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The Effects of Western Media on the Image of the Middle East After 9/11

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Declaration of Originality

I, Mohamed Ali Si Youcef, do hereby declare that this submission is my work entitled the Effect of Western Media on the Image of the Middle East After 9/11 and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Date:

Dedication

I dedicate this humble work to the six-year-old me, YOU DID IT CHAMP!

To my family and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, whose words of encouragement and push tenacity ring in my ears.

To my brothers and sisters who were able to handle my mood swings throughout the journey of this study.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my friends for their full support and their words of advice.

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the transformation of Western media's portrayal of the Middle East following the events of September 11,2001. The study provides a historical context on the role of media, its influence on American society's views of Middle Eastern cultures and identities prior to 9/11. It then chronicles the events of 9/11, the timeline, and its political, economic, and social aftermath. The main aim of this research is to understand the significant shift in Western media's depiction of the Middle East post-9/11, and how it altered and distorted the image of the Middle East through increased stereotyping, Islamophobia, and the persistence of Orientalist perspectives. The primary findings indicate that sensationalized media narratives in the wake of 9/11 served to reinforce negative stereotypes, proliferate irrational fears, and "otherize" the Middle Eastern world, perpetuating an "us vs. them" mentality detrimental to cultural understanding.

Keywords: Cultural Identity, Islamophobia, Media Evolution, Orientalism, Stereotyping, Middle East image, Western Media, 9/11.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General introduction

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks profoundly impacted global perspectives, casting the Middle East into a harsh international limelight and prompting intense scrutiny of its cultural, religious, and political fabric. This event catalyzed Western media to significantly influence public discourse, often framing the region through a lens marred by stereotypes and Orientalist views. Such portrayals have sparked debates over their contribution to Islamophobia and prejudice, complicating the path toward mutual understanding and dialogue between Western societies and the Middle East.

This dissertation focuses on examining the portrayal of the Middle East in Western media in the post-9/11 era. The study will analyze a diverse range of media sources, including news reports, documentaries, films, and television programs, to explore the dominant narratives, themes, and representations employed in depicting the region. Particular emphasis will be placed on examining how the Middle East is framed in relation to issues such as terrorism, conflict, religion, and identity.

Understanding the role of Western media in shaping perceptions of the Middle East is of paramount importance in our increasingly interconnected world. Media representations have a profound influence on public attitudes, shaping not only individual beliefs but also broader societal discourse, intercultural relations, and policy decisions. By critically analyzing the ways in which the Middle East is portrayed in Western media, this research seeks to shed light on the complexities of media influence and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between media representation and public opinion.

The main objectives of this thesis are to analyze the portrayal of the Middle East in Western media post-9/11 and to explore how the media's construction of the "War on Terror" narrative in the aftermath of 9/11 influenced Western policies, military interventions, and relations with the Middle East. Additionally, this research aims to critically analyze the events of 9/11 and their impact on global politics and security. By examining these aspects, this thesis seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of media in shaping perceptions and policy decisions in the post-9/11 era.

Key research questions include:

1. How did the media coverage of the September 11 events shape public perception and understanding of such events?

2. How have the events of September 11th influenced the rise of Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslim communities?

3. How have Western media impacted the image of the Middle East After September 11th?

Research Hypothesis :

1 Increased media coverage of the September 11th events shaped public perception by emphasizing global conflicts and terrorism while reducing attention to domestic issues.

2 Media coverage of September 11 contributed to the stigmatization of Muslims, leading to increased discrimination and Islamophobia.

3 Western media coverage of the Middle East after September 11 impacted how the region was perceived globally, potentially reinforcing existing stereotypes or biases.

The central hypothesis of this study is that Western media representations of the Middle East in the post-9/11 era have contributed to the perpetuation of stereotypes, biases, and misconceptions about the region, shaping public perceptions in a predominantly negative manner. Through a critical analysis of media narratives and framing techniques, this dissertation aims to uncover the underlying mechanisms through which these representations are constructed and disseminated, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the impact of Western media on the image of the Middle East.

This work is divided into three chapters; the first chapter is an introductory chapter. It explores the world of media, its types, historical evolution, and role in daily life. It focuses on media and identity, Middle Eastern culture, and their contribution to American society. It also examines the status of Arab and Muslim people in America before September 11th.

The second chapter provides a detailed account of the September 11th attacks, the 9/11 Memorial, the bravery of passengers, and the immediate aftermath and response to the tragedy.

The third chapter examines the political, economic, social, and cultural changes in the Middle East following 9/11, focusing on regional conflict, Islamophobia, hate crimes, and prejudice. It also examines how Western media has distorted the region's image

CHAPTER ONE : Western Media View of Middle Eastern Prior to September 11th

1.1. Introduction :

Keeping up with regular updates is essential in today's environment. In any field, one needs to be aware of the most important information. The only thing that can help us in this situation is the media. A person can learn about the most important and pertinent news through the media. Media is the most popular platform to get news from north to south or east to west. In essence, media refers to the tools and technologies used to communicate information and ideas among people, communities, and nations. This expansive field encompasses various forms of mass communication, including traditional outlets like newspapers, magazines, television, and radio, alongside modern platforms such as websites, blogs, podcasts, and social networks. Through these mediums, media serves vital roles in society by informing, entertaining, and fostering dialogue.

This chapter, will explore the fascinating world of media , and attempts to shed light on its types, and historical evolution ,early forms of communication, following its development from the printing press to the internet. It will also talk about the role of media ,and how has a significant impact on our daily life , Additionally, it will focus on the challenges that facing media today . chapter this research will focus on Media and Identity ,and Middle Eastern Culture , and their Contribution in developing American Society, and shed light on how was the American Media prior the event, then Moving to The status of Arab and Muslim people "Middle East" in America prior to September 11th.

1.2. Definition of Media :

The Term "media" refers to a broad and dynamic range of communication channels that combine entertainment, connection, and information. Media has accompanied humans on the path of expression and knowledge for millennia, from the ancient whispers carried by the wind to the lightning-fast digital pulses of social media.

The term "media" is the plural of "medium," borrowed from Latin. Initially, "medium" meant "an intervening agency, means, or instrument," first applied to newspapers two centuries ago. In Latin, "medium" conveys "vehicle, equipment, tool," and "middle, mid, common." "Media" traces back to the Latin "Mēdia," originating from the Ancient Greek "Μηδία". Media was first used in its modern application relating to communication channels by Canadian communications theorist Marshall McLuhan. The word "media" describes a range of channels of communication or equipment for storing and distributing content. It includes everything information that can reach or impact people, such as news, artwork, instructional materials, radio, print, digital, and television media, as well as advertisements. The public's opinions and comprehension of world events are greatly influenced by the

media, In fact, media's diversity makes it possible to disseminate information to a wide range of viewers, which adds to our awareness of world events and cultures on multiple levels. In the book, "Understanding Media: Extensions of Man" published in 1964, Marshall McLuhan, who was a media theorist at the University of Toronto, coined the phrase *"the medium is the message."*McLuhan, M., Fiore, Q., &Agel, J. (2001). The idea behind the expression is that knowledge itself is not as essential as how society transmits and absorbs it. In other words, McLuhan's thesis means that a message's medium—visual, print, musical, etc.—affects how society interprets it. Stephen Hawking, who is a British theoretical physicist, cosmologist, author and Director of Research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology within the University of Cambridge, once said: *"The media need superheroes in science just as in every sphere of life, but there is really a continuous range of abilities with no clear dividing line."*

1.3. Types of Media :

There are many different types of media, and each has a specific function in communication. Newspapers and magazines are considered print media; radio and television are considered broadcast media; and internet platforms that promote user-generated content and interactions are referred to as social media. Together, these various kinds influence how information is shared and used in our globalised society.

1.3.1. Print Media:

Print media is a term used to describe traditional media formats that are given to readers after being printed on paper. This includes newspapers, magazines, books, brochures, flyers, billboards, and other printed materials. Print media has been a primary source of news, information, and entertainment for centuries. It offers a tangible and tactile experience for readers and is often considered more credible and trustworthy compared to digital media. Print media allows for in-depth coverage, long-form articles, and detailed analysis, making it suitable for those seeking in-depth information and a more immersive reading experience.

Historians often credit the printing press as a pivotal invention that revolutionized communication and had a profound impact on society. It is commonly said that the printing press was the birth of what we know today as media. The ability to mass-produce books and other printed materials allowed for the dissemination of information on a much larger scale than ever before. This led to an increase in literacy, the spread of ideas, and the democratization of knowledge. The printing press is often seen as a catalyst for the Renaissance and the Reformation, as it enabled the widespread circulation of new ideas and challenged traditional authority. Overall, the printing press is regarded as a

game-changing invention that shaped the course of history.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), a Scottish philosopher, satirical writer, essayist, historian and teacher claimed in the 1830s that the printing press created the modern world by destroying feudalism. Many historians say that the advent of the printing press was the birth of what we know today as media.

Destroying Feudalism: As discussed by Thomas Carlyle, refers to the dismantling or overthrow of the feudal system in society. Carlyle believed that the printing press played a significant role in this process by challenging and ultimately breaking down the traditional feudal structures. Feudalism, characterized by a hierarchical system of land ownership and obligations between lords and vassals, was seen as outdated and oppressive by Carlyle. The emergence of the printing press facilitated the spread of information, ideas, and knowledge, leading to a transformation in societal structures and power dynamics. This shift marked a transition towards modernity and the rise of what we recognize today as media.

1.3.2. Broadcast Media:

The phrase"broadcast media" refers to a variety of mediums that are used to convey, broadcast, and communicate news, entertainment, and information to a sizable and distributed audience. It encompasses media from radio, television, and the internet, including blogs, websites, and podcasts. In order to transmit signals that can be received by the right devices, broadcast media uses electronic or electro-magnetic media along with audio-visual elements. For societal awareness, education, marketing, and advertising, broadcast media is crucial. It may connect with a broad spectrum of individuals with various needs, interests, and preferences. Additionally, broadcast media has the power to shape politics, culture, and public opinion. Broadcast media, however, also has to contend with obstacles including laws, censorship, rivalry, and moral dilemmas. The processes involved in producing broadcast media include content generation, distribution, transmission, and reception.

1.3.2.1. Television:

Television, often abbreviated as TV, is a ubiquitous form of mass communication and entertainment that has become an integral part of modern society. It consists of a device with a screen that displays visual and auditory content through electronic signals. Television programming encompasses a wide range of genres, including news, sports, documentaries, reality shows, dramas, comedies, and more. Viewers can tune in to live broadcasts or record programs for later viewing using digital recording devices. Television has the power to inform, educate, entertain, and influence public opinion. It serves as a platform for advertising, political messaging, and cultural representation. With the rise of streaming services and on-demand viewing options, television has evolved to offer more

personalized and interactive experiences for audiences. Despite the increasing popularity of online content, television remains a dominant medium for reaching a broad audience and shaping popular culture.

1.3.2.2. Radio :

Radio, a long-standing form of mass communication, continues to play a significant role in the media landscape. Utilizing electromagnetic waves to transmit sound, radio broadcasts reach a wide audience across geographical boundaries. Radio programming includes a diverse array of content, such as news updates, music, talk shows, sports commentary, and cultural programming. With the advent of digital radio technology, listeners can access a broader range of stations and higher audio quality. Radio remains a vital source of information during emergencies, providing real-time updates and alerts to the public. Additionally, radio serves as a platform for promoting music artists, hosting interviews and discussions, and engaging with listeners through call-in shows and social media interaction. Despite the rise of streaming services and podcasts, radio continues to thrive as a convenient and accessible medium for entertainment, news, and community engagement. Its ability to connect people through shared experiences and voices makes radio a timeless and enduring form of communication.

1.3.2.3. Internet Media :

Internet media, a rapidly evolving and dynamic form of communication, has revolutionized the way information is accessed, shared, and consumed in the digital age. With the proliferation of high-speed internet connectivity, users can access a vast array of online content, including news articles, videos, podcasts, social media posts, blogs, and more, from anywhere in the world. Internet media platforms such as websites, social media networks, streaming services, and online forums have democratized the creation and dissemination of content, allowing individuals and organizations to reach global audiences with ease. The interactive nature of internet media enables real-time engagement between content creators and consumers, fostering a sense of community and connectivity in the virtual space. Moreover, internet media has transformed traditional media industries, such as journalism, broadcasting, and advertising, by providing new avenues for distribution, monetization, and audience engagement. While internet media offers unparalleled access to information and entertainment, it also raises concerns about privacy, misinformation, and digital literacy. As internet technologies continue to advance, the landscape of internet media will continue to evolve, shaping the way how the world communicate, connect, and consume content in the digital era.

1.3.3. Social Media :

Social Media refers to online platforms that enable users to create, share, and interact with

content. It includes platforms like Facebook, Twitter (now X platform), Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Social media has revolutionized communication and has become an integral part of people's daily lives. It allows individuals, organizations, and businesses to connect, share information, and engage with a global audience. This type of media enables the rapid spread of news, allows for user-generated content, facilitates real-time communication, and provides a platform for marketing and advertising. It has transformed the way people consume information, share opinions, and interact with each other.

Social Media has many benefits, such as connecting people across the world, providing access to diverse and rich information, and empowering users to express themselves and participate in various activities. However, it also has some drawbacks, such as exposing users to misinformation, cyber bullying, privacy breaches, and addiction. Social Media has been connected to detrimental effects on mental health, especially in young people, according to numerous sources.

Drawing on research showing links between social media usage and online harassment, depression, anxiety, and poor sleep, the Surgeon General has released an advice highlighting the dangers of social media use on the mental health of young people. According to a Pew Research Centre survey, it is primarily seen negatively by 64% of Americans as having an impact on current American affairs.

Lawmakers, worried about data privacy and the detrimental impact on mental health, have put out legislation that would forbid children under 13 from using this type. While some people believe that it can bring awareness to important issues and connect people, others argue that it contributes to incivility, hate speech, and the spread of harmful ideas.

Despite its drawbacks, the overall impact of social media on society has been profound, with both positive and negative effects. Therefore, it is essential to recognize the various implications of social media and use it responsibly to harness its benefits while mitigating its potential drawbacks. Thus, it is important to use social media responsibly and critically.

1.4. Historical Evolution of Media:

From cave drawings to tweets, media has come a long way. It all started with early humans sharing ideas through pictures and symbols. Over time, writing and printing allowed information to spread wider. Then, came radio and television, bringing the world into our living rooms. Today, the internet lets anyone share anything instantly, reshaping how we communicate and access information.

1.4.1. Early Forms of Communication:

Media has been around for thousands of years in a variety of formats. Actually, the most well-known examples of primitive media are paintings found in caves. About 62,000 B.C.E., humans made

their earliest cave drawings. Most of the paintings featured animals. It is unclear why these paintings are there, but one theory suggests that people used them to silently communicate to one another about which animals were safe to eat.

Furthermore, the ancient Egyptians conveyed stories through hieroglyphs, a combination of pictorial and sound symbols. These people represented their language in writing using Egyptian hieroglyphic script. According to experts, the purpose of the creation of hieroglyphs by the ancient Egyptians was to consistently and accurately record and communicate information related to religion and governance.

Then, storytelling gave way to oral tradition, a mode of communication in which ideas, knowledge, artwork, and cultural details were passed down orally from one generation to the next. This could occur through song, such as chants or ballads, or through speech, such as folktales, poetry, or prose. This allowed various societies to pass down oral traditions of history, literature, law, and other information to future generations. These songs and stories were eventually recorded and released.

Although the shift from spoken to written communication probably happened simultaneously, scholars contend that Homer's "The Iliad" is the oldest extant Greek written work that sprang from oral tradition.

1.4.2. The Printing Press Revolution:

The next major development in communication history is mass printing, which improved literacy while also making it simpler for individuals to obtain news and other information. Every book was written by hand until the printing press was created by Johannes Gutenberg who was a German inventor and craftsman in the fifteenth century, meaning that every copy was distinct. But print media could now be created in large quantities thanks to Gutenberg's printing press.

Since it took much less time to produce 50 printed books than it did to generate 50 handwritten volumes, the printing press accelerated communication and, as a result, spread of knowledge. Furthermore, 3,000 pages could be produced by several printing presses in 60 minutes by the 1930s.

Books were only available to the upper classes prior to the invention of the printing press. But because books could now be produced in large quantities at lower costs, middle-class readers could likewise obtain and appreciate them. The result was a rise in popular literacy.

1.4.3. Rise of Radio and Television:

The wireless telegraph machine, or radio, was created in 1895 by Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi. It used radio waves to transmit messages in Morse Code. Communications businesses developed Marconi's technology to send data other than Morse Code before World War I (1914). Reginald Fessenden created a device in 1914 that could transmit speech and music thousands of

kilometers away. In 1920, Detroit hosted the first radio newscast, which was followed by sporting events and concerts. The majority of US and European houses had radios by the 1930s. But following World War II (1945), television surpassed radio as the most significant electronic mass medium.

Television's precursor to today's technology began in the 1920s with the development of the kinescope by Vladimir Zworykin who was a Russian-American inventor, engineer, and pioneer in television technology. In 1926, John Logie Baird demonstrated a television system in London, and black and white electronic television sets were commercially produced in the US in 1928. In the late 1940s, black and white televisions became more popular, and the ABC television network was formed. The 1960s saw politics take center stage, and the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy changed the way breaking news was covered. The Public Broadcasting Service was launched in 1970, creating a market for nonprofit educational programming. Home Box System (HBO) and Video Home Recorders (VHS)-based Video Cassette Recorders (VCR) were introduced in 1972 and 1977 respectively. In the 1990s, sitcom television became popular, and in the 2000s, reality TV became popular. In the 2010s and 2020s, streaming services became even more popular, with HBO and NBC developing monthly subscription services.

1.5. The Role of Media:

Media plays a crucial role in society by providing information, promoting accountability, amplifying diverse voices, and fostering cultural exchange. It acts as a watchdog, holding governments and institutions accountable for their actions, promoting transparency, exposing corruption, and ensuring the functioning of a democratic society. Media also provides a platform for diverse perspectives and voices to be heard, allowing marginalized communities and individuals to share their stories and challenge dominant narratives.

However, media can also spread misinformation and fake news, leading to confusion and misinformation among the public. Some media outlets prioritize sensationalism and manipulation, focusing on controversial or shocking stories to attract attention and increase viewership. This can lead to distortion of facts and manipulation of public opinion.

Media has the power to shape public opinion and influence beliefs and behaviors, which can be used responsibly or exploited for propaganda or promoting certain agendas. Privacy and ethical concerns arise from media's constant presence in our lives, raising concerns about privacy invasion and the ethical implications of intrusive reporting or paparazzi culture.

While media can play a positive role in society by providing information, promoting accountability, amplifying diverse voices, and fostering cultural exchange, it is essential to be aware of its negative aspects to make informed decisions. Marshall Mcluhan stated in his book Counterblast (1954): *"The media are not toys; they should not be in the hands of Mother Goose and*

Peter Pan executives. They can be entrusted only to new artists, because they are art forms." The statement emphasizes the importance of treating media as powerful tools with significant influence, not just toys. It suggests that media should be entrusted to "new artists" with creativity and understanding, recognizing its potential to shape perceptions, challenge norms, and evoke emotions. This highlights the need for mature media professionals.

Overall, the role of media is multifaceted and essential in society. It provides information, shapes public opinion, offers entertainment, educates the public, and acts as a watchdog on power. A vibrant and independent media is crucial for a functioning democracy and an informed citizenry.

1.6. Challenges Facing the Media:

There are several challenges facing the media in general. One major challenge is the rise of fake news and misinformation. With the advent of social media and the ease of sharing information online, false or misleading information can spread rapidly and have a significant impact on public opinion. Another challenge is the decline in traditional revenue streams for media organizations, such as print advertising and subscriptions. This has led to budget cuts and layoffs in many newsrooms, compromising the quality and depth of journalism. Additionally, there is a growing distrust of the media, with accusations of bias and partisan reporting. This has eroded public confidence in the media's ability to provide objective and accurate information. Lastly, the digital age has brought about a fragmented media landscape, with audiences consuming news and information from various sources and platforms. This has made it harder for media organizations to reach and engage with their target audiences.

1.6.1. Fake News and Misinformation:

One of the biggest challenges facing the media today is the spread of fake news and misinformation. According to McGonagle (2017), fake news is purposefully made material that is disseminated in an attempt to mislead people and trick them into believing unverifiable truths or lies. According to Duffy et al. (2019), fake news is defined as any information that appears to be authentic news but contains inaccurate or misleading information. As reported in the latest research, false information is defined as myths, rumors, conspiracy theories, hoaxes, and misleading or inaccurate content that is purposefully or inadvertently shared on social media platforms. With the rise of social media platforms, anyone can create and share news stories, often without any fact-checking or verification. This has led to a proliferation of false information, which can have serious consequences for individuals and society as a whole. Fake news can influence public opinion, undermine trust in the media, and even impact political processes such as elections.

1.6.1.1. Social Media Misinformation and Politics:

Misinformation on social media significantly impacts politics, with studies showing that it spreads quickly among people with similar ideologies, influenced by confirmation bias. For instance, the US Presidential election in 2016, the French election in 2017, and the Indian election in 2019 are just a few examples. A major issue was the partisan impact, when erroneous information was passed off as legitimate. Based on user behavior, fake news has the power to distort feeds and worsen the situation in political settings. Although, misinformation has less 'life', its consequences may not be short-lived. Verification of fake news takes time, and by the time verification results are shared, fake news could achieve its goals.

Characterizing political disinformation on social media is primarily the product of confirmation bias Material challenging readers preconceived notions and political connections is likely to be rejected, whereas material supporting them is more likely to be read and discussed. Republicans, for instance, accepted fake news supporting Trump during the 2016 US election. Among those who have similar ideas, misinformation spreads swiftly. Misinformation could potentially spread more quickly due to the interface's design. Some researchers looked into the impact of the information presentation format on social media platforms and found that these platforms subtly compel users to accept particular information by presenting the information in a way that minimizes the significance of the information's source. People are more prone to reject information from a lesser-known source than to believe information from a reputable source, hence this presentation is manipulative.

1.6.2. Decline of Traditional Media:

Technology improvements, heightened competition, and shifting consumer behavior are all contributing factors to the demise of conventional media. Digital media's ascent, which has democratized the spread of knowledge, and the drop in advertising revenue are major drivers behind this reduction. Newspaper companies and network television have lost money from advertising, and traditional media—once the main source of news and entertainment—has significantly decreased in significance and power. Particularly since the younger population prefers to consume news and entertainment on their smartphones and tablets, digital media offers accessibility, ease, and interaction that traditional media finds difficult to match.

It is becoming more difficult for traditional media to hold onto their market share as a result of the growth of digital media, which has increased competition and fragmentation. With weekday newspaper readership down 32% over the past five years and 82% of Americans listening to traditional radio, the United States' audiences for traditional news media are consequently diminishing. A new high has been reached for streaming TV as traditional TV is losing ground to streaming, with broadcast and cable TV accounting for less than half of all TV usage, while 42% of Americans listen to podcasts on a

monthly basis.

1.6.2.1. From Print To Digital:

The rise of digital media has sent shockwaves through the once-dominant world of traditional media, particularly print. Newspapers and magazines, once the pillars of information and entertainment, find themselves struggling to compete with the immediacy, affordability, and interactivity of digital platforms. Consumers, accustomed to constant updates and a wide variety of content at their fingertips, are migrating online for their news fix. Traditional media's grip on advertising revenue is loosening as well. Businesses, recognizing the power of targeted advertising, are shifting their dollars to digital platforms that offer greater measurability and the ability to reach specific demographics. This exodus of ad revenue cripples traditional media's ability to produce high-quality content, further accelerating the decline.

However, the story isn't entirely one of obsolescence. Some traditional media outlets are embracing the digital age and finding success. They're building strong web presences, creating engaging online content, and leveraging their established reputations to attract paying subscribers. Print media, while experiencing a circulation slump, it is not entirely dead. They are still a dedicated audience, particularly among older demographics, who value the physical experience (refers to the tactile sensation and engagement experienced by holding and reading a physical newspaper or magazine, distinct from the digital experience of online news) of holding a newspaper or magazine.

The media landscape is undergoing a significant transformation. Traditional media outlets must adapt or risk being left behind. The key lies in innovation – creating content that thrives online, diversifying revenue streams beyond advertising, and carving out a unique niche in a crowded digital space. Whether traditional media can successfully navigate this digital revolution remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: the way we consume information and entertainment has irrevocably changed.

1.6.3. Media and Social Issues:

Media and social issues are intertwined, with media playing a crucial role in shaping and influencing societal problems. It provides access to information, shapes public opinion, and raises awareness about important social issues. However, media can also perpetuate negative social phenomena, such as reinforcing harmful stereotypes, discriminatory practices, and the degradation of women and sexuality. Media representations can shape public perception and reinforce biases, leading to the marginalization and mistreatment of certain groups.

The impact of media on children and youth is another area of concern. Media can provide educational content and foster creativity, but it can expose young minds to violence, unrealistic beauty standards, and harmful behaviors. Research on media effects in relation to social issues has yielded

mixed results, with some studies affirming its role in promoting violence, sexism, racism, and other forms of oppression, while others are more skeptical or attempt to identify positive aspects of media influence.

Media ownership and political economy are also recognized as social problems. Corporate ownership of media outlets can undermine democracy by influencing public opinion and limiting diverse perspectives. When media outlets are controlled by a few powerful entities, the potential for biased reporting and the suppression of dissenting voices increases. This concentration of media ownership poses a threat to the democratic ideals of a free and independent press.

The rise of new media, such as social media and online platforms, has sparked debates about their role in addressing social issues. These platforms have provided alternative sources of information and given marginalized groups a platform to share their stories and experiences, but they have also raised concerns about the spread of misinformation and the potential for echo chambers.

The media has played a significant role in globalizing social problems, such as the refugee crisis, race relations, gender relations, global warming, drug trafficking, and mental health. Journalism and other forms of media practice have brought these issues to the forefront of the public sphere, generating awareness and prompting action.

Moreover, the media has played a role in addressing social issues. Many cases exist where media reporting has helped in resolving conflicts and bringing perpetrators of abuse to justice regardless of nationality or religion. The media has the ability to uncover injustices, ensure responsibility from individuals and organizations, and rally public support for reform. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize that the media can also create social issues. For instance, the unquestioning reporting on the White House prior to the Iraq War in 2003 highlights how the media can lead to severe consequences.

The relationship between media and social issues is complex and multifaceted. While media plays a significant role in constructing and addressing social problems, it can also perpetuate negative social phenomena. Concerns about its impact on children and youth, mixed research findings, media ownership, and the rise of new media platforms further complicate this relationship. However, the media also has the potential to globalize social problems, facilitate their resolution, and hold individuals and institutions accountable. It is crucial to critically analyze and understand the role of media in shaping and addressing social issues to foster a more informed and equitable society.

1.7. Media and Identity:

A broad and complex topic that explores how different forms of media influence the way people perceive themselves and others. Media can be seen as a source of information, entertainment, socialization, and identity construction. Media can also shape and reflect the values, norms, and ideologies of a society. Media and identity can be studied from various perspectives, such as

psychological, sociological, and communication theories.

The social identity theory suggests that people categorize themselves and others into social groups based on shared characteristics, such as ethnicity, gender, and religion. These social groups foster a sense of belonging and identity. The media helps to shape and preserve social identities by portraying different groups positively or negatively, as well as encouraging intergroup contact and comparison. It also affects the relevance and value of specific social identities, depending on the situation.

According to the self-discrepancy theory, people have three distinct elements of their self-concept: the actual self, the ideal self, and the ought self. The actual self is how one views oneself, the ideal self is how one wishes to be, and the ought self is how one believes one should be. The media can influence self-discrepancy by giving pictures and messages that develop or reinforce standards and expectations for the ideal and ought selves. When there is a disconnect between the actual self and the ideal or ought self, people may experience unpleasant emotions like dissatisfaction, anxiety, or sadness. It can also help to minimize self-discrepancy through consumption, imitation, and identification.

Media and identity are intertwined, according to symbolic interactionism, a sociological theory that suggests people construct their sense of self through social interactions and the use of symbols. Media, as a form of symbolic interaction, allows people to communicate, share meanings, and create identities. It can also influence social roles and expectations, challenging or reinforcing dominant values and norms. Postmodernism, another relevant theory, questions the existence of a single, stable, and coherent identity. It suggests that identity is fluid, fragmented, and multiple, influenced by factors like culture, history, and power. Media can offer diversity and plurality, offering people a range of identities, but also creates confusion and uncertainty that undermines authenticity. It can also serve as a site of resistance and contestation, where people can challenge and subvert dominant representations and discourses of identity.

Two communication theories are relevant to media and identity. The first is the uses and gratifications theory. This theory asserts that people actively and selectively use media to satisfy their needs and goals. Media serves various functions for people, such as information, entertainment, socialization, and identity. It also provides people with gratifications, such as pleasure, arousal, and escape. Media affects people's identity in various ways. It can fulfill their psychological and social needs, such as self-expression, self-presentation, and self-enhancement. Media can also influence their identity by providing them with models, cues, and feedback that shape their self-perceptions and self-evaluations.

The second theory is the cultivation theory. It proposes that media exposure, especially to television, can shape the beliefs, attitudes, and values of people over time. Media creates a common and

shared reality that influences the social construction of identity. Media affects people's identity by providing them with a sense of social reality, such as the norms, roles, and stereotypes of different groups and individuals. It also influences their identity by creating a sense of identification, such as the similarity, empathy, or attachment to certain media characters or personalities.

These are some of the major theories and approaches that can help us understand the relationship between media and identity. However, there are many more perspectives and dimensions that can be explored and discussed. Media and identity is a fascinating and dynamic topic that reflects the complexity and diversity of human beings and societies.

1.8. Middle Eastern Culture and Identity:

The Middle East, a land cradled by ancient civilizations and echoing with the whispers of history, boasts a vibrant tapestry of cultures and identities woven together by shared experiences, traditions, and rich heritage. With approximately 20 countries from the snow-capped peaks of the Atlas Mountains to the sun-drenched shores of the Arabian Peninsula, this diverse region pulsates with a captivating blend of customs, languages, and ethnicities.

1.8.1. Religion:

The cultural and societal fabric of the Middle East is deeply intertwined with its diverse and rich religious history. Originating in the region, the three main monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have played pivotal roles in shaping the identities of individuals and communities across the Middle East. Islam, in particular, holds a significant presence in the region, with approximately 20% of the global Muslim population residing there. Emerging in Arabia during the 7th century CE, Islam rapidly spread through conquest and conversion, solidifying its influence in the region. Apart from Islam, the Middle East is also home to a variety of minority religions, including those within the Abrahamic tradition and other categories like the Iranian religions, such as the Bahá'í Faith, Druzism, and Zoroastrianism, contributing to the religious diversity of the region.

Tracing back to ancient times, the Middle East was characterized by polytheistic faiths practiced by civilizations like the Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians. Over time, the emergence of monotheistic religions like Judaism in the 6th century BCE, Christianity in the 1st century CE, and Islam in the 7th century CE replaced these ancient traditions, shaping the religious landscape of the region. Despite the prevalence of monotheistic practices in contemporary Middle Eastern society, the ancient traditions continue to wield a significant influence on various aspects of culture, including arts, literature, philosophy, and customs. This enduring connection between religion and culture is evident in many Middle Eastern countries, where religious identity plays a fundamental role in shaping personal and collective self-perceptions. The religious diversity and historical depth of the Middle East's

religious heritage continue to shape the region's cultural identity in profound ways, reflecting a blend of ancient traditions and contemporary practices.

1.8.2. Language:

The Middle East's linguistic diversity reflects its intricate cultural fabric, with many languages reflecting the region's historical, ethnic, and religious intricacies. The Middle East's linguistic landscape is dominated by three principal language families: Afro-Asiatic, Indo-European, and Turkish. Arabic, the most widely spoken language in the region, is the official language in several countries and serves as a unifying force among Arabs. Persian, another important language, is primarily spoken in Iran and parts of Afghanistan, whilst Turkish, originating in Central Asia, is widely spoken in Turkey and certain regions of Cyprus. Kurdish is spoken by Kurdish groups in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria. It belongs to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family, While Hebrew is an official language in Israel, it also retains religious significance for Jews worldwide. Greek, while less frequently spoken than Arabic or Persian, has historical significance in places such as Cyprus. Along with these major languages, the Middle East is home to roughly 20 minority languages, which reflect the region's numerous ethnic groups and cultures. The use of English as a lingua franca in commerce, education, and international relations emphasizes the region's interwoven history and rich cultural legacy, as well as its connections to other regions and continents.

1.8.3. Art and Literature:

Art and literature serve as powerful means of human expression, embodying the creativity, culture, and identity of their creators. The Middle East boasts a rich tapestry of artistic and literary traditions that trace their roots back to ancient civilizations. Noteworthy characteristics of art and literature in the region include the prominent use of calligraphy as a form of artistic expression, particularly within the realm of Islamic art. Calligraphy, an art form that involves the elegant and intricate writing of various scripts, styles, and techniques, adorns religious texts like the Qur'an and secular objects ranging from ceramics to architecture. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, calligraphy also functions as a form of literature, conveying both meaning and beauty through the written word.

The influence of oral tradition has played a significant role in shaping the literary landscape of the Middle East. Oral tradition, the practice of transmitting stories, poems, and knowledge through spoken word rather than written text, is a fundamental aspect of many cultures in the region, including the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Hebrew, and Arab cultures. This tradition serves as a wellspring of inspiration for written literature, giving rise to timeless works such as the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Bible, and the Thousand and One Nights. Moreover, the diversity of genres and themes within Middle Eastern literature reflects the multifaceted nature of the region, encompassing poetry, fiction, drama, history,

philosophy, and more. These literary works not only showcase the rich cultural heritage of the Middle East but also provide a platform for exploring a wide array of perspectives, languages, religions, and traditions. Celebrated literary miracle such as the Qur'an, the Shahnameh, and the works of Rumi, Hafez, and Naguib Mahfouz stand as testament to the depth and breadth of literary creativity in the Middle East.

1.9. The American Media Before September 11th:

Before the September 11th, 2001 attacks, the media in the US had a major role in influencing political discourse and forming public opinion. It included both new digital outlets and established media including radio, television, and newspapers. Public education regarding current affairs, political changes, and societal challenges was greatly aided by the media.

However, there were also concerns about the concentration of media ownership and the influence of corporate interests on the news. A few major conglomerates owned a significant portion of the media outlets, leading to potential biases and limited diversity of viewpoints. This concentration of ownership raised questions about the media's ability to provide objective and unbiased reporting.

Moreover, the prioritization of entertainment over thorough news reporting often stemmed from sensationalism and the desire for higher ratings. The prevalence of infotainment and sensationalism became more widespread in television news, particularly highlighting this trend. Consequently, sensationalized news stories or celebrity gossip sometimes overshadowed important matters.

In addition, there was criticism leveled at the media's reporting on political developments and official initiatives prior to September 11th. Some said that there was a lack of accountability as a result of the media's failure to critically assess the acts and policies of the government. There were worries that the media's close ties to the powerful would undermine their watchdog function and prevent them from providing critical analysis.

In general, prior to September 11th, the American media was extremely important in creating public opinion and providing information to the public. Sensationalism, media ownership, and a dearth of critical analysis, however, were major issues. These problems paved the way for a dramatic change in the media environment after September 11th.

1.10. Arab and Muslim People in America pre-9/11:

Prior to September 11th, Arab and Muslim people, particularly those from the Middle East, faced various challenges and prejudices in America. While it is important to note that experiences varied among individuals, some common themes can be identified.

Arab and Muslim communities in the United States had long been subject to stereotypes and discrimination. They were often portrayed negatively in the media, perpetuating stereotypes of

terrorism, violence, and backwardness. This created a hostile environment for Arab and Muslim individuals and communities.

In the political sphere, there were instances of profiling and surveillance targeting Arab and Muslim individuals. This was particularly evident in immigration policies and law enforcement practices. Arab and Muslim communities were disproportionately affected by policies such as the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), which required certain individuals from predominantly Muslim countries to register with the government.

Furthermore, hate crimes and acts of violence against Arab and Muslim individuals were not uncommon. Mosques and Islamic centers were sometimes vandalized or targeted, and individuals faced verbal and physical attacks, prejudice and discrimination against Arab and Muslim people existed, but it was less common and less talked about than it is now. While incidents of Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racial profiling did occur, they were less common in the public conversation. The Arab and Muslim communities in America were heterogeneous, comprising people from many nations and backgrounds who made contributions to the country's society in a variety of sectors, including politics, business, the arts, and academia.

1.11. Middle Eastern Contributions to Pre-9/11 American Development:

Middle Eastern people have contributed to the American society in various ways before 09/11. They have enriched the cultural diversity, participated in the economic growth, and influenced the political and social landscape of America.

1.11.1. Cultural Contributions:

Middle Eastern Americans have introduced or popularized various aspects of their culture in America, such as Arabic calligraphy, belly dancing, henna tattoos, hookah lounges, and falafel. These cultural expressions reflect the diversity and richness of the Middle Eastern heritage and identity. They have also contributed to the fields of literature, film, music, and art, showcasing their creativity and talent. Some of the notable Middle Eastern American artists are the Pulitzer Prize-winning author Khaled Hosseini, the Oscar-nominated director Ramin Bahrani, the Grammy-winning singer Norah Jones, and the acclaimed artist Shirin Neshat. Their works explore themes such as migration, identity, conflict, and belonging. They have also commemorated their ancestry and diversity through many events and festivals, including Arab American Ancestry Month, the Arab Film Festival, the Arab American Book Award, and the Arab American National Museum. These events and institutions are intended to educate, entertain, and empower the Middle Eastern American community and the general public. Middle Eastern Americans have contributed to America's cultural richness while also challenging preconceptions and prejudices.

1.11.2. Economic Contributions:

Middle Eastern immigrants played a crucial role in shaping the American economy through their significant contributions across various sectors. Their entrepreneurial spirit and inclination towards innovation were evident in their high rate of business ownership, surpassing the national average. This trend can be attributed to factors such as a strong work ethic, family-oriented business models, and a desire for economic independence. By identifying unmet needs within their communities, many Middle Eastern immigrants established businesses that filled market gaps, whether through ethnic grocery stores, restaurants offering unique cuisine, or import-export enterprises specializing in specific goods. These initiatives not only catered to local demands but also created job opportunities, benefiting not just the immigrant families but also the broader local community. Additionally, Middle Eastern immigrants brought a wealth of specialized skills and expertise to the American workforce, with many professionals migrating due to political or economic instability in their home countries. This "brain drain" proved advantageous for the US, as these immigrants brought valuable knowledge in fields such as engineering, medicine, computer science, and more, effectively filling critical gaps in industries like oil and gas, where their expertise was particularly valuable given the US's reliance on Middle Eastern oil, as well as in various scientific research areas.

Middle Eastern immigrants also contributed in facilitating trade and international relations, leveraging their cultural connections and established networks with their home countries. This cultural understanding and bridge-building helped American businesses seeking to expand into the Middle East, fostering increased trade relations that contributed to a boost in American exports and imports, thereby enhancing the overall US economy. In vital service industries like hospitality, retail, and transportation, Middle Eastern immigrants stepped in to fill labor shortages, showcasing their strong work ethic and adaptability. Their willingness to take on essential roles in these sectors ensured their smooth operation, ultimately benefiting the economy.

1.11.3. Social and Political Contributions:

Middle Eastern people in the United States also made significant social and political contributions that helped shape American society. From the early days of immigration, Middle Eastern immigrants actively participated in American politics by forming social clubs and associations to advocate for their interests and navigate their new society. In the labor movement, Arab Americans played a vital role, particularly in the auto industry, where they were instrumental in establishing the United Automobile Workers Union. As Middle Eastern American communities grew, they began electing representatives to local and state offices, increasing their political participation and giving them a stronger voice in shaping American politics. Alongside their political contributions, Middle Eastern immigrants also engaged in social activism and community-building efforts by forming religious

organizations, cultural centers, and social service groups that provided support for newcomers, preserved their cultural heritage, and fostered a sense of community. Many Middle Eastern Americans actively participated in interfaith dialogue, promoting understanding and tolerance between different religious groups in the United States. Additionally, Middle Eastern Americans joined the broader civil rights movement, standing against discrimination and advocating for equality for all Americans.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the media, with its diverse forms ranging from traditional print and broadcast to modern digital platforms, plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception and discourse. Its historical evolution has seen it transition from a mere conduit of information to a powerful influencer of societal norms and opinions. The Middle East, rich in culture and identity, has been subject to various portrayals in Western media, particularly post-9/11. Despite facing challenges in representation, individuals from the Middle East have made significant cultural contributions, enriching the tapestry of American society. Their participation in various sectors has not only fostered cross-cultural dialogue but also aided in the development of a more inclusive and diverse American narrative. This symbiotic relationship underscores the importance of media literacy and the need for media that reflects the multifaceted nature of all societies, including the valuable contributions of Middle Eastern cultures to global development. The following chapter provides a detailed account of the September 11th attacks, and the bravery of passengers, and the immediate aftermath and response to the tragedy.

CHAPTER TWO :
Description of 09/11 Events

2.1. Introduction:

On September 11, 2001, the world witnessed the 9/11 attacks, which marked a turning point in modern history and profoundly altered security strategies, international relations, and cultural standards. Numerous innocent lives were lost as a result of Al-Qaeda's orchestrated terrorist attacks, which also permanently altered the collective psyche of humanity. The attacks ushered in a new age of international conflict and tightened security measures, which included the War on Terror, the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and the invasion of Afghanistan. The American people's tenacity and solidarity in the face of hardship bear witness to the resiliency of the human spirit throughout trying times.

This chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive account of the events that transpired on September 11th, focusing on the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, as well as the courageous actions of the passengers and the subsequent collapse of the Twin Towers. Additionally, it will delve into the immediate aftermath and response to the tragedy, including the urgent measures taken in the wake of this devastating event.

2.2. The morning of September 11th:

American Airlines Flight 11 was the first plane to strike the New York World Trade Center. The impact left a giant flaming hole near the 80th floor and took the lives of the flight crew and hundreds of others who were working in floors above the impact zone. The tragedy of this event caused mass confusion and took the life of many people, but those who were still healthy and capable of escaping found it hard to believe that the happening was real. Some who saw the event from the ground never knew what hit the tower and assumed it was a freak accident. This event caused a large community of people to re-investigate the safety precautions used in all American skyscrapers. A similar incident had happened in 1945 when an Army Air Corps B-25 bomber crashed into the 79th floor of the Empire State Building in heavy fog, killing 14 people. It was both then, and in 2001, a very tragic scene to watch people plummet to their deaths from one of the world's tallest structures. Eyewitness reports suggested that some of the victims jumped rather than face the fire and unbearable smoke. The heat from the flames was said to have been unbearable and people trapped in the upper floors were desperately trying to signal for help. A group of children on a school trip from Maine had made it down from the top of one tower only a half hour before that tower and the one they had originally been in at that time would no longer exist. A second plane, the United Airlines Flight 175, struck the South Tower of the World Trade Center only 18 minutes after the first plane's impact. This left no doubt in anybody's mind that this was not an accident and caused mass panic both in and around the towers.

2.2.1. The hijacking of American Airlines Flight 11:

At 7:59 a.m., American Airlines Flight 11 took off from Logan International Airport in Boston, heading for Los Angeles, California on September 11. Five hijackers, affiliated with Al Qaeda, boarded the plane with tickets in first class, dressed as if they were ordinary passengers. They arrived in a rental car from Maine and parked and left the car in the airport parking facility. Their names were Mohamed Atta, Satam al Suqami, Waleed al Shehri, Wail al Shehri, and Abdulaziz al Omari.

At 8:14 a.m., the flight was handed off from air traffic controllers at Boston to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)'s New York Center. The last routine communication made by the flight crew was at 8:13 a.m., informing the Boston Center controller "We are climbing to 26,000."

Between 8:13 a.m. and 8:20 a.m., the five hijackers likely gained control of the cockpit. At 8:13 a.m., Satam al Suqami and Waleed al Shehri moved from their assigned seats in 2A and 2B to first-class seats 8D and 8G. At 8:14 a.m., the flight's radar data was lost, and primary radar showed the flight in a rapid descent. The controller in New York first noticed the flight's descent and then observed two sharp 180-degree turns. The controller asked repeatedly for the status of the flight, and at 8:21 a.m., the flight did not respond. It was presumed that the last 9 minutes of communication were between hijackers, as the voice was in Arabic, and a struggle was overheard. (Onion,A.(2023))

2.2.2. The hijacking of United Airlines Flight 175:

At 08:14, United Airlines Flight 175 was taken off and heads to Los Angeles. As compared to the hijackers from American Airlines Flight 11, Fayez Banihammad apparently was the most experienced pilot, as he was the only hijacker of Flight 175 who has a valid pilot's license - though for small planes - rather than a private pilot's license or none at all. He resides and trains in Florida from the spring of 2000. Hamza Alghamdi and Mohand Alshehri follow Banihammad to the United Arab Emirates in April 2001 and entered the US shortly thereafter. At one point, we hear him say "They ought to pray for me... If I cannot find you again I will call you," which may indicate that the teamwork at this point was less coordinated compared to the team aboard Flight 11. Around this time, the passengers and crew of UA 175 would had been just learning of the attacks on New York, but there isno direct evidence that they knew of their own flight being a target.

Between 08:42 and 08:46, Banihammad and Alghamdi likely storm the cockpit, as Ziad Jarrah had done on Flight 93. The 9/11 Commission suggested that only Banihammad entered and killed the pilots, as it claims that Alghamdi made the statement about prayers while Banihammad was speaking to him on the radio. The pilots may had been killed with the idea of utilizing Banihammad's piloting skills to force entry into the cockpit of target aircraft his leadership. This followed the pattern of the Flight 93 hijackers of using the most skilled pilot as the team leader, in order to effectively plot strategy with the least risk of resistance from passengers and crew stretching the duration and success of the hijacking.

From about 08:47, Jarrah's transmissions had become a bit more frequent and the syntax clearer. A rough translation of his last known transmission at 08:48: "Is that true? Did you get him? That is great... May God recompense you well... Two of us." The reference to "Two of us" likely signifies that final resistance had been overcome and the "third time charm" in comparison to the other attacks had now made success guaranteed. This is the last definite communication from the flight deck.

A nine-minute phone call is made at 08:52 from Flight 175 passenger Brian Sweeney to his wife Julie. He says he is at 38,000 feet and that the plane is descending, as its true course to its final descent over New York had begun at roughly 08:51. He relays some information on the hijackers to Julie and concludes "I've got to go honey... They're in the cockpit." Sweeney then recites the Lord's Prayer and the call ends at 09:03. This was the only real-time information from the 9/11 flights that was known to the government, public, and media within the next few days of the event and it thus played a key role. At 09:00, New York ATC learns by happenstance that Flight 175 had also been hijacked. The United Airlines flight dispatcher in charge corresponds with various personnel and confirms the belief that a hijacking is in progress and that the so far unclear information Brian Sweeney's call is consistent with this. From 09:01 to 09:02, the FAA alerted the DOJ Command Center of a possible hijacked aircraft heading to Southern New England - the entity was uncertain of the identity of the flight. As it was realized that this information also applied to Flight 175, the FAA New York Center manager ordered an "ATC zero" which meant complete grounding of all aircraft and all ATC facilities in the New York Metropolitan area. This last event would be covered in greater detail at a later point. By now, suspicions inside and outside of the Flight 175 cabin are high and the passengers are beginning to act; at 09:00 a female flight attendant broadcast over radio a description of the four hijackers, including seat numbers. The last voice recorder transmission from Jarrah: "Hi, how are you? I hope you're doing good." This is an apparent attempt to check on the status of ongoing interference, perhaps due to noticing the previous unusual announcements by the crew.(Duvall, J.N.,&Marzec, R. P. (2011)).

2.2.3. The Crash of American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower:

At 8:46 am on September 11th, 2001, American Airlines Flight 11 began its descent into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. The tower itself stood as a symbol of the United States and at 10:29 am, after burning for 102 minutes, ultimately collapsed due to the fight. No one could believe the sights that took place on that day. Families near the towers could see the events taking place and people plummeting to the ground in attempts to escape the hell on the upper floors of the towers. A total of 2,749 people were killed and 24 are still missing from the World Trade Center attacks. This death toll also includes the 343 firemen and 72 law enforcement officers who responded to the event. There have been numerous accounts of the occurrences of this day, including those of the

survivors and eyewitnesses.

With all the stories and facts, it is still not certain on what and why this may have taken place but the information provided can help show the effects of that happening on millions of Americans. The events leading up to the attacks can have an extensive impact on the future and all are all able to take something from it. The system failures that were successfully demonstrated by the terrorists will always be fresh in the minds of the families and others affected by the events. During the event of Flight 11 itself, the impact on the victims and system failure are evident in these attacks (Mullen, M. (2023)).

2.2.4. The Crash of United Airlines Flight 175 into the South Tower:

United Airlines Flight 175, a Boeing 767-200 on a scheduled flight from Boston to Los Angeles, crashed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 09:03. The Flight 175 hijackers were Marwan al-Shehhi, Fayez Banihammad, Mohand al-Shehri, Hamza al-Ghamdi, and Ahmed al-Ghamdi. Less is known about this flight than the other flights involved in the September 11th attacks.

It was believed that Flight 175 was directed towards a target in Los Angeles, California. However, the time at which the decision to head towards Los Angeles was made is not known. The aircraft remained airborne for approximately 20 minutes and then began to deviate from its flight path at 08:42. The aircraft then made a U-turn and continued in the direction of New York City. It was believed that the hijackers took over the plane at 08:47, as evidenced by the sudden change in its trajectory, the violence of the turn, and the off-course radio communications. The 9/11 Commission speculated that the hijackers intended to crash the plane into the White House because of the turn the plane made shortly before heading into New York's airspace.

2.3 The Pentagon Attack:

Within a few minutes, the hijackers turned off the plane's transponder, which transmits an electronic identifying signal, and turned it back on with a different code. Shortly afterward, the aircraft veered sharply south. The hijackers also cut off the plane's radar signal. The loss of transponder data and halting of radar tracking were key to a number of false assumptions that contributed to the confusion of the day's events.

By this time, events were happening fast. At 9:32, the FAA Command Center in Herndon, VA, notified FAA headquarters that American 77 was lost in Indianapolis Center's airspace, that Indianapolis Center had no primary radar track on the aircraft, and that the aircraft was squawking a hijack code. The FAA's national operations manager, Ben Sliney, ordered that all aircraft nationwide be grounded, and at 9:42, the FAA issued an unprecedented nationwide ground stop for all flights, which meant any airborne flights were told to land at the nearest airport as soon as possible. He then directed all FAA facilities to instruct all airborne aircraft to land.

At 9:39, after receiving several direct notifications from the hijackers, indicating that no military intervention had yet occurred, the hijackers aboard Flight 77 again turned the aircraft northwest and then straightened out on a direct course for Washington, D.C. They were not spotted by the Langley fighters because the FAA had not been tracking the flight on a radar scope since the transponder was turned off. The aircraft was observed on radar making a 180-degree turn in the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana area and speeding on a straight path to Washington. This is consistent with autopilot navigation. The hijackers' navigational skills, the aircraft's high speed, and the lack of preparedness for a scenario like this prevented North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) from intercepting Flight 77. (Jackson, B. A., Peterson, D. J., Bartis, J. T., LaTourrette, T., Brahmakulam, I., Houser, A., & Sollinger, J. (2002))

2.3.1. The Hijacking of American Airlines Flight 77:

The passengers aboard American Airlines Flight 77 were settling in for their destined flight from Washington D.C. to Los Angeles on the morning of September 11. At the same time, the five terrorists on this flight were making their move. Just before the hijacking commenced, some calls were made to an unknown individual saying, "We are ready to go."

At 9:37:46, Flight 77 received a command to turn and head to a different flight plan, vectoring straight towards the Pentagon. Just two minutes after the command was put through, the transponder was turned off, making it very difficult for Air Traffic Control to track the location of the airplane. Although radar continued to track the flight moving in a turn to the right and descending. The hijackers were so professional in their flying skills that they flew underneath the navigational aid system which uses a plane's transponder signal to determine its position, altitude, and where it is heading. They turned the transponder back on at 9:45:34 for one second and once again at 9:46:40, finally turning it off for good. By this time, the controllers had attempted to make contact with the plane but there was no response. They did notice that the plane was no longer headed to its designated flight plan path and was now heading East.

At this time, the next command that was made was from Barbara Olson, a passenger aboard the flight, speaking to her husband U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson. She described that the plane had been hijacked and the hijackers were going to crash the plane in efforts of obtaining a ransom. U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson then notified the Justice Department Command Center at 9:49 that communication had been lost.

2.3.2. The Crash of American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon:

The crash of American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon had an extensive impact on the building and the actions of the United States Army Field Artillery Detachment (USAFAAD). At roughly 08:46, American Airlines Flight eleven crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, marking the beginning of a terrifying sequence of events which would lead the United States into war. It was not until forty minutes later, when radar operators at Indianapolis Center saw an aircraft about thirty miles east of Indianapolis, Indiana. The aircraft's transponder was turned off and was in the middle of an unauthorized turn to the south. This would be the first of many panic attacks by the FAA on 9/11. Three minutes after controllers saw the plane, it turned southeasterly and descended. And just four minutes later, the aircraft read 220 knots as it hit the Pentagon's western face between the first and second floor level, exploding on impact and causing a portion of the building to collapse. Controllers at Indianapolis Center watched what they believed to be Flight eleven's primary radar return moving into the Washington, DC area. Those same controllers were the first to communicate with Washington controllers about the hijacking of American Airlines (AA) Flight eleven. This uneasy battle with identifying aircraft in the sky would cause many more false reports concerning hijacked aircraft on 9/11.

2.4. The Crash of United Airlines Flight 93 in Pennsylvania :

During the chaos of the 9/11 attacks, United Airlines Flight 93 was supposed to be en route from Newark, New Jersey, to San Francisco, California. As a result of the other attacks, the plane changed course and was heading for Washington, D.C. News of the other hijackings had already reached the passengers via air phones and the plane's captain and first officer were not answering internal calls. With this information, the passengers realized that they had little chance to survive. It was unclear how the passengers learned about the other hijackings, but the 9/11 Commission speculates that the passengers of Flight 93 were heroes once they had this information. There was no mention of an air phone call to the cockpit, but the captain and first officer concluded their conversation at 9:27 and the hijackers were presumably storming the cockpit at that time. Using a food cart and boiling water from the in-flight coffee, the passengers attempted to retake the cockpit at 9:57. At this time, the cockpit voice recorder was turned off, indicating that the hijackers were aware of the counter-attack. The passengers then made their final push to take the cockpit between 10:00 and 10:02. In response, the hijackers crashed the plane at 10:03 into a field in Stony creek Township near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, killing all 44 people on board.

On September 24, 2002, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Vice President of the United States unveiled a Flight 93 memorial plaque in the pavement of the US Capitol to honor the

passengers and crew of Flight 93. The efforts of those passengers would have saved whatever the hijackers intended to hit in Washington, D.C. and better yet, numerous of the passengers and crew demonstrated their courage for their country and each other with their famous cry of "Let's roll" before rushing the hijackers.

On September 11th, 2001, United Airlines Flight 93 was en route from Newark, New Jersey to San Francisco, California when it was hijacked by four terrorists as part of the coordinated attacks on the United States by the terrorist group Al-Qaeda. The hijackers took control of the plane shortly after takeoff, using box cutters to threaten the passengers and crew. The passengers and crew were able to make phone calls to loved ones and authorities on the ground, learning about the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Realizing the true intentions of the hijackers, the passengers and crew of Flight 93 bravely decided to fight back. They attempted to regain control of the plane, engaging in a physical struggle with the hijackers. The hijackers responded by crashing the plane into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, killing all 44 people on board, including the four hijackers. The actions of the passengers and crew of Flight 93 have been widely praised as heroic and selfless. It was believed that their efforts to fight back against the hijackers prevented the plane from reaching its intended target, which was believed to be either the White House or the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. Their sacrifice undoubtedly saved countless lives and demonstrated the courage and resilience of the American people in the face of tragedy. In the years since the crash of Flight 93, a memorial has been established at the crash site in Shanksville to honor the passengers and crew who lost their lives that day. The site serves as a reminder of the bravery and sacrifice of those on board the plane, as well as a symbol of the strength and unity of the American people in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

2.5. The Collapse of the Twin Towers:

The structural damage caused by the plane crashed. After the initial impact of the planes on the towers' exteriors, the buildings reacted much as one would expect a steel structure to respond to massive energy input. The lightweight, hollow, brittle, and thin-walled construction of the World Trade Centre WTC perimeter frame, for example, was of a type widely used in the late 20th century for high-rise structures. It is well understood that heat weakens steel. At 1,000°F, steel will have lost about 50% of its strength, and at 1,800°F, steel will have lost nearly 90% of its strength. The steel structure of the towers was exposed to fires burning at 1,000°F and 1,800°F for a duration that weakened the structure to the point of localized failures, which eventually led to the total collapse of each building. Approximately 10,000 gallons of jet fuel from the planes were the energy source for the fires that weakened the structures to the point of collapse.

At the levels of the impact, the fires would have reached their maximum temperatures in as little as 10 minutes. No other tall building has ever experienced an uncontrolled, fire-induced collapse. The

impacts of the jet planes at high speeds caused the buildings to sway with very large oscillations. This would have increased the tensile and compressive loads on the damaged floors and would have further stressed the damaged and undamaged core and perimeter columns.

2.5.1. The Structural Damage Caused by the Plane Crashes:

The north tower of the World Trade Centre was struck in a glancing blow by flight 11. The plane, travelling at a speed of approximately 750 km/h, entered the tower at an angle of approximately 25 degrees. The wingspan of the Boeing 767 is just under 37 meters in length, which caused a massive hole on the 95th to the 101st floor of the 110-storey tower, the fuselage only punctured a hole around 3 windows across. The energy of the aircraft's impact was dispersed over a 6-floor area inside the tower, and due to the fact that only 10% of the jet fuel ignited on impact, both planes were responsible for hitting the towers, this meant that most of the energy from the fuel was carried inside the building. This then had an effect on the firing caused by the igniting of fuel because no matter what the initial damage was, the planes only had an estimated time of 20 minutes before the jet fuel detonated to cause the building to collapse.

Black and white, to the untrained eye it was nothing, what was going on in the scene. To the trained and experienced eye, there is far more to this image than first thought. What's going on here? How long has this been happening? What is going to happen after that? There are many questions just waiting to be answered. Imagine watching the video of a building being hit by a plane, the trained eye is looking at the structure from the moment it is hit, thinking of all the possible outcomes, and the damages that would have been caused.

2.5.2. The Fires and Weakening of the Buildings :

Fires in buildings pose a potential danger to both the safety of the occupants and the structural integrity of the building. Fire protection measures are essential in maintaining the building's structural stability and preventing potential damage. In the case of the World Trade Center towers, the failure of the structural system resulted in a loss of the building's state of being.

In the short time duration since the towers were hit, the fires were intense and widespread: 54 minutes in the north tower and 102 minutes in the south. It was believed that the fires were fed by the jet fuel from the planes, but most of it had probably burned away in the initial explosion. They were fueled by the planes' seats and other combustible materials, along with paper, rugs, and curtains. Any materials that were stored in the buildings for maintenance and cleaning purposes would have added to the combustibles.

With the brightness of fire and the magnitude of the event, it was no surprise that the occurrences of fire at the World Trade Centre have been a topic of much interest. The fires in the WTC

towers were essentially a race to the finish, between the efforts of the firefighters to control the fires and the progress of the fires in consuming the buildings. The race was not to put the fires out, but to reach survivors still trapped above the fires and to attack the fires enough to prevent a total collapse of the towers.

2.5.3. The Collapse of the North Tower:

Analysis of the North Tower collapse had shown that the impact and heat resistance of the fireproofing on the perimeter and core columns were successful in allowing for the time period of complete evacuation of the building after the aircraft impact. This then resulted in little loss of life when compared to the South Tower where there was no working stairwell passage above the impact zone. Simulation has shown that collapse would not have been initiated by the aircraft crashes and resultant fires, but for the dislodging of insulation from the trusses supporting floors in the impact zone.

After the aircraft struck, many people were seen on the edge of the gaping hole desperately attempting to escape the smoke and flames from the building. Given the amount of time it took for the building to collapse and considering the location and extent of known survivors, it was believed that some people were able to escape to the stairwells, although no survivors were found above the impact zone. The Omission of the stairs and the functioning of the elevators were an oversight in the design of the World Trade Center. The majority of modern-day skyscrapers are equipped with an area of

refuge in each third of the building, where there would be no more than a one-minute walk to a fire-rated stairwell. This was not the case at the World Trade Center where the stairs were centralized and elevators only traveled from the ground floor to the top floor of the building. This design greatly inhibited vertical evacuation during the World Trade Center bombing in 1993 and the events of September 11th.

The North Tower stood for 102 minutes after being struck by Flight 11. In the final moments, the building was rapidly destroyed. The precise sequence and magnitude of events were not known. At some time between 9:59:04 and 10:28:31 a.m., the portion of the building above the 98th floor abruptly tilted to the south and began a 12-second long descent to the ground. The entire top block then became obscured by dust and debris in the next few seconds. The upper section struck the lower section of the building at 10:28:55 a.m. The impact and power of this block falling on the building below caused the complete collapse of the North Tower in just 8 seconds. The upper block only damaged the perimeter of the tower and core columns once as it tilted and fell. The debris from the top segment too fell inside the tower and was unable to cause significant damage to the base structure to the extent that would prevent a successful implosion of the building. (Orabi, M. A., Jiang, L., Usmani, A., & Torero, J. (2022))

2.5.4. The Collapse of the South Tower :

It was a mere 56 minutes after the airplane crashed into the South Tower. Smoke, debris, and body parts filled the tower. Firefighters planning to ascend the tower were advised by New York Police Department (NYPD) aviation that the top of the tower was glowing bright red. Battalion Seven Chief Orio J. Palmer relayed a radio transmission which stated "Ver.... We're still heading up...We're in the impact zone on 78. No isolated pockets of fire. We're on 78 and we've got numerous...we've got two isolated pockets of fire. We should be able to knock it down with two lines. Radio that, 78." This was the last transmission made from any firefighters in the building.

After analyzing the situation and the advice that was given by the aviation unit, Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Commissioner ordered firefighters to withdraw from the building. His order was made after he had a brief consultation with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) . Firefighter's efforts greatly intensified during those fifty-six minutes. They managed to reach as high as the 78th floor. During the final minutes intervals before the tower collapsed, firefighters witnessed a visible bulge in the southwest corner of the tower as well as a rapid increase in smoke.

At 9:03 a.m., United Airlines Flight 175 struck the South Tower on a southwestern course, also crashing through floors 78 to 84. Firefighters in the South Tower were not able to receive the message to evacuate, and the situation quickly intensified after the second plane impact. With the limited information and knowledge on the severity of the situation, many firefighters were unaware of the collapse of WTC 1. Some fire chiefs who were notified of the collapse of WTC 1 believed that their evacuation order was still impertinent and that it applied only to WTC 1. This was a gross factor which led to the unfortunate and avoidable deaths of many FDNY firefighters.

The South Tower collapsed at 9:59 a.m., only 56 minutes after the impact of Flight 175. The rapid time in which the tower fell was partially due to the structural damage received from the airplane crash, the fire which weakened the steel structure, and the lack of insulation on the trusses. A combination of sagging trusses as a result of the fires which dislodged from the perimeter, core, and the hat truss, led to the buckling of the core columns which proceeded to initiate the initial collapse of the tower's upper section.

2.6. Immediate Aftermath and Response:

The immediate aftermath of the attacks led to uncertainty and fear within the United States. There was a deep concern for the safety of New York City, due to the still-standing but unstable structures. The United States stock market closed for four trading days after the attacks, resuming on September 17, and the U.S. civilian airspace was closed for two days. Recording artist Mariah Carey released a charity single, "Hero," which she performed on the televised America: A Tribute to Heroes in an effort to raise money for families of victims.

A number of Hollywood personalities released public service announcements in the wake of the attacks, often declaring United States strength in unity. An episode of the television show The West Wing, which aired on October 3, 2001, although a work of fiction, paid homage to the heroic sacrifices of emergency workers in the wake of the attacks. Several radio stations pulled pre-September 11th songs such as "Aerials" by System of a Down and "Walkin' on the Sun" by Smash Mouth from the air, and many television shows removed, edited, or rescheduled episodes following the attacks, as they may have contained sensitive subject matter. Stephen Sondheim composed a song "A Moment With You" for the 2001 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, which featured him on a fire truck float in efforts to boost New Yorkers' spirits. An exhibit dubbed "New York Responds" showcased over 150 images taken by amateur and professional photographers in the days and weeks following the attacks. These photos captured the responses of New Yorkers in the wake of an event they were unlikely to forget. (Iyengar-Kapuganti, R. L. (2022))

2.6.1. National and International Reactions:

After the profoundly tragic and devastating events that transpired on September 11th, 2001, an overwhelming and heartfelt outpouring of sympathy, compassion, and unwavering solidarity materialized from nations across the globe. American newspapers boldly proclaimed their messages of unity in diverse languages, resonating with readers around the world. In countless corners of the earth, communities gathered in somber candlelight vigils and awe-inspiring demonstrations, with thousands upon thousands of individuals mourning the heinous attacks that had unfolded on American soil. Remarkably, this unprecedented wave of sorrow and compassion prompted North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), for the very first time in its storied history, to invoke Article 5, demonstrating an unbreakable resolve to combat terrorism collectively. In an unprecedented show of unity, the alliance's member nations resolved to implement eight momentous measures, forever altering the course of action to ensure the security of nations worldwide. Simultaneously, the United States, resolute in its determination to safeguard its people and defend the principles of freedom, unhesitatingly dispatched National Security Guards to fortify its borders while mounting a decisive response in the conflict-riddled lands of Afghanistan.

On September 12, 2001, the eminent Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, proclaimed a national day of mourning as a poignant testament to the profound impact of these despicable attacks on the United States. Deeply moved by the magnitude of this tragedy, lawmakers within the European Union announced September 14 as an official day of mourning and remembrance, paying solemn tribute to the victims of these reprehensible acts of terror. Just a day later, on September 13, 2001, Italy's resolute Defense Minister, Antonio Martino, who would go on to become the esteemed President

of NATO, affirmed the nation's full readiness to comply with the United States' requests, as stipulated under the binding tenets of Article 5 within the Washington Treaty.

As October began to emerge on the horizon, a multitude of sources emphatically reported that an overwhelming majority of nations had unequivocally extended their resolute support and unwavering solidarity to the American people in their time of profound grief, embodying the unshakeable bonds of humanity that transcend borders .

2.7. Investigation and Identification of the Perpetrators:

The 9/11 attacks were immediately blamed on Al-Qaeda, an organization headed by Osama bin Laden. Within hours of the attacks, the FBI had already linked the 19 hijackers to the organization, based on information found in luggage which had missed its flight to Boston from the same connecting flights which the hijackers had boarded.

The 9/11 attacks were a major problem for intelligence analysis, as the failure to prevent such a large-scale operation and the success of the attacks themselves were a major and immediate political issue. Intelligence and security agencies stepped up their activity across the board, expanding old efforts and initiating new ones. Across the world, arrests were made on those thought to be connected with Al-Qaeda, with diverse results. Evidently, the identity of the perpetrators was of critical importance to 9/11, as the events themselves were like calls to action, with the culprits themselves beckoning a reaction.

In October 2001, The USA PATRIOT Act was signed in an attempt to combat terrorism in the United States and around the world, giving unprecedented and controversial powers to law enforcement agencies. The title of the act is a contrived acronym standing for Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act. This and a string of other legislative acts have essentially been calls for the prevention of repetition of 9/11, attempting to remove the causative factors of the attacks themselves.

2.7.1. The Identification of the Hijackers:

The FBI was immediately charged with identifying the hijackers and collecting evidence for prosecution. It was hard to determine how the FBI identified the 19 alleged hijackers within days of the attack and found incriminating evidence against them. Critics said that Atta's (the alleged ringleader) passport was found a few blocks from the WTC. It should have been blown outside when the plane he was in hit the trade center. The FBI maintains that through cashed credit card receipts, a bag belonging to Atta that contained his will (conveniently left at the airports), and other evidence found in both the US and in Afghanistan, it was able to positively identify all the hijackers, Atta being the first in early October.

Anthrax letters sent to Senators Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy were purported to be from Al-Qaeda. The FBI has said that the attacks were so complex that they must have been state-sponsored, indicating that Iraq and Iran were involved. This assertion was also hard to prove and might be hard to believe considering that Al-Qaeda had been able to complete similar though failed operations in the past and considering that the US has launched large attacks on both of these states, retaliation was a strong possibility. High government officials involved in the investigation have privately stated that they were not sure who was behind the attacks. This clearly contradicts President George W Bush's repeated statements that there was a solid evidence against Al-Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden.

2.7.2. The Establishment of the 9/11 Commission :

The establishment of the 9/11 Commission was a result of a growing public sentiment that questions surrounding the 9/11 attacks remained unanswered and with the upcoming 2002 midterm elections potentially bringing a change in party control of Congress, bipartisan calls for an independent investigation grew louder. Despite initial resistance from the White House to extend the final deadline for the investigation, the joint congressional committee pushed for more time to review additional documentation and recall witnesses, including key Al Qaeda informants detained by the U.S. government.

The lack of cooperation from the White House, along with pressure from committee Democrats and victims' families, led to a political turning point. The Bush administration initially opposed the establishment of an independent commission, but eventually gave in to the demands of the victims' families and Congress, leading to the formation of the 9/11 Commission in 2002.The Commission was tasked with investigating the reasons behind the attacks, identifying those responsible, and examining the failures that allowed the attacks to occur. Despite initial support from the Bush administration, their backing began to wane after the release of a congressional joint committee report that did not provide concrete evidence of an Al Qaeda 9/11 conspiracy. The 9/11 Commission had an 18-month timeframe to complete its investigation and submit a report of its findings.

2.7.3. The Search for Osama Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda :

Intelligence activities and secret service operations to locate and capture terrorist and Al-Qaida leader Osama Bin Laden had been kept secret for understandable reasons, with limited information available to the public. However, evidence strongly indicated multiple instances where Bin Laden narrowly evaded capture, despite facing significant deterioration in his position since the aftermath of the devastating September 11th attacks. Speculations suggested he might have already met his demise, adding intrigue and uncertainty to the situation. The aftermath of the September 11th attacks had an immediate and profound impact, prompting the United States and other influential world powers to

intensify their focus on terrorism, particularly the notorious Al-Qaida organization. In October 2001, US and UK forces, in collaboration with the Northern Alliance, executed a strategic invasion of Afghanistan to dismantle the Taliban regime, which had been supporting Al-Qaida forces within the country. This military intervention, meticulously planned and executed, proved to be a critical turning point in the fight against terrorism, ousting the Taliban from power and dealing a severe blow to both Al-Qaida and its Afghan allies. However, the fall of the Taliban did not bring an end to the conflict, ushering in a tumultuous phase of guerrilla warfare and continuous clashes between Al-Qaida, Taliban remnants, and the newly established Afghan government supported by the US-led coalition. Despite years passing since the initial invasion, Afghanistan remained in a precarious state, with ongoing challenges to stabilize the nation as government forces and militant groups engaged in relentless conflict, highlighting the struggle to establish lasting peace and security in the region.

Conclusion:

The terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, were a tragic and unprecedented event that forever altered the course of American and global history. The loss of nearly 3,000 innocent lives, the audacious nature of the planned attacks, and the symbolic targets struck at the core of America's sense of security and invincibility. In the aftermath, the United States underwent significant changes in its foreign and domestic policies, engaging in wars overseas while enhancing security measures and surveillance at home. The repercussions of 9/11 extended worldwide, sparking unrest, backlash, and a renewed focus on combating terrorism. The memory of 9/11 remains ingrained in the national consciousness, serving as a reminder of the hatred that fueled the atrocities and highlighting America's resilience in the face of such tragedy. While the attacks left deep scars, they also brought the nation together in mourning, spurred comprehensive reforms, and showcased the enduring spirit of the American people. Keeping the memory of 9/11 alive honors the victims and heroes, illustrating humanity's ongoing commitment to peace, justice, and freedom. The following chapter will delve into the impact of the events of September 11th on the Middle East and its residents, as well as explore how individuals from the region have been unfairly portrayed as terrorists by Western media, leading to negative perceptions.

CHAPTER THREE :
9/11 Impacts on the Middle East and Western Media Coverage

3.1. Introduction:

Following the 9/11 attacks, Western media portrayed the Middle East negatively, focusing on terrorism and extremism, leading to increased Islamophobia and discrimination. The media's coverage was overly generalized and failed to accurately represent the region's complexities, perpetuating negative stereotypes and fear mongering. This one-dimensional portrayal overshadowed the region's rich cultural heritage, diverse populations, and everyday lives, hindering efforts to promote understanding and dialogue between the West and the Middle East. The media's coverage significantly shaped public perceptions and attitudes, leading to misconceptions and prejudices that continue to impact relationships between the East and the West today.

This chapter will delve into the impact of the events of September 11th on the Middle East, focusing on both the political and economic ramifications. It will also explore the social and cultural shifts that have occurred, taking into account the regional conflict, Islamophobia, hate crimes, and prejudice that have emerged. Additionally, this chapter seeks to analyze how Western media has shaped the perception of the Middle East post-9/11 through the perpetuation of stereotypes and misrepresentations, particularly in portraying Middle Easterners as terrorists and lacking cultural understanding. Furthermore, it will illuminate the effects on public perception and attitudes towards the Middle East, including the fostering of fear and hostility towards the region, as well as the perpetuation of Orientalism in Western media.

3.2. Political Impact of September 11th on The Middle East:

The political effect of the event on The Middle East has been significant. One of the major impacts was the rise of terrorism in the region. The US belief in the link between Al-Qaeda and the incumbent Taliban regime in Afghanistan meant that there was no distinction between the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the state which was harboring the terrorists.

Looking to avoid another attack on the scale of 9/11 on its own or another Western countries soil, the US has been proactive in its measures to secure the safety of its nation. This has led to numerous attacks on suspect terrorists and their organizations with the most notable being the engagement of Iraq by US and UK forces in 2003. Fearful weapons falling into the hands of terrorists or rogue states and desiring a more stable and pro-Western Middle East, the US set about pressuring many countries into democratic reforms as a "war of ideas" against the catalyst of Islamic extremism. This has often led to semi-permanent occupation of the countries in question and has at times seen fighting against extremist elements within the country. An example of this would be the ongoing Afghanistan War and the Iraq War. While great success has been made in disrupting the more direct forms of terrorist attacks on the West or Western interests, the method by which it has been done has had

negative consequences and long-term failures. The disbanding of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq was swift and successful, however, without a valid government to replace it with, the country has fallen into war between its various factions and religion with many of the insurgents being terrorists. The result in the short term has been worse than under the previous regime and coalition forces faced a similar but more difficult situation in attempting to stabilize the country.

3.2.1. Rise of Terrorism:

The 9/11 attacks have led to disastrous outcomes in a certain part of the world, and that is mainly the Middle East. Its key impact was the rise of terrorism.

Terrorism is not a new concept to the Middle East. The region was accustomed to terrorist activities due to ongoing conflicts in countries such as Israel and Lebanon. It is the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent US War on Terror, however, that have caused terrorism to surge to new heights. In the view of many analysts, terrorism escalated in the Middle East due to the presence of coalition forces in Muslim countries, and there is data to support this argument. According to the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), terrorist attacks increased from approximately 3000 incidents causing 7000 deaths in 2002, to almost 12,000 incidents causing 16,800 deaths in 2013. The sharp increase in terrorism became evident in Iraq, an area deeply affected by the 9/11 attacks. Cost of the Damage from Terrorism in Iraq

This vastly increased terrorism, generally a result of the War on Terror, has caused an enormous loss in lives and in economic terms to several Middle Eastern countries. It has greatly affected the residents' sense of security and in some cases, forced foreign investors or aid organizations to withdraw, thus affecting the country's economic development. For example, a survey of 130 major aid organizations conducted by Oxfam in 2006 revealed a tremendous drop in international assistance in Iraq. The foreign aid funding for some of these organizations was sliced by half in 2006 due to security issues, and 37 organizations reported relocation within the country. This has posed a setback to a nation already struggling to recover from decades of war and sanctions.

3.2.2. Increased Military Presence:

Iraq experienced the harshest brunt of the increased presence of the United States military. The current government was unseated and the country was placed under military occupation. This has resulted in a change in tactics for the United States as well as a new focus on the rebuilding of government infrastructure and the establishment of democracy. This represented complete change in direction and upgrading of military presence in the region. Other countries, which were mentioned earlier as being linked with the 9/11 attacks have also now experienced, increased foreign military presence. Saudi Arabia, for example, had long hosted US military bases; however, due to public pressure, the US military has since been moved to other regions including the Persian Gulf as well as

the establishment of bases in neighboring Arab states. This has caused some tension with the Saudi government; however, the current friendly relation and alliance makes it less likely that troops will need to be stationed in Saudi Arabia. This is also true for the Persian Gulf states where there has been no significant increase in military presence. In Afghanistan, it can be said that there has been a decreased military presence of the United States and the international coalition. However, the previous support of the Taliban regime with regards to the Al-Qaeda organization was a key cause of the military action, and it was stated that the removal of the Taliban government was the goal to prevent further terrorist attacks and support in the region.

3.2.3. Destabilization of Governments:

Iraqi and Afghan governments were overthrown by US-led forces. Iran, although it had a conflicting relationship with the Taliban, did not want to see a US-backed regime in Afghanistan and will have identified the toppling of Iraqi leadership as a major threat.

The fear of regime change in Iran was so high that in the aftermath of 9/11 when the US requested cooperation in The War on Terror, it offered an opportunity for a US-Iranian relationship rapprochement. This was quickly discarded when in President Bush's State of the Union address in 2002, "Iran, their marginalization, we will work closely with the opposition." This statement identified his administration's aspirations to topple the established regimes and had completely reversed the offer of relationship rapprochement. When Iran realized that it was a potential US target, it became involved to a greater extent in aiding insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan to create a quagmire situation and bog the US forces down for the long term.

3.3. Economic Impact of 9/11 Event on The Middle East:

The 09/11 attacks had a profound impact on Middle Eastern Economy.

3.3.1. Impact on Middle Eastern Tourism:

The decline in tourist arrivals led to large job losses and a fall in foreign exchange revenues. The World Travel and Tourism Council estimated that 250,000 jobs would be lost across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in the first year following the attacks. According to one recent study, 83% of 19,000 hotels in the region reported a downturn in business following September 11th with Lebanon and Tunisia being worst affected. Hotels in Beirut reported occupancy rates as low as 10%. Foreign exchange revenues were also hit hard. Dubai, which suffered a decline of 64,000 European visitors between September and December 2001, estimated a loss of $55 million in revenue from European tourism. Egypt's minister of finance states that his country lost an estimated $1 billion in tourism revenue between September 2000 and September 2001. The decline in revenue was particularly damaging for the poorer North African countries, where reduced earnings in hard currency restricted

ability to fund imports and contribute to balance of payments deficits.

The events of September 11th immediately led to a travel advisory against anywhere in the world which disrupted many tourists' current travel plans. This had negative effects on the primary tourism destinations in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region. Dubai reported that stopover visitors slumped by nearly 50%. Egypt, a country that attempted to recover from the tourists decrease caused by the Luxor Massacre, estimated that they lost over a million tourists in the month following September 11th due to the US travel advisory. The situation was worst for Lebanon and Yemen, where the decline in arrivals from traditional western markets was exacerbated by the fact that many Arab tourists decided to cancel their travel plans to avoid problems in entering the United States. An estimated 5.5 million tourists to the region either cancelled or deferred their trips. Even the Gulf states, which have enjoyed growth in tourism from Asian and Arab visitors, experienced problems. For example, the Kuwaiti tourism office had to cancel new promotional campaigns targeting western tourists due to the volatile global situation and curtail spending.

The impact of September11th on the Middle Eastern tourism industry has been profound. This sector is an important source of foreign exchange revenue and employment across the region. Prior to September 11th, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) was the world's fastest growing region in terms of international tourist arrivals. Between 1990 and 2000, tourist arrivals in the MENA region rose from 29 million to 39 million. This upward trend was expected to continue with forecasts of a total of 63 million arrivals by 2020. The tourism sector was also one of the largest creators of employment in the informal sector, providing jobs especially to women and young people.

3.3.2. Changes in Foreign Investment Patterns:

The literature on foreign investment in the Middle East post September 11 is inconclusive. Crawford (2003) argues that while a slight decline in foreign investment may be expected, from studies conducted on terrorist incidents and their effect on foreign investment, the possibility of a strong adverse reaction in terms of disinvestment by multinational corporations and a decreased level of new investment and entry by foreign firms into the region is an unlikely result. This is because it is perceived that increased political risk will be offset by the potential for higher returns and profits in the region. However, the events of September 11 have led to increased political risk and uncertainty around the globe.

This is particularly problematic for the Middle East. A study conducted by the World Bank (cited in Buckley, 2003) claims that political violence has a significantly negative effect on foreign investment. The study covered 109 developing countries and found that an average level of political violence reduces expected foreign direct investment Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow by 45 per cent, affecting mainly horizontal investors with joint ventures in non-primary sectors.

As seen in previous sections, the Middle East is a region characterized by political conflict and violence, and the increased perception of global political risk has led to a matching of insurance and reinsurance costs for overseas investment which has increased by an additional levy of $5 to $15 per $100 on foreign affiliates of US multinational firms, further discouraging new investment in the region (Crawford, 2003). This increase in perceived risk has led to a change in the modality of FDI in the Middle East, from direct investment in local affiliates to portfolio and other forms of investment which are less vulnerable to political risk. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2002), the shrinking available pool of global FDI is also unlikely to favour the Middle East. Middle Eastern countries were previously able to compete for FDI among an array of countries, but after September 11 there is a possible decrease of investment from developing countries in Asia and Europe, the majority of which is undertaken in the form of horizontal investment in similar sectors to the Middle East. Overall there is a strong probability that the Middle East will miss out on investment from economically more active periods and places in the global economy.

3.3.3. Disruption of Oil Markets:

After 09/11, economic difficulties within the Middle East were compounded by disruption in oil markets, due primarily to fears of US military action against oil-rich Persian Gulf states. The events were followed by a period of high price volatility which continued for several years. According to Chossudovsky (2001), the volatility did not affect an overall rise in oil prices, however, it caused large fluctuations in prices at particular times throughout the year. High uncertainty about potential US military action in the Middle East was initiated by the Bush administration's development of a National Energy Policy report, which laid out the administration's strategic objectives for energy security, to decrease reliance on foreign sources of energy, particularly from the Persian Gulf. This ultimately led to fears of an invasion of Iraq. US Vice-President Richard Cheney made headlines when it was reported he had stated, "The good Lord didn't see fit to put oil only where there are democratically elected regimes friendly to the United States. In reference to potential military action in Iraq, he stated "Whoever controls the flow of Persian Gulf oil has a stranglehold not just on our economy but on most other economies as well. Step one must be to eliminate that potential stranglehold."(klare, M. (n.d.)).

This history of US military involvement over energy interests in the Middle East has generally translated to war and has tended to leave world and particularly Middle East oil markets in a state of uncertainty and has been marked by oil supply disruptions and an increase in geopolitical risk premium. The events of September 11 initiated a psychological increase in the security risk to oil supplies, although attacks on oil infrastructure were few, the perceived risks are what dictate prices. US military action in Afghanistan and more recent threats of action against Iran have achieved strong negative responses in world oil markets and in turn rises in oil prices, the effects have been particularly

detrimental to developing nations.

This recent history of American 'energy security' actions and its effects on world oil markets raise apprehension about future US military involvement in the Middle East and its effects on oil prices. Cole (2007) states, 'alarm over US intentions could push oil prices higher than any other event in the last few decades. In 2006 it was feared that the US would attack Iran in efforts to stop its nuclear program. Escalating prices for oil and gas may also have unintended consequences for the American economy as spending on energy exceeds spending on defense.' Korea and Braithwaite (2004) foresee a potential replay of the 1991 Gulf War where oil prices doubled due to actual supply interruption from Persian Gulf States. In this scenario, however, it was predicted that prices could triple within a matter of weeks but the Iraq war in 2003 provided a more accurate comparison, where a less severe actual supply interruption caused the price of oil to increase by over 30% in a matter of weeks. Kim and Perman (2009) use a Vector Auto Regression (VAR) model to show that the increase in geopolitical tension in the form of war risk or news of war in the Middle East has a long-run effect on increasing real oil price, signifying a structural change in oil markets. Thus, the prognosis for future oil market stability is bleak and increased US military action has adverse implications for real income and economic welfare in the Middle East and the rest of the world.

3.4. Social and Cultural Changes on the Middle East After 9/11:

The aftermath of 9/11 brought significant social and cultural changes to the Middle East.

3.4.1. Islamophobia:

In the days and weeks following the September 11th, 2001, devastating terrorist attacks occurred in the United States, many people across the nation experienced an irrational fear of Middle Eastern terrorism. This fear, known as "Islamophobia" - a term that means an irrational fear or prejudice of Islam and those who practice it - has been defined in recent studies as "indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims". Some studies have defined it as a type of racism, "a closed-minded hatred, prejudice, or hostility towards Muslims". A study by Nathaniel Gowler entitled "The Racialization of American Islam" also linked fear of Islam to prejudice, saying "the construction of the 'dangerous Muslim' in contemporary Islamophobia discourses very closely resemble the dehumanizing rhetoric employed by anti-Semitic [anti-Jewish] propaganda of the 1930s and 1940s" (Elsheikh, E., & Sisemore, B. (2023)). These prejudices and fears in American society have had dire consequences for Muslims.

A Gallup poll in 2010 found that forty-three percent of Americans admitted to feeling at least a little prejudice against Muslims. And that prejudice has turned into real-world discrimination. Hate crimes committed against Muslims rose dramatically after 9/11, more than any other time in American

history. For example, although no Muslims were charged with their religion in connection with the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, Muslims in the United States felt fear and retaliation. After September 11, the New York City police reported a "precipitous" rise in attacks on people and property of the Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities. It is stated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that there was an increase of 1600% in anti-Muslim incidents. The anti-Muslim incidents increased after 9/11 and specifically in the year 2001, 481 incidents of violence and discrimination against Muslims in America were reported. After that, the average was about 150 incidents per year. Today, back in 2011, the number of anti-Muslim hate crime acts is five times above the number in 2001. Such high rates of hate crimes have instilled fear and a sense of collective guilt within the Muslim-American community. Aggression towards Muslims can take the form of physical attacks, verbal assaults or chants, damage to property, workplace discrimination, and total avoidance in social settings and public transportation.

3.4.1.1. Impact on Muslim Communities:

Muslim communities across the United States experienced a significant impact due to the rise of Islamophobia. First and foremost, there was a surge in hate crimes against Muslims in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. According to the (FBI), the number of anti-Muslim hate crime incidents jumped from 28 in 2000 to 481 in 2001 - an increase of almost 1,600%. Such crimes included physical assaults, verbal attacks, and attacks on mosques and Islamic centers.

A study by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) revealed that nearly 60% of Muslim Americans have experienced some form of religious discrimination in the past years. These crimes and discrimination were compounded by the deep sense of marginalization that the Muslim population suffered from. Many Muslims reported cases of being discriminated against in various aspects of their lives. This included employment, educational opportunities, religious worship, access to public services, and democratic involvement.

Muslims' sense of isolation and alienation was further intensified by the lack of attention and responses from the government, with the perception that Muslims were ignored and alienated from U.S. society both politically and socio-economically. For example, in 2004 U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss told a large crowd that "I know that all Muslims don't support terrorists. I'm not saying that. But most terrorists are Muslims."(Woolfe, s. (2023)). Meanwhile, although Muslims make up around 1% of the U.S. population, they account for 9% of religiously motivated harassment complaints. Such disconcerting figures reveal the dire situation faced by Muslim communities, calling for immediate and effective measures to address Islamophobia in U.S. society.

3.4.1.2. Rise of Hate Crimes and Discrimination:

Furthermore, the main media platforms at the time extensively reported on terrorist attacks and portrayed Muslims as being behind these attacks. There was continuous speculation on the potential threat of terrorism, and this led to widespread fear and panic, which was then used to justify the introduction of new legislation and policies in a bid to strengthen national security. The everyday experiences of ordinary Muslims "exemplified state policies in which the normative figure of the potential terrorist has been created and amplified." This state racism - whereby Muslims were not treated as equal citizens but rather as potential suspects - actually played a part in giving rise to a far-right racist backlash. And, indeed, in the wake of 9/11 and the association with Islam and the Middle East, it became apparent that the existing levels of racial and faith hate-related incidents were to increase as statistics were released. These statistics showed a rise in such incidents as well as an increase in anti-Muslim and anti-Islam attacks taking place. For example, Sir John Stevens, the then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, noted in the Observer that after 9/11 and the start of the war on Afghanistan, the Security Service recorded an average of 900,000 hits per month on its website, as opposed to the usual 50,000, from people wishing to join the police or Army - an approximate increase of 1,800 percent. This application of laws and use of Islamophobic and racial motivation affected Muslims at all levels, from local policies to everyday lifestyles(Alizai, H. (2017)).

At a legislative level, many laws were introduced after 9/11 to target Muslim individuals and kinds of groups. Some of these include the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005. These laws allowed for the indefinite detention of foreign suspects, gave power to the police to search people without needing to arrest them and permitted the Home Secretary to ban and proscribe internationally.

"Faith hate" is a relatively recent institutional term that refers to hatred towards an entire religion. The term emerged after 9/11 and effectively to mean hatred and fear against Islam and Muslim communities. Such prejudice and discriminatory views directed at the entire faith system and its members have affected the lives of many Muslims in Britain but also throughout the world. Moreover, "faith hate" is fashioned in every aspect of human life, from the public sphere to private places.(Ali, Y. (2012)).

3.4.2. Migration and Refugee Crisis:

Immigrants and refugees coming from Muslim countries, or from countries that were specifically affected by 9/11, face discrimination and xenophobia in their host countries. The United States and several European countries have enacted harsher immigration policies, aimed particularly at Muslims and Middle Easterners. These policies include increased border security, detainment, and deportation of illegal immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries, and interrogations and

investigations into the immigration status of young Muslim men. For many, the practical effect of these policies is the denial of political asylum, sending them back to their war-torn home countries. Communities in the United States and countries such as France have stepped up hate crime attacks on Muslims, including shootings, murder, physical attacks, vandalism of Islamic centers, and discrimination in the workplace. This discrimination has left immigrants and visible minorities feeling isolated, unwelcome, and fearful for their personal safety and the futures of their children.

On top of political asylum denials and racial discrimination, conflict in the Middle East has displaced millions within war-torn countries and has created large refugee populations in neighboring countries. Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq rank in the top 10 of countries that produce the most refugees, both internally displaced and in other countries. Pakistan and Iran also have large numbers of Afghan and Iraqi refugees, and Turkey and Jordan have taken in hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees. High-income Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Kuwait have only accepted refugees in the single digit or low thousands. The vast majority of refugees wish to return home when it is safe to do so, but for many, it is a long and difficult path. Refugees who have well-established lives in host countries with high levels of discrimination may never be accepted back into their home countries or may find it more dangerous than expected. Those who do return home may find that their communities and infrastructure have been destroyed, and the skills and knowledge they acquired abroad do not help them re-establish a life in their home countries.

3.4.3. Radicalization and Terrorism:

The United States launched the War on Terror as a result of the September 11th terrorist attacks, with many initiatives aimed at reducing terrorist activity around the world. However, terrorism has emerged as a paradoxical by-product of the War on Terror, with terrorist incidents being higher in the 7 years after the attacks than in the 7 years preceding the attacks. It has also become apparent that there has been a large increase in terrorist activity in Middle Eastern countries which are either closely associated with US activities in the War on Terror, or are the subject of war initiatives. This was especially evident in Iraq, where the US-led invasion not only led to the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime and the search for weapons of mass destruction, but also created a power vacuum that has fostered extremist groups and increased rifts between Sunni and Shia groups. Subsequent terrorist incidents in Iraq have had major effects on the political landscape of the region.

A study using data from the Global Terrorism Database assessed the impact of terrorism on changes in government in Iraq since the US invasion, finding that terrorism increases the likelihood of government turnover, and that changes in leadership also increase the level of terrorism, creating a dangerous feedback loop. Another study by Saleh and Blomberg (2009) used the same dataset to analyze the impact of spillover from the Iraq War on terrorist activity in neighboring countries. They

found that while Iraqi terrorism had little effect on surrounding countries in the years immediately following the US invasion, incidents of terrorism in these countries began to increase dramatically from 2004 onwards. This suggests that as Iraqi terrorists found it more difficult to achieve their goals within Iraq due to increasing security measures and intergroup violence, they began to spread to surrounding countries to carry out attacks. This has been evident when terrorist organizations such as ISIS that emerged in Iraq and the Levant have made huge territorial gains in Syria and carried out attacks in Turkey. This is further evidence that radicalization and terrorism have increased rather than decreased as a result of US-led anti-terror initiatives.

A final point by Gould and Klor (2016) is that military intervention can cause terrorists to alter their strategies and increase the deadliness of attacks. This would suggest that the Iraq war and similar US initiatives have made the world a more dangerous place in terms of terrorism. A very similar situation can be observed in Afghanistan in which the Taliban has continued to regain territory and carry out attacks since US forces have withdrawn, demonstrating that attempted US-led state building has failed to reduce terrorism in this region.

3.5. Impact of September 11 on Western Media Coverage:

It is a well-known fact that media plays an important role in portraying an image of a particular country or region to the rest of the world. This image may be purely constructed from the ideals and interests of a particular group, but it is usually an image that the country or region cannot erase, regardless of whether it is true or not.

After the events of September 11th, the image of the Middle East that was portrayed in Western media drastically and negatively changed. The entire terrorist activity was, according to Western media, affiliated with those of the Muslim religion. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre were no longer seen as an act that was conducted by an extremist group, but an act that was conducted by the entire Muslim world, an idea which is completely false and unjust. According to Said, Muslims and Arabs are often essentialized as being an irrational, unchanging, violent, and immoral people whose ways are inferior to those of the West. This generalizes and degrades the entire Arab community. Said defines Orientalism as a separate and 'other' way to define the Orient (or the East) from that of the Occident (or the West), making the Orient a 'European' colony. This has become increasingly true after 09/11. The events of 09/11 and their repercussions were the occasion for the United States to intervene more directly and forcefully in the Arab world. And as the military and political activities have intensified, the literary and intellectual representation of the Arab world has increasingly become identified directly with Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. The US government kept emphasizing that the Muslim world was the enemy and that the US had to do something serious about Arabs and Muslims.

In the months following 09/11, the Council on American Islamic Relations documented 1,714 violent incidents against Americans who were or were perceived to be Muslims. These incidents existing within America demonstrate the negative effect of the US political propaganda translated by media on the West from the East, which portrays the East in an evil and 'terroristic' way. This effect is becoming further institutionalized within Western society. The danger of this kind of propaganda and the hatred it incites is immeasurable. The portrayal of the Middle East and Islam has become increasingly degraded, and there has been a rise in racial activity and hatred toward those from Middle Eastern descent. Much of this behavior has gone unpunished. This attests to the Western view of the Orient as being inferior and different, which is highly dangerous as it degrades an entire group of people to a lower level.

3.6. Stereotypes and Misrepresentations:

In the first few weeks following 9/11 event, around 1,700 articles were published depicting Arabs and Muslims and linking them to terrorism. Jack Shaheen, a prominent author on the issue states that "since September 11th, it's like open season on Arabs" due to the upsurge in media use of Arab stereotypes to generate an emotional response in viewers. Using data from a content analysis study on prime-time television, he notes that out of 1000 television hours featuring Arab characters, 12% were victims, 16% were involved with oil-related work, and 24% were associated with terrorism. Any positive aspect involving Arab culture such as history, tradition, hospitality, and generosity were largely ignored. This is an important point brought up by Shaheen and others regarding the limited knowledge the Western population has of Middle Eastern culture and the effects these stereotypes will have on future generations' ability to appreciate the diversities within it.

Another side of the argument is that these are not actually stereotypes but the realities of the situation we face, the threat of terrorist actions throughout the world. The supporters of this view suggest that media is not unfairly representing Middle Easterners, it is simply depicting ongoing in the Arab world and we do not have to look far to see examples such as international airline hijacks, kidnappings, large-scale bombings, and assassination attempts. They suggest that it is just unfortunate for peace-loving Middle Eastern people that this is how their image is perceived due to actions of a minority. In some respects, this is true, but for better or worse it is the media that is shaping the public's opinions and thus it is important to differentiate between fact and fiction and to present all aspects of it. Shaheen suggests that if the role of a terrorist is to be depicted, a history of why they have adopted this cause should be shown, what are their motivations, and for which cause are they fighting as terrorism carries many conflicting definitions.

3.6.1. Portrayal of Middle Easterners as Terrorists:

Firstly, there is the portrayal of Middle Easterners as 'terrorists', which sweepingly stereotypes a whole ethnic group. Punning on the criminal act of 'terror', communicating through language and imagery, Western media have successfully made the connection between 'The Middle East' and 'terrorist' in the minds of their audience. This slanderous link has had a serious effect on Western attitudes and behavior towards Middle Eastern people and those culturally identified as such. An EU report across 15 Member Stated, carried out following September 11th, found that 50% of the over 9000 surveyed believe there to be a 'clash of civilizations' or 'religious war' between the West and Islam, and 54% believe that Westerners and Muslims have incompatible value. Reports in national newspapers such as The Sun printing headlines like "Brit-born Al-Qaeda chief planning UK outrage" contribute to a mentality that breeds intolerance and can lead to harmful discrimination towards innocent people.(Considine, C. (2017)).

Secondly, the stereotypical image of the Arab 'terrorist' has symbolic implications concerning perceptions of the Middle East in its entirety. The often turban-clad, bearded villain bears resemblance to the popular Hollywood image of a 'native' Indian. Comparing this to Said's theory of Orientalism, Arabs and other Middle Eastern people are considered 'others' who act in strange ways to pursue strange ends. By going to the extent that make and model of car for a Middle Eastern 'terrorist' is entirely realistic, films and programs have constructed a reality in which all actions of violence in the West are associated with the Middle East. This is often exacerbated by political leaders such as George W. Bush who, attempting to reduce fear levels in the US, claimed a higher threat to its citizens and explaining the need for military action on the grounds that it is 'better to fight them over there than fight them in the street'. This has left many to feel that the perception of Middle East terrorism is a threat to Western security, and reinforced images of the Middle Easterner as a violent outsider who is attempting to infiltrate the Western world.

3.6.2. Lack of Cultural Understanding:

In the aftermath of the tragic 9/11 attacks that shook the world, a great deal of discussion has taken place regarding the imperative need for a deeper understanding of Islam and Arabs. It has become increasingly clear that there is a pressing urgency to bridge the knowledge gap between the Western world and the Middle East. Unfortunately, despite this urgent call for comprehension and empathy, it is disheartening to observe that there has been an inadequacy in transforming these sentiments into concrete actions that effectively combat discrimination and enhance sensitivity towards Muslims.

During the post 9/11 era in the United States, the media took center stage in portraying the disparities between Islam and the Western world. With fervor, they emphasized the inherent

incompatibility of these two cultures and crafted a narrative that painted Islam as an extreme and radical faith. This portrayal, in turn, has resulted in the perpetuation and reinforcement of stereotypical images of Muslims (Ameri, 2002). The mere sight of a full, thick beard, the traditional white jalabiyah paired with a red berdani, or the graceful image of women fully enveloped in a hijab and abaya has become synonymous with terrorism and danger across the globe, disregarding the regional nuances associated with these attires. Tragically, these associations arise largely due to a lack of knowledge regarding Islamic culture and a conscious effort on the part of media outlets to appeal to the easily recognizable and memorable images that resonate with their viewers (Shaheen, 2001).

Consequently, it is abundantly clear that the misinformed and broad targeting of Arabs and Muslims has resulted in a truly disheartening revelation: most mainstream Western media entities possess an appallingly limited understanding of Islam, and their dissemination of this ignorance perpetuates throughout their audiences. As highlighted by the works of Shaheen (2001) and Rugh (2004), much of what audiences in the United States and the Western world at large know about the Arab world stems exclusively from their exposure to media outlets. Regrettably, the religion of Islam is rarely showcased as a faith that promotes discipline and spiritual growth, as noted by Ameri (2002). Instead, whenever Islam is addressed, it is overwhelmingly portrayed in the context of terrorism, perpetuating an inaccurate narrative that fuels fear and discrimination.

3.7. Impact on public perception and attitudes towards the Middle East:

One negative portrayal often leads to another. At least two recent content analyses report that Arab and Muslim Americans are being negatively stereotyped in both local and national television news and that the events since 9/11 have only increased the prevalence of these stereotypes. In a California State University study, content analysts found that Arab and Muslim Americans were depicted as "disloyal, violent, and politically radical," as well as being associated with an increase in crime and unpatriotic behavior. In a national study of network and cable news coverage, 60% of Arab Americans and 44% of Muslim Americans sampled reported experiencing discrimination since 9/11. These people attributed their perception as Arab or Muslim as a key variable in whether or not they have been portrayed negatively.

Since the events of 9/11, negative depictions of Arabs have not been limited to news media. Scholars have documented a trend in which Hollywood has re-framed the Arab as a stock villain. Rather than a political other, (refers to the portrayal of Arabs as political adversaries, often linked to geopolitical conflicts like those surrounding 9/11.) the Arab has now become a cultural other (refers to the portrayal of Arabs as fundamentally different from Western culture, implying a sense of inferiority or backwardness). Arabs are now not only seen as the enemy of America, but enemies of modernity with timeless values, and a people that are degraded, dehumanized, and unworthy of the freedoms that

Western people have come to take for granted. This trend is not exclusive to the United States. In a study of the German press, scholars found that after 9/11, the country's Muslims were often portrayed as "dangerous, backward, fanatical, irrational, and violent."(Parker, C. (2004)).

3.7.1. Creation of Fear and Hostility Towards The Region:

This is evident in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) word "Terrorism is premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." This instance identifies Arabs as the functionaries of terrorism when comparing with the images of violence and destruction that are seen in news reports. The September 11 attacks supplied an instant association between Middle East and Islamic terrorism, revolving the skewing public opinion into a concrete linkage of Arabs with a danger to Western security. Essentially, it means that security threat equal to terrorism is an extremely powerful tool in making a situation seem dangerous. The buildup of fear and hostility is augmented by the elevated amount of media coverage on issues of warfare and terrorism, largely overshadowing any other form of Middle East-related news. Additionally, the US government's response in launching a war against terrorism only served to bolster beliefs of the Middle East being a region of disarray and violence. This hostile climate created has led to a study conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project in saying that the majority of Americans felt that the average Arab could not be trusted.

The shift in negative perceptions to genuine action can be seen in both hostility from Western communities towards Arabs and increased discriminatory treatment of Arabs. This ranges from verbal abuse and vandalism to physical violence against people of Middle Eastern appearance. There have also been reports of mosques being vandalized and the Quran being desecrated as an increase in hate crimes against Muslims. As recently as 2010, hate crime statistics in America showed that even 9 years after September 11, anti-Islamic hate crimes were still 50% higher than pre-9/11 levels. On an institutional level, Arabs have been subject to increased state discrimination and surveillance in Western countries. This includes ethnic profiling, unwarranted arrests, denial of civil liberties, and deportation, justified by governments in protecting against terrorism. All of these are clear indicators of increased hostility and discrimination supported by negative perceptions of the Middle East.

3.7.2. Reinforcement of Existing Biases and Prejudices:

The negative coverage of the Middle East in the media post 9/11 has led to an increased negative sentiment against the region and its people. F. Gregory Gause, III, a Professor of International Affairs and John H. Lindsey '44 Chair at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University, argues that those who "tended to see the region and its people as backward, authoritarian, irrational, and intolerant" were provided with plenty of evidence to support their viewpoint by events

subsequent to September 11, 2001. Existing biases and prejudices held by Western audience regarding the Middle East being uncivilized and fanatical were only strengthened by the way in which news was reported and talked about.

This reinforcement of existing stereotypes can be attributed to the way in which news organizations present news. The communication of news is generally comprised of mental "pictures" or images of events and issues. These "pictures" are reliant on historical, social, and cultural contexts that are already understood by mass audiences. The news is framed in a way that is intended to help the audience readily understand where an event happened, to whom or what, and why it is important. Through simplified frames and cues, the news can become reliant on cultural, historical, and social shared knowledge to communicate the "gist" of a news story. This makes it easier to comprehend and can bring about an emotional response from an audience. News stories are said to form a "relationship between patterns of cognition and emotional response that operate to increase the salience of a given message in the mind of the receiver," which in turn helps to foster the stereotypes that are already in existence. An example of this is how US newspaper articles use the term "terrorist," implying that the attackers were Muslim extremists, no matter who they were. This happened after the 2002 Bali bombings when most referred to the attackers as Jemaah Islamiah terrorists, even though the bombers were until this time non-associated, yet enough of the Muslim faith to bring that term into play.

3.8. Orientalism in Western Media:

So it seems that one of the main causes behind the misrepresentation and stereotyping of Middle Eastern people and their culture is Orientalism in Western media. Edward Said, a well-known scholar, has written significantly about this topic. He defines Orientalism as "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western Experience." In other words, it is an attempt to reflect and "teach" the culture of the Westerners to the East, making the East seem "weaker" and "less developed." This is a dangerous perspective because it gives the Westerners the power to label and "see" the East in the way they want to - creating a biased and often negative perception of the East - such as assuming the East has a more religiously fueled culture and is less peaceful as a result. This concept interlinks with media in a way that forms "fantasized" images of the Middle East through news channels.

Edward Said, a renowned Palestinian-American literary theorist and cultural critic. He is best known for his work on Orientalism, suggested that the way we produce knowledge - through the process of learning about and understanding people and culture - is closely linked to the way power operates in a society. "Knowing" the Orient, or the East, gives power to making statements and generalizations about the East; in this case, the media can manipulate the way the audience perceives the East through biased and twisted information, with evidence often being selective and the truth being

distorted to suit the opinion of the Western media. This is crucial to understanding why the image of the Middle East in Western media is often so different from the Middle East itself.

Cultures in the Middle East are diverse, with many different languages, religious practices, and traditions - just like in the West. However, when the media portrays the Middle East as a homogenous mass of violence and poverty and Islam as the main and only religion, this misrepresents the reality and leads to prejudice and discrimination. According to Professor Reina Lewis, this misrepresentation has significant consequences on how Muslim people are perceived in Western societies. Maryam Sheik, a researcher specializing in media and Islam studies, argues that media representation of Muslims after the 9/11 attack has led to the marginalization of Muslim culture in Western society and the portrayal of all Middle Easterns with the same "terror" label has resulted in the vulnerability of Islamic practices worldwide.

Conclusion :

The events of 9/11 have significantly impacted the Middle East's image, as seen through Western media. The region has faced increased political tensions and foreign involvement, along with the social and economic fallout from conflict. Western media has often depicted the Middle East using stereotypes and outdated views, wrongly associating the actions of a few with the entire region. This has led to widespread Islamophobia. Such a distorted image has misrepresented the true diversity and complexity of Middle Eastern societies. It has also affected how countries interact with the Middle East and shaped policies based on these misconceptions, continuing a cycle of misunderstanding and mistrust.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

The impact of Western media on the image of the Middle East after 9/11 has been profound and far-reaching. The coverage of the attacks and subsequent events has perpetuated stereotypes, reinforced negative narratives, and hindered understanding and empathy toward the region and its people. The one-dimensional portrayal of the Middle East as a violent and unstable place has fueled xenophobia, Islamophobia, and mistrust in Western societies.

The first chapter laid the foundation by exploring the historical context of media and its role in shaping cultural narratives. It examined the various types of media and their evolution over time, emphasizing their influence on the construction of the Middle East's cultural and identity narratives. This chapter also highlighted the significant contributions of Middle Eastern culture to the development of American society, establishing a baseline for understanding the pre-9/11 media landscape.

The second chapter provided a chronological account of the 9/11 events, their immediate response, and the enduring aftermath. This pivotal moment in history served as a catalyst for profound changes, not only within the geopolitical sphere but also within the media's portrayal of the Middle East.

The third chapter shed light on the multifarious effects of 9/11 on the political, social, and economic landscapes of the Middle East, as well as the subsequent shifts in Western media coverage. The analysis revealed a marked increase in stereotypical portrayals, a rise in Islamophobia, and a resurgence of Orientalist perspectives, which collectively contributed to a distorted image of the Middle Eastern region.

The current thesis was not an easy work, the study only looked at how Western media influenced the image of the Middle East after 9/11, without considering other factors like government policies and individual views. It also relied on sources like articles and news reports, which may not always be completely accurate or unbiased. Additionally, the study focused only on the period after 9/11 and did not explore the long-term effects or global impact of Western media portrayal.

The Future research topic can deal with Islamophobia in non Western media, social media and otherness, and how the Middle East was portrayed in Western media before and after 9/11 to see how stereotypes have changed over time. They could also examine how social media shapes public opinion of the Middle East and how alternative media sources challenge mainstream narratives. Research could also look into how the experiences and perspectives of people from the Middle East living in Western countries contribute to a better understanding of the region.

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