room for private ownership. Nevertheless, in some countries such as Oman, Libya, Egypt, and, most importantly, Saudi Arabia, media laws and regulations are quite elastic and vague. The same rules also apply for the press. For instance, in February 2001 the Saudi Council of Ministers Resolution announced that all Internet users in Saudi Arabia shall refrain from publishing or 'accessing' data containing the following:

1. "Anything contravening a fundamental principle or legislation, or infringing the sanctity of Islam and its benevolent Shari'a, or breaching public decency.
2. Anything contrary to the state or its system.
3. Reports or news damaging to the Saudi Arabian armed forces, without the approval of the competent authorities.
4. Publication of official state laws, agreements or statements before they are officially made public, unless approved by the competent authorities.
5. Anything damaging to the dignity of heads of states or heads of credited diplomatic missions in the Kingdom, or harming relations with those countries.

6. Any false information ascribed to state officials or those of private or public domestic institutions and bodies, liable to cause them or their offices harm, or damage their integrity.

7. The propagation of subversive ideas or the disruption of public order or disputes among citizens.

8. Anything liable to promote or incite crime, or advocate violence against others in any shape or form.

9. Any slanderous or libellous material against individuals" (Al-bab., 2001).

However, none of the above mentions what is banned material and every rule can be considered broad and not specific. Although Saudi Arabia is a pioneer of pan-Arab satellite television, it has one of the most tightly-controlled media environments in the Middle East. The media is strictly controlled by the government, especially on the issue of criticising the head of government and his family, and coverage of Islam and public morality. The state owns all domestic broadcast media and closely monitors privately-owned media, but publicly subsidises in the print media. The media policy statement urges journalists to uphold Islam, oppose atheism, promote Arab interests, and preserve the cultural heritage of the country. It also provides guidelines to newspapers on controversial issues, and the information minister must approve and may remove all editors-in-chief.[21] The government owns the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), which expresses official government views. Also, entry of foreign journalists into the kingdom is tightly restricted, and foreign media are heavily censored.

A country such as Saudi Arabia which struggles with social, political and economic changes, while its internal situation is unstable and threatened by terrorism, is forced to continuously adapt its governance systems amidst these existing challenges. According to Salameh (1980), Saudi Arabia has a complex polity with sensitive stability. It requires governance that is responsive to the country's numerous

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[21] See: 10 Most Censored Countries: *A special report by the Committee to Protect Journalists* [online]. Available at: http://www.cpj.org/reports/CPJ.Ten.Most.Censored.5.2.12.pdf [Accessed 10 August 2012].

constituencies. The fact that the Saudi combination of religious conservatism, oligarchic capitalism, oil wealth, and deep geographical differences has not yet exploded is largely due to the amount of compromises the royal family has made with Islamic fundamentalists, liberal reformers, business interests, and the US – the House of Al-Saud's strong international allies.

Historically, debates around the introduction of media and information technologies in the country occurred in the context of changing parameters of governance, particularly within the broad framework of Western influence on a society that prides itself to be the cradle of Islam. The Saudi paradox between a capitalistic economy dependent on trade with foreigners and a conservative society with influential elements hostile to foreign influence, explains the various political and religious manoeuvres that surround the introduction of, and subsequent debate about, new information and media technologies and their output. This environment has made Saudi Arabia an arena of struggle between the religious, political and business groups attempting to shape future modalities of governance to be compatible with their interests. Among these circumstances, the Saudi media, whether local or transnational, remain confused over whether to cover internal issues or simply broadcast the one voice of the controlling government, since there is no democracy.

Television Broadcasting in Saudi Arabia

Television broadcasting started in Saudi Arabia in 1965, but unofficial broadcast services were initiated in 1955. EGLTV went on the air in Dhahran, the eastern province of Saudi Arabia, and was, surprisingly, operated by the US Air Force. A second station started in Dhahran in 1957, while another broadcast from the ARAMCO compound served the employees of American companies. Saudi Arabia initially operated two national television channels and colour television was introduced to the country in 1976. Television programming is similar to that of radio in the sense that Saudi Arabia is the heart of the Islamic world; therefore, religious programming has a special importance in Saudi television (Amin, 1995: 15).

During the Gulf War, and with the beginning of the air strikes in mid-January 1991, Saudi TV started to broadcast CNN directly to their large domestic audience through the official Saudi Channel One. Saudi Arabia taped CNN, and then after censorship would rebroadcast the initial satellite transmission. This approach suggested an eventual divergence of the vision of international satellite broadcasting, but no definitive decision had yet been made. In the years that followed the Gulf War, dish ownership was further stimulated by the increasing amount of international programming available. This was partnered with the increased range and reduced cost of satellite dishes. Also, the number of firms that worked in marketing, servicing and even the manufacture of dishes largely increased.

This trend has been dramatically accelerated through the progressive appearance of three privately owned Arab satellite television broadcasting systems, all three of which are owned by Saudi Arabian business interests and enjoy, to a greater or lesser degree, links to members of the Saudi royal family. The conservative *Ulama* religious groups were always opposing television, and to anything that suggests communication with the outside world. In the spring of 1994, pressure from these groups finally led to the banning of satellite dishes in Saudi Arabia. This resulted in private Saudi investors broadcasting their privately-owned television networks from different countries. And although the ban was lifted in 1995, these private investors sought to protect their broadcasting businesses from the religious police criticism or closure. They did not want these official channels to interfere with their type of business, as the religious police are entitled to close down any type of business they consider non-religious or corrupt. So, the Saudi privately-owned television networks carried on their business from different countries.

Ownership of most of these satellite channels often returned to Saudi elite members, if not Saudi royal members themselves. However, despite owning many media outlets, any detailed analysis of on-going terrorism or internal issues in Saudi Arabia were completely prohibited, unless the issues were presented and analysed from the official

point of view. The following landscaping of the Saudi media will explain how the latter is being applied in each outlet.

MBC (Middle East Broadcasting Centre)

After two years of concentrated effort, the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) launched the first privately owned Arabic-language satellite television station in September 1991. The aim of the service was to provide a communication channel linking Arabs who live, work, or visit Europe with their homeland and culture. However, the service was also extended to Arabic-speaking countries from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf. MBC is a news-led service but also offers broadly based family entertainment and a wide range of lifestyle and informational programmes (Middle East Broadcasting Centre, 1991). MBC has reflected a growing push by the Saudi government to spread its views throughout the region. Abdullah El Masry, Executive Director of MBC's Board, stated "Through MBC we hope to prepare the air for reconciliation in the Middle East, to be a bridge of understanding". Reflecting the liberal, internationalist ethos of the channel, MBC Deputy Chief Executive Officer Robert D. Kennedy added: "If our presenters covered their heads we'd be like everyone else. That's exactly how we don't want to be" (Waldman, 1992).

MBC's aspiration was to become an Arab version of the major American networks, and the broadcasting centre's Head of News, Steven Maney, stated that the owners directed him to produce 'CNN in Arabic' (Middle East Broadcasting Centre, 1991). Also, MBC became the first Arab telecommunications company to open a correspondent office in Jerusalem: "Israel is there, and we have to deal with it", said Walid Al-Ebrahim, MBC's official owner (Ibrahim 1992). MBC started transmission under the ownership of a range of Arab investors. Most of its capital came from Salah Kamel, a prominent Saudi banker, whose Dallah al-Baraka company has grown into a vast holding company being successfully involved in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab countries. Some of the trading areas the company has been involved in include: Islamic banking, supermarkets, food product manufacturing, publishing, real estate,

and many others. He and Walid Al-Ebrahim, a brother-in-law of former King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, worked as partners through their company "World Space Corporation", based in Washington DC (Middle East Broadcasting Centre, 1992). After investing in this company, MBC was granted permission by the US Federal Communications Commission to launch a satellite transmitting to the Middle East and Africa. MBC started with a working capital of $US300 million and a $US60 million annual budget (Marlow, 1992). Yet, Saleh Kamel then parted by establishing a new television network of his own (ART). This led Walid Al-Ebrahim, brother-in-law of Saudi's former King Fahd, and uncle of the former king's youngest and dearest son Abdul-Aziz, to remain as an official owner of MBC. However, although Al-Ebrahim officially owns the MBC television network, it is said that Abdul-Aziz himself owns the whole television network.[22]

MBC is also partially funded by advertising, which provides a valuable new means of communication for advertisers wishing to reach an Arabic speaking audience in a number of markets. It has attracted considerable up-market advertising in the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia, as well as in Bahrain. MBC has achieved a major share of the market competing against national stations as well as its two pan-Arab rivals, ART and Orbit. MBC appointed Jeddah-based advertising representatives Tihama to sell advertising time. To support the launch, a major marketing and advertising campaign included press, television, and radio advertising, public relations and television materials in Arabic and English, and an extensive contract providing satellite feeds for apartment blocks.

MBC started broadcasting across Europe and North Africa via EUTELSA T II and across the Middle East through ARABSAT. MBC's transmissions are uplinked from its studios to EUTELSA T for European direct-to-home and cable coverage through British Telecommunication's International Docklands teleport. However, MBC studios, which is currently based in Dubai, is equipped with high-quality layout and

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[22] Loretta N. (n.d.). *Sleeping with the Enemy* [online]. Available at:
  http://www.monies.cc/publications/saudi_finance.htm [Accessed 9 March 2012].

production equipment. As a UK-based broadcaster when it first went on air, MBC was licensed by the Independent Television Commission (ITC). In addition, coverage extends from Scandinavia to North Africa and from Ireland to Eastern Europe, reaching all major population centres of Europe as well as all of North Africa and the Middle East (Middle East Broadcasting Centre, 1992).[23]

The professional presentation of a broad mixture of programmes has very quickly earned MBC a large and loyal audience. In contrast to state-run television, production is high quality and meets high international standards, such as the BBC and US ABC channels. MBC provides family-oriented programming, including films, children's programmes, drama and music, as well as daily feature programmes, international news, sports, and current affairs. MBC transmission is around an hour, with a reading from the Qur'an in the early morning and children's programmes after. The latter are a mixture of cartoon adventure series and educational programmes. Adult programmes are broadcast in the late afternoon and include documentaries with an emphasis on Islamic culture and art, as well as sports and science programmes, and a daily drama series.

The main thirty-minute news programme is transmitted at 1800 GMT and is followed by the evening feature film, usually from one of the major Middle Eastern studios or the West. In the early evening, magazine programmes from the Dubai studios are shown and cover topics such as travel, pop music, fashion, business, and sport. A special medical programme reports on the latest developments in health care, medicine, and the advances taking place internationally in the fields of medical technology and surgical practice. There is a daily programme that reviews the world press, highlighting the principal events of the day as seen by commentators around the globe, and a regular look at historical events and their relevance to today's world. Current affairs programming, including political debates and exclusive interviews with heads of Arabic states, are also featured. There is also a weekly programme that reviews the latest cinema news for both Arabic and non-Arabic productions, keeping

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[23] Middle East Broadcasting Centre (1992). Document. London.

viewers abreast of developments on the international film scene. Also, a weekly fashion show reports on the latest trends and collections worldwide, and a travel programme keeps people informed about where they might want to visit (Middle East Broadcasting Centre, 1992). At 2100 GMT evening programming continues with more chat shows and drama before the late-night segment, which includes variety shows, plays, interviews, and concerts by top Arab stars. This is followed by the late news and other programmes until the next day's early morning Qur'an reading.

MBC's plans for expansion include a movie channel, a family entertainment and educational channel, a general entertainment channel, a sports channel, and a news channel which have been activated. MBC has four main special channels for each of these genres:

- **MBC:** Main Arabic Channel: is the main channel in the Arabic Language. Its transmission is described above.
- **MBC 2:** Movie Channel: American movies are transmitted 'round the clock' with subtitles for Arab audiences.
- **MBC 3:** Children Channel: transmits children's programmes in both Arabic and English.
- **MBC Four:** American Family and Entertainment Channel – subtitled: this channel is dedicated to transmitting the American ABC channel's programmes 'round the clock'.
- **MBC MAX:** This channel transmits subtitled American social movies 'round the clock'.
- **MBC Action:** This channel transmits violent action movies 'round the clock' Without regard for age or psyches of the viewers.
- **Al-Arabiya News Channel:** Al-Arabiya was launched in February 2003 with an investment of 300 million dollars by the Saudi-controlled MBC, Lebanon's Hariri Group, and other investors from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf states. It was set up as an all-news channel to compete directly with Qatar-based al-Jazeera TV.

Al-Jazeera has ruffled feathers among governments in the West by screening videotapes from al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. By giving a platform to exiled Middle East figures, al-Jazeera has upset Jordan, Kuwait, Algeria and the Palestinian Authority, among others. As el-Nawawy and Iskandar (2001) demonstrate, al-Jazeera has become a household name by challenging every imaginable Arab taboo, ranging from interviewing Islamic radicals and Israeli generals, to frontal attacks on Arab government and no-holds barred discussion of social and cultural controversies.

When al-Arabiya went on the air, it promised its audience objectivity and accuracy. Its controllers pledged: "We are not going to make problems for Arab countries ... We'll stick with the truth, but there's no sensationalism". The *New York Times* wrote that Shaikh Walid's "personal political interests" may have encouraged him to establish al-Arabiya. As Shapiro (2005) notes, "the Saudi royal family dislikes al-Jazeera because it gives air time to al-Qaeda, and one of al-Qaeda's most cherished goals is the overthrow of the Saudi Government". Al-Arabiya's sophisticated production values set it apart from other Arab news channels. Its sets and graphics have a clean, high-tech look and its news bulletins are fast-paced, where no item lasts longer than two and a half minutes and are introduced with a dramatic drumbeat.

There is nothing on al-Arabiya quite like al-Jazeera's signature programmes, "Islamic Law and Life", which offers advice to viewers on how to apply *Sharia* to their lives, and "The Opposite Direction", which features fierce head-to-head debates. However, what was reported and broadcast on al-Arabiya in its first few months was, at times, similar to what one could see and hear on al-Jazeera. The two stations competed to show the most provocative, gory footage of casualties from Iraq. Yet, the station hardly discusses the ongoing violence in Saudi Arabia, nor any other internal issue that would put the Saudi royal family or government under deep analysis or criticism.

ART (Arab Radio and Television)

The second private Arab satellite system, and no doubt the largest in reach and in Arabic programming, is ART (Arab Radio and Television). ART was established by Sheikh Saleh Kamel, a media tycoon who was also a key player in establishing MBC's network until he decided to develop his own satellite television service. Since striking out on his own with this new television network, he has partnered in this vast broadcasting venture with Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, whose large investments in Citicorp, Euro Disney, News Corporation, Apple, Rotana, and the Plaza Hotel have made him a major player in global financial markets.

ART has pioneered the global trend in specialisation broadcasting in the Arab world. It began transmission from the Telespazio Center in Fucino, Italy, via ARABSAT in January 1994, providing four channels: a movie channel, a sports channel, a general or variety channel, and a children's channel. Since then, ART has become a global platform of more than 20 channels, 17 of which are its own and most of which are encrypted. Over two years ago, ART unveiled its own Broadcasting and Production Centre in Avezzano, nearby the Telespazio Center. Operated by its Italian subsidiary Kidco Services, s.r.l., the Avezzano Center is a state-of-the-art digital transmission and production centre put together for ART by Sony, which considers the centre a showcase for its cutting-edge broadcast technology. Currently, ART consists of sixteen channels that broadcast 24 hours a day, and these are the following:

- Movies (1)
- Movies (2)
- Hikayaat (Drama Channel)
- Cinema
- ART Tarab (Music Channel)
- Sport 1
- Sport 2
- Sport 3
- Sport 4

- ART America

- ART Australia

- ART Europe

- ART Latino

- Movies America

- ART Teenz

- Iqra' Channel (Islamic Channel): Iqra is a religious satellite network, based on Wahhabi Islam, as most cleric presenters are taught in the Wahhabi Schools of Saudi Arabia. The studios are, for the most part, located in Dubai, but many of the programmes are recorded in Saudi Arabia, where prayers, sermons and talk shows are rebroadcast.

Iqra's network is widely watched throughout Saudi Arabia and by many Arabic-speaking people of the same Wahhabist ideology. Much of its popularity comes from featuring the most famous and strict Qur'anic televangelists, of which the Egyptian Amr Khaled is one.[24] However, the last time that Amr Khaled appeared live on ART's Iqra' channel was a few days after the fall of Baghdad. There have been some sources insisting that certain "Arab officials" had asked Sheikh Saleh Kamel to axe the popular preacher. However, there have also been some rumours and speculation that this request was actually made in response to pressures from the US (Al-Ahram, 2003). As mentioned in Shahba (2005), Mohammed Hammam, Executive Manager of the Iqra' channel states:

> "Terrorism has become synonymous with Islam … and such
>
> misinterpretation is supported by some Western media networks".

He maintains the belief that:

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[24] Amr Khaled is an Egyptian preacher. He is popular, especially amongst young Muslims, as the media sometimes refers to him as the Islamic Billy Graham. Unlike other traditional clerics. Khaled, 38, defies the stereotype of the Islamic preacher. He wears a hand-tailored cream suit, an open necked sky-blue shirt, brown loafers and a Bulgari watch. The accountant-turned-preacher shifts easily between the worlds of religion and business.

"…the gap separating Islam and the West must be bridged, and that the media have a moral obligation to attempt to provide that much-needed bridge, avoiding generalisations and stereotypes, which is not the actual state of things".[25]

However, the next chapter will provide an opportunity to study the content of the Iqra' channel. The analysis will prove evidence over whether the channel has succeeded in replacing the Western misinterpretation of Islam, and if it has managed to bridge the gap between the East and the West. Apart from live and syndicated sports coverage, much of ART production originates in Cairo, but programmes are also produced for ART in Avezzano, Beirut, Amman, Riyadh, Jeddah, Tunis, Dubai, Düsseldorf, Paris, and Rome. To the degree that ART relies on live and syndicated coverage, as in the case of sports, or its impressive film library, it quickly acquired a very large following in its initial phase broadcasting. Its general or variety channel – dominated by entertainment, but also includes public affairs and business programming and considerable religious and Arab heritage programming – reminds one of the format, style and tone of the national channels.

Since encrypting in 1996, ART has been struggling to attract more viewers and so started to develop higher quality programming. This led to acquiring Middle East rights to the best of European football, including the Italian League and recently the British Premier League, and all four of the Grand Slam tennis tournaments. In its struggle for quality, ART has increased its number of public affairs talk shows, where audiences participate in debates over Arab cultural standards and daring social issues for public dialogue such as divorce, premarital sex, male impotence, and drug use. ART's policy does not consider news in its transmission, which means that ART avoids the broadcasting of news bulletins. ART believes that it would be very expensive if news is produced conscientiously by one's own staff of Arabic-speaking television journalists and by one's own overseas bureaus, as in the case of MBC. They

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[25] Ibid.

also believe that it is risky to touch sensitive issues, because this would lead to stirring up local or regional official wrath and potential sanctions.

Rotana Audiovisual Company

Rotana Audiovisual Company was established in 1987. In 1995, Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, the Saudi king's nephew acquired 25 percent of the company, which is considered the largest Saudi recording label having contracts with the top 100 Arab artists. In 2002, his stake in the company was increased to 48 percent, and in 2003 to 100 percent. Rotana began producing and distributing Arabic music and songs all over the world. During the past 17 years, Rotana has grown rapidly to become the largest producer and distributor of Arabic music and songs worldwide, with over 100 artists of the Arabic world and with a distribution network that covers the globe. Also, the Rotana Arabic Entertainment Television Channel, which broadcasts from Dubai and Lebanon, has become a major attraction for teenagers, young adults and older audiences in the Arab world. It launched Viewer Interactivity, so young viewers are directly involved through the services of MMS, SMS, and games and chat-rooms. The Rotana channel features:

- 2,439 Video Clips
- 7 Musical programmes
- 3 Variety and 4 entertainment Programmes.
- 4576 Live songs in Concerts & Music Festivals.
- 724 Programme Songs

However, Arab investors in such enterprises do not normally rely on Saudi Arabian territories for work. Instead, they use other countries as bases for their business. For instance, MBC started its transmission from London and is now does do from Dubai. Such environments allow these privately owned media channels to work freely, without fear of any clerics or politicians meddling in their production that opposes

religion or internal policy. All of the Rotana channels do not allow their programmes to cover any Saudi issues, as no channel is related to news or politics.

Al-Resalah Satellite Television Channel

On March 1, 2006, Saudi Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal Abdul Aziz launched his new 24-hour Arabic-language Islamic channel Al-Resalah (*the Message*), which broadcasts from Kuwait. In a press conference, Prince Al-Waleed said that his new channel, which, according to The Saudi Gazette, was a family channel that would "counteract the misconceptions about Islam in other societies", as well as project Islam as a religion of moderation and tolerance and provide a platform for dialogue on religious, social, and economic issues. In addition, Arab News quoted Prince Al-Waleed as stating the channel was to be the forerunner of an English-language Islamic channel aimed at a Western audience.[26]

The channel's advisory committee includes Sheikh Abdullah bin Sulaiman Al-Manai, member of the Senior Ulama Commission, Saudi Arabia; Dr. Abdullah Naseef, President of the Muslim World Congress (MWC); Dr. Hamed Al-Refaie, Secretary-General of the MWC and President of the International Islamic Forum for Dialogue; Dr. Abdullah Al-Meslih of the Commission of Scientific Signs of Qur'an and Sunnah; Sheikh Ali Al-Nashwan, Executive Manager of the Prince's Kingdom Holding Company's Humanitarian Division and religious advisor to the prince; Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Askar, former head of the media department at Al-Imam Saud bin Muhammad University; and Dr. Walid Arab Hashem, Shura Council member. Shura Council member Walid Hashem told Arab News that the channel would feature cartoons and animated films with a moral content, and that its main objectives were to unify the ranks of the Islamic community, counter negative perceptions if Islam, and wean the youth away from the path of extremism.

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[26] http://www.saudigazette.com.sa [Accessed 19 April 2006].

Yet, since Al-Resalah launch in March 1, 2006, MEMRI (The Middle East Media Research Institute) has identified a television programme that supports Jihad and terrorism on this new television channel.[27]

Al-Majd Television Channels

A new brand in satellite television channels is Al-Majd TV (Glory TV). This independent Wahhabi-Islamist television channel network started broadcasting in May 2003. Its finance comes from a group of religious Saudi investors. Al-Majd television network broadcasts from Dubai, as broadcasting tools in Dubai Media City are independent, easy and powerful. Al-Majd is financed by Saudi clerics and businessmen, while the rest of its capital is derived from advertisements. In January 2004, Al-Majd's children channel began transmission and the channel's future plan includes one documentary and another scientific channel. Al-Majd television's policy aims to distribute Islam according to its own investor's Wahhabi belief. This does not make them in any oppositional situation with the Saudi Government, as Wahhabi Islam is the main religious belief in the whole of Saudi Arabia and a source of legitimacy for the House of Al Saud.

The daily transmission of Al-Majd includes a mixture of a Qur'an reading, a Prophet Mohammed quotation reading and interpretation, and news. The channel relies on the Saudi Arabia News Agency as a news source for both local and international coverage. Among the Saudi population, the Al-Majd channels are very popular because they cater for Saudi educational and religious backgrounds. Therefore, any coverage of incidents of terrorism and violence in Saudi Arabia are analysed from an official point of view. There is no way for any branches of Islam or religious

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[27] The excerpts from an interview with the Iraqi Cleric Ahmad Al-Kubeisi. He promotes Jihad on the new Al-Resalah Saudi television channel. See: MEMRI [online]. Available at: http://www.memritv.org/Transcript.asp?P1=1075 [Accessed 24 April 2011].

minorities in Saudi Arabia to be included in any discussion through Al-Majd programmes. Viewers in the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Mediterranean can watch Al-Majd channels. However, Western Europe is not yet able to receive Al-Majd TV.

Saudi State-owned Television

The Ministry of Culture & Information of Saudi Arabia presents Saudi Arabian television channels. The satellite programming is a blend of religious and cultural programmes, entertainment and local music, Arabic drama programmes, non-Arabic films and serials, children's programmes, and news and current affairs. Special programming is produced for all the major events in the Islamic calendar, especially for Ramadan and for the period of the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to the Holy Places. According to Sakr (2001), transmitting Saudi's own government-controlled material by satellite enables the Saudi Government to claim it is keeping up with new media technology while also observing the need for 'responsible' content compatible with regional values and traditions (Sakr, 2001 37-40).

Saudi Arabia Television Channels

- **Saudi Arabia - Channel One:** the main Arabic channel.
- **Saudi Arabia - Channel Two:** transmits family programmes, drama and (U) rated American movies in English. It allows non-Muslim audiences, who work and live in Saudi Arabia and the region, to understand Islam according to the Wahhabi doctrine by interpreting the Qur'an and Prophet Mohammed's quotations according to the Wahhabi ideology. This also includes lectures presented by Wahhabi clerics.
- **Saudi Arabia -** Sports Channel.

- **Al-Ikhbariya** – this channel was launched in January 2004. It is the first Saudi state-owned TV channel to feature female anchors. Al-Ikhbariya covers local and international news, and broadcasts hourly news bulletins. Its programming also includes live debate shows which the network directors hope will involve some European and American personalities. The station directors also remark that there may include English-language programming in the future. This satellite channel was established amidst the rise of terrorism, and aims to improve the image of Saudi Arabia, its government, and the media in the region and the rest of the world.

However, as the ideology of Wahhabism was crucial in creating the Saudi monarchy, Wahhabist leaders have always opposed anything they viewed as *bid'a*, a curse for any change or modernisation that deviates from the fundamental teachings of the Qur'an. The telephone, radio broadcasts, and public education for women were at one point condemned as innovations wrought by the Devil. Riots ensued over the introduction of television in 1965, and were only quelled after police fired on demonstrators.[28] Similar tensions exist today. However, a recent ruling suggests that camera mobile phones and music played as mobile phone ringtones should be outlawed on religious grounds (Lane, 2004).

Whenever the forces of change prevailed, it was usually with the argument that the novelty could help propagate the Qur'an. For instance, there are no movie theatres in Saudi Arabia. The controlling Wahhabi leaders believe that they promote the unhealthy mingling of the sexes. The production of television commercials are submitted for Wahhabi approval as well. Women have to wear Islamic clothes in order to appear in a TV commercial. So, as the Wahhabis believe that their faith should spread, they believe that different technologies can be used to distribute Islam to every corner of the world. As a result, official Saudi television channels are

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[28] See: Frontline. (n.d.) *Saudi Arabia: a chronology of the country's history and key events in the U.S. Saudi Relationship* [online]. Available at:
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saudi/etc/cron.html [Accessed 11 April 2012].

dedicating every channel to serving this objective. Most religious programmes are prepared and presented by Saudi clerics, which include religious, medical and social programmes. Interestingly, most of the Saudi television production is based around the Wahhabist perspective. Live chat programmes enable the audience to contact their most trusted religious leaders for their *fatwas* over many aspects of their lives.[29] This also applies to all Saudi radio stations. Qur'an Radio is a pioneer in transmitting the Wahhabi ideology to the region and to the rest of the world. Such programmes allow Saudi clerics to guide their listeners to the so-called "right" Islamic belief.

Table 4.1: Saudi Official Radio and Television Channels

Saudi Arabia Television: Four Channels
Channel One
Channel 2 – Live Broadcasting
Al-Ekhbariya: News Channel
Sports Channel – Live Broadcasting
Saudi Arabia Radio: Radio 1 (from Riyadh), Programme 2 (from Jeddah), Radio Qur'an, European Broadcasting, Multi-Language Broadcasting 1, Multi-Language Broadcasting 2, Current Language 1, Current Language 2

However, Saudi Government-controlled television and radio stations are highly popular among the religious crowd. It is hardly watched or listened to by the younger Saudi generations, while for the elder audience it remains a major source of daily local news updates. However, this information is based on a personal account, as there is no official audience rating data in the Gulf region. Such data does not exist in most

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[29] Many programmes are considered tools of persuasion in delivering the Wahhabi message. The main policy of Saudi television channels is to expose Western modernisation as a way of the Devil. See, for instance: an interview with a Saudi cleric Sheik Abdul Muhsen Al-Ahmed, on *″Is Islam being unfair to women? A conversation with an American citizen″* [online]. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIvcpOHphZU&feature=relmfu [Accessed 27 June 2012].

of the Middle East countries, as there are no clear regulations over the consumption of television services.

Table 4.2: Sample on Radio Qur'an Programmes

Lecture Title	Lecturer	Timing
Lessons from the Two Holy Mosques	A Group of Wahhabi clerics	4:10pm – Daily
Between the Prophet and his Followers	Mohammed Al-Monjed – Wahhabi	2:05pm – Every Saturday
The Orient Lists' Efforts between Destruction and Construction	Dr. Zuhair Al-Khalid – Wahhabi	5:35pm – Every Saturday
A Brief Interpretation of "Sahih Muslim" – Prophet Mohammed Quotation Book	Dr. Abdulla Al-Motlaq – Wahhabi	10:15pm – Every Wednesday
A Brief Interpretation of "Sahih Muslim" – Prophet Mohammed Quotation Book	Dr. Abdulla Al-Motlaq – Wahhabi	10:18am – Every Wednesday
Famous Quotations in "Al-Meezan" – a book	Dr. Ebrahim Al-Rayyes – Wahhabi	2:56pm – Every Wednesday
Prophetic Lessons	Dr. Mesfer Al-Domaini – Wahhabi	1:40am – Every Friday

Based on a personal observation, any other Islamic school of thought, different to Wahhabism, is not permitted to be presented on any Radio Qur'an programmes, and only Wahhabi clerics are allowed to present the programmes. The speaking guests on Radio Qur'an also come from the same school of Wahhabi thought. Thus, any other local or regional religious minorities are unable to express their views through Radio Qur'an. However, the radio station's policy does not deal in negotiating between Wahhabi ideology and other religious schools of thought.

As the news media became bigger business, innovative traditions led by creative editorial dominance began to erode and resulted in the media growing from a nicely profitable, creative business into a gigantic investment opportunity. As noted in Alger (1998), Doug Underwood, former reporter for *The Seattle Times* and the Gannett News Service, and Professor of Communications at the University of Washington, confirms the drastic corporatisation of the media:

> "It's probably no surprise that in an era of mass media conglomerates,
> big chain expansion, and multimillion dollar newspaper buy-outs, the
> editors of daily newspapers have begun to behave more and more like
> the managers of any corporate entity".

The Internet

Saudi Arabia has had an Internet connection since 1994, but initially restricted its use to state academic, medical, and research institutions. In 1999, however, public Internet access was made available, with filters to block access to information deemed offensive to Islam (Wahhabi Islam) or state security. Saudi Arabia has created one of the world's biggest Internet filtering systems. The authorities have officially announced that they block access to nearly 400,000 web pages, with the aim of "protecting citizens from offensive content and content that violates the principles of Islam and the social norms". Two months after local ISPs began offering access, Saleh Abdul Rahman Al-'Adhel, President of the King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology (KACST), affirmed that the KACST was "blocking undesirable web sites" by using what he called "very fast computer programs". However, he denied that KACST had prohibited any applications such as chat services, "unless they were linked to pornographic sites" (Nasser, 1999).

Nevertheless, as the Internet is officially regarded as "a harmful force for Westernising people's minds", the Internet blacklist in Saudi Arabia covers some very broad fields. It includes websites of political organisations and Islamist movements

that are not recognised by the Wahhabi School of thought or the Saudi Government. Also, any publication that deals directly or indirectly with sexuality is considered bad material.[30] Saudi women, who represent nearly two thirds of the country's Internet users, can only access online content that has been expunged of any reference to their rights, their health or their intimate lives.

Saudi Arabia has a law that deals specifically with the Internet, but it is very strict and requires all websites to obtain official permission. Despite the presence of 37 private companies permitted to operate as ISPs (Internet Service Providers), "all traffic at the moment goes through the servers of the Internet Services Unit (ISU) at King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology (KASCT). It takes responsibility for maintaining the Saudi Internet censorship system and manages the gateway used by all the local ISPs. As a result, it can monitor all online data exchanges taking place in Saudi Arabia. The ISU is also the agency in charge of the country domain name .sa and it manages the technical aspects of Saudi Internet. But it simply carries out instructions received from Saudi security services and does not decide what must be censored.

The ISU offers an online form and e-mail address (abuse@isu.net.sa) for Internet users who want to report sites they think should be blocked. Hundreds of requests of this type are received every day and are handled by a full-time team assigned to this task. It seems that the filters installed by the ISU, with the help of such US companies as Secure Computing, are easy to get circumvent. In fact, a seasoned Internet user can access censored sites quite quickly. The simplest solution is to go to a discussion forum offering an up-to-date list of proxy servers. In the great majority of cases, these relay servers are used to access pornography sites and any other sites blocked by the Saudi authorities.

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[30] See Internet Filtering in Saudi Arabia in 2004 on: http://opennet.net/studies/saudi [Accessed 10 August 2012].

The banned religious sites do not, of course, include approved Wahhabist ones as most of the religious sites that face blockage are either moderate Islamic or Shiite ones. Also, homosexuality and women's rights are completely absent from the Saudi Internet. Regardless of the huge difference in content, both religious and homosexual websites are treated in the same manner by those who are responsible for blocking websites. Both received genres are considered dangerous to Saudi minds and, therefore, are blocked. Music sites such as www.rollingstone.com, humour sites such as www.poopreport.com, online translation software such as www.systransoft.com, and the best-known anonymizers such as www.anonymizer.com, www.silentsurf.com and www.megaproxy.com are also on the ISU blacklist.

For all the official attempts to block inappropriate website content, some individuals and organisations have succeeded in breaking this censorship. For instance, the Movement for Islamic Reform in Arabia (MIRA), created in 1996 by Sa'ad Al-Faqih, is a London-based religious movement that is very critical of the Saudi political system. It has succeeded in breaking the Internet rules in Saudi Arabia. Its website, www.miraserve.com, is on the list of sites that have been censored by the government since the outset of Internet in Saudi Arabia. Yet, the movement quickly found ways of getting around the censorship, managing to identify find solutions which involve sophisticated technology that are easy to use.

To access www.miraserve.com despite the filter, Saudis simply have to send an e-mail message to a certain address in order to receive an automatic response identifying a URL (web address) that is not blocked. The MIRA installed a device that allows it to create an unlimited number of web addresses through which its online publication can be accessed. MIRA also offers advice on how to use the Internet anonymously by using a Hotmail or Yahoo email address, and by surfing the Web using software provided by companies such as Anonymizer or Safeweb.

However, as the Internet is becoming an increasingly vital medium, and with all Arab countries allowing access to the Internet, Arab opposition groups, regardless of their

type of resistance, deemed it the best medium for spreading their political views as it is difficult to censor. Thus, with all the local censorships they are confronting, Saudi political and Islamic militant groups are spending efforts to deliver their messages to the outside world through the Internet. This new technology has become a key tool for propaganda and for the exchange of ideas among reformists and violent militant groups from the one side, and the crowd on the other. This has been achieved through building special websites featuring peaceful calls for reformation, criticism against the Saudi royal family, videos of Americans being executed, or texts inspiring attacks.

Videos, like the one of a kidnapped American citizen who is killed, or a violent militant's threat, show that the Internet is playing an increasingly important role for militants as they intensify their campaign against Westerners in Saudi Arabia. From the extreme Wahhabi militants' point of view, the Internet allow for the creation of fear in the expatriate community in Saudi Arabia and to cause some kind of reason to leave Saudi Arabia. Although such websites are banned in Saudi Arabia, these websites are still easy to access. Many of these websites offer a unique easy-to-use sophisticated technology that helps circumvent official censorship to various political and terrorist texts and messages.

The Press

The autocratic and largely undemocratic systems that govern some Arabic countries have significantly hindered the development of a free press. While private ownership of the media exists, journalists operate under severe constraints to provide independent or critical reporting on domestic affairs of their own country. Saudi Arabia, the largest and most influential member of the GCC (Gulf Corporation Council), has perhaps the most restricted press in the Middle East. The Saudi King must approve the hiring of editors and may dismiss them at will. Journalists, as a result, keep to the unofficial boundaries of acceptable journalism and almost never challenge the policies of the royal family or report on sensitive domestic matters. In

this context, Saudi Arabia exercises tremendous leverage over the regional and international press beyond its borders. For example, the Arabic daily newspaper Al-Hayat and the magazine Al-Wasat, both based in London, are owned by Prince Khaled bin Sultan, a nephew of former King Fahd and current King Abdullah. Similarly, the London-based daily al-Sharq al-Awsat and its sister publication al-Majallah, belong to Prince Ahmad bin Salman. Additionally, the wire service United Press International (UPI) is a subsidiary of the Middle East Broadcasting Corp. (MBC), owned by Sheikh Walid al-Ebrahim.

The type of indirect influence the kingdom applies over news content is perhaps best exhibited by the constraints faced by the respected London-based daily Al-Hayat.[31] On the one hand, the newspaper is able to maintain editorial autonomy over news content. However, due to its overpowering dependency on advertising revenue from companies within Saudi Arabia, it carefully avoids sensitive news stories which might lead to it being banned in the kingdom and the subsequent alienation of advertisers. Also, the Saudi Government exercises considerable influence over the local press in other Arab countries. Additionally, the Saudi government has signed "media protocols" with the ministries of information in several Arab countries that, in effect, obligate them to censor any news which discusses internal Saudi politics or criticism of state officials.[32]

Moreover, the government restricts domestic newspapers from releasing stories about the country that are based on stories in the foreign press, and stories about Saudi politics, royal family members, and women's rights. Censors, on many occasions, remove or black out offending articles imported into the country, glue pages together,

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[31] On 24 October 2002, the Washington Post reported that Saudi Arabia had banned editions of the Saudi-owned, London-based newspaper al Hayat. It contained the latest instalment in an exchange of open letters between the US and Saudi intellectuals about September 11. See: Cooperman, A. (2002). *Saudis Ban Paper with U.S. Scholars' Letter* [online]. Available at: http://www.americanvalues.org/html/alan_cooperman.html [Accessed 5 August 2012].

[32] See "Saudi Arabia and Other members of Gulf Corporation Council" [online]. Available at: http://www.cpj.org/attacks97/mideast/saudiarabia.html [Accessed 25 July 2012].

or prevent certain issues of foreign publications from entering the market.[33] And although there are over ten daily newspapers, all are subject to restrictions on writing and commenting over local issues. Moreover, the government bans all books, magazines, and other materials that it considers sexual or pornographic in nature, to the point that even pictures in haute couture catalogues are blacked out if clothes do not meet with the Islamic dress codes.

Table 4.3: The Press

The Press	
Um-Al-Qura	Mecca based weekly (first official newspaper in Saudi Arabia, established in 1924 during the rule of Abdul Aziz Al Saud)
Sout Al-Jijaz	Mecca-based (second newspaper in Saudi Arabia, established in April 1934 during the rule of King Abdul Aziz). Name of the newspaper changed to Al-Bilad.
Al-Riyadh	Riyadh-based daily
Al-Jazirah	Riyadh-based daily
Okaz	Jeddah-based daily
Al-Sharq al-Awsat	Riyadh/London-based daily
Al-Hayat Newspaper	London-based daily
Al-Watan	Abha-based daily
Al-Bilad	Jeddah-based daily. Formerly the Sout Al-Hijaz
Al-Madinah	Al-Madina-based daily
Al-Youm	Dammam-based daily
Arreyadi	Riyadh-based daily
Arab News	English-language
Saudi Gazette	English-language

Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media

[33] See "Saudi Arabia bans issue of National Geographic with article on country" [online]. Available at: http://able2know.org/topic/13225-1 [Accessed 27 June 2012].

Freedom of expression is known for being a basic right of the individuals in applying democracy and human dignity. Yet, as many observers note, it can be one of the most fatal rights, especially in countries like the Middle East. Freedom of expression allows people to express their different views over their governments performance. It also encourages them to act against any political dissatisfaction. In John Milton's 1644 old book *Areopagitica*, he opposed state restrictions on freedom of expression on the grounds that individual men and women are blessed by God with the faculty of reason, which allows them to read and enable them, according to their conscience, to make choices between good and evil. By censoring what could be read, Milton argued that individual's freedom to think. For Milton, freedom of the press is necessary because "the virtue of the individual must be developed and tested continually by engaging contrary opinions and experiences" (Keane, 1991: 12).

Thus, toleration of a range of opinions was the basis of individual virtue. Milton's religious perspective, however, did not mean he was with the idea of absolute freedom. He defended the banning of "popish" books and accepted that licentiousness of the press should be punished. So, according to this argument, freedom of the press should not be conceived on religious grounds, but on the basis that every person had the right to decide for him/herself on all life matters. Thus, it is considered a natural right of individuals to freely publish their views in face of the restrictions imposed by the state. Another argument by Bentham and James suggests that smooth operation of the political system depends on the free expression of public opinions, as it reflects "good governance" and a "safeguard against misrule".

According to Mill and Bentham, freedom of the press could, also, scrutinise the workings of power and bureaucracy, and prevent the corruption of legislators and administrators (Keane, 1991: 16). These theories became the basis of the theory of liberal democracy with the press seen as a major player in the development of political systems. Yet, the role of such freedom is still not considered in many political systems in the twenty first century. Of course, it is hard to imagine any state,

whatever its constitution, with complete freedom of expression. According to Street (2001: 250), all states operate codes which provide for restrictions on the content of videos, films and television programmes. Yet, with Saudi Arabia's strict rules, the kingdom's fourteen million citizens and six to seven million foreign residents have always been denied a range of basic rights guaranteed under international law, ever since its establishment by King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud in the early 20th century. Freedom of expression and association are non-existent rights.

Additionally, political parties and independent local media are not permitted and even peaceful anti-government activities remain forbidden. Infringements on privacy, institutionalised gender discrimination, harsh restrictions on the exercise of religious freedom, a lack of freedom of religion and speech for minorities, and the use of capital and corporal punishment are also major features of the kingdom's human rights record. According to Human Rights Watch, although the Saudi government expressed a new interest to discuss domestic human rights by inviting Human Rights Watch to the kingdom, the Saudi authorities are still blocking access to trials and places of detention.

By interviewing 100 Saudi female academics, educators and medical professionals in early 2007, the Human Rights Watch documented how male guardianship of adult women does not recognise women's rights to education, employment, health, and freedom of movement. The government's policy officially requires male consent for many daily women activities. This system is premised on the idea that women have limited or no legal right to act on their own behalf, and this affects the majority of Saudi women across economic and social divides. While guardianship is interpreted as a kind of protection for women, it fails to protect some of their most basic rights. Saudi journalist Fatima Al-Faqih (2007) notes that Saudi women are not allowed to do any of the following without a male guardian's consent:

1. Driving
2. Travelling abroad

3. Renting a hotel room

4. Naming her new-born baby

5. Issuing herself identification documents (passport, identity card, a new bank card, and so on).

6. Going out of the house

7. Going out of work

8. Taking a new job

9. Renting a new residence

10. Wearing un-Islamic clothes without Abaya

11. Enrolling in a school, college or university

12. Accepting a government grant to study abroad

13. Buying shares in the stock exchange, or opening bank accounts for herself or her children

14. Unveiling her face in public (in some rural areas in Saudi Arabia)

15. Hiring a non-Saudi employee (male or female) for her family

16. Collecting her children's inheritance in the court

17. Getting married

18. Any surgery to control or stop birth

19. Getting discharged from a hospital

20. Benefiting from any addiction and aids therapy programmes

21. Going to government offices and meeting with officials

22. Carrying on with her marriage, if her male guardian refused to

23. Opening the door for police or emergency, in case of fire or any emergency in her house or in schools.[34]

24. Going into court, without a male guardian to identify her to the judge

25. Being released from prison without a male guardian to take her

26. Forbidden from *not* sleeping with her husband

27. Forbidden from asking for divorce, and if so, she has to pay her husband a lot of money

28. Forbidden from raising her own children after divorce, unless her husband gave consent to do so

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[34] The Mecca girls school fire incident in 2002 is a clear example of this rule. See: Saudi police 'stopped' fire rescue. [online]. Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/1874471.stm [Accessed 27 June 2012].

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29. Forbidden from withdrawing her children from her ex-husband, even if he was not qualified to raise them

30. Forbidden from marrying her daughters, unless her ex-husband approves

31. Forbidden from collecting her retirement money (if a government employee)

32. Forbidden from standing and serving customers, if she owns a business of her own

33. Forbidden from working in 90 percent of major economic and business sectors in the country

34. Forbidden from taking any executive or high level job, in both public and private sectors

35. Working in a place where both genders work together

36. Getting herself elected, or voting in any local elections

37. Meeting foreign delegations and signing agreements

38. Making her husband angry

39. Not sleeping with her husband, without a convincing reason (health reports only)

40. Leaving the house with the family's driver

41. Her voice is alone, and that she should keep very quiet.

When King Abdullah recently gave consent to reform the cultural scene, many Saudi intellects faced a ban over distributing their publications in Saudi Arabia. Such books could only be bought from outside Saudi Arabia. The list of the intellectuals include:

- **Dr. Ghazi Al-Gosaibi:** Former Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Britain and Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. His novels include "*The Insane Asylum*", "*Freedom Apartment*" and "*Abu-Shallakh Al-Bermai*" but are not available in Saudi bookstores. Although Dr. Al-Qusaibi had lost his official posts many times, he remained close to the decision-makers and to the head of state, despite the fact that he opposed the government over many issues until his death in August 2010.

- **Dr. Abdul Rahman Munif:** A Saudi dissident who lived the rest of his life in Syria. His critically praised novels looked at political oppression in the Middle East, and Saudi Arabia in particular. He died in exile in January 2005.
- **Dr. Turki Al-Hamad:** Some of his books on political criticism are banned from Saudi Arabia. While he is not popular in Saudi Arabia, Dr. Al-Hamad is widely appreciated and highlighted in other countries' media. His publications can be found in major capital cities around the world.
- **Abdo Khal:** A famous and popular novelist in the Middle East. His books are not sold in Saudi Arabia because they address the sacrosanct trio of taboos in the Arab world, which are sex, politics and religion.

In the aftermath of the suicide attacks that killed some 3,000 people in the USA in 2001, the state of the Middle East's media began to attract unprecedented international attention. There were two reasons for this unwanted interest. The first arose from the fact that 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi nationals. Suddenly, for people outside Saudi Arabia, the socialisation of a generation of young Saudis became a focus of concern. According to Doumato (2003) and Prokop (2003), the kingdom's school textbooks were scoured for anti-Western messages and its media assessed for complicity in promoting intolerance. Criticism was levelled at the Arab media in general. Testifying before a US Congressional committee, the head of a private media-monitoring organisation based in Washington claimed that the government-controlled media in Arab states 'frequently' carried articles openly supportive of, or even calling for, terrorist attacks against the US (Whitaker, 2002).

A second reason for ever-closer media scrutiny developed with the rise of al-Jazeera, the pan-Arab satellite channel that started up in the tiny Gulf state of Qatar in 1996. When the US government reacted to 9/11 by dropping bombs on Afghanistan, al-Jazeera's unique position inside the country and its access to exclusive videotape of the Saudi-born dissident, Osama bin Laden, earned instant worldwide recognition for the al-Jazeera brand. It also provoked fierce arguments

about whether the channel was inciting its viewers to violence, or doing the exact opposite by opening a space for verbal fire as an alternative to killing (Sakr, 2004a).

For many media critics close to the Arab society, the central issue was not incitement through television images, but the widespread non-use of public channels of communication in the Arab world for the exchange of conflicting political and social views. From some accounts, the spilling over of "dangerous radicalism" could be blamed on an absence of "normal outlets for expression", resulting from censorship imposed by dictatorial systems (The Economist, 2003). According to others, censorship was not the ultimate explanation. It could be circumvented, but only by imaginative people with a better understanding of political struggle and more knowledge about the way other societies operate (Rabbani and Hendriks, 2001: 26).

The first *Arab Human Development Report,* compiled by Arab intellectuals under UN sponsorship, picked up on the multidimensional nature of what it called the 'freedom deficit' in Arab countries, including a lack of voice (UNDP, 2002). It took a broad view of the institutional context (formal and informal) in which freedoms were denied and stressed the 'deep complementarity' that exists in the Arab world between individual agency and social arrangements (UNDP, 2002: 20). The second was in a series on obstacles to knowledge diffusion imposed by controls on the media (UNDP, 2003). Yet, the two reports caused a mixed reception among their target audience and indicated that conflicting diagnoses of the region's problems would restrict change in the making of Arab media policy. Indeed, while policy analysts outside the Arab world looked for evidence of media liberalisation inside the region, Arab governments targeted their energies at non-Arab media through campaigns aimed towards highlighting the foreign misreporting of the Middle East.

However, governments in the region have sought to retain tight control over media structures and media content, to ensure that official perspectives on media policy are generally the only ones expressed. A non-state-centric analysis of pan-Arab satellite

television in the 1990s revealed that Arab governments were firmly in the driving seat of regional broadcasting policy, despite appearances to the contrary (Sakr, 2001). Yet, examining the situation after September 2001 required an exhaustive checklist of potential players.

In fact, it is hard to consider the media policies of any Middle Eastern country without taking account of regional or international players; the reasons for this are linked to language and history. The fact that Arabic is understood across a large group of contiguous countries means that cross-border communication is not subject to the same obstacles it often encounters elsewhere. From the early days of Arab broadcasting there was often no clear distinction between domestic and international radio broadcasting, as countries competed to transmit political propaganda over as wide an area as possible (Boyd, 1999: 4-5). Pan-Arab satellite broadcasting followed this precedent. Given the difficulty of jamming incoming satellite signals or enforcing a ban on receiving equipment, the most usual response was for each state to create one or more satellite channels of its own. In Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, this task was assigned to private companies allied to the ruling elite. According to Sakr (2001: 158-64), information ministers collaborated across borders to impose a broadcasters' code of honour and prevent uncooperative stations from breaking ranks.

Additionally, media policies have to be seen in context of the region's shared history of colonisation. One amply documented assessment maintains that neither Islam nor Arab culture can define the Arab Middle East as much as its background of external intervention (Henry and Springborg, 2001: 8). According to Halliday, the corollary of this is that contemporary public discourse has been shaped by 'one ideology above all', namely nationalism. Like all ideology, it serves to obscure the real choices that Middle Eastern states and their opponents are confronting (Halliday 2002: 56). This received a major boost in 2003 with the US-led invasion of Iraq. By using force, and rationalising it with a discourse of human rights and democratisation, policy-makers behind the invasion provided the

perfect rationale for Middle Eastern leaders to define their own policy needs ever more starkly – in terms of national sovereignty and independence. Yet, such portrayals carry weight with local populations. Individuals are fully aware that the very same countries behind the invasion had traditionally supplied authoritarian systems in the region through military and financial support. Nevertheless, the G8 summit meeting in June 2004 agreed to forge ahead with a programme to strengthen "freedom, democracy and prosperity" in the Middle East through contacts with governments, business and civil society (White House, 2004). The programme was intended to build on existing European-Mediterranean, US-Middle East, and Japanese-Arab "partnerships".

However, any idea of reform in Saudi Arabia leads to looking more closely at the political and cultural aspects that shape the ideology of the Saudi people. As the popular ideology is divided between two camps, the output of the Saudi media can end with the same result. On the one hand, the strict Wahhabi ideology and stresses its radical views of Islam based on the rules of *Tawhid* "monotheism", In this perspective. For the most radical Saudi clerics, anyone against *Tawhid* are considered enemies, and this include Christians, Jews, Shiites, and even insufficiently devout Sunni Muslims. For these radical views, the US is seen as the major player and an enemy, as do the rest of these groups, in destroying the true path of Islam. The US is seen as a grand enemy for its attack on Sunni Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq. They also consider the US demands to de-Wahhabise Saudi's education curriculum as a satanic move. Therefore, the Wahhabi-dominated national cable television or radio programmes, as well as the Internet, reflect this ideology. Despite international criticism, these media outlets are still transmitting programmes with Wahhabi-based topics that criticise Western modernisation, women's liberation, and Western democracy and culture.

According to the radical interpretation of *Tawhid*, *jihad* is the struggle through force of arms and sometimes through strict persuasion against idolatry. In the minds of the clerics, stamping out pagan cultural and political practices at home and supporting the

war against Americans in Afghanistan and Iraq are two sides of the same coin. Jihad against idolatry, whether on real battlefields or through the media, sees the clerics never tiring of repeating it is eternal and "lasting until Judgment Day", when true monotheism will destroy polytheism once and for all. The doctrine of *Tawhid* ensures a unique political status for the clerics in Saudi Arabia. After all, they alone have the necessary training to detect and root out idolatry so as to safeguard the purity of the realm. *Tawhid* is, thus, not simply an intolerant religious doctrine, but also a political principle that legitimises the existence and continuity of the Saudi state. Although the Saudi King Abdullah, leads the second camp of liberal reformers, seeking rapprochement with the West and the rest of the world, two major questions arise.

The questions that may rise are whether he succeeded in removing existing Wahhabist influence and replaced it with a more moderate ideology that allows communicating and understanding with the rest of the world and *others*, if has he had the opportunity to turn against his family's strong allies who have always played a key role in legitimising the House of Al-Saud, in order to accept international calls for reform, and whether there been changes in the language of the Saudi media upon the latest declarations of reform.

However, the next chapter will explore the way in which the national Saudi media, as well as privately-owned media, deal with the issue of terrorism that worries many Muslim and Non-Muslim communities. For this purpose, a thorough analysis of the Saudi media will examine whether the idea of reform has proved successful in adopting a new media policy, and if the Wahhabi influence is still dominating the Saudi media scene. As it can be suggested, "the third world is not reality, but an ideology". However, the analysis in the next chapter will examine whether Wahhabism and Nationalism have, and will always be, key in shaping people's minds in Saudi Arabia. The chapter will identify whether the Saudi government has succeeded in opening up the media to public discourse over the country's major issues, including the issue of terrorism.

Summary

This chapter examines the political, economic, social situations, as well as the ideology that may affect the quality of the media message in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, it was an opportunity to examine the landscape of the Saudi media institutions and owners, as well as the impact of official and religious institutions on the outputs of these media channels. Despite the abundance of the Saudi media organisations, it does not seem enough to provide the right sphere to the public opinion beside the message of the official and religious institutions.

In fact, any control over the media channels and the public opinion by these institutions are not commensurate with the challenges of regional or international media, as the policy of the media blackout does not work in a globalised information age.

Chapter Five
Framing Terrorism News

Research on Framing Terrorism

Current understanding over the impact of exposure to terrorism news on media consumers in the Middle East is very limited. Although there have been some valuable studies of terrorism and effects on collective minds (Norris, Kern and Just, 2003; Iyengar, 1987), a scant body of research provides some insight into the impact of terrorism news on the Arab audience. For example, Iyengar (1987) argues that viewers are "sensitive" to contextual cues when they reason about national affairs. Their interpretations of issues like terrorism or poverty are highly dependent on the particular reference points furnished in media presentations. The author investigated the effects of media frames on individual opinions of several political issues: which included crime, terrorism, poverty, unemployment, and racial inequality. Also, Norris et al. (2003) note that the events of 9/11 symbolise a critical culture shift in the predominant *news frame* used by the American mass media to understand issues of national security, and altering perceptions of risk at home and threats abroad. They argue that what changed, and changed decisively with 9/11, were American *perceptions* of the threat of world terrorism more than the actual reality.

According to Cottle and Rai (2006), the media works by exhibiting and considering consent on issues of the world. It does this by a distinctive "communicative architecture" built in terms of an entire stock of "communicative frames". They suggest that news and information have no intrinsic value unless embedded in a meaningful context which organise and lend it coherence. News stories can be interpreted as narratives that include information and factual elements, and also contain an implicit message. In order to identify frames, the informational content of news reports is less significant than the explanatory commentary that attends it. Therefore, this complementary study aims to identify the ways in which the Saudi

media covers terrorism news and the packaging used to cover this national issue. Additionally, because the Arab world is almost devoid of political communication studies that analyse terrorism coverage and its effects on its audience in Saudi Arabia, I hope to contribute and add value in this field.

Understanding Psychological Responses to Terrorism News

Although there has been a considerable amount of research which has explored psychological responses to media over the past decade, scholars have much work to do in order to understand the Arab media audience's response to their national media messages. Some researchers have examined cognitive responses to elements of terrorism news production, but almost none of these studies have targeted the Arab audience.

Of particular interest to the current study are findings that suggest news packaging can influence psychological responses to terrorism news (Norris et al., 2003). However, moving beyond these Western findings should provide greater depth to ones understanding of how the Saudi media package terrorism news, and how the Saudi audience learn and react to terrorism news. To that end, we attempt to develop the current knowledge of terrorism news and its effects in two ways:

1. In the empirical part of this thesis, we will study the content of terrorism news in the Saudi media and establish the elements that contribute to terrorism news frames. As will be discussed in detail below, such frames can shape how the Saudi audience perceive terrorism-related stories.
2. Attempt will be made to establish the ways in which terrorism news coverage helps shape people's assessment of terrorism stories and their reaction to such news.

The Mediated Message in a Globalised World

With mediated news, considered a prime source of information for a large number of people and satellite technology which aids the globalisation of its content, it has become available around the clock, transmitting in "real time" and covering live events. Since the late 1980s, the growth of media has been unparalleled and has had implications for democracy and public discourse. By supplying reports (and images) of the contemporary world, the media performs an important role in shaping social awareness. Therefore, the issue of media control has become the focus of academic and political concern.

According to Herman and McChesney (1997), the media are vital in a position where citizens are unable to meet one another, acting as a link between them. They provide a proxy for the bigger society and in different levels of unity and connectedness. They not only present information and entertainment, but also play a main part in supporting democracies. The concept of the "public sphere", originally explained by Habermas (1962-1989), concerns the coming together of people and the discussion of ideas, again often related to governance and democratic ideals. Media, in this sense, create direct channels to what Habermas (1991) calls "public sphere". Media can, therefore, enforce discourse and debate on matters which are deemed important to the community. The public sphere, including the economy, religion and the state, is part of that space and is beyond the influence of institutions.

The public sphere means all of the places and forums where important issues to a political party are discussed and debated, and where vital information is provided so that citizens can participate in their community. Habermas' work relies on a description of an historical moment during the 17th and 18th centuries when tea rooms, societies and salons were the places of debate. He (1991: 398) extends this to the ideal of participation in the contemporary public sphere and defines the public sphere as:

"By "public sphere" we mean first of all a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed. Access to the public sphere is open to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere is constituted in every conversation in which private persons come together to form a public. When the public is large, this kind of communication requires certain means of dissemination and influence; today newspapers and periodicals, radio and television are the media of the public sphere. We speak of a political public sphere when the public discussions concern objects connected with the practice of the state".

Hebermas' concept is significant, as any society that claims to be democratic should have informed citizens who are capable of making independent political choices. Therefore, citizens need to be informed about what is going on and the choices they should debate and act upon. If they were given wrong or incorrect information, then the political options they decide may not be in the best interests of democracy or humanity. Therefore, public sphere works positively when it is not a subject to the state authority, and developing and serving such autonomy is essential to functioning democratic communications. A public sphere functions effectively when there is a considerable range of media outlets, each partially or wholly independent of the state and commercial domination. The most important factor is that there are no limitations on the scope of political viewpoints and that resources are situated in such a way that powerful economic and political actors cannot drown out the views of media representing the less powerful portions of society.

Though there are many other tools of public sphere, the media are the major transmitters of communication through which the public have a part in the political process - their effectiveness will determine how capable a democracy works. As Rheingold (1993) suggests, if their performance is poor then people will be ignorant, isolated and depoliticised. So, as a result an elite minority will easily capture and maintain control over decision-making.

Although governments make threats to the public sphere, rising private media corporations that have emerged in the recent years hold a bigger threat. They do not only exist to make profits but will also influence the way their audience think about the world. The agenda setting hypothesis, as noted by Cohen (1963) and Iyengar and Kinder (1987), suggests that ideas and images, which the mass media spread, largely determine what citizens think of and the importance they give to the issues. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972: 167-187), the agenda setting hypothesis is good for explaining why people with similar media exposure place importance on the same issues. Although individuals may feel differently about the issue at hand, most people will feel the same issues are important. Also, McCombs and Shaw (1972) note that the problems which receive great attention on the national news become the problems that the audience regard as a citizen's most important. This stresses Lippman's (1922: 29) early notion that what we know about the world is largely based on what the media decide to tell us.

However, the 21st century's new age of terrorism has brought significant challenges to modern media through maintaining their role and responsibility in the public sphere. Terrorism has changed from the hijackings and hostage taking situations through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, to global, and sometimes, indiscriminate attacks. With the globalisation of news, the role of the media has become ever more significant. All these factors contribute to a more complex relationship between the media and governments. The relationship between the media and governments' agenda stresses the idea that *public interests* are not considered major priorities anymore, but instead *political* priorities are considered to be the outcome of media priorities. This is often justified by the new counter-terrorism legislation and the media's need to balance their role of serving the public interest with government expectations of media support; whilst amid increased secrecy and sensitivity to criticism and opposing views. This scenario is being played out in many parts of the world in such a way that there are suggestions of a possible decline in the role of the media as the fourth estate.

Therefore, it is worth examining the relationship between media and governments over the past six years, particularly news media coverage and commentary on the "war on terrorism". The first major question underlying this is: can the media be considered as playing an independent role in the formation of the political agenda? This will lead to examining the possible effects of a government's legislation to increase government powers and security measures on the media over framing terrorism news. In addition, it will help to support the notion that news reporting of terrorism can influence the standards by which people evaluate issues, policies, and the world around them.

In order to examine this relationship, some background is necessary. The most commonly cited turning point in this relationship is September 11, 2001, when planes attacked New York and Washington landmarks, with the accompanying public outrage and a subsequent government upsurge in anti- and counter-terrorism policies. As Nacos' (2002: 9) points out, these attacks highlighted the concept of mass-mediated terrorism, showing "an existential link between terrorism and publicity via the mass media", with the added aim of gaining the attention of political decision-makers. At the same time, Western governments articulated an expectation of popular support.

In the days and weeks that followed September 11, the Western media, particularly in the US, followed a patriotic and nationalistic line reflecting the administration's views and policies, and there was little public debate. This is when the US President George W. Bush stated that "you are with us or you are with the terrorists" (Frum, 2003). There was a concentration in news items on "the National angle" among the drama and tragedy, as in the emphasis on the US 9/11 victims of the World Trade Center. Saturation coverage through the press, radio and television has shown a strong focus on the official efforts against the terrorist attack on American interests, as well as on the victims of the incident. It also emphasised the threat of terrorism to the security and stability of the whole American nation. However, this point was about the sole concern of the government and many of the media.

With the emergence of the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera private news network in the nineties of the last century, private Arab televisions have come to the fore as an alternative source of information and a place for public debate. Not only Al-Jazeera broadcast in Arabic language, but it extends its broadcasts in English. Alongside such developments is the entry of the new media in the arena. Although it is a news source with variable content and reliability, the Internet provides a forum for views which may not be taken up in the mainstream media. It has been used by terrorist organisations (with devastating effect) in order to attract followers and proclaim terrorist agendas, as happened in the wake of the 2005 London bombings. It was also used to transmit hostage situations, such as executions, over the past few years. The combination of this wide-ranging and largely uncensored information source, and the accessibility of 24-hour global television news, has had a profound effect on the way in which issues are covered and interpreted.

For instance, as most Arab countries are not subject to a clear democratic authority, structural transformations of the public communication and opinion formation tools have helped to establish an alternative transnational Arab public sphere that increasingly shapes politics and opinions throughout the Middle East. New media, including satellite television stations such as al-Jazeera and newspapers of different currents distributed free of charge on the Internet, and rapid distribution of news through e-mails and instant messaging have given citizens in countries such as the Gulf countries and the Middle East a means to challenge and irritate state censorship and control. This public sphere does not substitute for democracy, it has few institutional channels by which to translate its preferences into outcomes, and it has met with major government counter-pressures.

However, it has also dramatically reshaped the dynamics of Arab politics and conceptions of Arab political identity. Perhaps the Egyptian opposition's use of the online social networks to mobilise the uprising during the Arab spring is a prominent example. As Hudson (2001) notes, new media forms are "beginning to exert a revolutionary force across the Arab world . . . transforming Arab political Culture".

The Relationship of Governments and the Media in the Rise of Terrorism

Schlesinger (1998) argued if the simpler media coverage of 20th century terrorist attacks left scope for independent media reporting on reasons and motivations. During the mid to late 20th century, terrorists manipulated and exploited the media as a voice to claim responsibility and make known their demands, as well as bring attention to a specific cause. Governments wanted public support while they controlled the information. According to Perl (1997), the media needed timely and dramatic images to meet the requirements of public interest while also maintaining cooperation with government policies, without eroding their own freedom of speech. A constant between 20th and 21st centuries in regard to terrorism is the fear factor, a vital part of mass-mediated terrorism. Nacos (2002, p. 10) outlines how terrorists plan and stage incidents "to provide the mass media with cruel, shocking and frightening images". Such news coverage can, most importantly, affect public opinion and attract the attention of the government of the target country. Even without terrorists claiming responsibility, the mass media send a message of fear to citizens and their governments (Nacos, 2002). Therefore, this global communications network ensured the message reach the targets well beyond a specific city or country.

It is evident that there has always been interdependence between journalists and government officials: governments want the media to promote their policies, highlight achievements and foreshadow changes, while the media are aware of the centrality of government in many aspects of life and as a major source of news items. Yet, if, as Silberstein (2002: 3) suggests, government officials have "the power to shape perceptions of violent events and their principal actors". This brings the notion to how the media becomes involved in presenting an official line in times of terrorist attacks comes to question. Looking at how the US media have responded to Iraq, and with a US flavour as to what constitutes journalism and what its role ought to be, Seib (2004: 154) notes that the swings in media support and attention to certain issues can be partially blamed on a "lack of true independence". In the three-sided relationship of

government, media and terrorists, the media would stand with the government in a fight against terror.

As Gerrits (1992: 48) notes, the German terrorist Michael Baumann once stated:

> "We took a great interest in the press. We always immediately looked how the newspapers, especially in Berlin, reacted to our actions, and how they explained them, and thereupon we defined our strategy".

Baumann (1992: 57) explained why the media are so important for the terrorists' success:

> "At that time, we were already very much on the media trip… It was always great when those actions were planned. You could have a good laugh. They were really well put together, so that the symbolism would appear. And when all went well, you had great fun. We would go home and watch it all on the telly".

Before exploring the kinds of frames the media use in covering terrorism news, it is worth recognising the distinction between terrorism and other terms. Any term used in the media in any particular context is tied to judgments about the legitimacy of the action in question and of the political system against which it is directed. Terms like "guerrilla", "partisan" or "freedom fighter" hold explicit connotations of a well-grounded struggle against an occupying power or an oppressive regime. In other words, to label an action as "terrorist" is to consign it to illegitimacy. Common statements such as "one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter", for instance, are morally bounded. Therefore, making such statements would require explicit or implicit invocation of some moral context. This suggests that any media contextualisation must be framed within a meaningful historical ground. Also, the decision about whether one is confronted with a real case of terror or of a fight against ruthless oppression (or occupation) has a strong moral component. It is the moral element that decides both the type and nature of responses and the presentation of the

act in the media. According to Cohen-Almogar (2005), terrorism is conceived as inhuman, insensitive to human life, cruel, and arbitrary. So, to remain morally neutral and objective toward terrorism and to sympathise with terrorist acts is to betray ethics and morality.

Therefore, examining terror from a moralistic point of view alone – from a 'right' versus a 'wrong' perspective – may create various points of view, dictated by the different symbolic-moral universes of the examiners. One way to avoid this is to revert to mere chronologies of events, stripped of social context, and concentrate on temporal sequencing to show the earlier events that somehow caused the later ones. This may help the media from reflecting a mere bias in the eyes of the audience, but terror will once again need to be viewed in its social, political, and moral context. Another alternative method is to look over particular moral content and inspect the interaction between terror and moral boundaries, which helps combat terrorists who wish to blur issues and gain public legitimacy and support. It also confines the assumptions to terrorism in liberal democracies, where people are free and able to promote their rights and freedoms by legal means.

As terrorism is defined here as the threat or use of violence against citizens for political, religious or ideological means by individuals or groups who are willing to justify their perpetrations to achieve their goals, the assumptions that lies beneath is that there is no contest between terrorism and democracy. Also, in terms of social politics, democracy needs to furnish enough alternatives for citizens to express their satisfaction and grievances so that it can possibly lead to violence. Political groups and associations have legal paths to explore in order to reach their objectives in peaceful means.

Framing Terrorism News

The following chapters will aim to study the Saudi media and the frames used to frame terrorism in Saudi Arabian news, as well as how audiences respond to such

frames through alternative media. Therefore, it is worth studying the types of hypotheses that detail media frames. In order to conduct this, an overview of the major existing theories is required and has the aim to find a suitable hypothesis to develop this empirical study. This will include Iyengar, Cottle, Altheide, Van Gorp, and others. It will also be based on Shah et al.'s (2004: 102-120) notion of media and news frames, and will be directly related to people's cognitive responses to Saudi media messages.

The concept of framing the news is generally related to agenda-setting tradition. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses its attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning; the media will then draw audience attention to specific issues. The media's gatekeepers decide where and what the audience will think about, and journalists are responsible for selecting the topics accordingly – this is considered the original agenda setting concept. News items occurs are more than just highlighting certain topics: the way in which the news is conducted and the frame in which the news is presented are important alternatives decided by journalists.

According to Sheufele (1999: 103-122), framing refers to the construction of news and is due to organisational and market pressures. Thus, a frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organise and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided. Frames are abstract notions that serve to organise or structure social meanings, and these influence the perception of the news presented to the audience. This form of agenda-setting not only guides the audience to the issues that they should be thinking about, but also to how to think about them.

As Sigal (1986: 25) explains, news "is not what happens, but what someone says has happened or will happen". Therefore, to know fully about the nature of news, it is important to identify those who act as sources of the information and the way they (journalists) deal with them. Most often, these figures are government members,

whether police officers or politicians, and are considered key players. Their information is seen to be authoritative and their views legitimate. They are the ones who make information available on a regular basis in a form that the media can easily facilitate. As noted by Waisbord (2000: 95), "All of us have been educated professionally according to the idea that the government is the main source of information, that everything that happens with it is important". So, when researchers study the media from the politicians' point of view, they are likely to regard news coverage as one among several tools in a politician's grip in order to push forward their policies, legislation and career.

Media effects research refers to the construction of news due to organizational and market pressures as framing (Scheufele, 1999). Framing a news story regarding a public issue creates a slant or spin that may affect the way news consumers understand the issue, as well as the policies they prefer as a remedy. Framing is inherently a part of news construction. Certain facts exist for each issue or event reported in the news, and newsmakers must choose which facts to include (or indeed exclude) in their reporting. Terrorism stories in particular, which compose a plurality of stories in news broadcasts, offer a prime example of how framing occurs in the news. Papke (1987) suggests that we cannot develop any political meanings for issues like terrorism, for instance, because we are restricted to the ideology that is presented through the status quo. In his study, Papke discusses the effect of framing the criminal on people who consumed the news at a certain period of time. He concludes to the idea that framing can be seen as an independent variable, changing the way that a viewer interprets a story and the meaning they place upon it.

Framing can also be viewed as a dependent variable: one that occurs as a result of the news production environment. Scheufele (1999) provides a comprehensive model for the complex area of framing studies, and is perhaps the best source to obtain a useful operationalisation of the concept. He places framing studies in the context of media effects research, which operates under the view that the media plays a key role in the construction of reality. Also, Entman (1993: 52) states:

"To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendations".

While there is not as yet a complete and universally accepted definition of framing, social constructivism is the basis on which media effects and framing studies are conducted. According to Scheufele's model, framing is a process-oriented phenomenon: as much as the environment of news production can cause framing to occur, the news workers' individual frames, developed from their own exposure to the media, may act upon their understanding of an issue and impact the way they construct the news. For others (Brosius and Eps, 1995: 391-412), the word 'frame' is nothing more than a metaphor. Also, others see framing as a central organising structure, which can be systematically and empirically tested.

As Entman (1993: 51) suggests, framing research is a "scattered conceptualisation" or a "fractured paradigm". This need not necessarily limit its usefulness and while some writers urge the establishment of a united paradigm of framing research, others argue that the concept can be usefully employed in very diverse ways (D'Angelo, 2002: 870-88). Therefore, framing occurs in the media when a story uses a particular spin or angle that affects the way the viewer or reader processes the issue.

When a news story is framed, when it is put into a context that makes it either more interesting to the viewer or easier to understand, it acts as an independent variable on the viewer's comprehension of the story. When framing is viewed as a dependent variable, it is an effect of the news production environment, such as pressures placed upon news organizations. Therefore, in the next chapter, this research will address framing as an independent variable; addressing the effect that news content could have upon the public's perception and understanding of specific issues, and their use of that information in political discourse and the democratic process.

As Norris et al. (2003) note, news frames simplify the politicians' message and rhetoric such as *"I condemn all acts of terrorism"*, for instance. Yet, in order for the media to be successful, gatekeepers need to consider the rising problems from their actions. First, they need to remember that they cater for the needs of many different audiences, which includes audiences from all over the globe (especially in this globalised media age). They need to target their audience and then determine the best method to promote their product, and also consider what their different audiences want to see.

In fact, the media can play an important role in shaping mass perceptions of other nations. Studies have noted that being exposed to news coverage can increase knowledge about, and can highly influence public perceptions and views toward foreign nations (Albritton and Manheim, 1983: 622-8), Manheim and Albritton, 1985: 43-59); (Perry, 1987: 416-2). According to Bartels (1995: 479-508) and Manheim (1994: 131-48), such opinions, in turn, can have significant implications in a number of areas; these range from personal interactions among people of differing countries, to mass attitudes about foreign policy, to the practice of public diplomacy. Thus, it is important that actors in the international arena are aware of undertaking serious efforts in moulding the content of media coverage and harming other nations in a direct manner.

According to Cottle and Rai (2006: 163-189), television news works on exhibiting and considering consent on issues of the world. It does this by a distinctive "communicative architecture" built in terms of an entire stock of "communicative frames". News and information have no intrinsic value unless embedded in a meaningful context which organise and lend it coherence. News stories can be interpreted as narratives that include information and factual elements, and also contain an implicit message.

Therefore, in order to identify frames, the informational content of news reports is less significant than the explanatory commentary that attends it. While this is true of

journalism in general, it is especially obvious in television news which is abundantly filled with metaphors, catchphrases, and other symbolic devices that provide a shorthand way of suggesting the underlying storyline. These techniques provide the rhetorical bridge by which discrete bits of information are given a context and relationship to one another. So, in terms of how news covering terrorism is shaped and presented, the frame is: organising the concept(s) to make sense of the connected events and propose what is at issue.

Previous research shows that terrorism stories compose a plurality of stories in local news media. As Yanich (2001: 221-241) notes, terrorism, as a public issue, is covered more often than all other public issues combined. Terrorism stories also have all of the components of news stories. As noted in Epstein (1974: 4-5), the former NBC Evening News Executive Producer, Reuven Frank states:

> "Every news story should, without any sacrifice of probity or responsibility, display the attributes of fiction, of drama. It should have structure and conflict, problem and denouement, rising action and falling action, a beginning, a middle and an end. These are not only the essential of drama; they are the essentials of narrative".

Terrorism stories hold all of these characteristics, and are, thus, an appropriate example of framing on local news media as a whole. As frames are basic cognitive structures which guide the perception and representation of reality, Iyengar (1987: 828) explains that viewers are "sensitive" to contextual cues when they reason about national affairs. Their interpretations of issues like terrorism or poverty are highly dependent on the particular reference points furnished in media presentations. He investigated the effects of media frames on individual opinions of several political issues, such as crime, terrorism, poverty, unemployment, and racial inequality.

Iyengar (1991) conducted a study of individual frames as a dependent variable. He studied the use of event-based (episodic) and issue-based (thematic) forms of

presentation in the news on people's responsibility attributions on each issue. He found that the types of responsibility for crime and terrorism fell into three categories of responsibility: individual, punitive, and societal. He compared the effects of news framing on the attribution of responsibility with the effects of party identification, liberal-conservative orientation, and knowledge on the issue. In the case of crime and violence, opinions and attitudes were affected more by attributions of responsibility than by any other factor. He speculates that none of the above mentioned factors are as effective as attributions of responsibility because the two major party orientations (liberal-conservative) have not formed divergent views on most issues concerning violence.

Iyengar (1991: 14) tested the framing effects of television news on political issues. He concluded to the idea that the framing of issues by news can shape the way the public perceive the causes of, and the solutions to, major political issues. This is all connected to the ways in which television news reports particular events and cases. Iyengar calls this "episodic" news framing: that is event-based news which is counterpoised to "thematic" coverage, which places political issues and events in some general context (issue-based coverage). "Episodic framing depicts concrete events that illustrate issues, while thematic framing presents collective or general evidence". He found that news that held an episodic form of reporting were less likely to decide society as responsible for the event, and subjects that held thematic reports were less likely to decide individuals as responsible. In one of the clearest explanations of this occurrence, subjects that covered stories of poverty, featuring homeless or jobless people (episodic framing) were much more likely to put the blame of poverty on individual failings, such as addiction or low education, than stories about high national rates of unemployment or poverty (thematic framing). In addition, audiences of the thematic frames were more likely to regard the reasons and answers to governmental policies and other factors beyond the control of the affected individuals.

Iyengar found that there are three types of responsibility for terrorism and violence, which fall into three categories; these are individual, punitive, and societal responsibilities. He compared the effects of news framing on the attribution of responsibility with the effects of party identification, liberal-conservative orientation, and knowledge on the issue. In the case of crime, opinions and attitudes were affected more by attributions of responsibility than by any other factor. Iyengar's study showed that the dominant frame for treatment responsibility was that of punitive measures. Therefore, opinions and attitudes on terrorism issues are more vulnerable to the effects of the news than to political aspects. Iyengar's results suggest that an expanded look at terrorism stories in the news would be appropriate, considering the relatively strong effects of framing in terrorism stories on national news.

Iyengar's Hypothesis Explained

- **Dominant Format**

In terms of the Dominant Format of presentation, there are two value labels. Iyengar's research shows that the episodic form of presentation is more common than the thematic form of presentation, appearing in 89 percent of all crime stories in his sample. However, the following section will include a detailed explanation of each form of presentation, and we expect that our empirical study will end with a similar result.

- **Episodic Presentation**

In the case of this empirical study, an episodic story is one in which terrorism is depicted primarily in terms of concrete instances that illustrate events. The main area of focus in the story is the event of a single terrorist incident or an activity related to that act. Thus, a news report covering terrorism in this manner may take many

different forms. It may provide details on the occurrence of a terrorist event, and investigations or arrests on the part of police. A large percentage of episodic terrorism stories cover the events of terrorist incidents, even though these incidents comprise a much smaller amount of total terrorist acts than they appear to on the Saudi news media. For example, coverage of a terrorist incident may range from a brief announcement of the discovery of the terrorist group, to an announcement that the police are searching for the suspects, to a lengthy detailed official statement of the severe punishment of a particular terrorist perpetrator(s). These stories are often accompanied by footage or pictures of the scene where the terrorist perpetrations took place, with police surrounding the attacked area and bullet holes illuminated by the emergency lights of patrol cars and ambulances.

Footage or pictures of arrests are popular, but trial events or pictures showing handcuffed suspects being led to a courthouse or standing by while the press conduct brief interviews with their defence attorney, are hardly seen in Saudi media terrorism coverage. This turns to the closed trial environment, as the Saudi courts are known for functioning in a high level of secrecy. Such types of footage or pictures might not add much useful information to the story, but may make it more interesting, if not horrifying, to viewers or readers.

Additionally, pictures are useful in keeping viewers engaged in the story for the brief time it takes to report such an event. Episodic terrorism coverage may also take the form of a "human interest" story that focuses on the experiences of people who were affected by the terrorist incidents. Most often, it is the families of victims of terrorism who are asked to tell their stories on the news, since this type of story has the potential to elicit much sympathetic emotion from the viewer. Family and friends of the suspects do appear in human interest themed terrorism stories as well, but mostly to explain how their loved ones have been wrongly accused. Footage or pictures of either side, teary eyed in their homes and surrounded by pictures of those they have lost to death or to incarceration, do not require narration from a reporter because they serve the same purpose as the footage or pictures of the terrorism scene itself. The

footage or pictures provide little additional information that is useful, save perhaps for the exact location of the terrorist scene for those who are familiar with the area. This and other similar stories provide information about specific cases of terrorism, which may be useful in cases where warnings are due, yet rarely address terrorism in a larger context.

- **Thematic Presentation**

In contrast to episodic stories, thematic terrorism news coverage puts terrorism as a case in a broader context. Stories of this nature address the general consequences or conditions of terrorism, and mostly appear in a policy context. The situation or particular aspect of terrorism being addressed may be local or national. Thematic stories are often broadcasted when the government is either introducing or debating a bill that affects the prosecution or punishment of a particular terrorist incident. Such abstract pieces may also appear when a community seems to be plagued with a particular problem such as terrorism, or if a study has recently been released which addresses the causes, symptoms, or possible solutions to a specific type of crime. Instead of interviewing local police, neighbours, or families of crime victims, or suspects, as is the case in episodic crime coverage, thematic stories usually turn to professional sources. Legislative debates may be covered with footage or pictures of expert testimony. However, stories that address topics such as the effect of terrorism on victims or the success rate of rehabilitative programmes will often include interviews with university researchers who conducted studies in those areas.

Thematic coverage of terrorism stories provides information about the general conditions of terrorism in an area or across the nation. Such stories may report on an increase or decrease in terrorist incidents' rates, debates over the use of capital punishment, or discussions on the impact of extremism on young Saudis. Such stories provide evidence of the existence or dynamism of terrorism and its consequences. When focused on the legislative process of creating and modifying policies for

combating terrorism, thematic stories can educate citizens on the public issue aspects of terrorism instead of the events as they occur in their communities.

Attribution of Causal Responsibility

Attributions of causal responsibility refer to the way the story is framed to give meaning to terrorism in terms of the person or institution responsible for a terrorist incident. Iyengar's study showed that three main themes appeared when he asked people to attribute responsibility for crime: individual, societal, and punitive attributions. Of all the attributions of causal responsibility in Iyengar's study on the issue of crime, individualistic attributions comprised 38 percent, societal attributions comprised 48 percent and punitive attributions comprised approximately 10 percent (Iyengar, 1991). The specific meaning we assigned to these variables is as close as possible to Iyengar's interpretation.

- **Individual Causal Responsibility**

Individualistic attributions for the causes of crime were more common in Iyengar's study, when news stories used an episodic form of presentation. As we expect to be true in our empirical study, a terrorist story coded as exhibiting individualistic causal responsibility is one in which the problem of a terrorist act is blamed on the individual who committed it. These stories either clearly mention or hint to an individual's character deficiencies, or their low education and employment skills. Such a story may discuss a suspect's drug use, personality disorder, lack of ethic, or other dysfunction as motivation for that person to commit a terrorist act. Other terrorism coverage may mention a criminal's prior offenses, coming to the conclusion that the person is in need of rehabilitation.

Many stories do not make specific references to any particular individual motive, but rely on sources to allow assumptions to be made. For example, a story covering a terrorist incident may include a brief statement from a witness or someone who lives

close to the location of the terrorist incident. These types of sources often pose questions such as, "how can something like this happen in this country?" or "how can someone do something horrible like this?" These comments, while they do not explicitly blame an individual, refer indirectly to the person who perpetrates terrorism and chose to do so due to their own dysfunctions. Other stories that do not mention an alternative motive (i.e. a societal or punitive cause) will also be considered as attributing individualistic causal responsibility. If the story does not mention a specific societal or punitive cause, the viewer or reader is then left to negotiate with the idea that a suspect's individual dysfunctions were the reasons for the terrorist perpetrations he committed.

As Iyengar indicates, episodic presentation in terrorism coverage is most likely to elicit individualistic attributions to the cause of the crime. It focuses on the events of a specific terrorist incident instead of terrorism as a public issue. Such coverage highlights that correlation, and focuses on the who, what, where and when of an event while almost ignoring the important questions of why and how. Eliminating an examination of the discreet causes of terrorism leaves the media audience to speculation, and likely to the assumptions that a terrorist attack was perpetrated due to an individual's problems instead of those of society or the system itself.

- **Societal Causal Responsibility**

Societal attributions for the causes of terrorism refer to a variety of social, economic, or political circumstances that lead to perpetrating terrorism or violence. This is what Iyengar defines as "the role of the mass media and entertainment industry in glamorising crime and legitimising the use of violence" (Iyengar, 1991: 29). Specific examples of this type of story include a case of police brutality, where errors in their procedures and arrest processes led them to cause injury to a person who did not deserve it.

- **Punitive Causal Responsibility**

Terrorism stories that are framed to exhibit punitive causal responsibility are those that blame the causes of terrorism on the ability to avoid severe punishment. Such stories may focus upon inadequacies or corruption of the criminal justice system, or to a group or an individual's disregard for the consequences of their actions. Stories that cover police brutality, as an obvious abuse of power on the part of an officer, are also included here. Also, mentions of organised terrorism or instances where terrorists think they will not get caught are considered to attribute punitive causes of responsibility of terrorism.

Attribution of Treatment Responsibility

Attributions of treatment responsibility refer to the assignment of a person or institution over the duty of finding a remedy for the terrorism instance. The responses that Iyengar obtained in his research for this category were the same as those for attributions of causal responsibility, individual, societal, and punitive attributions. In Iyengar's study, less than 10 percent of respondents attributed treatment responsibility of the crime to individuals. Forty-two percent attributed treatment responsibility to society, and 50 percent of the attributions referred to punitive measures (Iyengar, 1991).

- **Individual Treatment Responsibility**

According to Iyengar's findings, the attribution of treatment responsibility to individuals did not often occur. This suggests that self-rehabilitation is not a dominating treatment suggestion for resolving terrorism. Therefore, terrorism stories that do suggest individual self-improvement include: stories of officials who take it upon themselves to correct an abuse of power, similar acts by ordinary citizens who

commit lesser violent acts, or the mention of suicide by someone who wants to avoid more serious punishment.

- **Societal Treatment Responsibility**

Societal treatment responsibility refers to the notion that terrorism can be resolved by actions of the state. Improvements in the basic socioeconomic or political order, such as "reductions in poverty and inequality, rehabilitative and educational programmes, and an improved economy" (Iyengar, 1991, p. 30), are all examples of societal treatment responsibility. Also included here is heightened public awareness, such as the formation of neighbourhood watch groups or legislation intended to prevent similar terrorist perpetrations from occurring in the future.

- **Punitive Treatment Responsibility**

Punitive measures of treatment responsibility were the most common response obtained in Iyengar's study. These responses refer to the use of stricter or more certain punishment against terrorists. This category includes focus on events preliminary to punishment, for example, searches for, arrests, or investigations of alleged terrorists. For coverage of civil cases, the treatment is left up to the decisions of the courts, and therefore inherently falls under the definition of punitive treatment. In some cases, no specific terrorists may be mentioned, but other ideas introduced into the story, such as the belief that someone must be punished, put these stories into the punitive category.

Also, in his analysis of US and UK television coverage of terrorism, Altheide (1987: 161-76) notes that there are basic differences between "event-type" frames that are connected with regular evening news broadcasts, and "topic-type" frames that are connected with interviews and documentary presentations. For instance, event-type frames tend to highlight the visuals, the aftermath and tactics of terrorism; while topic-type frames are more likely to include materials about the reasons, aims and rationale. This is surely no less the case, whether it is about the reporting of terrorism

in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Europe, or the US. At the same time, Altheide (2006) and Kavoori and Farley (2006: 19-48) note that in the contemporary world of globalism, a mixture of events and topics, as well as other frames for representing "terrorism" or "counterterrorism", can be noticed. In fact, all the latter assumptions are similar in terms of Iyengar's episodic-thematic types of framing terrorism news.

Another useful study is Shermak's (2006: 428-461). He examined the American media coverage of terrorism between 1980 and September 10, 2001. He focused his analysis on a list of terrorist-linked incidents and *New York Times* articles that had relation to each incident. This study documents the amount and sort of coverage brought by domestic terrorism incidents, and also identifies the variables affecting whether an incident is covered and how much space it receives. It reveals that most terrorism incidents receive little or no coverage in the news, but a few cases are sensationalised in the press.

There are several features that coherently clarify which incidents are covered and receive substantial news space. Incidents with casualties, linked to domestic terrorists, targeting airlines, or when hijacking is used as a tactic are consequentially more likely to be reported and have more space and words written about them. Shermak's study concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of these findings for the understanding of terrorism as a social problem.

In addition, Cottle (2006: 19-48) examined television news programming in six countries, which included: the UK, the US, Australia, India, Singapore, and South Africa. He focused his observations in the two-week period 13-26 September 2004. His rather large sample of television news programmes contained 27 television channels, 4 international satellite channels, 56 different news programmes, and 560 television news programmes. His sample consisted of 1,662 news items connected to terrorism and were gathered during the sample timeframe. And, while the period of his analysis does not represent the changing nature and major events that mark the war on terror over an extended amount of time, it did, however, achieve a systematic

spread of communicative frames by television news broadcasts. It also provided an idea of how these narrative frames are formed and influence the coverage of terrorism worldwide. Cottle (2006: 21) set out to explore the way in which established media forms "mediatise" or shape, facilitate, and condition the communication of conflicts. His analysis provides a very helpful heuristic and theoretical sample for identifying the complications involved in the social construction and reproduction of mass-mediated views of what should and should not be a "crime", what should or should not form "justice", and how both of these are also framed in connection to a mass articulation of legal order and/or social issues.

Thus, the argument here is that the different communicative modes of visual and auditory expression, which are placed in the mass distribution of images and narrative texts on terrorism, need to be fully tested and considered by media experts and others. In other words, analyses of the frames and genres that continuingly reshape people's views of terrorism, and their understanding of the ways in which these perceptions are differentially "opened" or "closed" to the insertion of alternative interpretations and articulations of terrorism, can help provide a means or praxis for those wishing to engage with the mass media over the social construction of what constitutes terrorism or law and order.

Cottle (2006) asserts that there are different "communicative frames" that regularly construct the presentation and making of conventional news stories, which are essential to television news production. He has empirically demonstrated that these frames have become "naturalised" over time and have been virtually, if not universally, deployed by television journalists around the world. However, the main contention is that his "communicative architecture of television new" exhibits a complexity that has yet to be recognised and properly assessed by researchers. As Kappeler et al. (1996) and Potter and Kappeler (1998) remark, this myopia to the complexity of mass media has undermined our dialectical appreciation of the circulation of conflicting ideas in general, as well as our understanding of the mediatised "wars" on terrorism, crime, drugs, and other social problems in particular.

Cottle brings a group of conventionally deployed communicative frames that television news production use, which are either focused toward "conflict" or "consensus". Narrative frames of social conflict include dominant, contest, contention, campaigning and expose-investigative. As each of these frames regularly builds the communication of issues in various modes, they all do so in terms of analysis, statements, counterstatements and arguments. While narrative structures of social opinions include community help, collective concerns, cultural consideration, and mythic stories. In comparison with the conflict-based frames, these consensual frames are more built on "cultural display" than on "analytic consideration". The conflict-based and analytic frames are quite different, as the consensus frames tend to produce a more "expressive" mode of communication, moving from the semiotic to the symbolic and mythic.

The last two frames in Cottle's communicative architecture of television news making are two patterns of news frames, which are reporting and reportage. Both frames, though quite different in structure, add considerably to the complexity of the dissemination of representation in general, or of law and order in particular, because each form can variously draw upon both analytic-propositional and aesthetic-expressive (or deliberative and display) modes of communication. Coherent with the daily production sequences of television news, the classic or stock reporting frame functions in terms of information transmission and surveillance of current events. This mode of communication presents the cold solid facts, which means basic news accounts of events that are usually without context, history of the incident, explanation or competing definitions and accounts.

Reporting frames, as Cottle (2006: 25) explains, privilege "an epiphenomenal and disaggregated view of reality in which violent events and reactions, rather than underlying conditions, possible causes, or motivations, become the focal point". This brings us closer to Iyengar's "episodic framing model, as it also produces "visually appealing and consists of on-the-scene live coverage" (Iyengar and Simon, 1993: 370). This type of coverage can be problematic, however, because episodic reports

emphasise drama without providing viewers the appropriate context by which to evaluate the information. This makes Cottle's "reporting" close to Iyengar's "episodic" farming. Also, Cottle (2006: 34) notes, the reportage frame "represents a carefully constructed and often powerful frame for the exploration of issues and their backgrounds, dynamics, and impact". Therefore, this frame helps to supply the means for generating an extended knowledge because it presents a thicker kind of news report.

As Nichols (1991) argues, reportage frames, given their attraction with documentary forms, which are unlike reporting frames, provide valuable descriptions of reality and invariably move the handling of story from "what is" to "what ought to be". So, as Nassar (2005) points, the process of using film and other visuals and personal testimonies, for instance, reportage frames put themselves, as well as the audience, in the place or virtual space of "bearing witness"; this means they move beyond the more dualistic frames of fact and fiction and into emotional realms of human identification. And again, this resembles Iyengar's model of "thematic framing", where information is placed in a global context and evaluation is enhanced when information is presented in a thematic narrative – a characteristic that is quite common in arranged coverage of terrorism news.

In terms of media studies of terrorism, scholars and the public alike need to consider the different news frames and framing of terrorism. The diverse non-fiction journalistic frames need to be integrally introduced with fictional frames. By examining how these overlapping frames influence public views and expectations about the type of evidence jurors demand for a conviction (or an acquittal) in terrorism cases, and based on whether they watch prime-time television news or news programmes, we can begin to assess the impact of these different frames on the evolving and relative character of "reasonable doubt" for terrorism (Shelton, Kim and Barak, 2007: 2).

So, as Cottle (2006) notes, there are two mostly predominant modes of communicative framing, namely, the news-controlled "classic" reporting frame with its mission "to inform" in an ostensibly detached, objective, and accurate representation; and the dominating frame, referring to news stories that are clearly defined by a single external news source and usually derived from some authority or officialdom, whilst being less derivative from some challenger or other group within the social hierarchy. In the case of the reporting frame, reporters and news decision-makers are relatively independent to report on terrorism and terrorist organisations because they freely decide what is newsworthy. However, in the case of terrorism news, it is typically a dominant frame established by the US FBI and the various state and federal departments of police, as well as the justice administration. This casts its elite influence over the liberal democratic reporting picture. In combination, these two communicative frames symbolize terrorism representations that are highly consensual or one-dimensional in nature.

As to the widespread terrorism news presentations, there are the conflicting news narratives centred around contests and contentions. In the framing of the contests, these adversarial news items are normally structured by a binary opposition and both sides are given approximately equal weight or representation. The conflicting framing of terrorism stories that involves an increased array of views or perspectives, which can be articulated simultaneously, are more complicated. For instance, in high-profile terrorist incidents news stories become framed over time, not only as contests over guilt and innocence but as contentions over the more nuanced and qualifying engagements of different interests and identities, which express themselves in these cases. These stories are typically placed in the social causes of treating economic, gender, and racial or ethnic injustices against each other.

According to Chancer (2005), both contest and contention frames permit for all types of commentary and criticism from legal specialists, journalistic executives, and social activists. They offer up a diversity of views, including alternative ones, which may challenge or usurp the ruling ideology of "equal justice for all". Additionally, the

other two conflicting frames (investigation and campaigning) are comparatively uncommonly used today as they were in the past. It is commonly recognised by news people, political experts, and academics alike, that there has been a loss or a decline in the use of the expose-investigative frame that once conformed to the idealised liberal democratic part of journalism as a watchful guardian. Also, in the context of the overriding articulation of the "global war on terrorism", the old proverbial "war on crime" frame has taken a back seat to the new "war on terror" frame, as President George W. Bush repeats his saying that terrorism is not a simple case of law enforcement and crime fighting. Instead, it is serious business.[35]

Thus, the consensual frames, community service, collective concerns, cultural recognition, and mythic tales all seem to be relatively insufficient. And yet, it is these frames that seem to work their way back almost unconsciously through both conflicting and consensual methods of communication. Cultural recognition, for example, can help forward cultural issues, identity politics, and cultures of difference that lead toward extreme nationalism, ethnocentricity, or cultural homogeneity. It can display and support many views of multicultural diversity, tolerance, and understanding as well. Also, just as the war on terror is already drawing a boundary between "*Us*" and "*Them*" – and threatens to further marginalise minor groups already distanced as "Other" within imagined international communities – the same can be said of the war on crime and its marginalisation of the "Other" at home, as both express the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

According to many observers, the mythic frame that distributes implicitly, if not more directly, as a subtext of terrorism is perpetuated by a number of myths or misconceptions which, despite their falsity, help establish a credible, dramatic, socially constructed representation of recognised realities about terrorism and its perpetrators (Kappeler et al., 1996; Bohm and Walker, 2006). These mythic frames are not, in fact, about giving knowledge or new information. Instead, they are about

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[35] George W. Bush, Press Conference, 21 August 2006.

drawing upon or reaching into the cultural reservoirs of all communities, and establishing emotionally charged and symbolic displays of pre-existent values, narratives and fears. As for consensual frames of community service and individual concern, these also go beyond the conventional news reporting frames. In the community service frames, news media explicitly advise audiences on what new information is about, for instance: what terrorism means and how they might manifest in the theft of their identities, and what they should or should not do to prevent themselves from being victimised. These news frames are advisory or service oriented and lend themselves to instructional methods.

Collective news frames, among the most hardly used frames, do not simply report and advise on new forms of terrorism and law enforcement. Rather, as Cottle (2006: 31) argues, they "elaborate and visualise collective interests through their identification of 'common interest' subject matter, often embodying and/or prescribing shared communal values or sentiments". While these are generally 'feel good' human interest stories that last temporarily, they may also be facilitated in the name of combating terrorism or in pursuing stability and security for all.

As Barak (2007: 101-109) suggests, it is important to identify more culturally and materially nuanced accounts of the representations of terrorism in the media. This does not seem to be a new debate, however; Arrigo (1996: 123-35) argues that in an age of globalisation and satellite communication, it has become even more relevant as the mix of genres and frames becomes virtual and as terrorism, crime and justice and law and order have become more a cultural hybridisation of reality and hyper-reality. Nevertheless, Cottle's (2006: 44) communicative architecture explains how "mediatisation" is represented in and through the media's available communicative forms.

Another research by Van Gorp (2005: 480-507), who studied the coverage of asylum seekers in the Belgian press. He examined the framing of asylum seekers as innocent victims or intruders. In the study, Van Gorp developed a detailed matrix that included

coding the type of asylum seekers portrayed in the story, how the problem was defined, what was seen to cause it, and who was responsible for solving it. He also examined metaphors, emotional appeals and visuals. For example, one story might focus on a refugee family in fear for their lives, frame the problem as one of how to best welcome victims of prosecution, and then appeal to compassion and justice. By contrast, another story might describe a 'flood of individuals seeking to abuse asylum rights, present the asylum-seeker as a threat to Belgian culture, focus on the problem of lax asylum policy, and appeal to xenophobia (Van Gorp: 461). Van Gorp systematically coded, and then statistically examined, the clustering of such framing devices. This confirmed that news reports do indeed contain a number of framing devices and that the victim-frame was present in its pure form in 21 percent of the articles and the intruder-frame in 26 percent.

The study by Norris et al. (2003: 13) explains that, while journalists report terrorism by "framing" the story around "empathy" and "suffering", many media audiences are likely to become frustrated because they expect the reporting to be "framed" around "justice". The editors point out that journalists regularly employ news "frames" that simplify, prioritise and structure the narrative sequence of events when reporting on terrorism. News frames, says the study:

> "…bundle key concepts, stock phrases and iconic images to reinforce
> certain common ways of interpreting developments... Without
> knowing much, if anything, about the particular people, groups, issues
> or even places involved, the terrorist and the anti-terrorist frames
> allows us to quickly sort out, interpret, categorize and evaluate these
> conflicts".

So, as a result, people's perceptions on what they get exposed to through the media will vary from one to another. This will be explained in the next section.

Language of Terrorism Coverage and the Public Response

Media representation is known for using resources of shared social backgrounds and strengthening them at the same time. Cultural studies identify mass communication processes not as pure information transmission, but as a set of textual practices that require an active interpretation by the audience. This approach, especially when applied to news media, supports the interpretation of journalism as a observable circumstance that can be referred to as a place of security in a social, cultural and epistemological perspective. In order to explain this assumption, Silverstone (1996) and Morley (1992) studied the interaction between television and society, neglecting the model of the magic bullet and sketching a social scientific approach with contributions from anthropology, psychology, semiotics, and so on. Silverstone's (1996) study on television and everyday life offers interesting clues to understand the concept of news journalism as a security place. Silverstone argues that television is a "place" where our social and cultural beliefs are, generally, stressed and reassured. Therefore, news media can be seen as a reference of stability and safety.

In spite of the changeable relationship between the linguistic form and the ideological, cultural studies say that it has to be possible to find a structured set of relations among those levels. As Morley (1992: 122) notes, media contexts are important as a context of reception, and so, the daily world is also the outcome of symbolic production. Thus, the processes of coding and decoding are enveloped in social and symbolic practices which maintain and constitute social realities. For this type of approach, meaning is the "real stuff" of which the word of everyday life is constructed. The media audience will then interpret the symbolic meanings which are then reassured by the media. Also, the idea of trust is important to reassure people's existence and security, which covers the beliefs most people have about the continuity of their identity and the stability of their own social and cultural communities. However, what concerns news media is the idea that news makers attempt to give meaning to the chaos around.

Therefore, it is significant to analyse the type of frames and rhetoric the Saudi media use in disseminating terrorism news at this sensitive time of crisis. It is important to examine the coding process and whose view the media distributes in the time of terrorism. Based on Alterman (1998), as part of the nation-state building process and prior to the era of the Internet and other transnational media, the operation of Saudi state-run electronic and other media was oriented towards shaping a collective ethno-national identity according to the need of building national unity in the postcolonial period of any Arab nation-state. As Boyd (1993) and Karram (1999) note, these are a type of "tribal media", in written and electronic forms, which function within a defined geopolitical unit and with closed borders. This arrangement limited the leakage of external mass media content, as well as the limited broadcast range of terrestrial television stations and restrictions applied by the political system. Yet, with globalisation spreading news and intervening in every part of the world via satellite, this has become almost impossible to control. This will be examined in the next chapter.

However, the Internet has successfully created a new public space, cyberspace. Toulouse (1998: 5) defines cyberspace as "a new transnational realm of civil society". Additionally, Resnick (1998: 48) examines the transformative quality researchers have attributed to cyberspace, stating:

> "…ordinary everyday politics has captured Cyberspace".

He (Resnick (1998: 49) argues that cyberspace has undergone a process of "normalisation", stating:

> "(it) has not become the locus of a new politics that spills out of the
> computer screen and revitalizes citizenship and democracy".

Similarly, Streck (1998: 29) points out that cyberspace does not expand text into experience, it reduces experience to text. While Warren (1995: 171) defines the public

sphere as an arena in which individuals participate in discussions about matters of common concern, in an atmosphere free of coercion or dependencies (inequalities) that would incline individuals toward acquiescence or silence". However, the most important explanation for normalisation is Rice and Burbules' (1994: 4-6). They argue that the absence of the otherness of the 'Other' secures the futility of the effort to empower marginalised groups and to give them a space to raise their silenced voice".

However, these definitions will be used at a later stage when examining the interaction of certain marginalised Saudi groups through the Internet. Thus, the public sphere serves different alternative views of social and political issues, from popular and traditional members' views that are joined by opposition and alternative groups. They vary from political activists to religious members and from democracy seekers to terrorist members (as in the Saudi case). They both recruit and distribute their views, bringing their issues into a larger public sphere. These convergences ensure a sense of participation in a public sphere of online expression, stressing interpretive freedom to take the place of a previously felt need to connect with those having the same demands.

News Framing and Audience Perceptions

As a result, the choice of a news frame has a direct influence on public perceptions, especially where there are competing opinions from terrorists and the government. Journalists try to go beyond these perspectives by attempting to "balance" the contrasting viewpoints and preventing direct expressions of sympathy with one side or the other. Yet, apart from this mediatised influence people form a view of the world in complex ways. In his book "Television Culture", Fiske (1987: 84) notes:

> "The television audience is composed of a wide variety of groups and is not
> a homogeneous mass . . . these groups actively read television in order to
> produce from it meanings that connect with their social experience".

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Indeed, mass communication is one main provider of information and opinion, but there are many other sources including: family, workmates, educational background, reading, and personal experience and background. When the media are more or less the only source of information about some event or issue then they have a much better chance of defining the way people think. Thus, in an emergency situation, when the ruling class is challenged, things can become very different. An obvious characteristic that in times of national crises, the ruling class, while seriously needful to remain in control, can be deeply divided over how to remain powerful. At the same time, their control over newspapers and broadcasting outlets would face challenges from the outside world, especially in a global age.

Philo (1995) notes that the political message must be re-shaped to explain apologise or legitimise new connections and events. This is because the audience are not sealed off in conceptual bubbles or positioned indefinitely by static architecture of discourse, as there is a need to constantly re-work social ideas in relation to the defence of interests. Philo and Miller (2001) also remark that if belief systems were not continually challenged by new experience and contradictions, there would be no need for political debate. In real societies, there are groups, class fractions and interest assemblies who disagree over how the world should be interpreted and what should be perceived as necessary, possible and desirable. In their work, Philo and Miller analysed the role of the media in such struggles because of its potential power in reflecting and developing key elements of belief.

Based on an analysis of more than 200 evening newscasts aired during the first six years of the Reagan administration, Dobkin (1992) offers a detailed study of the modes in which news media increased public fear about terrorism and encouraged support for specific US policy objectives, rather than build sympathy for the terrorists. Dobkin examines the similarities between news media and government representations of terrorism, combining textual criticism with an interpretation of official US policy statements. He argues that government depictions and news

presentations of terrorism reproduce a belief that supports military strength and action.

Dobkin also examines different features of news coverage, i.e. the dramatic format of television news and the political interests that this format serves, the narrative construction of enemies by television journalists and public officials, and the political significance of the "terrorist" label. He also analyses the use and significance of testimony (particularly that of people affected by crises), the mutual exploitation of political crisis by both television news producers and public officials, the function of journalism in shaping the conduct of public diplomacy and public perceptions of foreign conflict, and the creation of a consensus about the need for military responses to political violence.

Dobkin remarks that people's beliefs can be influenced by new messages from the media and also by the flow of new experience which can, in itself, be potentially used in the rejection or acceptance of new messages. Media messages change and so does the flow of experience. And these two are vitally related. When political ideologies are developed as political practice they should have certain outcomes in public experience. This means that the systems of ideas which legitimise social and political power must be constantly re-worked. However, the official message is chosen, shaped and presented as a news item or story, and certain individuals are actively constructing their own interpretations and meanings of the world around them.

Terrorists' Use of the Media

The relationship between terror and the media has increased in both its intensity and professionalism, specifically because the media have created an arena in which terror is not only presented but is also justified. In many important respects the media have become an open arena in which terrorists are running after both exposure and time, in order to present themselves in a sympathetic and understanding manner. It is not only

al-Qaeda's use of al-Jazeera to disseminate its messages, but the very fact that different media channels give time or space to spokespeople who rationalise and justify specific terror activities under the guise of a supposedly neutral 'explanation'. Any such discussion allows terrorists to use articulated spokespeople who will present their moral situation, often by using authoritative terms and slogans in an attempt to persuade audiences that their cause is worthy and defended.

Moreover, terrorist spokespeople frequently attempt to convince audiences that resorting to terror is a 'no-choice' alternative, implying that the road to paradise must be paved with misery and tortured corpses. The implication of such rhetoric is that violence is the only way to resolve such conflict. Contemporary global trends and politically correct influences have complicated this connection even further, sometimes by further helping to blur demarcations between perpetrator and victim, and by obfuscating the justification for terror or countermeasures. Evidently, those who have been attacked or hit by terror will lack sympathy or understanding and will present sharper moral distinctions. Apart from the past events, the rhetoric used by the media in their coverage of terror or any serious national issue has become a major issue, especially that the Middle East faces a number of issues, that require a successive revision of the output of their national news media.

However, the next chapters will examine the ways in which the Saudi media is dealing with the case of terrorism. This can help to identifying the methods used in framing terrorism in the national media, and analyse how the audience interacts and responds to such incidents through alternative media outlets. The hypotheses of news framing in this chapter will help construct the empirical research in the next chapter.

Summary

This chapter introduces the reader to the role of media in reporting terrorism in the 21st century, as well as the influence of such coverage on the public sphere. We have examined the different existing hypotheses of framing as well as a framing analysis of the media coverage of terrorism which included Iyengar, Cottle, Van Gorp, Altheide and others. Additionally, we have studied the impact of terrorism frames on the audience perception of terrorism, as this can act as a guide for the final recommendations.

Although Iyengar's hypothsis will be the basic in conducting the content analysis in the next chapter, we will use the other hypotheses as a guide to understanding the effects of agenda-setting and audience perceptions on the audience. This will help developing a systematic content analysis of terrorism framing in the Saudi media.

Chapter Six

Framing Terrorism in the Saudi Media and the Public Response

Methodology

This part of the dissertation consists of a clarification of the empirical part of this study, which aims to examine the ways the Saudi media frame terrorism news. The general goal is to investigate the types of information the Saudi mass media uses in presenting terrorism news amid the government's control of the media. Additionally, we aim to investigate the audience response to the official news about terrorism. This will allow to examine the extent of freedom of speech in the press, the Internet, and television sources. By this, we hope to unveil the methods that the Saudi official media use in informing its audience about terrorism (through their national media) and how the audience may respond to such news. Our methodology will consist of a systematic content analysis, where we will identify and classify the characteristics of the written and visual text of terrorism news, the types of terrorism information being promoted, and the content of the public's reaction to such media disinformation.

Research Questions

Below are the questions we hope to answer after considering the reviewed literature and the analysis we will conduct:

1. What is the nature of terrorism coverage on national Saudi news media in terms of content and issue coverage? (episodic vs. thematic)

There are several propositions that we will test when conducting the research. First, that the national news media's coverage of terrorism stories is primarily episodic, while public treatment to official news is thematic. Based on Iyengar (1987, 1991), we will attempt to reveal that official news coverage of terrorism must inherently be

episodic, because news coverage of terrorism is, by definition, event-based. This information leads to assumptions about the nature of terrorism coverage in national Saudi news media, which is primarily concerned with the realm of terrorist attacks and resultant destruction, and not on a deeper explanation of its causes and treatment.

2. What are the dominant frames of responsibility in the national Saudi media's coverage of terrorism?

The second group of assumptions we expect to be true concerns Iyengar's attributions to causal and treatment responsibility. By responsibility, we mean the way in which stories are covered in order to give meaning to terrorism, based on the idea that a person or a group is responsible for a specific terrorist act. Responsible treatment refers to the assignment of a person or institution to the task of finding a remedy for terrorism. As Iyengar noted, the episodic form of presentation increases individual attributions of causal responsibility over the other two possible outcomes that are social and punitive. We, therefore, hypothesise that the dominant frame for causal responsibility in Saudi national news on terrorism will be individually dysfunctional.

3. How does the news production frame responsibility for terrorism, and how do online news media contrast with the dominant print media as sources of the analysis and debate around terrorism issues?

Iyengar's study identified that the dominant frame for treatment responsibility was that of punitive measures, and we expect to obtain similar results. Iyengar used the news to draw forth responses from people in regards to their opinions on certain issues. This research will be based upon looking for the demonstrable factors in the news that would likely lead the audience reaching certain conclusions. Therefore, we expect the majority of terrorism stories to focus on information that covers these, so that individuals are causally responsible for the problem of terrorism. This can be due to the nature of the political system, which sets the policies of the media in general, and while punitive measures are suggested as a treatment of terrorism. The third

hypothesis to test is the relationship between the dominant form of presentation and the frames for causal and treatment responsibility. Iyengar found that news stories that exhibited an episodic form of presentation were most likely to elicit the individualistic attribution for causal responsibility and punitive attributions for treatment responsibility. In this respect, we expect the same to be the case for this research.

In fact, people are engaged in an on-going process of trying to make sense of the world, through interactions with fellows and scientists, and many are seeking to make sense of the information they receive. Therefore, in terms of studying the public response to terrorism news, we will examine the audience conception and definition of reality that can be embedded in the institutional fabric of society through their response to national news of terrorism. We presume that an individual's experience signifies a function of the social system in which he or she resides. This assumption will help to interpret the idea that the Saudi public do not seem to determine the characteristics of terrorism from the details they see through the national media. Rather, the manner in which they respond to those characteristics, is the resulting from their negotiated constructions they mutually hold.

Additionally, we will examine the Saudi public's understanding of terrorism in relation to the system in which they live, by looking closer at their responses where they express themselves on different media channels. This will connect our study to the media effects that are generated from being exposed to terrorism news.

4. What are the levels of freedom of speech that each Saudi media outlet provides for public discourse, and how do the public interpret terrorism news in their local news media, and what are their reactions towards terrorism news?

In addition, we expect to be true is that although there is currently an information revolution in the Arab world, which has transformed political discourse in the region in the space of a few years, the Saudi government insists on full control of media

access and content. This clash between the free flow of information, people's desires, and state control is all encompassing in the country. Therefore, we hypothesise that new technologies have created a new type of political debate that transcends Saudi national boundaries and control, in comparison with traditional press and television media and, therefore, this has allowed for open channels for people to communicate and comment over the their national issues and the media.

In the conclusion we hope to draw from this research is that the combined effects of journalistic, economic, organisational, and, most importantly, political pressures that news organisations experience, have an effect on the content of the news; and that the public's understanding to such news can differ from the government's aims and information requirements being delivered. The pressures placed upon news media workers can lead them into developing a recognisable routine in their daily newsgathering, especially the repetitive use of sources that guarantee a correct story for the news programmes.

For the issues involved with terrorism, official sources are easily accessed, and are conducive to the production of stories that are primarily episodic in nature. In this type of coverage, the news focuses on the details of a specific terrorist event. Such stories also fulfil other "requirements" of news values, that they are thrilling enough to keep the viewer's attention and have the qualities of fictional television drama, and yet serve loyalty to the Saudi system. These aspects are most important to the news producers who expect news audiences to be consumers and loyal citizens. Finally, we aim to uncover whether news workers have sufficient experience to qualify them to provide other terrorism news, and whether they have the ability to work in an atmosphere of freedom and professionalism in a time of national crisis.

However, there are many other opposing viewpoints that exist regarding the nature of terrorism and the options for the treatment of terrorism and terrorists in the media as well. Such views can be found through alternative media outlets that reflect the opinions of various groups. There is a strong radical opposition to the continued Saudi

government's efforts in fighting fundamentalism. In fact, radical Islam has always been a way of life and an ideology taught in government schools from the early stages, and thus, it has a huge number of followers.

Other moderate opposition positions blame the government for raising fundamentalism over the years. Yet, the radical voices do not consider terrorism as horrifying perpetrations, but rather as Jihadist acts in the face of the ruling class and their Western allies. Nevertheless, these opposing viewpoints rarely, if ever, appear as topics in the national news media. The discourse in the terrorism coverage of national news media is not conducive to citizen participation in public deliberation of such issues. Through this research, we hope to be able show that the pressures experienced by the Saudi news producers, especially the political pressures, do not result in a news product that contributes to an informed or a negotiating society. Therefore, we will use Iyengar's categories as a basis to identify the general use of terrorism coverage in the Saudi press. Additionally, we will have our own categories in order to identify a deeper understanding of the content of terrorism news coverage. This will not only help clarify the general presentation of terrorism news, but will confirm the type of content where a deep and striking result can be found in people's response to such news.

Sample

In order to apply Iyengar's hypothesis to the Saudi national news of terrorism, we will use content analysis. Since the official media outlets present terrorism in a different way from the online discussion, it is vital to consider each individual terrorism-related story and online reply as individual units of analysis. The official terrorism news stories will explain the type of presentation that Saudi media uses to interpret terrorism, while the audience replies to the news of terrorism will represent the dissenting opinions to the official coverage.

Based on Iyengar, framing a story through an episodic mode of presentation will occur when the story is constructed with reference to one specific event, such as the

reporting of a specific terrorist incident or arrest of a terrorist. Thematic framing will be used when the story addresses a larger issue such as a debate over corrections policies. As Iyengar's research shows, news presentation is primarily episodic, and that this type of story is more likely to bring about an attribution of individual responsibility for the causes of crime in his respondents. The assumption here is that even when the story appears to be thematic in its treatment, it still lies under episodic categorisation. There will be stories where we will demonstrate this hypothesis.

Attributions of causal responsibility refer to the person or institution that is responsible for the reported crime. Similarly, attributions of treatment responsibility will refer to the person or institution that is responsible for resolving the problems of crime. The responses Iyengar obtained from his study could be placed into three categories for both attributions: individual, societal, and punitive. Thus, we will aim to maintain those categories in my content analysis and study the content of each news story according to my own set of categories. Additionally, we will analyse the content of the Saudi public response through online media sources. This will introduce evidence of any contradicting views by the Saudi public towards terrorism.

This study will be based on four terrorism-related news stories, taken from the most popular national newspapers in Saudi Arabia. In addition, we will use online forums from different intellectual trends to study public reactions to the same published news stories. The selection of these four stories is based on the assumption that they represent the conventional methods that the Saudi media use in covering terrorism news; which is the focus of the study in this practical part. The publication time of these stories is also another reason for choosing these stories, as they represent the peak of terrorism incidents in Saudi Arabia.

The stories to be used in this study are as follows:

1. Three French dead and another injured by unknown (date of story: 27 February 2007).

Sources of news story: Al-Riyadh Newspaper, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, Okaz, Al-Arabiya online, Rasid online, Al-Tajdeed online.

2. Prince Nayef states: We know who stands behind legitimizing Takfeer and killing and misleading the Saudi youth: We will announce their names soon (date of story: 21 September 2006).

Sources of news story: Al-Riyadh newspaper, Okaz, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, Al-Arabiya online, Al-Tajdeed online, Al-Shorfa online.

3. Prince Nayef states: Knowledge pretenders more dangerous than violence perpetrators (date of story: 9 April 2007).

Sources of news story: Al-Riyadh newspaper, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, Okaz, Al-Arabiya online, Rasid online, Al-Tajdeed online.

4. The arrest of 136 deviant terrorist members and a terrorist attack foiled (date of story: 3 December 2006).

Sources of news story: Al-Riyadh newspaper, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, Okaz, Al-Arabiya online, Rasid online, Al-Tajdeed online.

From each terrorism-related news story we aim to identify how the Saudi media present terrorist incidents, how the different online media present these stories for the online audience, and how the public respond to the original forum posts. Therefore, the unit of analysis for the newspapers and the Internet will be each individual terrorism-related story in their textual details, as well as public feedback on the original news story.

Each story will represent a unit of analysis, and each original story and reply (in the online outlets) will represent units of analysis. We will use Iyengar's set of categories as a base to identify the official framing of terrorism in the national news, and we will also identify our own set of frames in order to interpret the deeper meanings that each news item or reply holds. This can bring the reader to a deeper understanding of the content than the Saudi news of terrorism produces for the public, as well as provide an understanding of the content of the public response to each published news item.

Based on Iyengar's study of news frames, the specific aspects of framing addressed in each terrorism story will be: episodic vs. thematic forms of presentation, attributions of causal responsibility, and attributions of treatment responsibility. In addition, we will study the content of each news story, so the rhetoric can reveal more results. Finally, we will look at these media outlets to examine the amount of access and freedom that each allows for public participation. This will lead to studying the types of opinions that the public express on the issue of terrorism through accessible media sources.

One may wonder about the relationship of some of the samples' stories to Iyengar's "episodic framing" instead of his "thematic" mode of presentation. In this regard, we suppose that the coverage of terrorism is often focused on special events of terrorism, and not on a thematic analysis of the causes that has led to the emergence of terrorism as a serious issue. Episodic news stories are often centred on one terrorist incident, and thus presented to bring a mere official message to the public regarding the terrorist incident; and this is often without a serious analysis to the reasons behind the perpetrating terrorism.

Therefore, in order to interpret the meanings of each news item and reply through the online media, we have prepared a coding sheet. In terms of a newspaper coding sheet the categories are as follows:

- Title of news item.
- Name of newspaper – online versions.
- Date of news item.
- Type (original news item or public feedback).
- News source (source of news).
- Dominant frame.
- Attribution of casual responsibility.
- Attribution of treatment responsibility.

In terms of the Internet coding sheet the categories of analysis are as follows:

- Title of news item.
- Web site address.
- Date of news item.
- Type (original post or reply).
- Number of replies.
- Dominant frame.
- Attribution of casual responsibility.
- Attribution of treatment responsibility.

Finally, in the television coding sheet the categories are as follows:

- Title of programme.
- Type of programme.
- Programme speaker(s) or guest(s).
- Duration.
- Date of production.
- Dominant frame.
- Attribution of casual responsibility.
- Attribution of treatment responsibility.

For news in newspapers we have selected the following publications:

- Okaz newspaper (represents Western province)
- Al-Riyadh newspaper (represents Riyad, the capital city)
- Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper (Saudi owned Pan-Arab newspaper).

In fact, newspaper sources do not actually represent the voice of the opposition because there are no opposition newspapers in Saudi Arabia and all print media is controlled, if not owned, by the Saudi government. As the Internet provides a freely accessible media channel for all, we will be able to diversify the coverage sources of the selected four terrorism incidents. This includes official Saudi media (al-Arabiya – http://alarabiya.net) and online forums used by the opposition (Islamist and liberal).

The Al-tajdeed website (http://www.al-tajdeed.co.uk) represents the Islamist opposition and the Rasid website (http://www.rasid.com represents) Shiites and liberal views.

Using the results of the content analysis of the Saudi media, we will develop a systematic framing analysis of the used codes in framing terrorism in the Saudi national media. This can enable one to identify the types of news frames the Saudi media use in covering terrorism news among the challenges of the Arab media, and the public's use of the new media as alternative means to increase the Saudi public debate in the limitations of mainstream media. We hope that this study can interpret how the official rhetoric frames the issue of terrorism through the national Saudi media, how terrorism perpetrators are represented, and how the opposition media (fundamentalist and liberal) reflect on the same issues. Through careful analysis of the basic frameworks adopted from Iyengar, we hope to be able to succeed in bringing a deeper explanation of the content of frames used in news coverage of terrorism.

Coding

We have spent over a year reading and categorising the meanings that may appear in terrorism news coverage in the Saudi news media, as well as public views of terrorism on online discussion forums (posts and replies). In order to interpret how the news of terrorism is shaped and presented, we have used Iyengar's set of frames. This includes the following:

- Category (A) Dominant frame: "episodic (A1), thematic (A2).
- Category (B) Attribution of casual responsibility: "individual (B1), societal (B2), punitive (B3).
- Category (C) Attribution of treatment responsibility "individual (C1), societal (C2), punitive (C3).

Coding Scheme

<u>Dominant Format</u>
-   **Episodic** – Stories take the form of a case study or event-oriented report and depict (of presentation) terrorism in terms of concrete instances that illustrate events.
-   **Thematic** – Stories place terrorism in a more general or abstract context; directed at general outcomes or conditions.

<u>Attribution of Casual Responsibility</u>
-   **Individual** – Cause of terrorism is attributed to individual dysfunctions such as character deficiencies or inadequate education and employment skills.
-   **Societal** – Cause of terrorism is attributed to social dysfunctions such as economic conditions, discrimination, racial inequality, poverty, or cultural institutions.
-   **Punitive** – Cause of terrorism is attributed to the ability to avoid severe punishment.

<u>Attribution of Treatment Responsibility</u>
-   **Individual** – Treatment of crime attributed to individual self-improvement.
-   **Societal** – Treatment of terrorism attributed to improvements in underlying socioeconomic and political order, such as reductions in poverty and inequality, rehabilitative and educational programmes, improved economic conditions, and heightened public awareness and freedom of speech.
-   **Punitive** – Treatment of terrorism attributed to the imposition of stricter and more certain punishment against terrorists (Iengar, 1991).

Since gathering and interviewing a group of respondents, and conduct the same type of research designed by Iyengar, is beyond the scope of this research, we have chosen to take another approach. First, we examined the dominant forms of presenting terrorism in the news and code each story as either dominantly episodic or dominantly

thematic. In order to understand the link between these forms of presentation and framing responsibility, we have coded each story for its respective frame of causal and treatment responsibility. We worked on defining the attributes as closely to Iyengar's descriptions as possible. This helped in identifying the demonstrable factors that could be found in terrorism coverage which place responsibility in either category of this study. We have chosen Iyengar's model as a basis for this study because the idea behind his research was dependent on the assumption that explanation is an essential ingredient to human knowledge, and thus important to political thinking and decision-making.

Therefore, in the next chapter we will analyse the framing of terrorism news in the Saudi media, as well as public response to the framing of terrorism online. We will use an interpretive approach in order to examine Saudi public feedback on the news of terrorism; this will be through online national newspapers and online debates about the same news stories published in the Saudi conventional press.

Our examination will be based on a focused, in-depth content analysis, and having a prepared coding sheet with a list of meanings. Accounts of commonly held meanings and views will be collected and then categorised into five variables; these are:

- Dominant frame (episodic, thematic).
- Attribution of casual responsibility (individual, societal or punitive).
- Attribution of treatment responsibility (individual, societal or punitive).
- Prominence of news story – in press journalism.
- Proportion – the total participation in the online debate will count in the Internet analysis.

Press Findings

Story Characteristics

Our sample is drawn from a study of the coverage of four terrorism news stories from the Saudi conventional press media, as there were some characteristics first examined independently of our findings. These categories include:

"Newspaper title"
Gives knowledge of the source of the news stories, as some newspapers are published in Saudi and others, such as Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, are published in London. It allows the observer to identify any possible difference between terrorism coverage in the national newspapers and Saudi-owned pan-Arab newspapers.

"Date"
Provides the date of publication; however, most stories are published between 2006 and 2007. By this time, we expect the Saudi government had enough knowledge and experience in dealing with terrorism news (as it had been on-going since 2002).

"Type"
This refers to the type of news item, including my sample, which includes original press news stories and public feedback (through online newspapers and public forums).

"News Source"
This refers to the sources that provide news reporting to a news story, as the source is essential to news coverage. They validate the information presented by the newspapers and help the reader to understand the story in a way that is meaningful. Sources are a prominent aspect of framing because they validate the viewpoints of "authorised insiders": those people whose knowledge is the cue from which readers form their own opinions. Institutional, especially government sources are the most

commonly accessed for this purpose. This is because they are extremely reliable informants for the purpose of "truth" validation and are accessible to news workers.

Additionally, based on Iyengar's set of attributions, an examination of the following characteristics provides an analytical view of the content of stories included in the sample:

- Dominant frame (episodic, thematic).
- Attribution of casual responsibility (individual, societal or punitive).
- Attribution of treatment responsibility (individual, societal or punitive).
- Prominence of news story – in press journalism.
- Proportion – the total participation in online debate will be counted in the Internet analysis.

Once our results are discussed, we will compare the characteristics of each story type to the entire sample. This comparison will provide an explanation to how the production of terrorism news is manifested in Saudi Arabia, and how the public responds to such news.

In fact, many news organisations put their reporters on beats that focus on a certain political area, for example, police, local government, and so on. The people who are put on these beats become acquainted with the officials who work in those areas, and frequently access their knowledge when needing to confirm all or part of a story they are planning to report. In addition, politicians are often more than willing to take advantage of opportunities to speak to the public through the news. While it may not be actual leaders themselves who appear on the news, their representatives make the same impact on viewers. As the public recognises them as dependable sources of information, news workers turn to them more frequently. The variety of sources mentioned or used in a newscast is an indication of the level of fairness given to different points of view on a story.

Therefore, a story that includes different points of view from various sources can be said to be fairer than a story that uses only one. Multiple points of view allow the readers to identify with the one they feel most closely aligned to, while using only one source may seem to give validity to only one opinion, which gives the news reader the option of jumping on "the bandwagon" or walking away from the story in complete opposition to its content. The use of sources in terrorism coverage also serves to validate the point of view to the audience as one of the most acceptable.

The use of sources specifically in terrorism reporting will validate the opinions of those who are asked to comment or give information on the story. However, most terrorism stories use information given to them by the police and government figures. Law enforcement officials are easily accessible to the media, thus reporters often turn to then for information and quotes. In addition, they are usually guaranteed to have accurate and updated information regarding any terrorism event. Since police sources are given in terrorism reporting, an examination of the use of other sources is also considered appropriate. The types of sources included criminal justice sources (e.g., police), sources from government, victims, suspects, eyewitnesses, family members of victims, family members of suspects, neighbours, defence attorneys, and other sources. However, the police or other criminal justice personnel were cited in a majority of the stories. Of all the four news stories on terrorism in this analysis, the sources were as follows:

Other categories of sources, such as defence attorneys, criminal justice sources, neighbours (someone who lived close to a terrorist incident scene), victims and family members of victims, suspects, eyewitnesses, and a suspect's family members do not exist in my sample. The most frequently used source was selected government officials (such as the Saudi Minister of Interior). This finding indicates that the coverage of terrorism on national newspapers is based on the information given by those involved in processing terrorism, and does not allow for any particular meaning to be given to terrorism by alternative sources. This narrow use of sources will be kept in mind when considering the framing of responsibility in this study's sample.

"Prominence and Proportion of News Stories"

This refers to how prominent and lengthy each news story can be. Obviously, whenever the newspaper is owned or influenced by the government, news stories of terrorism and terrorism-related news are prominent on the first page, lengthy, and include comments from public officials. All of the studied news stories were published in the homepage of each newspaper:

As Al-Riyadh newspaper is the main representative to the voice of the central government in Saudi Arabia, it dealt with the news items on a broad and large scale, unlike the rest of the newspapers published outside the capital city of Riyadh, as "Okaz" is published from Jeddah, Saudi second largest city, and "Al-Sharq al-Awsat" from London.

As we study Saudi news coverage of terrorism in each chosen story, through both press and online news sources, we aim to use Iyengar's set of categories as a basic tool for the analysis; while my own set of categories will be applied in order to study the meanings that each story holds. This can explain whether the current methods in the official terrorism news coverage possibly make a positive impact on the public, increase their understanding and acceptance to the implicit governmental views, or simply contribute to the creation of a more complex understanding.

Summary

This chapter aimed to present a detailed explanation of the methodology used in studying framing of terrorism news in Saudi Arabia national media. We have examined several propositions to test the aspects of the research. What we aim to draw from this study is that the combined effects of journalistic, economic, organisational, and, most importantly, political pressures that news organisations experience, have an effect on the content of news and that the public's understanding to such news stories is contrary to the meanings that the government aims to deliver. Moreover, we will aim to examine the ways in which the audience may receive and respond to such news.

In order to apply Iyengar's hypothesis to Saudi's national news of terrorism, we will use content analysis. Based on the Iyengar's hypothesis over the coverage of terrorism news, we have explained the analytical tools for the empirical study and the selection of the study's sample. The units of the study will be each terrorism-related news story, as well as each news reply to the original published news item. We will also explain our coding methods and scheme for the online news stories and replies.

As we study the content of each news story through the press and online news sources, this study will not be complete without testing the possible dissenting frames drawn by the audience of online news outlets in Saudi Arabia. This will help explaining whether the official coverage of terrorism news can have a positive impact on the audience or lead to counterproductive results.

Chapter Seven
Findings

This empirical study is based on Iyengar's set of categories to explain the content of terrorism news. In addition to adopting Iyengar's list of dominant frames, we have found our own set of codes in order to explain the deeper meanings of the basic used frames. These set of categories hold different meanings. We were able to define them through having analysed the meanings that appeared in every news story. In order to manage the workload and to give an opportunity for checking my judgment against that of another coder, I recruited a research assistant to help with coding. I have divided these categories as I, II, III, and IV. In each category, I aimed to track the meanings that help in understanding the rhetoric that were usually used in the coverage of terrorism news reporting. This can also support the interpretation of the content of frames adopted from Iyengar. Based on the unit's analysis, I was able to identify whether the meanings contained praise for the government and its policy against terrorism (I), praise and support for extremism and violence in the name of Islamic Jihad (II), or voices of liberal opposition (III). I also tracked a neutral transfer or meaning that may not be enough to explain or serve the coverage (IV). An example of this can be Quranic verses, or a mere description of events. The full list is available in the appendix (1: i, ii, iii, iv).

Content codes

This represents the most important characteristic in this empirical part. It explains Iyengar's used frames in each news story. It provides a basic explanation of the type of content and meanings used in shaping terrorism responsibility in the Saudi news. Iyengar's codes fall into three categories, which are as follows:

- Category (A): Dominant frame: "episodic (A1), thematic (A2).
- Category (B): Attribution of casual responsibility: "individual (B1), societal

(B2), punitive (B3).

- Category (C): Attribution of treatment responsibility "individual (C1), societal (C2), punitive (C3).

Finally, there will be another set of categories which will help in explaining the used meanings we were able to identify in most news stories. It will provide a deeper understanding of the meanings used in shaping terrorism and its responsibility in the Saudi press. The relation of this set of categories to Iyengar's-based categories of terrorism responsibility is that it provides a deeper insight over the nature of meanings that each news story holds. The codes were divided into the following four categories:

- Category (I): Meanings that praise the government in its war against terrorism.
- Category (II): Radical opposition that praises radicalism and violence in the name of Jihad.
- Category (III): Liberal opposition that explains the causes of terrorism.
- Category (IV): Neutral coverage aspects.

Therefore, based on Iyengar's study, the analysis of the "used codes" will reveal the type of dominant frame in each story, the attribution of casual responsibility, and the attribution of treatment responsibility.

Table 7.1.0: Dominant Frame Category (A)

Category A (Dominant frame)
A1 (episodic)
A2 (thematic)

Table 7.2.0: Attribution of Casual Responsibility Category (B)

Category B (Attribution of casual responsibility)
B1 (individual)

Category C (Attribution of casual responsibility)
C1 (individual)
C2 (societal)
C3 (punitive)

B2 (societal)
B3 (punitive)

Table 7.3.0: Attribution of Treatment Responsibility Category (C)

Category C (Attribution of casual responsibility)
C1 (individual)
C2 (societal)
C3 (punitive)

Press Findings

Framing Terrorism in Story 1

Story title: *"Three French dead and another injured by unknown"* (date: 27 February 2007).

The story in all three newspapers followed similar episodic coverage. The story portrayed the perpetrators as mere deviant criminals, who killed the French citizens and ran away towards the mountain side. Police were portrayed as helpful and duty-bound men, who ran quickly to the incident to rescue the injured. The following table explains the used frames.

Table 7.1.1: Framing Terrorism in news story (1)

STORY 1	*Al-Riyadh*	*Al-Sharq Al-Aswat*	*Okaz*
Sources	Police	Police – French Foreign Minister	Newspaper – driver of Red Cross

Word length	638	191	235
Dominant frame	A1	A1	A1
Causal responsibility	B1	B1	B1
Treatment responsibility	C3	C3	C3
Coding categories used (%):			
I	1 (12.5%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)
II	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
III	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
IV	7 (87.5%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)

By looking closely at the meaning this story held in each newspaper, we were able to identify the following meanings. Any dominant format or frame represent the kind of coverage used by the newspaper. While the dissenting frame reflects the views of the public sources in the news story.

Table 7.1.2: Framing Terrorism acts

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame
Type of Terrorists	**Criminals**	**None**
Role of Terrorists	**Active, killers, criminals**	**None**
Problem definition	**How to treat unlawful killing by police**	**None**
Problem source	**None**	**None**
Responsibility	**Individual perpetrators of**	**None**

	crime	
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Punishment of individual criminals	None
Moral and emotional basis	Police moral duty to save victims	None
Metaphors/stereotype	Dangerous, anti-Islamic, criminals	None
Visuals	Picture of police members guarding a room in a hospital (Okaz) – map of incident location (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat) – police members guarding a room in a hospital (Al-Riyadh)	

Framing Terrorism in Story 2

Story title: *"Prince Nayef states: We know who stands behind legitimising Takfeer and killing and misleading the Saudi youth: We will announce their names one day soon ... Bin Laden is silly and agent of a foreign intelligence"* (date: 21 September 2006).

The story in all the three newspapers followed similar coverage. The Saudi Minister of Interior, Prince Nayef, met with religious police committee members and explained who was behind the on-going terror in Saudi Arabia. The story describes Prince Nayef's statement as an "improvised" one during a ceremony honouring the religious police members who attended and contributed in a religious monitoring training course. The following table will explain the used frames.

Table 7.2.1: Framing Terrorism in news story (2)

STORY 2	Al-Riyadh	Al-Sharq Al-Aswat	Okaz
Sources	Government – Religious Police	Government	Government
Word length	3,036	92	1,861
Dominant frame	A1	A1	A1
Causal responsibility	B1	B1	B1
Treatment responsibility	C3	C3	C3
Coding categories used (%):			
I	144 (92.90%)	57 (96.61%)	116 (89.23%)
II	0 (0%)	2 (3.38%)	0 (0%)
III	2 (1.29 %)	0 (0%)	1 (0.76 %)
IV	9 (5.80%)	0 (0%)	13 (10 %)

Table 7.2.2: Framing Terrorism acts

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame
Type of religious police	Reformers, guides to true Islam, a necessity in a state of Islam	None
Type of Terrorists	Intruders, ruining national	

	unity and safety, agents of the West & other Arabs	None
Role of Terrorists	**Active, misleading the youth, criminals, terrorists**	**None**
Problem definition	**Need to combat the deviant groups by religious police, they are a threat to law and order**	**None**
Problem source	**Deviant extremist groups, the West, enemy of Islam, envy on Saudi Arabia prosperity**	**None**
Responsibility	**Individual perpetration of terrorism**	**None**
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	**Punishment of terrorists, calling for intellectual safety, strict security policy, defend Salafi Islam and country's safety, and calling for JIHAD against enemies of the state**	**None**
Moral and emotional basis	**Religious police moral duty to save the country and Salafi Islam from threats, defending women's rights**	**None**
Metaphors/stereotype	**Dangerous, anti-Islamic, terrorists, deviant groups, evil**	**None**
Visuals	**Prince Nayef being honoured in ceremony (Okaz), picture of Prince Nayef and Grand Mufti in the ceremony (Al-Riyadh), Picture of Prince Nayef (Al-Sharq Al-awsat)**	**None**

Framing Terrorism in Story 3

Story title: *"Prince Nayef states: Knowledge pretenders more dangerous than violent militant groups"* (date: 9 April 2007).

The story in all three newspapers followed similar coverage end of the "Media and Crises" forum, the Saudi Minister of Interior, and Prince Nayef stating that those who pretend to have knowledge are more dangerous than the terrorism perpetrators. Prince Nayef discussed many issues such as terrorism and its financing, intellectual safety, freedom of the media and its policy, criticism of Arab media, online journalism, rehabilitation of deviant thought Activism, women's privacy and security awareness, and loyalty to the country and Islam. He also criticized Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organisation. The following box will explain the used frames.

Table 7.3.1: Framing Terrorism in news story (3)

STORY 3	Al-Riyadh	Al-Sharq Al-Aswat	Okaz
Sources	Police	Police	Police
Word length	2,816	474	1,386
Dominant frame	A1	A1	A1
Causal responsibility	B1	B1	B1
Treatment responsibility	C3	C3	C3
Coding categories used (%):			
I	7 (100%)	15 (62.5%)	26 (65%)
II	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

III	0 (0 %)	3 (12.5%)	1 (2.5%)
IV	0 (0 %)	6 (25%)	13 (32.5%)

Table 7.3.2: Framing Terrorism acts

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame
Type of Terrorists	Criminals, terrorists, deviant intellectuals, Apostates from the extreme left to extreme right, wanted by police	None
Role of Terrorists	Active, killers, criminals, instigators of terrorism and fighting in other states, distributors of intruding ideology	None
Problem definition	How to combat terrorist ideology and terrorism, and secure intellectuality	None
Problem source	Ignorance, hatred, extremism	None
Responsibility	Individuals perpetrating terrorism	None
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Punishment of terrorist groups, intellectual awareness	None
Moral and emotional basis	Government moral duty to save the country from terrorism, protect the life of non-Muslim expatriates.	None
Metaphors/stereotype	Dangerous, evil, anti-Islamic, immoral terrorists, deviant groups	None
Visuals	Picture of Prince Nayef (Al-Sharq al-Awsat), Prince Nayef being honoured (Al-Riyadh), picture of Prince Nayef (Okaz)	None

Framing Terrorism in Story 4

Story title: *"Police arrest 139 deviant terrorist members and abort a terrorist attack"*
(date: 3 December 2006).

The story in all three newspapers followed similar coverage, where the terrorists were portrayed as mere criminals who killed the French citizens and then ran away towards the mountain side. The police were portrayed as helpful duty-bound men, who ran quickly to the incident site to rescue the injured. The following box will explain the used frames.

Table 7.4.1: Framing Terrorism in news story (4)

STORY 4	Al-Riyadh	Al-Sharq Al-Aswat	Okaz
Sources	Minister of Interior	Minister of Interior	Minister of Interior
Word length	638	190	235
Dominant frame	A1	A1	A1
Causal responsibility	B1	B1	B1
Treatment responsibility	C3	C3	C3
Coding categories used (%):			
I	14 (60.86%)	23 (71.87%)	2 (100%)
II	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
III	0 (0 %)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
IV	9 (39.13%)	9 (28.12%)	0 (0%)

Table 7.4.2: Framing Terrorism acts

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame
Type of Terrorists	Groups affected by thinking about the "other", tools in the hands of the "others", connected with foreign sources, Takfiris, misleading young people, suicidal, mentally sick, criminals, deviant groups	None
Role of Terrorists	Active, misleading youngsters, criminals, threatening national peace and prosperity, suspected acts, legislators of killing and pillaging people's money, fuelling discord and the corruption of young people, covering up wanted members, financing terrorist operations	None
Problem definition	Police need to treat unlawful killing	None
Problem source	Mentally sick groups	None
Responsibility	Deviant individuals threatening national peace and citizens' lives	None
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Arresting and punishing deviant groups	None
Moral and emotional basis	Police awareness and moral duty to save the country and protect the lives of citizens	None
Metaphors/stereotype	Takfiries, anti-Islamic, mentally sick, criminals, spies	None
Visuals	No pictures (Al-Riyadh), no pictures (Al-Sharq al-Awsat), picture showing seized weapons, national soldiers and	None

	a timeline for security suspects arrests (Okaz)	

By examining the coverage of the four news stories, we would identify that all the newspapers followed the same story coverage, as the major source for these major national newspapers is the Saudi News Agency. This means that all newspapers are merely publishers of what the government disseminates and considers as news, and no oppositional voice was found in all newspapers coverage. But surprisingly, looking closer at the deeper meanings of the individual reports, we would identify some contradiction in the official voice. As the government is responsible for fighting terrorism, some official statements held a radical view. Examples can be seen in news story 2, which included a 3.38% weight in category II – those of which hold radical opinions. The first meaning clearly stated that the West was behind active terrorism in Saudi Arabia; and the second was that the government was calling for Jihad against enemies of Islam (mainly considered to be the West).

In addition, in some news stories we were able to identify more than one governmental explanation for the reasons behind active terrorism, and more than one solution to treating these acts. The first suggestion was that the government should fight terrorist groups, and secondly that the government needed to search for deeper liberal solutions in treating terrorism as a growing phenomenon. Such an example was found in news story 2.

In Al-Riyadh's coverage, category I (the loyal view) represented 92.90 percent of the story's causes and treatment, while category III (the liberal view) was present with 1.29% in explaining and suggesting the treatment of perpetrated terrorism; another notable coverage for the same news item was Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. Category I was present with 96.61% in defining the causes and treatment of terrorism perpetrations, while category II (radical view in treating terrorism) was present with 3.3%. Such coverage would lead to the notion that the Saudi government is not clear in its

procedures in fighting terrorism, nor the Saudi media in determining the causes of the rising wave of terrorism and the necessary methods in dealing with this national crisis. However, in the absence of the analytical framework to public opinion through the traditional press, we were able to detect this through the published news over the Internet. Online news allowed publishing dissenting frame, as well as opposing public replies to the original published news story.

Online Findings

Story Characteristics

This part of the study analyses the coverage of terrorism in different online Saudi sources. By the time we reached the end of our empirical study, some web sites were shut, but the analysis is based on the same terrorism-related stories used in the press sources; these are:

- Government-supporting source: Al-arabiya.net (existing).
- Radical opposition source: tajdeed.co.uk (non-existing online anymore).
- Liberal opposition sources: rasid.com and Al-shorfah.com (existing online, but content was removed due to a new Iraqi ownership).

The online analysis of public response to terrorism news allows to understand the way in which the people of Saudi Arabia respond to official terrorism coverage in alternative online sources. The sources to our sample are forums that reflect different views of governmental, radical and liberal opposition. This online analysis offers identifying the same factors found in press analysis, as well as examining the explicit public views, which come as a response to particular online news stories. We have analysed the original postings, as well as the replies to the original posts, in four different online sources. We have developed the analysis based on our own

interpretation of the expressions which may exist in the public replies to the news reporting.

The first four analysis characteristics were part of the coding scheme for the preliminary round of coding, while the last one "Used codes" was performed upon the content of the terrorism stories. These categories include: website address, date, type (post or reply), number of replies, and used codes. An examination of these characteristics will provide a general idea of the types of stories included in our sample, and a representation of public response of terrorism coverage in different Saudi online sources.

As we were able to track the number of the replies to each news story (post) in the online press sources, we could not track the number of the audiences (readers) to each post, as the online sources do not actually provide an official count to the readings, unlike the way it can be found in online forums. This can be found in the following table:

Table 7.4.3: Tracking Audience and Replies:

News story (1) *"Three French dead and another injured by unknown"*		
Source	No. of audience (Readings)	No. of audience replies
www.alarabiya.net - I	N/A	152
www.altajdeed.org.uk - II	826	17
www.rasid.com - III	N/A	5
News story (2) *"Prince Nayef states: We know who stands behind legitimising Takfeer, killing and misleading the Saudi youth: We will announce their names one day soon … Bin Laden is silly and an agent of a foreign intelligence"*		
www.alarabiya.net - I	N/A	12
www.altajdeed.org.uk - II	1429	12
www.al-shorfa.net- III	276	5
News story (3) *"Prince Nayef states: Knowledge pretenders more dangerous than violent militant groups"*		

www.alarabiya.net - I	N/A	55
www.rasid.com - III	N/A	8
www.altajdeed.org.uk - II	1264	5
News story (4) *"Police arrest 139 deviant terrorist members and abort a terrorist attack"*		
www.alarabiya.net - I	N/A	233
www.rasid.com - III	N/A	4
www.altajdeed.org.uk - II	1471	8
Total	**5719**	**516**

Online sources

- Government-supporting source: www.alarabiya.com
- Radical source: www.tajdeed.org.uk
- Liberal source: www.rasid.com and http://al-shorfah.net. The latter link was used as an alternative online liberal source, in the absence of news story coverage in www.rasid.com.

The categories of meaning applied in the analysis come from our close study of the news stories of terrorism in the Saudi media. We were able to identify whether the meanings contain (I) praise for the government and its policy against terrorism, (1I) praise and support for extremism and violence in the name of Islamic Jihad, (III) voices of liberal opposition, and (IV) neutral transfer or meanings that may not be enough to explain or serve the coverage.

Framing Terrorism and Terrorists in Story 1

Story title: *"Three French dead and another injured by unknown"*

This story is taken from three major online sources (official, radical opposition and liberal opposition). We have analysed the story in each source separately, as each source generated different types of public response. The following boxes will explain the used interpretations of this terrorist incident in each online source.

Table 7.5.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.alarabiya.net

The following table shows the original frame used by the online source alarabiya.net, a government-supporting online source, while the dissenting frame reflects the content of the public response to this news item. The dissenting frame section provides the meanings found in each public reply. It is noted that, while the original news stories are presented in an episodic format, public replies (dissenting frame) are always thematic. Also, the separate table for the content codes provides a detailed review of each used content code in the dissenting frames.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame *Al-Arabiya.net*	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - public replies*
Type of Terrorists	Criminals	Stupid, armed groups, retarded, spoilers, terrorists, killers, brain-washed groups that kill leads to God's heaven
Role of Terrorists	Active, killers, criminals	Spoilers and deformers of Islam, groups ruined the country
Problem definition	How to treat unlawful killing by police	Threat to law and order, killing foreign people = damaging Saudi reputation
Problem source	None	Terrorist religious leaders gave fatwas of takfeer and killing, enemies of Saudi behind this incident, al-Qaeda behind this act, bin-Laden behind this incident, evil powers behind this incident, poverty, radicalism and extremism, Islamic revolution in Iran, state's excessive control resulted in extremism and terrorism
Responsibility	Individual perpetrators of	Individual perpetrations of

	crime	terrorism, other countries responsible in terrorism in Saudi, al-Qaeda's responsibility
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	**Punishment of individual criminals**	**Religious leaders should condemn terrorism and declare fatwas to prohibit killings and takfeer, punishment of terrorists, street police should be more responsible in stopping crime and terrorism, combat poverty, open Saudi for more civil liberties and let women drive**
Moral and emotional basis	**Police moral duty to save victims**	**Police and government moral duty in protecting Saudi**
Metaphors/stereotype	**Dangerous, anti-Islamic, criminals**	**Terrorists, killers, deviant anti-Islamic groups, traitors, takfeer, ignorance, extremists.**
Visuals	**Picture of police members guarding a room in a hospital (Okaz) – map of incident location (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat) – police members guarding a room in a hospital (Al-Riyadh)**	**None**

Table 7.5.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	1	9.0 %
II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	10	90.90 %

Table 7.5.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes used in 152 replies to the original news story in al-Arabiya.net.

I	672	92.81 %
II	4	0.55 %
III	26	3.59 %
IV	22	3.03 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.alarabiya.net (I)

- These groups aim to distort the image of Saudi Arabia. Terrorism should be eradicated by the government, as well as the official religious establishment (*Ulama*).
- Damn these deviant groups. They do not belong to Islam as they say. Government and police should do the necessary to protect our land from their criminal acts.
- May God bless our government in fighting these deviant groups.
- It is the Takfeeri ideology that brainwash the youth to perpetrate killing and violence in the name of Islam.
- We can only protect our country if we developed civil rights and freedoms and rights: freedom of speech and women rights to drive.
- Terrorists are mere traitors to their country. Government should fight the extremist ideology with every possible way.

Table 7.6.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.tajdeed.org.uk

The following table shows the original frame used by the online source tajdeed.org.uk, which is a radical and extremist and oppositional online source. The dissenting frame reflects the content of public response to this news item.

The original post comes as breaking news that says "Urgent: killing of four French in Media", and then concludes "details… soon". Then, in later replies, someone mentioned the full story from Reuters to stress that the victims were Muslim. We used the second reply as a main news post, as the first post was a mere breaking news announcement.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - public replies*
Type of Terrorists	Extremists	Arabia Mujahedeen are never mistakable in their operations, decent citizens perpetrated this operation as a revenge to the dignity of their sisters in Iraq, could be a woman's perpetration, could be a planned act, al-Qaeda heroes, puritans of God
Role of Terrorists	Active killers	Defenders of Islam and Muslims lands against Jews and Christians, defenders of Muslim dignity
Problem definition	Extremists attacking the French	Saudi official news is fake: foreigners are not Muslims, Saudi intelligence is involved in this operation to discredit Mujahedeen
Problem source	Ignorance	Non-Muslims in a Muslim land, Saudi Government discredits Mujahedeen in killing Muslims, while victims are not Muslims
Responsibility	Individual perpetrators of crime	Mujahedeen, angry citizens, an unknown woman, a government's lie.
Treatment responsibility or	No foreign-looking people are	Do not believe government

Policy solution	lawful to kill or takfir.	statements, chat forums should be careful in writing about Mujahedeen activities because Saudi intelligence can use such information. To expel non-Muslims from Muslim lands
Moral and emotional basis	None	Mujahedeen do not kill women and children
Metaphors/stereotype	None	Mujahedeen, heroes, defenders of Islam.
Visuals	None	None

Table 7.6.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	0	0 %
II	2	100 %
III	0	0 %
IV	0	0 %

Table 7.6.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes used in 17 replies to the original posted news story.

I	7	8.13 %
II	79	91.86 %
III	0	0 %
IV	0	0 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.tajdeed.org.uk (II)

- Our decent citizens have implemented this operation. They are not sinned in

implementing this *Jihadist* act.

- This operation is a revenge to the dignity of our sisters in Iraq. It maybe perpetrated by a woman as well, who knows!
- I doubt this operation. It may be orchestrated by the government itself!
- We need to protect our Mujahedeen. Do not you write anything in this forum, as it may be monitored by the government.
- Expel non-Muslims from Muslim lands Terrorists and we will be just fine.
- Do not believe government statements. Be careful, as the Saud intelligence is very nasty.

Table 7.7.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.rasid.com

The following table shows the original frame used by the online source rasid.com, which is an oppositional liberal online source. The original news item is brought from Al-Jazeera.net and left for readers to reply to. The dissenting frame shows an overview of the public response to this news item. The dissenting frame section will not provide every single public view, but will highlight the main meanings. The separate table for the content codes should provide a detailed review of the content codes used in the dissenting frames.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - public replies*
Type of Terrorists	Hateful killers, terrorizing groups, criminals	Wahhabis, Salafis, fanatics, this is what your sect call for: killing anyone who disagrees with you in religion
Role of Terrorists	Active killers	Active killers, saboteurs of Saudi reputation
Problem definition	Hatred, terror	Extremism, Saudi mufti condemns terrorist acts but not the ideology itself: radicalism and prejudice

Problem source	Hatred	Ideology behind these acts, Salafi figures from the Royal Court support active radical Wahhabis
Responsibility	Individual perpetrators of crime	Government and religious leaders are responsible for breeding and nurturing this deviant ideology
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Not any foreign-looking people are lawful to kill or takfir.	Grand Mufti should be careful of any declaration, government is responsible
Moral and emotional basis	None	Prophet Mohammed respected his Jewish neighbours
Metaphors/stereotype	None	Fanatics, killers, criminals
Visuals	Archived picture of police members in a street operation	None

Table 7.7.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	6	54.54 %
II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	5	45.45 %

Table 7.7.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes used in 5 replies to the original posted news story.

I	14	87.5
II	0	0
III	1	6.25
IV	1	6.25

Table 7.7.4: Total used codes

The following table shows the total number of codes used in the original stories of each news source, and the replies received.

I	700	82.35 %
II	85	10 %
III	27	3.17 %
IV	38	4.470 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.rasid.com (III)

- The Wahhabist ideology is behind these terrorist acts. We did warned of this radical doctrine.
- This is the fruit of an extremist ideology that does not believe in the other. Fighting the radical ideology is a must.
- These terrorist groups aim to sabotage the reputation of Saudi Arabia.
- We never heard that Prophet Mohammed has harmed his Jewish neighbours. This is not Islamic. Such perpetrations do not belong to Islam.
- Grand *Muftis* and *Salafi* figures in the Royal Court support active radicalism. Government is responsible for fighting these acts.
- Government and religious leaders are responsible for breeding and nurturing this deviant ideology.

Framing Terrorism and Terrorists in Story 2

Story title: *"Prince Nayef states: We know who stands behind legitimising Takfeer, killing and misleading the Saudi youth: We will announce their names one day soon … Bin Laden is silly and an agent of a foreign intelligence"*

The story in all the three newspapers followed similar coverage. The Saudi Minister of Interior, Prince Nayef, met with the religious police committee members and explained who was behind the on-going terror in Saudi Arabia. The story describes

Prince Nayef's statement as an "improvised" one during a ceremony honouring religious police members who attended and contributed in a religious monitoring training course. The following box explains the used frames.

Table 7.8.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.alarabiya.net

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of religious police	Reformers, guides to true Islam, a necessity in a state of Islam	We do not want the religious police, we want the religious police, corruption fighters of drugs and black magic
Type of Terrorists	Spies to foreign sources, supported by the US	None
Role of Terrorists	Active, spies, ignorant, misleading the youth, criminals, terrorists	None
Problem definition	Need to combat the deviant groups by religious police, they are threat to law and order	None
Problem source	Deviant extremist groups, the West, enemy of Islam, envy on Saudi Arabia prosperity	None
Responsibility	Individual perpetration of terrorism	None
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Punishment of terrorists, calling for intellectual safety, strict security policy, defend Salafi Islam and country's safety, calling for JIHAD against enemies of the state	Calling for more religious monitoring, calling for less religious monitoring
Moral and emotional basis	Religious police have a moral duty to save the country and Salafi Islam from threats,	None

	defending women's rights	
Metaphors/stereotype	Dangerous, anti-Islamic, terrorists, deviant groups, evil	None
Visuals	Archived picture of Prince Nayef	None

Table 7.8.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	21	87.5 %
II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	3	12.5 %

Table 7.8.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes found in 12 replies to the original posted news story.

I	6	85.71 %
II	0	0 %
III	1	14.28 %
IV	0	0 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.alarabiya.net (I)

- Free us from the religious police so Saudi Arabia can have some peace.
- The religious police are there to save Saudi lands from corruption, black magic and drugs.
- Saudi Arabia needs to have more solid hands in monitoring and fighting corruption.
- God bless Saudi Arabia.
- God bless the King.

- God bless the police.

Table 7.9.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.tajdeed.org.uk

The original post was brought from the Al-Riyadh newspaper. What is interesting about this post is the public replies to it.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of religious police	Reformers, guides to true Islam, a necessity in a state of Islam	We do not want the religious police; we want the religious police, corruption fighters of drugs and black magic, servants in the hands of Al-Saud.
Type of Terrorists	Spies to foreign sources, supported by the US	Praising Osama bin Laden as great, regard al-Qaeda organization as Mujahedeen of God
Role of Terrorists	Active, spies, ignorant, misleading the youth, criminals, terrorists	Osama bin Laden = great religious leader
Problem definition	Need to combat the deviant groups by religious police, they are threat to law and order	Need to rid Al-Saud, the house of Kufr, they did not maintain land and dignity, religious leaders must incite the public for Jihad against al-Saud and the US
Problem source	Deviant extremist groups, the West, enemy of Islam, envy on Saudi Arabia prosperity	House of Al-Saud, agents of the US and the British, the filthy people who destroyed the two holy mosques and served the crucifix
Responsibility	Individual perpetration of terrorism: al-Qaeda and its followers	Al-Saud are spies and agents
Treatment responsibility or	Punishment of terrorists,	Calling for more religious

Policy solution	calling for intellectual safety, strict security policy, defend Salafi Islam and country's safety, calling for Jihad against enemies of the state	monitoring, calling for less religious monitoring, calling for Jihad
Moral and emotional basis	Religious police have a moral duty to save the country and Salafi Islam from threats, defending women's rights	Osama bin Laden and his Jihadist network seek liberation of Islam and Islamic lands
Metaphors/stereotype	Dangerous, anti-Islamic, terrorists, deviant groups, evil	Al-Saud = traitors, grandchildren of the Jews (dogs) and Christians (pigs)
Visuals	Picture of Prince Nayef	None

Table 7.9.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	63	96.92 %
II	2	3.07 %
III	0	0 %
IV	0	0 %

Table 7.9.3: Figures of used codes in public replies

The following table shows the found codes in 12 replies to the original posted news story.

I	0	0 %
II	37	100 %
III	0	0 %
IV	0	0 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.tajdeed.org.uk (II)

- We reject the religious police. They are servants for the house of Al-Saud.
- The religious police are good in protecting our land from corruption, black magic and drugs, regardless of their loyalty of Al-Saud.
- House of Al-Saud are agents of the US and the British. They are filthy people who destroyed the land of the two holy mosques and served the crucifix.
- We need to fight (Jihad) so we can liberate our land from Al-Saud and their unbeliever (*Kafir*) allies.
- Al-Saud are children of the Jews. Fighting them is our ultimate duty.
- Osama bin Laden and his Jihadist network seek liberation of Islam and Islamic lands.

Table 7.10.1: Framing Terrorism acts – http://al-shorfah.net

This online source is used as an alternative for the liberal voices of the Saudi public, in the absence of any related coverage of this news item on www.rasid.com – which represents liberal views. Although this web site does not exist anymore online, as censorship on online content was executed with the escalation of the public debate online amid terrorism incidents, the original post was brought from the Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper. The terrorist frame presents the original meanings found in the original post, while the dissenting frame shows the public views on the original post.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of religious police	**Reformers, guides to true Islam, a necessity in a state of Islam**	**Corrupt religious system needs to be re-structured, need to change its policy and methods**
Type of Terrorists	**Intruders, ruining national unity and safety, agents of the West & other Arabs**	**Killers of innocent civilians, military and citizens, deviant groups**
Role of Terrorists	**Active, misleading the youth,**	**Terrorism, threats and**

	criminals, terrorists	bombings
Problem definition	**Need to combat the deviant groups by religious police, they are threat to law and order**	**The government covers up terrorists' identities**
Problem source	**Deviant extremist groups, the West, enemy of Islam, envy on Saudi Arabian prosperity**	**The religious police establishment is a bad image in Saudi**
Responsibility	**Individual perpetration of terrorism**	**Individual perpetration of terrorism, and the government: it hides information**
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	**Punishment of terrorists, calling for intellectual safety, strict security policy, defend Salafi Islam and country's safety, calling for Jihad against enemies of the state**	**To re-structure sensitive government establishments, change religious police methods, government should not support the religious groups**
Moral and emotional basis	**Religious police have a moral duty to save the country and Salafi Islam from threats, defending women's rights**	**None**
Metaphors/stereotype	**Dangerous, anti-Islamic, terrorists, deviant groups, evil**	**Deviant groups, terrorists, killers**
Visuals	**None**	**None**

Table 7.10.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	7	87.5 %
II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	1	12.5 %

Table 7.10.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes used in five replies to the original posted news story.

I	1	7.69 %
II	0	0 %
III	11	84.61 %
IV	1	7.69 %

Table 7.10.4: Total used codes

The following table shows the total number of used codes in the original stories of each news source, as well as the replies.

I	98	63.63 %
II	39	25.32 %
III	12	7.79 %
IV	5	3.24 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: http://al-shorfah.net (III)

- There is a huge need to reconstruct the corrupt religious system and change the general policy and methods of the system.
- The deviant groups are killers of innocent civilians, military and citizens.
- We really need to know who the perpetrators of terrorism. Why does the government cover-up these groups?
- How many times did we say that the religious police is not good for Saudi Arabia?
- Saudi needs to reconstruct its sensitive official establishments, as some officials can be dangerous to the system itself.
- The government should not support the religious groups, as this can make them stronger.

Framing Terrorism and Terrorists in Story 3

Story title: *"Prince Nayef states: Knowledge pretenders more dangerous than violent militant groups"*

This story is taken from alarabiya.net, a government-supporting source; it from the end of the "Media and Crises" forum, where the Saudi Minister of Interior, Prince Nayef, stated that those who pretend to have knowledge are more dangerous than terrorism perpetrators. Prince Nayef discussed many issues such as terrorism and its financing, intellectual safety, freedom of the media and its policy, criticism of Arab media, online journalism, rehabilitation of deviant thought Activism, women's privacy and security awareness, and loyalty to the country and Islam. He also criticised Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organisation. The following box will explain the meanings used in the original news item and public replies to the story.

Table 7.11.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.alarabiya.net

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of Terrorists	**Pretenders of religion, more dangerous than active terrorists, criminals, terrorists, deviant intellectuals, Apostates from extreme left to extreme right, wanted by police**	**Deviant groups, non-nationalistic groups, terrorists, germs**
Role of Terrorists	**Active, killers, criminals, instigators of terrorism and fighting in other states, distributors of bad ideology**	**Active killers, destruction**
Problem definition	**How to combat terrorist ideology and terrorism, and secure intellectuality**	**Terrorism = threat to law and order, national unity, security and religion, anyone who declares himself a Mufti, government have permitted the broadcasting of deviant messages on TV and satellite channels for years**

Problem source	Ignorance, hatred, extremism, Arabs and Muslims are source of terror in the world = they harmed the image of Islam and Arabism	Hatred, Saudi culture has something wrong, no trustworthy fatwas for the young Saudis, Takfeer of Muslims and Shia in particular, Mosque imams are behind ideological deviance and terrorism
Responsibility	Individuals perpetrating terrorism	Cooperation of scientists, religious body, intellectuals and universities to confront terrorism and extremism
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Punishment of terrorist groups, intellectual awareness	National activism against terrorists, need for cleansing the religious scene, recruiting loving and compassionate Ulama, cleansing the racist judicial system, eradicate sectarianism
Moral and emotional basis	Government has a moral duty to save the country from terrorism	Terrorists reject national anthem, we love the government
Metaphors/stereotype	Dangerous, evil, anti-Islamic, immoral terrorists, deviant groups	Deviant groups, non-nationalistic groups, terrorists, germs
Visuals	Archived picture of Prince Nayef.	None

Table 7.11.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	22	81.48 %
II	0	0 %
III	3	11.11 %
IV	2	7.40 %

Table 7.11.3: Figures of used codes in public replies

The following table shows the codes found in 55 replies to the original posted news story.

I	212	90.59 %
II	4	1.70 %
III	16	6.83 %
IV	2	0.85 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.alarabiya.net (I)

- Terrorism is the scourge that kills communities. Perpetrators of terrorism must be eliminated.
- There is no doubt that terrorism is a threat to our safety, security of national unity. We hope the government takes the right measures to ensure returning security to, and unity of this nation.
- Terrorists are active killers. We and the government are all responsible for fighting these groups.
- Saudi culture has something wrong. There is a lack of trustworthy fatwas for the young Saudis.
- *Takfir* of Muslims, and Shia in particular, is behind rising terrorism. Mosque imams are behind the spread of ideological deviance. This needs to be treated as soon as possible.
- The extremists are known for rejecting the system. They even refuse to recognise our national anthem!

Table 7.12:1 Framing Terrorism acts – www.tajdeed.co.uk

This story is taken from www.tajdeed.co.uk, a radical opposition source, which does not exist anymore online. At the end of the "Media and Crises" forum, the Saudi Minister of Interior, Prince Nayef, gave his opinion. The original post was brought from the London-based Al-Quds Al-Arabi (www.alquds.co.uk). Prince Nayef stated

that those who pretend to have knowledge are more dangerous than those who perpetrate terrorism. Prince Nayef promised to campaign against members who were religious extremists and responsible for acting against the House of Al-Saud. He criticised terrorism and its harmful perpetrations against Islam. Then, al-Quds Al-Arabi included its journalistic overview on the Saudi situation by stating that in Saudi Arabia, there are several fatwas declared by extreme radical religious figures which link Jihad and the attacks on the Saudi government and foreign expatriates. The following box will explain the meanings used in the original news item and the public replies to the story.

Dominant Format Episodic	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame Excerpts - Public replies
Type of Terrorists	Islamist extremists, angry about the US policies in the Middle East	Prince Nayef = Heretic, agent of the US and a dog who has no religion and harms Islam, the wanted members' real mistake is that they once believed that Al-Saud were Muslims
Role of Terrorists	Active, killers, criminals, instigators of terrorism and fighting in other states, distributors of bad ideology	Active killers, destruction
Problem definition	Terrorists perpetrated many bombings against government oil establishments and foreign workers, they seek to overthrow the ruling family (ally to the US)	Al-Saud corrupt morals
Problem source	Anger, hatred, extremism, government adoption of a very extreme religion and its effect on educational curricula in Saudi, separation between	The House of Al-Saud

	men and women in society	
Responsibility	Government responsible for extremism, feeding school books with radicalism and hatred, banning between men and women, banning religious freedom	The House of Al-Saud
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Government to eradicate terrorists, intellectual awareness by the media and cultural establishments, eradicate roots of terrorism and its social context	Jihad against the Jewish Al-Saud, the Jews, the new allies (the Iranians) and all Islam enemies, Jihad and patience are the remedy until crushing all
Moral and emotional basis	None	Nayef has no belief and morals, and should not speak about Islam
Metaphors/stereotype	Extremists, deviant, muftis, Jihadist	Al-Saud = Al-Jews, heretics, agents of the US, dogs, not Muslims
Visuals	None	Picture of late King Fahd drinking alcohol

Table 7.12.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original story.

I	28	84.84 %
II	0	0 %
III	3	9.09 %
IV	2	6.06 %

Table 7.12.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes in 5 replies to the original posted news story.

I	0	0 %
II	17	100 %
III	0	0 %

IV	**0**	**0 %**

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.tajdeed.org.uk (II)

- Prince Nayef is a mere heretic. He's the number one agent of the US and a dog. He has no religion and is dedicated to harming Islam, trust me.
- Whoever believes that the Al-Sauds are Muslims is mistaken !
- We will commit ourselves to Jihad against the Jewish Al-Saud, the Jews, the new Iranian allies and all Islam enemies.
- Jihad and patience are the only remedy until we crush all terrorists and active killers.
- Nayef has no right to speak about Islam. He is surely not one!.
- Getting rid of Al-Saud is our moral duty. They have corrupted every aspect of Islam.

Table 7.13.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.rasid.com

The original post here is taken from Reuters, where Prince Nayef stated that knowledge pretenders are more dangerous than those who perpetrate terrorism. Prince Nayef promised to campaign against the extreme religious members who are responsible for acting against the House of Al-Saud. He criticised terrorism and its harmful perpetrations against Islam, and called the different educational establishments to fight terrorism alongside the government. The following table explains the used meanings in the original news item, as well as the public's replies to the original post.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	**Dominant Frame**	**Dissenting Frame** *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of Terrorists	**Islamist extremists, angry about the US policies in the Middle East**	**Terrorists are products of Al-Saud**

Role of Terrorists	Active, killers, criminals, instigators of terrorism and fighting in other states, distributors of bad ideology	Active killers, destruction, hate to live with the other, gangsters
Problem definition	Terrorists perpetrated many bombings against government oil establishments and foreign workers, they seek to overthrow the ruling family (ally to the US)	Religious extremism is a product of Salafi ideology, moderate Sunni sects do not breed extremists, Al-Saud recruited extremism to grip their rule on Saudi, terrorism is now the fruit of such control, Al-Saud only cared for rule and control in Saudi
Problem source	Anger, hatred, extremism, government adoption of a very extreme religion and its effect on educational curricula in Saudi, separation between men and women in society	Radical Salafi ideology
Responsibility	Government responsible for extremism, feeding school books with radicalism and hatred, banning between men and women, banning religious freedom	The House of Al-Saud, government and Prince Nayef are the ones who supported the radical members and allowed them to publish killing fatwas against anyone different in sect or ideology, Prince Nayef responsible for spreading sectarianism
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Government to eradicate terrorists, intellectual awareness by the media and cultural establishments, eradicate roots of terrorism and its social context	Eradicating extreme ideology so the country can live in peace, ideas of real nationalistic citizens should be respected and considered, release prisoners of opinion because they are the real treasure to advancement in Saudi

Moral and emotional basis	None	Salafi people cannot live in harmony with others
Metaphors/stereotype	Extremists, deviant, muftis, Jihadist	Radicals Salafis, extremists, gangsters
Visuals	Picture of Prince Nayef	none

Table 7.13.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original posted story.

I	28	93.33 %
II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	2	6.66 %

Table 7.13.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes found in 8 replies to the original posted news story.

I	0	0 %
II	0	0 %
III	27	100 %
IV	0	0 %

Table 7.13.4: Total used codes (post and replies)

The following table shows the total number of codes used in the original stories of each news source, and the replies.

I	290	78.8 %
II	21	5.707 %
III	49	13.32 %
IV	8	2.174 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.rasid.com (III)

- Terrorists, as we all know, are the product of Al-Saud. They're responsible for

injecting the brains with bad ideology.

- Al-Saud have no right to complain. They are the ones who recruited extremism in order to strengthen their grip on Saudi Arabia.
- Terrorism is the fruit of radical Islam that Al-Saud cared to spread to control the Saudi lands. This is what they did and it's their responsibility to eradicate it now.
- Prince Nayef responsible for spreading sectarianism. So, why not confront what he did now?
- Salafi people cannot live in harmony with others. This is why they perpetrate terrorism to fight any opposing groups.
- It's the government's duty to eradicate the extreme ideology so the country can live in peace.

Framing Terrorism and Terrorists in Story 4

Story title: *"Police arrest 139 deviant terrorist members and abort a terrorist attack"*

This story was written by Al-Arabiya.net and concerned the arrest of 139 terrorist members. The following box will explain the content codes in both the original story and the dissenting meanings by the public.

Table 7.14.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.alarabiya.net

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of Terrorists	**Terrorist cell suspects, terrorist cell members, connected to foreign sources, Takfiris, suicidal, mentally sick, criminals**	**Terrorists, active killers, bombers, Jihadists, deviant dogs, takfiris, anti-humanistic, cancer ideology**
Role of Terrorists	**training for perpetrating terrorist acts, suicidal attacks, active criminals, misleading**	**Meddling with the country's security**

	youngsters, threatening national peace and prosperity	
Problem definition	**Radical fatwas bear danger to safety and stability**	**Threat to law and order, terrorists misunderstand religion**
Problem source	**Radical fatwas to kill official members, businessmen, and official establishments, mentally sick groups**	**Government is not strict in punishment, Syrian intelligence behind terrorism in Saudi**
Responsibility	**Deviant individuals threatening national peace and stability**	**Government is responsible, praising government and police in fighting terrorism**
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	**Arresting and punishing deviant groups, to treat unlawful killings by police**	**People should cooperate with police by informing about fugitives of justice, must combat terrorists and their supporters with an iron hand, Jihadists need to fight Americans in Iraq and Jews in Palestine, terrorists need to believe in real Salafism**
Moral and emotional basis	**Police have a moral duty to save the country and protect the lives of citizens**	**Government and police duty in fighting terrorists**
Metaphors/stereotype	**Terrorists, radicalism, anti-Islamic, mentally sick, criminals**	**Terrorists, radicalism, anti-Islamic, mentally sick, criminals, anti-Salfi**
Visuals	**Archived picture of police members arresting wanted terrorist members**	**None**

Table 7.14.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original posted story.

I	4	33.33 %

II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	8	66.66 %

Table 7.14.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes found in the 233 replies to the original posted news story.

I	808	94.17 %
II	7	0.81 %
III	25	2.91 %
IV	18	2.09 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.alarabiya.net (I)

- Terrorists are active killers. They seek to destabilise the security of our dear country. May God bless our King.
- Terrorists threat our safety and unity. I think that the Syrian intelligence is behind this case.
- The government is not strict enough in dealing with these active bombers.
- People are all responsible to cooperate with the police by informing about fugitives of justice.
- I think that returning back to the original guides of Salafism can save us from terrorism.
- Jihadists need to fight the Americans in Iraq and Jews in Palestine. This is the only way we can liberate our lands from the infidels.

Table 7.15.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.tajdeed.co.uk

The original post was quoted from al-arabiya.net and added by the viewpoint of the forum member who highlighted the story.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame Excerpts - Public replies
Type of Terrorists	Terrorist cell suspects, terrorist cell members, connected to foreign sources, Takfiris, suicidal, mentally sick, criminals	Jihadists, heroes who defeated the Americans and will defeat Al-Saud, will cleanse the land of the holy mosques, Allah's (God's) soldiers
Role of Terrorists	training for perpetrating terrorist acts, suicidal attacks, active criminals, misleading youngsters, threatening national peace and prosperity	Meddling with the country's security
Problem definition	Radical fatwas bear danger to safety and stability, Saudi Government is a big liar but does not know the art of lying, the whole story is a lie, 139 terrorists before perpetrating a terrorist is a lie: four terrorists can do a lot	Saudi government tells lies and cover up reality, Saudi government obeys US orders, official confusion to please the US, Saudi soldiers = Satan's soldiers
Problem source	Radical fatwas to kill official members, businessmen, and official establishments, mentally sick groups, Saudi announces arrests to please the US	Government tells lies, government's application of US orders, Saudi government confusion, possible fear of Iran
Responsibility	Deviant individuals threatening national peace and stability, government responsible for disseminating wrong information	Individual members perpetrated violence in support to their brethren in Iraq, Saudi government, US policy directs the Gulf countries in fighting Jihadist members
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Arresting and punishing deviant groups, to treat unlawful killings by police,	To eradicate Al-Saud, to revenge for those who were killed by Prince Nayef

	government should stop telling lies	(Interior Minister)
Moral and emotional basis	Police moral duty to save the country and protect the lives of citizens	Government and police have a duty in fighting terrorists
Metaphors/stereotype	Terrorists, radicalism, anti-Islamic, mentally sick, criminals, Saudi government = liars	Mujahedeen, Allah's soldiers, Satan's soldiers, agents of the Jews
Visuals	None	None

Table 7.15.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original posted story.

I	0	0 %
II	11	100 %
III	0	0 %
IV	0	0 %

Table 7.15.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes found in 8 replies to the original posted news story.

I	0	0 %
II	38	82.60 %
III	8	17.39 %
IV	0	0 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.tajdeed.org.uk (II)

- Jihadists are our heroes who defeated the damned Americans. They will also defeat the house of Al-Saud, and will cleanse the land of the two holy mosques.

- The jihadists are Allah's (God's) soldiers on earth. Do not believe what the government says about them.
- I think that individual members are responsible for these acts. They resort to violence as a means to defend their brethren in Iraq, and they are not to blame.
- Prince Nayef has killed our sons, and one day, this dirty agent will be killed too.
- All the Gulf countries are following the U.S. policy in fighting our Jihadist members.
- Prince Nayef is an agent of the West and the Jews. We shall kill him one day.

Table 7.16.1: Framing Terrorism acts – www.rasid.com

The original post was quoted from al-arabiya.net. The dissenting frame should show the public response to the original post.

Dominant Format *Episodic*	Dominant Frame	Dissenting Frame *Excerpts - Public replies*
Type of Terrorists	**Terrorist cell suspects, terrorist cell members, connected to foreign sources, Takfiris, suicidal, mentally sick, criminals**	**Dirty terrorists, undercover criminals, night bats, weak cobwebs, nationalism pretenders**
Role of Terrorists	**training for perpetrating terrorist acts, suicidal attacks, active criminals, misleading youngsters, threatening national peace and prosperity**	**Terrorists want to spread fear among citizens and cast doubts on the loyalties of others**
Problem definition	**Radical *fatwas* bear danger to safety and stability**	**Government is not strict enough with the extremists**
Problem source	**Radical *fatwas* to kill official members, businessmen and official establishments, mentally sick groups,**	**Government is not strict in punishing extremists and extremism**

Responsibility	Deviant individuals threatening national peace and stability	Government needs a serious terrorism eradication policy, government should unveil terrorists cells and leaders
Treatment responsibility or Policy solution	Arresting and punishing deviant groups, to treat unlawful killings by police	Government should stop activities of advice committee, red-eye policy needed, hitting terrorists with axes on their heads
Moral and emotional basis	Police moral duty to save the country and protect the lives of citizens	Government and police duty in fighting terrorists and extremism
Metaphors/stereotype	Terrorists, radicalism, anti-Islamic, mentally sick, criminals	Terrorists, radicalism, anti-Islamic, mentally sick, criminals, anti-Salfi
Visuals	Archived picture of police members arresting wanted terrorist members	None

Table 7.16.2: Figures of used codes in the original story

The following table shows the codes used in the original posted story.

I	4	33.33 %
II	0	0 %
III	0	0 %
IV	8	66.66666667

Table 7.16.3: Figures of used codes in the public replies

The following table shows the codes found in 4 replies to the original posted news story.

I	9	52.94 %
II	0	0 %
III	7	41.17 %
IV	1	5.88 %

Table 7.16.4: Total used codes (post and replies)

The following table shows the total number of used codes in the original stories of each news source, as well as the replies.

I	825	86.3 %
II	56	5.85 %
III	40	4.18 %
IV	35	3.66 %

Selected quoted of the Public replies

Source: www.rasid.com (III)

- These dirty terrorists work undercover. They are nasty and government is responsible for fighting these groups.
- Terrorists want to spread fear among citizens. Maybe it's a clever way to test the loyalties of others by casting a doubt on their loyalism!
- How many times did we say that this is the result of extremism? It is now the duty of the government to fight the spread of this ideology.
- Why does not the government publish the names of the terrorist group members and their leaders? We need to know their names.
- We do need a strong policy in fighting these mentally sick people. They do not represent Islam at all.
- The government should stop the activities of advice committee. It is responsible for drawing a stronger policy in fighting these criminals.

Reliability Check

A reliability check measures the degree to which a test consistently measures its chosen elements. According to Kirk and Miller (1986), there are three types of reliability check results:

1. Quixotic: a single method of observation that continually yields an unvarying

measurement – one observer told to say the same thing-trivial – FBI stories, etc.

2. Diachronic: the stability of observation over time-weakness, i.e. nothing is fixed as things progress.

3. Synchronic: similarity of observations within the same time period, which is most important.

As stability, or intra- rater reliability means the same coders getting the same results try after try, the recorded results in this study are based on the analysis of two researchers who worked closely at the same time. It was important to ensure the results were sound and accurate. We both worked as a team of two in coding and reviewing the results of our analysis in order to get the most accurate results. As a final step to check our accuracy in encrypting and analyse it once again, we ended up with the same result that we brought up in the first analysis process. We both made sure that the news story held the same registered meanings in our list of meanings – although we did stop at times to reflect on the content of the news story – in order to ensure full agreement on the meaning as in the previous analysis round.

The results of the second round of analysis, to re-check the reliability of the press news story by Prince Nayef (*We know who stands behind legitimising Takfeer, killing and misleading the Saudi youth: We will announce their names one day soon ... bin Laden is silly and an agent of a foreign intelligence*), came with the following results.

Table 7.17: Used content – Al-Riyadh

I	144	92.90 %
II	0	0 %
III	2	1.29 %
IV	9	5.80 %

Table 7.18: Used content – Al-Sharq Al-Awsat

I	57	96.61 %
II	2	3.38 %
III	0	0 %

IV	0	0 %

Table 7.19: Used content - Okaz

I	116	89.23 %
II	0	0 %
III	1	0.76 %
IV	13	10 %

Table 7.20: Total codes used in the three news stories

Category	Frequency	%
I	317	92.15116279
II	2	0.581395349
III	3	0.872093023
IV	22	6.395348837

This means that the results reflected a synchronic measure, which is mostly important to the study's end results.

Summary

This empirical chapter exhibits the findings of the content analysis of Saudi media news coverage of terrorism, the press, the Internet, and television. We have studied the dominant form of presentation, the dominant frames of responsibility, and the treatment responsibility of terrorism in the Saudi media. We have also studied the public's response to such news through the Internet, as this is considered the only open space where individual members of the public are able to interact with one another. Although we did have difficulty with the accessibility of information through that different types of media having different time lines, the Internet content was a useful source, as news and forum content stays viewable for a longer period than on television and in newspapers.

In addition, online content analysis was helpful in revealing how audiences understand the issue of terrorism in Saudi Arabia, as the public view is totally absent in both the press and television. As the official newspapers framed terrorism stories in an episodic frame, the public replies came in thematic mode and where many had the opportunity to express their views freely and in more detail. However, the final chapter will recommend solutions to the ways in which the Saudi media covers sensitive national issues in the absence of an open media environment and freedom of speech.

Chapter Eight
Conclusion

Discussion

According to Neal (1998), when social order is seriously thrown into disorder people usually require more information than the media can provide. Therefore, in crises such as terrorism, citizens will become almost totally dependent on the media for news that may be necessary for their survival. As Graber (1980: 228) notes, individuals look to the media for information, explanation, and interpretation. For instance, when the 9/11 attacks occurred, everyone on the US soil (and around the world) followed the media in order to receive the latest information about the attacks. Also, in 2003 in the Arab Gulf, when Saddam Hussein was arrested, people in the Gulf (and around the globe) relied on the media as a basic source of information. This can also be found in the news of 2011's Osama bin Laden's death, and the escalation of the "Arab Spring" events, which dominated the Arab news since 2011.

According to The National Research Council Committee on Disasters and the Mass Media (1980: 10), the press enacts six functions during a crisis: the warning of expected or impending disasters; conveying information to officials, relief agencies and the public; mapping the progress of relief and recovery; dramatising lessons learned for the purpose of future preparedness; taking part in long-term public education programmes; and interpreting slow-onset problems as crises or disasters. Many scholars suggest that the media have many functions dependent on the audience needs. As Dominik (1996: 47) notes, that in addition to transmitting information, the media perform as a "social utility function" by providing companionship and emotional support in the absence of other human beings. Other scholars (Entman, 1991; Hertog, 2000; Iyengar and Simon, 1993) have found that the media performed different functions within different crisis situations. As Lowery and DeFleur (1995: 341) note, the selection of problems and the significance they receive tend to be

distinct from one media to another, but all types of media contain information on the primary issues.

In this regard, the Saudi national news media rarely exercised its role. Based on Bennett's ideal model (1996), it only reports on the actions of the government so that people may keep it in check. Also, the national Saudi news of terrorism takes the role of a governmental storyteller, and, whether intentionally or not, frames responsibility of terrorism and politically-related issues upon individuals who are recognised as holding such responsibility. However, it does not address the problem of terrorism by linking it to any historical political, economic or intellectual context which may prevail in the Saudi community.

In fact, terrorism news are covered in the national Saudi news media more as a chronicle pieces rather than serious political or intellectual issues; therefore, most meanings are lost in the perceptions of terrorism which may differ from the status quo. Additionally, such coverage does not identify the events as part of a larger phenomenon. As a consequence of the historical alliance between the government and the extremist Wahhabi establishment to control Saudi Arabia, and the existence of the old blackout media policy, it is impossible for people to become adequately informed and politically active on the issue. Regulations and censorship have prevented the coverage of the internal community to external media in general. Also, there is rarely any chance for the participation of media consumers (the public) to deviate from mainstream ideas or opinions held by the ruling class. As Patterson (1997: 365) argues, because there are limitations on the press as a political actor, it does not attempt to perform the job of a political institution. He further explains that since the values of the press differ from (if not oppose) political values, journalists cannot be relied upon to help citizens identify their own values as they relate to public policy.

The limitations on what and how to cover also makes it harder for the press to focus on terrorism as a long-term political and/or intellectual dilemma. According to Patterson (1997: 453-5), not only is the mismatch of values between government and

the press not conducive to forming public opinion, it also "weakens the bond of trust between leaders and led", which is a "defect in the practice of democracy".

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Saudi Arabia's political system is not democratic. So in a situation like this, it does not seem hopeful that the press can overcome its limitations to become an effective actor in the mass communication field. In such circumstances, Patterson (1997: 453-5) suggests that the best the media can do is recognise their limitations and exercise restraint in pretending to overcome them. He argues that the press is limited in its ability to inform the public. Political institutions, too, are not highly suited to providing information to citizens that they can use for political deliberation. The actions that Saudi political leaders take are often geared towards increasing their popularity among citizens rather than educating them about domestic issues.

The Saudi news coverage of terrorism tends to continually display horrific and sensational aspects of terrorism, without tackling its original causes. It does not care about analysing terrorism causes nor interpreting or treating the phenomenon, as much the public witness disseminated fear through their national media. So, as long as Saudi policy rejects the idea over analysing terrorism terms of its existing historical, political, economic and intellectual aspects. Its national media remains empty of any content that serves the public in understanding its roots and motivations. However, this may help the government in fighting a national crisis with a serious long-term plan. Additionally, the government reduces people's confidence in their national media, as most of the messages are shaped by the government and only serve its interests. Most importantly, Saudi government does not seem to have the interest to communicate with its people. The government needs to understand how the audience perceive the events so they can establish a compelling media message that helps fighting or eradicating terrorism.

Yanich (2001: 239) discusses the relationship between the actions of the press and the reactions of legislators as the "news coverage, public perception, policy response"

scenario. He argues that the media has an effect on policy-making, and that the role of the media should be addressed in the course of policy discourse. Much like Scheufele's (1999: 103-22) discussion of the process-model of framing in the news, the cyclical relationship between the treatment of issues by the press and the way they are dealt with by the government, makes it difficult to find a place to intervene. Thus, for the purposes of this discussion, there are two problems that become apparent due to the nature of Saudi news coverage of terrorism. First, Saudi news media is not supplying useful information, as it was created to do and as it claims. Second, people are unable to rely on the most accessed source of information for knowledge that is useful for deliberation on public issues and effective participation in the political process.

In terms of the quality of the news, there are several dilemmas that relate directly to this issue. First, the Saudi government deliberately overshadows the causes of terrorism and its relationship to the political, economic, intellectual and social conditions, including Saudi's relationship with the US, women's rights, and freedom of expression issues. It continues to resort to media blackout, which thus increases the congestion and escalation of terrorism and violence. Second, the historical alliance of the Saudi government with its religious authorities continues to disseminate ideas "under the name of religion", which says that any opposition to the ruler is a question of taboo in the Islamic faith, and that people are forced to obey their leader in all circumstances. Therefore, the issue of claiming any internal reforms, including reforms to Saudi media content, is hostage to political and religious blessings. So, as long as these two associated establishments in governance and in guiding people over how to think and behave through the national media, the situation will witness no real change.

However, there can be other implementations to improve the quality of the Saudi national news. First, in-depth, detailed studies that grade the quality of Saudi news coverage in both the press and television on a yearly basis would be quite effective. Measuring station performance across a range of characteristics would accomplish

two things. One, it would put national news media in competition with other privately-owned Pan-Arab media outlets over the quality of news. Second, making detailed information readily available to all potential consumers of terrorism news would lead citizens to demand better conduct of news organisations that represent their own national issues. Unfortunately, the issue of terrorism has not been yet analysed on the basis of experience or aspirations of the Saudi public, as the official rhetoric is dominant in interpreting such news.

Second, as is often the case for those most in need, the Saudi public may find it more difficult to access the information they require. Aside from newspapers, the Internet can be considered the most promising source of easily accessible information available. Not only can users inform themselves on topics of interest, but they can access as many national news sources as they wish in order to discover the multifaceted nature of political and social issues. While traditional network Internet sources may be as one-sided as their press and television news counterparts, there are many sources that divide issues much further. From the extreme fundamentalist to the liberal; some may argue that these sources are biased, but the significance of such sources is that together they raise more questions and address more issues than official news media. Although the Saudi population may not have the chance to access all the available online information, due to government online censorship, they are able to break these barriers and find websites where they can pass on their views of national issues with courage and defiance. Thus, the issue of how to close the digital divide between the Saudi government and its citizens is something to keep in mind when considering solutions to communicating with the Saudi public.

Also, the opportunity of a mutual exchange of ideas or discussions among people through the media is restricted. This was achieved by using cautious monitoring of public opinion, to understand what might lie beyond the bounds of popular acceptance. Additionally, the Saudi government permits the appearance of certain loyal opposition figures within its media, as to prove its consent to include various kinds of opinions within its boundaries. This can help new ideas to develop slowly

while keeping an eye on the media content, without making any serious risk to the government's strong grip on power. According to Alterman (1998), the Saudi media have played a vital role in this equation by both disseminating government voice and providing a forum for carefully formulated criticism and commentary on Saudi policies. These tribal media preparatory measures were made by the government, not only to secure the existence of the political system, but also to preserve socio-cultural order and cultural religious values that provide the basis for the legitimacy of existing political order. As Sharabi (1985) remarked, the strengthening of the traditional patriarchal society, which is part of this media policy, also aims to bear the existing media model. However, it is important to realise the type of content that disseminates through the national media and its impact on public understanding.

As the Saudi media functions in one direction, the public sphere is virtually non-existent. The messages are sent from the government to the population without any feedback or interaction. There is only one approved management that decides which issues to include and how they can be dealt with or discussed by the Saudi media. As a consequence, Saudi audiences become passive in their consumption of their own media, as any public discourse to social or political problems is alien to this kind of media. This opens the door for other Arab news outlets to attract Saudi opposition to talk about national problems, but this can raise tensions between Saudi Arabia and other regional countries that disseminate such outlets from their soil, i.e. Qatar's al-Jazeera and its broadcasting of Osama bin Laden's statements against Saudi Arabia, and other liberal Saudi opposition figures.

However, the importance of the Internet and its role in the creation and maintenance of the public sphere has great significance in many parts of the world that lack the tools and basic socio-political circumstances for the functioning of such a public sphere. As is the case of Saudi Arabia, the government controls traditional mass media and permits little margin which can be accessible to all sectors of society, parties and individuals. Therefore, examining the role of the Internet in the

maintenance and empowerment of the public sphere has great significance, as the virtual community becomes a virtual public sphere.

As to Rice and Burbules' (1994: 4-6) argument in chapter five, "the absence of the otherness of the 'Other' secures the futility of the effort to empower marginalised groups and to give them a space to raise their silenced voice", is quite right. This allows extremists to gather in one place, develop their plans and decide to carry out their individual tasks. Thus, the online public sphere serves as a different alternative view of social and political issues, both from extreme left to traditional members' views that are joined by opposition and alternative groups. Online members vary from political activists to religious members, from democracy seekers to terrorist members. Both recruit and distribute their views and bring issues into a bigger public sphere. These convergences ensure a sense of participation in a public sphere of online expression, stressing interpretive freedom to take the place of the previous need to connect with those with the same demands.

The nature of this study also raises some questions that may be addressed in further research. One project to consider would be to determine the influence of framing policy on Saudi national news coverage of terrorism. More specifically, to examine past terrorism coverage (over a period of time) for changes in attributions of treatment responsibility, and then compare these results with such policy results. In a rapidly developing national crisis, one needs to examine whether news frames emerge with patterns similar to those in other crisis situations. One should also identify which sources played the most important roles in framing the news, and the degree to which new events bring about change in media frames.

In fact, when covering a rapidly developing crisis, the media are likely to follow the updates and present different forms of frames as events develop. Graber (1980: 229) notes that there are three levels of media coverage of a crisis. In the first stage, the media are the prime source of information, not only for the general public but also for public officials linked to the crisis. According to Graber (1980: 233-234), the main

duty of the media is to describe what has happened and help coordinate the relief work, and their main objective is to attain accurate information to treat uncertainty and calm people. In the second stage, media coverage concentrates on making sense of the incidents. Plans are expressed and implemented to address the needs of the victims and repair the damage. While the third stage extends the first two; in an effort to provide the facts, the obligation of the media is to place the crisis in a larger, longer-term perspective.

In this regard, the Saudi media can shift framing strategies from presenting frightening information to a containment or calming approach when "dread-inspiring events are developing in unpredictable and potentially threatening ways" (Ungar, 1998: 36). Chyi and McCombs (2004) proposed "frame-changing" in their study of the coverage of the Columbine school shooting, arguing that during any news event's life span the media often reframe the event by emphasising different attributes. Muschert and Carr (2006) extended the study of frame-changing across similar events and between more and less salient events. Although some studies examined frame dynamics and offered useful ideas of sequence-related frame changes associated with time, neither of these studies examined frame-changing in news coverage as events evolved through the stages. Such a study would help the Saudi media in framing terrorism news in a dynamic way, instead of mere storytelling.

One final suggestion for further research would be to conduct a similar analysis in the coverage of other public issues, to identify whether the construction and strategies that address Saudi political problems are as limited as they are in the national news media. Iyengar's methods proved useful for this study and it was interesting to see how his research on the issue of terrorism in national news coverage translates to Saudi political news as a whole.

The Democratic Option

After the 9/11 attacks and the events of 2011 Arab Spring, much of the political and media discussion on terrorism concentrated on prevention policies. The question over whether promoting democracy can prevent renewed terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia is interesting to point to be raised. Although pessimists may doubt it, democratisation has gained credence as a counterterrorism strategy in the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks. In fact, democratic establishments, by allowing the peaceful reconciliation of complaints and providing channels for participation in policymaking, have helped to address the underlying situations which have fuelled the recent rise of Islamist extremism. The source of much of the current wave of terrorist activity in Saudi Arabia, as in the rest of the Middle East, is not a coincidence. The Saudi government lacks the legitimacy and capacity to react to social and economic problems.

Although not without risks, and only if pursued as part of a broader strategy, democratisation can help reshape the climate in which terrorism and violence thrive. More precisely, promoting democratisation in the closed society of Saudi Arabia can provide a set of values and ideas that offer a great alternative to the appeal of the sort of extremism that is currently expressed in terrorist activity. Islamist terrorism rejects simplification and easy explanation. Its causes are multifaceted and complicated, and any one response to terrorism will provide only partial results. Thus, a comprehensive, dynamic policy response to combat Islamist terrorism is necessary, including recruiting the media for this objective. One cannot confirm that the absence of democracy can wholly explain the causes of terrorism in Saudi Arabia, but the lack of democracy in many other repressed countries has played a major role in creating the conditions conducive to the recent emergence of Islamic extremist movements.

In addition to being affected by economic difficulties, the Middle East is the least democratic region in the world. Close to none of the countries in the Middle East demonstrate enough respect for political rights and civil liberties to be considered

'Free', as described by Freedom House in its 2012 annual survey of freedom around the world. The organisation rates Saudi Arabia as 'Not Free', characterised by severely limited political and civil rights, political persecution and terror, and repression of free association and peaceful dissent. According to Zakaria (2003: 136), the condition is "an almost unthinkable reversal of a global pattern", in which "almost every Arab country is less free than it was forty years ago. There are few places in the world about which one can say that".

Although they are considered an important base for political stability, the extremist secular opposition groups lack neither complete national or global acceptance nor a broad base of political support. Also, Saudi civil society is weak as a result of the severe oppressive laws and coercive methods the Saudi government uses to suppress political expression. Independent media are hugely non-existent and most newspapers and articles are closely monitored, and outlets that exist are seen as serving the interests of the government. In such circumstance, extreme repression drives all politics underground, placing the moderate opposition at a disadvantage and encouraging political extremism. By their nature, democratic movements and leaders build support by operating openly and using traditional instruments of peaceful protest such as criticism through the media, public meetings, and mass organisations; yet, the highly authoritarian system bans such activism by prohibiting these activities and persecuting and imprisoning non-violent opponents. In contrast, successful conspiracy is historically connected to authoritarian, top-down systems of control, to a cult of unity, to the suppression of opposing opinions, and to the elaboration of obscurantist theories. Therefore, political extremists welcome brutal repression because it radicalises activists and swells their own position.

So, the clear consequence of severe repression is to weaken or destroy moderate elements within society, with whom a compromise can be hit, and to empower those that seek total success for their extremist cause at the same time. As authoritarian repression creates an environment in which terrorist extremists can grow, it also reduces public support for the Saudi system. In fact, globalisation has brought an

unprecedented level of communication, commercial and cultural penetration of societies, informing populations with ready evidence of their comparatively poor political, economic and social conditions. According to the United Nations Development Program (2007), the rigid political structure of Saudi Arabia cannot deal effectively with its deteriorating political and social conditions, which, therefore, creates a growing crisis of legitimacy. With little possibility of improving their own lives or routing their efforts toward producing meaningful change in their own country, the educated but unemployed youth of Saudi Arabia have grown increasingly angry and frustrated.

The reasons behind the progression from frustration to violence against the US, the West and Saudi Arabia's own system are many and complex, but surely the distorted information flow within Saudi Arabia's media plays a major part. Governments that suffer from lack of legitimacy have always tended to shift their people's attention to evils outside their own land. Also, the closed nature of Saudi Arabian society contributes both to a lack of legitimacy of its own system and to the proliferation of distorted, tense religious-based rhetoric manipulated for the systems' own interest. So, as long as the population are discouraged by their lack of political and economic prospects, and desire to identify and identify someone to accuse, as well as a media that is severely anti-American, anti-Western and anti-non Wahhabi believers, Saudi Arabia will remain a fertile ground for the extreme violent message.

In this regard, the Wahhabi school of thought raise generations of Saudis on total obedience to the ruler: they were officially given the authority to distribute hatred and hostility against both the West and non-Wahhabi Muslims. This stands as a barrier against people's negotiation of any different idea they were raised on. So, the issue of changing the official rhetoric at the time of terrorism will not be collectively successful, as people will not accept any thought contrary to what they have always known. Thus, the current Saudi rhetoric can be seen to swing between convincing the world that it does fight terrorism and intolerance, and, at the same time, permits its

clerics to spread ideas of hatred and jihad against the West and other non-Wahhabi Muslims (through the national media).

Since the Wahhabi ideology considers the West as an enemy of Islam, as well as Arab countries that are allies of the West being considered infidels, the Saudi government is, therefore, an enemy in this holy war. Therefore, it is possible to say that as much as the Saudi government uses religious interpretations as a persuasion tool for its own interests through the media, Saudi religious leaders disseminate explicit or implicit messages to promote Jihad against the world, including their own government (because it supports the West in fighting terrorism). This makes the media situation very sensitive, and thus any reform to Saudi media content is dependent on its release from the grip of both the government and the religious establishment. Therefore, the Saudi Arabia system's most serious threat comes from religious radicals that embrace more extreme versions of the official ideology.

According to Byman and Green (1999: 1-20), Saudi Arabia is set by many acute problems, such as the need for economic and political reform, corruption, unemployment, lack of freedom, and a burgeoning population. These are concerns of a strategic nature and need to be considered, even if they are close to overcome. As the Saudi government's legitimacy is based on an extreme radical view of Islam, any new kind of tolerant Islam could be seen as too slow in the near future. Over the long-term, the establishment of democratic political systems in the Middle East has benefits that can lessen the great possibilities for the recruitment of extremists.

Limitations of Research

There were several limitations to this research that should be mentioned. The first was a limitation on the gathering of data. This study was based on four terrorism stories published in national Saudi newspapers, as well as public feedback on each story through multiple Saudi websites. The selected online sources were based on their

political and intellectual orientations. However, it is beyond the scope of this research to use physical respondents to test the direct relationship between terrorism news coverage and issue opinions, as the amount of potential risk through conducting such a study in Saudi Arabia would prevent the undertaking of such an action. The basic concepts of this research followed Iyengar's study closely, and hopefully served to clarify the reasons why some of his assumptions proved to be true. As Scheufele (1999: 103-22) notes, media effects research examines framing in the news, both as an independent and a dependent variable. While Iyengar looked at the effects of media frames on individual frames, it remains useful to examine such media frames as variables dependent on other factors. This research stems from Iyengar's study only to explain the broader content of terrorism news in terms of the environment in which it is produced.

Another limitation on the gathering of data is that the sample of news stories was not based on a "constructed week". By sampling a Thursday newscast from one week, a Tuesday newscast from the next week, and so on, the sample would be more representative of Saudi national news media as a whole. But, the analysis sample was selected on the events basis and on the news that followed, covering such events. However, despite this limitation, we believe the results gained from this research are valid and useful in addressing further issues.

Despite the obstacles that we had in conducting this empirical study, having two coders to conduct the content analysis was obviously ideal than working individually. This arrangement allowed for inter-coder reliability as well assuring that individual bias did not influence the coding process. In addition, inter-coder reliability can only be assured through strict adherence to the coding instructions. However, the explanations of each variable and their attributes are quite detailed and thorough, thus lessening the chances of bias or changes throughout the coding process. However, we are quite confident that the research design is thorough enough to allow the study to be reproduced under similar circumstances, dependent only upon the availability of more coders and a wider sample. Another positive factor is that this study does not

only focus on content, but considers the audiences as recipients to terrorism news – by reviewing both content analysis and audience reception as opposing frames. Studies which address two or three levels of the communication circuits in mass communication are uncommon, because they are very labour intensive. Such multi-level research projects can be very helpful in examining frame analysis.

Summary

The purpose of this research was to examine the form and content of the Saudi national news media coverage of terrorism, to determine its effectiveness as a source of information that citizens can use to participate in deliberation on public issues. The results show that the way terrorism is constructed in Saudi national news media leaves little room for interpretation or analysis of terrorism as a political, intellectual or social problem. We have reached to a conclusion that national Saudi news media is not a useful source of information to use in public discourse. The suggestions and recommendations offered will hopefully add to this understanding, and work towards a solution for the problems addressed.

The media today has become the most influential tool over people's understanding and deliberation, which means that the media is considered one of the most vital means of security within the reservation of national and popular institutions. In fact, the Saudi media can play an effective role in the process of construction, progress and security by sound effects, image, and through several political and social programmes. In addition, movies, advertising and representation, symposia and dialogue can influence the progress levels and contribute positively in the elevation of its society. The media can help in achieving security and stability in Saudi Arabia, and mobilise events, even square events, can reflect the pulse of the ordinary citizen, monitor negativity, and contribute to correcting ineffective policies. In fact, the media can help in re-mapping social security and promoting national unity over a longer term, but only if those responsible for the media are aware of its powerful influence and are ready to use it effectively.

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APPENDICES

The full list of categorised meanings found in reading the press and online coverage of terrorism in Chapter seven.

i.   Statements of Category I

No.	Group (I)
	Government News Content
I-01.	Accusing the terrorist groups of ruining the national economy
I-02.	Accusing the terrorist groups of ruining national security & stability
I-03.	Accusing the West of being anti-humanitarian and degrading women's rights, asking people to adhere to Islamic law.
I-03.	Accusing Zionism or the West (enemies of Islam) of perpetrating terrorism
I-04.	Asserting the security and stability of Saudi lands
I-05.	Bombing terrorist places
I-06.	Calling educators, parents, teachers and the media as responsible for educating people in the right ideology
I-07.	Calling the terrorist groups or terrorist ideology "deviant groups or deviant Ideology"
I-08.	Condemnation & criticism of terrorists & Islamist ideology and attacks, even though the government was always supportive of religion.
I-09.	Criticising crime in the name of Jihad or Islam
I-10.	Criticism of a bombing & killing fatwa(s)
I-11.	Fear of terrorism
I-12.	No mercy for the terrorists & terrorism
I-13.	Poetry (praising leadership)
I-14.	Portraying suicide bombers as terrorists
I-15.	Portraying terrorists as corrupt and evil, and spies of the West
I-16.	Praising the government and the security forces' efforts in fighting terrorists and terrorism
I-17.	Praising the religious leaders and religious police

I-18.	Praising national unity and campaigns against terrorism
I-19.	Prayers: that God saves the country from terrorism
I-20.	Reform is a myth
I-21.	Prayers: that God saves the government from terrorism
I-22.	Religious statement against terrorism
I-23.	Rejection of fundamentalism and fundamentalists
I-24.	Saudi Arabia and its youngsters are targeted by enemies
I-25.	Supportive of the government and towards protecting Saudi Arabia
I-26.	Swearing at the terrorists and suicide bombers
I-27.	Swearing: criticism against Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda
I-28.	Terrorists mislead the nation and naïve youngsters
I-29.	Terrorism = crime
I-30.	Terrorists will go to hell
I-31.	Terrorism = non-Islamic
I-32.	Terrorists should be prosecuted
I-33.	Warning Saudi people not to watch or listen to foreign media
I-34.	War on terrorism or counter terrorism

ii. Statements of Category II

No.	Group (II) *Radical Opposition Views*
II-01.	Accusing the Saudi government of supporting the Infidels and the crusaders (Christians and Jews, and the West)
II-02.	Accusing the Saudi Government or the West of corruption. Thus, Jihad to liberate the land from corruption is religiously lawful
II-03.	Accusing the government of Westernising the country. Thus, using force to return the people to Islam is legitimate
II-04.	Accusing Shiites of perpetrating terrorism
II-05.	Describing Christians and Jews as *Kuffar* (Infidels or crusaders)
II-06.	Calling for Jihad
II-07.	Calling Muslims to boycott the Infidels (countries, products, ideology and education)
II-08.	Calling Terrorists "Mujahedeen"
II-09.	Calls for the liberation of Muslim lands from the Infidels
II-10.	Condemnation of the government's acts in arresting or killing Islamists and Jihadists
II-11.	Criticising the freedom of the Saudi media - any Western media production (i.e. songs, movies and general entertainment). Thus, media owners and the government are to be confronted by force)
II-12.	Criticising the security forces' efforts in fighting the Mujahedeen
II-13.	Declaration of victory and celebration of Jihad
II-14.	Demands to emancipate the people from the Royal Family by force (leaders of corruption)
II-15.	Demands that people take revenge of the corrupted Saudi Royal Family (by force)
II-16.	Encouraging Muslims to join Jihad in other Muslim countries
II-17.	Glorification of Jihad and martyrdom (Holy War)
II-18.	Hailing bombing and killing *fatwas*
II-19.	Hailing crime if in the name of Islam - describing crime as Jihad against the Infidels
II-20.	Hailing Osama bin laden, terrorist acts and praising its perpetrators
II-21.	Holy War against the Infidels (Christians and Jews)
II-22.	Holy War against the Infidels (Al-Saud, government, Shiites and other Muslim ideologies)
II-23.	Jihad Fatwa - killing non-Muslims *fatwa*
II-24.	Jihad leads to victory
II-25.	Opposing the government

II-25.	Poetry glorifying Jihad and Martyrdom - Holy War against the Infidels and Al-Saud - Jihad
II-26.	Portraying the Jews, US, and the West as the devil
II-27.	Portraying the terrorists as Holy Warriors (soldiers of God)
II-28.	Praising the terrorist groups and martyrdom
II-29.	Praising "Mujahedeen" leaders: Osama and others
II-30.	Swearing or laughing at the government and princes

iii. Statements of Category III

No.	Subgroup (III) *Liberal Opposition Views*
III-01.	Accusing Al-Saud and the government of corruption and calling an end to corruption, reasons of instable security and rising terrorism
III-02.	Accusing the government of instable policy (potential cause of rising terrorism)
III-03.	Accusing the house of Al-Saud of creating and supporting Wahhabism
III-04.	Accusing the government of supporting the extremists
III-05.	Calling for freedom of religion *(moderate Sunni and Shiite groups)* (as the dominating radical Wahhabism is officially superior to any other moderate branch of Islam)
III-06.	Calling for political and economic reform (that economic growth is controlled by a small number of beneficiaries, while the rest are in need - reason for rising terrorism)
III-07.	Calling for government transparency to stop rising terrorism
III-08.	Calling for human rights (potential cause of people's anger and violence that the minority number of rich people are dominating the political and economic scene)
III-09.	Calling for women's rights
III-10.	Demands for a state constitution (as a lack of clear set of rules gives the ruling minority the authority to rule ruthlessly without considering people's rights - reason for rising terrorism)
III-11.	Demands for equal shares in wealth (potential cause of public anger and rising terrorism)
III-12.	Demands for freedom of expression/ speech (as lack of free speech increases violence and terrorism)
III-13.	Demands for freedom of the media (so intellectuals can discuss the internal situation without government or Islamist control)
III-14.	Demands for reform in the economy (potential cause of public frustration and violence)
III-15.	Demands for reform in the justice system (potential cause of public frustration and violence)
III-16.	Demands for participation in politics - decision-making
III-17.	Demands to emancipate the people from the controlling power and domination of Al-Saud (for their strong internal control and lack of democracy that increases terrorism and violence)

III-18.	Demands to emancipate the people from religious leadership (source of extremism and violent radicalism)
III-19.	Demands to end crime and poverty (potential cause of violence)
III-20.	Demands to end mediation in daily official dealings
III-21.	Demands to end unemployment (cause for rising dissatisfaction)
III-22.	Opposing the government

iv. Statements of Category IV

No.	Group (IV)
	Neutral News Coverage
IV-01.	Analysis of terrorist ideology (by clerics and intellectuals)
IV-02.	Analysis of terrorist attacks
IV-03.	Arrest of terrorist groups or deviant groups
IV-04.	Campaign against terrorism or war on terrorism
IV-05.	Government or official statement
IV-06.	Interview with families of killed military force soldiers
IV-07	Kidnapping or killing Western workers in Saudi Arabia
IV-08.	National Bedouin songs
IV-09.	Government officials calling terrorists to surrender to the government
IV-10.	News coverage of killed security forces and their families
IV-11.	Official statement calling the terrorists to negotiate with the Saudi government
IV-12.	Public expression of government and police efforts in fighting terrorism
IV-13.	Terrorism news coverage
IV-14.	Terrorist bombing or killing security members
IV-15.	Terrorist attacks against civilians
IV-16.	Announcement of wanted terrorists