

THE IMPACT OF THE NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF ISLAM IN THE
WESTERN MEDIA AND CULTURE FROM 9/11 TO THE ARAB
SPRING

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DEDICATION

In Loving Memory of
Jeddah Zineb and Nana Tassa'adit

“Oh Allah! Make useful for me what you have taught me and teach me knowledge that will be useful to me” Ameen.

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BOUSMAHA FARAH

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While the Arab spring succeeded in ousting the long-term dictator led governments from power in many Arab countries, leading the way to a new democratic process to develop in the Arab world, it did not end the old suspicions between Arab Muslims and the West. This research investigates the beginning of the relations between the Arab Muslims and the West as they have developed over time, and then focuses its analysis on perceptions from both sides beginning with 9/11 through the events known as the Arab spring. The framework for analysis is a communication perspective, as embodied in the Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM). According to CMM, communication can be understood as forms of interactions that both constitute and frame reality. The study posits the analysis that the current Arab Muslim-West divide, is often a conversation that is consistent with what CMM labels as the ethnocentric pattern. This analysis will suggest a new pathway, one that follows the CMM cosmopolitan form, as a more fruitful pattern for the future of Arab Muslim-West relations. This research emphasizes the factors fueling this ethnocentric pattern, in addition to ways of bringing the Islamic world and the West to understand each other with a more cosmopolitan approach, which, among other things, accepts mutual differences while fostering agreements. To reach this core, the study will apply a direct communicative engagement between the Islamic world and the West to foster trusted relations, between the two.

John Parrish-Sprowl, PhD., Chair

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1-1 Introduction

My first experience regarding the relationship between the Islamic Arabic World and the West, occurred when I began attending communication courses at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) in 2008, occurring after 9/11 (2001), but before the Arab Spring (2010). I was shocked by the way Arab Muslims were portrayed in American and other western media, TV channels, radio, films, and newspapers; they were often described as fanatics and/or criminal Muslims, if accused of crimes or illegal actions, while other criminals were simply designated by their gender or country of origin. Most Arab Muslims originate from North Africa and the Middle East and speak Arabic. So when I say Muslims, I only mean people from these two geographic areas. My first reaction to this phenomenon was to attempt to foster a public discussion through the national public radio (NPR), so I called the Indianapolis PBS station. However, one of the directors I talked with did not seem interested in initiating this kind of show and simply said that NPR only covers local news and national events, although parts of the programs sponsored by BBC World and aired by NPR, cover the Middle East and other Islamic countries.

Beginning with 2010-2011, in several Arab countries, the populace began demonstrating against their old regimes, ousting long time presidents such as Ben Ali (in Tunisia), Al Gadhafi (in Libya), Mohamed Salah (in Yemen) and Hosni Mubarak (in Egypt). Most people in the West openly supported the demonstrators who protested against their respective dictators.

This leads to the following questions:

RQ1. Has the negative perception of Arab Muslims in western media changed after the events known as the Arab spring, given the number of newly democratically elected leadership in the Middle East and North Africa?

RQ2. How do Muslims citizens of these countries view the West after its support in ousting dictatorial regimes in their countries?

In analyzing these questions, it is important to highlight the factors behind the clash between the Arab Muslim world and the West. Some of these factors include, “America’s decades-long support for dictators who accommodated its economic and security interests and its permanent and unconditional support for Israel” says Tariq Ramadan, a scholar and Islamologue, (Ramadan: 1). In addition, the West portrayal of Muslims as being violent and not tolerant of other religions has contributed to the clash. Did the Arab spring alter this view as expressed in the media? As an additional support of the ethnocentric patterning claim, the study is considering two other elements as important as the scholarly print material; the coverage of the Danish Cartoons and the Arab Spring by CNN and Aljazeera Arabic channels.

The last part of the thesis focuses on studying CMM can offer a perspective that facilitates an improvement of the perceptions and subsequently the relations between Arab Muslims and the West, thus proposing an innovative approach to communication between the two. So the present paper will attempt to answer the following research questions:

RQ3. Can a CMM analysis approach offer a framework for understanding how to alleviate the tensions in the co-constructed conflicts between the Arab Muslims and the West?

RQ4. How might a CMM analysis be used to suggest an alternative conversational form to mitigate tension and misunderstanding between Arab Muslims and the West.

1-2 Literature Review

A- Historical Background

The two worlds of Arab Muslims and the West (generally Western Europe and the USA) have a shared relational history spanning the last fourteen centuries. It began in 622, with the birth of a new religion called Islam led by a prophet named Mohamed, sent at first to the pagans Arabs of Mecca (Saudi Arabia), during a time when Byzantium, the Christian empire and Persia, the fire worshipers (Zoroastrianism), were the two superpowers of that era. However, both Byzantine and Persian empires were in continual conflicts and “the mutual damage inflicted by Persia and Byzantine on each other” (Brown 6) facilitated the way for Muslims to rapidly conquer an empire reaching from central Asia to central Spain taking most of the Persian and the Byzantine provinces, which gradually embraced Islam and rejected the two ancient religions (Brown 6).

By the eighth and ninth centuries, first and second AH (Al Hijra is the Muslim calendar which started with the migration of the prophet Mohamed to Medina, the second holiest city to Muslims in Saudi Arabia), the North African coast, Indian lands, and parts of China were all part of the Arab Muslim Empire (Brown 6).

Under this vast empire emerged a diversity of cultures, with the “Islamic faith and civilization provided an underlying unity” (Esposito¹) 37-67), enabling the empire to remain relatively stable for some time.

But when the capital of the empire transferred from the first state-government in Medina to other Arab provinces such as Damascus, Kufa, and Basra, customary laws between provinces changed. “These laws were coupled with the caliph's (the supreme leader of the Muslim community) decision and his judges' ability to settle disputes on the basis of their own discretion, resulted in a confused and often contradictory body of laws” (37-67). In addition, differences in “how important religion is to the Muslims’ lives, what practices are acceptable in Islam, levels of religious commitment, and openness to multiple interpretations of their faith” (Pew Center) are all other aspects that contributed to the cultural diversity of Muslims at that time and this continues into present.

B- The Perceptions Between the West and the Arab Muslims

When explaining the perception between the West and the Arab Islamic World, the first step is to look for the historical origin based on centuries of tensions and clash. Many authors divide this relevant history into four periods, the first dating from 622 on the Christian Calendar, 1 AH, with the hegemony of the Muslim world, until the fall of Grenada in Spain in 1492, 897 AH. During this period, the Muslims knew a huge expansion of geography and influence, as Islam spread from the Arabian Peninsula to North Africa and parts of Asia and Europe (Shadid, Koningsveld 177). During this time “the Muslim Spain knew the most brilliant and tolerant society ever; Muslims, Christians, and Jews intermingled exchanging goods, services and ideas” (Brown 5).

The second period is related to the Crusades, beginning during the 11th century when Pope Urban II gave his speech that launched the Crusades, by calling all Christians in Europe to war against Muslims in order to reclaim the Holy Land Jerusalem. Both Muslims and Christian's armies fought several wars sharing a number of victories and defeats on both sides.

The third period marked the era that brought an end to the Crusades, and the fourth period is related to the colonization of the Middle East and North Africa by European powers such as France, Italy, England, and Portugal.

Although many of these countries fought wars of liberation against European powers in the 20th century, they found themselves still dependent upon their former colonizers as a consequence of the trading patterns established between the colonies or former colonies. With the advent of the colonial era, "any trade was to be carried out only with the European powers like French colonies traded with France, British colonies with Britain, Portuguese colonies with Portugal, and so on" (Pearson 131). The whole infrastructure that was set up to service this trade was oriented toward Europe only. So "All communications and banking facilities were integrated into those of the colonial power" (132). After independence, these countries found themselves still under the domination of the European powers, under what became known as neo-colonialism.

Consequently, the distribution of global power which, while once was in Europe's hands, shifted geographically, and grew to include the United States, increased the alienation, frustration, and mistrust of the Arab Muslim world towards the West (Kalin par.17).

Furthermore, the tensions between both worlds have been exacerbated by other issues, related to trade, technology and culture that are as important in defining the relationship as the Crusades and colonialism. These issues are summarized in the Australian Parliamentary Library magazine by Gary Brown and, not surprisingly, include the creation of Israel in Palestine and the September 11 attacks. The historical tensions between the two worlds had the potential to lessen during the Arab awakening, which was marked the shift in western perceptiveness, from one of criticism to one of support.

Contemporary tensions, especially prior to the Arab spring, have been especially strained due to western support, if not the outright creation of Israel. Through the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the British government informed the Zionist Federation, that Palestine will become "a national home for the Jewish people" (Declaration). After World War Two, and consistently with the framework of the Balfour Declaration, a Jewish state was launched in 1948. Since that time, Palestine has been the center of the conflict between Arab Muslims and the West. From the Arab side, Palestine, "called land of Canaan by archeologists" (Al- Suwaidan 25), has always been part of the Arab history and Palestinians are the modern people originated from the tribes of "Canaan who migrated from the Arab Peninsula as early as 2035" (Harden ltd in Schoville 162).

According to Tarek Al- Suwaidan, author of *Palestine Illustrated History*, "the first Jewish migration started with the birth of Ishmael (Ismael) and Isaac in Palestine" whose father, prophet Abraham (Ibrahim), was originally from Babylon (Iraq) and "the second migration occurred when the prophet Moses (Musa) fled with his people from Pharaoh, King of Egypt to Palestine" (26).

After Islam, Jerusalem became the third holiest city as a result of the Prophet Mohamed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his Ascension to Heaven (Zain n-pag). From the Israel side, the history of the Jewish people begins when God tells Abraham to leave his homeland, promising him and his descendants a new home in the land of Canaan (Rich n-pag) This is the land now known as Israel, named after Abraham's grandson, whose descendants are the Jewish people.

The land is often referred to as the Promised Land "because of God's repeated promise to give the land to the descendants of Abraham" (Rich) Thus, it was a divine command to establish Israel in Palestine according to Jewish revelations.

Following the creation of the State of Israel, neither the Arab Muslims nor the Palestinians accepted this decision, thinking that the West and Great Britain in particular, were trying "to clean up the mess of the Holocaust at the expense of the Palestinian people" (Brown 14). In addition, for the Arab Muslims, the surrender of Palestine especially Jerusalem, is unacceptable in large part due to the significance of the region in their own history. From this standpoint, Palestinians and Arab Muslims fought many wars against Israel and were defeated because of the permanent and continual support of the United States and Europe to Israel. Adding to the tension between the two, is what is perceived as daily violence by Israel against the Palestinians, which the West never seems to condemn, resulting in increased resentment of the Arab Muslims against the west. The creation of Israel, and the resulting war and violence, under the support of the West, continues to be one of the highest tension points between the Arab Muslims and the western world.

The events of September 11 and the subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, only served to escalate the tensions between the West and the Arab Muslims. While the U.S. and Europe see extremist groups in the Arab Muslim world as a threat to the international security and to the future of Western civilization, many in the Muslim world see the "war on terror" as a war on Islam and Muslims, explain Esposito and Moghahed in *Who Speaks for Islam* report.

They further suggest,

“The overwhelming majority of Muslims subscribe to the universal principles of human rights, rule of law, and democracy, which are also Western values. But they also want the West to respect Islamic culture, religion, and tradition” (Qtd. in Kalin par.17)

This means, in part, engaging in a “balanced discussion of Islam-West relations than depicting Muslims as terrorists or violent.” (17) As a result “Islamophobia, the unfounded fear of Islam and Muslims, and the hatred arising from that fear are a major source of tension” (17).

In analysis of papers that were published after 9/11 from both the Arab Muslims and the West, detailing the western perception of the Arab Muslims, a study called “In Muslim Americans and the Media after 9/11”, written by Mohammed Abid Amiri, claims that the US media played a major role in shaping public perception about Muslims. By dividing his study in two different periods; the first six months, then, 1 to 3 years after 9/11, he concludes that during the six months after 9/11, Muslims were given numerous opportunities and interviews to explain and defend their faith, whereas the one year anniversary following 9/11 (Amiri 6-7) the American opinion shifted from positive – supportive to negative-critical, as it shows in the major newspapers and magazines (New York Times for instance) with reduced opportunities to discuss their faith.

Arab Muslims were not only portrayed negatively in the western media but in films as well, Jack Shaheen is among the first authors who studied how Hollywood “Conditioned audiences to perceive Arabs and by extension Muslims as unrelenting enemies of Western values” (1). The movie *Adventure in Iraq* for instance featured the US Air Force bombing Iraq to free British and US hostages. In the movie, Arabs were portrayed as “Pro-Nazi, devil worshippers, fanatics, and purring sheikhs” (1)

Reports from the Arab Muslims perspective, such as in Al-Ahram, the Egyptian weekly newspaper, include mixed feelings of Muslims in the Middle East towards the west, while condemning the attacks and expressing their sympathy for the loss of civilians they also criticized the U.S government for its racist policies towards Arab Muslims and for its unwavering support of Israel (Condemning Aggression, n. a).

By the end of 2010, the Middle East and North Africa went through seismic political changes, caused by huge demonstrations that ousted four major regimes; Ben Ali in Tunisia, Al Gadhafi in Libya, Mohamed Salah in Yemen, and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt. These events were called the Arab Spring or Arab Awakening. Although the U.S and Europe governments hastened to support the new democracies, it did not change the way Arab Muslims view Americans and the West, as anti-government protestors in Syria calling for the fall of Bashar al-Assad’s regime were chanting “traitor and American agent,” and as thousands of Tunisians applauded Tarek Ramadan for preaching that “It’s dangerous to think that France or the USA deeply care about their democratic aspirations,” (Qtd. in Medien par.2).

The Arab Spring was described as a positive event by some of the Western newspapers as noted Rashid Khalidi when he states in *The Nation*, published March 3 2011, “Suddenly, to be an Arab has become a good thing.” After the negative coverage that every paper published about the Arab Muslims, the Arab Spring marked the first positive information coming from the West since the 9/11 attacks.

In addition to print material, visual coverage is another element that illustrates the negative perceptions of Arab Muslims in Western media. For example, we can turn to how Aljazeera and CNN channels analyzed the Danish cartoons controversy of 2006 and how they reported about the Arab Awakening of 2010.

In 2006, Danish Cartoons were published depicting Mohammad in ways that many Muslims find offensive at the least, and more likely simply blasphemous. When the controversial cartoons began to gain attention around the world, the Qatar-based al Jazeera channel increased its coverage, and Youssef al-Qaradawi, the Muslim preacher and host of a popular show on Al-Jazeera television, in February 2006 called for a public “day of anger” against the cartoons. The riots that followed escalated into generalized attacks on Western targets according to *Asharq Al-Awsat*, an Arab newspaper based in London.

Examining the Danish Cartoon from the western side, Brent Sadler, a journalist at CNN, used “grossly sensationalized terms” when he introduced a segment interview with Fleming Rose, the culture editor of the conservative Danish weekly *Jyllands-Posten*, which published the cartoons.

Second with the Arab Spring, CNN played an important role in conveying the positive view of the Arab Spring to the American audience. Anderson Cooper exposed the Egyptian government lies during the demonstrations by stating “the Egyptian vice president Suleiman says, we should praise the young Egyptians for guiding us towards the path of democracy, while police and army had detained more than 119 people since the start of the demonstrations”(Cooper).

Many studies support the conclusion that there is a strong negative perception of Arab Muslims in western media and culture, and this assumption of such negative portrayals is a driving force in the relations between the West and Muslims. The USA and Saudi Arabia for instance, have historical relations based on mutual interests, Washington depended on Saudi Arabia - the Middle East’s largest reserves of oil by using their role as the dominant power in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC to maintain oil price at a workable rate. According to Robert. F. Worth, author of “U.S. and Saudis in Growing Rift as Power Shifts”, “they shore up stability in a region dominated by autocrats and hostile to another ally, Israel Middle East, and supported bases for the American military” in return the USA guaranties “Gulf security, particularly the security of the Saudi royal family” (Ottaway).

At this juncture in history, the Arab Muslim world and the West are between two stories; a story of the past filled with conflicts and mistrust, and the story that they must now create together based on understanding and agreement if they are to move forward in a productive and mutually satisfying manner. From an analysis based on CMM, it is possible that they can become the architects of a truly new order of cooperation.

C- Review of Studies Describing Agreements Between the Arab Muslims and the West

According to Kai Hafez from the Center for European Integration Studies, problems between Islam and the West are often more the result of a lack of meaningful dialogue than from a proactive conversation between the two. He states that the West portrays Islam as a “fanatic and violent religion while the Islamic world depicts Western societies as dehumanized, commercial, and sexist” (Hafez 5).

From the perspective of Geneive Abdo, Guardian correspondent in Tehran in 2000, western journalists generally lack training and knowledge when they report about the Islamic world; her view is based upon her experience while reporting from Iran in 2000. However and for Khaled Almaeena, the ex- editor in chief of Arab News, Saudi Arabia, notes that Arabs are not doing enough to “counter the tension and animosity” (Almaeena 41). This state of ignorance that often exists between the two sides, needs to be addressed in a practical and meaningful way. Ezell Darrell, from the University of Birmingham, posits, in his dissertation, the importance of a religious attaché position in constructing the communication between Arab Muslims and the West. Darrell explains “These attachés would be assigned to those [diplomatic] missions in countries where religion has particular salience in order to deal more effectively with complex religious issues.” (Darrell 266).

He also observes, in a manner consistent with CMM, “When engaging Muslim audiences, the attaché must put confrontation in a back seat and thus be ready to simplify complex communicative issues through discussion” (294), CMM, in the cosmopolitan form, takes into consideration the differences between people’s views but foregrounds coordination over coherence.

From the same perspective, Abd al-Hayy Michael Weinman, from the Salaminstitute.com suggested in his dissertation called “Action, research, dialogue, and the American Mosque” many steps to facilitate an intra- Muslims dialogue, living in the West including, small groups for dialogue with same ethnical background, education, and gender in addition to having Muslim moderators in group discussions.

In addition, Tariq Ramadan elaborates on his answer to a question from a New York Times journalist about what Islam needs to bring to the West, by saying, “There is no Islamic finance or Islamic medicine, it is wrong to think there is an Islamic alternative, but there are Islamic ethics in medicine, Islamic ethics in finance, and Islamic ethics in art.” (Pew Forum). In Islamic ethics in medicine for instance, Ramadan thinks there should be an existing contact and regular consultation between jurists and doctors in end of life issues such as euthanasia and organ donation (Ramadan 174).

CHAPTER TWO: THE CONCEPTIONAL FRAMEWORK

2-1 The Coordinated Management of Meaning

For Muslims and the West to improve their future relations, they must reshape their current pattern of communication, which, in CMM terms, is based on an ethnocentric form (Pearce, 2012). According to W. Barnett Pearce, ethnocentric communicators “would always see differences as disagreements which in other words, appear as conflicts between right and wrong” (15). Currently, Both Muslims and the West see each other as inferior or/ and enemy; The West believes that Islam is a religion of intolerance and because of this the western civilization is at risk. Muslims believe that the West hate them and will do anything to destroy their religion.

To escape this ethnocentric view, how can Muslims and the West reinvent their communication pattern into a relationship that is less suspicious and divisive? One venue for change lies in W. Barnett Pearce’s practical theory of the Coordinated of Management of Meaning (CMM) that suggests a better relationship is possible if the parties engage in dialogue that he labels a cosmopolitan form of communication (16). CMM posits the notion that there are two concepts in comprehending the purpose of communication; the basic one is the transfer of information from one person to another, this works best when each party in the conversation is already in general agreement and perceive themselves as highly similar in outlook and makeup.

In all human interaction, Pearce suggests that people should aspire to making a better social world, not simply assuming that their interchange is unrelated to the construct of the world that they live in (Pearce) than talking about it rather than, what did we mean by that; the questions should be more focused on the constitutive nature of communication and ask instead “How are we making it? This, says the author, embodies the process of how can we move forward and create a more peaceful, cooperative world. From this perspective, an effective dialogue can be created.

To understand the notion of dialogue as used in CMM, the following four concepts must be defined the communication perspective, coherence, coordination, and mystery.

A- The Communication Perspective

To take a communication perspective is to shift your intellectual gaze to look at communication not through it (Pearce 3). This is consistent with the notion advanced by Richard McKeon “Communication is a fashion of thinking and a method of analyzing which we apply in the statement of all fundamental problems” (89) In so doing we examine the constructive process of communication rather than simply focus on what is being said. Thus when engaging in dialogue, Muslims and westerns should put “confrontation in a back seat” (Ezell 306) and construct their communication as moving forward through discussion by simplifying complex issues in ways that can account for the understanding from each side. The relations between Israel and Palestine have always been treated as conflict and confrontation without any sign of agreement.

Both parties should think of their meetings as series of discussions that constitute the present and potential future of reality and try to improve the way they are presenting their ideas and dealing with each other with the intent of trying to understand the perspective of the other and making certain that the other believes they understand them. This is different than simply trying to get their own perspective across to the other side. No matter how eloquent the rhetoric, without reflexive understanding as the core of the process a more constructive future cannot be made

Furthermore, taking a communication perspective involves three, interrelated conceptual frames: The first, consists of focusing not on people and nations as independent and isolated beings, but rather as parts of “clusters of conversations, since participants are orchestrating conversations rather than embodying power where both sides are at the same level”. The second concept underlying a communication perspective is to realize that communication is substantial and its properties have consequences” (Qtd. in Anderson par. 7). In other words, communication makes each of us individually and our relationships so the nature of conversation matters. Instead of accomplishing opposition and disagreement in every discussion, crating an adversarial existence, people might want to look for other means of relating such as; “exchanging of ideas, expanding, exploring, and investigating”(Tannen 8); An intercultural communication studies course presents an illustration of what this idea might look like. In this situation students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds might meet together in a classroom, discuss topics where they might not understand each other, or may even strongly disagree with them, but they would expand their knowledge, explore other people opinions rather than advocate for their own beliefs, values and ways of being.

The third concept in taking a communication perspective consists of treating cultures, attitudes, and socio-economic structures and other such notions as **made not found** (Pearce, 3). Since they are made in conversation among people they can be changed in communication as well. One small, simple, example, I come from a Mediterranean culture, where the use of hands is part of speaking, in the US I try to connect with others by avoiding such hand movement since it might not be readily understood when dealing with non –Mediterranean friends or neighbors. In this way, I am attempting to **make** a more solid connection, not simply express my own perspective in my own traditional manner. The challenge of making a better social world, from a CMM framework or communication perspective, is to facilitate a dialogue between people who do not usually agree. To do that, we must imagine a discussion that is a function of the interplay between these three key concepts of the theory: coherence, coordination, and mystery.

B- Coherence

The second key term in CMM relevant to this analysis is coherence, which describes how meanings are achieved during conversations. To understand the concept of coherence in CMM we should think of people as storytellers, their stories are told according to the way they think, feel and act (Pearce & Associates 12). CMM practitioners treat all conversations as anecdotes or episodes of a larger conversation, rather than complete stories; they use the open –question way to enrich the conversations. In his explanation of the coherence concept, Pearce provides the example of a public dialogue, held in a Colombian city, that addressed the terror and violence that consumed the community and how they could work together to achieve safety and prosperity (Pearce 5-6).

Specifically, for example, was the need to address the issue related to how residents felt about the police. The facilitators were able to help both sides develop a better social world by guiding their conversation in a way such that both parties felt comfortable talking about it; those who hated the police needed to express what would be different if the police were not corrupt, while others who had high esteem for the police and felt differently about the law enforcement, were asked to develop more about why they felt that way. Then the discussion turned to how they might work together to develop a common perspective on law enforcement and how it could work to support the development of a better community.

Another example that illustrates the concept of coherence would be how we might deal with Alzheimer patients; I recall my sister who used to take care of my late grandmother who was such a patient, saying, “I always start my conversation by asking her open questions and I feel that she likes that.” She would never cook something for instance, before she suggests many dishes and asks her which one she would like to eat. ” Grandma would then starts telling her own story about the dish she chose like how to cook it, what spices my sister should use because she feels comfortable and can be more open.

C- Coordination

The term coordination describes the notion that whatever we do or say does not stand alone, it is always “intermeshed with the interpretations and actions of other people”. (Pearce 6) It refers to our interactions with others and explicitly recognizes that we work together to make meaning.

“It does not mean participants match perfectly their resources and practices, but that they collaborate in the production of a pattern that encourages further development” (Rossman 35). In other words, well-coordinated conversation helps us move forward in our dialogue as we make our relationship, whereas in poor coordination we either do not provide a basis for moving forward constructively, or worse, create uncoordinated diatribe. Pearce provides the example of Gandhi’s civil disobedience, which was a refusal to coordinate within British oppressive practices (Pearce 50). This created a disruption in the societal order. Such lack of coordination, in this case, was designed to undermine colonial rule. In the Middle East, it often fosters violent retaliation. He also says that some patterns of coordination can produce more opportunities for richer relationships than others (50); I, for example, spent two years in a Fishers neighborhood but my relationship with my neighbors has always been “hello – hello,” our sense of coordination was limited to the greeting but did not enrich our relationships. Pearce suggests that creating our social world involves the participation of people in a multi turn and a multi person process and the quality of coordination will play a key role in the desirability of that world.

D- Mystery

The term mystery is used to remind us that our daily existence or stories are but one small part of the stories that comprise the human condition and that, new stories are constantly being made. Thus we must recognize that our experiences and interpretations are always unfinished, each day we engage in new conversation that can alter our stories in an infinite array of ways.

Pearce and Cronen believe that mystery is embedded in each conversation and that enables us to ask how our world is made and how can we remake it differently.

Later on during his life and in another document titled *At Home in the Universe with Miracles and Horizons: Reflections on Personal and Social Evolution*, Pearce states that “the awareness and of reflexive self- awareness, which means the ability of a critical quality of mind that enables men and women to shift from one perspective to another intentionally, is an aspect of making mystery as the highest level of the contest.” (Pearce, 34)

From my understanding, to make a better social world, people benefit greatly if they evolve to their highest level of mindfulness in their communication with one another. This level includes not just active mindfulness, but also kindness, grace, and love. One of the examples Pearce offered was about a Vietnamese immigrant Ha Minh Thanh who wanted to help a nine years old hungry boy during the earthquake of Tsunami in Fukushima, Japan, by giving him his own food bag. Ha Minh was impressed when the boy added the bag to the food pile instead of eating it. He told him, “I see a lot of people hungrier than me, if I put it there, then they will distribute the food equally to everybody” (Pearce 42).

In addition, to understand a dialogue at a more conversational level, we can also consider that conversations may follow a recognizable pattern or form, and that these forms create differing trajectories for relations between people. Pearce suggests that in our world humans have created four general and recognizable forms of communication; monocultural, ethnocentric, modernist, or cosmopolitan.

2-2 The Monocultural Form of Communication

Monocultural communication states that everyone is treated as native of the culture (or of the form) and ways of understanding are never open to change because “the monocultural communicators believe that there is only one right culture, theirs” (Grimes, Richard 12). Thus, all of the people are considered to have common behavior, language and values. These similarities enable the members of the same (mono)cultural background to be adept at predicting the behavior of others and assume, with some confidence, a common perception of reality, “ I listen to what they say and I know what they mean” (Pearce 96). Mono-cultural communication therefore is based on nearly absolute similarities among all of the members of the speech community.

According to Pearce, an interesting example for a mono-cultural view of migration one can be found in the French political model. According to the French constitution, established in 1789 all citizens are equal. With the acquisition of colonial territories, the concept of citizenship was extended to all those who live in French Guyana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Reunion. However, what is interesting about this model is that it advances a notion of equality meaning everyone is the same, thus accepting diversity in faith and faith practices such as the headscarves of Muslim women who are French citizens is not possible. They argue that this should not be accepted, insisting on conformity by all its citizens in the name of treating everyone as equal. Other critics of the model point out that the interpretation of equality assumes a common language and culture, which is not the case in the Guadeloupe and other French colonies, although they do learn French as a national language, they speak their native languages as well.

2-3 The Ethnocentric Form of Communication

Ethnocentric communicators treat some people as native of the culture and some others as non-native. Those labeled as natives are the ones ethnocentric communicators consider to be in their own group, they can engage in interaction between each other with ease because their resources (stories or versions of the truth) are not at risk; they can share the same cultural stories and ways of understanding the world.

With interacting with those considered non-native, ethnocentric communicators are not open to change because they believe that their ways of understanding are the best and most true. Fundamentally they believe their culture is superior, while all non-native groups are considered inferior, wrong, and even a threat (Grimes, Richard 8).

All differences that one can express with non-native are seen as disagreements and sources of conflict (Pearce 15). An example of ethnocentrism can be found in the origin of the Greek word barbaras and it referred to those people who did not speak the same language as Greeks. Bar –bar was taken as the sound that a dog makes. The Greeks, in a classic example of ethnocentrism, considered those whose speech they could not understand to be on the same level as dogs, which also could not be understood. They did grant people the right to be different than them, but only in a clearly inferior way.

2-4 The Modernistic Form of Communication

Modernist communicators treat everyone they meet as non-native and their ways of changing are open because they always live in progress, seeing constant development and change as more important than connection and understanding (Grimes, Richard 14). For them, quite simply, it is more important to be up-to-date than to be understood.

If it means a lack of connection with others, any and everyone included, then these communicators, then so be it. Thus they tend not to see themselves as part of a clearly defined group, because a group would imply some level of stasis. Therefore there are “no critics for not keeping up with long-lasting values” (Grimes, Richard 15). They also stress the importance of the individual in making judgments and taking action. Taking their lead from the Enlightenment, they live in the manner of Martin Luther, chose to overthrow Catholic practices because they did not fit his own interpretations of the scriptures and deemed the individual perspective as paramount when considering a relationship with God (Pearce 5). The cosmopolitan form of communication takes useful elements from each of the other three forms and develops them in an attempt to describe a way in which people might conceptualize and perform communication such that they could peacefully co-exist and thrive despite considerable differences in worldview.

2-5 The Cosmopolitan Communication

Pearce defines a cosmopolitan communication view as one, such that, “everyone is treated as both similar and different” (Pearce 17). They are at the same time “not like us” in how they interpret the world differently; but also “like us” in how they have developed ways of looking at the world similar to ours in form, not in content (Rossmann 35). She goes on to note that: “The cosmopolitan communicator, mindful of differences in interpretive criteria seeks neither to erase these differences in self nor in others, but to respect them and use them as a basis for establishing a new, common, and sometimes necessarily temporary set of criteria” (35).

Disagreement through difference can be seen as positive because “cosmopolitan communicators see disagreement as an opportunity for learning of different ways of constructing reality”(Sietar 1) and choose to interpret them as resources, provided that they do not completely block coordination between people. Besides, they think all of us are born unfinished and become whom they are through cultural learning (Grimes, Richard 9).

The West and Arab relations are based on a number of misconceptions; Arab Muslims believe that the West sees them as different and inferior to themselves in the sense that Muslims are “fanatic, violent, and lacking tolerance” (Pew Research), they represent a threat for the western civilization and values. From the western side, the West believes that Arab Muslims treat them different “selfish, Immoral, and greedy” (Pew Research Center). Nothing highlights this chasm more clearly, suggests Pew Center than the West and the Arab Muslims response over the Danish Cartoons; Muslims say that westerners don’t respect their Islamic religions, and majorities of both the Americans and Europeans blame Muslims intolerance to different points of view. Bringing cosmopolitan communication into their relationships provides the opportunity to establish trust and initiate collaboration.

CHAPTER THREE: PERCEPTION OF ISLAM IN WESTERN MEDIA AND CULTURE FROM 9/11 TO THE ARAB SPRING

The third chapter examines the perspectives of the West and the Arab Muslims as it is represented in the media, both electronic and print, from 9/11, 2001 through the events labeled the Arab spring, which began in 2010. The analysis includes issues related to word choice and the consistency with which each side is depicted in their perspective media outlets. A particular focus will be an examination of the coverage related to the publication of the Mohammed cartoons in a Danish newspaper. In addition, coverage of the Arab spring by CNN and Al Jazeera Arabic channels are highlighted due to their respective representation of the West and Arab countries, as well as their global reach.

3-1 The Perception of the West Towards the Arab Muslims Post 9/11

Immediately following the attacks 9/11, the mainstream media along with other editorial sources, modified their information strategies, going from more “moderate approaches to a classical Orientalist frame work” (Kumar 1). Kumar Deepa, author of *Framing Islam: Media Construction of the Middle East post 9/11* observed that Islamic people, on one side, are the forces of destruction, represented by the Islamic extremism, on the other side, in contrast, are democracy and freedom, represented by the US and its allies. This media strategy “cultivated an environment of ideology and ethnocentrism among its citizens” (Itq. in Hutcheson 2004, (Trevino, Kanso, Nelson 3), where there is only one-way to report the attack, “**We** symbolized good, **they** symbolized evil” (3). For the next six years following the attack, reports discussing both Islam and Arab Muslims appeared on an almost daily basis, both in print and broadcast media throughout the west (Dunsky 2).

For instance, data from 2003, analyzing British newspapers, showed an explosion of coverage on Islam. These topics accounted for 24 percent of the total news coverage in the Guardian and 30 percent in the Times (6). This increase, of course, is also related to the Iraq war, which began in March of 2003. In 2008, for example, the Times included 162 references to Islam and Muslims and the Sun 62 (Poole 6) especially with a reference to the London Airport bombing, which happened the year prior. American Newspapers demonstrated a similar amount of coverage with the same viewpoint: the New York Times and the Washington Post had the highest percentage in the unfavorable category in their portrayal of Muslims both before and after 9/11 (Trevina, Kanso, Nelson 11).

The consistency of coverage in both British and American media demonstrates what is known as “a framework of interpretation” (Poole 6). Islam, for example, was almost never explained within this coverage, leaving much room for interpretation regarding the nature of Islam and its many variations (Trevino, Kanso, Nelson 3). Adding to the perceptual problem is that the term Jihad has simply been interpreted as bloodshed, tyranny, holy war (Itq. in Abdullah 1), whereas the majority of Muslims understand the term as meaning a “struggle to be good” (Itq. in Abdullah 4). Western papers tend to offer either negatively biased interpretations of Islam or of terms such as Jihad, or none at all, leaving readers with the freedom to infer from the data presented to them without additional clarifying information to assist in evaluating the perspective presented.

The bias is carried through the media, in substantial part, by word choices that convey a negative stereotype. The following examples illustrate this concern for shows how the media portrayed the Arab Muslims during this time period:

A- Islamic Terrorism: the most significant shift in the coverage of Arab Muslims in the Western media was a direct blanket association with terrorism; “Muslims terrorists” is often perceived as a consequence of 9/11 (Itq. In Madani 1999, Semati 1997)

Being the enemy, the Arab Muslims were portrayed as wanting to destroy the West through violence because they are not capable of democracy, “they can only produce despotism” (Kumar 11). With the constant presence of Islamic terrorism in the western media, European and American audiences felt they were always at risk of being stuck by a terrorist attack; a Dutch research states, “when news on terrorism is discussed more and more and images of terrorists attacks are repeatedly shown over and over, this will lead to an overestimation of the risk of terrorism” (Drik 3)

For any accident or fire, for example, people were being conditioned to think of a terrorist attack, as a consequence, they find themselves in a daily stress and fear.

B- Categorization: In most references, many of the following adjectives are used beheading, assassin, radical, fundamentalist, extremist, fanatic, bomber, in addition to the use of terrorist (Trevino, Kanso, Nelson 11). As a consequence, once a person is labeled in this way, action against them does not have to be justified, says Poole (7). Quite often, right after 9/11 Muslims in America were questioned, “detained, refused legal representation, no family visits were allowed sometimes tortured without any specific charges” (Abdo 83), as a result of the USA Patriotic ACT, which gave greater power to law enforcement, “to intrude on the daily lives of American citizens and legal residents” (83), especially those of Arab Muslim origins.

3-2 The Arab Spring in the Western Media

During the early months of 2011 the Middle East and North Africa saw a wave of protest that was later called the Arab Spring. At first, Western governments seemed “to be taken wrong-footed by the surprise” (Golan 360), which might explain the hesitant reaction they had, “wanting to position themselves between supporting the youth’s aspirations to freedom and dignity, and historic allies as Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak or Tunisia’s Zine El Abidine Ben Ali” (360).

It also explains the few articles and research papers that the West published related to the various Arab nation revolutions, were more about Egypt and Syria, important areas for Western policies, than about the other countries involved in the wave of uprisings. For instance, the study of *European newspapers framing the 2011 Egyptian revolution* addressed the Egyptian revolution from an op-ed (opposite editorial) standpoint. The opposite editorial is “a forum for the articulation of divergent opinions absent of institutional connections” (Itq. in Shipley, 2004). Op-ed pieces, mainly written by academics and experts “to attract new readers, improve the quality of debate, and inform readers about salient issues” (Itq. in Rosenfeld, 2000), help to frame issues for the readers. One study examined the content of two elite newspapers, the International Herald Tribune and the European version of the Wall Street Journal, and found that “interpreted and advocated divergent policy stances regarding the demonstrations in Egypt for western readers” (Golan 360). The content focuses on the authors, the sources, and the arguments that were presented in the opinion section.

The analysis indicates that following the day of the Egyptian revolution; nearly 39% of the op-ed articles discussed the revolution (364). Authors were, for the most part, American and Western academics that considered the future democracy, which might emerge as result of Mubarak's departure. They also analyzed the historical causes of the revolt, which were manly due to the dictatorial nature of the regime and the lack of basic freedoms (364)

With respect to the Syrian revolution, the vast majority of reports coming from many different sources, such as journalists and rebels' videos helped the western media form one mainstream statement about the unfolding crisis in Syria. This report is summarized in the *Global Research* analysis by Stephen Gowans who says that Al Assad army, "topple down peaceful pro-democracy protesters, forcing them to take up arms" (par.1) and fight back. This statement is supported by members of the US government, such as John McCain, who was a fervent proponent of USA air strikes on Syria. McCain denounced the Syrian regime "that is murdering tens of thousands of its own people in order to remain in power" (McCain par.8). By the third year of the war, the western media seem to develop a different picture of the Syrian revolution, resulting from stories such as one in which some of the rebels savagely killed seven soldiers from the Syrian army; demonstrating "how many rebels have adopted some of the same brutal ruthless tactics as the regime they are trying to overthrow" (Chivers, n-pag).

However, in general, many journalists express the opinion that the coverage by the Western media gave the Arab Spring an international voice they otherwise might not have. Cottle Simon, author of *Media and the Arab Uprisings*, says, “The news media in the United Kingdom in contrast, appeared to grant early recognition to the protestors’ aims” (McCain 9). The media in the kingdom did not wait for the British government statement. Along with other western media, “it helped legitimate the Arab protests” (Simon 9).

From the studies above, it is important to understand the varying degrees and differing nature of how the western media covered the Arab spring in the Middle East and across North Africa. Although all the revolutions of the various countries aimed to achieve freedom and democracy, by ousting the old dictatorships that were for a long time supported by the West, the media in the west offered a selective coverage of those protest movements that often supported the protestors. While the western media covered the peaceful transition to democracy in Egypt with greater objectivity than it had all stories related to Arab Muslims since 9/11, it also led a strong campaign against Assad regime by supporting the rebels.

In turns, this leads to the question: What was the effect of the coverage of 9/11 and the Arab Spring in the Arab Muslim culture? Did Arab Muslims change their generally negative and suspicious views towards the west, once they demonstrated support for the wave of demonstrations?

3-3 The Event of 9/11 in the Arab Muslim Media

From the Arab Muslim media perspective, 9/11 attack was generally portrayed a big American lie, as shown by the report on Muslim-Western relations released on July 21 of 2011 of a study conducted by Pew Research Center, which asked Muslims in eight countries –including Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Pakistan- whether they thought groups of Arabs carried out the 9/11 attacks on the USA. In each country, less than 30% of the respondents believed the idea to be true (Qtd. Trager par.2). This might explain why there are few, and those that are tend to be limited, printed materials on the Arab Muslims view of the 9/11 attack.

This is summarized in Al-Ahram, the Egyptian weekly newspaper, which reported on the mixed feelings of the Arab Muslims in the Middle East, who “condemned the attacks, expressed their sympathy for the loss of civilians but criticized the U.S government for its racist policies towards the Arab Muslims and support of Israel” (Al-Ahram n.a).

Although research focused on how, in both the Arab electronic and print papers, reporting the 9/11 attack was limited. As a consequence, in dealing with this event, political cartoons proved to be an important mode of communication. Arabs and Muslims used them after 9/11 in printed media to “express a vivid and an obvious message” (Diamond 270). Basically, “readers were told what is happening in the world, what to think, and how to feel about it” (Etefa 2). One typical study examines political cartoons in Arabs and Muslims’ newspapers including Al Ahram of Egypt, Nowrooz the daily Iranian, and the Pakistani’s Dawn newspaper.

Close attention to the cartoons reveal many topics including “description of the events of September 11 and the World Trade Center site; glorification or demonization of Osama bin Laden; and use of costumes, masks, and puppets to imply esoteric truth or power” (Etefa 21).

Among other themes, the cartoons depict the U.S. “as a powerful, a well equipped cowboy, but often stupid, blind, or misled soldier” (21). Next, they make fun and ridicule the U.S. showing its incompetence in its hunt for bin Laden. Finally, they describe the fear of the Arab world about who would be the next country to be invaded by the USA after Afghanistan and Iraq (21)

If the coverage of 9/11 did not seem of great importance from the Arab Muslim viewpoint, the Arab Spring had unlimited coverage and analysis in the printed material across the countries involved, from North Africa to the Middle East.

However and since the emphasis of the present study is to analyze the impact of the Arab Spring on the Arab Muslim view vis-à-vis the West, it is important to evaluate whether Muslims’ view change after the Americans and the West supported the Arab Spring; The next section will attempt to answer the question.

3-4 The Impact of the Arab Spring on the Image of the West and the USA in the Arab

Muslim Countries

After the US and the West supported the Arab Spring, a survey conducted by Pew Research Center’s Global Attitudes’ Projects from March 21 to April 26 of 2011 states, in its opening *The Arab Spring Fails to Improve US Image*, that the “rise of pro-democracy movements has not led to an improvement in America’s image in the region”.

To the question: are the Arab Muslims favorable to America, only 10% in Turkey approved, Pakistan (11%), Jordan (13%), Palestine (18%) and Egypt (20%). Why this hate although the west changed its view? The question was raised by Mohamed El-Bendary in his book, *The Ugly American in the Arab Mind*, he states, “The aggressive policy led by president George Bush by invading Iraq and Afghanistan and the war on terror resulting in stereotyping the Arabs and Muslims in the US and the West” (218) are among the reasons why Arab Muslims are not favorable to America. Other reasons include the fact that the US is still perceived as helplessness or weak in the face of Israel intransigence over the peace process. The US for instance, either refuses to condemn the Israel violence policy perpetuated against the Palestinian or blocks any UN resolutions against Israel, using the Veto. The other perception is that “America had propped up many of those demonstrations in the Arab Spring, only to abandon them ungracefully” (Jones n-pag).

In fact, the US did abandon the Bahraini demonstrators for instance, when Washington did not oppose the use of Saudi tanks to crush down the peaceful demonstration in 2011.

So from a Middle East perspective, there is a lot of talk about democracy, but not much chance in the western behavior.

The social media played a pivotal role during the peaceful demonstrations in the Arab streets, which brought down regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and pressed for change in other countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

It is no surprise that many studies called the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the Internet Revolution or the YouTube Revolutions, “Facebook, and YouTube, personal blogs have been used as an insider perspective to the ongoing revolutions” (Storck, 6). Perhaps, the best example, the Tunisian revolution started when Al Jazeera Arabic aired a video from YouTube showing the Tunisian vegetable vendor Mohamed Bouazizi self-immolation. His suicide came after a policewoman slapped him. “Given the “youth bulge” in the Arab world, where between 55 and 70 percent of the population is under the age of thirty (DeLong-Bas n-pag). The social media are opening a new communication territory both in terms of “ accessing other people ideas and in terms of individual expression” (DeLong-Bas).

Social media can also be used to improve the communication between the West and the Arab world, for example, it is already being used between Jew and Arabs on the Facebook page, like the one launched in 2013 between Jew and Arab youth and called, “Jews love Muslims Muslims love Jews”. Mohamed one of the Muslim members says, “One of my Jihads is to bring Peace between Muslims and Jews”

As an additional example of the dichotomy between the media of the West and Arabs is an analysis of how the two channels CNN and Aljazeera Arabic, covered the controversy of the Danish Cartoons and the Arab Spring.

3-5 The Coverage of the Danish Cartoons by Aljazeera Arabic and CNN Channels

On September 2005, Jyllands –Posten, a Danish conservative newspaper, published twelve cartoons “depicting the prophet Mohamed as a terrorist” (Qtd. in The Guardian). Not surprisingly, the Muslim leaders in Denmark felt outraged and saw this as an offense to the Islamic faith, “which prohibits any physical representation of the prophet Mohamed” (Douai, n.pag). Both the government and the newspaper, which professed their freedom of expression and the press, dismissed the request for an apology. The spread of the controversy gained momentum, which resulted from the decision by many western newspapers to republish the cartoons in support to the Danish newspaper, viewed as offensive to the Denmark Muslims leaders who initiated a campaign in the Middle East against Denmark.

Violent demonstrations then went spread across the Muslim world, resulting in destruction of many European Embassies in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Egypt as well as the boycott of the Danish products by the Arab Muslims. This international incident has posed a significant question about how the western and the Arab Muslims media presented the coverage of Mohamed cartoons. This analyzes of the coverage from Aljazeera Arabic and CNN views representing the Arab Muslims and the west perceptions, illustrates the contrast in perspective as presented in the media on both sides.

While both channels refused to show the cartoons “in respect for Islam and not to offend the viewers” (Hoft n.pag) believing their role is to cover the events surrounding the publication of the cartoons not necessarily adding fuel to the crisis itself, nonetheless, their intense coverage and the frame created a global conflict. “When the controversy began, Aljazeera Arabic channel increased its coverage” (Asharq Al-Awsat n.a).

IT produced a series of talk shows; the first “Behind the News” was aired on January 21, 2006 and framed the problem around the causes of the insults against the prophet and whether the Arab and Muslim complaints were enough to stop it, or whether greater efforts were needed to do so?

“The message is clearly about a boycott call and a need for more diplomatic and political pressure” (Lynch n.pag), the second show also called “Behind the News” and was hosted by Faisal al-Qassem, February 3. This one aired just as the crisis was really deepening. Al-Qassem, known to be the most provocative host on Aljazeera, discussed how to interpret the solidarity of the European newspapers with the insult to Islam.

The show took a political focus when the host related the Danish cartoons to the electoral victory of Hamas and the standoff over Iran’s nuclear program (Lynch). The third show “Open Dialogue” aired on February 4th and framed the discussion around the boundaries between the sacred and the profane, meaning where the line protecting religious beliefs should be drawn (Lynch). Even if these shows did only incite boycotts and protests, violence came after Sheikh Yusuf al Qaradawi, the highest Sunni figure in the Muslim world, declared on Aljazeera, that February 3, 2006 should be an “international day of anger” although he advised the Muslims to protest peacefully (Al Shariah wal Hayet). This analysis illustrates how Aljazeera did more than cover the Danish cartoons; it was behind a real campaign to expose the west conspiracy against Islam and Arabs.

When the coverage focuses on coupling images and description of violence as in CNN's case, covering the Danish cartoons was an opportunity to re expose Samuel Huntington's thesis, the Clash of civilization between the west, champion of freedom and the Arab Muslims, leaders of violence. Indeed, when CNN journalist Brent Sadler introduced a segment interview with Flemming Rose, the culture editor of the Danish newspaper, he stated,

“Ten thousands of Muslims demonstrated in the Middle East, Asia and Africa on yet another deadly day of protest.....With other protests from Asia to Africa, Denmark's prime minister, now calls the situation a growing global crisis” (Qtd. in Powers 353).

His introduction was followed by Tom Foreman, a CNN correspondent, who interpreted the growing global crisis using Samuel Huntington's narrative, “Starting here in Africa, going through the Middle East here...These protests span the world... This is precisely what Osama bin Laden has said for years that he wants, a clash of civilization between the entire Muslim world and the entire western world” (Qtd. in Powers 353). Showing violence repeatedly and describing the clash between the two worlds is a clear message that incites both against each other. On the other hand, when Rose offered an apology stressing his deep respect for the Islamic faith, it went unnoticed because at that precise moment, CNN chose to show the images of escalating violence again, which encouraged the stereotype of Muslims as violent and intolerant, “instead of seizing the opportunity of finding ways for cross cultural rapprochement” (Powers 353).

Consequently, the focus stayed on violence and did not change to offer opportunities to build bridges between Muslims and the west and solve this conflict. Instead, and due to the repeated presentation images depicting violent demonstrators burning flags and throwing stones at the western embassies, his apology was considered a weakness in the face of the Muslim enemy.

Serving the ideology of ethnocentric view, both Aljazeera and CNN succeeded in inflaming public opinions from each side. Consequently, the conflict took an ideological turn and divided the world between Arab Muslim and Western Christian.

Despite the similar reaction perceived in the Arab Muslims countries during the Danish Cartoons controversy, this assumption is also a driven force. Just to mention how different were the Arab countries reactions to the Arab Spring and their support to the Palestinians.

Although the Saudi official religious ideology is the Wahhabi sect, the Saudi state did not backup the Brotherhood movement of Egypt and was quiet concerned by Mohamed Morsi election as president because “Saudi likes order and stability more than it likes political Islam.” (Cole). On the other hand, even if the Arab Muslims wants to support the Palestinian cause, they will express it differently. For example, “the Egyptians under General Sisi have destroyed the smuggling tunnels between Sinai and Gaza” (Cole) that served as a lifeline for Gazans hit by the Israeli siege.

3-6 Covering the Arab Spring from CNN and Aljazeera Perspectives

The uprisings in the Arab Muslim world constitute the first time “since 9/11 that Arabs were not portrayed as barbarians, terrorists, or imbeciles” by the West (Salaita, 134). The USA and Europe supported the Arab uprisings and so did the most of the world media.

Anderson Cooper, a correspondent for CNN, exposed the Egyptian government lies during the demonstrations when he noted “the Egyptian vice president Suleiman says, we should praise the young Egyptians for guiding us towards the path of democracy while police and army had detained more than 119 people since the start of the demonstrations” (Cooper).

However, and according to Salaita, author of *Corporate American Media Coverage of Arab Revolutions* study, “Corporate media have expressed little interest in the well-being of Arab societies, instead focusing on how events would affect the well-being of Israel” (133). For instance CNN online, which points at the changes brought by the Arab Spring that “swept away some of Israel’s old regional allies” (Robertson, 4 par.). Salaita also suggests that the coverage of the Arab Spring was different from one country to another; this difference “determined whether a particular tyrant was a United States enemy or client” (133).

The demonstrations in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, for instance, were simply ignored while at the same time the war in Syria has been and continues to be highlighted; *Five Reasons why Syria’s War Suddenly Looks more Dangerous* was the paper published on CNN online in May10, 2013 (Lister).

Finally, even when the media expressed sympathy and admiration for the people who agitated to produce the Arab Spring, it did not acknowledge the potential compatibility between political Islam with democracy (134). *Success of Egypt's Islamists Raises Questions for West*, another article, published by CNN online on December 7, 2011, at the time of the Muslim Brotherhood party victory with more than 40% of the vote in the Egyptian elections (Pearson), illustrates the lack of conviction expressed by journalists in the likelihood of Arab democracy. Thus the Western media and governments supported the Arab Spring while at the same time not wavering from support of their interests, and those of their permanent ally, in the region: Israel.

How did Al Jazeera Arabic analyze the view of Arab Muslims towards the West after its support of the Arab Spring? The answer is that if the Arab Awakening changed the perspective of some Americans regarding the Arab Muslim world, it did not extinguish Muslim anger towards U.S. policies in the region. This was and continues to be the perspective that Al Jazeera Arabic broadcast through its talk shows and analysis. First, much analysis focused on the western position to the Arab uprisings.

The illusion, held by many, that the West is in control of all situations, was shown to be just that, and this was brought forth by the Arab media when it broke the monopoly of the news and images, usually provided by the Western media side only; Mohammed Fal Wald Al Moujtabah, an Aljazeera analyst, supports this claim when he says, “despite a perpetual follow up of the Arab region, revolutions surprised western governments, their positions were thus characterized by confusion”. (Did the Arab Revolutions drop the West 2011?)

He further considered that the revolutions “dropped the legendary image of the West in the minds of many people”. (Drop the West) The West had ceased to be in control of all situations in the Arab Muslim world by supporting the old regimes, “to maneuver and direct events according to their own agendas”. The uprisings had exposed this illusion to all.

The second point of analysis examines the role of the Arab networks and channels in breaking the monopoly of the news and images usually brought almost exclusively to world audiences by the western media, Marwan Bishara, Aljazeera political analyst and professor of international relations, states in the *Western Media View of the Arab*

Revolutions:

“Aljazeera and other Arabic channels broke the monopoly of Western media and some agencies News, which were supplying the majority of events in the world with news and pictures bringing non-stereotypical images of Arab youth from the Arab man, all this openness surprised the West and was forced to deal with it positively.”

As a consequence, one of the challenges faced by the administration of President Obama was to convince skeptical Arab Muslims that America and Europe really were supportive of the Arab revolutions. According to Stephen Cal, quoted in *America and Arabs,*

“Today Muslims believe that the struggle continues because Western culture is always undermining the Islamic culture and, most importantly, that the Western powers have earned the image of a massive military dominant of the Islamic world”.

Clearly, among those in the Arab countries, there is this mistrust and fear that support by the US and European governments, for the uprisings, is temporary and based on western interests. As one Arab observer noted “The West is not evil pure or good, but governed by interests”, states Dr. Suheil Al Ghanoushi in his analysis published by Aljazeera.net “ *Arabs and the West Before and After the Revolution*”

He went on to elaborate his position regarding how he believes that Arab youth should approach the West. He first detailed his perspective the western way of thinking, explaining that Europe and the USA, are governed by interests, translated into clear objectives and plans, which are implemented with discipline. Their achievements are always assessed with an eye towards creating better results. He then compared western governments, which are elected by their people on the basis of national interests and the Arab regimes, which are isolated from the people and as a result, their legitimacy eroded; “they are ready to overcook their national interests in order to stay in power, this is the reason why both sides encounter difficulties to deal with each other”, says Dr. Al Ghanoushi, who also adds, “the youth need to adopt a new approach in dealing with the West based on systematic understanding and getting rid of ideological approach” (Al Ghanoushi).

Throughout the third chapter data and analysis main focus was to highlight the expression in the media of an ethnocentric view, as defined by CMM, from both the Arab Muslims and the West, substantiated by scholarly printed materials and from the western and Arab networks, CNN and Aljazeera.net.

CHAPTER FOUR: CMM AND THE ARAB MUSLIMS/WEST NEW COMMUNICATION APPROACH

From the above analysis, it is reasonable to assert that most difficulties encountered by both the Arab Muslims and the West are a result of “misperceptions” as described by Dr. Mathieu Guidere and Newton Howard in their paper, *The Clash of Perceptions*. On the Muslim side, misperceptions lie in the image that Muslims have on westerners in general and on Americans in particular. For example, the war in Iraq has been perceived as a war between the American Christians and the Arab Muslims, since for Muslims “the USA is a country comprised only of a hardline of Christians without any other religion” (Guidere, Howard 5). On the American side, all Muslims are one bloc, containing nothing but fanatics and consequently there is only one “Muslim experience” (Guidere and Howard, 6). Illustrating this point was the incident regarding the publication of Danish cartoons depicting Mohamed, which was marked as a European effort to defend the freedom of the press, while Muslims “see the Danes and others as extremists who wanted to blemish the image of Islam and the prophet Mohamed” (6)

Given the current situation of Arab Muslims and the West, built on misconception that serve to facilitate an ethnocentric pattern of communication, the question posed is how can a CMM analytical approach facilitate a shift from the misconception that results in an ethnocentric pattern which only serves to perpetuate a dangerous tension?

4-1-How can a CMM analysis approach shed light on the tensions in the co-constructed conflicts between the Arab Muslims and the West and reduce these tensions while foster a new level of cooperation?

The answer to this question lies in what Barnett Pearce labels cosmopolitan communication, which he considers the most likely form to achieve better social worlds, especially among those with incommensurate understandings of reality. To achieve the cosmopolitan form of communication, we first need to move our understanding of communication to one that conceptualizes it as a perspective, rather than as simply a way of transmitting and receiving information or messages (Parrish-Sprowl).

From a communication perspective, rather than talking at people hoping that they understand and agree with you, it is important for people to engage in dialogue as defined and discussed in a manner similar to what Buber suggests (Buber 1958, Qtd in Abd al-Hayy Michael Weinman 19). Dialogue, in this sense, Buber thinks is “creating new relationships between people who usually do not talk with each other – and who, when they do, tend to communicate in an adversarial way” (Buber). Such is the case of Arab Muslims and the West; both sides do talk, but never communicate in the dialogic sense.

Based on CMM in general, and the concept of cosmopolitan communication in particular, as developed by Pearce and others, Parrish-Sprowl provides a set of resources that can serve as a guide to those who wish to engage in conversation designed to create constructive social change (Parrish-Sprowl 2014).

These resources include the suggestion that questions be given more primacy than statements, that participants should mirror each other to improve listening and check for mutual understanding, and a set of key questions that each interactant should constantly ask of their self prior to engaging in any given speech act (Parrish-Sprowl). For the present analytical purpose, these resources will be applied to the Arab Muslims and the westerners. First, it is suggested that both Arab Muslims and Westerners need to shift their thinking and practice from making statements, especially those designed to inflame, to asking questions in an effort to develop greater understanding and empathy.

Second, they should consider their choices of what they should say and how they should say it with the aim of producing a constructive dialogue, not simply tit for tat jabs, as they have so often in the past. For this, it is recommended that the interrogative form of communication is a good way to start because it helps facilitate a dialogue, and it holds the possibility of moving the conversation forward by promoting insight, empathy, and understanding rather than reciprocating diatribe. Another reason why asking questions is important is that it promotes reflective participation in the conversation, by creating as focus on being listeners, at least as much, if not more so, than being talkers. Finally, asking questions encourages the others to share and be part of the critical thinking process as well, facilitating the movement towards a mutual solution, one that captures the best of both sides (Parrish-Sprowl, 2014).

At this juncture in history, the communication between the Arab Muslims and the West is based on a disputation, where each party throws accusations at the other without any evident attempt to listen, understand and respond in kind to each other. If the situation is to change, then both parties need to shift to a cosmopolitan form that privileges dialogue over argumentation. It would facilitate dialogue if both Arab Muslims and the West thought about the statement “whatever I say next is my choice and what choice would move us in the direction of constructive dialogue” states Parrish-Sprowl (22)

For example, the choice to criticize a religion, in this case Islam, since it is in the European media tradition to do so, would be better taken by the Arab Muslims if it were to be preceded by a meeting with the Muslim leaders in Denmark in which an appropriate way to portray Islam without offending Muslims would be discussed or as has been noted “they should do little research before they write or depict something” (Martin and Chaney 5). In turn, the Arab Muslims reaction would be less negative if the Muslims leaders of Denmark did not inflame the crowds by spreading the news of the cartoons in the Middle East and North Africa, since the humor was not meant for those people but for the Danish audience (4)

Much of the interaction between Arab Muslims and the West has been contentious and thus the effort is more on being right, and consequently trying hard to win an argument against the other side than building functional, working partners in peace.

From a cosmopolitan perspective, being effective in developing a good quality relationship is more important than being right in an argument, because being effective creates a dialogue whereas trying to be right creates an endless and often dead-end debate. This resource can play a major role in building the bridge of trust and mutual respect between, for instance Iran and the USA. Instead of an argument based on the notion that Iran cannot develop a nuclear weapon, and, in turn, that America is the devil, the dialogue should take the form of how do we want a Middle East free of nuclear danger and how can Iran be included in a Middle East cooperation process based on developing economic relationships with the USA.

Along with the process of being effective in facilitating constructive dialogue, communicators can improve understanding through the art of mirroring which is predicated on summarizing and repeating what the other part says in a way that makes them feel understood (Parrish-Sprowl 24) we should recognize when anger or frustration are taking hold in the body and ask ourselves both how that is connected to what is being said and how might we respond to reduce, rather than give into, feelings that can undermine an otherwise constructive dialogue. In this way we interact with a great ability to produce a more desirable emotional environment for the conversation) and where confusion or misinterpretation can be discussed and reconciled. In negotiations a third party, such as when President Carter worked with the Israelis and Egyptians, can facilitate this.

The effort to engage a cosmopolitan communication form in contentious relationships, celebrates a dialogue where mutual respect is demonstrated through intent listening and caring, and recognizing the other person as present and important in the conversational space. Indeed, Parrish-Sprowl adds another skill to aid in achieving quality cosmopolitan communication; the one that extends conversation to include the whole body, “we need to learn to recognize body feelings as not simply reactions to messages but realize that they are part of messages” he says (25). For example, we should recognize when anger or frustration are taking hold in the body and ask ourselves both how that is connected to what is being said and how might we respond to reduce, rather than give into, feelings that can undermine an otherwise constructive dialogue. In this way we interact with a great ability to produce a more desirable emotional environment for the conversation

In addition, of course, we should be mindful of nonverbal communication and the cultural variation that gives rise to differing ways of presenting attitudes, feeling, and respect for other. For example, saying, “yes” to someone should be followed with nodding to reinforce the position. Also people from Mediterranean region like Algerians and Italians tend to use their hands while speaking because it is part of the message and this should be understood within the context.

4-2 How Might a CMM Analysis Be Used to Suggest an Alternative Conversational Form to Mitigate Tension and Misunderstanding Between the Arab Muslims and the West?

The findings I present here are, by the nature of the situation, incomplete, as any study will be; they are based on what is offered in terms of a cosmopolitan approach of communication by theorists, along with studies from both sides, rather than by any attempt to engage in this way from either party. In this section I will add a layer of analysis that will be based on the research, books, and lectures presented by Dr. Tariq Ramadan because, more so than any other scholar, his studies examine how the Muslim world and the West can communicate together on a common ground. Thus, the idea for instance, that Muslims should contribute instead of trying to integrate is a potential one in terms of cosmopolitan approach of communication.

Other scholars and observers, in addition to Ramadan, also present analyses that support the notion that CMM can be applied to build an effective communication approach between the West and the Arab Muslim world. For example, the work done by Darrell Ezell with a focus on how the presence of religious attaché in American embassies could play a major role in understanding the Muslim perspective and encouraging interfaith dialogue, provides a practical suggestion that would facilitate a cosmopolitan conversation (Ezell, 2010). By engaging in direct communication Ezell says, explaining Pearce theory “The participants must aspire to a more substantive and detailed form of exchange” (290).

This is consistent with the cosmopolitan form, which focuses on how dialogue is making the social world rather than simply just talking about it (Pearce³). An example that illustrates the efficacy of CMM to achieve peace between groups is the peace-building project sponsored by the Institute of Maluku Tengah in Indonesia in 2003 and led by the Public Dialogue Consortium, an organization created by Pearce Barnett and his associates to promote dialogue between persons, groups, and communities. The project held many discussion forums between the leaders and youth of two groups, which resulted in resolving a conflict between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia, which had lasted four years and left more than six thousands deaths and five hundred thousand people displaced prior to this intervention (interfaith Peace-building 4).

Going back to the theory framework, Pearce suggests four CMM concepts; the communication perspective, coherence, coordination and mystery (Pearce⁵, 1989). The present study will take into account these four concepts since it aims to bridge the gap of communication between two worlds, which are different in many ways but can be capable of coordinating their efforts in order to construct a shared world with tolerance; the West on one side and the Arab Muslims on the other.

When we approach a circumstance from a communication perspective, we are less interested in “what happened as a result of” the dialogue (looking through communication) and more interested in “what got made” in the conversation and what kind of social world was created in the process? (looking at communication) (Interfaith⁷).

As a result, taking a communication perspective in the Arab Muslims and the West relation demonstrates that looking into the process of communication can be more effective than looking through it, which will help construct a better world that they can make together.

Based on the above analysis and examples, making better social worlds between the West and the Arab Muslims can be translated into; how should the western media report on the Arab Muslim world, what role can the western Muslims play in bringing both worlds closer, developing a new public diplomacy with the Arab street, and what input can Islamic ethics bring to the western society.

A- The Western Media and Reporting About the Arab Muslim World

Since the negative perception of Arab Muslims in the western media and printed material has a major role in influencing how westerners view Muslims, many scholars offer suggestions regarding how reporting about the Arab Muslim world should be conducted. Dr. Tariq Ramadan states that the information in many papers and interviews that were devoted to Islam and Muslims in the western media since 9/11, “stays superficial, partial, and frequently confused among journalists and academic circles” (Ramadan, 23). Other note that this occurs because western journalists often lack training and knowledge to tell these stories, says Geneive Abdo (47).

First, and in terms of basic knowledge, Ramadan explains that there is only one Islam as defined by the unity of its beliefs; God the Almighty, the Angels, the Prophets, the Holy Books He sent, the Day of Judgment, and the predestination. These are called the six pillars of faith, and the unity of its practice or the five pillars of Islam, which every Muslim should practice including; bearing witness that there is only one God and Mohamed is his Messenger, praying five times a day, fasting the month of Ramadan, giving charity to the poor, and performing pilgrimage once in life whenever one is able to. Both Sunnite and Shi'ite traditions draw this unity from the two bodies of founding texts; the Quran and the Sunnah or the sayings of the prophet Mohammed (Ramadan 23).

However, when we move from the unity of Islam, Ramadan states, there are two levels of diversity; the first one is the difference in reading and interpretation of the texts between reformists, traditionalists, rationalists, and mystical, which resulted in more than 30 schools founded by Sunnites and Shi'ites. The second level of diversity is the multiplicity of cultures that determines Muslims identities, their sense of belonging, and their vision of contemporary issues, adds Ramadan (24); A Muslim from Malaysia is different from the one in South Africa like an Arab Muslim from Algeria is different from a Middle Eastern one, also an African American Muslim does not have the same vision and identity as the Muslim immigrant. Knowing this basic information about Islam, schools of interpretation and the cultural diversity of Islam, is an important element for Western reporters who want to write about Muslims.

The various interpretations and diverse cultures of the Muslims are not the only two factors that influence how they perceive the West; Marda Dunsky suggests, “The history of U.S. policy and intervention in these regions—from the beginning of the cold war until today—is intimately connected to how Muslims throughout the world regard and react to us.” (n.Pag). In addition, she notes that without this perspective as part of the mix, the reporting on Arab Muslim world will remain incomplete, to solve this dilemma, she creates a seminar course called "Reporting the Arab and Muslim Worlds" where students / journalists can increase “their media literacy and knowledge about topics like Islamic diversity and U.S. public diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim worlds” (Dunsky) by mixing journalism with academic writing while applying five criteria; the balance, point of view, voice, context, and the framing. For Dunsky, a journalist report should take into account multiple sources, analyze the perspective of the view and check who is quoted, then state the historical background of the story and last examine what issues are included and which one are omitted and why.

After the training, many papers, published by major newspapers like the New York Times, reporting the Arab Muslim world, provided an objective source of material, adds Dunsky such as the three-part series “An Imam in America” written by Andrea Elliott who won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize. The paper was a detailed portrait of an Egyptian Imam leading Muslim congregations in New York City. “This and other examples show how coverage in the U.S. media went from one side story to giving voice to Muslims by relating their part of history and experiences” adds Dunsky.

From the readers' standpoint, it is important to read and develop a sense of critical and more understanding of another culture and faith. On the contrary, biased papers guide the readers to intolerance.

Encouraging the media to embrace the Islamic view is the essence of communication perspective, which raises awareness about differences and similarities.

B- Western Muslims are a link between the West and Arab Muslim Worlds

"In fact, Muslims living in the west can be as influential as western journalists and their role as significant", Abdul Malik Mujahid thinks. He is the executive director of Radio Islam.com, launched in Chicago, 1990. In the 1980s', Mujahid worried about the future relationship between Islam and America (Abdo 124). He sincerely believes that if American Muslims could "develop a healthy relationship with mainstream society" (124) this would be important for world peace. Launching a radio talk show was aimed to develop this "healthy relationship". But how can Radio Islam or other initiatives "above the cacophony of the 1500 Christian Radio Talk Shows, or TV commentators such as Bill O'Reilly telling Jewish callers that "this is a Christian country" asks Claire Hoertz Badaracco, professor of communication at the University of Milwaukee and author of *Improving American-Muslim Relations: The Responsibility of Public Speech*.

According to her, developing public speaking skill is an enterprise that needs to be accomplished by Muslims Americans "through strategic placement of key texts, training media spokespersons, and by working with the professionals who understand public opinion engineering and the science of public relations." (34) By doing so, the climate of confusion and suspicion will change leaving room to a more positive opinion in the minds of many Americans.

Besides, if the religious differences are the ones posing problem to the mainstream society, Muslim public speakers should be able to lay a dialogue where the focus is on common values and interests not on differences. John Esposito says, “Many differences enhance rather than threaten societies and should be tolerated in pluralistic societies, unless they threaten national security” (Qtd. In Islamophobia Today).

At the community level, these public speakers should include “religious leaders and scholars who must seek to see that change occurs in training the next generation of imams, priests, ministers and rabbis who influence the next generation of parents” (Esposito 2011 n. Pag). This is where the real challenge comes in for the western Muslims who must be the link between both worlds and contribute to western society. As detailed by Tariq Ramadan in his book, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, Muslims in the West could give back to their societies without sacrificing their Muslim faith and identities. Furthermore in a lecture presented at ICNA (Islamic Circle of North America) conference 2010, Tariq Ramadan explained why it is important to understand that western Muslim concept has more value than Muslims in the West since it embeds that a Muslim can be a westerner and a Muslim at the same time, and neither one should exclude the other.

Consequently, integration is a concept that should be updated, because the real challenge for western Muslims is not just fitting in, but in how they might contribute to better link the two sides. This contribution can have a global vision because “An American or European Muslim’s enemy is not the non- Muslim but anything that is wrong” according to Ramadan. This global vision can be translated into speaking against marginalization and poverty for instance.

These social problems can bring together all sides regardless of their faith or cultural background such as the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, a civil society movement created in 2005. This initiative brings together youth, women, and organization faith groups who are all “calling for an end to poverty and inequality in the world” (Global Call website). Another initiative is the Global Movement of Non-Violent Resistance, which was launched in 2009 against the Violent and Extremist Policy of the State of Israel but where the commitment is based on “unconditional and equal rejection of racism of any kind, be it anti-Jewish, anti-Arab, anti-Christian or anti-Muslim” (Ramadan7).

Another way for western Muslims to contribute on a global level is the field of education by interacting with public schools and being part of the textbook making process; Shabbir Mansuri created the Council on Islamic Education in 1990 after he noticed that wrong information about Islam and other religions were in the sixth grade social studies textbooks. Within the 450 pages, 10 covered several different world religions without naming them, “instead called, "Religion in Japan," "Religion among the Bedouin" and "Religion in France" — rather than talking about Shintoism and Buddhism, Islam or Catholicism”, states Mansuri (Qtd. in Hartley n- pag).

Indeed, when facts about religion are omitted, students will learn that religion in their lives is insignificant or not important. “Also the link between arts, history, literature, and contemporary life will be lost because there is no basic understanding of religious life and practice”, according to Mansuri (Hartley) So with other Muslims scholars, he led a campaign that has resulted in changing the way religion is taught in American public schools.

While Mormons for instance, often received little mention, with no other details in older textbooks, now Utah requires students to understand the contributions of Native American Indians by “exploring and knowing the Mormon pioneers' heritage influences.” (Hartley). The council has become the Institute on Religion and Civic Values and aims to correct the way all religions are taught in educational institutions and schools.

C- Developing a New Public Diplomacy With the Arab Street

Phillip Seib, Director of the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California thinks that, “the new dynamics of the Arab world requires a meaningful shift in public diplomacy strategy, with less emphasis on advertising and more on service”. In other words, the US government ought to connect more with the Arab youth, those who led the Arab Awakening because for many of us, this awakening was not only Facebook revolutions but also “people coming out in the street wanting to earn a living, have clean water, and keep their children healthy.” (Seib). These people are the real actors and the ones with whom Western countries should deal with. “ In the past, diplomacy was with leaders, now it should be with people”, said one of Seib’s North African friends.

Consequently, connecting with the street would encourage Washington to redesign its public diplomacy and “engage in a new communicative action at the grassroots level” (Ezell) A principal goal of U.S. public diplomacy should be to assist Arab Muslim communities and youth leaders who are engaged in education, job creation, entrepreneurship and other programs that can improve the lives of people (Seib). This will reshape the region’s future and bring a lot of friends to the USA.

With this initiative, America will prove its sincere intentions in helping the Arab Muslims rather than waving the flag of democracy in the Middle East and North Africa.

Finally, Dialogue in CMM is a synonym for ethical communication; if we each contribute to another's social construction of reality we can properly do it through dialogic ethics. The next finding is about the input of Islamic ethics in western society since Islam as a communicative religion, regards ethics and positive values as the core principles for human interaction.

D-The Input of Islamic Ethics in Western Society:

What are the Islamic ethics? And how can they contribute to the West? Islamic ethics are an amalgamation of the Qur'an, the teachings of the prophet Muhammad, and the precedents of Islamic jurists ("Islamic Ethics")

Many studies suggest how Islamic ethics should deal in a matter of science, finance, ecology, arts, culture, and communication. In science for instance, the major issue concerns the end of life or what is called euthanasia. According to the Islamic Medical Association of America (IMANA) "When death becomes inevitable, as determined by physicians, taking care of terminally ill patients, the patient should be allowed to die without unnecessary procedures" (BBC Religions) So turning off life support for patients in terminal state is permissible but "hastening death with the use of certain pain-killing drugs is not allowed, as this would equate to euthanasia," adds the Association.

Furthermore, Ramadan explains that stopping the life support for patients in terminal state has a lot to do with insurance costs and organ transplant issues.

Currently, most of the decisions on terminating a patient life are based on the power of money either because insurance is more expensive to keep a patient alive or because of the increasing need to the organs transplant. (Ramadan 174). In all circumstances, the medical staff must provide support and advice with the intention of protecting dignity and welfare of the patient (176).

Another situation where Islamic ethics can play an important role is contraception and family planning. Addressing Muslim physicians, Ramadan tells a story of many Muslim African societies that did not accept family planning because of the way it was presented to them, “ you know having more children, will make you more poor” whereas “ you know, according to the prophet Sunnah, sexual activity can be for procreation purpose and for pleasure and love as well ” (Ramadan). The African Muslims families are more likely to cooperate if it is reported to them as an Islamic ethic.

Along with contraception, Ramadan provides another critical element: abortion. The question of abortion can be very tricky in cases other than when the mother’s life is in danger. During the Bosnian war (1995- 1999), many Muslim women became pregnant as a result of rapes. Muslim Physicians were trapped between community appeal to perform abortions and their faith, which is against killing un-born babies. Saudi scholars issued a Fatwa (a religious decision) that abortions were prohibited by the Sharia Law (the Islamic Jurisprudence), therefore pregnant women had to keep their babies. However, the issue was that those pregnancies came without free will beside the emotional trauma caused by the war and rapes. So, the European Muslim scholars made the abortion in a case of rapes lawful. “Decisions about abortion in Islam are very dynamic because scholars deal with them on a case by case basis” (Ramadan).

Consequently, the issue of supporting abortion or not needs to be redefined as to fit the complex human condition since each one is different and exists in different situations.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

CMM theory is seen as valuable as it “seeks to provide a way to make communication more clear because it encourages individuals to explain their viewpoints in order to reach understanding” says Rossmann (427). However, by only focusing on individuals, CMM has fewer applications when it comes to political discourse. When we deal with nations, interests get involved based on factors like geography and economy because nations leaders do not represent their emotions and views, but rather their countries interests. The West and Iran did not have diplomatic relations for a decade. Now that their interests have changed with a new leadership in Iran, both sides believe that an open communication is the best way to reach agreement and build partnership.

Geography is another factor that defines how the West deals with the Arab Muslim world. The 18/02/2014 episode of the program "from Washington" aired by Aljazeera Arabic, discussed how The United States and France examine the Islamic movements in North Africa. For Abedi Fastbad, Director of The Center for Studies on The Arab world and The Mediterranean, “There is a strategic partnership between the Islamists and the United States”, like the case of Mohammed Morsi and the Brotherhood Movement in Egypt. In 2011, The USA supported Mohamed Morsi when he was elected as the president of Egypt as long as the peace between Israel and Egypt and USA interests were not challenged. But adds, “France did not change its position on the Arab Spring and believes that the arrival of the Islamists to power cause problems”.

As for Marwan Bishara, Aljazeera political analyst, “America adopts policies based on strategic interests, not ideology”.

The United States adopts this communication approach believing that geography has little to do when considering relationships with other nations, while France’s position is more ideological, it takes into consideration the fact that North Africa is less than two hours from the French lands, and the 6 million immigrants living in France, whom impact is not less important than the Islamic movements. In 1992, the Algerian Islamic movement FIS (Front Islamic du Salut) won the parliamentary elections, which were cancelled just after by the Algerian army and its leaders jailed. France never condemned the Coup d’état. The financial / economical factor is another perspective considered when the West communicates with the Arab world (the case of USA and Saudi Arabia mentioned earlier).

Despite the limited applications of CMM in the political discourse, the theory has proved successful in facilitating solutions to conflicts between communities and families. This success can be summarized in two cases, one for the Interfaith Peace-building Institute for Maluku Tengah Indonesia and another case involving two Latino families (Creede et al., 2012). Following a devastating four-year conflict between Christian and Muslim communities in Maluku, Indonesia, the Interfaith Peace-building Institute for Maluku Tengah, with the participation of other organizations for peace, brought together forty former enemies—religious leaders from the Province of Central Maluku—to initiate a dialogue about community restoration.

After five days of meetings, the participants were able to create a common vision for reconciliation based on, “shared religious values, strength through difference, tradition, and dialogue.” (Public Dialogue Consortium website) which ended the conflict.

The second application involved two fifteen-old-year girls of Latino background. One from the Dominican Republic and the other from Puerto Rico, both families were sent to the mediation center after an altercation took place between the two girls in school about some kind of rumors which escalated to the point the Dominican father threatened to kill the other father. When both families came to the center, Julie the mediator had to make the four adults leave the room in order to decrease the tension and calm everybody down. The confrontation between the girls showed that they were not as hurt as their parents and were able to move past the conflicts when they remembered their pleasant memories and past relationships (Creede et al. 233).

5.2 Implication For Further Research

How can a CMM approach promote improved relations between nations? What other tools can CMM develop? How can the West and Iran who were in conflict for more than a decade keep their communication open and achieve new perspectives? At the same time, what are the tools that CMM can develop to help Palestinian and Jewish people find a solution knowing the fact that neither one want to accept the existence of the other?

A decade ago, legal scholars and intellectuals debated whether a Europe Union (EU) required a common cultural heritage rooted in ethnicity, religion and national history and based on cosmopolitan ideals. For Jurgen Habermas, German philosopher, European people do not have to,

“Feel that they belong together culturally or ethnically to act in a democratic manner and experience solidarity with their neighbors, especially beyond their borders. It is enough that they share a common set of ethical and civic values and participate in a set of institutions that enable them to communicate and debate” (Rabinbach, 2012).

His critics came after some Europeans intellectuals proposed to transform the system of European governance into one of executive federalism as a response to Greek crisis (Rabinbach). His central argument from the book he published, *The Crisis of the European Union*, is that the European project must realize its democratic potential by evolving from an international into a cosmopolitan community. This same concept can be applied to Palestinian and Jewish people who although, share the same land with a common monotheist heritage, do not have the same culture and religion. But if they can adopt the cosmopolitan communication that goes beyond their borders, then how can CMM help them achieve that? It can start by transforming the narrative; from rejecting to accepting the existence of each other.

5-3 Conclusion

This paper has examined the negative perception of the Arab Muslims in the Western media and culture from 9/11 to the Arab Spring. From the scholarly printed and visual material, it investigated the factors that caused the tensions between the two. Factors like the Crusades and colonialism of the North African and Middle East countries by the European powers; France, Italy, and England, these conflicts were enflamed with the creation of Israel in Palestine and the event of September 11. This thesis has argued that the assumption about the negative perception is a driven force in the relation between the two. The West has historical relationship with the Arab Muslim world based on mutual interests; also the Arab world's unity against the West is a fashionable one appearing when the Arab leaders decide it is relevant (like with the Danish cartoons).

The main goal of the present study was to lay a foundation for a more cosmopolitan communication approach suggested by the Coordinated Management of Meaning theory, which the Arab Spring marked a turning shift in the perception from negative to support.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that the western media needs to consider the foundation of Islamic faith and the cultural diversity of Islamic countries when reporting about the Arab Muslim world. In fact, when reporting about an Imam life in New York for instance, it gives a second voice to the paper and the opportunity to the reader to develop a better understanding about another faith. Next, the western Muslims can play a major role in presenting Islam to the West by their contribution in the western societies. Taking part to the writing process about Islam in school textbooks is one among other contributions.

The other major finding covers how the American diplomacy should shift from supporting the leaders to encouraging the Arab Muslim youth initiatives in the fields of education, job creation, entrepreneurship, and other programs that can improve people lives. The last major finding is related to the use of Islamic ethics in modern science. In the case of a terminal patient life, Islam does make a difference between turning off the life support machine and hastening the death with the use of a pain-killer which is forbidden for Muslims, because and according to the Islamic faith, only God the Creator can give and take life a

The results of this study indicate that if CMM was successfully applied to resolve conflicts between nations, as in the case of Greece and the European Union, communities like the interfaith peace-building project between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia, and family members like with Latino girls. It can also prove evidence in the matter of political discourse between the West and the Arab Muslims.

This work provides additional evidence with respect to how Muslims and Islam are perceived in the Western media and culture since 9/11; it extends our knowledge on how the West perceived the Arab Spring and the relations between both the West and Arab Muslims after. Finally, it will serve as a base for future studies on researching more ways to apply CMM between the West and the Muslims.

However, a number of limitations need to be considered, first and as a part of media negative perception, the study did not evaluate the use of movies and television shows. There are a number of shows that can be analyzed on how western culture depicts the character of the Arab Muslims. Only a small paragraph covered how Hollywood show the Arab Muslims in one movie.

Second, social media is becoming an important dynamic in human interactions. The paper did not devote more space to examine how the social media was used to express the western feeling towards the Arab Spring in order to give more evidence to the turning shift. Also, as a finding, how it can be part of the building process between the two.

The present study offers an example of how we might begin to think of the communication process between parties that do not seem to hear each other in order to improve the quality of life of all involved. In addition, the research also provides many questions in need of further investigation; such as how might a CMM approach promote the relations between nations? What other tools can CMM develop to resolve political conflicts? And how can CMM help two antagonistic nations, Israel and Palestine, sharing a same land and monotheist faith get along together? As Barnett Pearce often noted, “If we want a better world we will need to make it (Pearce⁶, 2007).”

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