

**A SEMIOTIC STUDY OF REPRESENTATION
OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN THE
DOCUMENTARY *FITNA*: A CASE STUDY**



Researcher:

**Muhammad Awais Bin Wasi
REG NO.63 -FLL/MPhIEg/F07**

Supervisor:

**Dr. Ayaz Afsar
Associate Professor**

**Department of English
Faculty of Languages, Literature & Humanities**

**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY,
ISLAMABAD**



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Title of the thesis: “A Semiotic Study of Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Documentary Fitna: A Case Study”.

Name of Student: Mr. Muhammad Awais Bin Wasi

Registration No: 63-FLL/ MPhil(Eng)/F07

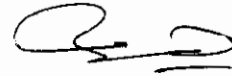
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Viva Voce Committee



External Examiner

Dr. Nighat Sultana
Assistant Professor
Department of English
NUML, Islamabad

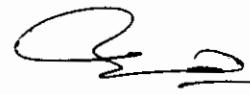


Dr. Munawar Iqbal Ahmad
Acting Dean
Faculty of Languages & Literature

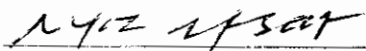


Internal Examiner

Dr. Muhammad Safeer Awan
Assistant Professor
Department of English, IIUI



Dr. Munawar Iqbal Ahmad
Chairman
Department of English



Supervisor

Dr. Ayaz Afsar
Associate Professor
Department of English, IIUI

27 July, 2012

Dedicated

To my parents

Abstract

The present study is primarily grounded in the hypothesis that the documentaries on Muslims and Islam especially originated in Europe in the wake of 9/11 are misrepresenting Islam and Muslim' identity and generate a discourse of "Othering" of Islam and Muslims in general as well as those living in the European countries, having far reaching implications. A semiotic analysis of the signs used in it by employing the triadic model of sign given by Charles Peirce with giving particular focus on Indexical signs brought into light the referential and causal relations various signs generate with regard to Muslim identity and Islam. The applications of semiotic practices brought into light significant latent themes in the documentary where Muslims are framed as the "fundamentalist Other". The current study also attempts to put forward an alternative Muslim narrative based on the scholarly discourse of the Muslims in the contemporary era. This study also reveals as to as to how the construction of Muslim identity has been depicted by deconstructing the canonical texts as well as the selected discourse generated by some Muslims. Moreover, it brought into light the significant trends in the western digital discourse *viz-a-viz* Muslims and Islam.

CANDIDATE DECLARATION FORM

I, Muhammad Awais Bin Wasi

Son of Sardar Abdul Khaliq Wasi

Registration No: 63-FLL/MPhilEg/F07 candidate of Master of Philosophy (English) at the International Islamic University, Islamabad do hereby declare that the thesis *A Semiotic Study of Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Documentary Fitna: A Case Study* submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree in the Department of English (FLL) is my original work and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.2 Background

The phenomenon of representation of Muslims is by no means a new occurrence rather its genesis can be traced in the past many centuries especially when the power centre was shifted in the 13th and 14th centuries in the wake of Renaissance and Enlightenment. Since then, Arabs and Muslims have had the special 'place' in the western literature and that place was duly divulged by Edward Said in his *Orientalism*. While discussing the relationship between the east and the west and construction of 'Orient' in the western literature, he comments on Islamic Orient in the following words:

Much of the personal investment in this study derives from my awareness of being an "Oriental" as a child growing up in two British colonies. ... In many ways my study of Orientalism has been an attempt to inventory the traces upon me, the Oriental subject, of the culture whose domination has been so powerful a factor in the life of all Orientals. This is why for me the Islamic Orient has had to be the centre of attention. (1978, pp. 25-26)

While Said has exhaustively mapped the literature that was produced by the emergence of the book, the phenomenon of representations is still going on rather it has increased its value as well as magnitude. It, therefore, needs to be seen in the global power relations. Since the emergence of electronic media, the digital representations of Muslims and Islam besides the written text have added the significance of this whole issue. The role of Hollywood in this whole backdrop is very significant.

Jack Shaheen (2006) in his critical book *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a*

People maps the history from the earliest days of cinema to the contemporary Hollywood films blockbusters that feature machine gun wielding and bomb blowing “evil” Arabs. While having the exhaustive analysis of the one thousand films, he identifies the tendency in the movies that Muslim Arabs are portrayed in the films as the public enemy number one, brutal, heartless, uncivilized others bent on terrorizing the civilized westerners.

Rezayce Yazdi (2006) studied the representation of Muslim image in one hundred Hollywood movies of 20th century and showed that what they did is, in fact, misrepresentation. He also divided the Hollywood Cinema in three historical phases: a) The first phase starts from the creation of Hollywood to Zionist regime b) The second phase starts from Zionist regime to Islamic revolution of Iran c) The third phase starts from Islamic revolution to the after effects of 9/11 attacks. In the first phase, the Hollywood Cinema misrepresented Muslims by portraying them primitive, uncivilized and stupid. In the second phase, they were portrayed looters and wild besides making their representation either as rich stupid or powerful cruel. Similarly, in the third phase, Muslims were portrayed as religious fundamentalists who had deep-seated hatred against Judaism and Christianity.

Moreover, in the last few years, Muslims were often misrepresented by Hollywood as their dark and negative images were portrayed through making a propaganda war against them besides constructing their characters as terrorists (Niya, 2006). Observing the biased attitude of Hollywood in representing the Muslims and Islam; Ziauddin Sardar (2002) observes:

The representation of Muslims as evil terrorists is so deeply etched in Hollywood consciousness that they are now used as standard plot devices even in narratives that have no connection with the Orient whatsoever. (p. 151)

So such depiction of Arabs and Muslims was not restricted to the Hollywood movies

rather it is manifested in other forms of the mainstream media that significantly included television, newspapers and magazines. Prophet of Doom: Islam's Terrorist Dogma in Muhammad's Own Words (2004), Black Sunday (1977), Submission (2004), True Lies (1994), The Siege (1998), Terrorist on Trial: The United States vs Saleem Ajami (1988), Kingdom (2007), Obsession: Radical Islam War Against the West (2006), Terror Islam in Its Own Words (2007) Islam What the West Needs to Know (2007), Undercover Mosque (2007), Aching Heart (2007), Undercover Mosque: The Return (2008) Terrorists Among Us: Jihad in America (1994) and caricatures printed in the Danish newspaper Jyllunds-Posten, are some of the examples of such works. Many other media products also have depicted Muslims as "the other" to the Western society. Since the 9/11, this kind of misrepresentation came on rise to its peak, in which Islam and the Muslims came under complete 'Othering'. The Europeans have a negative image of Muslims as they consider them dogmatic, violent, aggressive and irrational (Ameli, 2006).

Keeping this backdrop in view this dissertation analyzes "Fitna" (2008) as a case study. It is a 17 minutes long documentary released on March 27, 2008 by Geert Wilders, a Dutch parliamentarian and leader of 'Party for Freedom', the third largest political party in the parliament. This documentary carries a selection of verses from various chapters from the holy book of the Muslims – the Quran. The verses have been taken from various surahs including Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War), An-Nisa (The Women), and Muhammad. It also shows a number of media clips and newspaper cuttings representing violent behaviour by the Muslims. The movie by and large makes a claim that the Quranic teachings promote violence and anti women behaviour and give license to kill the people other than Muslims. Based on these arguments, the Muslims both in the Islamic countries as well as those part of the diaspora living in Europe especially Netherlands are considered potential threat to the West and the peaceful co-existence of the world.

A second part of the documentary titled as “Netherlands under the Spell of Islam” deals with the influence of Islam on Netherlands and conveys that the emerging Islamism is potential threat to ethos of democracy, women rights, the cultural plurality and the demographic composition of Netherlands. The filmmaker presents a number of selected audio recordings of the Islamic clerics in Netherlands as well as the common Muslims living there and the newspaper headings in order to substantiate his argument that Islamic principles and their compliance by the Muslims in Netherlands will bring real disaster to Netherlands.

The name of the documentary was meaningfully chosen to substantiate the argument that Quranic teachings are *Fitna* to the world in general and Netherlands in particular. *Fitna* is an Arabic word which may not be exactly translated into any other language including English, as this very word has multiple meanings ranging from a test and a trial, a temptation, to persecute the weak, to deprive someone of his/her lawful rights, to seize his/her houses and torture him/her, to suppress truth through tyranny, to hinder men from the path of Allah and to mischief (Maududi, 1998, p. 322) but in this film it is used to refer in the sense of dissension and strife.

While the movie got international attention (Miller et al, 2010), it did not receive the welcome response even by the Netherlands government as it immediately distanced itself from the documentary. Jan Peter Balkenende, the then Prime Minister of Netherlands, said:

The film equates Islam with violence. We reject this interpretation. The vast majority of Muslims reject extremism and violence. In fact, the victims are often also Muslims... ..We therefore regret that Mr. Wilders has released this film. We believe it serves no purpose other than to cause offence. (Para 3 and 4, 2008)

On the one hand the government censured the release of the documentary, on the other, the large majority of the people of Netherlands do not share the vision of their government in this regard. A poll was conducted by TNS NIPO for RTL television – in which 54% want to show this film. This situation brings into light that the people of the country tend to buy the

argument presented by Wilders in his documentary. In a two day-long conference titled 'Facing Jihad' held in Jerusalem, this movie was shown to the conference participants and it was announced there that it would be shown in several European parliaments (Kalai-O-Waha, 2011). Moreover, the film maker was charged in a Netherlands Court in 2010-2011 on account of some of his statements including calling ban for Quran, referring Muhammad to be a devil, calling Islam as a fascist religion and producing the documentary *Fitna* but he was acquitted by The Dutch Public Prosecution Service on June 23, 2011.

It, *prima facie*, is one of the attempts, by Geert Wilders but in the historical as well as the contemporary global backdrop it sounds very significant to dispassionately and objectively study the representation of the Muslims in it as a case study. It is also important to look into the canonical text in the documentary as it associates the Quran with terrorism and terms the book as *Fitna*.

1.2 Objectives of the study

This study is an attempt to understand as to how Muslims and Islam are represented in the documentary films especially originated in Europe in the post 9/11 period. It seeks to study the representation of Muslims and Islam in the documentary *Fitna* as a case study and bring into surface as to what extent the documentaries in general and the one under study in particular stereotype the identity of Muslims and Islam and construct their image as the "fundamentalist Other" and "European Other" and how far this construction of Muslims' and Islamic image depicts Muslims and Islam as they are.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How Islam and Muslims, in general as well as those living in Europe, are

represented/Othered in the documentary *Fitna* and how far Muslim identity is stereotyped? In addition, to what extent do semiotic practices help to decipher the stereotypes and reveal the latent assumptions underlie in the documentary?

2. To what extent such representation and discourse reconcile with the mainstream Muslim discourse of the contemporary world and what are its potential implications?

1.4 Plan of Research

Based on the hypothesis that many of the documentaries and films on Muslims and Islam especially those which originated in Europe in post 9/11 scenario are misrepresenting Islam and Muslims' identity and generate a discourse of Othering of Muslims. There are a number of other documentaries mentioned earlier, but *fitna* has been selected for this purpose as a case study due to its significance.

In order to test the hypothesis, semiotic analysis of the documentary has been carried out by employing the triadic model of sign given by American pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce. While I will discuss threadbare the theoretical background of semiotics and the model of Charles Peirce in Chapter two, it is here mentioned that according to Peirce model the sign has three forms: the Symbolic sign, Iconic sign and Indexical sign. The sign is described in his own words in his essay "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs" as:

...a Sign may be termed an Icon, an Index, or a Symbol. An Icon is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes merely by virtue of characters of its own, and which it possesses, just the same, whether any such object actually exists or not....An Index is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of being really affected by that Object....A Symbol is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object.

(1986, p. 8)

Keeping this classification of sign in view various signs including in the documentary would be labeled as Icon, Index and Symbol and would be discussed in order to understand their latent meaning and message. In addition, it would explore the kind of image of Muslims

it creates and deliberate as to what extent these signs stereotype Islam – in case they do so - Muslims' identity and generate the discourse of Othering of Islam

In the documentary all the words either spoken or written would be treated as the symbolic signs as, according to Peirce, there is no visual or natural link between the symbol and object it refers; it is in fact based on some shared association given by those who use the symbol. In this way, all the words used in the documentary would fall under this category as words (signifiers) and the concepts (signified) they refer do not share any natural association but they are based on shared conventions and arbitrary relations. Similarly, all the visual images which among others included images of Prophet Muhammad, blood smeared daggers and swords, blood smeared children, and images of women employed in the documentary will be treated as the iconic signs and studied what effects these signs in isolation as well in totality produce in the documentary. These images are treated as iconic signs, as according to Charles Peirce, an Icon resembles the object it depicts.

The first chapter of this dissertation discusses the background of the study, the problem statement and the hypothesis. Besides, it also discusses the major research questions, plan of research, though briefly, to address them, objectives and significance of the research study at hand. It also includes the methodology employed for the present study.

Following this the second chapter titled as Literature Review encompasses the phenomenon of representation, politics of representation, representation of Muslims and Islam in general and in the wake of 9/11 in particular, and representations of Muslims and Islam in the documentaries.

The chapter titled as Data Analysis consists of the semiotic analysis of the documentary by employing the triadic model given by Charles Peirce. It seeks to analyze as to how Muslims and Islam are represented in the documentary through employing various iconic, indexical and symbolic signs and what are its implications. By applying the classification

made by Charles Peirce all the verbal and visual signs the documentary entails are interpreted after classifying them as iconic, symbolic and indexical framework and seen as to how these signs play their role to construct image of Islam and Muslims that may turn out to be a kind of deliberate attempt at stereotyping and generating the discourse of Othering.

The Discussion chapter, mainly seeks to discuss the themes and issues emerged while carrying out the analysis in the fourth chapter, and comes up with an extensive discussion and interpretation on the dynamics and various dimensions of the themes.

The Conclusion of the study wraps up the whole study by addressing the research questions and the hypothesis posed in the introduction along with highlighting the broader implications of the study.

1.5 Significance of the study

As discussed earlier the (mis)representation of Muslims and Islam is not a new phenomenon, however, since the emergence and steady rise of digital media and especially in the wake of 9/11 this phenomenon has been tremendously increased. While plethora of text on representation of Muslims has been produced and analysed over the years, the representation of Muslims through digital means is a rather new and growing area but a very powerful phenomenon to shape the opinion of the audience and viewers. Therefore, there is not a rich body of research on such digital representation especially with reference to Muslims and Islam. This necessitates the need to carry out some rigorous research endeavours to understand this phenomenon in the right context and unearth the latent objectives, if any.

Fitna is perhaps the first documentary film which claims that the Quran, the holy book of Muslim community across the globe, gives license to kill and the real source of intolerance among Muslims and the cause of terrorism in the world. Likewise, through the selective representation of the acts of some individuals, the documentary also claims that violence and Muslims and Islam for that matter as well are synonymous and are strongly wedlocked and

perhaps cannot be divorced. Such stereotyping of the community having over 1 billion population scattered around the world by an influential political figure through one of the influential medium to shape the opinion badly necessitates the need to study this phenomenon rather deeply but objectively and bring into surface the implications this endeavor has to the much needed global peace and harmony.

1.6 Research Methodology

This section describes the research process employed to carry out the analysis. The research design comes primarily under the purview of qualitative research and the analyses largely used the descriptive method coupled with semiotic analysis that has been used to examine and evaluate the verbal and visual representation in the documentary film that has been selected as a case study in order to understand the construction of ‘reality’ through the process of representation employed in the documentary. While the results of the case study may not exactly be overgeneralized, they do help decipher the nature, trends and implications of the phenomena under study, for the case study primarily aimed at examining the phenomena under study thoroughly and meticulously.

The descriptive method, according to Travers, seeks to ‘describe the situation as it exists at the time of existence of the study and to explore the causes of the particular phenomena’ (as cited in Adanza, 1995 p. 39). It also examines as to how Muslims and Islam are (Mis) represented in the documentaries and how far they stereotype the Muslims’ identity and create the discourse of “Othering” of Muslims and Islamophobia coupled with the serious implications such discourse have. Also, how far the representation is in line with the mainstream Muslim discourse prevalent in the Muslim world?

In order to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions the process of representation is analysed by employing the triadic theory of Charles Peirce on the documentary *Fitna*.

1.6.1 The Data Description

The data for the present study, relevant to the three types of the sign defined by Charles Peirce, has been extracted from the documentary *Fitna* which is in two forms: written and spoken (which is also available in transcribed form and given at the appendix) text and image text. The written and spoken text include the verses from the Quran – which are five in number and all of them have been extracted for analysis here – excerpts from the speeches and interviews and comments of the various character in the documentary film comprising eight major and 11 secondary extracts have been analysed while three figures carrying 13 iconic images that were purposely selected as the samples for the analysis as they were largely representative of the objective of the study at hand.

1.6.2 Data Analysis

In order to test the hypothesis, semiotic analysis of the documentary has been carried out by employing the triadic model of sign given by Peirce. Since this documentary film *Fitna* is a semiotic system consisting of Symbol, Index and Icon, semiotic approach in general and the triadic model of Sign by Peirce in particular are very appropriate to analyse it.

The 19 textual extracts, as stated above under data description, mainly comprise the selected excerpts of the Quran, selected extracts of the speeches of some Muslim clerics as well as well as some common Muslims living both in Europe and Muslim world especially Iran and Arab World, comments of the victims, Europe based newspaper headings, while the visual images included the images of the Quran, caricature of prophet Muhammad, blood smeared children, images of women shown in the documentary. They come primarily under the category of Symbolic signs.

While carrying out the analysis, the setting of each unit (extract) has been briefly

described and then each sign has been analysed mainly at the symbolic and indexical level. Semiotically speaking, everything in the seventeen minutes documentary study including each word, sound, music, gesture etc may stand for something other than self and hence work as a sign, but the current study has been confined mainly to the eight main and eleven secondary extracts coupled with three figures carrying 13 photographic images within them. However, in the course of analysis some more signs which may not come under these categories have also been identified and interpreted. As far as the structure and development of the analysis is concerned, it would be discussed in the introduction of Chapter 3.

It is important to mention here that as the classification of Sign introduced by Peirce in terms of Icon, Index and Symbol overlap, there is at times overlapping of themes also in some extracts or visual images, however, the overlapping and repetition of themes reflected in some extracts have been avoided and every theme has been discussed and analysed separately. Notwithstanding, if there is still any reflection of some repetition it has been deliberately incorporated as at times this repetition also serves as a sign and indexicalise something and create significant interpretant.

The phenomenon of representation of Muslims and Islam, its fast expansion from text to the digital media both fictional and factual, and its intensity as well extension in the wake of post 9/11 period provides a significant backdrop to study it and necessitates bringing out the latent objectives of this occurrence. The selection of *Fitna*, which though produced in 2008 but its distribution is still continuing by Ruder Finn, a public relations firm, based in the United States, was made in the same context. By employing the semiotic practices the phenomenon of representation *viz-a-viz* Islam and the Muslims, stereotyping their identity and the construction of Othering would be discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present chapter is mainly divided into two sections: first focusing fundamental and theoretical concept of representation, politics of representation with a focus on postcolonial context, strategies of representation in postcolonial literature, stereotyping, representation and Media; while the second, the representation of Muslims and Islam particularly of digital western discourse with special focus on documentaries produced in the 9/11 period.

2.1 Fundamental and Theoretical Concept of Representation

On the face of it, representation is a common term as is extensively used in day to day life, however, it is, in fact, a much debated and contested phenomenon among the scholars, and carries a number of meanings and interpretations. While it is used in a number of academic disciplines including psychology and philosophy, film and literary studies, media and communication, art and visual culture, politics and government, sociology and linguistics, it has many different uses and nuances (Webb, 2009) thereby making it a complex phenomenon. Literally it means ‘making something present again’ (Ankersmit, 2002) or sign that stands in for someone or something else or to look like or resemble an object (Mitchell, 1995). In other words, it primarily deals with the depiction or re-presenting the object. In literary theory, representation is defined in three ways: (i) to look like or resemble (ii) to

stand in for something or someone and (iii) to present a second time to re-present (Lentricchia, 1995). Deepika Bahri, (2003) says representation is presence as much as reproduction, making of an idea in the mind and political sense it means 'speaking for.'

It mainly focuses on the questions including 'who is performing representation? What does it mean? and What effects does it have' (Webb, 2008, p. 2). As it is said that representation stands in for something or someone else, this phenomenon of substitution of something for something or someone else is central to the concept of representation which can easily be observed in arts, language and politics.

Though primarily the issue of representation has, since ancient times, been associated with aesthetics, general theory of arts and semiotics, it is no more confined to these areas only rather it has been expanded to other disciplines as well including others politics; and there are obvious relationship between semiotic representation and political representation.

While the phenomenon of representation, as discussed earlier, is contested among scholars and theorists, it is not a new one, rather it dates back to the ancient era of Plato and Aristotle and gradually evolved to the contemporary era. In the ancient times, it played an important role to study literature, aesthetics and semiotics. The two important classic theorists Plato and Aristotle both consider literature as one form of the representation. While Plato agrees to accept literature as representation, he says that this kind of representation does not depict the reality rather it constructs the world which is illusory and away from reality. (cited in Skilleas, 2001) In contrast, Aristotle identifies the three way involved in the process of representation which include the 'object', 'manner' and 'means'. Object refers to the thing which is represented; manner, the way the thing is represented and means is the material that is used for representation (ibid).

What Aristotle calls 'means' are in fact codes and conventions that can be language and other signs of representation. Language is indeed a means of representation but there are

multiple ways of employing this means; for instance, various ways including dramatic, recitation, narration and description can be used to achieve all sorts of effects such as pity, admiration, laughter and scorn and represent all sorts of things (ibid).

As far as the question is concerned that whether representation can depict reality, it is argued that representation, how precise it would be, may not depict the whole reality. So the issue of representation of reality is indeed philosophical as any representation is more than merely a reproduction of that which it represents: it also contributes to the *construction* of reality. Even 'photorealism' does not depict unmediated reality. The most realistic representation may also symbolically or metaphorically 'stand for' something else entirely (Chandler, 2007, p. 70).

Representation, therefore, cannot be termed as the neutral depiction of objects as there is always a gap between the real and copy, for it is rather impossible to dissociate representation with the culture and milieu in which it is produced.

According to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1990), there are two ways of representation: *Vertreten* and *Darstellung*. *Vertreten* means stepping in someone's place or to tread in someone's shoes. This kind of representation is similar to the political representation as it speaks on behalf of someone or something while *Darstellung* refers to representation, 'placing there'; this kind of representation is like 'proxy and portrait' (Landry & Maclean, 1996).

Representation has various forms including textual and visual; among texts novels as well as other genres of literature, non-fiction writings including academic and journalistic writings while the visual forms of representation include films, dramas, advertisements, paintings, etc.

2.2 Representation and Semiotics

Semiotics, the study of signs, and representation, are also closely linked with each other, for

Semiotics foregrounds and provides the framework to study the phenomenon of representation. The important element of the analysis is to explore the relationship between what is being represented and what/ who represents (Mitchell, 1995).

However, the analysis is not merely confined to this relationship, it analyses how reality is constructed through mediation, how some signs are foregrounded while the other are backgrounded. Since signs play the fundamental role in representation, it becomes clear when we explore from the semiotic perspectives that meaning is not only contained in books, computers or other audio visual media, rather it is created by us. Meaning is not 'transmitted' to us, we actively create it according to a complex interplay of codes or conventions of which we are normally unaware. We learn from semiotics that we live in the world of signs and we have no way of understanding anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized. Through the study of semiotics, we become aware that these signs, and codes are normally transparent and disguise our task in reading them. Living in a world of increasingly visual signs, there is a need to learn that even the most realistic signs are not what they appear to be. Likewise, the social reality is also created with the interplay of signs and the existence of all external reality. While the concept of representations has many dynamics as well as dimensions as it is used in other disciplines including politics, psychology, mathematics, chemistry etc, we shall be focusing its role as tool to advance the political and ideological objectives.

Besides discussing the relations between Semiotics and Representation it is pertinent here to discuss some fundamental concepts of Semiotics as the research study at hand mainly employs the semiotic approach to carry out the study.

2.2.1 Theoretical Framework of Semiotics: Semiotics or Semiology is generally defined as the 'systematic study of signs' (Eagleton, 1986, p. 100). The word 'semiotics' came from the Greek word semeiotikos, which denotes the study of signs (Cobley

& Jansz, 1997), and it was first used in English by Henry Stubbes (1670) in a very precise sense to denote the branch of medical science relating to the interpretation of signs.

While this field is closely related with linguistics, it is also linked with the number of other disciplines ranging from medical, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, zoology, etc (O'Grady et al, 1997) and some of its significant branches include Biosemiotics, Cognitive Semiotics, Computational Semiotics, Literary Semiotics, Law Semiotics, Music Semiotics, Organizational Semiotics, Social semiotics, Theater Semiotics and Visual semiotics.

The wide ranging and rather complex field of semiotics has been further expanded in the contemporary age of communication.

The classical tradition of semiotics include scholars from the latter half of twentieth century, such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva, Umberto Eco, A. J. Greimas, Juri Lotman, – the founder of the Tartu School of Semiotics, Thomas A. Sebeok, Noam Chomsky, Michel Foucault. Yet many of them owed intellectual debts to nineteenth-century pioneers of semiotics like Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure. (“Semiotics – study of communication and signification”, n.d; para.4)

While semiotics has become an important cross disciplinary field that is not confined to humanities alone but is also extended social and natural sciences and as a subject included in the curricula of some of the institutes of the world, it is likely that it plays significant role to expand the body of knowledge and explore new dimensions of the existing knowledge. In particular, in the present era of media and communication where man-made signs are as much as perhaps never have been in the world history, semiotics as a tool has a great potential to analyse the real dynamics of the problems and prescribe the viable alternatives.

2.2.2 The Concept of Sign: The concept of sign is fundamental to the whole field of semiotics but it does not mean that idea of sign comes up with the emergence of semiotics as discipline, rather this concept and its concomitant debates, in fact, date back to

the ancient era with the debates between the Stoics and Epicureans around 300 BC (Noth, 1995) in Athens regarding the difference between the 'natural signs' i.e. freely occurring throughout nature and 'conventional signs' i.e. those designed precisely for the purpose of communication (Cobley & Jansz, 1997). However, Semiotics does provide for the first time the systematic and scientific framework to study signs and signs system.

John Locke in his 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding' (1994) significantly contributed to the later study of sign system, however, the full blown semiotic awareness appears under the auspices of the two founding fathers Ferdinand de Saussure (1857- 1913) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839 – 1914) (Cobley & Jansz, 1997).

Saussure, who laid the foundation of modern semiotics defined the linguistic sign as a two-sided entity, a dyad. One side of the signs was what he called the *signifier*, material aspect of a sign that can be visual or sound image, while the other inseparable part of the sign is termed as *signified*, mental concept or idea which evokes in our mind when we hear or see the visual or material image or signifier. The central to Saussure's understanding on the linguistic sign is the arbitrary nature of the bond between signifier and signified and there is no natural link between the sign and the actuality to which it refers (Cobley & Jansz, 1997). It is in fact the relationship based on the conventions.

It seems important to mention here that 'signified' and 'referent' are two different things and may not be confused with each other, as the former is the mental concept while the latter is the 'actual object' in the real world. It is also significant to mention here that 'a sign must have both a signifier and a signified and there cannot have a totally meaningless signifier or a completely formless signified (Chandler, 2007).

2.2.3 Peirce Model of Sign: In contrast to Saussure, American pragmatist and philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, whose model is being applied in the research at hand, came up with a triadic model of sign also termed as Semiotic triangle that is different from

the dyadic one of Saussure (ibid).

His triadic model includes three related parts of a sign which include sign or representamen, an object and an interpretant. A sign or representamen is the form which the sign takes that is similar to Saussure's signifier but it is not necessarily material, for instance, a written word, an utterance, smoke etc (ibid). An object or semiotic object is a thing to which the sign refers, in other words what is signified may be termed as an object, for instance, fire may be signified by smoke while an interpretant is not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign, such as signified (ibid).

Peirce further categorized the signs as:

2.2.4 Icon, Index and Symbol: Icon is a sign that resembles the referent or the object. It looks like the referent it represents, and sounds like the referent or retains an image similar to the referent (Kim, 1996). However, it is not confined to only visual image but onomatopoeia, voice actors in documentary dramas can also be included into the icons (ibid). So the *iconic* sign is one which is, in one or more respects, the same as the object signified. This is also called likeness and resemblance.

Indexical sign, though, does not represent its signified through resemblance, has associations and inherent connections between the signifier and signified. Often this relation between signs and their referents are causal in nature. For instance, 'a diamond in one's golden ring on one's finger indicates wealth, GNP is an index demonstrating the economic power of nation' (ibid). This form of sign indicates something. For instance, a clock indicates the time of the day, smoke indicates fire, etc. The index is connected to the object. In this form of sign 'the signifier is not arbitrary but is directly connected in some way either physically or causally to the signified and this link can be observed or inferred (Chandler, 2007).

A symbol is a sign that is made in an arbitrary manner and has neither resemblance

nor existential relationship between the signifier and signified, however, these signs come to existence through conventions. Social convention or agreement is the source of meaning. All the languages of the world are symbol systems (Kim, 1996).

In the current study, all the verbal signs used in the documentary, more precisely the words spoken and written/displayed have would be treated as symbols analysed accordingly. These symbols include excerpts from the Quran, speeches delivered by some clerics and newspaper headings, and other words spoken by the narrator and other characters in the documentary.

2.3 Representation in Postcolonial Perspective

The concept of 'representation', the politics of representation as an ideological tool, as discussed above, is an old phenomenon and has a significant link to rule and govern; Said's seminal work *Orientalism* which mainly focuses on the study of the very phenomenon discovers this phenomenon by mapping the literary and other discourses of a number of influential western thinkers and writers, prominently including Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Napoleon, Byron, Arthur James, and Henry Kissinger etc wherein East was termed as inferior and *other*. Based on the theory of Michal Foucault – Knowledge/power nexus and the politics of representation, Said brings into light the relationship between East and West by discovering the whole system of knowledge about the orient (1978, p. 6). He observes that 'the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony, and is quite accurately indicated in the title of K. M. Panikkar's classic 'Asia and Western Dominance' (p. 5). Orientalism, according to Said, is not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment.

The whole investigation of literary texts and historical records carried out by Said

brought into light that as to how the tool of representation has been employed to construct east as the anti thesis of the west and how such discourse has been instrumental in defining European self image and placating the people of the centre. Through this stereotypical representation of the orient the people of the center were placated and convinced that that the colonial mission of the Europeans in order to civilize the *other* is justified and mandatory.

Though Said confined himself to the written text, the phenomenon of the construction of Orient was expanded to the other forms of discourses as well. In the preface of his book *Orientalism*, Ziauddin Sardar (2002) observed 'after retrenching itself in scholarship and literary imagination, Orientalism has moved on to conquer film, television and CD-ROMs.' (p. vii). The study will focus on the media representation and not the texts.

While discussing the politics of representation, it is important to keep in view who speaks what and for whom? The answer to this fundamental question may lead to understand the underlying political agenda and the ideological objectives which may be fulfilled by constructing the representation and specific identity through various modes which include films, television, photographs, paintings, advertisements, academic texts, novels and other literature, journalistic writings etc.

From the cited references and discussed academicians it can be said that representations as a tool has been used since centuries, but the massive stereotypical representation of Arab Muslims in particular and the other Muslims in general have created the need to study the underlying reality in all these representations.

The phenomenon of representation has been used as an ideological tool to reinforce system of inequality and subordination and played an instrumental role in sustaining the colonial and new imperialist missions.

Orients are termed as timeless, changeless, static, irrational, abnormal, orient races are depicted as murderous and violent Arabs, lazy Indians, the instructable Chinaman; feminized

orient are represented as exotic, submissive, luxurious, sexually mysterious and tempting by and large orient is stereotyped as decayed and degenerated. So it can be said that the politics of representations better served the colonialist projects and is serving the new colonialist endeavors in the contemporary world.

2.4 Representation and Media

As discussed earlier the phenomenon of representation dates back to Greek era gradually evolved in the contemporary era, the emergence and fast increasing electronic media has had a deep influence in augmenting this phenomenon and taking new shapes and introducing new dimensions. As stated earlier that in the process of representation reality is not mirrored but it is constructed and created. This objective of constructing and creating reality and identity is better accomplished through the media.

‘While analysing representation in media one may not confine oneself to see the ‘reality’ or identity that is produced or constructed, it focuses on the process of representation as to how that construction is accomplished. If, for instance, there is an image, it is important to understand as to how that image is created, camera's angle, lighting, distance, etc., are to be taken into consideration as there must be a reason for selected process of representation of any specific image’ (Lacey, 1998, pp. 15-18). In other words the production of meaning is significant to understand as to how reality is constructed; camera's angle, lighting, distance are in fact the codes which in fact construct the meaning through keeping in view the denotative as well as the connotative dimensions of codes employed in the making of an image (ibid). In media representation the one who represents makes the decision of what, how and why the process of representation should be carried out.

2.5 Representation of Muslims and Islam

While the current study focuses on the representation of Muslims and Islam, it seems pertinent to discuss the phenomenon in detail. Although Orientalism or Oriental Studies initially focus on ancient and near Eastern Studies which later used indiscriminately for all the Asian civilizations, the great deal of Oriental scholarship was focused on Muslim culture more than other groups (Varisco, 2007).

In the introduction of the study, a brief backdrop of representation in post colonial perspective and its steady rise especially in the wake of 9/11 in the contemporary world was discussed. It was stated that Muslims and Islam had a special place in the discourse generated in the west for the past many centuries which was for the first time in a very systematic and comprehensive manner brought into light by Said (1978) in the late 20th century in the polemic work *Orientalism*. While Edward Said brought into light the construction of Orient by mainly relying on the textual evidences of European scholarship, it has not mapped the other media except the texts. Since the emergence of the mass media the construction of the 'other; and the stereotyping of Muslims and Islam in general and Arab Muslims in particular has tremendously increased and advanced the ideological and political objectives of new colonialists and imperialists. While a number of Hollywood movies carried out stereotypical representation of Arabs and Muslims, the mass media including the digital media extended as well as expanded the discourse in the contemporary world and not confined itself on only Arab Muslims but Muslims across the world.

Since the focus of the research study is a documentary, we shall have the brief review of the 10 important documentaries in which representations of Muslims and Islam have been occurred. However, before analyzing the relevant documentaries it seems pertinent to have a brief look and the documentary and its relevance with the idea of representation.

2.6 Representation in Documentaries

The term documentary was first used in 1926 to refer the kind of films which are based on by and large the real occurrences having an opinion and the explicit specific message based on the facts presented in the documentary. Pare Lorentz defines a documentary film as 'a factual film which is dramatic' (as cited in Eagen, 2010, p. 242).

It is very significant to observe that to choose documentary to represent any phenomenon is very important as it is supposed to depict reality and is termed as the wholly factual and nonfiction which may contribute to the formation of popular memory (Nichols, 1991).

2.7 Representations of Muslims and Islam in Documentaries with special Focus on Post 9/11 Period

The brief review of the ten documentaries with a focus on Islam and Muslims are being given in the following lines which also helps to contextualize the semiotic study of the documentary *Fitna* which is the focus of the research study at hand.

Al-Qaeda's New Front is the documentary which won the 2005 Alfred L. Dupont Columbia University Prize apparently focuses on the Al Qaeda and terms it a formidable threat to the west, however, it also stresses that a large number of Muslim population is already in the west, the rapid growth of the this populations in the western countries is a threat to the western societies, their values and culture. This kind of representation gives the United States and its allies a justification to sustain the war on terror and invade other countries under its notion of preemptive strike.

Islam What the West Needs to Know is another significant documentary released in 2006

which comprises excerpts from the real interviews, excerpts from the Islamic canonical texts, footages from the western leaders and Islamic television broadcasts, Islamic art work, etc. Based on these selected evidences the documentary seems an effort to stereotype Islam as religion which promotes violence and terror. The documentary observes:

[To assume] that Islam is a religion of peace is fundamentally, totally, and disastrously wrong. In fact, Islam is intrinsically violent; it is the impetus for modern terrorism, and its doctrines necessitate that the only possible relationship between Islamic civilization and non-Islamic civilization is war or subjugation. (Davis, 2006, p. vii)

On October 21, 2005, *Obsession: Radical Islam's War against West* was released; opening with the scene of the collapse of the twin towers on September 11, 2001, it draws parallel between Islam and Nazism and terms it as dangerous ideology which is full of hate and seeks to dominate the whole world and hence is a grave threat to the western civilization. This documentary was massively distributed, reaching 28 million copies in the US prior to the US elections 2008.

It is believed by many that the anti Muslims and Islam views have had very few taken in the west, however the statements issued by the two important media networks of the US tell another story. Both the media groups show 'positive' response over this movie. Fox News observes:

Image after image, example after example... [Obsession] is shocking beyond belief...Sean Hannity: *Fox News*

CNN's anchor says about the movie:

Heart wrenching...I encourage everybody to see this film...you definitely get an incredible education by watching this film... Kyra Phillips: *Anchor, CNN Newsroom*.

The Third Jihad: Radical's Islam for America was produced by the same producers who produced *Obsession*. While seventy two minutes long documentary film which comprises the video clips which represent Muslims anti human rights, anti women and terrorist makes a start with this statement: "This is not a film about Islam. It is about the threat of radical

Islam. Only a small percentage of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims, are radical. This film is about them", in the course of the documentary it is observed that their definition of radicalism is their own; radicals are those who violently stand against the occupations of their native lands by the alien forces. In addition it argues that America faces two types of jihad violent as well as cultural.

Terror Islam in Its Own Words was released in 2007 and broadcast through the Fox news network. It consists of a number of video clips taken from televisions, excerpts of the speeches of some clerics advocating attacks on America and Israel.

Radical Islam: Terror in Its Own Words is a Fox new documentary based on the FOX news investigations, released in 2007 which draws comparison between radical Islamism and Nazism, shows video clips of suicide bomber, particularly the Middle Eastern countries which include Iraq, Iran, Israel, Lebanon and Afghanistan and other images and symbols which indicate that the United States faces the false and hateful propaganda by the radical Muslims especially in the Middle East. The documentary also shows some clips of interviews of some Muslims scholars who according to the Fox news are moderate but the documentary claims that radicals were so powerful that modernists are irrelevant. While the name of the movie shows that it only represents radical versions Islam, it does not seem restrict to one; this fact can easily be understood by the observation made by a viewer after seeing the documentary. He observes in the second part of the documentary:

They should remove the word "radical" as its not radical Islam itsnormal Islam. Its not just extreme groups but every Muslim is just like them - though usually he is not brave/mad enough to actually blow himself. We really need to keep them isolated from our lands! No Islam in the west!!!! Send them back home. (Phares, W. & Emerson, S, 2007)

Terrorists Among Us: Jihad in America was released in America in 1994, and won a number of important awards including George Polk award discussed militant Muslims' groups in America. It was produced by an American journalist Steve Emerson who has also

produced *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against West* and *Radical Islam: Terror in Its Own Words* in 2005 and 2007 respectively. He characterises the speeches and other activities out of the context.

Undercover Mosque is a documentary program first aired in January 15, 2007 on Dispatches Series British Television Current Affairs Program and based on the secret investigations on the mosques throughout Britain. The documentary comprises the selected excerpts from the speeches of clerics substantiating the argument that Islam is religion of violence and threat to the western values.

In continuation of this series after one and half year of the release of *Undercover Mosque* another documentary program titled *Undercover Mosque: The Return* was aired on September 1, 2008. Some undercover reports gathered the data from the speeches of the clerics of the mosques and interviews from some Muslim academics and Islamic centres which include London Central Mosque, King Fahad Academy and Muslim World League. Moreover, some selected verses uttered by some Muslim female clerics while delivering lectures at different occasions were also presented to signify that mosques preach hate and Muslims code of conduct is a threat to the western values. Saudi funding to the mosques and seminaries across the world especially in Britain seems as a problem and Saudi version of Islam, through various images including veils and other images signifying Islamic ideology as anti Jews/Christian, anti women, anti western law and values, is portrayed as a big threat to the world.

Aching Heart is a 75 minutes long Swedish documentary, which was also termed the best one by Swedish Film Institute and won Golbagge Award, released on October 19, 2007 that shows young Europeans who want to sacrifice their lives.

All the documentaries by and large deal with the same theme as the Muslims and Islam are perceived to be violent as well as cultural threat to the west. Though the adjective

of radical is used with Muslim and Islam which, *prima facie*, indicates that they do not represent the whole community or their religion but the selection of video clips, excerpts from the canonical texts, extracts of interview from some Muslim religious scholars seem to be sufficient to create Islamophobia both in the western society as well as the power echelons. So through this kind of representations Islam and Muslims are being portrayed as the threat to the world in the mainstream media. Islamophobia has been constructed through such portrayal. Islamophobia is the fear of Muslims and Islam which leads to a hostility and often discrimination against individuals and communities. Frequently it is connected with the belief that all Muslims are fanatics, have a violent tendency towards non-Muslims and that they all reject values like equality, tolerance and democracy (Ramberg, 2004, p. 85).

Besides, it is also portrayed through the documentaries besides other forms of representations that the present crisis the world faces is primarily motivated by religion which does not seem in conformity with the reality. A further distortion occurs when violence by muslims is said to be motivated solely by their religion (Martin, et al, 2009, p. 22).

While these documentaries are just a few of many to indicate the simmering trend among the western intelligentsia, it may be observed that the western media by and large constructs Islamophobia and shapes the public opinion against the Muslims and Islam besides guiding the policy makers to formulate the policies in accordance with the constructed reality the media is being showed in various forms.

Western media is framed as an extension of Crusader and Zionist interests, a propaganda tool mobilized by anti-Muslim forces in a war against Islam. According to the movement, the primary mission of the media is to obfuscate the call to Islam and justice by mispresenting Islamic movements, distorting the truth, and sowing lies. (Wiktorowicz, 2005, p. 155)

These misrepresentations, which are even confessed by the sane elements in the west, have the serious repercussions as the media plays an important role to formulate the policies including the foreign policy of a country. Talking about the relation between foreign policy

and media, Gerges (1999) argues:

This is evident in the case of Islam and of Muslims, who are often portrayed in a negative light, thus placing them at a considerable disadvantage in U.S. public opinion. Although mass public opinion may not count much in the foreign-policy equation, elite opinion does; decision makers and members of the policy elite get much of their information from the press. Both views- on the one hand, of the media as a supportive arm of the state, whose negative coverage of Islam reinforces and reflects U.S. policy makers' fears and prejudices, and on the other, of the press as an indirect participant in the process insofar as it contributes to the climate in which policy is made- have this in common: the notion that the media's coverage of Islam and Muslims sheds much light on the making of U.S policy. (p. 49)

However, it is important to understand the real dynamics of the threat which the world faces instead stereotypically accusing any community or religion. In the preface, Tusch (2007, p. vii) traces or at least tries to trace the root of the present situation of the world: 'Countering some alarmist voices in the West, neither migration nor Muslim culture are to be blamed for the contemporary crisis, but the very nature of unequal capitalist accumulation and dependency that is at the core of the world capitalist system.'

So keeping in view this context it becomes very important to study the recent phenomenon of representation of Muslims and Islam in the popular media in order to understand the share, genuineness and veracity of the claims made in the media productions. In the same context, the recent documentary film *Fitna* has been chosen as a case study to have an objective analysis of the documentary by using the method of semiotic analysis. In the following chapter the semiotic analysis of the documentary film will be carried out.

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CHAPTER 3

Stereotyping and Representation of Islam and Muslims in *Fitna*

This chapter seeks to analyse as to how Muslims and Islam are represented in the documentary *Fitna* through employing various verbal and visual signs (excluding the musical ones) which would be studied under the classification of sign made by Charles Peirce which are called Symbol, Icon and Index. While this classification has earlier been briefly discussed, it is important to mention here that this classification is not exclusive in nature rather it is inclusive and complementary as these three kinds at times overlap each other. For instance, Symbol is based on shared convention and there is an arbitrary relation between the representamen and Object, but it can have the factor of indexicality too. In the course of analysis, for instance, the textual extracts would come under the category of Symbol as the words and their meanings on the face value are shared between the producer and the viewers but besides these conventional and agreed meaning of language between the producer and the viewers they (extracts) also carry the indexical element as they suggest some causal or referential relations these signs generate. Likewise, an Icon, which is based on the resemblance between the representamen and object, may also indicate the phenomenon which is referential or causal. In this way, one class of sign may have other elements too. Keeping this concept of the classification, the randomly selected signs of the documentary would be studied and seen as to how meaning making process is established through these signs in the documentary under study. It is also important to point out here that while everything in the documentary is a sign ranging from each word, image, sound, colour, the current study has delimited to the various textual extracts as well as the visual images appeared in the documentary and discussed and analyzed them as signs. Before carrying out the extensive analysis, it is important here to spell out the structure and

techniques used in the documentary and understand as to how this structure and techniques serve the purpose of the documentary. Following it a broad outline of the structure of the analysis have also been mentioned before starting the analysis of signs in the documentary.

3.1 Structure and Techniques of the Documentary

The 17 minutes long documentary has a macro as well as the micro structure. The macro structure includes the beginning, middle and end and each scene has its own structure also that would be discussed below under the title 'Structure of the Analysis'. The documentary mainly comprises two parts: the first part deals generally with the themes of Islam's relation with terrorism, violence, and cruelty while the second part deals with Islam's increasing role in Netherlands. The structure of the documentary is causal but at times it takes the form of comparison and contrast but the whole structure is logically consistent to the assertion made in the beginning. The documentary is indeed a cohesive unit, carefully crafted though having overlap of themes at times, and it mainly is structured on causal or indexical relations that would be explored in the course of the analysis.

3.1.1 Beginning: The beginning of the documentary is attention grabbing as it starts with a very powerful audio visual hook of the cartoon image of a turban bomb with lit a fuse made by Kurt Westergaard and published in Jyllands Posten Denmark in 2006. The turban also carried the Arabic text of *Kalima* (a statement of testification of faith in Islam) as written "There is no God but Allah" and the 15 minutes countdown clock begins which leave the viewer keen to know that what would happen after 15 minutes. Here, the complication/structure also seems the basis of the documentary. Besides being attention grabbing the beginning is also revealing the subject of the documentary. There is an assertion in the beginning, the whole documentary seeks to substantiate the argument placed in the beginning.

3.1.2 Middle: The middle of the documentary is characterized with a number of scenes that reiterates the core assertion of the documentary through causal relations in the chain of scenes. In the first part of the documentary, every scene starts with audio visual display of Quranic verse with

corresponding English translations and following with interviews of some selected Muslims, clerics' speeches, the images of destruction and the clippings of newspaper headings. By employing this technique, though the documentary primarily seeks to substantiate the causal relations between the Quran and terror and other synonymous evils but on the other hand the shots within each scene also testify that Muslim individuals, clerics across the globe share what the documentary is meant to communicate through each selected verse. In addition, the shots of the documentary have also got straightforward as well as underlying meanings but by and large they remain logically consistent to main argument of the documentary that would be discussed while analyzing the extracts in the following lines.

3.1.3 End: The documentary ends with some texts rolling upward that mainly includes that the Muslims should tear out the hateful verses of the Quran, the government of Netherlands gives respects to the Muslims and Islam but in return Islam has got no respect for it. In addition it is also displayed that Islam wants to destroy the world so the European should defeat Islam as it had done Nazism and Communism earlier and they should stop Islamization and guard their freedom of choice.

Following this text, a blank page is displayed on which the image of the cartoon which displayed in the beginning of the documentary. The fuse burns and the time counters shows the seconds on the screen and when it reaches at 1 there is a huge explosion and images of lightening, flash and thunder displayed on the screen.

3.2 Key Techniques used in the documentary

The key techniques used and their potential effect to authenticate the themes of the documentary are given below. In addition, it would also bring into light how the reality is authored and not just recorded.

3.2.1 Exposition/Punchline: The way viewers are acquainted with the subject of the

documentary is indeed masterfully constructed to lay strong impression in the beginning and holding the views attention completely leaving them hungry for what would happen at the end because the countdown in the documentary begins in exposition.

3.2.2 Casting: The casting of the characters in the documentary which significantly included clerics, political leadership such as Ahmedinijad, interviews of individuals have been carefully casted to substantiate the major themes of the documentary. For instance, a character in the documentary which is a cleric takes a sword while making his speech, waves it in the air in a very emotional manner having the applause of the audience which are edited out. Casting of such characters and projecting them as the prototype of all the Muslim clerics and scholars in the world.

3.2.3 Costumes and Locations: The techniques of costume and locations have also been very intelligently used in the documentary. The costumes of the clerics making speech signify that they mainly hail from various Arab world, Iran, Afghanistan and Palestine. Similarly the locations which included the buildings of the twin towers as well its other adjacent buildings in New York, Madrid Airport, mosques in the Netherlands have been incorporated to substantiate the major theme in the documentary.

3.2.4 Interviews: Direct and Indirect: In direct interview both questions and answers are seen in the documentary while in the indirect interview questions are posed but they are edited out from the documentary. Both the techniques of an interview have been incorporated in the documentary but it seems that of all the interviews shown in the documentary a few were perhaps primarily conducted for this documentary. The most of them from stock footages and used in the documentary ignoring the time, place and context of those interviews.

3.2.5 Stock Footages and Stock Archive: Stock Footages and Stock Archive refer to all the photographs, images, video clips which were not constructed originally for the documentary but they are incorporated in a documentary. In *Fitna* such footages have extensively been used with some modifications but in the most cases without giving their primary references. These stock footages are interspersed with other signs to create a very powerful persuasive effect on the viewers

as they engage them in multiple levels. For example, in one shot a footage of a bunch of waving daggers smeared with blood are juxtaposed with the newspaper clipping of a news story titled as 'HITLIST: and names of Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Theo van Gogh and Geert Wilders are mentioned along with their photographs.

3.2.6 Voice Over: The Voice Over is the off the record audio commentary and one of the important features of the documentary but this documentary does not have the audio commentary but it does have the commentary but that is not played, rather its text is displayed on the screen. Of the total words which are approximately 1302, as many as 101 words which is 8 % of the total words have been used in the documentary which come directly from the producer of the documentary Geert Wilders. The 8% words are primarily didactic in which Geert Wilders categorically calls Islam and Muslim as a threat and ask the Europeans in general and the people of Netherlands in particular to up against the fast creeping religion in Europe.

3.2.7 Montage: Montage comes from a French monter 'to assemble' but montage to documentaries means in which archival footages are cut up and reassembled and give new connotation by fracturing the time and space. The image and shots are juxtaposed to create new meanings (Spence & Vinicius, 2011). Montage of shots of blasts, mutilated dead bodies, beheaded men and women, other images, newspaper headings, comments, interviews are so effectively carried out that this techniques engage the readers at all levels and leave deep impact on the viewers. The montage uninterruptedly lies with the main argument of the documentary.

3.2.8 Graphics: A number of graphics significantly included photographs of people as well as places, images of placards, banners, statistical charts, the transcription of the text for the viewer, have extensively used along with the Quranic verses and comments of the clerics and other real characters in the documentary.

3.3 Structure of the Analysis

As discussed earlier, that while the documentary has been divided into two major parts, I have also

structured first part of my analysis keeping this structure in view. The first part has been divided into five scenes and each scene starts with the verse of the Quran and ends with another verse that also serves as the onset of another scene. While a scene can be defined in multiple ways but according to Shum, et al (2001, p. 843) 'a scene is a video consists of a sequence of semantically correlated shots.' The general structure of a scene in the documentary includes the audio visual display of a Quranic verse, followed by the speech excerpt(s) of the cleric, comments of some individuals, images mainly reflecting and substantiating the argument explicitly and implicitly stated in the verse. The first five extracts are the onsets of each scene and the most important shot which on the hand knits together with the main argument as well as some other themes including each of it. However, it is significant to mention that the intensive scene analysis would not come under the scheme of research at hand as we are primarily dealing with signs, it would rather focus on various signs including Symbol, Index and Icon and understand as to how the interplay of signs carry out the meaning making process in the documentary and while carrying out the process the setting and details of the scene would also be incorporated to place the sign in its backdrop to develop the argument. The eight main and eleven secondary extracts would serve as the signs and be analysed accordingly.

3.3.1 The Second Part: Islam under the Spell of Islam: The second part of the documentary thematically focuses Muslim's increasing role in the state and society of Netherlands. The duration of this part is 10 minutes which becomes 70% of the total documentary and the major themes of this part include the increasing number of Muslims in Netherlands and Europe who seemingly deeply rooted in their cultural values; Islam being an ideology and Muslims being a community as a threat to Europe; Islam's relations with Nazism, Communism and the Quran being the fueling force of all these phenomena. Extract 6, Extract 7 followed by Extract 7.1-2 and Extract 8 (which comprised the voice over of the director) would be treated as sign and discussed accordingly. In addition, the Iconic signs which included Figure 1, Figure 2 (which included the four photographs of blood smeared children along with their parents) and Figure 3 (having five

photographs of women). These iconic signs are shown in the documentary under the title “The Netherlands in the future?!”

Following is the analysis of the extracts and their concomitant aspects with focusing on the indexicality of various signs mentioned create in the documentary. The following analysis would confine itself to study the theme generated through various signs, however, the detailed discussion on these themes would be carried out in the next chapter.

3.4 Extracts from the Qur'an, Comments of Victims/ Speeches, Interviews

The documentary shows five extracts from the three chapters of the Quran which include Surah Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War), Surah Al-Nisa (The Women) and Surah Muhammad which have been juxtaposed with some other textual extracts spoken or displayed on the screen as the visual images.

The documentary opens with a two-page slide: On the one page the word Qur'an appears while on the word “FITNA” written on it. While this sign has characteristics of an Icon, Symbol and Index, its indexicality is based on the causal and referential relation between Quran and Fitna (dissension) as signifying the former causes the dissension and anarchy in the world. The black colour behind these two images and the word Fitna, written in yellow colour resembling fire reinforce interpretant of death and destruction in the minds of the viewers. In addition, this sign is immediately followed by another sign (an iconic image of the Prophet Muhammad) having a long beard and turban laden with a bomb which later in the movie exploded and the images of the twin tower attacks were shown right after that. Both the signs of the book and the image of prophet would be discussed at length at the last part along with the images but this part also only briefly discusses while analyzing the verbal text especially the one taken from the Quran. These signs were immediately followed by the following verse from the Quran.

Extract 1

Prepare for them whatever force

And cavelery ya are able of gathering
 To strike terror
 To strike terror in the hearts of the enemies, of Allah
 And your enemies

After recitation of the verse by an anonymous cleric and showing both the Arabic text with corresponding English translation on the screen the visuals of the twin towers attacks on September 11, 2001, which killed 3000 people and many more were injured, and scenes from the 7/7 Madrid bombing were shown when ten bombs went off in the trains carrying the commuters at Atoch station in Madrid in which 200 people were killed while approximately 2000 were injured. This was followed by a number of other sign which included the visual images of destruction of infrastructure, screaming of the people present on the occasion, that was followed by a sign (video clip) of a cleric who is shown delivering a speech in Arabic and the corresponding English translation is appeared as:

What Allah makes happy? Allah is happy when non-Muslims get killed; annihilate the infidels and the polytheists; Your (Allah's) enemies and the enemies of the religion; Allah count them and kill them to the last one; and don' leave even one.

This sign (video clip) was immediately followed by the images of the dead mutilated bodies lying on the ground and a young man smeared in blood, and the badly destroyed image of the train.

The respresentamen of the sign mentioned above (Extract 1) serves here as an indexical sign in the documentary which establishes causal relations between this verse and the images shown which in fact reflected the scenes emerged after the tragic incidents. It is indexicalised that these two attacks were a direct effect of the sign (verse) given above and a threat to the American and European political, strategic and military structures as the World Trade Centre in New York was not just one of the tallest buildings but it was in fact symbol of America's robust economy and resilience. Similarly, the images of the destruction in the wake of the Madrid bombing shown immediately after the display of the sign (extract 1) on the screen indexicalise Muslims efforts to conquer Spain, one of the important European country and the member of European Union and the country where Muslims ruled 781 years from 711 AD to 1492 AD. By this indexicality Muslims narcissism with their glorious past and their violent efforts to restore their legacy of power have also

been signified.

The sign (image of the twin towers of the World Trade Centre complex of New York) appeared in the screen indexicalise the economic prowess of the United States of America and the sign of plane which crashes with this building indexicalise the Muslims and Islam which are going to crash the economic structure and financial prowess of the country. The collapse of the twin towers was the object of the representman (verse) and they both make a sign that creates abominable interpretant in the minds of viewers with regard to Islam and Muslims.

However, the one who is well acquainted with the backdrop of the sign (extract 1) may not agree with the causal basis drawn between the representman (Verse) and the interpretant, for the verse (sign) does indicate and suggest the preparation and use of force but in quite different context than the one signified in the documentary by terming it as a cause to the collapse of the twin tower incident.

The indexicality which this verse suggests may duly be understood if this verse is put into the backdrop and examine its text rather carefully. The representamen (To strike terror), which was repeated twice while this repetition is not there in the original Arabic text from where this sign has been lifted, reinforces the interpretant of terror with regard to Muslims and Islam. Similarly sign (them) in the phrase "Prepare for them" is in fact indexical to all those people who are not Muslims and by this indexicality this interpretant is created that the Muslims are commanded to be belligerent and confrontational to the humanity.

However, it is important to mention here that the object of the representmen (them) in the book refers to those non believers those who broke the treaty in the wake of the first Muslims battle that is termed as battle of Badr, which is mentioned in the previous verse but that is omitted in the documentary which causes to create an interpretant to the viewers by retaining the word "them" and making it indexical sign to the non believers indiscriminately. The two immediate previous verses 56 and 57 of the sign (verse) mentioned above read as, "Those of them with whom thou madest a treaty, and then at every opportunity they break their treaty..."

war, deal with them so as to strike fear in those who are behind them...' . Similarly, the verse 61 which read as 'And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it, and trust in Allah. Lo! He, even He, is the Hearer, the Knower (61)' also clarifies that if those who break the treaty may reconcile to the principles of treaty, there is no need to use the force. So this backdrop in fact caused the sign (verse) (in the form of representamen) and it points towards that situation.

Besides, the sign (verse) also stands for the general concept of standing army as deterrence in case of any aggression and, therefore, suggests Muslims to prepare a better equipped, better trained, professional permanent army that is nothing alien to the modern conduct of war in the contemporary world. By the above mentioned sign this interpretant is created that amassment of the weapons including both the conventional and nuclear by the Muslims is a unique but hostile phenomenon confined to the Muslims and their book only, however, this concept of standing army is neither a new nor associated with a single community, it dates back to the Roman Empire's concept of *justum bellum* (just war), found in almost all the major religions especially the Abrahamic religions Judaism and Christianity and also continues in the contemporary world (Paterson, 2009, p. 94).

As has been discussed earlier in the previous chapter that in the process of representation it is important to keep in view that what is being represented and what is omitted or in other words what is foregrounded and what is backgrounded. The above mentioned sign (verse) is an apt illustration to this point.

Extract 2

Fight them until there is no dissension
And the religion is entirely Allah's.

This sign appeared in the documentary along with other subsequent verbal signs which are the video clippings of the interviews of some Muslim individuals, clerics and Iranian president who say that Islam is meant to rule the world. Looking at the symbolic as well as indexical level of the above mentioned sign (in the form of representamen) two interpretants are created. One, if we take the

words (representamen) of the sign (extract 2) it creates an interpretant that Islam commands its followers to carry out a perpetual war against the non believers until every inhabitant of the planet becomes Muslims and the religion of Muslims prevails across the globe. The interpretant of unending war becomes another sign and further creates interpretant of fear among others that the Muslims are urged by their God to unleash a never ending war against all the religions, ideologies, systems and communities of the world particularly the western world and the violent actions by allegedly some Muslims in the west are not isolated acts but manifestation of many signs of Quran including the one mentioned above. The above mentioned sign also disperses this interpretant in the minds of the viewers that the confrontation between Muslims and the west and Europe is not the result of some political and other concomitant dynamics, the earlier representament has been replaced with the new one that the manifestation of violence in the west allegedly perpetrated by Muslims is primarily inspired and motivated by their book that is by and large the agreed document among all the Muslims of the world and hence every Muslim especially one who practices the divine guidance is duty bound to exterminate all the religions and their followers from this planet in order to please their God.

This is how the meaning making process has been carried out by displaying the above mentioned sign juxtaposed with other signs. However, it is important here to mention what the above mentioned sign indexicalises in the book from where this sign has been lifted.

This sign even symbolically does not suggest indiscriminate use of force, rather this point towards the specific situation when war is imposed on the Muslims and dissension is created in the society only then the state of Muslims allows to fight against those who create disturbance in society until the dissension/disturbance comes to an end. So the above mentioned sign (in the form of representamen) has the causal relations with dissension and not being a non believer which is being signified through the sign in the documentary. In addition, the word 'them' (line 98)' indexicalises here all the non believers, but, in fact, it suggests only to the persecutors mentioned in the previous verse which is omitted in the documentary. The previous (sign) verse 38 of the same chapter says

‘tell those who disbelieve that if they cease (from persecution of believers) that which is past will be forgiven them; but if they return (thereto) then the example of the men of old hath already gone - before them, for a warning-’ (Quran, 8: 38). If the verse 39 is read together with verse 38, it signifies that the use of force is only relevant as long as the persecution remains.

Similarly, looking at other occasions in the Quran this indexicality does not seem true. As in another occasion, the same book says ‘Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth has been made clear from error. Whoever rejects false worship and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things’ (Quran 2: 256). Likewise, it also states ‘(O Prophet!) exhort them your task is only to exhort; you cannot compel them to believe’ (Quran 48:28).

Now the second interpretant of the above mentioned sign which is created through the sign. The clippings of the interviews of some Muslim individuals, clerics and the current Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad immediately appeared on the screen that duly create the indexicality of the sign that Islam encourages its followers to conquer and rule the world especially by the use of force and Muslims are hell bent upon to materialize this principle into reality. This referential relation between Islam and hegemony is created and projected through displaying the verse and its subsequent signs which are discussed below. I will describe and discuss those signs.

Following the above mentioned verse, the clipping of an anonymous Muslim Shia scholar seemingly hailing from Iran due to his dress code, Persian language and hanging picture of Imam Khomeini behind him, delivers his sermon in which he says:

Extract 2.1

Islam is (more) superior than the Jews, than the Christians, than the Buddhists, than the Hindus.

The only (law) Allah accepts is Islam.

And whoever seeks any other (law) apart from Islam, will never be accepted.

The extract (2.1) creates interpretant that Muslims are considering themselves superior over all the religions and cultures and they do not believe in the peaceful coexistence and plurality and

hence become the threat to the world in the long run. Also the Islamic worldview is primarily imperial in nature and its *modus operandi* to translate the vision into a reality is militant and violent. In addition, the sign (Extract 2.1) at the indexical level creates a causal relation between Muslims and the Superiority Complex, a psychological phenomenon identified and spelt out by Alfred Adler, the founder of the school of Individual Psychology in his works “Understanding Human Nature” and “Social Interest” who mainly holds this view that superiority complex is emerged in order to conceal the inferiority complex so Superior Complexity is an effort of concealment of weakness of an individual.

The sign (Extract 2.1) seeks to manifest the relation, especially for the informed viewers of the documentary, between the Muslims and Superiority Complex, because it signifies that Muslims as a community suffers from inferiority complex and in a state of stress and depression due to lagging far behind in a number of arenas where the contemporary world is far ahead. It is signified that while Muslims are not strong enough to compete with others, they have had to take resort in superiority complex for the compensation of their inferiority complex. In addition, the above sign also creates the interpretant of islamophilia by projecting Muslims as the uncritical admirer of their religion.

The moment this image disappears from the screen, Mahmoud Ahmedinijad, president of Iran in the background of the flag of Islamic Republic of Iran appears on the screen saying:

Extract 2.2

Islam is a religion that wants to rule the world.
It has done so before and eventually will rule it again.

Through these two signs (Extract 2.1 and 2.2) on the one hand the association of Islam and hegemony were indexalised while on the other hand it also signified that violent Muslim revolution by referring Iranian revolution of 1979 and suggested that Islam does not urge its followers to bring only radical change it urges them also to bring violent revolution and Iranian revolution of three decades ago is a case in point, as is suggested in the documentary by relating it with Iran in particular. Since the Iranian revolution proved to be a great set back and blow for the American

imperial designs, Iranian revolution is used in the documentary as an indexical sign to a threat which may repeat in other Muslim countries as well that need to be impeded.

The sign (Extract 2.2) also refers to the global hegemonic approach of Iran towards the world and it signifies that Iran's efforts to have nuclear capability need to be seen in this backdrop. While the sign predominantly brings into surface the relation between Iran and hegemony, it also creates a causal link between Islam and imperialism.

The signs of video clipping, mentioned above, also indexicalise that Muslim political leaders as well as their religious scholars are on the same page with regard to hegemonise the world with the ideology of Muslims and there is no difference between the sentiment on the ground and the structures of power in the Muslim states. In addition, the repeated references of Iranian cleric as well as political leadership of the country also signify that any effort being made by the Muslims in any part of the world to dislodge the system has got association with Iran besides having its causal relation with overall ideology of Islam. These signs also cause to augment the already held interpretant among the general populace of Europe that Iran is an emerging threat to the western political, economic and social system due to its national outlook that has been indexicalised through the video clip of the President Nijad.

Following this sign, four other selected video clips were also shown on the screen. Ibrahim Mudeiris, a Palestinian preacher speaks these words to a congregation:

Extract 2.3

We have ruled the world before, and by Allah, the day will come when we rule the entire world again!

The day will come when we rule America.

The day will come when we rule Britain and the entire world!

Here, Muslims' ambitions to rule the world were associated with the history and through this association future is also projected on the similar lines. In addition, and most significantly the sign (Extract 2.3) refers the Muslim narcissism and make a causal relation between Muslim Narcissism and terrorism in the world, for it signifies that the Muslims across the world are in the state of

sickening self love and extreme love for their religion, history and civilization and are unable to accept, respect and accommodate other religions, cultures, and civilizations in the world, rather they set to exterminate other religions and cultures. This causal relation between the Muslim narcissism and terrorism is basically grounded on a psychological concept regarding the relation between narcissism and violence which suggests that a narcissist individual suffers from a mental disorder known as Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) reacts more aggressively the source of his frustration (Vaknin, 2001, p. 17). Based on this concept it is signified while the Muslims community is suffering from this psychological phenomenon which motivates them to carry out violence. This causal relation between Muslim narcissism and the current wave of terrorism in the world create an interpretant of 'Muslim and Islamic menace' in the minds of the viewers and audiences of the documentary.

The sign (Extract 2. 3) was immediately followed by the clip delivered by a cleric, seemingly an Arab Muslim who says in Arabic 'Allah commanded us to spread this religion worldwide that subsequently followed by fiery speech of Abdul Rahman Saleem in English having British accent, a British-Iranian activist, not a cleric by his qualification but an engineer by profession and former spokesperson of Al-Muhajiroun a Britain based organization that is banned in the UK. His words are

Extract 2.4

You will take over the USA!
 You will take over the UK!
 You will take over Europe!
 You will defeat them all!
 You will get victory!
 You will take over Egypt!
 We trust in Allah!

This is immediately followed by the signs (images) of the protest demonstration before Danish embassy in Britain where demonstrators are shown holding signs that read: "Islam will dominate the world" and "Freedom go to hell." Before discussing the sign (extract 2.4) it is important to mention that the speech delivered by none other than a native British Engineer cleric signifies that the threat Europe is facing with regard to Islam is not external only, the real threat comes from within which

is further fuelled by Islamic vision of power. While the cleric is an engineer by profession, the appearance of the cleric while delivering his speech also create the interpretant that 'Conquering Europe' and 'Conquering Globe' mindset is not confined to the Muslim clerics and religious people among them, the modern educated Muslims not only share the mindset but propagate publically and urge their fellow beings to translate this vision into a living reality.

Through this extract coupled with the subsequent images appeared in the documentary the systematic relations between Islamic ideology and some of the European Muslim's conduct in Europe have been brought forth signifying that they seek to impose their ideology on the world especially in the Europe and the United States. Through these signs especially the quadruple repetition of 'take over' in the above extract creates and underpins the interpretant of threat that the Muslims are set to take over Europe in particular and world in general.

Extract 3

Those who have disbelieved
Our signs, we shall roast them in fire
Whenever their skins are cooked to a turn, we shall
Substitute new skins for them
That they may feel the punishment:
Verily Allah is sublime and wise

Following the shocking images of mutilated dead bodies with burnt skins, this verse appeared on the screen. Once again, the images of the mutilated bodies are shown to link it all with the verses given above. The verse and the subsequent images indexcalise that this punishment has been inflicted on them by the Muslims in the obedience of Allah's commands. Through this sign (verse) the interpretant is created that sufferings of the non Muslims and the violence perpetrated on them are motivated by this verse of the Quran, hence a causal relation between the Quran and cruelty and tyranny sought to be established in the documentary. Also this interpretant is created that the lion share of the violence in the world in general and the terrorist incidents in Europe, the USA and other parts of world in particular are the direct effect of the sign (verse) mentioned above. This indexical relation between the representamen and Object is not based on the right indexicality as the sign

(verse) is indexical to the punishment of the offenders not in this world but in the life hereafter and this view is also shared by other major religions of the world which significantly include Christianity and Judaism and may not be confined to Islam only. So the indexicality of the sign is quite different rather contrary from one which is given in the documentary.

In addition, the indexicality the sign (verse) is creating that Islam is inherently anti Jew and the Muslims are commanded to kill the Jews. This indexicality has been created by the display of two signs on the screen: the one is a video clip of Bakr Al-Samarai, a firebrand Muslim cleric who is shown to take out a sword while declaring anti-Jewish ideas:

Extract 3.1

'If Allah permits us, oh nation of Muhammad, even the stone will say Oh Muslim. A Jew is hiding behind me, come and cut off his head. And we shall cut off his head! By Allah, we shall cut it off! Oh Jews! Allahu Akbar! Jihad for the sake of Allah!

The audience of the speech seems highly emotional and chant slogans "God is great, God is great" which signify that the audience is quite in sync with the ideas and vision of the speaker. While the second sign is a brief interview of a Muslim girl of three and a half year donning a scarf:

Extract 3.2

(Interviewer) What is your name?
 (Girl)- Basmallah
 (Interviewer) Basmallah, how old are you?
 (Girl) Three and a half.
 (Interviewer) Are you a Muslim?
 (Girl)- Yes
 (Interviewer) Basmallah, are you familiar with the Jews?
 (Girl)- Yes
 (Interviewer) Because they are what?
 (Girl)- They are apes and pigs.
 (Interviewer) Because they are apes and pigs?
 (Interviewer) Who said they are so?
 (Girl)- Allah.
 (Interviewer) Where did they say this?
 (Girl)- In the Koran .

Through these two signs (representations of those reflected in Extract 4 and 5) indexicalise that the Muslims are inherently anti Jew and Islam is constantly at war with Jews. The Muslim children are deeply indoctrinated with this view that Jews are destined to be killed in pursuance of divine

guidance and when they grow up with this belief they are duty bound to kill the Jews whenever and wherever they find them. The sign (Extract 3.2) meant to create an interpretant of fear rather phobia especially among the population of Jews which is estimated to be 13-14 million and spread out across the world significantly including Europe, USA, Israel, Netherlands etc. The context in which the above mentioned sign appears is also a sign.

Following the sign (extract 5) another sign sharing the similar theme appeared in which a cleric, who seems an Arab from his dress and language, delivers his sermon before a large audience in which he says:

Extract 3.3

The Jews are Jews.
They are the ones who must, be butchered and killed.

It reinforces the indexicality that the Islam is primarily an anti Jew religion and it is equated with Nazism especially in terms of its enmity with Jews. Of the images which are depicted in the documentary to signify that Muslims are anti Jew, most of them have a link with Iran. For Instance an excerpt of the president of Iran is quoted in the documentary and extracts of the speeches of some Iranian clerics as well as citizens of Iran are shown to convey this view. By doing so that it is indexicalised that Muslims in general and Iran in particular are against Jews and hence are the threat for the Jews the world over.

Extract 4

Therefore when ye meet the unbelievers, smite at their necks and when ye have caused
Bloodbath among them
Bind a bond firmly on them.

The sign (representamen above mentioned) indexicalises that all non believers especially the Jews and prisoners should be killed. This interpretant is created through symbolic sign (words of the verse) and indexicality the sign creates and projects through displaying on the screen numerous image of the mutilated human bodies, scenes of decay and destruction, before the appearance of this verse on the screen and immediately followed by a cleric's speech against Jews and some images

with veiled Muslims and placards saying “Be prepared for the real Holocaust” and “God bless Hitler”.

The sign (verse) creates an interpretant, at the symbolic level, that Islam is inherently violent and Muslims are barbarous who exercise these commands and not only inflict violence to free men but even those who are in their custody. The above extract if read symbolically creates this interpretant, but looking at the signs (words) which are used to create this interpretant seems questionable as some of the words used in the extract do not seem corresponding to the original Arabic text of the book. For instance, the sign “bloodbath” (61) is used which does not correspond to its Arabic text, and creates the interpretant that Muslims are generically bloodthirsty and cannibals. The closest Arabic sign for this sign (word) is “routed”, as is used by Pikthal in his translation, which creates an interpretant that is quite different from the one which the sign blood thirsty is creating in the documentary. Similarly, through the sign (interpretant) “smite their necks” in the above mentioned verse, this interpretant is created that Muslims are commanded to slash/cut the necks of the non believers, as through indexicality of this sign, some of other signs (images) including the one where a man was beheaded allegedly by some Muslim individuals are shown in the documentary to signify that these acts are primarily motivated by this sign (verse) of the Quran. However, the close examining of the context of the Muslims conduct of war makes this indexicality wrong as the sign “smiting their necks” does not indicate towards the slashing of the enemies but it signifies towards shooting to kill in the battle and that this concept is present in all the conventional as well as classic legal frameworks pertaining to the conduct of war and may not be referred as the exclusive prerogative of Islam and Muslims conduct of war as is indexicalised in the documentary.

In addition, it is also important to observe what is omitted from the sign under discussion as the omission of some signs create an interpretant which the producer of the documentary seeks to get across. However, it signifies that people who are arrested in battle should be freed when the battle ends either after paying some amount or if the Muslims authorities waive off the money and set them free without charging anything from them. Thus, they would neither be punished in captivity

nor killed.

While at the indexical level this sign on the hand makes a causal relation between Islam and violence and on the other it associates Islam and Muslims with the suffering of the Jews over the centuries as the representamen (verse) is followed by an interview of Theo van Gogh whose extract is given as under:

Extract 4.1

(Reporter) Don't you think that someday there will be an idiot who wants to kill you?
 (Theovan) No, I can't imagine that.
 You believe in the goodness of man?
 No, not in the goodness of man, but in my own arrogance,
 And has so much effect,
 ...that bullet will not come for me.

This is an extract from the interview with Theovan Gogh, the film producer who was working with Ayan Hirsi Ali, who wrote the script of *Submission*, in order to produce an eleven minute documentary film *Submission* wherein verses from the Quran were painted on the naked body of a woman and it is portrayed that the Quran justifies violence against women. Theovan was killed in Amsterdam on November 2, 2004 by a Dutch Moroccan Muslim Muhammad Bouyeri on the grounds that the film is sacrilegious.

Here it is suggested that Muslims are homicidal maniacs and murderous thugs and want to kill a Jew as a religious obligation. Moreover, the above mentioned sign (extract of interview) also indexicalise with the phenomenon of threat especially in Europe as well as it relates Islam and Muslims as an ideology and community with intolerance and are too adamant to their view and not only refuse to listen to the one which is contrary to their world view but kill him/her who is beholder of the view which is opposing to Muslims' worldview. This causal relation between Muslim community especially the Muslim Diaspora in Europe becomes questionable if one does the careful reading of Islamic texts and the practices as a whole which indexicalise that Islam does not bar the plurality of views but in fact it in fact is against the notions of freedom of expression and free will. Moreover, the sign mentioned above also is indexical to the Islamic concept of Apostasy signifying that any Muslim who expresses his will which is against Islam should be condemned to death and

hence the relation between Islamic command and the killing of Theovan is of cause and effect as it is signified that the killing of Theovan has primarily been caused by the word of God and executed by a Muslim inspired by the word of God.

Extract 5

They but wish that ye should reject faith
So take not friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah
But if they turn renegades, seize them and kill them wherever ye find the
And take no friends or helpers from their ranks.

The above mentioned sign follows in the documentary with the images of beheading of American hostage Eugene Armstrong and some Muslims declaring Islam as the best religion of the world and announcing death penalty for those who convert from Islam to any other religion. This sign (extract 5) suggests that Islam is not only anti pluralist religion rather it wants to kill all its opponents. This sign is also followed by heading of three news items published which read:

Extract 5.1

Ex-Muslim Jami assaulted
Death to Rushdie
Death Threats for Hirsi Ali too

It has been indexicalised here that all the converted or non-practicing Muslims are necessarily to be killed. Through the following image the interpretant is created that Islam commands its followers to kill all those who do not subscribe to the Islamic law. Islam and rigidity and intolerance are associated through this sign, and by Salman Rushdie and Hirsi Ali it is signified that there is no room for dissent in Islamic framework and it bars the freedom of expression.

It seems pertinent to discuss here the indexicality between Islam and intolerance through the mentioned sign and the interpretant which is being created among the viewers of the documentary. Salman Rushdie and Hirsi Ali are not threatened just because they hold views which are different from the mainstream Muslim discourse, they both attempt to create dissension not in the Muslim societies but in other societies also through their provocative and non-academic discourse. For instance, Hirsi Ali, does not critique Islam academically but in fact she abuses the prophet

Muhammad and issues some remarks on Islam which are less academic and more abusive. The same goes for Salman Rushdie especially for his novel *The Satanic Verses* (1988) which carries remarks against the Quran and prophet Muhammad. The remarks uttered in the novel are so much sacrilegious as far as the muslims' sensibilities are concerned that may not be reproduced here and thereby may not sound enough even to deliberate upon its academic merit and research scholarship. So by taking instances of Salman Rushdie and Hirsi Ali, Muslims across the globe and their ideology may not be stereotyped. It is also to be kept in view that both the personalities are alive and active in their respective arenas despite the fact that Muslims are over 1.5 billion and living almost across the globe.

Analyzing it symbolically, the sign "They" in the line 82 seeks to refer the non Muslims, as an object of the representament 'they', but rather its actual object is 'hypocrites' who are pretending to be Muslims in the time when this command was revealed. The noted commentator of Quran Syed Abul A'la Maududi (1998) argues about this sign (verse) saying that it is a 'verdict on those hypocritical confessors of faith who belong to a belligerent, non Muslim nation and actually participate in acts of hostility against the Islamic state (p. 67). So the interpretant that this sign is creating is in fact a sweeping overgeneralization for the non Muslims as is done in the documentary.

3.5 The Netherlands under the Spell of Islam

Of the 17 minutes long documentary, ten minutes are reserved for the representation of Islamic ideology and Muslims at large while the remaining seven minutes (which is the 70% of the documentary) were reserved for depicting the situation of Netherlands with reference to Islamism under the title 'The Netherlands under the Spell of Islam.'

In this part it is shown that how fast the Muslim population is increasing in the Netherlands, and how the Muslim citizens living in the Netherlands are becoming threat to the demographic composition and political representation of the country. The images including the burqa clad and scarf wearing women were shown while doing various activities including shopping in the markets

alongside the bar graph indicating the rise in Muslim population in Europe; two individuals in the uniform which indicate that they are security personnel setting off their shoes before entering the mosque alongside the graph bar displayed on the screen which shows that the number of Muslims in Europe reached upto 54, 000, 000 by 2007. These images were further followed by a Dutch speaking man who says that 'he will kill his mother and sister if they have sex with someone' and an excerpt from the comment of a cleric in Arabic saying that Islam considers adultery a crime. This comment was followed by depicting the images of the minarets of the mosques or Islamic centers in the Netherlands coupled with the selected audio excerpts from the two supposed sermons in Arabic in the Dutch mosques; and of them one urges his followers that they should denounce all the political parties and political systems and ideologies including democracy, liberalism, and socialism as they are originated from the human brain. Afterwards under the title of Netherlands in Future shocking and horrific images were shown that include the killing of women, beheading them, and the Dutch newspapers clippings wherein the same theme were reflected. And in the last an image of tearing apart a page from Quran is shown following with the heading of 'stop Islamization', 'defend our freedom' and it concluded with an explosion when a bomb in the turban of Prophet Muhammad went off. In the following lines some of the extracts depicted in *Fitna* which are in fact the symbolic signs would be analysed.

Extract 6

Number of Muslims in the Netherlands (graphic)

1909-54

1960-1,399

1990-458,000

2004-944,000

Number of Muslims in Europe (graphic)

2007 - 54,000,000

These representament (Extract 19) makes a relation between the rising figures of Muslim population and the emerging threat to Netherlands in terms of its demographic composition in future. It (sign) suggests that this rise, that is primarily caused by conversion, would soon change the demographic composition of the country that would have serious political implications as due to

this change Muslims would occupy the political and other state institutions in the country and the natives would be at their mercy. Through creating this indexicality an interpretent is created that Muslims are increasingly becoming a dangerous threat to Netherlands that need to be countered.

Following the above mentioned extract, some video clip of common individuals as well the clerics in the Netherlands are displayed on the screen which are followed by the images of Gays men hanged, blood smeared children and the blooded, hanged and assassination of women. It is indexicalised that the Netherlands in future would witness these practices. With regard to creating a relation between Islam and cruelty, some signs (extracts) are displayed which are given as under:

Extract 7

If my mother or my sister have sex with someone else...
 ...then I will kill them too.
 Then you will commit an honor killing?
 -Absolutely.

This extract was uttered by an anonymous person seemingly the native of Netherlands who speaks in Dutch and its corresponding translation is appeared on the screen. Before this sign appears on the screen, the two individuals in the uniform are seemingly the Dutch security personnel setting off their shoes before entering the mosque alongside the graph bar displayed on the screen which shows that the number of Muslims in Europe reached upto 54, 000, 000 by 2007.

This idexicalse that it is not the immigrant Muslims who want to subscribe to the notion of honor killing, rather the penetration of Muslims' views are so penetrating in the society that even a native citizen of Netherlands who does not seem religious through his appearance shares the view that he will kill his sister if he she found guilty of adultery. In addition, the sign (image) in which individuals in the uniform are seemingly the Dutch security personnel setting off their shoes before entering the mosque also indexicalise that Muslims have also made inroads into the significant state institutions of the country which suggest that the whole country is soon to be overtaken by the Muslims within the country. In addition, the above mentioned sign also indexicalise that those who convert to Islam are radicals and despite citizen of the country challenge the law, values and ethos of the society in which they live and signify that threat is not only the outside but the volcano seems

simmering within the country and may erupt in any time in future so people should stand up and confront with this ideology and its followers

The above mentioned sign is followed by another sign (extract) who said in Arabic while his translation was displayed on the screen in these words:

Extract 7.1

In the Netherlands, for example, one is allowed to commit adultery or be a gay.
But I don't feel called upon to be a party to that, because Islam considers something like that a crime.

This sign (Extract 7.1) in Arabic was uttered by a Muslim cleric wearing a cap and having a beard that was followed by the images of Mosques in Netherlands which were followed by an audio clip of an anonymous cleric who seemingly delivers his sermon in a mosque and observes:

Extract 7.2

If the married woman, Allah forbid, commits adultery or married woman commits adultery
Then she will be stoned

The signs (extracts 7, 7.1, and 7.2) by and large create indexicality at the two levels. First they indexicalise the emerging dangerous threat to the Netherlands and create an interpretant of phobia and fear in the minds of the native non Muslim population of the country, while at the other level they indexicalise Islamic concept of punishment with barbarity and cruelty signifying further that Islam gives discretion to every individual for determining and exercising the severest punishment to the offender. They create an interpretant that Muslims not only outnumber the native population, but they would exercise the strict punishment to those who were involved in homosexuality and adulteration. The violent images of women and blood smeared children create the interpretant that in future women and children were taken their right to life as human beings in the Netherlands.

Extract 8

The sound you heard was a page being removed from the phonebook
For it is not up to me, but to Muslims themselves to tear out the hateful verses from the Quran.
Muslims want you to make way for Islam, but Islam does not make way for you
The Government insists that you respect Islam, but Islam has no respect for you.
Islam wants to rule, submit, and seeks to destroy our western civilization.
In 1945 Nazism was defeated in Europe.
In 1989, communism was defeated in Europe.

Now the Islamic ideology has to be defeated.
 Stop Islamisation
 Defend our freedom.

The sign (Extract 8) indexicalise Islam with intolerance, fanaticism, the colonial ideology, equate with Nazism and communism, thus Islam and threat wedlocked in a referential relations through this sign. Through mentioning Nazism and Communism it creates an interpretant that the west is at war with Islam as it was in the past with Nazism and Communism. It does not make parallels only between Nazism and any specific group within Islam but it indiscriminately equates it with Islam per se with Nazi ideology. It in a way equates the Muslims book Quran with *Mein Kampf* (1926) (My Struggle/My Battle), a book that is written by Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and mainly deals with his life and political ideology.

This signs in fact aims at creating an interpretant of Islamophobia in the minds of the viewers of Europe and in particular those of Netherlands. While the discourse on the phenomenon of Islamophobia is not new but the volume of such discourse has been tremendously increasing in the wake of the twin tower incident in the United States.

In the following lines the major iconic signs used in the documentary will be analyzed to see as to how these signs create meanings with regard to representation of Islam and Muslims. As stated earlier that an iconic sign is a sign which represents its object mainly by its similarity (Peirce, 1986). These signs are closely related with the things they represent and look exactly like them these signs are called iconic signs, however, these signs are also indexical as they show the direct link between the representament (images) shown below and object they refer through the representaments. Each sign will be discussed with its connotative meaning and its significance in the context, and what interpretant these signs make in the viewers mind of the documentary.

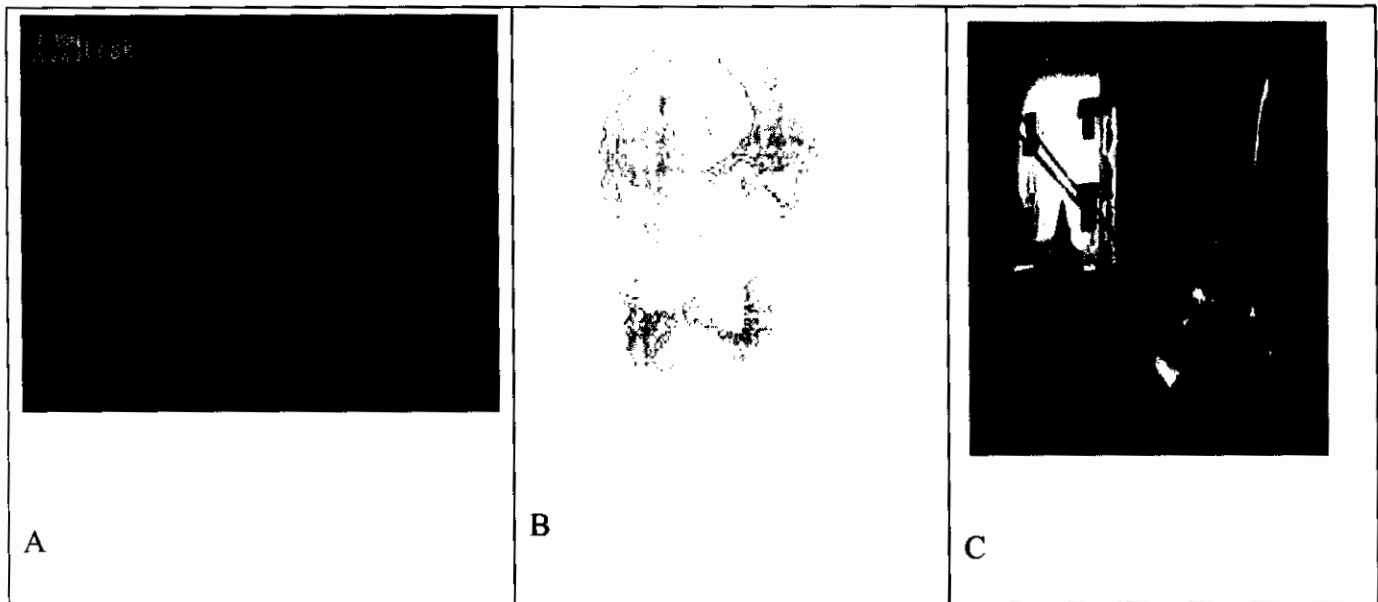


Figure 1

The documentary starts with appearance of the sign (A) on the screen which indexicalise that the violence allegedly perpetrated across the globe is primarily motivated by Quran and thus Islam and dissention are bracketed together in a causal relations signifying that Quran fuels fire and terror in the world. This sign does not create a relation between Muslims and terrorism only; it primarily brings into surface the relation between Quran and terrorism which is very significant and has far reaching fallouts and implications especially for those who would subscribe to the views presented in the documentary. Among many other this causal relation creates an interpretant in the minds of the viewers that Islam will always remain at war with the rest of the world. The sign A in figure 1 also carries two other verbal signs within it which include the word “Quran” in Arabic on the left slide and the word “Fitna” on the right side of the image. The Object of the representamen “Fitna” is Quran and similarly the Object of the representamen “Quran” is “Fitna” and both the signs create an interpretant that once causes the other.

Similarly, the iconic sign of Prophet Muhammad with bomb in his turban, originally made by Danish Cartoonist Kurt Westergaard which triggered a wave of protests in the Muslims countries and some protest demonstrations ended in violence in various parts of the world, that later exploded in the documentary indexiclaise the wave of terrorism is caused by the teachings of Prophet. Similarly sign (C), makes the relation between Quran and terrorism and violence. The

representations of the three signs mentioned above create an interpretant that the manifestations of terror in the world are not the result of the teachings of the Muslims meta narratives and the alleged involvement of the Muslims in acts of terror are not the result of their grievance, alienation, or other political factors rather their practices are quite in sync with the directions of Quran and Sunnah.

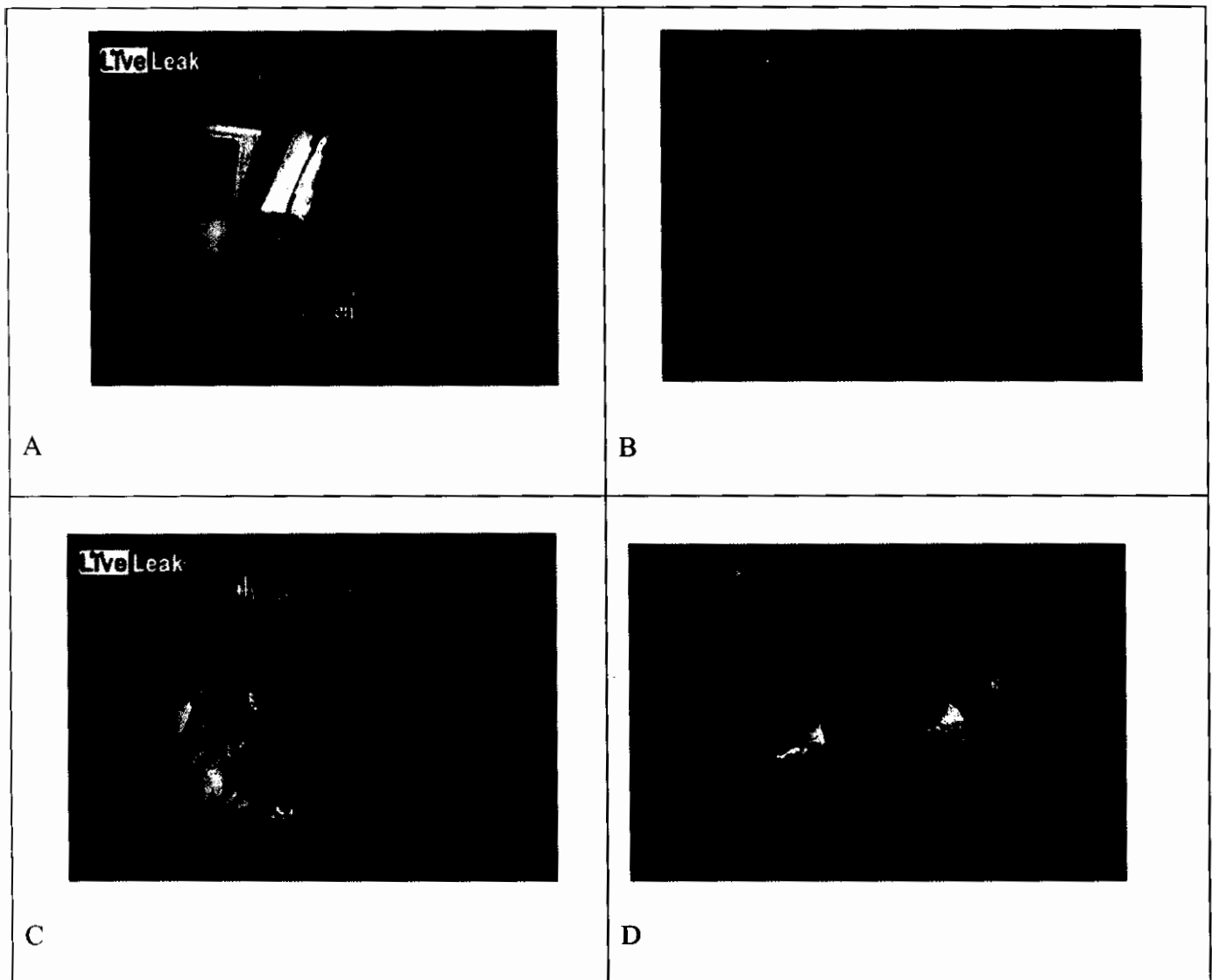


Figure 3

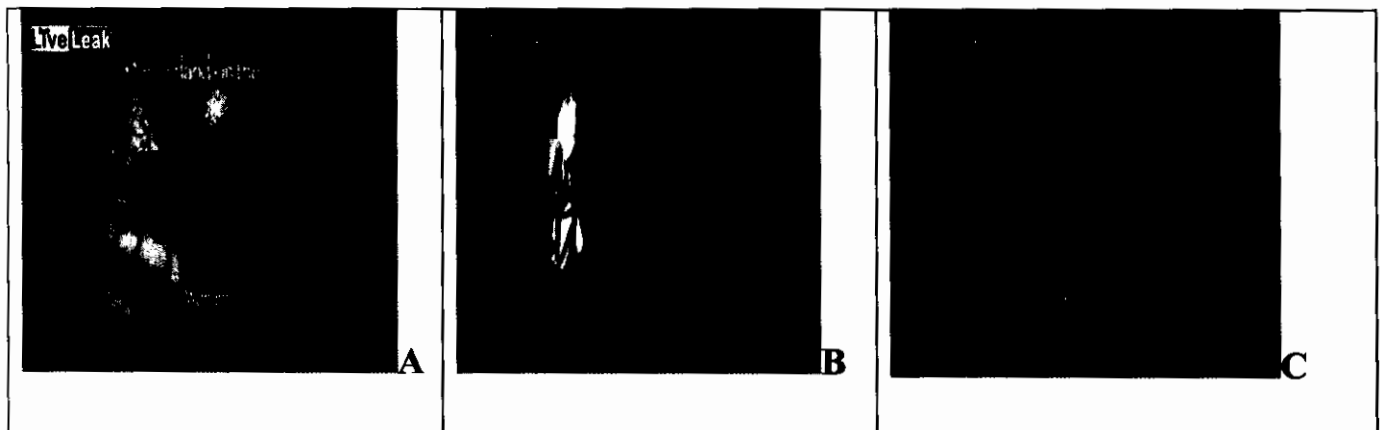
The signs (A), (B), (C) and (D) reflect a controversial religious rite termed as Qama Zani among some of the Shia Muslims, in which parents make a small cut on head/forehead with a sharp razor as a sign of mourning in grief of Imam Hussain, the son of Khalif Ali, who was martyred in 680 AD along with his family members. Through these signs indexicality between Islam and violence is

created signifying that violence is inherent in Muslims and they are accustomed to it since their childhood. The cutting of children by their parents (sign B and C) especially their mother creates a highly distasteful and abominable interpretant in the minds of the viewers regarding the religion of Islam and the Muslims. The parents love for children is a universal phenomenon and a highly cherished relation but through the mentioned signs it is signified that Islam and Muslims even do not share with this fundamental human instinct of love and affection and they have nothing to do with harmony and love. Besides inflicting torture to the children, the sign (A) creates an interpretant that Muslim children inflict themselves into torture and persecution in order to please their God.

In addition, in all the signs mentioned in figure 3 above another symbolic sign (The Netherlands in the future) also suggests that inherently violent religion Islam is incrementally inching towards Netherlands and making its penetration in its political and other state structures so the people should stand up against the religion and its followers within the country and across the globe also in order to create an impediment against the threat.

Besides, the sign (figure 3) also suggests to the viewer that the Muslims are intrinsically accustomed to a kind of sadistic pleasure which they get by inflicting themselves.

3.6 Islam and Women with special reference to Netherlands



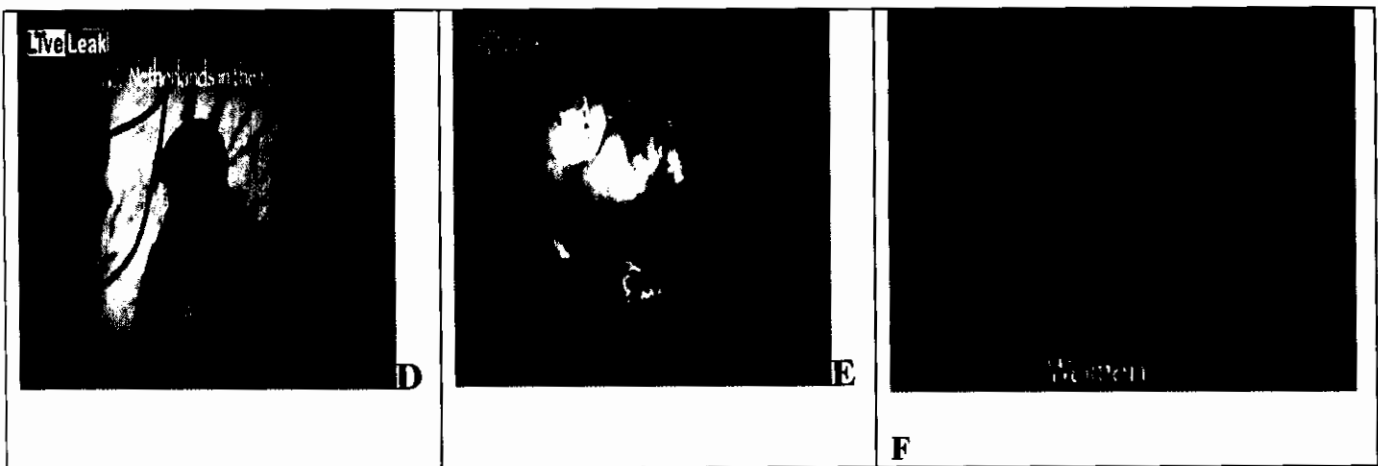


Figure 4

The representaments of signs (A) and (C) denote a Muslim woman who is undergoing her circumcision. This is a practice in which part of a woman's external genital is removed for multiple reasons including the medical ones. The one reason which the literature on this subject suggests that it reduces a woman's libido. Through representaments of signs (A) and (C) the indexicality is created between Islam and oppression of women and the deprivation of their fundamental human rights. Besides creating the interpretant that Islam is against the basic human rights of woman it also creates another interpretant in the minds of the viewers that this practice is exclusive to the Muslim societies. However, this practice is largely followed in the world which, according to a report of World Health Organization, include 28 countries of the Western and Eastern countries and 100-140 million have declared that they have undergone this experience. So its exclusive clubbing with Islam may not be substantiated with the teachings of the religion and the construction of interpretant of phobia in the minds of the native population of Netherlands seems a misleading relation between Islam and terror.

The representamen of the sign C (Figure 4) denotes a man pointing gun at Afghan style Burqa clad woman who is about to be shot for committing adultery. Likewise, the representamen (D) denotes a veiled Muslim woman again, who is indicted by its traditional attire, is to be punished for committing adultery. Similarly, the representamen of the sign (E) and (F) denotes two decapitated women lying their head on the floor. The representamen of the sign (C) (D) (E) and (F) indexicalise the religion of Islam as misogynist and cruel towards its treatment with women and thus also

equates it with a threat for the western ethos and values in general and laws and traditions of Netherlands in particular. The Muslims residing in Netherlands are also indexicalised with threat to the country as they are more inclined towards their own religious belief system and practices and keep their identity intact instead of assimilating in the European society, which, the signs suggest, a threat to the European culture, civilizations and demography.

In addition, the representation of signs (A, B, C, D, E, and F) followed by a sign of mosques, scarf wearing woman and a numerous newspapers headlines which reinforce the interpretant that Netherlands is under the spell of Islam which is constantly at rise and going to conquer the country and impose its vision and practices on the people of the country. In addition, the mentioned signs also establish a link with the cultural debate in some of the western countries including France regarding hijab/burqa (veil) issue that indicates that the visible presence of Muslims in the west is considered as the threat. But the careful analysis of the matter suggests that while the new generation of Muslims in the west is largely inclined to the cultural and civilizational dimension of Islam and seems ready to integrate in the European societies but not ready to assimilate there. This is perhaps the reason to construct a feminist discourse by representing the selective representation of Muslim women, portraying them as the oppressed and projecting their religion as the actual oppressing force.

The analysis carried out in the chapter brought into light the major themes along with the added emphasis as to how they were constructed by employing various signs in the documentary. The indexicality of the selected signs used in the documentary has remained the dominant thread, as it has been identified in the course of analysis that it was the main technique employed in the documentary for the meaning making process. It suggested that through a very careful selection of verbal and visual signs a systematic referential and causal relation between the Muslims canonical texts especially the Quran coupled with the discourse of some selected Muslim clerics and violence, terrorism, misogyny, sadism, narcissism, fascism and other concomitant themes discussed above. The combination of these themes constructed the phenomenon of Islamophobia in the west in

particular and other parts of the world in general. The Indexical or the cause and effect structure of the signs, in fact, constructed a 'truth/reality' for the audiences of the documentary that the manifestations of the problem as depicted in the documentary is deeply rooted in the perennial genesis of the Muslims' primary texts and their scholars' discourse and this phenomenon will remain so as long as the genesis/roots are intact. This indexicality necessitates an independent investigation and threadbare discussion that will be made in the following chapter with focusing on the major themes emerged in the analysis.

CHAPTER 4

The Alternative Narrative to Representation and stereotyping in *Fitna*

This chapter mainly seeks to discuss the themes and issues emerged in the previous chapter and come up with an interpretation on the data as while carrying out the analysis the discussion on the themes has been deliberately avoided and the chapter was confined to the analysis of data only. However, the major themes, their dynamics and various dimensions emerged in the analysis necessitate some discussion.

It is important to mention here that the major themes emerged in the analysis may not be termed as the new ones as most of them are rooted in history and recurrent in the discourse generated by the orientalist from time to time in the past as well in the contemporary era but their timing especially in the post 9/11 period, as this study also focuses, gives them credence to interpret and discuss them in the present timeframe and global political and cultural weather. However, it seems significant to mention that while the discourse generated by the Orientalists in the history with regard to Muslims and Islam has got parallels with the contemporary efforts in this regard and the documentary *Fitna* is seemingly a part of it but the most significant aspect of the current wave is that it aims to target one of the core canonical texts of Muslims in a very blunt and abusive manner and links it with whatever bad the planet is witnessing.

The identified themes are very broad and wide ranging and recurrent in the contemporary ideological, political, cultural and mass media discourse, it may not be possible nor is the scope of the present study to cover each theme and its concomitant aspects, we would confine our discussion to only those aspects which have close relevance to the research at hand. More precisely, the

discussion would briefly comment upon the themes emerged in the analysis, their link with the main hypothesis and research questions of the study and their implications.

The major themes brought into surface while carrying out the analysis in the previous chapter would be discussed under different heads below.

4.1 Quran and Fitna

This is one of the fundamental arguments of the documentary reflected through a number of symbolic and iconic signs that Quran and Fitna are interchangeable names and one fuel another and have got causal relations between the two and the violent acts in the world particularly in Netherlands, Europe and the USA are its manifestations. The way Quranic verses and excerpts of some clerics and violent and terror acts are juxtaposed and shown, it seems convincing for a viewer that wherever there is any anarchy, disorder and violence in the world it is due to the teaching of the book. However, paradoxically the bare reading of the book in general and the verse quoted in the documentary in particular suggest the view that is quite contrary to one which projected through the documentary. The book asks to stop anarchy and dissension if it arises in the society and the Quran even commands its followers to fight until the dissension in the society comes to an end (Quran, 8:39). Another significant thing which needs to be pointed out here is that the cause to fighting is dissension in the society and not infidelity of the people. And to determine any unrest in the society as *Fitna* and take up against to eliminate it is not the prerogative of some individuals or groups.

While the word *Fitna* has been used to convey the predominant sense of mischief/dissension in the documentary and also served as synecdoche, for the word refers the whole book – Quran, this word has multiple meanings which range from test and trial, to persecute the weak deprive them of their lawful rights, seize their houses and torture them, to suppress truth through tyranny, to hinder men from the path of Allah and to mischief (Maududi, 2011, p. 322). So this Multiplicity of meanings embodied in the word in Arabic may not be exactly incorporated into any other language including English.

4.2 Terrorism: Quran Gives License to Kill?

While Muslims and terrorism are frequently bracketed in the mass media discourse especially in the post 9/11 period and it has almost become axiomatic in some quarters to repeat the cliché that “not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims, clubbing Islam, as a religion per se, with terrorism and saying the documentary that it is none other than the Quran that gives license to kill. By this link it is conveyed that the fault primarily lies with the book and not the followers and it is the book which gives license to kill who don’t subscribe its views. However, the same book condemns killing of a single innocent man and equates the killing of an innocent man with the killing of the whole humanity.

... He who plays slays a should unless it be (in punishment) for murder or for spreading mischief on earth shall be as if he had given life to all mankind (32 Al-Maidah)

As one may not construct the overgeneralization for Christianity by referring from the Bible ‘Make war on them until you have wiped them out (Samuel, 15:18), the same may not be done in the case of any other religion including Islam.

Islamic code of war prohibits Muslim combatants to bring collateral damage. Prophet Muhammad says ‘Do not kill women, Children and the old.’ At the victory of Makkah the Muslim army were instructed not to attack any injured, nor to chase who runs for his life and give assurance and safety for one who sits in his homes and keeps the door shut.

Similarly Abu Bakar (632-634 AD), the first Khalif of the Muslims while giving instructions to the army that was leaving for Syrian expedition that women, children and aged should not be murdered, dead bodies would not be disfigured; monks and devotees would not be harassed, worship places would not be demolished, fruit bearing trees would not be cut down and harvests not to be set ablaze, towns would not be ruined (Kadduri, 2010, p. 102). This suggests that the religion which does not allow its followers to damage even trees, how it could urge the believer to bring destruction to the world. So it does not seem a balanced approach to construct a reality that Islam is

going to explode the planet. As far as the use of force is concerned Quran at various occasions allows exercising the force but in this case Quran may not be singled out as the only scripture giving this right for self defence, rather almost all the primary scriptures of the major religions of the world significantly included Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and modern international law not only grant this right but the glorification of violence can also be observed in many scriptures. Besides, having the similarities with other faiths and contemporary international legal order, Quran does allow the use of force but it does not encourage it rather permit it as a last resort, perhaps that is why there are 70 such occasions in the Quran where prohibitions against warring are found (Pandya & Laipson, 2009). Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad also states 'Never desire war and aggression. Always ask God for security and peace; but when peace is threatened, heaven is beneath the shadows swords' (Muslim, 1998). In addition, in case of war the Quran does not allow the unproportional use of force and confine the Muslims armies to its minimum use in order to attain the objectives among which significantly included the establishment of peace. So the argument that terrorism is fuelled by Quran and Quran gives license to kill may not be substantiated by the contextual reading of the book.

While there are a number of aspects related to this debate but due to the paucity of time and the limited scope of research they may not be covered. The researcher, however, does suggest the readers to study *Fiqh of Jihad* (Qaradawi, 2009), *Jihad: Mazhamat and Baghawat* (Ahmed, 2012) and *Islamic Code of War and Peace: A comparative Study of Major Civilizations* (Maududi, 2011), *Islam International Law and the World Today* (Ghazi, 2011) as these recent works provide the alternative paradigm and largely address the issues emerged in the debate regarding Islam and terrorism and the concomitant aspects of this debate.

4.3 Islam and Barbarity with special reference to Islamic Concept of Punishment

With regard to bracketing Islamic concept of punishment with barbarity it can be said that this view is not a new as sizeable volume of literature on both the claims and response is available, the

depiction of the concept that Islam is barbarous in terms of awarding punishment and every Muslims individual has got the right to determine and execute the punishment portray Islam and Muslims as the threat to the civilizations and humanity. In the course of analysis it came out that Islamic ideology is not only against the freedom of an individual but it also awards a punishment which seems at odd with the western jurisprudence. Instead of talking about the whole concept of punishment in Islam, and comparing it with philosophy and practices of punishment in the western legal system the discussion will only confine to the debate emerged in the analysis which basically deals with the Fixed Punishment (*Hudood*) in Islam. In Islamic penal system the punishments have been classified into the three categories including (i) Fixed Punishment (*Hudood*) (ii) Retaliation and blood-money (*Qisas* and *Diyat*) and (iii) *Tazeerat* (discretionary punishment) (Qadri, 1995). In the documentary an individual Muslims claims to punish the would-be offender, that on the one hand does not reflect and represent the Muslims narrative and on the other hand it is not allowed in the Islamic legal system to determine and execute a punishment by an individual. The process of determination of offence in case of fixed punishments is so much rigorous and delicate that it is practically impossible to determine and award the fixed punishment unless and until the offender himself confesses his/her crime. Undoubtedly the fixed punishment is severe but according to the Islamic jurisprudence the implications of the crimes come under the fixed punishment are severest for keeping the fabric of society and the larger good of humanity. Moreover, fixed punishment on adultery is not only confined to only one religion or ideology there are other ideologies and religions including Christianity and Judaism that share the same vision as far as the punishment on adultery is concerned.

negative stereotyping of Islam and Muslims, as is done in the documentary, may be termed as the sweeping overgeneralisation. With regard to the incidents of 9/11 that practically became the turning point in the global political landscape, much has been discussed on almost every significant aspect of the tragedy and there are a number of theories which reject the official position of the United States that this act was done by Al Qaeda especially the research carried out by an American physicist and Professor Emeritus Steven Jones (2006) of Brigham Young University, and Griffin (2007) seriously shroud the official claims of the State Department. So the counter narratives against the United States official narrative especially the 9/11 Commission Report released on July 22, 2003 are too much significant to be ignored. Michael Meacher (2003), former minister of the state for environment in the Tony Blair's cabinet in a detailed article 'This War on Terror is bogus' remarked that '... plans for military action against Afghanistan and Iraq were in hand well before 9/11'. He maintained in the same article:

...The BBC reported (September 18 2001) that Niaz Niak, a former Pakistan foreign secretary, was told by senior American officials at a meeting in Berlin in mid-July 2001 that "military action against Afghanistan would go ahead by the middle of October". Until July 2001 the US government saw the Taliban regime as a source of stability in Central Asia that would enable the construction of hydrocarbon pipelines from the oil and gas fields in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, through Afghanistan and Pakistan, to the Indian Ocean. But, confronted with the Taliban's refusal to accept US conditions, the US representatives told them "either you accept our offer of a carpet of gold, or we bury you under a carpet of bombs. (Meacher, 2003, para. 2)

Having said so and besides putting all the theories aside, if the claims of the state department are even taken on the face value, this act whosoever carries out cannot be justified by the Muslims' canonical texts especially the Quran as well as the discourse of the mainstream Muslim discourse both in history and the contemporary world. That is why the 9/11 tragedy was condemned across the Muslim world and Muslims scholars expressed the deep sympathy:

5.5 Islam, Colonialism/Imperialism and Universalism

One of the significant themes of the documentary is Islamic Imperialism and Muslims' ambitions to rule the world and impose their world order and world view in the world. The global and universal approach of the religion was projected to reflect the colonial mindset of the Muslims and implicitly the reference is made to the Muslims history of ruling the various parts of the world since the mid seventh century which significantly included Arab World, North Africa, and Middle East. The notable Muslims regimes included Caliphates, Ummayyads (661- 750 AD), Abbasids(750-1258 AD), Fatimids (909- 1171), Ajuuraan(14th Century to 17 Century AD), Gazanavids (963-1187 AD), Seljuqs (1037- 1194 AD), Safavids (1301-1736 AD), Mughals (1526 -1857 AD) and Ottomans (1299- 1922 AD) and this series of regimes testify the claim that that Muslims ruled the larger part of the world and they may aspire to restore the leading role in the world. The argument of Muslims' aspiration to rule the world is not new especially in the literature produced by the orientalist, but it is indexicalised in the documentary that the terrorist incidents in America and UK in particular were primarily caused by Muslims ambition to rule rather conquer the world but the violent acts in the world are deeply rooted in political dynamics and not precisely ideological ones. According to Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman (2010), in their recent well researched book *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (2012), conclude that it is the foreign military occupation that drives suicide terrorism and this phenomenon has extended at the transnational level.

Although existing theories contend that it is a product of religious fanaticism or economic alienation, this volume shows that the logic of military occupation should be extended to account for transnational suicide terrorism. (p. 11)

Islam is indeed universal in approach and its message is for the whole world and humanity

4.6 Islam and anti Judaism

In the course of the analysis this theme has also been brought into surface that Islam is inherently an anti Jew religion and would like to exterminate all the Jews from the world. This interpretant has been created by showing a number of verbal and visual signs in the documentary and the Jews the world over have been threatened that the Muslims especially those who practise their religion are duty bound to kill them whenever and wherever they find them. Again the portrayal of Muslims as anti Jew is not a novel idea in academia and there is also huge literature on various dimensions of this claim and counter claim but the contemporary context and political developments in the world give added significance to this claim which have far reaching implications for the global peace. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics there were 13.4 million Jews worldwide in 2009, (CBS, 2010) and spread across Europe, USA, Asia, Africa and some other parts of the world and not to mention enjoy influential positions in the some of the powerful capitals of the world significantly included Washington DC, the capital of the world's super power. (For the magnitude of their influence see the book 'The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy' by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt published in 2007). In this backdrop such hateful discourse with stereotypical representation seems an effort to bring the civilizational clash.

As far as the Judaism and Islam are concerned, both are Abrahamic religions and their relations date back to the 7th century since the emergence of Islam in the Arab in the 7th century. Instead of going back to the history and roots of the religions and deliberating on the theological foundations of the religions, the current discussion will remain confined to the argument which is put across in the documentary that Muslims are generically anti Jew and Islam is like Nazism especially in terms of enmity with Jews. With regard to Islam's equation with Nazism, the discussion will be made under the next heading, this part, however would be restricted to Islam

common terms as between us and you...' (3:64).

In addition, of the images which are depicted in the documentary to signify that Muslims are anti Jew, most of them have a link with Iran which signify that Muslims in general and Iran in particular are against Jews. However, it seems that the statements coming from Iran regarding the Jews have been motivated by the political factors in the Middle East especially in Palestine Arab conflict. Nevertheless, it is also interesting to mention that among the Muslim countries the largest number of Jews, estimated 30-35,000 in the year 2000, are residing in Iran where a seat in the parliament is also reserved for the Jews. Apart from Iran Uzbekistan and Turkey are the second largest Muslim countries where Jews are living peacefully. The Jews in the history also enjoyed important positions under Muslim regimes. According to Uri Avnery (2006):

There is no evidence whatsoever of any attempt to impose Islam on the Jews. As is well known, under Muslim rule the Jews of Spain enjoyed a bloom the like of which the Jews did not enjoy anywhere else until almost our time. Poets like Yehuda Halevy wrote in Arabic, as did the great Maimonides. In Muslim Spain, Jews were ministers, poets, scientists.

Besides, the projecting Islam as an inherently an anti Jew religion and drawing comparison between Nazism seem motivated by ideas such as clash of civilizations as through this comparison the Jews are being reminded that they were going to face the wholesale slaughter by the hands of Muslims as Adolph Hitler did to them during the World War II which is commonly known as Holocaust in which 6 million Jew were reported to be killed.

In addition, there is no denying the fact that the Muslims and Jews remained at confrontation with each other in history and the present Palestine-Israel conflict also reflects it, it needs to be kept in view that the genealogy of the conflict is more political and less ideological and it needs to be seen in the context.

4.7 Islam, Nazism and Communism

With regard to Islam's causal relations with intolerance and fanaticism, some discussion has already been made, there is however need to discuss the indexicality which is created through linking Islam with Nazism and communism and equating Quran with *Mein Kampf*. While the scope of the study and time constraints may not allow the researcher to extensively deliberate upon this faulty equation between the two ideologies as Nazism is primarily based on the biological racism and antisemiticism while Islam does not share this vision of Nazism, it would briefly touch upon the significant aspects of the debate. As far as the comparison of the two books are concerned, one may draw some parallels by doing some surface reading and practices of some individuals, but the close and most importantly the contextual reading of Quran and life of Prophet Muhammad may not help deciphering the vision and approach of the book written by Adolf Hitler rather it reveals that there are little parallels between the two in the strict sense as Islam by its vision, approach and strategy is generically different. Racial superiority is the cornerstone of Nazism while Islam categorically turns down this notion as the Quran states:

Human beings, we created you all from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that they may know one another. Verily the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most God fearing of you. (Quran, 49:13)

Abul'Ala Maududi while commenting on this verse observes:

... through the present verse mankind is being warned about the major erroneous notion that has always led to the spread of evil around the world; namely the notion of prejudice based on race, colour, language and homeland and nationality... While this diversity is quite natural, it does not provide any justification for some people to claim any inherent superiority over others; to consider some on these grounds as high and others as low, some as noble and others as ignoble. Considerations of colour, race or nationality do not warrant people of any particular colour, race or nationality to regard themselves as superior to others. God created such diversities to foster greater cooperation and enable these different entities to become mutually introduced. There is only one basis for regarding one as better than the other and that is on account of their moral excellence. (Maududi, 1998, pp. 1055-1066)

Likewise, such vision is also reflected in the farewell sermon of the Prophet Muhammad delivered in 632 AD in the Mount of Arafat. He says:

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non Arab nor a non Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor does a black have any superiority over white except by piety and good action. (Shamim, 2011, p. 168)

Similarly, anti-Semitism had been one of the most important characteristics of Nazism but Islam is not inherently an anti Jew religion, as if it were the case it would not have asked the Jews to come to terms what is common between Islam and Judaism (3:64).

Besides, Islamic ideology is equated with communism and it is signified that what communism was to the western ideology and ethos, Islam is to the contemporary west. And by bringing out this comparison through a number of images an Islamophobic reality was constructed and the European masses in particular and all those who do not share the ideology of Islam are educated that Islamic ideology is an emerging threat to the sustenance of the western world. Such Islamophobia has been constructed and augmented because 'Europe experienced a unity vacuum and needed a new *bête noire* against which to align: Islam filled that gap' (Esposito & Kalin, 2011, p. 58) and also it is believed in the power echelons of the west that 'fear of the Green Menace (green being the colour of Islam) may well replace that of the Red Menace of world communism' (Esposito, 1992, p. 5). So the parallelism between Islam and Communism need to be seen in this context.

However, academically speaking, Communism is a social and political ideology primarily based on the theory of Karl Marx and Hegel and having a number of shades and it marked its influence in the 20th century. The parallels between the two may be drawn on some aspects but fundamentally and in terms of their vision and approach they are quite different if not diametrically opposed. Similarly, by doing some surface reading parallels of Communism with Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism might be drawn, but generically and in all contents and purposes they are very different if not poles apart.

So clubbing Islam with Communism reminds the capitalist west the threat of Communist ideology they had to face mainly in the 20th century and the Jews of the world are reminded of the

nightmare of the holocaust. By this parallelism construction of a horrendous fear among the general western non Muslim populace and the Jews may not be termed as overstatement.

4.8 Islam, Pluralism, Freedom of Speech and Apostasy

The analysis also brought into surface the theme that Islam is inherently against pluralism and freedom of speech and the Muslims who deviate from the religion is destined to be killed. In the course of the analysis it has also been brought into light that Islam commands its followers to kill those who do not subscribe to the vision and views of Islam. The killing of Theovan, Eugene Armstrong's beheading and his disembodied head displayed in the documentary juxtaposed with the verse 89 of the chapter 4 of the Quran and the word *Tauheed* (Oneness of Allah) accompanied with the beheaded image of Eugene and the references to Hirsi Ali, and Salman Rushdie in the documentary convey Islam's refusal to tolerate the dissenting voice and this image refers to Islamic concept of Apostasy.

While this concept does exist in Islamic jurisprudence and plethora of literature on its various dimensions is also available, it needs to be understood and looked into the right context. As far as the punishment of an apostate is concerned it is by and large the unanimous view of all the significant Muslim jurists and scholars that he should be punished, but the death penalty is not the only punishment; he should also be imprisoned till he repents, as some scholars view.

It is also important to mention here that bringing someone in the category of an apostate and awarding the punishment is sole prerogative of Islamic state and individual and groups do not have the authority to determine and execute any Muslim who they think is an apostate. According to Muhammad Hamidullah (1977), the capital punishment to apostasy is given on the grounds of treason and such punishment may not be confined to any one religion or ideology.

To wage war against apostates is justified on the same principle as that on which the punishment of a solitary apostate is based. The basis of Muslim polity being religious and not ethnological or linguistic, it is not difficult to appreciate the reason for penalising the act of apostasy, for it constitutes a politico-religious rebellion. The greater the harm of a given rebellion to a polity, the greater is the severity of repression. Every civilisation, not the least the modern Western one - both in the

communistic and capitalistic manifestations - has provided capital punishment against violating the integrity of what it considers its very *raison d'être*; and one cannot deny that right to Islam. As an independent organic community, Islam will have the liberty to determine what points should be dearer to it: colour of one's skin, language spoken by its subjects or ideology which animates its existence. As a passing remark, let us recall that the Byzantine law of the epoch of the Prophet also punished with death the apostasy from the Byzantine sect of Christianity. (p. 6)

As far as the discourse generated by Hirsi Ali and Salman Rushdie is concerned, one needs to look at the issue objectively and in the proper context. Even the surface analysis suggests that 'The Satanic Verses' and 'Submission' are not in fact the critique of Islam and Muslims; they rather abuse one of the largest communities and the second largest religion of the world disregarding even all the canon of freedom of speech codified none other than European governments and International bodies.¹ 'Infidel', an autobiography of Ayan Hirsi Ali, is one such example that is highly provocative regarding the prophet Muhammad, the most sacrosanct personality for Muslims, and in fact incite the members of the Muslim community for the violent response.

With regard to the theme that Islam does not allow freedom of expression, the careful reading of Islamic texts and the practices suggests that Islam does encourage its followers and mankind to speak truth, as Quran states 'Believers, fear Allah and speak the Truth' (Quran 33:70), and in other occasion states 'There is no compulsion in religion' which indicates Islam considers right of freedom as the fundamental human right and Muslims vision of plurality and dissent. Similarly the second Khalif of Muslim Umer Farooq remarks 'Since when did you take people as slaves when their mothers gave birth to them free.' These all statements came before the world had got acquaintance with the views of Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466- 1536), Galileo (1564- 1642), Voltaire (1694-1778) Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) regarding freedom of speech and expression. However, Islam like other religions and the contemporary international legal covenants do not encourage the unbridled freedom that ultimately brings anarchy in the society. So

¹ The Second para of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948 delimits the right to freedom saying 'in the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.' (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/history.shtml>)

in this context to single out Islam as the 'other' may not be balanced approach to be put forward before the wider audiences to project that Islam is antithesis to the notion of freedom as is done by the documentary at hand and portrayed through the extract mentioned above.

It is also signified in the documentary that Islam allows perpetual war against infidels. Although among Islamic jurisprudence some scholars hold this view but their opinion in this regard does not seem in conformity with one of the important injunctions of Quran that 'Let there be no compulsion in religion...' (2: 256) and 'to you is your religion, and to me, my religion (109: 6). In another occasion Quran says '(O Prophet!) exhort them your task is only to exhort; you cannot compel them to believe' (Quran 48:28).

4.9 Netherlands under the Spell of Islam

While 70% of the documentary focuses on the Muslims visible presence and their fast increasing population in Netherlands, it seems significant to discuss this phenomenon in the right context.

As far as its rise in Netherlands and Europe is concerned it is in fact the cumulative result of the immigration, asylum-seeking, birthrate and conversion to Islam. With regard to the immigration, the tremendous rise in immigration started when the Netherlands government in 1960s and 1970 have done recruitment agreements among others with Muslim countries including Turkey(in 1964) and Morocco (in 1969) to get the workforce in order to fulfill the needs of the industry (Nielsen, 2004, p. 62). The immigrants of these countries later called their family and settled them in the country. Similarly asylum seekers from some of the Muslim countries succeeded in creating settlement in the Netherlands besides coming a more substantial number of Muslims from Suriname, former Dutch colony, before and after it got independence from Netherlands on November 25, 1975 ("The Future of the Global Muslim population", 2011). Besides these factors, conversion has also played significant role to raise Muslim population especially in the wake of 9/11 and a sizable number of people started studying Islam to understand the religion which has become the center stage for criticism by academic as well as the mass media. At present the country

has got around one million Muslims becoming the 5.8% of the total population. *Euro Islam. Info*, a network of researchers and scholars and funded by Harvard University among others and focusing on disseminating the factual information, gives the data of Muslim population in the tabular form that is as under:

Ethnic breakdown of the Muslim population in the Netherlands		
Country of Origin	Numbers	Share of the total Muslim population
Turkey	358,000	40.5
Morocco	315,000	35.6
Surinam	70,000	7.9
Iraq	44,000	5.0
Afghanistan	37,000	4.2
Iran	29,000	3.3
Somalia	22,000	2.5
Dutch converts	10,000	1.1
TOTAL	885,000	100

(Douwes, 2005, p. 27)

If the authenticity and statistical validity of the above mentioned data is taken on the face value, the breakdown of the Muslim population reflected that the major factors of the rise of the Muslim population is the immigration of Muslims while conversion also remains a factor but not the substantive and only one in terms of understanding the rise of Muslim population and this factor is because of the strong message of Islam and not the portrayal of the Muslims and Islam which has been projected in the documentary.

In addition, the rise in the Muslims population is not only confined to the Europe or Netherlands for that matter. In 2006 the average population growth rate in the Muslim majority countries was 1.8% as compared to the world population growth rate that was 1.12%. It is also predicted in 2011 that Muslim population will grow twice as fast as the non Muslims over the next 20 years reaching from 1.6 billion in 2010 to 2.2 billion by 2030 making a quarter of the global population ("The Future of the Global Muslim population", 2011). So the increase in Muslims population in Europe and Netherlands may not be taken as an exception or surprising phenomenon,

rather it needs to be seen in the trend of growth of Muslim population both in the Muslim majority countries or the countries where they are in minority.

4.10 Islam and Women with special reference to Netherlands

While portrayal of Muslim woman as a subjugated and victimized object is not the recent phenomenon, according to Edward Said 'Muslim women are special object of western representation, always shown as victimized and vulnerable', such portrayal has been tremendously intensified in the recent years both in terms of magnitude as well as thrust of the argument. The portrayal of some women images in the documentary on the one hand needs to be seen in this context while on the other hand it has special relevance to Netherlands and Europe which would be discussed in the second part of this section. With regard to the theme of fixed punishment in Islam, which has portrayed through these pictures among many other significations, we have briefly discussed above, the following lines would briefly discuss the practice in which part of a woman's external genital is removed in order to reduce a woman's libido.

The majority of the noted Muslim scholars view that Islam does not allow female circumcision. Ahmed Talib of the faculty of Sharia Al-Azhar University says 'All practices of female circumcision and mutilation are crimes and have no relationship with Islam' (Menka, 2005). Similarly, Mustafa Zalmi, a Sharia Law expert and author of a book on Female circumcision observes 'according to 11 verses of the Quran, female circumcision is forbidden. FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) is not practiced in Mecca or Medina' (Rudaw, 2011). While the majority of the Muslims scholars oppose this practice there are a few who justify this act by referring a tradition of the prophet Muhamad which says 'a woman used to perform circumcision in Medina. Muhammad said to her, 'Do not cut severely as that is better for a woman and more desirable for a husband,' the status of this tradition is considered poor in authenticity by the scholars of hadith sciences.

Besides, it is very paradoxical that on the one hand the theme of women's oppression and subjugation is conveyed through verbal as well as visual images in the documentary while on the

other hand there is a tremendous rise of women's embracing Islam in Europe. This fact on the ground is not reconciling with one of the significant themes brought out while carrying out the analysis of the documentary. The recent scholarly study based on empirical research titled as *Women Embracing Islam: Gender and Conversion in the West* and edited by Nieuwkerk (2006) of Nijmegen University Netherlands sought to investigate this paradoxical phenomenon and understand what primarily caused the women of the west especially of the USA, UK, Netherlands and some other European countries to convert to Islam. The book, which is based on the joint contributions of leading historians, anthropologists, sociologists and theologians, concluded that a single factor may not be determined for this trend, however, the study, however, brought into light some common motivations which included 'attraction to Islam's high regard for family and community, strict moral and ethical standards, rationality and spirituality of its theology as well as a disillusionment with the Christianity and with the unrestrained sexuality of so much western culture.' This comprehensive study demystifies the implicit argument in the documentary that Islam is not only a misogynist religion rather it oppresses the women in a very brutal and cruel manner which the documentary sought to reflect through the two beheaded girls wearing hijab, another lady which is about to be killed and the other having a pool of blood under her feet. Besides portraying Islam as a religion of violence and cruelty especially with regard to its treatment with women, it adds another dimension and further augments the construction of Islamophobia that is discussed in the following lines.

4.11 Islamophobia and Stereotypical 'Reality'

Taken together all the signs discussed in the course of analysis a 'stereotypical reality' has been constructed through the systematic but careful selected representation of Islamic ideology and Muslim community both living in the Muslim majority nations and those living in Europe and Netherlands in particular. The signs chosen to represent Islam, as a religion and ideology were decontextualized, maneuvered and manipulated and the individuals chose for the portrayal of the

Muslims' worldview and culture may not be termed as the representative voices of the larger Muslim community. While the signs dealt with the number of themes, discussed earlier, they are integrated, have an underlying link and share the thematic unity that Islamic ideology and Muslims are emerging threat to the world especially Europe. However, this construction of the 'greatest threat' that 'the Muslims are coming, the Muslims are coming' (Pipes, 1990, pp. 28-33) is not a new one, it can be traced back especially to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Islam was started being taken as the real threat (Esposito, 1992, p. 51) but this was in fact the Muslims' reaction and rebuttal to the European colonialism and imperialism that challenged Muslims identity and their political role and for many of them colonialism even conjures up memories of crusades (ibid). This phenomenon having roots both in near and far history has been tremendously intensified in the wake of the incidents of 9/11 and Muslims were by and large started being demonized in the academic discourses and mass media representations including *Fitna*, disregarding the facts on the ground. Esposito and Mogahed's (2007) *Who speaks for Islam: What a billion Muslims really think* is a unique study of its kind of our time that has successfully exposed the 'reality' that has been constructed *viz-a-viz* Muslims and Islam. In this survey, conducted by The Gallup, a Washington based organization famous for conducting opinion polls at the global level, when asked what they most admired in the west. The sizable number of Muslims mentioned the three spontaneous responses (1) technology (2) the west's value system, hard work, self responsibility, rule of law, cooperation and (3) fair political systems, democracy respect of human rights, freedom of speech, gender equality (p. 80). Likewise, the majority of the respondents of the predominantly Muslim countries condemn the twin tower attacks, while only 7% view these attacks justified (p. 97) that can obviously be termed as the negligible minority and may not be taken as the views of the majority.

Besides, a number of influential scholars and politicians also debunk the myth that there is a causal relation between the phenomenon of threat and Islam which has been brought out in while carrying out the analysis of *Fitna*. According to Robert Fisk (Awan, 2011):

I don't think Muslims are threat to our society or the west; a very good friend of mine met me in Dublin the other day and asked me: Isn't Islam really a threat to us Robert, after all? I replied, hold on a second please, Is the Egyptian Army in Dublin? Is the Syrian Army in the Washington? Is the Algerian Army in London? No, it is our army there in Egypt, it is our army in Iraq and Afghanistan and even going into Pakistan from time to time, they are not coming to us; we're out there but somehow we have projected this fear of ours in the case of Islam into totally an imaginative world in which armies of the Muslims world are going back past to swamp London, Vienna, Paris Washington, you name it.

Similarly, George Galloway British Member of Parliament (Awan, 2011) also observes:

Muslims are not concerned about the lengths and skirts worn by the girls in the Stockholm or the existence of the red-light area in Amsterdam; Muslims are angry for what we are doing to them; they just want to live their lives they want to; they don't want to be occupied theirs or their fathers' homeland; therefore the myth created by the new cons that Muslims and Islam challenge "our way of life" is a fake polarity and fake dichotomy.

So the discussion carried out in this chapter concluded that the canonical text of Islam, the Quran, that is highly regarded by all the Muslims across the globe, is selectively put forward coupled with the practices and discourses of some of the Muslim clerics and individuals living both in Muslims majority as well as other countries where Muslims are in minority to the viewers in order to construct a reality that it is not the Muslims conduct that is a matter of concern for Europe but it is in fact their Religion -Islam- which poses not a challenge but a dangerous threat; which the discussion though not carried out very exhaustively owing to the constraints of time and scope, could not substantiate this attempted construction through the documentary *Fitna*.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This research was carried out for the purpose of exploring how the documentaries and films on Muslims and Islam especially originated in Europe in post 9/11 period are representing Islam and Muslims and how far such representation is in line with the mainstream Muslim discourse prevalent in the Muslim world.

It was the hypothesis of the study that such representation stereotypes Muslims' identity and generates a discourse of Othering Muslims through constructing the image of Muslims and Islam as the "fundamentalist Other" in general and "European Other" in particular with special reference to Netherlands. This study also sought to understand that how far this construction of Muslim' and Islamic image is appropriate to understand Muslims and Islam coupled with implications of such representation and construction in the contemporary world.

In order to test the hypothesis a documentary *Fitna* was chosen as a case study for its significance both in terms of its contents and the importance of its producer, and carried out its semiotic analysis by employing the triadic model of sign given by American pragmatist Charles Peirce. The study primarily focused as to how Muslims and Islam were (Mis) represented in the documentary *Fitna* and how far it stereotypes the Muslims' identity? adding that how far "Othering" of Islam is created in the documentary and its potential implications? Also it analyzed to what extent this construction of Muslim' and Islamic image is appropriate to understand Muslims and Islam?

For this purpose, the data present in the documentary mainly comprising the text and images were gathered and divided into 32 extracts which served as major signs in the documentary and the

analysis was carried out as to how these signs contribute in the meaning making process and play their role in (mis)representing the community as well the religion and stereotyping and generating the discourse of Muslim Othering.

Earlier, in the preceding chapters, the backdrop, significance and objectives of the study, phenomenon of representation, politics of representation in post colonial context, representation of Muslims and Islam in general and in the wake of 9/11 in particular, and representations of Muslims and Islam in the documentaries, theoretical backdrop of semiotics, the concept of sign with special focus on the theory of Charles Peirce was extensively been discussed before carrying out the analysis.

The findings of the research are described at length below and the conclusions drawn on the basis of those findings are also given.

The symbolic signs mainly comprise the verses from the holy book of Muslims which by and large create this interpretant that they substantiate and justify the violence perpetrated by some Muslim individuals or groups especially in the wake of 9/11 across the world are decontextualized and quite contrary to the interpretation held by the mainstream Muslims discourse across the Muslim world.

Besides the verses from the Quran and excerpts taken from the speeches of some selected Muslims clerics and other individuals who do not represent in any case Muslims as a community signify that Islam has got the colonial mindset and its approach is monolithic and universal, it doesn't allow freedom of speech and is barbarous in terms of punishment. Similarly through other signs which significantly include clippings of some Europeans media outlets signify Muslims are the emerging threat for European ethos of democracy, freedom of speech, women rights, the cultural plurality and the demographic composition of Europe in general and Netherlands in particular and Islam brings real disaster to Netherlands. However, the in depth and contextual analysis of the documentary prove that these claims are in fact the sweeping generalization and do not hold truth as far as the Muslims meta narratives are concerned.

While Muslims constitute a sizeable number of the population in Europe, this study also revealed that that Muslims especially of Netherlands are considered as the “Other” Europeans due to their growing visibility in that society and thus seemingly refused to be assimilated in the society.

Likewise, through iconic signs used in the documentary it is signified that violence allegedly perpetrated by the Muslims across the globe is primarily motivated by the Quran and the Seerah of the Prophet. The Quran, as the signs of the documentary signify, motivates its adherents to unleash violence and thus brackets Islam with *Fitna* and in a very shocking image of the prophet Muhammad has been portrayed in the documentary film as the one who causes terrorism in the world. However the in depth and contextual analysis of the verses of the Quran carried out in the study under the symbolic signs proves that the construction of Muslims identity and image of Islam through these verses, quoted in the documentary, may not be termed as appropriate paradigm to understand the Muslims and their religion in the contemporary world.

There is no denying the fact that the use of force has got an important place in Islamic jurisprudence but the careful examination of the texts suggests that it is linked with certain conditions when its use becomes inevitable in order to maintain peace and it remains valid as long as the problem persists; its use would be minimum possible until the problem ends. In this connection, Islam may not be singled out as all other religions of the world and national and international laws carry this right.

The depiction of Muslim and Islam in the documentary is an effort to enrich the discourse on new Orientalism and reinforcement of the binary between “us” and “they”. This new revival of Orientalism by demonising Islam and Muslims and terming them as “Other” and creating a false fear especially in Europe that Muslim are ready to take over the world would widen the rift between the cultures and religions.

The study also revealed that the documentary negatively stereotypes the Muslims identity and make overgeneralisation disregarding the realities on the ground with special reference to Muslim societies in the world. With totalizing absoluteness this documentary seeks to fix the

identity of Muslims and Islam ignoring the fact that the community which is being represented as a monolithic entity is a varied mosaic.

While some Muslims both individually and in terms of their groups, may have involved in some of the violent incidents across the world, which may have some reflections in the documentary also, but for some actions of the individuals and outfits to blame the whole community and its ideology is indeed an attempt to stereotype the identity of the whole community.

This documentary deliberately generates a biased and one sided discourse in order to augment Islamophobia in the present world. As the phenomenon of stereotyping and misrepresentation served as an ideological tool in the history to sustain the colonial projects, the same can be true for such discourse which is being generated through misrepresentation of the contemporary Muslims in the digital media in order to advance the project of new imperialism.

Misrepresentation, stereotyping and Othering of the community which is over 1 billion in number and spread out in almost all the parts of the world, and generate a discourse to substantiate the argument that Muslims and their religion are inherently dogmatic, violent, fanatic and anti rational not only far from reality on ground; it may not bring any good for the world but as it likely to have the negative implications for the peace of the world and harmony between the religious communities. The cartoon controversy of 2007 issue is a case in point which provoked Muslims across the world and caused huge man and material loss in protests demonstrations in various Muslim countries. According to one report 139 people were killed in protests in Nigeria, Libya and Afghanistan ("Cartoon Body Count: Death by Drawing," 2006).

Taken together, this documentary is an effort to misrepresent the Muslim community and their religion and Wilders, through *Fitna*, seeks to portray and represent it as a religious and ideological phenomenon and not the result of some other factors. Religion as one of the factors may have some role in some of the major conflicts of the world and involvement of Muslim individuals and groups may also be a phenomenon, but primarily these are the political and not necessarily the

religious dynamics of underlying the conflicts and violence in the world.

This study also provides an in-depth analysis and adds to previous research on representation of Muslims and Islam in the western discourse especially in the wake of the incidents of 9/11 and it also brings into light some significant trends in the western digital discourse *viz-a-viz* Muslims.

The (mis) representation and stereotyping which has been mapped in the current study have far reaching implications. It is likely to have construct, augment and solidify the binaries such as Islam and human rights, Islam and Democracy, Islam and Peace, Islam and Plurality and Islam and Freedom. In addition, it strongly augments the thesis of clash of civilizations and perpetual confrontation between Islam and the west and may dent heavily to the efforts being made to maintain global peace and justice. Such stereotyping and representation may increase further discrimination against Muslims in Europe which has also been reflected in a report published by Amnesty International in 2012 (Amnesty International, 2012). Moreover, the discourse depicted in the documentary *Fitna* may become fuelling force to create more Breviks² and Alex Wiens³.

Though due to constraints of time and scope of this work, the research dissertation was confined to only one but very significant documentary in order to have deep, insightful and all encompassing analysis of the movie, there is a need to carry out further research studies on the manifestation of digital representation of Muslims and their religion especially in the popular media and have an alternative narratives for the common viewers and policy makers.

² Anders Behring Breivik, a Norwegian citizen who bombed the government building in Oslo and killed 69 people at the Campy of Worker Youth League on July 22, 2012. He confessed that his purpose of killing was to save Western Europe and Norway from Muslim takeover. He admired Geert Wilders in his manifesto titled as '2083: A European Declaration of Independence.'

³ Alex Wiens, a German citizen and Russian immigrant stabbed a Muslim woman wearing headscarf to death in the German court. In a quarrel between Alex Wiens and Marwa El Shirbini in a park in Germany on August 21, 2008 Wiens began abusing the lady saying her 'terrorist', 'Islamist' and 'slut'. On these charges when Wiens was charged and called in the court, he said Muslims were monsters for him and why they were not deported after 9/11. After giving these statements, he attacked her in the court with a knife and assassinated her with 15 stabs in the presence of her child, husband and other people present in the court room.

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Appendix

Fitna - Geert Wilders

Source	Words	% of Total
Directly from Muslims and/or Qur'an	763	59%
Newspaper headings	192	15%
Directly from victims of Muslims	132	10%
Directly from Geert	101	8%
Directly from Interviewers	74	6%
General Statistics, Headers	40	3%
Total Words in Fitna (approximately)	1,302	100%

Counted by: Creeping Sharia @ <http://creepingsharia.wordpress.com>

Transcript of Geert Wilders' film Fitna (English)

(Sound of clock ticking)

Quran - Surah 8, verse 60 1
 Prepare for them whatever force 2
 And cavalry ye are able of gathering 3
 To strike terror 4
 To strike terror into the hearts of the enemies, of Allah and 5
 Your enemies 6

(Screams, oh my God, screams)(9-11 Emergency call)
 Ma'am, hold on for one second please. 7
 I'm going to die right aren't I 8
 No no no no! 9
 Say your, ma'am ma'am, say your prayers, we're not 10
 Yes, I'm going to die. 11
 You've got to think positive. 12
 Because you've got to help get you off that floor. 13
 I'm going to die. 14
 Stay calm, stay calm. 15
 Please, God. 16
 You're doing a good job ma'am, you're doing a good job 17
 It's so hot, I'm burning up. 18

(7-7 Emergency call)
 Montse, Montse, I'm at Atoch station and 19
 A bomb went off in the train 20
 Help, help! 21

What makes Allah happy Allah is happy when non-muslims get killed. 22
 Annihilate the infidels and the polytheists 23
 Your (Allah's) enemies and the enemies of the religion. 24
 Allah, count them and kill them to the last one, and don't leave even one. 25

QURAN - Surah 4, verse 56 26

Those who have disbelieved 27
Our signs, we shall roast them in fire 28

Whenever their skins are cooked to a turn, we shall 29
Substitute new skins for them 30
That they may feel the punishment: 31
Verily Allah is sublime and wise 32

If Allah permits us, oh Nation of Mohammed, even the stone will say, 33
'Oh Muslim, A Jew is hiding behind me, come and cut off his head. 34
And we shall cut off his head! By Allah, we shall cut it off! Oh Jews! 35
Allahu Akbar! (Allah is great!) Allahu Akbar! (Allah is great!) 36
Allahu Akbar! (Allah is great!) 37
Jihad for the sake of Allah! Jihad for the sake of Allah! Jihad for the sake of Allah! 38
Victory to Allah! Allahu Akbar! (Allah is great!) 39

What is your name? 40
- Basmallah 41
Basmallah, how old are you? 42
- Three and a half. 43
Are you a Muslim? 44
- Yes 45
Basmallah, are you familiar with the Jews? 46
- Yes 47
Because they are what? 48
- They are apes and pigs. 49
Because they are apes and pigs? 50
Who said they are so? 51
- Allah. 52
Where did they say this? 53
- In the Koran. 54

The Jews are Jews. 55
They are the ones who must, be butchered and killed. 56

Be prepared for the real Holocaust (image) 57
God Bless Hitler (image) 58

QURAN - Surah 47, verse 4 59
Therefore, when ye meet the unbelievers, smite at their necks and when ye have caused a bloodbath 60
among them 61
Bind a bond firmly on them 62

(Interview out take with Theo van Gogh)
Don't you think that someday there will be an idiot who wants to kill you? 63
No, I can't imagine that. 64
You believe in the goodness of man? 65
No, not in the goodness of man, but in my own arrogance, 66
And has so much effect. 67
...that bullet will not come for me. 68

Slaughtered 69

Mohammed B. (Muslim who killed Theo van Gogh) 70
 If I had the opportunity to get out of prison, and I had the opportunity to do it again, 71
 What I did on November 2nd, Allah, I would have done exactly the same. 72

Take lesson of Theo van Gogh! 73
 Take lessons from the examples that you can see! 74
 For you will pay with your blood! 75

Jihad Against European invaders (image) 76

Hitlist (images: Theo van Gogh, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Geert Wilders) 77

houses and young men must be sacrificed. 78
 markets must be lit and shops must be shattered. 79
 This is the path to victory. 80

(Video of American hostage Eugene Armstrong beheaded by Muslims)

QURAN - Surah 4, verse 89 81
 They/ but wish that ye should reject faith 82
 As they do, and thus be on the same footing as they, 83
 So take not friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah! 84
 But if they turn renegades, seize them and kill them wherever ye find them 85
 And take no friends or helpers from their ranks 86

Islam is a sacred religion. 87
 The best religion there is. 88
 If someone converts to Christianity, 89
 He deserves the death penalty. 90

Islam is far more superior than the Jews, than the Christians, than the Buddhists, than the Hindus. 91
 The only (law) which accepts is Islam. 92
 And no other (law) is any other (law) apart from Islam, will never be accepted. 93

Ex muslims anti assaulted 94
 Death to Rushdie 95
 Death threats to Hirsi Ali too 96

QURAN - Surah 8, verse 39 97
 fight them until there is no dissension 98
 And this religion is entirely Allah's 99

Islam is a religion that wants to rule the world. 100
 It has done so before and eventually will rule it again. 101

(Mahmoud A. - President of Iran)
 The message of the (Islamic) Revolution is global, and is not restricted to a specific place or time. 102
 Have no doubt...Allah willing, Islam will conquer what? 103
 It will conquer all the mountain tops of the world. 104

We have ruled the world before, and by Allah, the day will come when we rule the entire world again! 105
 The day will come when we rule America. 106
 The day will come when we rule Britain and the entire world! 107

Allah commanded us to spread this religion worldwide. 108

You will take over the USA! 109

You will take over the UK! 110

You will take over Europe! 111

You will defeat them all! 112

You will get victory! 113

You will take over Egypt! 114

We trust in Allah! 115

Islam Will Dominate The World (image) 116

Freedom Go To Hell (image) 117

Islam Will Dominate The World (image) 118

Freedom Go To Hell (image) 119

The Netherlands under the spell of islam 120

The mosque will be part of the system of the government of Holland. 120

Cabinet: no ban on burqa 122

Number of muslims in the Netherlands (graphic) 123

1909 - 54 124

1960 - 1,399 125

1990 - 458,000 126

2004 - 944,000 127

Number of muslims in Europe (graphic) 128

2007 - 54,000,000 129

If my mother or my sister have sex with someone else... 130

...then I will kill them too. 131

Then you will commit an honor killing? 132

-Absolutely. 133

In the Netherlands, for example, one is allowed to commit adultery or to be gay. 134

But I don't feel called upon... 135

...to be a party to that, because Islam considers something like that a crime 136

Greetings from the Netherlands 137

They should denounce political parties... 138

...and worldly concepts like liberalism, Democracy... 139

socialism and everything associated with it and originated from the human brain 140

If the married man, Allah forbid, commits adultery... 141

...or the married woman commits adultery...then she will be stoned. 142

The Netherlands in the future?! 143

Gays (men hanged, image) 144

Children (bloodies, image) 145

Women (bloodied, beheaded, hanged, images; assassination of woman, video) 146

(Newspaper headline images)

Islamists seek take-over 147
 Laakkwartier with Madrid in terror web 148
 Sudanese demand execution British 'miss teddy bear' 149
 Threesome suspected of planning attack 150
 Hell will break lose What you need is a heavy bomb attack 151
 We do not agree with freedom of speech, 152
 because we denounce democracy, Islam is our alternative 153
 Explosive increase honor killings Amsterdam 154
 School closes on muslim holidays 155
 added lessons in elementary school 156
 Free trip to Mecca through Islamic school 157
 Ankara wants Turkish in classrooms here 158
 Foreign inmates allowed in more quickly 159
 Van Gogh's murderer Mohammed B.: "My successors are ready" 160
 Van Gogh murdered after proclamation fatwa 161
 Almost half of young Moroccans anti-western 162
 Mosques under the spell of radical muslim group 163
 suicide commandos in the Netherlands 164
 Hamas gathers in Rotterdam 165
 Moroccans throw gay in water 166
 muslims don't like gays 167
 France legalizes violence against gays' 168
 Throw gays from tall buildings' 169
 Mosques turning the Netherlands into a muslim state 170
 Girls still genitally mutilated 171
 'Muslims hinder doctors taking care of women' 172
 Halal funds investment for muslims 173
 Al Qaeda proclaims death penalty Jihad against Wilders 174
 Quran license to kill 175

(sound of page turn of book, image of Quran)

The sound was heard was a page being removed from the phonebook 176

It is not up to me, but to Muslims themselves to tear out the hateful verses from the Quran 177

Muslims want you to make way for islam, but Islam does not make way for you. 178

The Government insists that you respect Islam, but Islam has no respect for you. 179

Islam intends to rule, submit, and seeks to destroy our western civilization. 180

In 1945 Nazism was defeated in Europe. 181

In 1945 Communism was defeated in Europe. 182

Now the Islamic ideology has to be defeated. 183

New Islamisation 184

Freedom of freedom 185

(sound of clock ticking, thunder claps)

186

187

