Media Representations of Islam in Russia and India: A Comparative Study of Othering, Enemy Imaging and Gender Stereotyping, 2001-2005

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled **"Media Representations of Islam in Russia and India: A Comparative Study of Othering, Enemy Imaging and Gender Stereotyping, 2001-2005"** submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that the thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Dedicated

To

Umma

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List of Abbreviations

CDA:	Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)
CIS:	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSBM:	Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia and European Countries of CIS
ISI:	Inter-Services Intelligence
ISIL/ISIS:	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant/ Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham/Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
KFU:	Kazan Federal University
MPL:	Muslim Personal Law
MSU:	Moscow State University
RCM:	Russian Council of Muftis
UCC:	Uniform Civil Code
WMD:	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Glossary

Abystay: A female clergy popular in the Tatar Islamic tradition.

Ahl-Kitab: People of the book/those who follow Bible and Torah.

Allahu Akbar: God is Great

Bismillah: In the name of Allah

Dar-al-Islam: House/abode of Islam a place where Muslim could legally practice Islamic *Sharia.*

Dargah: A shrine constructed over the grave of any revered *Sufis* or *Saikh* where pilgrims visit.

Dar-al-Harb: The abode of war/ the place where Islamic law is not legally followed.

Farzi/Faraizi Movement: Revivalist movement led by Haji Shariat Allah (1781-1840) who waged armed struggle against Hindu *zamindars* and British in Bengal.

Fatwa: An edict by an Islamic scholar regarding any issues related to *Sharia*.

Gurudwara: A place of worship for the Sikh community

Hajj: Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca.

Halal Shops/*Halal* foods: The places/foods/drinks certified as permissible by Islamic rules and tradition.

Hijab/Burqa/Purdah/Jilbab/Niqab: The different veiling practices observed by Muslim women.

Hijrah: The migration of Prophet Muhammed and his followers/the starting point of the Islamic calendar.

Imam: One who leads the *Namaz.*

Inorodtsy: The non-Russian ethnic people.

Islam Buli: Referring to Khaled Islambouli, the radical assassin of former Egyptian president Anwar-el-Sadat.

Jadids: Reform-minded clerics who advocated for new means and methods/modernization of Muslim community in Russia.

Jadidsm: The reformist/awakening among Muslims advocated for modernization without giving up the religious identity.

Jagirdari: The feudal systems of land grant and tax existed during Muslim rule in India.

Jihad: Struggle/strive for religious cause either against the evils inside or against enemies of Islam. Usually, the second one is highlighted as a holy war.

Jumua: The mass congregation at mosques on Fridays for prayer

Kabab/Kebab: The cooked/grilled meat dishes which has been part of the West Asian cuisine.

Kadimists: Traditionalist clerics (opposite of *Jadid*s) who preferred traditional means/values than modernization of Muslims.

Khaganate/Khanate: The geographic area coming under the rule of Khans.

Khalifa/Khalifah: The title given to one who heads the Islamic government system (*Khilafat*)

Khatib: A person who preaches religious sermons in mosque.

Khilafat Movement: The pan-Islamic movement emerged against British to revive the *Khilafat* system survived under Ottoman Turkey.

Madrasa/Madrassah: The educational institution focusing primarily on Islamic studies.

Mandir: A term for Hindu Temple in Hindi language

Millat-e-Islamiya: The notion of the unity of Muslims irrespective of the difference in nationalities

Mu'ezzins: One who performs *adhan* (call for prayer).

Mufti: Islamic scholar who is assigned/eligible to issue *fatwa* (edict according to Islamic law)

Muftiate: A governing body comprising of *Muftis*

Mujahideen Movement: Revivalist movement led by Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi who waged armed struggles against Sikhs and British from Swat valley during 1824-1831.

Mumin: A true believer in Islam

Musul'manskii vapors: Muslim Question/An administrative and socio-political state of affairs in dealing with Muslims.

Namaz: The Islamic prayer obliged to perform five times a day

Naqshabandya, Qadiriya, Chishtiyya, and Shaziliya: Different streams of traditional *Sufi* brotherhood known after respective *Shaikhs.*

Nikahnama: The Islamic marriage contract outlining the rights and responsibilities of the parties engaged in marriage.

Obrusenie: Russification/ An officially supported program under Russian empire to assimilate *inorodtsy* (non-Russian) ethnic people

Qadi: Judge/Jurist assigned to implement Islamic *Sharia*.

Qawali: An art form of praising the spiritual highness of *Sufis.*

Sahaba: The companions of Prophet Muhammed

Salafi: One who follows the predecessor (first generations after Prophet)/who rejects *Sufi* traditional rituals.

Sharia: Islamic law derived from Quran and Hadith (tradition of Prophet) and interpreted by Fuqha (Scholars of Islamic jurisprudence).

Sheik/Shaikh: The guru in any *Sufi* order.

Shudhi Movement: Revivalist movement led by Swami Dayanand Saraswati to face the challenge of conversion of Hindus.

Sovietskii Chelovek: Soviet Man/ A concept developed to override all national/ethnic diversities of Soviet Union.

Sufi: One who follows mystical tradition in Islam/who becomes part of brotherhoods.

Tablighi Jama'at, *Ahle-Hadith:* Two factions among *Sunnis* emerged in India challenging *Sufi* traditions.

Triple-talaq: The divorce process by spelling *Talaq* three times.

Umma: The transnational imagined community network connected under Islam.

Wahdat al-wajud and *Wahdat al-shuhud*: The philosophic concepts in *Sufi* tradition.

Waqfs: A religious charity/endowment for public benefit.

Zamindari: The feudal systems of land holding and tax collection during British rule in India.

Chapter I

Introduction: Media Representations of Islam, A Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Since the 11 September 2001 Al-Qaeda inspired terrorist attacks on the US, media across the world predominantly represented Islam and Muslims in a very negative light in the coverage of the incident and after. The Western media-constructed "discursive formations" of "othering", "enemy imaging" and "gender stereotyping" heavily reflected in the representation of Islam and Muslims. During the "War on Terror" campaign for military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq, the media discourses developed certain binary underpinnings of "Self"/"Other", "good"/evil", and "civilized"/ "barbaric" as the most appropriate mode of representation of Islam. Such conceptualizations of Islam in terms of orientalized and gendered logic largely ignored the social cohesion, peaceful cohabitation and interrelationship of Islam with other religions, cultures, and traditions in many countries. Consequently, the post-11 September 2001(henceforth 9/11if not within a quote) Western media discourse not only influenced the global perception of Islam as a threat but also led to the negative perception of Islam among people even in countries like Russia and India where comparatively secular social environment exists.

Historically, Russia and India are known for their cultural diversity in terms of religion, ethnicity, and language while Islam is one of the major religions and Muslims are the largest minority in both these countries. Notwithstanding certain cultural differences with Orthodox Christians in Russia and Hindus in India, Islam and Muslims enjoy constitutional freedom and equality and they coexist peacefully in the social fabric comprised of different cultures and traditions. Nevertheless, the recent global media framing of Islam linked with international terrorism and extremism has redefined the discourse on Islam and Muslims even in Russia and India regardless of the diverse local contexts. Hence, it's important to look into, the

characteristics and specificities of media representations of Islam in Russia and India.

The recent global context of the media representation of Islam has mainly been connected to the "neo-Orientalist" discourse reframed with the "War on Terror" after 9/11 that helped to find a common enemy namely "terrorism" either from Chechnya or Kashmir. Though the "Arab Spring" could bring changes into the erstwhile "Orientalist" discourse on the Muslim world, the recent developments in Iraq and Syria have brought back stereotyped narratives that reproduce "Islamophobia" and frame Islam as a unified global cultural threat. Media in such contexts worked as a mediator in linking the global discourses on terrorism with local conflicts mostly connected to Islam and Muslims and depicting them as a threat to societal, national and global security. Such discourses reinforce the emergence of a new enemy; "militant Islam" to replace the "red peril" (Brinks et al. 2006: 4) of communism existed in past decades. Similarly, the media has been circulating certain stereotyped images of Islam in terms of gender equality especially regarding the rights of women. Islam is being evaluated by the Western standards of individual freedom and being questioned for traditional conservative oppressive practices followed either in the Arab world or by Taliban in Afghanistan that results in gender stereotyping of Islam. Given such a global context this study compares the Russian and Indian media representations of Islam by analyzing the discursive patterns of three major themes: othering, enemy imaging, and gender stereotyping.

A series of events like wars in Chechnya (1994-1996, 1999-2000), Beslan tragedy (2004) in Russia; and post-Babri Masjid riots (1992-1993), Gujarat violence (2002) in India have raised questions on Islam having implications both at national and international level. Nationally, Muslims in Russia and India were forced to be integrated into the nationalistic narratives of security or to be excluded as "enemy within". Internationally, the question of Islam and Muslims in Russia and India has been reflecting the relations of these countries with immediate neighbors and the Muslim world at large. And the "neo-Orientalist" discourse after 9/11 has been

portraying the concept of “Ummah” or the notion of “Muslim nation” as an overarching threat and a common enemy in making globally. The analysis of the media discourses after 9/11 can reflect upon the contemporary debates on Islam and Muslims in the context of post-Soviet Russia and postcolonial India.

Since the media has been working as an “ideological apparatus” defining and reproducing the dominant discourses at the global and local level it raises pertinent questions on representations of Islam. Whether the media constructs an “Other” image of Islam in given socio-cultural contexts of in Russia and India? Whether the diversities of Islam and Muslims get minimum space and the “extremist” versions are being generalized as a real “threat” in media? Whether the media reproduce the “Orientalist” gender stereotypes of Muslim women? And generally, whether the issues of Islam and Muslims in countries like India and Russia are framed according to the global discourse on Islam and the Muslim world?

While the Western-dominated “global media flow” has been accused of bias in their representations of the “Other” especially Islam and Muslims the media narratives from Russia and India are expected to be an alternative “contra flows”. Therefore, a comparative study of the media representations of Islam in these countries can present a non-Western account of the image of Islam in the “mediascape”.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is drawn from a relevant body of literature related to the disciplines of international relations, media and gender studies and approaches of feminism, post-structuralism and postcolonialism that discuss the way media discursively constructs, manipulates and deploys the image of Islam and Muslims especially in the post-9/11 “War on Terror” discourse (Mamdani 2002; Poole 2002, 2011; Said 2004; Brown 2006; Kellner 2004; Esposito 2011; Abu-Lughod 2006; Mishra 2006; Brinks et al.2006; Khiabany and Williamson 2008; Semmerling 2008; Sardar and Davies 2010; Powell 2011; Khan 2012; Hasan 2012;

Rane 2014; Özcan2013; Posetti 2006; Eltantawy2007; Amin-Amer 2014; Kerboua 2016; Khalid 2011, 2017). The main concepts the study uses include media representation, othering, enemy imaging, and gender stereotyping based on the relevant literature.

Media Representations of Islam[1]

The media representation can be defined as the media function of both reproducing the dominant discourse and constructing certain narratives in a given social/political context. More than re-presenting the "reality", the media construct and circulate meanings in its representation of ideas, identities, and social images. This "constructionist" aspect of representation is highlighted by Hall (1997) defining the representation as "an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between the members of a culture" (Hall 1997: 15). As the "constructionist" approach to representation is followed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1960) in "semiotics" and Michel Foucault (1972) in "discursive approach" Hall (1997) suggests it as very significant in cultural studies unlike "reflective" and "intentional" approaches (Hall 1997: 15). More than looking into just meaning and language, Foucault approached representation as the production of power-knowledge through what he called 'discourse' or "a way of representing the knowledge about a

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[1]The question what is Islam has been addressed by theologian, historians and anthropologists defining it in diverse way. Literally the word *Islam* is neutral form of the Arabic word *sulm/salam* which means peace. The term used in Quran *Al-Islam* is supported by another term *deen* which can be translated as religion whereas *Muslim* is the term used for the followers of the *Al-Islam.* The *Al-Islam* which is used by Quran along with *deen*is conceptually elaborated by *Hadith*(Prophetic traditions) and *Thafseer*(interpretations of Quran) to identify its similarities and differences with early Semitic confessions, Judaism and Christianity. Islamic theologians use the terms of *Al-Islam, deen and deen-ul-Islam* to conceptualize believes and living practices of divine (*Allah*) orders professed by the Prophet (Muhammad). Historians and anthropologists define *Islam* as a doctrinal confession/discursive tradition followed by Muslims who emerged in Mecca in 6th century AD and spread across the world (Lewis 1993; Said 1981; Gellner 1981; Geertz 1968; Asad 1986). Based on such inputs we can define Islam as a discursive tradition conceptualized by *Qura'n* and *Hadith,* interpreted by theologians and practiced by Muslims in diverse time and spaces across the globe. Thus, for the purpose of this study, anything regarding to Qura'n, Hadith, theological interpretations, Islamic/Muslim traditions and practices are included in the concept of Islam.

particular topic at a particular historical moment" (Foucault 1972, 1980 cited in Hall 1997: 44). Therefore, Foucault's "discursive approach" is more applicable to the concept of media representation since media texts can be considered as products of the larger discourse in a given social context.

Underlining the discursive aspect of media representations van Dijk (1983) has noted that media discourse is not a ready "product" of news-gathering activities but it's "the manifestation of a complex process" in which existing social contexts of news production and representations of the reading public are decisive factors. Thus, the news production, according to van Dijk, "is not a direct representation (biased or not) of events, but rather some form of discourse processing" (van Dijk 1983: 28). Fairclough (1992) elaborates this point arguing that "media texts reflect and represent social entities and relations while also construing and constituting them" (cited in Kuhar 2006: 124). And Siapera (2010) argues that although representation is the outcome of the media production process it cannot exist outside the contexts of its reception "the interdependence between the processes of production and consumption of mediated representations should not obscure the work of representation as such" (Siapera 2010: 111).

Therefore, considering the media representation as a discursive process of constructing meanings in a given social context, this study focuses on how Islam is represented in media in different socio-cultural contexts of Russia and India. Gentz and Kramer (2004) have noted that the issue of discursive culture is even more salient when the media represent "foreign" or "alien" identities and cultural systems (Gentz and Kramer 2004: 1-10). And the issue of representation and misrepresentation in the discursive process has critically addressed by Said (1978) in his critique of Western colonial hegemonic discourses on the "Orient". Regarding the question of objectivity in the representation Said noted that:

> The real issue is whether indeed there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations because they are representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambiance of the represented. If the latter alternative is the correct one (as I believe

> it is), then we must be prepared to accept the fact that a representation is eoepso implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many things besides the "truth", which is itself a representation(Said 1978: 272).

Said's critique of Orientalism has exposed the discursive trend in the Western academic and media representations of the "Oriental Other". Notwithstanding the criticism for negating the agency of the "Orient" Said, following Foucault's power-knowledge paradigm, tried to uncover the Western practice of representing the "Orient" as inferior/subordinate "Other". More specifically, through *Covering Islam* (1981) Said raised critical questions on Western media representations and misrepresentations of Islam and its implications in the socio-political discourses. Therefore, this study conceptualizes the media representations of Islam drawing on theoretical insights from Said's interpretation of othering and orientalizing.

Other/Othering/Orientalizing

Unlike Hegel's philosophical conceptualization of "Self" and "Other", Said (1978) introduced the concept of othering as a political and cultural phenomenon prevailed in the "Orientalist" discourse which projected the "us" (west) against the "them" (rest). He defined Orientalism as a "style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said 1978: 2). The very attempt to make a distinction between the enlightened Occident "we" and despotic Orient "they" resulted in the construction of an "Other" out there. Elaborating this postcolonial perspective, looking into the British colonial discourses on India Spivak (1988) has also theorized the concept of othering as a colonial discursive approach constructing subordinate people as subjects and inferior others. Similarly, Abu-Lughod (1991) argued that othering is the result of "cultural notion" that operates as an essential tool to differentiate the "Self" from "Other" and the othering just like stereotyping helps individuals and groups to affirm their identity over others (Abu-Lughod 1991: 87, 143). And the media is part of this discursive process of othering in which the image of "Self" is constructed as superior and the "Other" is depicted as subordinate and inferior.

Based on Said's readings the concept of "orientalizing" is also used to understand the othering process in the media representations of Islam.

The othering/orientalizing practice in the representations of Islam got wider academic attention with Said's influential critique, *Orientalism* that exposes the colonial knowledge-power structure that produced the discourse on an alien "Other" in a different geographical space. For Europe and later for America the colonial space especially the Muslim world has been the object of Oriental discourses which tried to establish the superiority/authority of "Western Self" over the "Oriental Other" (Said 1978: 3).

With a very critical question, "how the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world" Said (1981) further explores the misperceptions of Islam and how partial media coverage usually finds what it wants rather than what is there. Through a critical analysis of the Western media discourse, he finds that "covering Islam" is more often ignorant generalizations about "Islamic characteristics" which in some way amount to racism. Moreover, he noted that the othering process in the representations of Islam should be taken as orientalizing because "the malicious generalizations about Islam have become the last acceptable form of denigration of foreign culture in the West" and "the mere use of the label 'Islam', either to explain or indiscriminately condemn 'Islam', actually ends up becoming a form of attack" (Said 1997: 10).

The othering is practiced by Western media and intellectuals by generalizing Islam for all negativities they see in the "other world" whereas Islam "defines a relatively small proportion of what actually takes place in the Islamic world, which numbers a billion people, and includes dozens of countries, societies, traditions, languages, and, of course, an infinite number of different experiences" (Said 1997: 12). Reducing Islam to a handful of rules, stereotypes and generalizations which reinforce negative notions like violence, primitiveness and atavism, Said notes that, "Islam as it is covered and (mis)represented in Orientalist thought and media

stereotypes stands charged and convicted without the need for supporting arguments or modulating qualifications" (Ibid: 13).

Whenever the Western media cover Islam, Said argues, it highlights the aggression as natural while the local contexts and circumstances are always obliterated. As a result, covering Islam becomes a one-sided activity of vilifying the "Other" against the glorified "Self". The later representations of Islam, according to Said, "is designed to show the religion's inferiority with reference to the West, which Islam is supposed to be hell-bent on opposing, competing with, resenting, and being enraged at" (Said 1997: 18). The misrepresentations and distortions rampant in the portrayal of Islam can be seen as the products of utter negligence towards understanding Islam and its culture that encourage perpetuating the hostility and ignorance. Said calls this sort of the Western media coverage of Islam as only covering up of the realities since "all discourse on Islam has an interest in some authority or power" (Ibid).

Although Said focused on othering process in Western media representations of Islam in the wake of Islamic Revolution in Iran and Palestine issue his theoretical frame was followed in many studies in particular local contexts (Karim 1996, 2002; Poole 2002, 2011; Poole and Richardson 2006). Acknowledging Said's contribution to the critique of Orientalism Karim (1996) suggests that the Western process of defining its "Self" by "constructing the Orient as a primary Other" was in progress for centuries and it becomes a "textual attitude" which preferred texts than actual experiences (Karim 1996: 207). In his research thesis on constructions of the "Islamic peril" in Canadian print media Karim argues that apart from depicting Islam as embodying the "Antichrist" in the eve of third Christian millennium a "monolithic Islam is presented as the antithesis of Western liberal values developed over the last 300 years" (Karim 1996: 36).

The representations of Islam in Canadian media, according to Karim, follow the dominant Northern discourses which reproduce the stereotypes of the "violent Muslim and Islamic terrorist". Instead of a critical examination of the motivations

and social conditions of people claiming to act in the cause of Islam, the actors are defined as per their religious affiliation. Apart from sharing similar cultural images on Muslims, Canadian media, according to Karim, go uncritically in reproducing stereotypes on Islam since they heavily depend on American and European sources. As the recent discourse of othering became a more domesticated practice that tries to link the "Other within" with "Orient" out there, "the Muslim Other who used to be far away across the oceans is now more likely to be a next-door neighbor" (Karim 1996: 506).

Similarly, the British media representations of Muslims were explored by Poole (2002, 2011) suggesting that an "Orientalist discourse" is reframed in the coverage of the development after 9/11 attack on the US. Much like Said argued Poole underlines that media offer only a few stereotypes like "Muslims are homogenized, backward, irrational, unchanging, fundamentalists, and misogynists, threatening and manipulative in the use of their faith for political and personal gain" (Poole 2002: 18).

Given certain changes in the form of othering of Islam Poole (2002) argues that "the current situation may not be about Islam, but the meanings and values attached to Islam in recent times are reproduced to demonize the enemy, even where the signifier 'Islam' remains unused" (Poole 2002: 16). To make the debate more attractive, Poole argues, "a new stereotype, an 'acceptable Other,' a liberal Muslim" is constructed in order to manipulate that "any Muslim falling outside this framework as extreme" (Ibid). Acknowledging the change in increased coverage of Islam and media becoming an important resource for public knowledge of Islam Poole argues that media also "limit the way in which Muslims are known" (Poole 2011: 53).

Considering this situation Brown (2006) points out to a "paradigm shift" from exotic, sensual stereotype of Islam to a stereotyped Muslim fanaticism whereas he does not believe 9/11 as a starting point of such a trend. In a comparative study of British and French media Brown (2006) argues that "a wide diversity of

representations of Islam existed in the British and French press before 9/11 reflecting mainstream social discourses of the period" (Brown 2006: 310). Though he agrees with the critique of Orientalism on stereotyping Islam and Muslims in a "homogeneous" character, Brown rejects the popular belief that the current mainstream discourses of Islam are contingent on the events of 9/11, because those discourses were already fully formed and continue to evolve (Ibid). Poole also finds media's "Orientalist" practice of othering through "individualizing" the perpetrator to appease the larger community and making them part of foreign "extremely religious and murderous ideology" whereas "the link is made to Islamic ideology, given as the driving force, but it is also Othered by being located outside the country" (Poole 2011: 56). Thus a new form of Orientalism or othering discourse can be identified across the contemporary representations of Islam.

Neo-Orientalism/new-Orientalism

In the post-9/11 context of media and academic discourses on Islam, Said (2003) has indicated to a "belligerent neo-Orientalism" which depicts Arab Muslims' identity as an individual actor and Islam as an institution. However, the reframed discourse of "neo-Orientalism" is carried forward by the same people, Bernard Lewis, Daniel Pipes and Samuel Huntington who always reassert the superiority of "Western Self" on "Islamic Other." While Lewis leads the attack blaming the deterioration of Islamic values and the rise of Western intellectualism and Enlightenment Huntington and Pipes contribute a lot expanding the thesis of "clash of civilizations" (Altwaiji 2014: 313).

Regarding this context, Amin-Khan (2012) suggests the rise of "new Orientalism idea" that is predicated on the "clash of civilizations" thesis and is spreading swiftly after 9/11 in the form of raced and gendered portrayals and demonized cultural representations of Muslims and Islam through media. The "Long War for Western hegemony" with the help of media, according to Amin-Khan, has resulted in the rise of anti-Muslim racism in Western societies. The "racially embedded process of securitization" also set the context for targeting and othering

Muslim women, labeling Muslim males with terrorism, and criminalizing migrants and refugees (Amin-Khan 2012: 1596). And the "new-Orientalism" is operationalized in different forms like "confronting Muslims and Islam politically and militarily, and by targeting traditional Muslim woman as a threat to Western culture, values, and ideals" (Amin-Khan 2012: 1600) The old discourse of superiority/inferiority is reworked in "new-Orientalism" in the form of "clash of civilizations" which reiterates the civilizational dominance of the West on 'Other' including Islam and Confucius (Amin-Khan 2012: 1602).

Similarly, Kerboua has pointed to the reincarnation of Western-centric view on Islam and the Muslim in a renewed form of "neo-Orientalism" that actually "far from giving an accurate representation of Islam and Muslims emphasizes exclusively on what are considered negative dimensions and components of the Islamic faith and culture, or the alleged behaviour of the Muslim" (Kerboua 2016: 24). Thus the orientalization, either new or old, of Islam and Muslim world ultimately follow the discourse of essentialisation, targeted stigmatisation, and stereotyping.

Critique of Saidian Orientalism

Said's *Orientalism* framework was not free from criticism of different aspects leveled by Orientalists and its defenders (Lewis 1982; Clifford 1988; Habib 2005; Warraq 2007). In a review of *Orientalism*, Lewis (1982) tries to answer the questions raised by Said regarding the bias in the "Orientalist" discourse. Lewis justifies the "stereotypes and facile generalizations" arguing that these are part of representations of not only the "other out there" but also the "other within" whereas Orientalists have "the advantage of some concern for intellectual precision and discipline." Pointing to the epistemological problem, how far other cultures can be interpreted, Lewis questions the Saidian school for missing the main part "the scholarly merits and validity of Orientalist findings" (Lewis 1982: 17).

Clifford (1988) raised a host of methodological and conceptual fault lines in Said's *Orientalism* thesis considering it as a personal or 'oppositional' protest of an Orient towards the West. While acknowledging *Orientalism* "as a serious exercise in

textual criticism and epistemological reflections on general style and procedure of cultural discourse"(Clifford 1988: 21), Clifford dismisses Said's arguments as "polemical". Clifford also questions Said's charges against Orientalist discourses arguing that "Orientalist inauthenticity is not answered by any authenticity" (Clifford 1988: 24).

Without suggesting any alternative to Orientalism, Clifford notes, Said attacked the "Orientalist" discourse from a variety of positions despite his "standpoint is not sharply defined or logically grounded" (Clifford 1988: 25). Uncovering the lack of clarity in appropriating Foucault and his concepts of power-knowledge and discourse, Clifford considers *Orientalism* as a "write back" against an imperial discourse by "an oriental whose actuality has been distorted and denied" (Clifford 1988: 29).

In a critical note on *Oreintalism* Habib (2005) questions Said for misinterpreting Marxian perspective on the representation of Orient and his heavy dependence on British and French sources while many Orients including Muslims criticized Islam. Defending Orientalism Habib argued that Said's concept of Orientalism is "far too general and far too restricted, and the limits of his definition are so set and the actual selection so executed that his conclusions are thereby simply pre-determined" (Habib 2005: 41) Habib further suggests that Said unreasonably used the term Orientalism even to blame the entire corpus of learned writings on the Orient though his criticism may be applicable to certain class of writings. As a result, according to Habib, the word Orientalism has become so degraded "that anyone can use it for anything one disapproves of, even when the disapprover may himself be a dyed-in-the-wool 'orientalist'!'' (Habib 2005: 44).

Meanwhile, many (Halliday1993; Brown 2006) have raised the issue of "Occidentalism" in Saidian School and equally blame both Orientalists and their critics for their focus more on discourse than on the analysis of reality. Halliday calls for moving beyond "unnecessarily polarized" and "methodologically impoverished debate" (Halliday1993: 163). Brown (2006) has also questioned critiques of

Orientalism for their “Occidentalist” discourses depicting the West as homogeneous in the representations of Islam and maintaining a subject-object dualism by reducing Islam to a passive victim of Orientalism (Brown 2006: 297).

However, scholars (Bhabha 1983; Prakash 1995; Karim 1996; Sardar 1999; Almond 2007; Dabashi 2009) have critically engaged with *Orientalism* and tried to point the shortcomings of Said’s approach while they acknowledge *Orientalism* as a framework to look into the politics of representations of “Other” especially Islam. Addressing the “question of other” in colonial constructions Bhabha (1983) defined stereotype as a “major discursive strategy” argued that it’s “a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated” and suggests that this “ambivalence is central to the stereotype” (Bhabha 1983:18). However, he noted that “the point of intervention should shift from the identification of images as positive or negative, to an understanding of the processes of subjectification made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse” (Ibid). And he suggests that “the mode of representation of otherness” is to be questioned since the “colonial discourse produces the colonised as a fixed reality which is at once an ‘other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible” (Ibid: 23).

Though he approves the debate raised by *Orientalism,* Karim (1996) criticizes Said for overestimation of the hegemony of “Orientalist” discourses without giving an alternative approach. Also criticizing Said for practicing contrary to his own arguments that any “method must be univocal and totalizing” Karim argues that Bhabha (1983) and Spivak (1988) are “more convincing since they show a few alternatives” (Karim 1996: 214). Thus to counter Orientalism, Karim finds hope in post-feminist, post-modernist, post-colonial and other dissenting movements across South and the North challenging the hegemony of dominant discourses and constructing alternative discourses. It’s argued that “there would be more informed and more authentic ways of depicting the ‘Other’ instead of stereotypical portrayals

of ‘immigrant’, ‘Third World’, ‘Black’, ‘Oriental’, ‘Arab’, ‘Muslim’, or ‘Islamic Fundamentalist’” (Karim 1996: 526).

Despite his disagreement with Said and terming Orientalism as a “partial and partisan subject” in which people engage with “background and baggage” with an assumption that “there is a real knowledge about the Orient” Sardar (1999) noted that Orientalism is “colonizing new territories and has moved into media spaces also” (Sardar 1999: 2). Arguing that “the encounters of Christendom with Islam is traced as the origins of Orientalism” Sardar presents the crusades as the crucial event that “initiated and perpetuated the representations of Muslims as evil and depraved, licentious and barbaric, ignorant and stupid, unclean and inferior, monstrous and ugly, fanatical and violent”(Ibid). While “Islam was the darker side of Europe for Christendom,” Sardar argues, “the Protestant Reformation and the rise of Ottoman Empire led to the transformation of Christendom to ‘the West’” (Ibid). Given the hegemonic representations, Sardar argued that “Orientalism is not a construction from the experience of Orient. It is the fabulation of pre-existing Western ideas over-written and imposed upon the Orient” (Ibid: 13).

In his critique of “New Orientalists” Almond (2007) engages with the “ongoing discussion concerning the relationship between Islam and the critique of modernity” and presents a non-European perspective to explore “how postmodernity to a large extent inherits in an altogether subtler way many of the Orientalist/imperialist tropes that had been so prevalent in modernity” (Almond 2007:4). Admitting the prevalence of an “otherness” control of Islam, Almond argues that “the peripherality of Islam in the discourses of new Orientalists” could explain “the high degree of compartmentalization involved in the representation of Islam” in their texts that still highlights “an Islam-for-others, an *Islam-pour-l’Occident*, an *Islam-pour-l’Europe*, and never an *Islam-en-soi*, an Islam for itself” (Almond 2007: 196, 203).

Through his “post-Orientalism” thesis, Dabashi (2009) also has noted the need of updating and reengaging with Said’s still “valid and operative” insights in

the wake of the post-9/11 syndrome. Though he tries to "articulate the theoretical foregrounding of the power of self-representation and rebellious agency for the subaltern, the colonized, the dominated," Dabashi acknowledges Said's engagement with the "will to resist power" in his later work *Culture and Imperialism* (1991) that opened a new era of self-representation from post-colonial world (Dabashi 2009: xii).

Notwithstanding all kind of criticisms towards *Orientalism* are considered as valid and legitimate, in the sense of "methodological" shortcomings or "oppositional" methods, nobody can deny the very epistemological question that Said raised towards the Western representations of the "Other" especially Islam. Though we can agree with the commitment of "Orientalists" to engage in academic and media discourses on "Orient" how can we reject Said when he exposes the residual cultural superiority of West reflected in text and practice on Islam? The far-reaching impact of "Orientalist" othering practices can be traced in the subsequent debates like "clash of civilizations" and "Islamophobia" which ultimately created an enemy image of Islam across the world. Since the "Orientalist" and "neo-Orientalist" othering became the part and parcel of representations of Islam in academics and media the concepts of "clash" and "Islamophobia" got more takers in the post 9/11conext.

Enemy Imaging: Clash of Civilizations/Islamophobia

Generally the concept of "enemy imaging" is related to the psychological aspects of war and conflict. It's considered as a powerful tool for public mobilization for war and is defined as "the construction of dehumanized images or beliefs that portray the "Other" as thoroughly diabolical, untrustworthy, evil and manageable only through violence" (Wessells 2000: 528). Enemy imaging takes socio-cultural roots and becomes part of the dominant ideology and is circulated through mass media. Since the process leads to the dehumanizing of the "Other" the superior "Self" loses the moral restraints against any offense on "Other" (Ibid).

Through the process of enemy imaging, certain images are used to out-group some members of the society and depict them as "enemy" either within or foreign. In a discursive process, "enemy imaging uses stereotypes to denigrate the members of the identified out group while aggrandizing the goodness and superiority of the members of the in-group" (Woehrleand Patrick 2000: 7). Ken Booth argues that enemy imaging can serve psychological, sociological and political functions like justifying the "Self", socialization of in-group norms and identification of interests and maintenance of an ideology (Booth 1998: 35). Therefore, the enemy imaging is the offensive part of the othering process through media and cultural representations of the "Other" as the enemy.

In this regard, the Huntington thesis of "clash of civilizations" can be considered as a frame to analyze the enemy image of Islam in media representations since it helped to strengthen the phenomenon of "Islamophobia". In his original article in 1993, Huntington argued that:

> The fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural…The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future (Huntington 1993: 22).

Arguing that the "civilization identity" will dominate other affiliations, Huntington named eight major civilizations including Western, Islamic, Hindu and Slavic-Orthodox which are supposed to clash in future. Among other civilizations, Huntington narrows down the focus to Islam and West suggesting that both sides take their interaction as a "clash of civilizations." As Huntington follows Lewis who has already pointed to such a confrontation between "West and Muslim world" or "the West and the Rest" he reproduces the "Islamophobia" rampant in the "Orientalist" discourse (Huntington 1993: 28).

Tracing the roots of the concept of "Islamophobia" Esposito (2011) found the phenomenon defined in Britain's 1997 Runnymede Report as "the dread, hatred, and hostility towards Islam and Muslims perpetrated by a series of closed views that imply and attribute negative and derogatory stereotypes and beliefs to Muslims"

(Esposito 2011: xxiii). However, Cesari (2011) defines “Islamophobia” as a “modern secular anti-Islamic discourse and practice appearing in the public sphere with the integration of Muslim immigrant communities and intensifying after 9/11” (Cesari 2011: 21).

Meanwhile, Cheng (2015) has pointed to the lack of clarity in the use of concepts “Islamophobia and Muslimophobia” regarding its target; Muslims, the people or the Islam, the religion. However, the anti-Muslim or anti-Islamic discourse generally targets Muslims and Islam accusing “backwardness, extremism, violence, and misogyny” and both “Muslims and Islam are conflated with no differentiation between the two” (Cheng 2015: 562). As both “clash of civilizations” and “Islamophobia” have become reference points in the enemy imaging of Islam in the post-9/11 discourses on Islam across the world it follows the “Orientalist” methods of asserting the superiority and humanity of the “Self” against the inferiority and barbarism of the “Other”.

Therefore, despite critiques at various levels, the Huntington thesis could establish the premises for Islamophobic narratives that reframed the earlier “exotic Orientalists tropes” to a new “hostile other” creating an enemy image of Islam capable to challenge the multiculturalism across the West and East. The interlinking of “clash” thesis with “fear” factors has been uncovered by Kellner (2004) who argued that the dominant discourses, frames, and representations adopted the “clash of civilizations” model that defined the media and public debate after 9/11. And this model ultimately “established a binary dualism between Islamic terrorism and civilization,” which resulted in the construction of a “global enemy” that needed to be fought on every front. Kellner points to the “enemy imaging” function of U.S administration and media through “Manichean discourse” constructing an “evil Other”, mostly radical Islamists. According to Kellner, the binary opposition between good and evil, us and them, civilization, and barbarism representing West and Islamic terrorists reproduced the discourses on “Evil Empire” of Soviet Communism, which represented the “Other in the Cold War” (Kellner 2004: 41).

O'Rourke (2012) underscores Kellner's observation on media's "dialectical reversal" from positive images to negative ones in the post-9/11 discourse on Islam and Muslims. During this period, according to O'Rourke, "Islam and Muslims are routinely denigrated and stereotyped as enemies of freedom and civilization, victimized as potential holders of threatening ideologies and even tortured to satiate the public need for perceived security"(O'Rourke 2012: 3). O'Rourke argues that "those antagonistic to Islam and those sympathetic to it often end up making the same argument." Theorizing that Islam and West hold different epistemological frameworks, O'Rourke argues, rightist neo-cons such as Huntington and leftists like Zizek "sing in same choir" of Osama bin Laden (Ibid).

The simplistic oppositional discourse, according to Abu-Lughod (2006), has become hegemonic that reduces Islam to "Islamists" in the media representations of Islam since 9/11. It also denies the scope of multiple worldviews and politics and resorts to the nonspecific and ahistorical label of "terrorist" to describe Muslims and those who study them. This labeling revives the civilizational discourse that put "West of freedom and civility" opposing "an irrational and deeply disturbing Muslim East that breeds those who attack without reason" (Abu-Lughod 2006: 5).

Poole (2002) argued that media, following the academic and political discourses, became a key player in connecting the "clash" thesis with "fear of Islam". The media, according to Poole, often worked like an instrument of public ideology demonizing and portraying Islam as a threat to western interests whereas such a framing consequently constructed and sustained the ideology necessary to subjugate Muslims at global and local levels. The "Orientalist" discourse supported by the portrayal of extremist images has been strengthened to justify the western hostility towards the "Other" whereas "an ethnocentric vision dominates current representations of Islam which are reductive and predominantly negative" (Poole 2002: 18).

The civilizational debate is prevalent in what Mishra (2006) suggested the "fear of political Islam persisted in discursive environments" in post-9/11

representations of Islam and democracy in the U.S prestige press. Mishra argued that the U.S media advocated for secularizing and modernizing Islam according to Western standards spreading the fear that any political role for Islam would be a threat to democracy. The enemy imaging of Islam thus seems prevailed in dominant discourses in U.S media depicting any visibility of religious commitment in the public and political sphere as threatening to democracy, human rights and women's rights (Mishra 2006: 160).

Regarding the media portrayals of American Muslims, Karim (2006) also noted that "of the innumerable events in a day involving the one billion Muslims in the world only those that dramatically break laws seem to appear on the front page and at the beginning of newscasts" (Karim 2006: 116). Going further in this regard Poole and Richardson (2006) argue that threat, fear, and misunderstanding of Islam and Muslims not only influenced the content of journalism but also reproduced in and through the news.

Asserting media's role in the construction of myths, Brinks et al. (2006) argued that "cataclysmic myths are being promoted by sophisticated modern media, which consequently help to keep an apocalyptic conflict between 'friend' and 'foe'" (Brinks et al. 2006: 4). They point to the discourse after 9/11 as an example to show how media could confirm the emergence of a new enemy "militant Islam" to replace the "red peril" of previous decades (Ibid).

Exposing the link between the "clash" thesis with "Islamophobia", Semmerling (2008) proposes the concept of "Orientalist fear" as a "narrative device that feigns reality by making references to the real" (Semmerling 2008: 223) whereas the lines between reality and fiction may blur to create anxiety, agitation and a sense of urgency. Such "Orientalist fear" prevailed in American popular films and media that depict "evil" Arabs who refute so-called American ideological and mythical paradigms. These cinematic imageries and media texts, according to Semmerling, are more about defining American Self than depicting stereotyped Arabs and Muslims in general (Ibid).

Sardar and Davies (2010) argue that Muslims and Islam have become central to the political questions of our time since “the debates and dilemmas of today are inextricably linked to the continuities established by the Orientalist/Islamophobia discourse” (Sardar and Davies 2010: 241). Exploring the Hollywood frames on Islam and Muslims Sardar and Davies argue that the cinematic narrative depicts a series of “freeze frames” constructed in a black and white imagery. These freeze frames not only repeat stereotypes of Muslims and Islam but also “impede and obstruct Muslim engagement with the issues of our times.” The concept of freeze frames tries to expose the centrality of Hollywood as the principal agency for the continuity of imagery and the lack of coherence in the representations of Muslims and Islam as well as the incoherence of the western imagination (Ibid).

The post-9/11 terrorism discourse contributed a lot to the reinforcement of the “clash” debate and “Islamophobic” representations of Islam. In a detailed analysis of media coverage of 9/11 terrorist events in the U.S during 2001-2010, Powell (2011) argues that the media coverage of terrorism constructs “fear of international terrorism” depicted as “Muslims=Arabs=Islam” waging war against a “Christian America’’ whereas domestic terrorism is covered as stray incidents or lonely-wolf problems (Powell 2011: 96). Portraying 9/11 perpetrators as Arab, Muslim brown “others” who represent Islam, US media developed a pattern of coverage that supported the concept of “clash of civilizations” (Ibid).

Media’s role in spreading “Islamophobia” is asserted by Esposito (2011) pointing to 2010 New York Post editorial that argued: “where there are mosques there are Muslims where there are Muslims there are problems” (Esposito 2011: xxiv). The net result, according to Esposito, “is a growing climate of suspicion, deterioration of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims and the growth of Islamophobia” (Esposito 2011: xxxiii). Mamdani (2002) also has pointed how the link between Islam and terrorism became a central media concern following 9/11 that resulted in new rounds of “culture talk that turned religious experience into a

political category, differentiating "good Muslims" from "bad Muslims," rather than terrorists from civilians" (Mamdani 2002: 766).

Rane (2014) uncovers such kind of a 'media-generated Muslims and Islamophobia' arguing that "the negative media coverage of Islam and Muslims associating terrorism present prior to Iranian revolution (1979), Gulf War (1991) and 9/11 (2001)" (Rane 2014: 29) while these events helped to reinforce stereotypes. Although the post-9/11 coverage of Islam and Muslims resulted in an almost universal awareness of the religion and its adherents it also led to "fear and prejudice towards Islam and Muslims" namely "Islamophobia" (Rane 2014: 32). If the terrorism frame were related only to coverage of global Islam prior to 9/11 now the shift is common in national contexts like British. Poole (2011) sees such practices as "decontextualization" or media's valiant effort to link acts of terrorism to Islamic belief rather than providing any historical or political context.

Orientalist Roots of "Islamophobia"

Although the theses of "clash of civilizations" and "Islamophobia" are widely circulated in the post 9/11 context its roots have been traced in the early "Orientalist" debates. Esposito (2011) argues that "Islamophobia" did not suddenly come into being after 9/11 whereas it has long and deep historical roots similar to anti-Semitism and xenophobia. To affirm this point Zubri (2011) has exposed the "Orientalist" themes in "British Islamophobia" arguing that "the representation of Muslims as barbaric, irrational, backward, repressive of women, irredeemably alien and Other" against the "Self" which is "modern, progressive, rational, civilized, humane and liberal" (Zubri 2011: 187).

Tracing the history of "clash of civilizations" theory, Adib-Moghaddam (2008) argues that the historical contexts of the supposed conflict between Islam and the west should be analyzed exposing the idea of the historical conspiracy also. According to Adib-Moghaddam the concept of "clash" was replanted by Huntington and others in the last century whereas "it was nurtured within a cultural genealogy that can be traced back to those early encounters, real or imagined, between east and

west" (Adib-Moghaddam 2008: 218). While the changing meaning of the "East" was met by the demonization of Islam the idea of "clash of civilizations", according to Adib-Moghaddam, can be interpreted as a "competition over history and temporal sequence of humanity" (Ibid).

The impact of such an enemy imaging of Islam in state policy is noted by Brinks et.al. (2006) as America used "militant Islam" phrase "for invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq while Russia opted for military force as the solution for the conflict with Chechnya" (Brinks et al. 2006: 4). More or less the same discourse had implications in countries like India during the "War on Terror" campaign because the cultural effect of media discourses globally helped the reawakening of archaic fears of "the other." And the "fear of Islam tends to prompt strong reactions in both the White House and the Kremlin" (Ibid). Pointing to the "neo-Orientalist" roots of "Islamophobia" Kerboua (2016) argues that in the post 9/11 context it has turned to be a complex phenomenon having world-wide echoes and consequences that "involves all the processes that function on a culturalist and reductionist reading grid not only of Islam but also of Muslims, be they in Western societies or in the Muslim world" (Kerboua 2016: 24).

Gender Stereotyping/ Muslim Women/Hijab

Apart from othering and Islamophobic frames, gendered stereotypes regarding Muslim women and the issues of hijab/veil are also subject to the "Orientalist" constructions in the representations of Islam. Stereotypes are generalized beliefs about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of members of the certain group. More than just beliefs about groups, stereotypes are also theories about how and why certain attributes go together whereas stereotyping represents the process of attributing certain characteristics to particular people only because they are part of such out-groups (Bodenhausen and Richeson 2010: 345-46; Hilton and Hippel 1996: 237-71). Moreover, Lawrence (2004) argues that stereotypes are false or misleading generalizations about groups and the stereotyping process leads to powerfully shape the perceptions about stereotyped groups and generally homogenizing them. In a

systematic approach to stereotyping cultural and media studies look into "the content of culturally salient stereotypes of particular groups, the processes by which these are historically and socially constructed and disseminated throughout society, and the social functions served by stereotypes" (Lawrence 2004: 251).

Following such a cultural approach we can define the concept of gender stereotyping as a social construction to generalize the notion of masculine/feminine roles in a given social context. Though gender stereotyping includes stereotypes of both men and women, here we focus on the theories and practices of gender stereotyping of women in media representations. Like other forms of stereotyping gender stereotyping also consists of generalized beliefs and attributes on a particular gender group regarding their membership in a certain group. Rather than stereotyped distinctions between masculinity and femininity within a group we consider here the generalizations of feminine gender of Muslim women given their cultural differences in large social context. It's more about constructing stereotyped "Oriental Other" images of Muslim women in contrast to the liberated "Self".

Feminist movements have evoked a series of debates on the gender stereotyping of women in social and cultural spaces, especially in the media. Historically, since 1860s feminists have questioned the media representations of women whereas the first and second waves of women's movements in late 19th and 20th centuries carried the struggle against dichotomized and hierarchical sex-role stereotypes represented in media as "natural" and "normal" (Carter and Steiner 2004: 2). Critical forms of feminist inquiry emerged in the1970s further examined the ways in which media representations supported the interests of patriarchy and capitalism. Using the Gramscian concept of "hegemony", feminists argued that media texts never simply mirror or reflect the "reality" but construct hegemonic definitions of what should be accepted as "reality". The scholarship in this area made a distinction between the concepts of sex and gender defining gender as a social construction rather than a "natural" fact (Carter and Steiner 2004: 4).

In a post-colonial perspective, Said (1978) and Spivak (1988) exposed the hegemonic “othering” of colonial subjects especially women in western scholarship and it opened a new way to look into the other side of stories about “women in Third World”. And the generalization of feminist gender discourse was strongly opposed identifying that “Orientalist” aspect was rampant in Western feminist discourse that reproduced the stereotypes of “Other Women” especially Muslims. This trend resulted in the emergence of Islamic or Muslim feminism which exposed stereotyping discourses within gender debates regarding the women beyond Western cultural contexts (Jawad and Benn 2003). In this study, we consider this kind of gender stereotyping which construct a generalized image of Muslim women in feminist discourses and media representations.

Questioning the Western feminist discourses on Muslim women many feminist scholars, (Mernissi 1991; Wadud 1992; Ahmad 1993; Badran 1994; Moghadam 1994; Mir-Hosseini 1996; Najmabadi 1998; Cooke 2001; Mahmood 2005) tried to establish a new framework to study about Muslim women. Instead of following established “Orientalist” stereotypes on Muslim and Arab women, these scholars promoted alternate discourse regarding the cultural and religious contexts. This endeavor resulted in the emergence of the concept of Muslim feminism or Islamic feminism (Seedat 2013: 413).

According to Jawad and Benn (2003) a kind of gender stereotyping, largely connected to the “Orientalist” or “clash of civilizations” debates reflected in the representations of Muslim women in the Western discourse on Islam after 9/11. Though there seemed a shift in meta-narratives on Muslim women from “Harem Queens” to “veiled subjects”, the dominant discourses often follow “Orientalist” images of oppressed women in Islam. Jawad and Benn (2003) argue that since the veil/hijab was depicted as a symbol of both anti-western and anti-feminist views, Muslim women had to suffer even verbal and physical assault and they were “high amongst the victims of retribution, targeted because of their religious visibility Jawad and Benn 2003: xiii).

The media representations of women, Özcan(2013) argues, have been a key factor in the creation and continuity of “biased images of the Muslim” whereas “oversimplifications” were applied in representing Muslim women and the representation of the veil “has come to signify multiple and shifting meanings, ranging from women’s oppression to Islamic terrorism” (Özcan 2013: 429). Özcan follows Bullock (2000) and Macdonald (2006) to argue that “the female headscarf has increasingly been perceived as a sheer symbol of women’s oppression in Muslim cultures, both in public discourse and media representations” (Özcan 2013: 429).

Similarly, Khiabany and Williamson (2008) have noted that certain British media homogenize the variety of Muslim veiling practices presenting the veil as a symbol of Islamic “refusal” to embrace “modernity”. Media consider veiled women as “ungrateful subjects who have failed to assimilate and are deemed to threaten the ‘British’ way of life”(Khiabany and Williamson 2008: 70). Here we can see how the hijab/veil becomes more than a subject of feminist discourse on oppression and subjugation and how it’s used as a symbol of cultural fear against Islam.

In a case study of media representations of veil/hijab in Australia, Posetti (2006: 1) argues that the “hijab debate” has fueled the discourse on “clash of cultures” since the Western media portray Muslim woman either as “veiled victims” in foreign lands lacking free choice who need liberation or as “threat to the Western societies” because they prefer “traditional Islamic dress”. The “hijab debate”, according to Posetti, “has divided the feminist movement with conflicting claims that it is a symbol of both oppression and freedom of expression” (Ibid). The author blames Western media for its double standard, claiming as a democratic institution while “legitimizing and spreading racism and bias” against communities like Muslims. Identifying recent shift from politics to religion in the coverage of Islam and Muslims in Australia, the author argues that the trend follows “homogenization of diverse cultural groups, generalizations and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes” (Posetti 2006: 2).

In her research on media representations of Muslim women in U.S, Eltantawy (2007) explores a number of studies that uncover media images of Afghan women that construct the binary of the "superior West" and the inferior and backward "Islamic Other" and framing of Arab/Muslim woman either as a "passive victim" or "active political agent" (Eltantawy 2007: 10). The Western media, Eltantawy (2007) argues, remain fascinated by the hijab of Muslim women that represented as a sign of "backwardness and oppression." Though media use positive frames of Muslim women, according to Eltantawy (2007), as intelligent, vocal and bold depicting artists, creative writers, politicians, businesswomen and economists, the wide coverage of issues like female genital mutilation, honor crimes and forced marriages without proper context ultimately brings back the stereotypes of victimized and helpless Muslim/Arab woman. As the Western media fail to give as much attention to the positive exceptions among Muslim women, Eltantawy follows Muslim feminists to argue that "cultural misconceptions about Muslim women still remain" in the form of depicting all Muslim women in an undifferentiated way (Eltantawy 2007: 373).

Orientalizing Muslim Women

Tracing the "Orientalist" roots of "hijab debate" Amin-Khan (2012: 1600) argues that the "niqab" has come to represent a contradictory symbol among those who embrace it and others. Even many Muslims who wish to question the patriarchal submission underlying in the "idea of the niqab" go silent or defend the right to veil in the face of racist attacks against niqab-wearing women. Amin-Khan places the racist attacks on niqab-wearing women as the outcome of "Orientalist" construction of Islam and gender in most Western states where veil has become a convenient scapegoat (Ibid).

The slanted and gendered portrayal of the Muslim woman, according to Amin-Khan (2012: 1601), marks her "both as a target of racist vitriol and as an object to be rescued from herself and her faith". Muslim women wearing a niqab,

hijab, or chador face “Orientalist” attacks through media as well as on the street whereas many among politicians, military, police, academics, and judiciary want to “save” the Muslim woman from Muslim men and the clutches of patriarchy (Ibid).In a civilizational effort, Orientalists provoke Western society to protect “our way of life” or “our values” by framing Muslim women’s identity as inferior and representing veil as an oppressive symbol and thus establishing Western conceptions of gender, identity, and culture as “superior”. Amin-Khan (2012: 1602) underscores that the “discourse on niqab” actually exposes the xenophobia and anti-Muslim hatred, which can be termed as “xeno racism”.

Altwaiji (2014) also has pointed to the “Orientalist” theme in gender debate around Islam as Lewis (2003) asserts the superiority of the Western civilization against Islam in the form of “most profound single difference” regarding the status of women. Highlighting the deterioration of Islamic values and the rise of Western intellectualism and Enlightenment, Lewis argues that women along with unbelievers and slaves did not benefit from the general Muslim principle of legal and religious quality. And the woman in Islam, according to Lewis, is the “worst-placed of the three” (Lewis 2003: 69 cited in Altwaiji 2014). In this regard, Hasan (2012) has noted the “Orientalist” impact in the spread of “gendered Islamophobia” even in feminist discourses that represent Islam as “misogynistic and oppressive to women” (Hasan 2012: 55).

In the wake of such biased discourse on Muslim women especially on hijab/veiling Amer (2014) argues that neither veiling started with the advent of Islam nor it’s practiced only by Muslims. The history of veiling is connected to the European colonialism in Muslim lands in last centuries, according to Amer (2014: 198) its “only since then that Muslim veiling has been associated with the oppression of women and backwardness of Islam”. Doing empirical research among Muslim women across the world, Amer exposes the stereotypes claiming that “veiling is not experienced as oppression by the majority of Muslim women … and the reasons for deciding to veil is complex and numerous rather than religious prescriptions and

political imposition”(Amer 2014: 199). Rejecting stereotyped representations of hijab and niqabAmer concludes with a critical statement: “veiling is a complex human right issue whose meaning cannot be reduced to a simplistic binary of emancipation versus oppression” (Ibid).

Despite the media representations of Muslim women as “oppressed or subjugated” under Islam or by Muslim men, Eltantawy (2007) underscores certain counter-narratives by feminists who argue with empirical evidence that the “hijab empowers and elevates women’s status from a mere sexual object to an intelligent human being worth listening to” (Eltantawy 2007: 374). On the other hand, media portray Muslim women as subjugated referring to veiling, polygamy and Shari’a laws as signs of oppression without giving adequate context about Islam. Instead of going through the debates and discussions happening among Muslim feminists, the Western media construct stories that are “usually inaccurate or distorted and give readers a very thin version of the truth” (Eltantawy 2007: 376). The studies mentioned above give us the background on the frames, themes, and methods used in the construction and reproduction of biased discourse on Islam by global and national media across the world, especially in the post-9/11 context.

Media Narratives on Islam in Russia and India

Media in both Russia and India have the history of being part of a discursive process constructing and circulating narratives on socio-political issues of the era they survived. Russian and Indian media had never been an exception in responding to the national and international issues according to the policies and ideologies of the apparatuses that regulated them. In this regard, the relevant literature (Zassorin 2006; Lokshina 2006; King 2006; Malashenko 2006; Yılmaz 2013; Rajagopal 2001, 2009; Sinha 2009; Ram 2011; Lankala 2011; Mecklai 2010; Narayana and Kapur 2011) on Russian and Indian media coverage of Islam and Muslims give different aspects of media constructed images in respective national contexts.

Exploring the contemporary context of media discourses in Russia, Zassorin (2006) argues that patriotism and aggressive chauvinism propagated by the Orthodox

Church has adopted by the nationalist media as a symbol of Russian resurgence. The media discourses on "popular myth that people from the Caucasus dominate the Russian mafia have resulted in the creation of an image of an internal enemy" (Zassorin 2006: 187-200). Lokshina (2006) exposes another post-Soviet media phenomenon of hate speech in media through offensive remarks about ethnic and religious minorities especially from the Caucasus linking them with "criminality" (Lokshina 2006: 201-214). King (2006: 215-228) underlines these post-Soviet prejudices of the media arguing that there "is a split between religiously inspired and secular approaches in a wide range of competing books and Internet sites, with a general tendency to favor conspiracy theories".

Regarding the media discourse on Islam in Russia Malashenko (2006) argues that "the Islamic factor was blown out of proportion." The war in Chechnya, in the mid-1990s, was often referred to as a "conflict of civilizations" and "the fundamental concepts of Islam especially jihad were distorted and extremist ideology was extrapolated, purposely or through ignorance, to the entire Muslim tradition" (Malashenko 2006: 34). In such a context, according to Malashenko, there were virtually no shows in Russian TV "that provide an honest and truthful account of Islam outside of politics, the "conflict of civilizations," and so forth. While many Islam-related media discourse were linked to wars, terror attacks, and armed conflicts Malashenko argues that "the relatively rapid formation of Islam's negative media image in the 1990s was due to a rise in nationalism among the Muslims and the ethnic/political conflicts that erupted in the late 1980s, with the conflicting sides often invoking Islam to justify their cause" (Ibid).

However, having no similar experience in Russia, the media were highlighting the clash debate when U.S. President George W. Bush made the rhetoric of "crusade," in the wake of 9/11 (Bush 2001). Malashenko exposes Russian politicians and media outlets going to copy European and U.S. experience whereas"Islam remains terra incognita for Russian television" which resulted in either crudely apologetic or provocative Islamophobic material (Malashenko 2006:

35). Malashenko finds modern Russian literature also as a "fertile soil for cultivating a Caucasian/Muslim enemy stereotype" (2006: 35). Though he rejects the reality behind "Islamic threat" cultivated in the media, reflected in artistic forms and blown up by politicians and clerics, Malashenko (2006: 41) suggests "it has become part of the Russian mass consciousness. Ultimately this refers to the Islamic, not Islamist threat, which really exists".Yılmaz (2013) underscores that the media is also encouraging hostility since "Muslims are most often portrayed as either criminals or religious radicals waging a holy war against Christians" in Russian TV. The Russian press, on the other hand, spread "stereotypical views that migrants, especially from Central Asia and the Caucasus engaged in corruption and developing local mafias" (Yılmaz 2013: 115).

On the other hand, the media discourse on Islam in India is largely connected to what Rajagopal (2001, 2009) conceptualized "the rise of Hindu nationalism and the reshaping of the Indian public sphere." Analyzing the post-1991 Indian media context Ram (2011) noted that Indian press (both English and Hindi) followed the "propaganda model" in their coverage of Ayodhya and Babri Masjid (1991-92) issues while vernacular press went to the extent of legitimizing the Hindutva nationalist discourse during Gujarat (2002) communal riots (Ram 2011).

Lankala (2006) has pointed to the Indian media discourse around Mamdani's concept of the "good Muslim-bad Muslim" dichotomy in the reportage of violence by Indian English-language newspapers. Exposing the contradictory responses of the Indian press, Lankala argues that "the prevalent liberal consensus of Indian nationalism, of which the press is a part, is responsible for the ambiguity that characterizes mainstream responses to majoritarian violence against Muslims" (Lankala 2011: 86). Similarly, Mecklai (2010) has pointed to the politics of Muslim representation in Hindi cinema arguing that the constant differentiation between mythic (Hindu) hero and the "other" as represented in popular cinema may even work as one of the reasons of communal violence in India. Farouqi (2009) has

covered the media images of Muslims that have implications on the relations of Muslims with other communities in India.

The research by Narayana and Kapur (2011) on news coverage of Muslims in English newspapers unveiled that media play a significant role in constructing the public image of Muslims in India. The findings of the study reveal that there is a significant difference in the framing and slanting of Muslims in different English newspapers. On the other hand, Sinha (2009) suggests that the Indian media's perspective on terrorism has changed over time especially after the Mumbai terrorist attack in 2008 as it started linking the terrorist attempts and incidents in India with the "Global Jihad." However, these studies are specified in certain national contexts and lack the comparative perspective which is the main aspect of this study.

Comparative Aspect of the Study

The concept of media representation and its practice in different countries can be analyzed in the context of globalization regarding its global and local implications as McLuhan (1964), Giddens (1990), Appadurai (1990), Thompson (1995) and Rantanen (2005) argue that there is practically no globalization without media and communications. However, the theories of media globalization, as a framework, have been questioned by Hafez (2007) arguing that the means of communication, the media, remain dominated by the nation and the state and its impact is international rather than global (Hafez 2007: 3, 26). McQuial (2006) already did assert this point suggesting that media were born into an era of competing nation-states and global ideologies and little has changed in the basic dynamics although mass media have greater independence from national control (McQuail 2006: 9). Similarly, Ampuja (2012) raises questions on globalization theory criticizing the media-centrism of this theoretical paradigm. Here we can see the need of more studies integrating the globalization theories and international media studies which can bring more insight to the role of media in defining and representing socio-cultural issues of societies in postcolonial and post-Soviet contexts.

In this regard, the project of de-westernizing media studies (Curran and Park 2000) strongly criticizes the normative theories from the US and Western Europe accusing them as the product of Cold War mindset (Koltsova 2006). Rejecting the old models in the wake of fall of European communism, Hallin and Mancini (2012) reconstructed the comparative method to make the comparative studies comprehensive integrating "media systems beyond the western world." Inspired from such de-westernization project, a host of scholars (Erni and Chua 2005; McMillin 2007; Thussu 2007, 2009; Vartanova 2013; Roudakova 2013) argued for internationalizing media studies through theoretical and empirical research on postcolonial and post-Soviet media developments in the wake of globalization.

Introducing Asian media studies, Erniand Chua (2005) argue for 'decolonizing' the framework adopting the critical impulses from Third World. McMillin (2007) reminded the need for more empirical studies on media of countries like India which is still experiencing the impacts of postcolonial socio-political and cultural issues. In this regard, Vartanova(2009) argued for 'de-Sovietizing' Russian media studies since the study of changes in Russian media would be incomplete without reflection on changes in the theoretical frameworks in which contemporary Russian media studies exist and vice versa. Roudakova (2013), on the other hand, argued for a new framework to compare media and political and cultural transitions in countries like Russia, China, and Venezuela.

The post-Soviet Russian media culture has been a subject of numerous studies (Benn 1996; Koltsova 2006; White 2008; Rosenholm et al. 2010). While Rantanen (2002) brought globalization discourse to Russian media studies the de-Sovietizing project has been taken forward by Beumers et al. (2009) discussing the 'conflicting signals' in post-Soviet Russian media. However, most of these studies followed the analytical method that giving primary importance to the political system and its impact on media culture and paid the least attention to the representation of diverse identities in the post-Soviet context.

Similarly, Indian media culture has got academic attention through seminal works of Appadurai (1996) McMillin (2007) Thussu (2007) though they focused on the role of media in cultural discourses in the context of globalizing Indian Diasporas, especially in UK and US. The cultural and political aspect of media representations has become the focus of many works like Rajagopal (2001, 2009) who pointed to the rise of Hindu nationalism and the reshaping of the Indian public sphere. Jeffrey (2000) shed light to the role of capitalism and socio-cultural factors in the production and dissemination of news and views in India while Ranganathan and Rodrigues (2010) discussed the transforming culture of Indian media in a globalized world.

These studies also focused on the transformation of the media system in postcolonial India and offer space for more research on the representation of diverse identities in the new media environment. From the above literature on media theories and frameworks, we can find the gap for a comparative study of media representations of identities in the postcolonial and post-Soviet contexts of countries like India and Russia. Against the backdrop of the above discussion, a few theoretical and methodological gaps are found. Theoretically, the existing media studies are mainly focused on Western experiences and the non-western contexts in countries like Russia and India have to be taken further. Methodologically most of the available studies focused on analyzing the media discourse in a given national context having very limited references to transnational or global comparative aspects. The global-local interaction of media discourses and the diverse nature of the media representations of Islam in Russia and India are overlooked.

The study is aimed to fill the gap identified in the relevant body of literature addressing the question of representing Islam in a non-western socio-cultural context like in Russia and India. There is a substantial lack of academic engagements in international media studies focusing on the comparative aspects of socio-cultural issues in global South in the context of globalization. This study can contribute to the existing scholarship on diverse socio-cultural aspects of Eurasia at large. Empirically the study has national and international implications since the media representations

from Russia and India on Islam can reflect the national discourses in these countries which can define the relations between identities within and out of these countries. Since India and Russia are expected to represent the “Rest” in global political and cultural discourses, their media representations of Islam will be decisive in their relations with the Muslim world at large.

The scope of this study is limited to the news and views on Islam in the national print media (*Izvestia* and *The Hindu*) in Russia and India appeared during (11 September 2001to 11 September 2005) the years after 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US. The criterion for selecting 9/11 as a starting point is justified for the global impact that the discourses on Islam after 9/11, especially in the context of “war on terror,” made across the world including Russia and India. This study covers the reports on major terrorist attacks such as Moscow theater hostage (“Nord-Ost”) (2002) and Beslan Siege (2004) in Russia, the parliament attack (2001) and Akshardham temple attack (2002) in India since they were framed in the context of the global discourse on 9/11.

The Focus of the Study

As the 9/11 became a global reference point of official discourse and media narratives on terrorism and Islam at the beginning of the 21st century it could sustain for decades. The focus of the study is as follows:

- To examine the socio-cultural contexts of the contemporary media representations of Islam in Russia and India.
- To study the images of Islam represented in international and domestic reporting by Russian and Indian print media.
- To analyze the current social perceptions of Islam in Russia and India.

Research Questions

The study tries to answer following research questions:

1. How do the socio-cultural contexts of Russia and India impact on media framing of Islam as an “Other”?

2. What are the factors behind the enemy imaging of Islam in Russian and Indian print media?
3. Whether the Russian and Indian print media follow gender stereotyping in their representations of Islam?
4. Whether the global discourses on Islam influence media representations in Russia and India?
5. Whether Russian and Indian print media stand for an alternative way in the representations of Islam?
6. How the social life experiences represent Islam in Russia and India?

Hypotheses

- The contemporary socio-cultural and nationalist narratives and the post-9/11 "neo-Orientalist" discourses have an impact on the print media representations of Islam as an "Other" in Russia and India.
- The Islamophobic global discourse on "clash of civilization" is a decisive factor influencing the construction of an enemy image of Islam in the print media representations in these countries.
- The "Orientalist" gender stereotyped images of Muslim women are reproduced in the print media representations of Islam in Russia and India.

Research Methodology

Considering the above objectives this study used the qualitative method of textual analysis of the print media texts on Islam and Muslims during the period 11 September 2001- 11 September2005. The textual analysis is followed by comparative analysis and discussion on the social perceptions of Islam and Muslims using the fieldwork data collected through participatory observation and unstructured interviews.

As representation is constructed in and through discourse, Siapera (2010) points out that the ideological distortions in representations are explored through framing (Goffman, 1974, Entman, 1993) and discourse analysis (van Dijk1983,

1985, 1991, 1993; Fairclough 1992, 1995) whereas the latter method must be complemented by a more in-depth analysis that will contextualize the media in a historical and cultural context (Siapera 2010: 116-120). van Dijk also has noted that "traditional content analytical approaches in critical media studies have revealed biased, stereotypical, sexist or racist images in texts, illustrations, and photos"(van Dijk 2001: 361). However, it was the later discourse studies could go deeply into "analysis of 'images' of the Others focusing the linguistic, semiotic, and other discursive properties of the text" (Ibid).

Therefore, the critical media discourse analysis, according to van Dijk, is to "study it in its own right and as a central and manifest cultural and social product in and through which meanings and ideologies are expressed or re-produced" (van Dijk 1985: 5). The media discourse analysis exposes the relations between "text" and "context" and it will look into "all dimensions from 'surface' properties of presentation, lay-out, graphical display in printed discourse" (Ibid). Moreover, van Dijk argues that comparative analysis of media products across nations and cultures can uncover the ideologies, mode of production and reception and will "specify which thematic, stylistic, rhetorical, schematic or other features of media discourse are imposed (or not) by dominant communication monopolies (van Dijk 1985: 8).

As the techniques to analyze news or media discourse van Dijk(1983) suggests to look into different "units" of analysis like "individual words (lexical items), various structures of the clause, whole sentences, sequences of sentences (paragraphs), or whole discourses"(van Dijk,1983: 25). When the overall topic or theme of a discourse is analyzed, van Dijk argues that it would be "at the semantic level of the discourse as a whole, not at the level of individual words or sentences" (Ibid). Regarding such a macro-structural analysis of news van Dijk introduces "local" and "global" structures of discourse suggesting that "the former pertaining to sentences and immediate sentence connections and the latter to larger segments of the discourse or the discourse as a whole" (van Dijk 1983: 28). The media discourse analysis also "requires a full analysis of its various levels, units, dimensions, modes,

and social contexts" and he proposes to look into "frames" or "scripts" which are important in understanding the meaning of the texts and to uncover the political ideologies of the concerned people in news (van Dijk 1983: 30).

Following the above framework of critical media discourse analysis, the representations of Islam is analyzed looking into the recurrence of three major themes: Islam as an "Other", Islam as an enemy, and Islam as a form of gender oppression in Russian and Indian media. However, instead of full-fledged systematic discourse analysis, this study follows an "informal discourse analysis" (van Dijk 1991: 10) that is integrated with content analysis and discourse analysis of media texts. As van Dijk (1991) did in his study of racism in newspaper articles we use the method of analyzing the patterns of binary themes of "us" versus "them" and representations of positive "Self" against negative "Other".

This study also partly follows Fairclough's (1992, 1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method adopted by Kuhar (2006) in a study on media representations of minorities addressing the questions such as "who speaks, what and how they speak, whose views and interpretations are reproduced by media discourse" (Kuhar 2006: 126). Therefore, the media texts in this study are analyzed by looking into the patterns of binary constructions, generalizations, essentializing, juxtaposing, contrasting and stereotyping in the representations of Islam. The study will try to uncover the biased texts, stereotypical constructions and juxtaposed narratives answering the questions like what is being represented, how is it represented, whose interests does it reflect and at whom the representation targeted? The study also takes input from the discourse analysis approach by (Khalid 2017) that explores the "implications of adopting some modes of representation over others and uncovers the neutrality and naturalisation of meanings and identities that can be used to elevate some 'truths' over others" (Khalid 2017: 9) in an orientalized gender discourse during "war on terror".

The materials (news, views, and editorials) for analysis were collected from the electronic archives of two national dailies *Izvestia* and *The Hindu.* The reports

are selected and coded looking into the content of the stories (including headlines and blurbs) that covers any issues regarding Islam focusing on the three major themes of this study.

The selection of these dailies as samples is based on their quality, popularity and the availability of archives in electronic format and the convenience of the research project. Therefore many popular Russian tabloids and many popular Indian language dailies, especially in Hindi, were not considered as samples. *Izvestia* is a 100 years-old newspaper in the Russian language that covers both national and international news and views on politics, culture, and economy. And *The Hindu* also enjoys the history of more than a century with wide coverage of national and international news, views, and opinion articles on politics, culture, and economy.

The textual analysis of each paper is followed by comparative analysis and discussion based on responses and lived experiences collected and observed by the researcher through fieldwork in Russia and India. Such a fieldwork-based qualitative analysis is included to reflect upon the media discourses with the everyday life experiences and narratives of people from both countries regarding Islam and Muslims. The data for this discussion was collected through fieldwork during March-April 2017 across Russian cities, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kazan, and Ufa. Though the cities were randomly selected the last two cities represented Muslim populated republics. The field work in India was conducted at different occasions in 2017, not in time bound manner. The main cities covered were New Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Kochi.

The methods of data collection include informal conversation, discussion and formal interviews unstructured open-ended questions. The study used recording, note writing, telephonic interviews, e-mail communication methods to interact with experts, religious persons, students, academicians, journalists and common people.

However, the research has a few limitations including lack of access to offline archives (which may limit the comprehensive analysis of news ‘positioning’) and using translated materials than original ones (which may limit the analysis of

'syntax' of the media discourse). Still, the selection of sample dailies and their national representativeness can be justified on the particularity of this study with the limited scope of generalization which needs more comprehensive selection and comparative analysis. A comprehensive theorization of media representations is beyond the scope of this study as the research is primarily focused on production or construction of the media discourse.

Structure of the Study

This study includes six chapters in which chapter one is called introduction which introduces the theoretical framework of media representations of Islam reviewing the literature in the field and places the research problem in Russian and Indian context. The second chapter explores the historical context of the discourses on Islam and Muslims giving special attention to the period after the disintegration of Soviet Union in Russia and the post-colonial context in India. The third chapter contains the textual analyses of the othering process in media narratives on Islam in stories on international and national issues and looks into whether the Orientalizing frames of Islam are adopted in Russian and Indian media. The fourth chapter analyses the Russian and Indian media framing of Islam in an enemy image and uncovers the Islamophobic constructions in the stories in the wake of terrorist attacks in both countries. The fifth chapter examines the role of media in Russia and India in constructing gender stereotypes in their discourses on Islam. It looks into the media discourse on Muslim women, veiling/hijab and analyzes how it's depicted in connection with gender debates in Russia and India.

Along with textual analysis, 3rd, 4th and 5th chapters have comparative analysis and discussion part that includes the field observations, responses and lived experiences of people from the both Russia and India. And the concluding chapter figures out the common factors, similarities and differences in the media narratives on Islam in Russia and India. The chapter explores the interaction of the global and local media discourses on Islam in the media representations in Russia and India

explains whether Russian and Indian media follow an alternative way in the representations of Islam. The chapter also validates the hypotheses, brings major findings of the study and suggests further areas for future research.

Chapter 2

Islam in Russia and India: The Historical Background

This chapter discusses the historical background of the arrival and development of Islam in Russia and India. It also explores the socio-political factors that influenced the discourse on Islam evolved through imperial, Soviet and post-Soviet eras in Russia and medieval, colonial and post-independence periods in India. And finally, this chapter contextualizes the contemporary discourse of “othering”, “enemy imaging” and “gender stereotyping” of Islam in media discourse and representational practices in Russia and India.

Islam in Russia

The historical narratives on Islam are mostly constructed on its entry into the lands beyond the Arab world. There are different stories in both Russia and India on the arrival of Islam either in the form of invasion or invitation. Historically, Islam reached Caucasus region in the middle of the 7th century when Arabs conquered Sassanid Empire in Iran centuries before Russian expansion to this region whereas Islamic entry into Russia is widely identified in connection with Mongol invasion in the 13th century (Hunter 2004: 3).

There are also historical facts which point to the smooth entry of Islam into Russia along the banks of the Volga River when King Almush made Islam the state religion of Bulghar kingdom back in 922 A.D[1]. The Bulghar kingdom had already known for centers of Islamic civilization centuries before Tsar Ivan IV conquered it whereas Bukharaev (1996) argues that the active role of Islam in the region was not apparently seen as early as 737 A.D (Bukharaev 1996: 167). Quoting archeological

[1] The stories of King Almush and his links with Muslim world are recorded by Arab traveler Ahmed ibn Abbas ibn Fadlan. Fadlan, then the secretary of the ambassadorial delegation of the Abbasid khalifa AI-Muktadir, was invited by Almush to visit his kingdom which is now known as the Republic of Tatarstan (Bukharaev 1996: 167).

and historical sources Yemelinova (2002) uncovers the trade relations between "proto-Russians" and neighboring Muslims in "neither exclusively conflictual and nor wholly co-operative" manner even before Arab-Khazar wars and general Marvan's military victory over Khazar Khaganate in 737 A.D (Yemelinova 2003a:17).

Mohanty (2016) points to this difference in opinions among Russian specialists on Islam since one group argues that history of Islam in Russia started early in 642 A.D (Yemelinova sets this date between 685-6 AD) based on Muslims' arrival at Derbent[2] the other school set that the year 922 AD as the starting point when Islam was adopted in Bulgaria on the Volga. A popular anecdote regarding incompatibility of Islam with Russia is circulated in the form of the rejection of Islam by Kievan ruler Vladimir as the state religion for the cause of alcohol consumption in 986 A.D. Vladimir, according to Mohanty, adopted Orthodox Christianity in the interests of the elite of Kievan Rus influenced by Byzantine Empire for the independence of Rus from the East represented by Islam as well as from the West represented by Catholicism. Though the choice of Orthodox Christianity was the adoption of a middle path for Russia, it always faced the dilemma between East and West (Mohanty 2016: 2; Hunter 2004).

Yemelianova (2003) has noted that Islam and Muslims enjoyed good relations with Russians during the years of trade and commerce with Volga-Bulgar kingdom which became the center and meeting point of different cultures even resisting Rus from external threats from Mongols. However, the Mongol conquest of Kievan Russia in the 13th century and the conversion of Ozbek Khan of the "Golden

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[2] According to Artur Sulimanov of Islamic University of Ufa, "Russia has two entry points of Islam through Bulgar and Caucasus without war. During the time of Prophet Muhammad, ten years after *Hijrah*, three of his *Sahaba* (companions of Prophet) came to Bulgar (though asked for the names of *Sahaba* his colleague Damir clarified that there are different opinions on the names of those *Sahaba*). It's also said that around 30 *Sahaba* came to the city named Derbend in Caucasus. People voluntarily accepted Islam in both places whereas the kingdom of Bulgar formed as Ibn Fadlan was requested by the king of Bulgar to write to *Khalifa* to make Islam the official religion of the country and send teachers and money to build forts" (Sulimanov 2017).

Horde" to Islam largely influenced the Russian perception of Islam especially in the years after the period of so-called "Tatar yoke". Similarly, the Russian conquest of Kazan Khanate in 1552 under Ivan the Terrible followed by the destruction of Islamic domains and deportation of Muslim elites followed by forced Christianization and Russification caused the hostile image of Russia among Muslims (Yemelianova 2003a: 23-24).

Therefore, Hunter argues, Russians perceived 10th century Islam as "barbarism" that followed by people in the borderlands as opposed to the "civilization" of Slavic European people. Similarly, Muslims viewed "Rus" (Russians) as wild and primitive natives and dangerous neighbors. Thus, Islam and Muslims were seen by Russians as aggressors, conquerors and oppressors and the Tatar-Mongol rule were considered as the cause of the socio-political and economic gap between Russia and the rest of Europe (Hunter 2004: 4).

Despite cultural and commercial interactions at local levels, the history of the encounter between Russians and Muslims during the imperial era influenced their respective collective consciousness, their national identities and their store of national myth and symbols. The image of Islam and Muslims remained as "hostile Other" and as a source of actual potential threat to Russia's security and even territorial integrity. At the same time, the image of Russia in collective memories of Muslims continued as a conqueror and imperial power caused the weakening of Islam and Muslims thus Russia has been perceived as the "hostile Other". While Russians tried to define themselves and their national and cultural identity against such an "Other", Russian empire believed itself as the eastern flank of the defense of Christendom against Islam and Asian nations as Spain was in the west. (Yemelianova 2003a: 23; Hunter 2004: 5).

However, Russian relation with Islam can be perceived as very different from West European experience since the state of Muscovy was ruled by Islamized Mongols for more than two centuries whereas Russia "colonized" Muslim territories of the Volga region, the Caucasus and Central Asia for centuries. The Russian

encounter with Islam continued when Tsarist Empire challenged Turkey and Iran and absorbed frontier territories of Crimea and Caucasus (Merati 2017; Wheeler 1977:40).

Under Imperial Rule

The history of Islam, its development in Russia and its relations with the state and society took a new turn during the imperial era of Tsarina, Catherine the Great (1762–1796) who is known for her accommodative and tolerant attitude towards Islam and Muslims. Her great benevolence towards religious freedom was more of a response to a series of stormy rebellions and mutinies by the Tatar and Bashkir Muslims during so-called "Pugachev uprising" (1773-75). As a result, active Christianization campaign among Muslims was stopped and Islam was recognized as a tolerated faith and the state patronized the creation of Islamic hierarchical establishments on the eastern frontiers in Ufa (1788-89) and Crimea (1794) whereas the position of Orthodox church remained dominant (Yemelianova 2003a: 25; Hunter 2004: 9; Campbell 2015: 7).

Despite her conquests of Cremia and North Caucasus, Catherine II made the state's relation with Islam more official forming a religious body for the "Community of Muhammedan Faith" which consisted of the *mufti* and three *qadis* in the city of Orenburg. Since then the system of Muftiate[3] or the spiritual rule of the all-Russia mufti over the Muslim communities of Greater Russia started officially (Bukharaev 1996: 167). The spiritual administration was divided into four assemblies under four Mufties; Tatar mufti of Orenburg, the Crimean mufti of Bakhchisarai, and Sunni and Shi'a muftis of Transcaucasus who were directly

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[3] According to Bukharaev (1996) it was during the 200th anniversary of this 'Muftite Islam' the discourse on 'Islam in Russia' became so openly and widely circulated even by Russian media. However, the Muftiate, once spiritually governed by the Central Muslim Board in Ufa, has become the battleground for several Muslim bodies. Now the question, Bukharaev (1996) arises, is whom do Muslims consider to be their supreme spiritual leaders whereas Russian statistics lists about 3000 officially registered local Muslim communities, out of which 2200 have their own mosques and imams (Bukharaev 1996: 168).

appointed by the government (Yemelianova 2003a: 26; Hunter 2004:10). Empress Catherine developed such a religion-centered framework for its subjects to engage with the autocracy thinking that religious authority in all its varied forms could be useful for the empire. Thus instead of imposing religious uniformity on its varied subjects "the empress and her successors devised a policy of toleration to make faiths such as Islam the basic building blocks of the empire" (Crews 2006:2).

Such an affirmative policy met its target, as Crews (2006) pointed when Muslims accepted the Russian empire as the "House of Islam" (*dar al-Islam),* a place where they could legally fulfill their religious obligations. This change in the relation between the Russian state and Islam is more explicit in following oath sworn by Muslims of the Russian empire, 1809:

> "We, the below-named, promise and vow before almighty God and the great Prophet Muhammad on four of his most just books, the Gospels, the Torah, Psalms of David, and the Qur'an, that we . . . must serve as loyal subjects of his imperial majesty . . . In concluding this our oath we kiss the Qur'an of our Prophet Muhammad. Amen…" (Crews 2006: x).

Once this warm relation grew in proportion, both the empire and Muslims became mutual beneficiaries. Since Muslims became the essential intermediaries for policing, judicial, and administrative organs of the empire helping it to expand and rule at a relatively low cost in much of Eurasia, Islam could find a place in empire's social milieu (Crews 2006:3). However, it would be unfair to say that Muslims under Tsars have been obedient subjects raising no voice against Russian empire and fighting for their rights and religious identity. Many Muslims, like members of other communities, opposed tsarist occupation in the early stages. Sheik Mansur led the Naqshabandi Sufi brotherhood against Russian military while Imam Shamil waged militant resistance across North Caucasus (Hunter 2004: 11).

According to Crews (2006), this resistance gradually decreased to that extent where Muslims approached the state to settle the disputes among the community and "Muslims needed the tsarist state to live according to God's plan" (Crews 2006: 9-10). While the regime instrumentalized Islam, Muslims welcomed toleration as

means of state intervention and "captured the state, applying its instruments of coercion to the daily interpretive disputes that divided Muslim men and women" (Crews 2006: 9-10). However, Catherine's successors generally did not pursue her enlightened policies whereas they gradually tried to bring back characteristics of classical colonial empire (Hunter 2004: 13).

Though the tsarist state kept its accommodative relations with Muslims it maintained a suspicious eye on people on the borders of the empire stretching from the Crimea to the Pamirs expecting that Muslims may ally with their "former masters" in Istanbul, Tehran, and other co-religious neighbors. The question of Muslim loyalty to the Russian state thus became a prominent issue not only among the officials but also among the people having social status and power in opinion making. This phenomenon is known as "Muslim Question" or *"Musul'manskii vapors"* developed in the second half of the nineteenth century and became a highly contested issue among educated Russia whereas during the last decades of Tsarist regime it also became the subject of the state policy (Campbell 2015; Merati 2017).

According to Campbell (2015), the "Muslim Question", as articulated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries comprised of complex ideas and concerns on reimagining governing the diverse Russian empire in the context of the modernizing world. "The fundamental problem reflected in a simple question, what to do about the Muslims?" (Campbell 2015:1). The "Muslim Question" was moreover an official dilemma to face a host of problems emerged in the years following the Crimean War (1853-1856) and it reflected the growing concerns among Russians about Muslims and the unity of the Russian state and it became a complicated issue after Caucasian War (1864) and imperial conquest in Central Asia (Campbell 2015:8). As the press played a crucial role in raising articulating the "Muslim Question" Muslim intelligentsia raised the concern, "are Muslims just an alien confessional group, or fellow citizen?" whereas "Muslims were viewed as both threats and models" (Campbell 2015:12).

Modernizing Mission

Gradually the “Muslim Question” in Russian empire attracted debates and comparisons with Muslim status under other empires especially European colonialism in Muslim lands. According to Campbell, the Eurocentric colonial “Orientalist” notions as Khalid (2000) and Morrison (2008) noted, were followed by Russians in perceiving Islam and Muslims as lagging behind modernity while they were treated as the passionate confession group who can make Russia a real empire (Campbell 2015:13).

In the lines of “Orientalist” notion of the superiority of Western culture compared to the “backward Muslim East,” many educated Russians and religious critics adopted both the idea and the language of a “civilizing mission” and viewed the doctrines of Islam-especially its fatalism- as the cause of Muslim “backwardness.” Taking the challenge of “Whiteman’s burden” to civilize Muslims and make them capable citizens of modern Russia people like Nikolai Ivanovich Il’minskii (1822–1891), a Russian Orthodox missionary worked hard to formulate the imperial perceptions and policies about the Muslims of the Russian empire in the late tsarist period (Campbell 2015: 56-57; Tuna 2002: 271).

Challenging the dismissive Orthodox clerical view of Islam, Il’minskii articulated a new perspective on Islam as a dynamic spiritual force and a serious opponent to Orthodoxy and recognized the Tatar Muslim Community as a vital community of believers. Recognizing the impossibility of converting Russian Muslims into Christians he left the hope for Christianization in a distant future (Campbell 2015: 52). Though he appraised Muslim empowerments *Il’minskii* frequently warned the empire about the danger of “Tatarization” which may influence Muslim Tatars over other *inorodtsy* (nationalities). Therefore Il’minskii called for the separation of the Muslims of the empire based on their ethnolinguistic differences and opposed “Islamicization” thinking that less Islamicized would lean to the Russian culture (Tuna 2002: 272).

The debate on Russification versus Tatarization of Muslims got political strength once government's educational projects for Muslims followed such program. Russian state declared Russification (*obrusenie*) as one of the main goals of official educational policy among eastern non-Russians which led to a tense situation in the eastern part of the European Russia. People here conceived the project connected the larger "Muslim Question" that was re-conceptualized in national terms, acquiring political meaning (Campbell 2015: 63).

Muslim Awakening

During the last decades of the imperial era, the so-called "ignorant and fanatical" Muslims in Russia had "unexpectedly awakened" from the alleged "backwardness". Yemelianova (2002) argues this "awakening" or "Islamic modernism" began in late 18th century Campbell (2015) suggests that it first became known to the broader Russian reading public in the 1880s through the writings of the Crimean Tatar I. Bey Gasprinskii (1851-1914) who was popularly known as Gaspirali (Yemelianova 2003a: 33; Campbell 2015: 71).

Gaspirali was a Muslim educator and publisher whose ideas and efforts had shaped the Muslim society in Russia since the 1880s. He criticized the Russian state's relations with Muslims alleging it as a master-subject relation rather than a "fully planned and consistent policy inspired by an idea" (Tuna 2002: 282). Gaspirali asked Muslims to modernize without losing their Muslim identities and persuaded them to make contact with outside world and look beyond their local communities either Muslim or Russian. He motivated them to unite culturally that can lead to political action (Tuna 2002: 282). While he questioned Muslims in Russia for their "social and intellectual isolation, deep backwardness, dead immobility in all spheres of life and gradual pauperization" (Campbell 2015: 72) Gaspirali also engaged in ideological debates with Russian reformists and became the ideological founding father of *Jadidsm* (new method), the reformist movement among Muslims in Russia. *Jadidsm* tried to overcome the alleged backwardness of Muslims through the

synthesis of cultural Islamic values with achievements of the West. As a result, during the time Gaspirali died, the changes among Muslims of the empire appeared in the form of modernization, end of isolation to a great extent and formation of Muslim political movement (Campbell 2015: 72; Tuna 2002: 282).

The people who propagated Gaspirali's idea of *Jadidsm* popularly known as *Jadids* and they followed Russian reform-minded religious and secular clerics in criticizing the condition of contemporary Muslim society and challenged the cultural conservatism of the Muslim community that caused Muslim backwardness. With the help of new public spaces, such as periodicals, books, schools, charitable societies, theaters and later, political organizations *Jadids* tried to address this cultural stagnation of Muslims. The movement faced a backlash once the *Jadids* questioned the old elite's monopoly over cultural production in Muslim society and *Kadimists* (traditionalists) accused *Jadids* of encouraging the destruction of tradition and the debasement of Muslim morality (Yemelianova 2003a; Campbell 2015: 73). However, Hunter (2004) argues, in response to attempts like *Jadidsm* that worked to strengthen the conditions of Muslims, Russian authorities supported "conservative and obscurantist elements within the Muslim religious and educational institutions" (Hunter 2004: 15) preventing Muslims to get out of the alleged isolation and backwardness.

However, the emergence of Muslim intellectuals engaging in reformist discourse through publications also hit the broadly accepted view of a "stagnant Islamic world" (Campbell 2015: 74). And the debates between *Il'minskii's f*ollowers and the *Jadids,* during the revolution of 1905 got more strength whereas Russian reform-minded Orthodox observers felt that "Muslims seemed to be more successful in mobilizing as a religious community as compared to their Orthodox counterparts" (Campbell 2015: 221). As a result, the *Jadidsm* started by Gaspirali helped the Muslims to modernize and challenge the official attempts to keep them weak and isolated and to limit the followers of Il'minskii from propagating Russian culture into Muslim territories (Tuna 2002: 282).

The new wave of political consciousness among Muslims during the years of 1905-1914 led to the emergence of an all-Russia movement of Muslim activists formulating a unified political platform to claim greater autonomy and equality. The first Congress of Muslims of Russia in 1905 demanded political, religious and property rights and encouraged the community to unite for demanding equal rights as the citizens of Russia. The second Muslim Congress in 1906 could officially announce a political party, Ittifaq-al- Muslimin (Union of Muslims) with a charter of demands. The third Congress in 1906 made the movement more comprehensive forming commissions to pressure the state on pressing issues. Though the Congress and the party could not achieve the expected goals it succeeded in forwarding a political agenda for Muslims of Russia during the last years of empire (Yemelianova 2003a: 38; Hunter 2004: 20; Mohanty 2016).

However, Wheeler (1977) questions the exaggeration of the political and cultural power of Muslims during last years of the Tsarist regime and the beginning of the Soviet period. Notwithstanding the commonality in religious, linguistic and ethnic factors, Wheeler argues, “there was never any effective political collaboration either among these communities or with those of the border regions of neighboring Muslim countries” (Wheeler 1977: 41). Moreover, Wheeler (1977) argues that neither the Tsarist regime nor the Muslim community raised the question of self-government whereas the *Jadidsm “*was essentially a cultural rather than a political movement aiming, like Sayyid Ahmad's Aligarh movement in India in the 1870s, at modernizing Islam with a view to enabling it to defend itself against alien cultural encroachment” (Wheeler 1977: 41).

Islam in Soviet Era

Although there were promises for peace and social justice once Bolsheviks came to power in Russia, Islam and Muslims had to face various challenges in religious and cultural matters than they experienced during tsarist years. After a short period of autonomy and interdependence during the revolutionary phase of 1917, which

revived the Muslim Congress and political activism, the official control on religious activities turned out to be rigorous than the Tsarist model. Though "Muslim communism" was supported and encouraged by Bolsheviks during the initial post-revolutionary period the liberal approach towards Islam and Muslims changed under Stalin and many leaders were persecuted and religion was suppressed (Yemelianova 2003a: 43; Hunter 2004: 20).

An important aspect of discourse on Islam in Soviet Russia was "Muslim nationalism" that meant identification of Islam with nationality[4]. Despite the difference in religious belief or practice Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Tatars, and Chechens considered themselves Muslims. Once these nationals raised their voice for political aspiration Lenin tried to win their hearts through "declaration of the rights of peoples of Russia" that offered power for self-determination. Moreover, addressing diverse nationalities among Muslims Lenin declared that "your beliefs and usages, your national and cultural institutions are forever free and inviolate" (cited in Hunter 2004: 23). Lenin's declaration met its target as Muslims joined with Bolsheviks even to form a body like Muslim National Communists to participate in October revolution. But in the later years, Lenin and Bolsheviks made a "comprehensive and long-term strategy to address the Islamic challenge" with the aim of eliminating Muslim religious infrastructure and its influence over the mass (Hunter 2004: 24).

Unlike the Tsarist regime, the Soviet state forced its ideology of militant atheism on people and led antireligious campaigns that devastated Islamic institutions and personnel. Muslims were put under suspicion and were deported when Hitler's armies advanced along the southern frontiers of the Soviet Union suspecting their loyalty to the state (Bukharaev 1996: 5). Though the ideological foundations for the annihilation of religious practices were framed by Lenin and the institutional framework for regulating them was taken forward by Stalin who

[4] This nationalistic notion was too strong among these communities that fifty years of atheist teaching and propaganda proved powerless to remove it (Wheeler 1977: 47).

strongly stood for creating a "*Sovietskii Chelovek* (Soviet Man)". However, the postwar years brought a normalcy in relations between Islam and Soviet government in the form of constituting Islamic Administration which consisted of tsarist era-like spiritual boards. Religious practices including *Hajj* were partly permitted (Mohanty 2016; Hunter 2004: 29).

Therefore, the "hostile" Soviet attitude towards Islam can be understood as both historical and ideological. Ideologically, Islam was perceived as "an anti-scientific, reactionary world concept, alien and inimical to the scientific Marxist-Leninist concept" (Wheeler 1977: 40). Bolsheviks believed Islam as incompatible with the fundamental interest of the Soviet peoples and as a hindrance to the development of a Communist society. Though Soviet attitude towards Islam and Orthodoxy was much similar, the latter has always been regarded as an integral part of Russian culture whereas Islam was treated as "exotic and inimical" to that culture (Ibid: 42).

Even though Muslim republics brought success in the fields of economics, education and technical production during post-war years the Soviet propaganda machine continued to target Islamic practices. Moreover, the Soviet regime continued the built-in dislike and suspicion of Islam as being anti-Russian and an "enemy within" who may collaborate with outside movements as pan-Islam and pan-Turkism (Wheeler 1977: 44). In 1944 Stalin ordered the notorious mass deportation of people from Muslim republics for falling into the hands of German propaganda despite official Mufti's declaration of *jihad* against enemies of Russia especially Hitler and great Muslim participation in the "Great Patriotic War" (Yemelianova 2003a: 46-48).

Based on available sources it's argued that there were deliberate attempts to scuttle the progress of any movement designed to strengthen Islamic influence during Soviet years. The Soviet measures against Islamic practices can be identified in the reduction of mosques from some 45,000 to around 400, and cut of registered functionaries from about 50,000 to perhaps 8000. Similarly, all centers of religious

instructions were prohibited except the *Mir-i-Arab madrasah* (seminary) in Bukhara in which only the training of readers of the Qur'an, preachers (*khatib)* and *mu'ezzins* (who calls for prayer) were allowed. Apart from abolishing *waqfs,* other religious economic activities Soviet regime kept Muslims from the rest of *Dar ul-Islam* (Wheeler 1977: 47; Yemelianova 2003a).

Although Khrushchev adopted de-Stalinization process the antireligious campaign carried on to ensure the Sovietization of all nationalities in which Islam and Muslims were the primary targets of the cultural Russification. However, Soviet Union kept a space to accommodate Islam, even during 1960-1964 when the anti-religious campaign was in worst form, to achieve its foreign policy goals in West Asia. Brezhnev lessened the anti-religious measures and tried to refrain from alleging Islam as a backward religion. Though the "Islamic Revolution" in Iran in 1979 forced the Soviet intellectuals like Leonid Medvedko to reinterpret Lenin's views on recognizing the revolutionary role of religions in certain conditions the Afghan War affected the Soviet relations with Muslim world when strong anti-Soviet sentiment spread across the Muslim world. The two-decade-long Soviet-Afghan war and the final withdrawal of Soviet army in 1989 and power shift to the Western-supported *Mujahideen* became major factors in defining the future of Russia's relations with the Muslim world and Islam (Yemelianova 2003a: 52; Hunter 2004:324; Mohanty 2016).

Despite the reduction in numbers of mosques and other religious centers during the last decades of Soviet rule, Islam remained alive across the Union. Among a host of reasons for the survival of Islam, Hunter points to the richest religious, cultural and national symbiosis in Muslim societies. Although the Islamic tradition was mixed with pagan elements Islam worked as a unifying factor in social and political relations while the ethnic nationalism strengthened this aspect. The negligence of development in Muslim areas, the influence of Sufi tradition, the ideological support from the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were also important factors in the revival of Islam. However, Gorbachev

continued antireligious propaganda especially against Islam alleging it as the main challenge to the reforms whereas his Glasnost and Perestroika opened the way for the revival of religions including Islam (Hunter 2004: 37; Yemelianova 2003a: 56).

During Gorbachev's reform years Islam not only revived the ethnic and cultural consciousness but it brought back ideas like ethnocentric nationalism, transnationalism, pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism that were popular in revolutionary times of 1917. Since 1989, when Russian Islam completed 1000 years, Muslims across Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Dagestan retrieved Islamic institutions, publications, cultural centers and even political parties that decided the future of post-Soviet Islam(Hunter 2004:41). Despite the anti-religious campaigns and persecutions during the Soviet era, according to Yemelianova, the "Muslim Communism" kept the affinity between the *umma* and Soviet system that lasted in Muslim regions even when other parts of USSR dropped it earlier (Yemelianova 2003a: 57).

Regarding the religiosity of Muslims during Soviet era Kerimov (1996) argues that Islam has been the sole regulator of social and economic matters and of culture, morality and family life of the majority of the people across the region until "militant materialism" was forced by Soviet and official propaganda worked for replacing Islam with communist worldview. However, Socialists succeeded in attracting the mass of poor and landless peasants of Central Asia and the Volga region to challenge the prosperous Muslim leaders and clergy with various socio-economic and class slogans. From the lower class group, clerics called "Red mullahs" emerged trying to make the ideology of Islam fit the ideals of socialism (Kerimov 1996: 183).

Due to the repressive measures against clerics the 70 years of Soviet Muslims is not reflected in theological works since Islamic theology almost died during this period. However, Islam survived in the lives and minds of the people while Soviet system created an unofficial so-called "parallel" Islam. Though official data claim that the Soviet Union had become a land of mass unbelief by 1960s, quoting

sociological researchers in 1985 Kerimov argues that, 60 to 80 percent people from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Tatarstan, and Bashkortostan replied that they considered themselves Muslims (Kerimov 1996: 185)

Post-Soviet Islam

The discourse on post-Soviet Islam in Russia has different dimensions regarding the state response to Islamic revival, the Orthodox relations with Muslims and the popular debates around Islam. Yemelianova (2003b) argues that "although Russia is traditionally associated with Orthodox Christianity it is historically a home for a substantial Islamic *umma,* community" (Yemelianova 2003b:139). However, Islam and Muslims never kept singular form under any banner until Catherine the Great invented the institution of the *Muftiate* as a medium of state control of her Muslim subjects (Ibid). Sotnichenko (2009) underlines this diversity of Muslims in Russia since they lack "any universally recognized authority and there are several organizations, regional or aspiring to the center position, authorities, *sheiks* and popular homilists with their own opinions" (Sotnichenko 2009:263).

Scholars like Verkhovsky (2008) argue Islam has not become a unifying factor for many varied ethnic groups in Russia whereas Hunter (2004) argues that though Islam didn't work as a significant factor in the identity formation of Russian Muslims it contributed to the cultural and political self-assertion of Muslims. Yemelianova, on the other hand, argues that "the indigenous nature of Islam was one of the more tangible cultural factors" binding not only Muslims but also "Russian society to 'the East' and differentiating it from European societies" (Yemelianova 2003a: 56; Hunter 2004; Verkhovsky 2008: 379). Hunter argues that Islam as a religion and culture constitutes an important part of the Russian Muslim's individual and collective identities. Islam's revival in Russia and Muslims' demand for self-determination and reorganization of Islam as an integral part of Russian cultural and political landscape have influenced the domestic and foreign policy of the country (Hunter 2004: xviii).

In such a post-Soviet Russian context, Sabirova (2011) has pointed, the narratives and discourses on Islam have taken a new dimension. Since media's growing attention to religious symbols, worship and events, the construction of religious buildings and the emergence of religion into the public sphere are depicted as "discovery of religion" after the end of official Soviet atheism and a new threat and a "return to the Middle Ages" (Sabirova 2011: 327). Regarding such institutionalization of religion, especially Islam in Russia Braginskaia (2012) argues that Muslim integration in Russia needs special attention due to the diverse nature of Muslim communities and particular state approaches to ethnic and religious tolerance (Braginskaia 2012: 597).

Once Islam returned to the public space in post-Soviet Russia scholars and media initiated debates on whether it's a revival of the old religion or importing of a new religion. While many scholars define the religious developments as "revival of Islam" or "re-Islamization" Muslim leaders like Gainutdin argue that it's only "legalization of Islam" (Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 325). Demographically, based on official and semi-official sources the Muslim population in post-soviet Russia is estimated around 15-20 million constituting 12-13.8 percent of Russian population of 145 million (Hunter 2004: 44; Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 321).

And there are different versions on the strength of Russia's Muslim population since Muslim communities exist in all of the Russian Federation's 89 territorial divisions whereas they are concentrated in two regions: North Caucasus in South and Volga-Ural region. And the number of Muslim communities has been in flux and the number of local Muslim organizations is estimated around 4000 (Hunter 2004: 47; Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 327).

However, there is no unique way to identify the religion of a person in post-Soviet Russia while the religiosity is more complicated to figure out. The religion and ethnicity are more intertwined especially in the case of Muslims. Based on the religious affiliations of the Russian Muslims, five republics, Tatarstan,

Bashkortostan, Chechnya, Dagestan, and Kabardino-Balkariya are identified as the main centers of Islam in Post-Soviet Russia (Lehmann 1997: 85).

While most of the religious institutions, practices, and movements returned to Russia during the years of *perestroika*, Islam and Muslims had to face a major challenge due to internal and external factors including security of the society and the state. Internally Muslims and Islam were perceived as a "threat to the Orthodoxy" while externally Russia was surrounded by a host of Muslim countries with vulnerable socio-political conditions in the post-Soviet space. In post-Soviet conditions, Russian Islam became organizationally, intellectually and politically diverse due to the decentralization and increased contact with the Muslim world (Yemelianova 2003a: 55; Hunter 2004).

Despite certain opposition from Orthodoxy and non-Muslim population federal and republican authorities kept a liberal attitude towards the building of mosques in the first decade of Russian Federation. However, the subsequent years witnessed several oppositions against the building of mosques that were even termed as part of 'Islamophobia' by Mufti Gainutdin. The revival of Centers of Islamic Education (Madrasas) was another challenge due to lack of adequate funds, human resource, and qualified instructors. Amidst the allegations of extremism, many Islamic education centers like Russian Islamic University of Kazan and Moscow Islamic University emerged with a curriculum consisting of both secular and religious education. Similar to the Islamic institutions there was a revival in the Islamic media sphere in the form of print, radio and television broadcasts though they are in a state of flux appearing and disappearing frequently (Hunter 2004: 75; Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 332).

In the post-Soviet era, Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia and European Countries of CIS (CSBM) and Russian Council of Muftis (RCM) are the two principal Muslim organizations that compete to get the allegiance and control of the Muslim communities in Russia. Headed by Talgat Tadzhuddin, CSBM has registered its charter with Ministry of Justice and it was also renamed as Central

Spiritual Board of Muslims Obedient to God of Holy Rus in 2003 to show Muslims' commitment to Russia. RCM is headed by Mufti Ravil Gainutdin who is a prominent figure in Russia's Muslim establishment and head of the Moscow Muftiate (Hunter 2004: 57; Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 325). Mostly two variants of Islam dominated during Soviet and post-Soviet years. While the Soviet-controlled modernist Islam was officially administered by four Muslim Spiritual Directorates the Sufi version or "parallel Islam" became popular through its Sufi brotherhoods (Bennigsen and Wimbush 1985).

Most of the Russian Muslims follow the Hanafi school of Islamic Sharia whereas Shafii school is dominant in Dagestan. The other form of Islamic tradition popular in North Caucasus especially in Dagestan is the Sufism or the mystical traditions of Islam. Hunter introduces Salafiyya (Wahhabism), Jihadism (Shahidism) and Euro-Islam as recent variations. The Hanafi tradition followed by RCM and CSBM is believed as more cooperative with governments at local and federal level while Sufi brotherhoods like Naqshabandya, Qadiriya, and Shaziliya are active even politically in North Caucasus (Hunter 2004: 80; Malashenko and Nuritova 2009).

The Salafiyya or Wahhabism, a school of thought follows the teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab whereas Jihadism and Shahidism, according to Hunter, are very recent versions of extremist movements that propagate violent means to get the ends of Muslims and Islam. Euro-Islam is the modernist version that follows the erstwhile *Jadidist* philosophy which propagated reformist ideas influenced by global Muslim intellectuals like Jamaluddin al-Afghani. Tatar intellectuals who proposed this version called for "western interpretation" of Muslim culture that promotes co-existence of traditional Tatar and Islamic values with the ideas of liberalism and democracy (Hunter 2004: 92). Therefore, rather than being a "coherent homogenous group" that follow common beliefs and political preferences Russian Muslims "are highly diverse practicing various forms of Islam" (Giuliano 2005: 197).

Relations with Russian Orthodox Church

Constitutionally Russia is a secular state as the Article 14 and Article 28 of the Constitution of The Russian Federation guarantees the freedom of conscience and freedom of religion (The Constitution of The Russian Federation 1997). However, the preamble to the 1997 law provided special provisions for Russian Orthodox Church regarding its “role in Russian history, spirituality and culture” whereas Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism are considered as an “integral part of the historical heritage of the peoples of Russia” (Federal Law 1997). Subsequently, Orthodox Christianity enjoys the status of state religion in many aspects and there were provisions to introduce religious education in state schools (Schroeder and Karpov 2013; Codevilla 2008).

Regarding the relationship between Orthodox and Islam in Russia Verkhovsky (2004) argues that it has been harmonious since Moscow Patriarchate and moderately nationalist politicians followed certain Eurasianist ideas whereas “many argued that the Jews using the West were setting Islam against Orthodox Russia” (Verkhovsky 2004: 127). In the wake of religious revival in Russia, the complex relationship between Islam and Orthodoxy, according to Hunter, made an impact in many areas whereas it also brought the elements of competition and cooperation (Hunter 2004: 117).

Subsequently, there is a limited role for Islam in shaping Russia’s cultural, social, economic and political discourses while Orthodoxy keeps a dominant hand in these aspects (Hunter 2004: 123). Although the positions of Moscow Patriarchy, according to Sotnichenko (2009), are shared by 90 percent of Russian Christians the leaders never had one consolidated opinion. Considering this trend post-Soviet trend, Verkhovsky (2008) suggests that the relations between Orthodox and Muslims have turned asymmetrical as far as tolerance is concerned (Verkhovsky 2008: 379).

Orientalizing Discourse in Russia

Brower and Lazzerini (1997) argued that Russian Orientalists "viewed the colonial world through blinders created by ethnic and historical stereotypes, and by clichés built of their own sense of ethnic and national identity and their conviction of moral superiority" (Brower and Lazzerini 1997: xvii). Recognizing ethnic difference with colonized people Russian Orientalist tried to construct "cultural superiority" projecting the "self-image of the civilized nation" against "savage natives" (Brower and Lazzerini 1997: xvii). Therefore, many parallels are found between Russian cultural representations of the peoples in the empire's southern and eastern territories and French and British images of Muslim lands. With the collective portraits of peoples in the borderlands as backward and inferior Russian Orientalist sustained exotic stereotypes (Brower and Lazzerini 1997: 314).

Despite admitting certain differences in the means and methods of European and Russian Orientalism Khalid (2000) has even criticized Said for giving an exception for Russia in his critique of large Orientalism project. Knight (2000) however, defended Russian Orientalism arguing that Saidian concept of Orientalism is not fully applicable in Russian context since it's different from British and French colonial imperialism (Knight 2000: 702).

The historiography and the textbook history are major factors influenced the current discourse on Islam in Russia since most of the Russian history textbooks in 19th and 20th century propagated "Orientalist" perceptions like "incompatibility of Moslems with intellectual culture" (Gibatdinov 2007: 277). On the other hand, the concepts of "Christian", "human" and "patriotic" were equated with one another and Christian values incorporated in education whereas any Muslim influence on the Russian culture or education was considered undesirable. To avoid such an influence the imperial Russian government banned Muslims from teaching historical and philological subjects and limited them to physical and mathematical subjects only (Gibatdinov 2007: 277).

During Soviet era, historical education was under ideological control and it never allowed providing any positive image of Islam even in Tatar history. In spite of depicting the negative aspects of Muslim rule, Islam was represented as a "reactionary, counter-revolutionary ideology" that would stop the progress of Tatar and other "eastern peoples" (Gibatdinov 2007: 283). Despite the changes in socio-political conditions in the country, the official history (textbook history) in the post-Soviet period followed imperial historiography and Soviet anti-religious propaganda. In federal textbooks Muslims are stereotyped as barbarians and fanatics, and Islam as an aggressive, dangerous or false belief whereas the Orthodoxy is depicted as the official state ideology and it is connected to the processes of growing xenophobia, intolerance and Islamophobia (Gibatdinov 2007: 273).

The Orientalizing/othering, Malashenko (2006) argues, has been a trend in for years in Russia because many people perceive Islam as something "alien" to Russia on the subconscious level. The official Soviet propaganda alienated Islam by dividing it into "foreign" and "Soviet Islam". The former one represented aggressive, politicized, form of Islam often connected to *jihad* while the later represented a feudal relic observed by "backward old men" and "weak women". Depended on political situations Muslims are perceived as alien or friendly whereas Caucasus and Tatarstan were perceived as moved away from Russian orbit and shifting closer to the world of Islam. Official ideology made difference between "alien" or fundamentalist Islam and "native" or traditional Islam to promote the separation of religion from politics and resist "political Islam" (Malashenko 2006: 28-29).

Enemy Imaging Discourse in Russia

There are diverse factors influencing the discourse that construct an "enemy image" of Islam in Russia. Verkhovsky (2004) has pointed to the prevalence of "Islamophobia" and anti-Semitism among Russian Orthodox nationalists before and after September 11 suggesting that in the mid-1990s Islam had no obvious place among hostile forces in Russia (Verkhovsky 2004: 132). And the idea of a Muslim

demographic "threat", having no concrete proof to support, is widespread across political and media spheres in Russia during the last decades (Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 321).

The hostile image of Islam is also connected to transnational factors as Hahn (2007) argues that post-Soviet Russia's Muslims have rejoined global '*umma'* to be influenced by its "ideological trends and becoming potential recruits and operatives for the Islamo-fascist revolution" (Hahn 2007: ix). Finding links between Chechen resistance and "global revolutionary jihad" Hahn argues that "the Islamist enemies of Russia and the West are exactly one and the same" and "Russia is experiencing the beginning of an Islamist jihad" (Ibid: 1).

Among a few reasons of such "threat" perception towards Islam Malashenko and Nuritova (2009) highlight the role of foreign education by Muslim youth who become "missionaries of a different Islam" once they back home from Arab and Turkish universities (Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 333). The role of Wahhabis and Salafis and their political ideology of "Islamism" are considered as a major factor in the "hostile" image of Islam. Moreover, the Arab world, Afghanistan, and Muslim Europe are believed playing an important role the indoctrination of Russian Muslims with "a different and unfamiliar Islam" (Ibid 2009: 341). However, raising questions on the real potential of "Islamism" in Russia, Malashenko and Nuritova (2009) accuse the government and its secret services of creating myths which are often produced even by Islamists while "many sources are not reliable" and most of the information is "designed to hide the true state of affairs" (Malashenko and Nuritova 2009: 344).

Giuliano (2005) also uncovers such an "enemy image" even in the official discourse appeared in President Putin's misrepresentation of Russia's Muslims as "potential Islamic Fundamentalist" in the context of terrorist attacks in Beslan (2004) depicting local extremists as takers of "worldwide caliphate" project of "global jihadis" (Giuliano 2005: 196). In this regard myths about the strength of Russia's Muslims and their opposition to the Russian central state "because of its history of

Islamic repression" are highlighted whereas the fact is that Muslims in Russia "largely opposed radical Islamic movements" (Giuliano 2005: 198). The political mobilizations of radical Wahhabis against Russian central state are also misrepresented as "threat' when "most Muslims in Russia do not share political goals or attitudes with Muslims living beyond the borders of their own republics" (Giuliano 2005: 215).

Orthodox nationalism, according to Verkhovsky, is a major factor in the construction of Islam as a "hostile other" because Islam is considered as a tool in the hands of the Antichrist, West, and Jews. While "radical Islamism" is perceived as a synthesis of western technology and eastern passion many believe that there is a Judo-western strategy to make Islam the enemy of Orthodoxy (Verkhovsky 2004: 132). The nationalists' view of Islam, however, did not echo the official stand of the Moscow Patriarchate, which has been in friendly relations with official Islamic bodies in Russia. Rejecting the concept of "Islamic extremism" the Patriarch warned the Christians in 1999 that such a term is not different from referring Orthodoxy or Christianity as "Orthodox" or "Christian extremism" (Verkhovsky 2004: 133).

However, there are two contrasting views among Russian nationalists on Islam as one group agrees that Islam cannot be hostile to Russia because Russian empire was based not only on Orthodoxy but on Islam also whereas another fraction asserts that Russian kingdom always should be Orthodox and all other faiths can be tolerated if they agree with the dominance of Orthodoxy (Verkhovsky 2004: 137). Although the 9/11 attack on the U. S evoked the debate of on the place of Russia in the debate of "the clash of civilizations" Russian nationalists treated Islam as one of "the combined enemies" especially after the hostage-taking incident in Moscow in October 2002 (Verkhovsky 2004: 143).

The "enemy image" of Islam in Russia is also the result of ethnophobia as Malashenko (2006) noted citing different polls conducted in 2002 that showed growing xenophobia among Russians against the people from the North Caucasus, Central Asia, and Arab countries (Malashenko 2006: 31). The erstwhile anti-Semitic

xenophobia trend is now shifting because Orthodox nationalists target Muslims as threat and Islam as the more alien religion toward Russian Christian Orthodoxy (Malashenko 2006: 32). Regarding the ethnophobia, Foxall (2010) also argued that Russians see Chechens as "the embodiment of all evil" while media and academia create a binary between political (*Rossiya*) and ethnic (*Russiya*) (Foxall 2010: 685).

The influx of Muslim migrants from former Soviet states and Muslim republics is also a defining factor in the growing concerns on demographic threat attributed to Islam. The post-Soviet mobility across Russia often causes political conflicts over issues of governance and rights of Muslim communities to build and develop Islamic institutions including mosques which depicted as part of a large design to increase Muslim migration to different regions of Russia that may overwhelm its Christian identity. As a result, there is a widespread apprehension that "Islam in Russia is expanding, demographically, geographically and culturally and is becoming more dominated by migrants and more globalized" (Agadjanian 2000: 97).

Due to this "enemy image" of Islam the dominant trend in Russia has been imposing greater government control over Muslims' religious and cultural life and limiting the cultural and political autonomy and growing anti-Muslim sentiments-Islamophobia (Hunter, 2004: 6) However, Merati (2017) has pointed to the diverse perceptions currently existing on Islam in Russia which question the Western notion of "Islamic factor" as a "threat" rather than an "asset".

Discourse on Muslim Women in Russia

The stereotypical "oppressed" images of Muslim women, the debates on status, rights and dress code of women in Islam have been a factor in the discourses on Islam in Russia across imperial, Soviet and post-Soviet years. Regarding the imperial attempts to civilize Muslim women, Azade-Ayse Rorlich, argues that the imperial government "adopted a 'feminist' stand in its dedication to the emancipation of Muslim women" (cited in Gradskova 2012: 61). At the same time, the government followed "anti-feminist" policies regarding the demands of Russian women for

emancipation in major issues ranging from education to family law and citizen franchise (cited in Gradskova 2012: 61).

The debate on Muslim women intensified during Soviet era with the First Muslim Women's Congress organized in Kazan in April 1917 prior to the Bolshevik Revolution. The Congress attended by Muslim women across the empire adopted radical statements and resolutions regarding rights of women, gender equality, political rights, right to divorce and to marriage by consent and the prohibition of the bride price, which were later supported by the All-Russian Muslim Congress in Moscow (Gradskova 2012: 63). However, the imperial Russian textbooks reinforced the "Orientalist" stereotypes of Muslim women depicting Tatar women as "isolated, motionless, inactive and lazy" and moreover as a creature of the lowest breed who does not even know what will happen to her in the after-life (Gibatdinov 2007: 279).

The role of Muslim women in the survival of religious traditions is widely accepted as many of them even enjoyed the status of *abystay* (female clergy) as part of the Tatar Islamic tradition. Though it faced challenges from Salafism, *abystay* that originally referred to the mullah's wife, the tradition supported Muslim women as teachers of Islamic texts and practices. Thus it can be perceived that knowledge about Islam survived in post-Soviet space mainly through fragmented ideas prevailed at the level of family traditions among "ethnic" Muslims in which women had a great role. In recent years with the help of ethnic nationalist movements women leaders like Fauziya Bairamova, emerged as the leader of a radical wing in the Party of Tatar National Independence Ittifaq. Despite her radical Islamist rhetoric, Bairamova shows the example of how Muslim women are getting out of their stereotyped images and becoming a leading voice of ethnic nationalist movements (Silantyev 2005; Gradskova 2012).

Regarding the debate on hijab Sabirova (2011) argues that presence of religion is no longer shocking in post-Soviet Russia since "lady in headscarf" has become part of the discursive process. Questioning the stereotyped images of practicing Muslim woman Sabirova asserts that "the appearance of a new generation

of women in headscarves in states traditionally dominated by Islam in Central Asia and the Caucasus, is by contrast considered in the context of post-soviet transformations" (Sabirova 2011: 340). Thus the new Islam of "practicing Muslim women" is questioned by even their parents, the state, and contemporaries while Islamized young women perceive it "as a kind of challenge to their parents' 'secular Islam', and a statement of religious service in accordance with public discourses encouraging reversion to religion" (Ibid).

Meanwhile, the reports of violent attack especially in Chechnya on women who failed to follow "dress code" have reproduced debate regarding the forced practice of hijab. Human Rights Watch report argues that dozens of women were intimidated or attacked even by officials across Grozny, for not wearing a headscarf or for not dressing allegedly in a modest way. The report also criticizes the Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrov for his "virtue campaign" for women started in 2006 that compels the women to adhere to "modesty laws" and to follow men's orders (Human Rights Watch 2011). Eventually, the discourse on Muslim women in Russia is influenced by "Orientalist" tropes, narratives of religious and political assertion and hijab controversy.

Historical Background of Islam in India

The historical narratives on Islam and Muslims in India have different dimensions in terms of its origin and relations with other communities before and after Independence and the contemporary status as the largest minority facing different kinds of identity questions. Similar to the Russian discourse on arrival of Islam, there are different narratives on the emergence of Islam and Muslim communities in India. Historical roots of Islam in India can be traced to the trade relations between Malabar in Kerala and Arabs from Muscat and Ormuz. The influence of Islam had felt in Kerala early in the 7th century when it spread over Arabia. Based on the archeological evidence it's argued that Islam began to spread in the Malabar both by

conversion including the last Perumal King and by the settlement of Arab traders (Panikkar 1989; Malik 2008; Schimmel 1980).

However, the history of the natural entry of Islam into India through travelers and trade relations is often eclipsed by the narratives on invasions by Muslims started by Muhammed bin al-Qasim in 711-712[5]. Though Islam and Muslims had so well established in Malabar even controlling the maritime trade across Indian Ocean centuries back, the history of warriors such as Mahmud of Ghazni (998-1030), Mohammed Ghauri (1149-1206) and Muhammad Babur (1483-1530) prevails in the historical narratives on Indian Islam. The Orientalist historians like James Mill (1826) divided Indian history into Hindu, Muslim and British eras, and the colonial masters played a great role in the development of such a distorted history of Islamic origin in India (Mukhia 1983: 61). While the colonial historiography had the impact of the colonial interest of the European forces and their rivalry with Arab and Muslim rulers, the local historians and political elites followed the same regarding the narratives on Muslim conquest over Hindu rulers (Chatterjee 1992; Eaton 2000).

The dominant pattern of historical interpretation of Islamic origin in the subcontinent thus kept the discourse on Islam in India in an "Orientalist" method constructed by "European Islamicists"[6] such as Sir William Muir (1898). This Mill and Muir method of historiography has been reflected in the colonial and post-independence narratives on Muslim identity and nationality. As Partha Chatterjee (1992) argued the 19th century "nationalist histories of India" that stereotyped Muslims as "fanatical, bigoted, warlike, dissolute, and cruel" was the reproduction of the European discourse under British colonial rule (Chatterjee 1992: 141). Therefore, to uncover the roots of current discourse we have to trace the historical developments regarding the Islamic and Muslim identity formation and its relations with the other identities especially the Hindus in India. The historical development of

[5] Though AD 712 is generally marked as the year of Bin Kasim's entry into Sind, Eaton (2000) argues that Muslim navies sailed to the coasts of western India and conquered Sind in 711.

[6] The history of Muslim invasions were mainly dramatized by Sir William Muir, a senior British official to India and a Christian missionary activist, through his widely circulated book, *The Caliphate, Its Rise, Decline and Fall(1898)*.

the question of Islam or Muslims in India is analyzed in a chronological pattern covering pre-colonial, colonial and the post-independence years.

Development of Islam in Pre-colonial Era

Regarding the entry of Islam and the emergence of Muslim communities in India Eaton (2000) argues that non-Muslims found it easier to accept Islam which carried cultural affinities with natives whereas Muslims practiced a cultural synthesis of Arab and local cultures across Malabar coast and beyond (Eaton 2000: 25). While the narrative on the entry of Islam into Indian subcontinent in the form of invasion via Sind is generally highlighted Schimmel (1980) has noted the cultural exchange between Muslims and the natives across north and south including Sind during the early years of Muslim arrival (Schimmel 1980: 5).

Historically, Muslim warriors marched to India from 711 A.D which also led to the establishment of Muslim kingdoms across India. Started by Arabs and continued by Turks and Mongols, the series of invasion of the Indian subcontinent has been depicted as Islamic invasion into the lands of Hinduism whereas a large part of Sind had adopted Buddhism. Sind was annexed to the vast Abbasid Empire spread across Europe and Asia and North Africa but the historic role of this conquest is noted by Eaton (2000) as the opening point for Indian agricultural treasures followed by its culture and knowledge to the larger world (Eaton 2000: 35).

Countering the popular notions on "Islamic invasion" Eaton (2000) finds the undercurrents behind the development of Muslim communities in across eastern Bengal, western Punjab, Sind and southern Malabar where Islam and local cultures synchronized through sedentary agriculture and trade that ended in mass conversions (Eaton 2000: 36). The intellectual and social elements prevailed in Arab rule over Sind when Muslims could connect the Hindu-Buddhist thoughts with Greek, Persian and Arab intellectual traditions while socially Islam was assimilating to the Indian culture (Schimmel 1980: 6).

Among the stories of "Islamic invasion" that could leave strong imprints in the contemporary discourse on Islam, the temple desecration by Muslim rulers has got primary attention in "Orientalist" and nationalist histories. Due to its religious validity, the temple desecration often used as the main departure point of projecting Islam and Muslim identity completely hostile to the native Hindu culture and practice (Engineer 1985: 205).

Based on diverse vernacular sources and oral histories of various so-called desecrated temples, Eaton (2000) argues that many of the temple desecration stories are based on memories of "distant past" depicted in Indo-Muslim literary sources. Actually, the early instances of temple desecrations started in 986 by Persianized Turk ruler Ghaznavid Sultan Sabuktgin (977-97) and followed by his son Mahmud of Ghazni (998-1030) can be perceived as their plundering for economic purpose rather than religious needs because they had never settled in India and occasionally carried attacks from Afghanistan. Mahmud's raids to Muslim cities in Iran and plundering millions of dinars and jewels also asserts this factor that his raid in India including Somnath temple, where a huge treasury of wealth was kept, was hardly motivated by religion[7]. Though the later Ghaznavids continued the raids to cities like Benaras to fund their military operations, their successors Seljuqs and Ghurids who settled in India continued selective temple desecration mainly to "delegitimize and extirpate defeated Indian ruling houses" (Eaton 2000: 100).

Similarly, the abandoning of famous temples of Khajuraho by both Candella royal patrons and Turkish army assures that the main motives of raids were destabilizing the economic and political relevance of temples rather than the desecration of religious doctrines. According to Eaton, since temples were natural sites for the contestation of kingly authority Turkish invaders to establish their own rule followed and continued established pattern often converting such sites to mosques to establish new sovereignty (Eaton 2000: 112).

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[7] Marshal Hodgson's three-volume, *The Venture of Islam* (1974) played a big role in attributing the religious factor behind the Muslim invasions.

However, the narratives of temple desecration by Muslim rulers have a long-lasting impact, for example, the destruction of Babri Masjid on the claim that it was built on Rama's birthplace, in India's political and cultural discourse regarding Islam. With the help of "Orientalist tropes" against Muslim rulers and Islam half-baked narratives of communally biased historians were widely used to construct a "hostile other" in India (Thapar et al. 1970). On the other hand, Persian sources in Medieval India were filled with religious rhetoric often used by historians and scholars to legitimize the actions of Muslim rulers[8]. The use of religious doctrines like *"Darul Islam"* (House of Islam) and *"Darul Harb"* (House of War) for legitimizing the Muslim sultanates and kingdoms also influenced the later discourse on Muslim relations with natives (Eaton 2000; Chatterjee 1992).

The rivalry between various Muslim rulers, Nawabs and Sultans and the valiant wars among Muslim Kingdoms show their dynastic interests than religious motives to build and enhance Islamic rule in India. During the days of "Sultanates", the *Sufi* and *Salafi* traditions of *Shaikhs* and *Ulamas* play a role in constructing the discourse on Islam and its relations with the other communities, mainly Hindus in Indian context before the European empires establish their colonial power. While the rulers like Akbar and Aurangzeb used the religious institutions and scholars to legitimize their reign and consolidate their regime the platform was set for a rift among the elites as well as the mass in a diverse religious context of India. In the later years, the *Bhakti* and *Shudhi* movements among Hindus and *Mujahid* and *Farzi* movements among Muslims were influential factors in the debates of assimilation and alienation between religious communities and their practice (Khan 1975: 14; Jalal 2008).

The final years of Mughal Empire were ripe to develop the gap between two communities as Shivaji raised the valor of "Hindu cause" to save Benaras and other holy places from "Muslim yoke". While fighting for the survival, arousing the

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[8] Eight volumes of *History of India as Told by its Own Historians* edited by Sir Henry M. Elliot and John Dowson (1849) helped a lot in the construction of a hostile image of Indo-Muslim regimes by Sita Ram Goel in his two volumes, *Hindu Temples: What Happened to Them* (1990 and 1991).

religious sentiments among the ruling elites was the last resort of Mughals who were challenged by Muslim nawabs, Hindu rajas, and East India company troops. Thus the developments before the battle of Plassey in 1757 and events during a century to the so-called First War of Independence in 1857 helped British colonial regime to consolidate its power through the construction of a "divisive" discourse among Hindu and Muslim nobility (Ashraf 1975).

Islam under Colonial Rule

Though Muslims from Arabia, Central Asia, and Afghanistan ruled over India for centuries the medieval era is not generally known for colonization. The centuries-old travel and trade between Arabs and Chinese and even Russians had made India the meeting point of global trade and cultural exchange. Chinese captain Cheng Ho (1406-33) Central Asian diplomat Abdul Razzaq (1442) and Russian merchant Afanasy Nikitin (1470) had reached Calicut years before Columbus mistakenly started his voyage to India and decades before Vasco da Gama declared the "great European discovery" of India in 1498. While Cheng Ho gave up his fleet of 317 ships and traded for two decades, Razzaq did his diplomatic duties for the prince of Herat and Nikitin became a legendary traveler the latecomers Gama and his follower Pedro Cabral (1500) used their military power to destroy the Calicut port and monopolize the Indian Ocean trade. As the European forces targeted Arab traders and made every effort[9] to distance Hindu King Samudri Raja of Calicut from Muslim advisors it marked the beginning of an era of the divisive policy of colonialism in India (Eaton 2000: 76-93; Panikkar 1960).

The later European forces like French, Dutch and British followed the Portuguese method of colonizing Indian subcontinent through military and technological power. The entry of East India Company (1600) as a commercial and industrial enterprise later turned to the colossal colonization of India that ultimately became a "jewel in the crown" of Queen Victoria from world's "Honey Jar". The

[9] Eaton (2000) has given the account of Gama's wrong perception on Hindus of the city as Christians and Siva temple as Church that inspired him to talk to King Samudri thinking him a fellow Christian.

British used every means including military coups and communal riots for the consolidation of power and trade across India which explicitly institutionalized after Battle of Plassey (1757). Though the communal elements were prevalent in the discourses and practices of Muslims and Hindus before colonial rule the institutionalized discourse of "othering" that led to "the sort of civilizational divide between India's 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' periods first postulated in British colonial historiography and subsequently replicated in both Pakistani and Hindu nationalist schools"(Eaton 2000: 127).

Reformist/Revival Movements

The early British rule had a seminal impact on socio-political order with the decline of the erstwhile nobility among Muslims followed by the emergence of new elite class among Hindus with help of colonial administration. This phenomenon also led to the formations of reformist/revival movements among Hindus and Muslims which asserted both religious and social identity and mobility of their respective communities resulting in a great gulf between them (Ahmad 2004; Jaffrelot 2007). The reformist/revival movements among Muslims emerged in the northern and eastern regions which were strong centers of Muslim power in numerical as well as in administrative terms. The defeat in Plassey, the disintegration of Mughal rule and the defeats of Awadh was followed by domestic challenges from Sikhs, Rohillas, Marathas, and Gujars aroused the Muslim consciousness of being threatened at every space (Ahmad 2004).

To cope to such a chaotic situation two major Muslim reformist/revivalist movements namely *Farzi/Farazi* and *Mujahideen* emerged in Bengal and Northern Province to purify Islamic practices among Muslims and to fight against local and foreign oppressors of the peasant community. Though the term *Farzi* insisted on the revival of religious practices, the teachings of Haji Shariat Allah (1781-1840), the founder of the movement, challenged colonial rule declaring British India a *Dar-ul-Harb* (abode of war). The movement emerged in response to the colonial act of

Permanent Settlement in 1793 which empowered Hindu *zamindars* against Muslim peasantry. Following his father's doctrines, Dudu Mian led the *Farazis* to fight against both European Indigo planters and Hindu landlords who levied Muslims even for temple functions. Having doctrinal differences with *Farazis* another movement (1827-31) emerged among the peasants of Bengal under Titu Mian which followed the more militant way to challenge colonial planters and Hindu *zamindari* (Ahmad 2004: 27). Engineer cites different historians to assert that despite its fanatic nature *Farazi* movement organized cultivators from both Hindu and Muslim community and "broke into the houses of Hindu and Muslim landholders with perfect impartiality" whereas *Farazis* are also labeled as "Red Republicans" (Engineer 1985: 11).

The *Mujahideen* movement led by Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi and members of declining nobility legitimized its name waging armed struggles from Swat valley during 1824-31 against Sikhs who challenged Mughal Empire. Following the teachings of Shah Abdul Aziz, son of Shah Waliullah, who declared British India a *Dar-ul-Harb* (the abode of war) Ahmad Barelwi also challenged the British. Arousing Islamic spirit among Muslims Barelwi traveled across north India and recruited former members of Mughal military and masses to fight against Sikhs and British until he was killed in Balakot along with top leaders of the movement (Ahmad 2004: 30; Jalal 2008: 57).

Still, the movement was carried forward by Wilayat Ali and Enayat Ali, brothers connected to former ruling family in Bihar, amidst British crackdown labeling *Mujahideen* as "Wahabbis"[10] and punishing them for treason. Despite the absence of large militant struggles *Mujahideen* movement survived as a revivalist form solidifying Muslim identity and remained a potential challenge to colonial

[10] Ahmad categorically rejects Hunter (1969) and Robbinson (1974) for their misinterpretation of *Farzi/Mujahideen* movements as "Indian *Wahabism*". He asserts that though both leaders of *Farzi/Mujahideen* had been to *Makka* and may be influenced by *"Whabism"* it doesn't mean that Indian movements were offshoots of Arabian *"Whabism"*. Citing A.R Desai and Thara Chand, Engineer(1985) also dismiss the *"wahabi"* connection of these movements. Engineer also points to similar militant movements led by Muslims across colonies.

oppression till to 1920s (Ahmed 2004: 30). Both these movements were highly influenced by the reformist ideas of Ahmad Sirhindi, who challenged Akbar's religious experiments with *din-e ilahi* and started the debate on *Sufi* philosophical concepts of *wahdat al-wajud* and *wahdat al-shuhud*. Being part of *Naqshbandi* order Sirhindi questioned the *Dargah* and *Qawali* practices of *Chishtiyya* order which enjoyed the support of Muslim ruling class. It was from this context Shah Waliullah emerged as a revivalist scholar narrowing the gap between two *Sufi* orders and inspiring *jihad* or fight against attacks on *Sharia* under Mughal and British rule. His son Shah Abdul Aziz Barelvi took forward Waliullah's revivalist doctrines which were followed by Sayyed Ahmad Shahid Barelwi in his *Mujahideen* movement (Umashankar 2012: 100).

During this revival era (1820 and 1920) *Darul- Uloom* in Deoband turned as the main center of Islamic education and theological discourses on Islam in South Asia from which the later revival movements like *Tablighi Jama'at*, *Ahle-Hadith* emerged. On the other hand, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh (established in 1875 and later became Aligarh Muslim University in 1922) represented the modernist school of Islam in India challenging the Orthodoxy and following British models of education and reforms. The reformist/revival movements encouraged both political and social assertion of Muslim identity vis-à-vis Hindu reformist/revivalist movements and British administrative measures. Actually, the Hindu reformist/revivalist movements emerged as a reaction to the socio-cultural domination of Europeans over the upper-caste elite Hindu intelligentsia who felt the Western ideals as a challenge to the Hindu traditions (Engineer 1985; Jaffrelot 2007). However, Jaffrelot (2007) argued that the Hindu reformist movements under various leaders and organizations revived the notion of Vedic "golden age" and consolidated the Hindu identity that resulted in the emergence of "Hindutva" that promoted the idea of "Hindu-Hindi-Hindustan" in which Islam and Muslims became the "threatening Other" (Jaffrelot 2007: 10-16).

The "Muslim Problem" during 1857 and After

Although the reformist/revival movements raised the identity consciousness among Muslims and Hindus, there were many meeting points for both communities in their fight against the colonial regime. While 1857 *sepoy* revolt or the first war of independence brought a friendly atmosphere when Muslim rulers put a ban on cow slaughter and Hindu rajas declared Friday as a holiday, it was cunningly destructed by colonial regime to consolidate its power in India. Unlike in the former struggles, which were mainly fought by declining nobility, 1857 revolt was marked by the mass participation from both communities. However, the divisive tendencies among the dominant sections of both communities in post-1857 context resulted in a tug of war for the share in governance under British rule that caused to the rise of so-called "Muslim problem". This British constructed phenomenon namely "Muslim problem" has been the influential element in most of the discourses on Islam and Muslims in the later decades (Engineer 1985; Imam 1975; Ashraf 1975).

While the 1857 uprising was a means to become part of the colonial government and to sustain their nobility for the ruling/dominant class among Muslims and Hindus it largely affected the masses in socio-economic and political terms. The later decades witnessed a more hectic fight between the nobility mobilizing the masses in the religious and community issues for securing their share in power. In the case of Muslims, the mutiny and disappearance of Mughal rule raised questions on their survival as an "Other" against British and newly emerged Hindu ruling class that forced them to fight against colonialism at every cost. While the traditional *Ulama* under Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi joined hands with newly formed Indian National Congress (1885) to *jihad* or fight against British Sir Syed Ahmad Khan founded Patriotic Association in 1888 to wean Muslims away from the Congress (Engineer 1985: 17; Ashraf 1975: 25).

This clash of interests, known as tradition versus modernity fight, between Aligarh and Daobend schools of thought had lasting influence in the socio-political development of Muslims, especially in north India. While the *ulama* insisted the

mass on rejecting colonial benefits including British education the feudal, *zamindari* and *jagirdari* class among Muslims collaborated with British and fought for their share with Hindu ruling classes who enjoyed the benefits of the decline of Muslim rule and change of administrative language and methods. British administration exploited this rift between the elite class of both communities and added fire into the communal tensions that made the "Muslim Problem" so hot to strengthen the separate nationalist tendencies among Hindus and Muslims. Though this clash had nothing to do with the interest of common mass in both communities the elites played with religious and community card to continue their aristocratic and feudal life (Engineer 1985; Imam 1975; Ashraf 1975).

Identity Mobilizations and Hindu Muslim Relations

The formation of Indian National Congress in 1885 was a turning point in the mobilization of nationalist movement for the independence of India whereas it opened the way for a common platform for Hindu and Muslim elites to champion their cause at the cost of the interest of the mass. Though Congress known as the unifying factor of Hindus and Muslims the personal interests of the leaders from both sides weakened its strength and gave way to form communally motivated blocks under Hindu Maha Sabha and Muslim League. While Hindu Maha Sabha leaders got upper hand in the Congress and stood for Hindu domination in the representative assemblies Muslim League voiced for separate electorates that ultimately led to the two nation theories resulting in the partition of the subcontinent in the names of religious identities and nationalities (Engineer 1985; Imam 1975; Ashraf 1975).

Though *Khilafat* and noncooperation movements under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the 1920s could bring back the freedom struggle into a joint fight between Hindus and Muslims the later years witnessed the clash for separate nations among the elites of both communities. While Hindu Maha Sabha rejected all possibilities of reconciliation forwarded by Nehru Committee the elitist leaders of Muslim League were adamant on leaving any space for rejecting the two nation

theory. All these socio-political developments before and after 1947 set the tone of relations between Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent which ultimately constructed a discourse of "othering" each other communities in the subcontinent at large (Engineer 1985; Imam 1975; Ashraf 1975).

Post-Partition Developments

Despite their decision not to go to Pakistan and continue their patriotic commitments, Muslims who stayed back in India had to face hatred being treated as responsible for the partition. Unlike many believed that partition would be a "solution" for the communal clash between Hindus and Muslims, the post-partition era witnessed the churning of a new trend that "othering" the Muslims either as unpatriotic loyal to Pakistan or as un-assimilative to the majoritarian cultural ethos. The concept of "*Millat-e-Islamiya"* (unity of Muslims irrespective of the difference in nationalities) and Muslim's concerns on other Islamic nations and holy shrines helped Hindus to raise questions on Muslims' loyalty to India (Enginner 1985: 143). Ultimately, the partition brought back graver situation than 1857 to the Muslims because at one hand they lacked eminent leadership and on the other hand leaders from other community feared the loss of support from majority if they endorse "Muslim cause" (Noorani 2003: 2).

The assassination of Gandhi at the cost of his efforts for reconciliation between two communities exemplified the undercurrent of strong hatred towards any concessions to an insecure minority. The divide between Jawaharlal Nehru camp and Sardar Patel mainly on the Hindu-Muslim relations and the later political and cultural assertion of the "Hindutva" nationalist ideology helped the alienation of Muslims from the national concept (Noorani 2003:10). The "communalization" of the electoral politics in the 1970s and 1980s, as seen in the Shah Bano case and the opening of Babri Masjid for puja, left strong imprints on the future course of Hindu-Muslim relations. The "Ramajanmabhoomi movement" and "Rathyathras" for proposed "Ram Mandir" escalated the divide between Hindus and Muslims in the

early 1990s that become unbridgeable with the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 and widened with violent episodes of Bombay (1993) and Gujarat (2002) (Noorani 2003: 14).

Regarding such a post-independence situation Aalam (2007) argued that though Muslims in India are historically known for their “shared history and culture” they are frequently blamed for “maintaining a separate and distinct identity” against the “majoritarian” concept of “national identity” or “notion of ‘Hindu’ nation” (Alam 2007: 245). However, the diversity of Indian Islam and is represented in different forms such as Sunni/Shia, Hanafi and Shafi schools, different Sufi orders, hundreds of *madrasas*, universities, Islamic organizations and political parties (Alam 2007: 247). Despite such diversities, according to Alam (2007), any demand of “politics of self-representation” is depicted as “homogenized” Muslim demand for two nations or emergence of “political Islam” that leads to the othering of entire community at the cost of a minority (Alam 2007: 256).

Moreover, the post-independence political discourse around Islam and Muslim identity in India is defined by a couple of myths “the existence of a single homogeneous, monolithic Muslim society in India” and “its historical tradition of a politically superior existence” (Azam 1976:32). While Islam (2012) addresses such a “Muslim question” in post-colonial India as the question of identity within the specific political context of the nation-state Bandukwala (2006) suggests that the complex past present and future of Indian Muslims can be defined only through the relations between two major religions Islam and Hinduism (Bandukwala 2006: 1341).

Othering/Orientalizing Discourse in India

Apart from the general perceptions of Islam and Muslims, the complex socio-political context of India has witnessed specifically othering/orientalizing process in historical narratives and political discourse. In a critique of Orientalism in India Jouhki (2011) uncovers how Anglo-Saxon Indo-Orientalism constructed thesis of “religiously, philosophically and morally glorious Hindu past” or the image of “the

Aryan (Western) and Vedic past destroyed by foreign Muslim invasion" (Jouhki 2011: 10). The concept of re-orientalism by Lau (2009) also critiques such cultural productions that depict stereotyped images of the "oriental within" especially in the South Asian context. In this regard Hasan (1994) exposes the prevalent assumption on Muslims in India suggesting that unlike other religious groups, their "other asset is that they constitute a community, ordered, unified and homogeneous and they are easily placed into 'fundamentalist', 'secular' and 'liberal' categories especially after Babri Masjid demolition" (Hasan 1994: 443).

Questioning this identical approach towards minorities in India Engineer (1999) has noted that in spite of blatantly communal periodicals "scholars and intellectuals of liberal-secular hue have contributed to the construction of the minority communities, especially the Muslims and the Christians, as homogeneous, orthodox-sectarian, anti-national and rabid evangelical, notwithstanding ample evidence to the contrary" (Engineer, 1999: 2134). Mehta (2002) also has exposed this prevalent "othering" practice in India arguing that "the fact is that Indian politics acknowledged Muslims, in so far as it did, only as a supplicant minority, not as full citizens" (Mehta 17 May 2002).

Alam (2008) asserts this point suggesting that Muslims are regarded as the "Other" of the nation even though the new politics among Muslims as part of a process of secularization is radically different from the pre-independence separatist trends and there is nothing in common in the nature and content of Muslim politics then and now (Alam 2008: 45). The textbook history is a major factor in the construction of "Other" image of Islam and Muslims during colonial and post-colonial periods. To meet colonial regime's economic and political ends British Orientalists exploited their mastery in the educational system to develop historical narratives that could accentuate Hindu-Muslim differences. Historical narratives, especially on medieval period were used systematically to inject communal poison to the students and people beyond academia. Reading colonial history books Muslims enjoyed the pride of being descendants of medieval kings whereas Hindus believed

the stories of invasions and enslavement of their ancestors. The distorted factors about Muslim invasions and temple desecrations were exploited by vested interest groups in both communities to assert their legitimacy to construct a "hostile other" (Engineer 1985: 205).

During their turn in power, the "Hindutva" forces followed the British method using the textbooks and educational institutions as the channel to construct anti-Muslim narratives. During Janata and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) governments, they wanted changes across academic and cultural institutions and reframe official curriculum removing or banning certain textbooks prepared by historians like Romila Thapar, Bipin Chandra, and R.S Sharma. The primary allegation towards these scholars was their "failure to condemn the Muslim invasions of India" (Jaffrelot 2007: 270).

Enemy Imaging Discourse in India

In spite of the "hostile Other" image of Muslims survived in the colonial and post-partition era the notion of "Muslim Threat" reemerged in the 1980s and 1990s when the narratives of dominating Muslim minority on Hindu majority were constructed for electoral gains. According to Nadadur (2006) "Hindutva" forces injected insecurity feeling among the Hindu majority and urged for solidarity among India's Hindu population arguing that "the nation was being controlled by the Muslim minority" (Nadadur 2006: 89). The changing demographics, political mobilization, the so-called illegal migrations from Bangladesh, strengthening of fundamentalist groups across Pakistan border, the exodus of Hindus from Kashmir and 1993 terrorist attacks in Bombay were the issues pointed as the exemplification of "Muslim threat". During this era, the mass media especially vernacular press and movies were strategically used to arouse "Hindu pride" against so-called raging "Islamic threat" (Ibid).

The post-Babri era, the threat perception advanced, as Rajagopal (2001) argues, "with the escalating rhetoric of Hindu nationalism, and the identification of

Muslims as the enemy within, what became evident was the sinister form of politicization of Muslim identity" (Rajagopal 2001: 10). The assertion of "Hindu identity", according to Rajagopal, was considered merely as a cultural matter and secularism was folded into Hindu culture and to dispute such an understanding was "pseudo-secular" whereas Muslim assertion was therefore treated as "disruptive, threatening, implicitly anti-national and requiring to be closely monitored" (Rajagopal 2001: 74).

The global Islamophobic narratives also made this process easier as people like Rao (2008) raised alarm against the threat of "radical Islam" in India which is part of "religion-inspired terrorism" that has strong philosophical underpinnings and has become too dangerous emerging as "the single largest threat to the security and stability of a host of nations" (Rao 2008: 722). Apart from the ideological indoctrination by foreigners, Rao finds direct foreign participation in Indian radical Islam in the form of illegal migrants from Bangladesh, who challenge demographic compositions and electoral politics in Assam and West Bengal and work like recruiters for Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) (Rao 2008: 722). According to Rao India is on the "global map of Islamic terrorist target" along with the U.S, Israel, and Russia which are allegedly declared as "enemy of Islam" or known for "ill-treating Muslims and occupying Muslim lands" (Rao 2008: 725). These narratives of internal "threat' and "external links" played a major role in the discourses on Muslims and Islam in the turn of the new millennium which also witnessed terrorist attacks at global and local levels.

Discourse on Muslim Women in India

The discourses on Muslim women in India have been mostly related to laws and personal rights in matters such as marriage (polygamy), reproduction (family planning), divorce (triple-talaq and maintenance) and inheritance (Engineer 1981). Though the question of Muslim women was debated in colonial years it became more explicit in India during the decades after independence. Such debates invited huge public attention when governments and courts interpreted Muslim Personal

Law, in 1937 and in 1986, which were perceived as a challenge to Islamic law (*Sharia*). While many Muslims under the aegis of *Ulema* and political leaders opposed such state interventions in personal law of the community others raised voice for reinterpreting Islamic *Sharia*, especially in the case of women, to comply with the need of the time (Engineer 1994; Vatuk 2008; Patel 2013). However, the still continuing debate uncovers various stereotypical images of Muslim women in India who face "double discrimination" in the forms of gender discrimination from traditional patriarchy and discrimination against religious minorities (Talukdar and Deoli 2013: 5).

Regarding such a complex situation Narain (2013) argues that Muslim women in India are "simultaneously included and excluded from the enjoyment of equal rights" (Narain 2013: 91) since they have located in-between the community, nation, public law and private law. Though Muslim women concurrently enjoy constitutional equality and freedom with religious and minority rights they face discriminations in familial and communal terms. The role of the state, according to Narain, is minimal in ensuring equal citizenship for Muslim women in their private spheres where family traditions and religious norms prevail. Thus, the question of Muslim women in India continues unsettled since neither government can challenge minority rights nor religious leaders can reject the divine law, *Sharia* (Narain 2013: 104).

However, the issue of Muslim women is also perceived in the larger Indian context where patriarchy is the part and parcel of each community. The women in India, according to Shukla and Shukla (1996), remain deprived of equal socio-political share despite having an "enlightened Constitution", a democratic system and a woman Prime Minister. Though Muslim women are depicted as "true victims" of gender discrimination exclusively facing certain concerns, they are part of issues that equally affect all women in India whereas Shukla and Shukla even go further to argue that Muslim women became "victim of socio-cultural irony" when Islamic

traditions "got colored by the Hindu traditions and values" which carried "conservative and restrictive elements" (Shukla and Shukla 1996: 6-8).

At the same time Engineer (1994) suggests that though religions "have accorded women inferior status and relegated them to a secondary position…it is not a religion but patriarchy which is the real culprit" (Engineer 1994: 297). While women could get job opportunities, maybe because of the shortage of male workers, they couldn't achieve gender equality even under Soviet system since it "failed to do away with patriarchy". Thus the question of unjust with women, according to Engineer, "is more a sociological than the religious or ideological problem" because social factors determine the attitudes of every society whereas "societal aspects prevail over religious or ideological aspects" (Engineer 1994:299). In this regard, a host of issues like low female literacy among Muslims could be resulted not because of their religious traditions or teachings but due to the general socio-economic reasons prevailed in India (Ibid).

Given the overemphasis on "religious doctrine" in the discourse on Muslim women in India Hasan and Menon (2004, 2005) also have argued for looking into the "socioeconomic status" of Muslim women identity. Similarly, rejecting the popular perception that "religious conservatism" is the primary constraint of female literacy among Muslims, Lakshmi (2014) argues that "poverty and financial constraints" along with discriminations in admission and scholarship processes are the major factors that prevent Muslim girls from getting the education in modern institutions in India. Subsequently, various reports of commissions including the comprehensive Sachar report (2006) have underlined not only the low educational status of Muslim women in India but also their poor work participation rate compared to the women of other communities (Lakshmi 2014: 662-665). However, we can't find a homogenized form of discrimination or backwardness of Muslim women in India since there is the difference in data and experience regarding the socio-economic status, urban, rural and regional backgrounds that never make them an "undifferentiated masses"(Shukla and Shukla1996: 1).

Most of the discourses that addressed Muslim women's issues in India however, either stereotyped the religion and its *Ulema* for its apathy to modernization or communally charged the community for not integrating into the "majoritarian" culture. While liberal modernist critics perceived Muslim women's lack of agency in dress code, movement, marriage, reproduction, and divorce, nationalist communal forces depicted it as a threat to the dominant Hindu culture. Still, there are counter-narratives that try to explore the lived experience of Muslim women and their response to the secular, feminist and communal frameworks constructed upon their agency and freedom. As Engineer (1981) noted, instead of following typical modern myths and prejudices, pragmatic approach to the issues like polygamy, divorce and family planning conducting field interviews among Muslim women diverse response of the so-called victims could be brought out (Engineer 1981: 850).

In this regard scholars like Muniza Khai, through surveys among educated Muslim women have concluded that despite their opposition to the Personal Laws relating to polygamy and triple divorce, they did not want to drop their religious identity. The same Muslim women who participated in the Shah Bano movement never hesitated in protecting their Muslim identity (Engineer 1994: 298). Sahu and Hutter (2012) emphasize such a diverse approach among Muslim women, not only in India but in Bangladesh also, who "are not passive followers of religious norms but have the agency to bring change in their own lives and take an active role in planning their family" (Sahu and Hutter 2012: 521). Muslim women in India thus simultaneously exercise their agency and follow religious norms for example in reproductive matters to reject the "demographic stereotyping" that Muslims will soon outnumber the Hindu majority (Sahu and Hutter 2012: 521).

The demands for equality and justice from Muslim women in India during the post-Sha Bano phase were mostly based on Constitutional remedies and secular feminist assertions that asked for gender-neutral uniform civil code (UCC) of personal law. Though a host of organizations and women activists emerged from Muslims during the 1980s and 1990s and got huge support from the liberal and

communal forces they could hardly convince the larger Muslim community and even the women that it’s not an attack on their religious identity. Moreover, the insecurity prevailed after Babri demolition (1992) and Gujrat violence (2002) made Muslim women more skeptical towards the attempts for their “liberation” when the entire community faced threat to their religious identity. The global and local situation after 9/11 that created suspicion and an environment of alienation of Muslims also affected the “progressive agenda” of women's groups and Muslim organizations that rejected *Ulema* and demanded the state and the judiciary to redesign the Muslim Personal Law (Patel 2009: 44-49).

In this context, it’s very important to note the attempts by women from the community who exercise their agency in breaking the patriarchal glass ceilings without dropping their religious identity. Instead of following the “universalistic principles of human rights” Muslim women activists now put forth their demands on the basis of Qura’nic interpretations. The new Muslim feminist or Islamic feminist demand for change Muslim Personal Law “from within” is referring guidance from *Qur'an* and support *Ulema* in their rejection of state intervention. Consequently, the stereotyped image of Muslim women is being challenged when women are taking their share in “new Muslim public sphere” contributing to the scholarly religious discourse and ensuring their part heard through a wide variety of media forms. However, Vatuk (2008) suggests that even the so-called secular media in India still try to reinforce existing negative stereotypes of Muslim women and sensationalize their issues which ultimately helps the communal forces to depict the “Other” image of Islam and Muslims (Vatuk 2008: 515-16).

Conclusion

There are similarities and differences in the historical and contemporary discourse on Islam and Muslims in Russia and India regarding the history of arrival, the question of socio-political identity and the issues of relations with dominant communities. While the history of Islam in both countries reflects the “Orientalist” historiography that highlights the “Muslim invasion,” the socio-political identity questions have

faced different phases in imperial, colonial, Soviet, post-Soviet and post-colonial years. The relations between Muslims and Orthodox Christians in Russia and Hindus in India also have been in diverse modes according to the administrative policies and socio-political environments of the respective countries. However, the orientalizing narratives and the threat perception of Islam along with gender stereotypes of Muslim women are common factors that need more attention in the context of the post 9/11 discourse on Islam in Russia and India. The next chapters analyze how the media represented these three factors and how the social perceptions reflect in the discourse on the Islam and Muslims in these countries.

Chapter III

The Othering of Islam in Russian and Indian Media

This chapter analyzes the othering/orientalizing practice in the media representations of Islam in Russia and India after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. For this purpose, we have taken contents (both news and views) from *Izvestia* (translated from Russian language edition) and *The Hindu* from 11 September 2001 to 11 September 2005 when the media across the world had extensive coverage of Islam. Since the voluminous number of reports on the subject is not manageable in this study we have selected randomly the reports that are most relevant for the study as samples from the limited time periods such as September-December, 2001, anniversaries of 9/11 and the incidents of major terrorist attacks between 2001 and 2005. Thus, reports during "Nord-Ost" hostage (23-26October 2002) and Beslan Siege (1-3 September 2004) in Russia and reports on Parliament attack (13 December 2001) and Akshardham temple attack (24 September 2002) in India are taken for textual analysis. The reports were coded according to their title and content covering anything related to Islam or Muslims during the given time frame. For the better understanding of the global and local dimensions of media representations, the post-9/11 reports and coverage of Islam and Muslims are classified in three different contexts: Muslim world, Russia and India and the Western countries. The reports of *Izvestia* and *The Hindu*, considering their patterns of framing, are separately analyzed and later put into the comparative analysis to find similarities and difference. The final part of the chapter reflects upon the social perceptions of the othering discourse of Islam and Muslims in the light of responses from the community members, fellow citizens and experts from the Russia and India.

Media Reports on Islam in Russia after 9/11: Othering Islam/Muslim World

The targeted stigmatization and essentialization of the Islam/Muslim world in the media discourse after 9/11 attacks have become subject of many studies (Poole 2002,

2011; Brown 2006; Amin-Khan 2012). Most of them noted the recurrence of "Orientalist" themes, mainly the "us" versus "them" and "civilized versus "uncivilized"/"barbaric" in the media representation of Islam. Influence of western media narratives and discourses on Islam could be seen in Russia media representation of Islam and Muslims. Reports appeared in *Izvestia* provides such narratives reflexive of othering of Islam.

Izvestia Reports on Islam/Muslim World

Izvestia reports that cover 9/11 incidents construct certain othering/orientalizing discourse on Islam and the Muslim world by selecting religious terms and concepts even in the headlines to describe the motive of terrorist attacks. For example, *Izvestia* report titled "In the name of Allah" by Alexander Arkhangelsky uses the very Islamic terminology *Bismillah* and depicts the 9/11 terrorist attacks as part of Islamic practice:

> To make Allah the Almighty…On September 11, 2001, Allah became the supreme deity. Chopped spiritually, morally and geopolitically, the Islamic world possesses the explosive power of the passionarity…the onslaught from the East… Before our eyes, we accomplished planetary Islamic revolution… The number exceeded one billion Muslims (Arkhangelsky 11 September 2001).

With ideologically motivated themes this report places Islam, as Said (1978) and Poole (2002) argued, on the other side of humanity/civilization and orientalizes Islam of the East against the civilized West. The entire Islamic world is blamed as chopped of spiritual, moral and geopolitical powers but accused of having explosive power. Therefore, the report not only reproduces the "neo-Orientalist" global discourses but also misrepresents Islam as an "uncivilized Other" threatening the "civilized Self" everywhere.

Izvestia also uses themes and phrases that construct an image of homogenized Muslim world responsible for the attacks. For example, in an interview with S. Iftikhar Murshed, Pakistani Ambassador to Moscow, he is represented as the one who was responsible to give the first official reaction on 9/11 attacks on behalf of the entire Muslim world. Moreover, with distorted information on celebrations in

Palestine and across the Muslim world on 9/11 attack *Izvestia* reporter Georgy Bovt asks:

> What was the reaction of people in Pakistan?"…on television now there are scenes of joy by Palestinians on the terrorist attacks in the United States (Bovt 14 September 2001).

More than asserting the power of "us", considering Russia as part of civilized world, the reporter tries to question Muslim world as the "other" while sarcastically seeking to know if the Pakistani people's reaction to the 9/11 attacks similar to that of expressed by Palestinians. The "otherness" of the Muslim world is clearly represented in the apologetic reply of the Pakistan official:

> People in Pakistan condemned the attacks. All Muslim countries have strongly condemned them… Religion has nothing to do with it. Islam is a very progressive religion (Bovt 14 September 2001).

The Pakistani Ambassador is forced to assert and defend Islam as a progressive religion which won't indulge into such criminal acts of violence. Such targeted othering by media, as in the above case, is similar to what Karim (1996) has noted the way media presents "monolithic Islam" as the antithesis of Western liberal values (Karim 1996: 36).

Historical memories are retrieved by *Izvestia* to essentialize the image of Islam as an inferior "Other" that is getting prepared to challenge the "civilized Self". For example, *Izvestia* correspondent Eugene Bay's interview with Sergei Khrushchev Nikitivich which is titled "America got its Afghanistan" recollects Soviet Russian experience with Islam during Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Nikitivich's answer to Bay underlines that Islam is seen in contradiction with western civilization:

> What is now happening in the Islamic camp is a religious maturation… In Chechnya and Central Asia we ourselves grow opponents who see Western civilization as a global enemy….For now, Islam is in the process that experienced Christianity in the Middle Ages (Bay 14 September 2001)

This interview hints that Islam was not a mature religion, which means that it contains "uncivilized" elements. Russians are seen as "we" "ourselves" who are letting Islamic opponents in Chechnya and Central Asia to see western civilization as

global enemy. Considering Abu-Lughod (1991) argument, that the superior "Self" (Western civilization) contrasts with subordinate and inferior "Other" (Islamic world), this report has the effect of an othering process. It reasserts the "Orientalist" cultural notion of an immature Islam that equals to the medieval Christianity. It also generalizes the perception across the Muslim world on Western civilization including Russia and connects it with global security discourses on the growth of such civilizational threat at home and near abroad.

Moreover, the generalization of extreme voices and acts of individuals and groups is the part of media discourse on stereotyping as Kuhar (2006) noted in the case of media representations of minorities. In this sense, *Izvestia* report "Let him speak" by Bychkov and Dunayev (7 October 2001) generalizes Bin Laden's voice as the response of the Muslim world and constructs the notion of legitimizing terrorism in the name of Islam. The similar notion is underlined in a report "World War on a voluntary basis" by Bogomolov that highlights extreme views of people like Bin Laden and depicts Islam as their ideological motive:

> The world is divided into Muslims and others….The states of the infidels have united against the Muslims…Bin Laden used Islam as an ideological roof. Hitler had such a "roof" of racism, Stalin had communism. Bin Laden began by demanding the purity of Islam. Finish with a claim to its uniqueness (Bogomolov 10 October 2001).

Here the report generalizes an image of ideologically motivated "irrational and unchanging" "bad Muslim" who thinks and acts against the common sense of the "civilized world." Poole (2011) has pointed out to this kind of media discourse that depicts Islamic ideology as the driving force behind atrocities carried out by individuals and certain groups belong to Islamic religion (Poole 2011: 56).

The stereotyped narratives are reproduced to construct "primitive" image of the Muslim world in *Izvestia* report by Vladimir Voinovich entitled "At the end of the tunnel":

> Islamic states, whatever they are, do not know how to make cars, TV sets, computers, tanks or planes. And how to do it, if the most learned people are busy reading the Koran, theology is considered to be the most important from the sciences (Voinovich 12 October 2001).

Apart from reproducing "Orientalist tropes" on the Islamic world, the report essentializes an inferior "Oriental Other" image that actually reinforces the superiority of the modernized "Self" as Said (1978) and Sardar (1999) observed. Similarly the *Izvestia* report by Maxim Yusin entitled "Iraq: the most fierce opponent" reproduces the imperial motives to use soft-power methods to win over the Muslim world:

> Yet the battle for the hearts and minds of Muslims' world is just beginning. It is still far from won…dozens of Islamic countries are in poverty, acute social problems, rigid authoritarian regimes…the civilized world has won the first round … in the "fight for Islam." The most difficult thing is yet to come (Yusin 18 October 2001).

The above report not only highlighting the civilizing mission of the "civilized world" to win over the Muslim world, but also generalizes the image of Islamic countries as "undeveloped" despotic regimes having a range of socio-economic problems. As the report endorses the global "fight for Islam" it explicitly shows the media's role in the discursive process of assigning "power" in the representation of "Other" as Foucault (1972) argued.

Similar in the line of Western discourses after 9/11 *Izvestia* report by Novoprudsky entitled "Renegade" reasserts such discursive power relations between the global forces and the Muslim world:

> Either Islam jointly condemns bin Laden as a heretic … and join the international coalition against terrorism … and now the main task of the entire western and Russian diplomacy is to push the Islamic world to the right choice… it's time to sow discord among Muslims (Novoprudsky 4 November 2001).

Said (1997) has pointed out to this sort of media coverage of Islam that actually covers up the realities since "all discourse on Islam has an interest in some authority or power" (Said 1997: 18).

This kind of othering process is more evident in a report titled "Terrorism: War in the first person" by *Izvestia* columnist Eugene Krutikov who returned from Afghanistan in the wake of "war on Terror":

> Now the main threat to the very existence of civilization is precisely this form of terrorism, an aggressive Islamism (Krutikov 19 October 2001)

On the one hand, *Izvestia* constructs a discourse that claims the very survival of civilization is threatened by an "an aggressive Islamism" on the other hand, it reasserts the pre-modern image of the Muslim world. In this sense, *Izvestia* report "Who killed Massoud" by Alexander Khokhlov argues that:

> Arabs did not exhibit characteristic curiosity for journalists, and all the time spent reading the Koran (Khokhlov 24 October 2001).

Izvestia report "Pashtuns deducted where Mullah Omar is" by Dunayev reproduces such stereotyped images of Afghan Muslims for their traditional practices:

> Celebrated the feast of Eid al-Fitr firing into the air and these shots pilots could take for the shelling (Dunayev 18 December 2001).

Izvestia on-line conference with famous scientist-Arabist Vladimir Alexandrovich Isaev on the role of Russia in the Middle East also reiterates such orientalized image of the Arab world:

> The savagery of Arabs knows no limits, and to conduct peace negotiations is possible just with anyone rather than sane individuals…Indeed, in some countries, in some areas, there is what you call savagery. But in the same country, you can meet highly intelligent people with whom it is possible to negotiate (*Izvestia* 24 October 2001a).

This kind of othering is reflected in *Izvestia* report "Where dangerous to go on holiday" by Yusin (30 October 2001) in which "Indonesian Islam" is depicted as "moderate" in contrast to the Islam in the Arab world. This discursive process of media that vilifies the Islam in Arab world and Afghanistan has strengthened the popular notion in Russia that there is indoctrination of Russian Muslims with "a different and unfamiliar Islam" (Malashenko 2009: 340).

However, amidst negative orientalizing representations of Islam in the context of 9/11 *Izvestia* report "The principles of Islamic hospitality" by Krutikov produces, as Poole (2002) observed, an image of "acceptable other" (Krutikov 20 September 2001). *Izvestia* report "Holy month Ramazan" by Emelianenko, on the other hand, brings an "Orientalist" exotic image of the Islamic practices:

> Women fasting with cracked lips and bleeding from the nose…often believers fast for the torture of the body, but not for the purification of the soul (Emelianenko 16 November 2001).

Meanwhile, another *Izvestia* report "Holy month" by Mitrichev brings the counter-narrative on Ramadan in Muslim countries like Syria where even Christians get ready to welcome Ramadan. However, the same report reinforces the Orientalist stereotypes arguing that:

> Unfortunately, the people are illiterat…this is very important, to be educated Muslim. For now, there is a powerful intellectual expansion of Islam. Tatars in Russia.. they are educated, they are very nicely dressed, they all read the Koran, and they are Muslims…the largest communities of Slavic Muslims of Russia in Kamchatka embrace Islam mostly educated people (Mitrichev 16 November 2001).

While the above report counters certain essentializing stereotypes such as Islam is not the religion for educated and civilized people like Aryans and Slavs it also constructs the image of what Poole (2002) says "acceptable other" who follows the modernized "Self".

Ultimately, the *Izvestia* reports after 9/11 covering Islam and Muslim world, as Said noted, reduces the diverse cultures and its followers to a "few stereotypes and generalizations which reinforce negative notions like violence, primitiveness, and atavism" (Said 1997: 13). And this othering discourse can be perceived as part of the "Russian Orientalist" tradition that projected the "self-image of the civilized nation" against "savage natives" to establish the cultural superiority (Brower and Lazzerini 1997; Khalid 2000). Therefore, similar to many other Russian media outlets *Izvestia* has followed the American rhetoric of "crusade" against the Muslim world in the wake of 9/11 and tried to copy Western discourses in representing Islam and the Muslim world (Malashenko 2006: 35).

Izvestia Reports: Othering Islam in Russia

Given the context of orientalized representations of Islam and the Muslim world at large *Izvestia* reports after 9/11 are analyzed to find how they construct an "Other" image of the Islam and Muslims in Russia. Malashenko (2006) and Verkhovsky (2004) have pointed out the role of Russian media and nationalist forces in the

construction of a diverse discourse on domestic Islam and Muslims, especially in the post-9/11 context.

In this regard *Izvestia* report titled "Party of Allah" by Vinogradov covers the growing Muslim political activism:

> The Muslims of Russia opened the Congress by reading the suras of the Koran, suitable for the occasion... excited speech about the events in the US and suggested that the memory of the innocent victims of the terrorist act should be honored. Delegates - representatives of different nations (there were not only Azerbaijanis) stood up: hats, turbaned sweaters, women's scarves. Some men demonstratively stayed to sit (Vinogradov 16 September 2001a).

With a title attributing the party to Allah, the report brings an othering discourse on political activism of Muslims in Russia, especially in 9/11 context. *Izvestia* also distorts the facts in different versions of the same story about the participation of representatives and gives emphasis on the response of few men to the honor to the victims of terrorist attacks. Thus with a stigmatized headline, distorted facts, and generalized themes, as Kuhar (2006) argued, *Izvestia* report tries to construct a stereotypical image of Muslims as "uncivilized Orientals" who lack civic manners.

In the wake of terrorist attacks in Russia, *Izvestia* report titled "Second front" by Chuikov and Chubarov follows the post-9/11 global discourse to generalize the domestic Islam and Muslims:

> The terrorist attacks in the United States and Chechnya are the links of one chain. There are Arabs and Arabs are here. Everywhere mercenaries and everywhere money…it would require a revision of Russian foreign policy and the relations with the Christian and democratic West and the Muslim totalitarian East… any mediation between Western democracies and Islamic mullahs doomed to failure (Chuikov and Chubarov 17 September 2001).

Constructing the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" as Said (1978) and Poole (2002) argued, the report depicts the Russian Muslims as part of the homogenized "despotic Other." In spite of targeting the Arabs and Islamic mullahs as enemies of civilizations *Izvestia* reproduces the "Orientalist" notion of civilizational superiority:

> Militant Islamism is irreconcilable to our civilization and is waging war on its destruction. Turning away from the West, we are left alone with medieval bigotry (Chuikov and Chubarov 17 September 2001).

As the above report evokes the notion of "our civilization" is being threatened by "medieval bigotry", it clearly reproduces the othering discourse popularized by "Russian Orientalists" on Muslims of the Empire (Brower and Lazzerini1997; Khalid 2000).

Moreover, targeted homogenization is used in *Izvestia* report titled "War and Peace" by Semyon Novoprudsky that represents the domestic Islam as part of the forces orchestrating every terrorist attack after 9/11 arguing that:

> There is a relationship between these events, of course. In the most general sense of all this are Islamic extremists (Novoprudsky 21 September 2001).

And in another report titled "End of Religion" *Izvestia* reporter even targets the representatives of Russian Muslims for their apologetic comments on terrorist attacks:

> One of the Supreme Muslim hierarchs of Russia, commenting on what happened in the US, states: Islam prohibits the killing of innocent people. He is absolutely right, but what right is it for Islam and its apologists to decide who is guilty and who not guilty (Novoprudsky 16 October 2001).

The othering process is evident in the above report as it questions even the civic response of Muslims in Russia to the terroristic acts and it challenges their right to defend their religion, Islam. It actually constructs an image of a domesticated "Other within", as Karim (1996) argued, who are not far away in a different geographic location.

Generalization of radical trends among Russian Muslims is evident in *Izvestia* report "Salvation is by faith" by Alimov arguing that there is an attempt to:

> Split the existing traditional Islam in Russia…a new Islamization of our country…Islam has become a part of the great history of Russia. For centuries, two spiritual culture is closely in contact with each other, there have been periods of tension, disputes, misunderstandings…neither the tragedy in New York nor the bombing of the Taliban did split Russian society. We were Russians, one people, not divided into Muslims and Christians (Alimov 16 October 2001a).

At one hand, the above report targets the Muslims for becoming possible troublemakers, on the other hand, it contrasts the non-discriminatory attitude of civilized Russians towards Muslims for centuries. Thus *Izvestia* essentializes the "Other" image of Muslims in Russia as a possible challenge to the undivided Russian

society. Giuliano (2005) has noted to the role of media and experts in spreading such a discourse in Russia that represents Islamism as an imminent threat to the integrity of the Russian Federation (Giuliano, 2005: 196).

Izvestia report "The Islamic Future" by Popova reproduces the prevailing discourse on Islam among national security experts and scientists:

> …the Islamic factor in the political arena of Russia…Islam in Russian politics plays a dual role…Islam is not dangerous and it's the speculative manipulation of Islam and even Islamic topics (Popova 21 December 2001).

As it exaggerates the notion of Islamic factor and manipulative character of Islam and Muslims in Russia, *Izvestia* plays its part in constructing an "Other" image as Said (1997) observed on the role of "media and experts" in the misrepresentation of Islam.

This kind of othering discourse is constructed in Veretennikova's report on Chechen leader Akhmad Kadyrov's visit to Syria and the apologetic comments regarding the terrorist acts in America and Russia:

> Islam is a religion of peace and cooperation…we are against all kinds of oppression of peoples against terrorism. All Muslims condemn terrorism and the death of innocent people (Veretennikova 23 September 2001).

Contrasting the superiority of Russians against Islam, *Izvestia* report "Islam in Russia: how it was" recognizes the centuries-long history of Islam in Russia and highlights imperial Russia's tolerance towards Tatar Muslims despite their active participation in the Pugachev uprising of 1773-1775 (*Izvestia* 16 October 2001). Thus the report constructs an othering discourse, as Said (1978) argued; glorifying the "civic superiority" of the Russians against the Islam that became "became a tolerated religion."

Such othering process by contrasting the images of apologetic Muslims against tolerant Russians is evident in *Izvestia* reporter Alimov's coverage of Minister Shaimiev's remarks:

> There are terrorists who commit crimes under the guise of Islam… Terrorism has no religion…the goals of the terrorists were to push various religions, set up the world against Muslims… Russia's clear position on the separation of Islam from terrorism has been well received around the world (Alimov 16 October 2001b).

Meanwhile, *Izvestia* reporter Akopov's interview with Sergei Kiriyenko, presidential envoy in the Volga Federal District, reproduces the debate of "us" versus "them" by citing its difference in the Russian and Western context:

> We are talking about the Muslims 'we' …Russia has one fundamental difference from Western countries. In the West, speaking about the problems of Muslims say they are. And we say we are. This is a key difference (Akopov 21 December 2001).

The report underscores Kiriyenko's stereotypical narratives on Russian mullahs and tries to orientalize Russian Islam asking that "is it really important features of Russian Islam (Akopov 21 December 2001).

Such a stereotypical image of Muslim scholar is constructed in *Izvestia* interview with Heydar Jamal, the head of Islamic Committee, introducing him as a cleric with "very radical views on Islam". The report also reproduces "Orientalist" stereotypes on Islamic countries for their commitment to accommodate "modern civilization with all due respect to Islam". The report constructs an othering discourse forcing Jamal to be apologetic:

> The core of Islam is the protection of the community of believers against the pretensions of tyrants, the oligarchy, and bureaucracy… Islam became deputy of the "new left ideas" that emerges after leaving Marxism. Islam becomes a synonym of "civilization poor" (*Izvestia* 25 December 2001).

As the report reconstructs stereotyped narratives regarding the notions of "Arab Sheikh" and "Islamic racism" *Izvestia* uses as Kerboua (2016) noted the neo-Orientalist "targeted stigmatization" to represent the Islam and Muslims.

Therefore, the generalized themes, essentialized images and stigmatized narratives in *Izvestia* construct an "Other within" image of Islam and Muslims in Russia. Such an othering/orientalizing discourse may challenge what Yemelianova (2003) argued "the indigenous nature of Islam was one of the more tangible cultural factors" binding not only Muslims but also "Russian society to 'the East' and differentiating it from European societies" (Yemelianova 2003: 56)

Izvestia Report on "Islamic Other" in the West

Besides the reports on Islam in the Muslim world and Russia, the coverage of Islam in the Western countries also gives information on the nature media representations.

In this regard *Izvestia* reports on Islam and Muslims in Western contexts are analyzed to know whether othering discourse is reproduced for the local audience in Russia. As in the previous section, the reports are analyzed looking into the generalized themes, essentialized images and stigmatized narratives that construct an "us" versus "them" dichotomy in the representations of Islam and Muslims.

In the context of post-9/11debates on radicalizing trends *Izvestia* report "Needless to Paris Friday prayers" by Huseynov brings the stories of converts to Islam:

> A curious fact is that two of those arrested, natural Frenchmen Jerome David Kurtaye, recently converted to Islam, and immediately got into the ranks of militants (Huseynov 24 September 2001).

As the report presents it as "a curious fact" that the "natural Frenchmen" just become unnatural "Other" once they convert to Islam. Juxtaposing the image of natural Frenchmen with converted Muslim turned militant; *Izvestia* also generalizes the "Other" as a possible threat.

The similar discursive method is followed in another report "Mujahideen from Catholic families" by Huseynov:

> Terror and Islam were their only homeland. As if in mockery of Western civilization, many of these people born in Catholic families are purebred Europeans (Huseynov 27 September 2001a).

With a headline that contrasts Mujahideen and Catholic families the report clearly constructs an othering discourse that Islam is being a threatening "Other" for Christianity and the West. Here *Izvestia* not only tries to assert the morale of "superior Western Self" on the "inferior Islamic Other" as Said (1978) and Poole (2002) argued but also essentializes the radicalism as peculiar to Islam contrary to Catholicism.

Moreover, targeted stigmatization of Islam and Muslims is explicit in *Izvestia* report by Georgy Bovt (3 October 2001) with a problematic headline, "if your neighbor is Muslim" that reproduces the western discourse of othering Islam and Muslims after 9/11:

> None of the leaders of the Islamic world erupted assurances of the recognition of the right to equality and the existence of a Western Christian civilization...non-white immigrants, particularly Muslims, are not integrated - and not going to - the traditional European culture (Bovt 3 October 2001).

Though the report questions the double standard of the West on terrorism *Izvestia* stigmatizes the Islam and Muslims as "un integrating Other" in the European context. This kind of targeted and stereotyped media representations of Islam according to Brown (2006) has been a new trend in the European press after 9/11 reflecting mainstream social discourses that reproduces what Said (1978) argued "Orientalist" tropes on "civilizational poor" Islam.

Izvestia report titled "They attack early in the morning" by Huseynov introduces migrant Muslims in France:

> …They were all young, most modestly dressed, some with a small beard. Screaming about bin Laden (Huseynov 28 October 2001).

Despite giving the account of othering experiences of such migrant Muslims the report ultimately constructs, as Poole (2002) observed, the stereotyped images of Muslims who are "Oriental Other" un-integrated to the "civilized West".

This discursive process of othering is not limited to the representations of poor migrants but also explicit in essentializing an Islamic scholar in European appearance. In an interview with an Iranian scholar Javad Tabatabai, *Izvestia* reporter Huseynov says:

> I expected to see a real Iranian theologian bearded and solid. But I shook hands with typical European intellectual who looked like a professor at the Sorbonne. Only the dark brush mustache betrayed Eastern origin of the largest specialist in the history and sociology of Islam (Huseynov 27 December 2001).

By contrasting a stereotyped image of a Muslim scholar against modern European intellectual *Izvestia* reproduces the "Orientalist" representation of Muslims as pre-modern Eastern people stuck in the cultural symbols. The report also constructs many generalizing narratives on Islam through questions like:

> Do you think that the West understand what is happening today in the Islamic world?... Do not you think that Islam, in general, stood in the Middle Ages, the time

> stopped the flow for the religion, Islam did not come into their renaissance? (Huseynov 27 December 2001).

Although the above report stigmatizes the image of an unchanging and primitive Islam of the middle ages in contrast to the enlightened West another report "In favor of the poor" by Shvedov (30 September 2001) finds certain qualities in Islam as a religion professing human values. However, *Izvestia* reports on Islam and Muslims in the West use the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" to construct an othering discourse that reproduces, as Sardar argues, the colonialist notion of Islam as the darker side of Europe (Sardar 1999:2).

Izvestia Coverage of 9/11 Anniversaries

During the anniversaries of 9/11 attacks, the media not only in America but across the world retrieve diverse discourses on Islam and Muslims. In this regard, we look into *Izvestia* reports during the anniversaries of 9/11 to know how Islam is represented. In the wake of the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks *Izvestia* report, "Islamic boom" by Eugene Bay covers a Muslim gathering in America:

> The largest forum in the history of the Muslim movement in the United States…started with a prayer in memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks on America…only after September 11, the average American noticed how many Muslims lives with him (Bay 1 September 2002).

Portraying the mass congregation of Muslims as an "Islamic boom" the title of the story denotes an emergence of "Other" in America. This notion of the "otherness" of Islam is underlined in the argument that Islam became a familiar to average American only after 9/11. Such a stereotyping narrative is very similar to that of prevailed in dominant discourses in U.S media depicting the visibility of Islam as threatening to democracy, human rights and women's rights (Mishra 2006: 160).

In that sense, *Izvestia* followed Western media by publishing a series of opinion pieces titled "If I were Osama bin Laden" by Oleg Osetinsky that reproduced the "neo-Orientalist" narratives evoking the notion of Islamic otherness:

> The first lesson of September 11, we learned that there are many enemies of civilization… disgusting of liberal orders and Western values… Muslims in

> Trafalgar Square shout “Britain will become Muslim!”…we are at the forefront of the war on "terrorism"(Osetinsky 12 September 2002).

Apart from constructing the dichotomy of “us” versus “them”, the article stigmatizes Muslims as the threat to “liberal values” and orientalizes them accusing “fatalism” and “aggression” and denial of the values of Western civilization.

> While there were few Muslims in civilized countries, everything was sort of quiet…it takes time to go through all phases of development. How can you imagine, say, the triumph of democracy in Saudi Arabia and in any other Islamic state? (Osetinsky 12 September 2002).

The article includes essentialized narratives on Muslim presence in “civilized countries” and stereotyped images of Islamic countries in terms of development and democracy. Thus *Izvestia* constructs an othering discourse, as Said (1978) and Poole (2002) argued, through the binary oppositions of an enlightened Occident “We” and despotic Orient “they”.

Considering the reactions from readers, in the second part of “If I were Osama bin Laden” *Izvestia* emphasizes its editorial policy in reproducing such a narrative. Apart from “Orientalist” tropes like “if I were a Sultan” the article stigmatizes Muslims:

> They also breed like rabbits, and relatives go to them and ride… the majority of our people believe if Muslims want to live here, all right, let them live, we are good! But let register will receive a voucher for a job. Work, pay taxes (Osetinsky 25 September 2002).

With targeted stereotyping of Muslims, the article not only constructs what Abu-Lughod (1991) argued the “cultural notion” of differentiating the “Self” from “Other” but also follows the discursive process of controlling the “Other”. Meanwhile, the third part of “If I were Osama bin Laden” directly targets Islam mocking that:

> What is terrorism and who are terrorists? Islam, the preaching of love… and Muhammad who was born in Mecca 500 years after the birth of Christ (Osetinsky 2 October 2002).

As it contrasts the prophet of Islam with Christ and compares Islamic and Christian doctrines, the article reasserts the otherness of Islam in European and Russian contexts. The whole three volumes of the article ultimately construct a civilizational

discourse that juxtaposes the "West of freedom and civility" against "an irrational and deeply disturbing Muslim East" (Abu-Lughod 2006). Though it gives space for a counter voice, a report titled "I do not want to be bin Laden" *Izvestia* tries to essentialize the Muslims arguing that "the majority of Muslims do not get used to the Western civilization" (*Izvestia*, 27 September 2002).

Amidst diverse debates on Islam during the second anniversary of 9/11 *Izvestia* report "The first call" by Shestakov covers French initiative for "building a French Islam, not Islam in France". Constructing a binary discourse of "modern and open Islam" versus Islam of immigrants, the report stereotypes the Islam and Muslims at large as an un-integrating asset in a civilized context. Through this kind of dichotomizing discourse, the media actually differentiates "good Muslims" from "bad Muslims" (Mamdani 2002:766).

In September 2004 Russia witnessed the most lethal terrorist attack when a school in Beslan was taken hostage which was widely described as Russia's 9/11. Therefore the reports during the third anniversary of 9/11 were mostly focused on the Beslan tragedy. In this sense, *Izvestia* report "How to treat Islam after Beslan?" tries to bring back the post-9/11othering discourse as it essentializes the Islamic world for "medieval monolithic opinions" accusing that the "elites still deny that Arabs staged September 11" (*Izvestia* 15 September 2004).

Meanwhile, during this period *Izvestia* brought a host of reports with counter-narratives to the othering discourse and practice in America and Russia. Reports such as "Cat Stevens sues America" (Bay 27 September 2004), "Appear in hijab in Moscow is like to go out naked" (Granik 28 September 2004) and the report on the opening of both Kul-Sharif Mosque and Annunciation Cathedral in the Kazan Kremlin (Nikolaev 23 September 2005) are addressing the issue of shrinking space for diversity in American and Russian societies.

Ultimately, most of *Izvestia* reports during 9/11 anniversaries reconstructed the othering discourse through essentialized narratives, stigmatized images and binary constructs on Islam and Muslims. In this regard, *Izvestia* followed Western

media that constructed themes representing Muslims as “alien and Other” against the “humane and liberal” West especially in the post-9/11 context (Zubri 2011).

Izvestia Coverage of “Nord-Ost” Siege

Apart from the global developments after 9/11, the local events also influenced the media discourse on Islam in Russia. The so-called “Nord-Ost” siege was one such event in which 130 of total 912 hostages were killed during 23-26 October 2002 in Dubrovka Theatre in Moscow. The siege of the theatre, where “Nord-Ost” musical was showing, was carried out by Chechen militants that caused huge debate linking terrorism and Islam.

Although it avoids any reference to Islam *Izvestia* reports on “Nord-Ost” siege focus on the religious identity of survivors that can evoke othering discourse on Muslims:

> …children, Muslims and several Georgians from the audience (Shvedov 24 October 2002).
>
> …hostages, representatives of Caucasian nationalities, Muslims, children, and women (*Izvestia* 24 October 2002).

Moreover, *Izvestia* report “Country-hostage” reproduces the discourse of civilizational mission suggesting that: “in Russia, the US, Europe, the civilized part of Asia has a great mission the salvation of mankind” (Bovt and Novoprudsky 24 Octoberober 2002). Such targeted framing of Muslims and stigmatized narratives on civilizing missions could produce otherness of Islam in Russia. And the effect of this othering process is explicit in former Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov’s opinion piece “war with Islam can split Russia” that warns about the “fate of Islam and Muslims in Russia” (Primakov 4 November 2002).

The otherness of Islam and the Muslim world is underlined also by linking the local motives and effects of terrorist attacks with global trends. In this regard *Izvestia* report “It's all over. Everything goes on” brings back the 9/11 discourse:

> In many Arab countries, a national holiday came with songs and dances on the streets after the September 11 attacks… Russia is opposed not only by Islam. We have no place in Europe either (*Izvestia* 27 October 2002).

As the report retrieves the “evil other” image of the Muslim world that allegedly celebrated the 9/11 attack it definitely constructs an othering discourse on Islam and Muslims in Russia also. To make such a discourse more appealing *Izvestia* article “New York, "Nord-Ost"-and further everywhere?” reproduces the post-9/11 binary construction of “our allies” and “our enemy”. And the othering process comes to a full circle when the article argues that “it is no coincidence that the greatest concentration of evil comes from the Islamic world” (*Izvestia* 18 November 2002).

Therefore, the *Izvestia* reports after “Nord-Ost” siege constructed an othering/orientalizing discourse on Islam by targeting the identity of survivors, reproducing the civilizing mission and invoking the evil image of the Islamic world. This trend of othering process by media has noted by Poole (2011) arguing that local terrorist acts are framed as motivated by foreign “extremely religious and murderous ideology” and every link are built “to Islamic ideology given as the driving force” (Poole 2011: 56).

***Izvestia* Coverage of Beslan Tragedy**

Similar to the “Nord-Ost” siege Russia witnessed another terrorist siege on Beslan School in North Ossetia during 1-3 September 2004. The deadly terrorist attack perpetrated by Chechen separatists resulted in the death of nearly 334 out of 1200 hostages mostly children. Since the attack brought back the post-911/ discourses linking terrorism and Islam *Izvestia* reports are analyzed to know how the othering process was carried out by media.

Apart from focusing on the identity of the attackers, *Izvestia* reports tried to frame the Beslan incident as a major terrorist attack like 9/11 and bring back othering discourse on Islam and Muslims (Spirin 2 September 2004). Though *Izvestia* argued that the unity of the country is not in the threat it makes reference to “Islam Buli” to evoke the “Other” image of Islamic identity (*Izvestia* 6 September 2004a). The reports of American president’s commitment to work with Russia in the fight against international terrorism retrieved the “war on terror” discourse that

targeted the Muslim world as a hub of terrorism (*Izvestia* 13 September 2004). In the previous section, we have analyzed a series of opinion pieces titled "If I were Osama bin Laden" by Oleg Osetinsky that reproduced the post-9/11 othering discourse in the context of Beslan attack.

Such an othering process is more evident in *Izvestia* article "How to treat Islam after Beslan?" that argues:

> The fate of the world in the twenty-first century is in the hands of Muslim theologians like Mullah Omar…he is not the only one supported September 11, 2001, in New York…elites still deny that Arabs staged September 11, they cannot do this (*Izvestia* 15 September 2004).

With essentializing themes accusing prevalence of "medieval monolithic opinions" in the Muslim world, the report also constructs an "Oriental Other" image of Islam. The article also generalizes the character of Islamic theologians for issuing fatwas on many issues rather than condemning terrorism that constructs the "stigmatized Other" image of Islam popular in western "neo-Orientalist" discourse as Kerboua (2016) argued.

Media Reports on Islam in India after 9/11: Othering of Islam/Muslim World

The impact of 9/11 on Indian media especially in reporting local terrorist attacks and communal violence has been pointed out by Lankala(2006), Narayana and Kapur (2011). The Indian media representation of Islam and the Muslims at large in the 9/11 context is to be analyzed in terms of the recurrence of "Orientalist" themes that construct binaries such as "us" versus "them" and "civilized versus "uncivilized" "good" vs "evil" and "civilized" vs "barbaric".

***The Hindu:* Reports after 9/11 on Muslim World**

In this section, *The Hindu* reports are explored to know whether it follows othering discourse through essentialized themes, generalized images and stigmatized narratives on Islam and Muslim world. In this regard, *The Hindu* report "America under attack: World Trade Center Collapses" generalizes the Islamic link behind the attack indicating to:

> warning from Islamic fundamentalists close to bin Laden…thousands of Palestinians celebrated the attacks, chanting “God is Great" and handing out candy (*The Hindu* 12 September 2001).

The otherness of Islam is constructed in this report as it attributes an ideological link to the terrorists as well as it uses a religious concept like “God is Great" (*Allahu Akbar*) to mark the celebrations regarding the attack. By generalizing a fundamentalist response and reproducing distorted facts about the celebrations *The Hindu* thus essentializes an “uncivilized Other” image of the Muslim world.

Similar othering process is evident in a report by Menon titled “U.S. on trail of jehad financiers” that uses Islamic concept of “jihad” to denote global terrorism whereas “Arab and Muslim world” is depicted as the financial sponsors of terrorism (Menon 13 September 2001). An editorial piece titled “Strategic moves to fight terror” also constructs othering discourse arguing that some “responsible Arab-Muslim states” are expected to be under anti-terror umbrella (*The Hindu* 14 September 2001a). With targeted stigmatization of the Muslim world and intended generalization of the Islamic concept of “jihad” *The Hindu* represents an “Other” image of Islam and Muslim world that is generally “irresponsible” to the civilized world order. This kind of othering/orientalizing of Islam and the Muslim world by western media especially in the post-9/11 context was uncovered in different studies (Said 2003; Poole 2011; Brown 2006).

Contrasting Islam and the Muslim world with the West is another method used by media to construct othering discourse. In this sense *The Hindu* oped-article by Indiresan titled “Dealing with terror” argues:

> …people in Palestine do not agree. They have been jubilant. Similar feelings must be widespread in many parts of the Islamic world…. Rulers of extremist Islamic countries are in greater danger of their lives than Western rulers are… That disease is the fanatic idea that Islam is not compatible with the rest of humanity and that Muslims cannot live in a non-Islamic state (Indiresan 15 September 2001).

Apart from constructing stereotypes of Palestinian people as jubilant for terrorist attacks like 9/11, the report essentializes Islamic world as part of such a trend. With

a dichotomized narrative on Islamic countries, the report also generalizes the idea that Islam and Muslims as un-integrated into non-Islamic contexts.

Such a notion of "primitive" Islam is repeated in a report, "Stand proud in defense of Islam, Afghans told" that brings Taliban supremo Mullah Omar's call for Afghans to defend Islam (Reddy 16 September 2001). And *The Hindu* report "Pakistan, Taliban and Osama" essentializes the Muslim world by depicting Bin Laden as "a cult figure in the politics of the Islamic world" (Sreedhar 17 September 2001). Through these stereotyped binaries and generalizations, as Kerboua (2016) argued, *The Hindu* orientalizes Islam as a "despotic ideology" defended by war and violence.

Juxtaposing stereotypical image of Muslim countries and its leaders is the way *The Hindu* report titled "Megawati U.S. visit a message to Muslims" used to bring an othering discourse. The report praises Indonesian President, Ms. Megawati Sukarnoputri as "one of the few world leaders who will be meeting the American President, Mr. George Bush" after 9/11. At the same time, the report reminds that she "is the President of a country where the largest number of Muslims lives" (Baruah 17 September 2001). As the report juxtaposes the image of Megawati as a responsible leader of a Muslim country with other Muslim leaders it orientalizes the Muslim world for not responding to the civilized world. Poole (2002) has pointed to this kind of othering by media as it constructs "a new stereotype an 'acceptable Other' a liberal Muslim" in order to manipulate that "any Muslim falling outside this framework as extreme" (Poole 2002: 16).

Generalized narratives are reproduced in *The Hindu* report "Arab grievances lend to conspiracy theories" to orientalize Muslim world for believing "conspiracy theories" on the 9/11 attacks while agreeing "to support the U.S. campaign against global jihad" (Menon 17 September 2001). Similarly, *The Hindu* report "Mobilising the Muslim world" generalizes Taliban's declaration of "jehad" as "the Islamic factor" that would challenge America and its war plans (Mohan 23 September 2001). On the one hand, *The Hindu* generalizes the Muslim world as takers of "conspiracy

theories" on the other hand it essentializes "jihad" as the factor that mobilizes the Muslims.

Targeted stigmatization of the Muslim world is prevalent in *The Hindu* report "'Osamaism' may only grow in strength" that highlights bin Laden's statements regarding:

> the conditions of the world today and the state of the Arab peninsula at the dawn of the Islamic era…similar band of men launched Islam on its triumphal march a little over 1,400 hundred years ago (Menon 9 October 2001).

By generalizing "Osamaism" as a trend in the Muslim world for centuries the report attributes "primitiveness and atavism" as Said (1978) and Abu-Lughod (1991) noted to construct an othering discourse on Islam. Similar stigmatization of the Muslim world is evident in *The Hindu* report "The battle for the Muslim mind" that presents Osama and U.S President as representatives of opposing camps i.e. terrorizing vs. civilizing mission (Mohan 9 October 2001). As the title of the report denotes the "Muslim mind" is depicted as the object of the battle of different interests using the power on an "inferior Other." Kerboua (2016) has pointed to such neo-Orientalist discourse of othering by imposing imperialist moral superiority of the western "Self" over the inferior Islamic "Other."

At the same time, *The Hindu* article, "The myth about Islamic world" by Baruah questions the western media for constructing "the U.S. versus them" arguing that "Islamic world is a myth, same as the Christian world" (Baruah, 10 October 2001). And *The Hindu* report "Cong. caution against joining 'Islam vs. West' fight" highlights the position of Congress party against Indian government's move to back the U.S. in "war on terror". As it cites the party position that "this fight doesn't become Islam versus the West or Islam versus the rest" (*The Hindu* 1 October 2001a) the report reproduces a counter-narrative to the othering discourse after 9/11 attacks. However, the above reports and articles show that *The Hindu* adopted a discursive process that constructed the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" in the representation of Islam and the Muslim world in its coverage the 9/11 attacks. In this

sense *The Hindu* followed Western media, as Brown (2006) argued, stereotyping Islam and Muslims in a "homogeneous character" after the 9/11 attack.

The Hindu: Report of Othering of Islam/Muslims in India

The Hindu reports after 9/11 are analyzed here regarding their methods of constructing othering discourse on Islam/Muslims in India. In the wake of 9/11 attacks an oped-article "Dealing with terror" generalizes the "Islamic factor" behind the conflicts in Palestine and Kashmir:

> Ostensibly, property disputes, in Palestine, Kashmir and elsewhere are the justification for Islamic terrorism. Will peace be established if Palestinians are given the territory they want and Kashmir is handed over to Pakistan? It is more than likely that such concessions will only whet the appetite of Islamic fundamentalists (Indiresan 15 September 2001).

Apart from essentializing the national/local conflicts as the manifestation of "Islamic fundamentalism" the report constructs "we" versus "them" dichotomy arguing that "we cannot hope to succeed against Islamic fundamentalism" (Indiresan 15 September 2001).

Another article "The brazen face of terror: Faceless enemy" by Bharat Verma follows the similar method of generalizing the fundamentalist trend as getting roots among Muslims in India:

> In India, the agenda is not limited to Kashmir, which the front wants to carve out as an Islamic state run on Wahabi philosophy from Islamabad, but extends to West Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Bihar and portions of South India (Verma 23 September 2001).

In the context of 9/11 attacks, the above report also constructs a victimized "we" image of India similar to America and Russia that facing the threat of hostile "them." Poole (2011) has pointed out this kind of othering practice by media as "the link is made to Islamic ideology" depicting it as the driving force of terrorism and Muslims are stigmatized as sympathizers of "extremely religious and murderous ideology" (Poole 2011: 56).

The stigmatized "Other Within" image of Muslims in India is portrayed in *The Hindu* report "Yes we are Muslim; yes, we are Indian...." that quotes Muslim

representatives like Javed Akhtar and Shabana Azmi who "claimed that their religion made them no less an Indian'' (Jacob 20 October 2001). Essentializing the apologetic positions of the Muslim community in India who faced targeted othering after 9/11 attacks, the above report reproduces an othering discourse prevalent in the country and outside. According to Karim (1996), such media discourse of othering becomes a more domesticated practice that tries to link the "Other within" with "Orient" out there (Karim 1996: 506).

Although many reports have no direct links with the post-9/11 discourses they are analyzed regarding the context that influenced the representations of Islam and Muslims in India. In this regard, several reports in *The Hindu* reproduced the discourse of appropriating Muslims during their religious festivals given their minority status. A few samples of such reports are here: "Saffron hue to 'urs' fete" (*The Hindu* 25 September 2001), "Iftars-then and now" (Katyal 7 December 2001), "Iftar boycott spells trouble" (*The Hindu* 11 December 2001), "Politics overshadows CM's Iftar party" (Mehdudia 11 December 2001) and "Messages from Sonia's Iftar" (*The Hindu* 12 December 2001).

These reports with stereotyped narratives on the power struggle in appropriating Muslim festivals construct an othering/orientalizing discourse that stigmatizes Muslims in India as an inferior "Other." Said (1997) has pointed to this kind of media practice of misrepresentations through utter negligence towards understanding Islam and Muslims and their culture that encourage perpetuating the hostility and ignorance (Said 1997: 18).

Another set of reports reproduces dominant majoritarian narratives on Muslims and Islam that essentializes the "Other" image of the community. In this regard, a report titled "Re-interpret your scriptures" quotes RSS chief saying "the history of Islam and Christianity was soaked in blood" (*The Hindu* 27 October 2001). Another report "Saffron brigade sets its sights higher" covers efforts of Hindu nationalist for cleansing school textbooks from the "Macaulay, Marx, madarassa" influence (*The Hindu* 3 December 2001). Reproducing the dominant narratives with

targeted stereotypes these reports construct the othering discourse on Islam and Muslims in India.

At the same time, certain counter-narratives are highlighted in *The Hindu* report "Malegaon and manipulation" that reproduces the stories of friendship between the majority Muslims and the minority Hindus (Punwani 23 November 2001). In this sense, *The Hindu* opinion-piece by Balraj Puri "Understanding Indian Muslims" challenges the othering discourse in the wake of 9/11 as "the media noticed only the extremist viewpoint" despite the silent majority of Muslims protested against extremist acts. Elaborating the diversity prevailed among Indian Muslims the article concludes that:

> If, in spite of these facts, some Muslims of India today betray tendencies towards any kind of fundamentalist, puritan and militant Islam, it is for the whole nation to find out its reasons and remedies and not for the Muslims alone (Puri 17 December 2001).

Though the report targets fundamentalist elements it reconstructs the dichotomy of "fanatic Other" versus "acceptable Other" that dominates in the discourse on Islam and Muslims in India in the context of 9/11. *The Hindu* has practiced such othering process through stigmatized narratives, generalized themes and stereotyped images of Islam and Muslims in India. As Lankala (2006) and Mecklai (2010) pointed out *The Hindu* becomes part of the media discourse that keeps reproducing mainstream responses and majoritarian notions in the representations of Muslims.

The Hindu: **Reports on "Islamic Other" in the West**

The orientalizing aspect of the media discourse on Islam and Muslims in the Western socio-political contexts in the wake of 9/11 attacks has pointed out by many studies (Poole 2002; Brown 2006; Amin-Khan 2012). In this regard, *The Hindu* reports are analyzed to know the pattern of representing Islam and Muslims as an "Oriental Other" in the Western context. The early reports such as "Texas mosque attacked" (*The Hindu* 13 September 2001a) actually reflect the growing trend of othering of Islam and Muslims in different parts of Europe. However, reports like "Bush warns against targeting Muslims" reproduce the American President's statement, "overseas

Islamic extremists may have plotted the terror attacks in the U.S." (*The Hindu* 13 September 2001b) that generalizes the religious identity of the suspected extremists.

Meanwhile, reports such as "Fear of anti-Muslim backlash in Britain" (Suroor 15 September 2001) and "Don't blame Islam for terrorism" reproduce the statements of British Prime Minister, Tony Blair who suggested that "the vast majority of Muslims are decent, upright people who share our horror at what has happened" (Suroor 30 September 2001). On the one hand, the above reports unveil the targeted stigmatization of Islam and Muslims in the West, on the other hand, they reproduce the discourse on an "acceptable Other" who share the experiences of "civilized Self." Poole (2002) has noted to this kind of media practice of exposing targeted stigmatization to highlight the "acceptable Other" image of the community.
In this sense, *The Hindu* opinion piece "Islam is not the issue, Muslims are", as the title of the article denotes, reproduces such a discourse that becomes part of an othering process:

> For far too long Islam has been allowed to become license for any Muslim to do whatever he pleases in its name… much of the debate has been marked by so much self-righteous indignation on the part of Muslims, and aggressive Muslim/Islam-bashing on the other side…too many generalizations, too much stereotyping, a lot of deliberate fudge, a great deal of misinterpretation of Islam and competitive blame-game (Suroor 19 December 2001).

Though the article makes comparisons of the debate regarding Muslims and Islam in the Western context the title clearly essentializes the Muslims as the center of the problem. Along with a targeting title the article includes themes that generalize Islam as an ideological cover for Muslims and stigmatizes them as usual takers of conspiracy theories. Despite acknowledging the targeted stereotyping of Muslims and Islam in the Western contexts after 9/11 *The Hindu* follows a kind of othering process either through constructing the notion of an "acceptable Other" or essentializing Muslim narratives and experiences of otherness. Kerboua (2016) has noted on this kind of othering process by giving emphasis exclusively on what is considered negative dimensions and components of the Islamic faith and culture, or the alleged behavior of the Muslim (Kerboua 2016:24).

***The Hindu* Coverage of 9/11 Anniversaries**

The reports during the anniversaries of 9/11 are analyzed as the discourses on Islam reemerge at global and local levels. In this regard, on the first anniversary of 9/11 *The Hindu* opinion piece "Remembering September 11" reproduces the discourse on Islam versus West that led to a situation like 9/11:

> …the West was guilty, less of anti-Islamism, but more of propping up, through its patronage and arms flows, the very regimes that could spawn Al-Qaeda…the real conflict that emerged in the aftermath of September 11 was not the conflict between the West and Islam (Mehta 10 September 2002).

As the article rejects the targeting of "Islamism" as the only evil behind 9/11 it constructs a counter-narrative to Western discourse that stigmatizes Islam and Muslims as the source of all terrorism and proponents of "clash of civilizations". Though it questions the dichotomy of Islam versus West the article by focusing on this aspect actually reproduces such an othering discourse in a non-Western context on the anniversary of 9/11.

In a similar way, *The Hindu* report "Address causes of terrorism" reproduces the western narratives on the Muslim world:

> …official Kuala Lumpur is keen to ensure that the U.S. investigators do not unwittingly portray Malaysia as an outpost of "international terrorism" and as a regional epicentre of terror…the alleged plot of the detainees to create a pan-Islamic state in South East Asia, their suspected game plan to convert Malaysia into a hotbed (Suryanarayana 23 September 2002).

Although the above report attributes the claim that Malaysia is the regional epicenter of terror to American officials, it clearly reconstructs a targeted othering discourse on a Muslim country. Moreover, by generalizing an allegation of creating a pan-Islamic state the article reproduces the "neo-Orientalist" narratives after 9/11 that stigmatizes Muslim world as a possible source of terror. O'Rourke (2012) observes this kind of othering process by media as a "dialectical reversal" from positive images to negative ones especially in the post 9/11 discourse on Islam and Muslims.

Similar stigmatizations of the Muslim world are evident in *The Hindu* oped-piece "One year of the war on terror" that generalizes "the relationship between Osama's family and the Saudi royal family" and his business interests "spread over

the entire Islamic world." And the article reconstructs a binary discourse that "the U.S. perception that a crime against Americans is a crime against humanity will not sell in the Arab world" (Sreedhar 26 September 2002). Thus generalizing the Osama as an influencing factor in the "Islamic world" and stereotyping the "Arab world" as an "Other" in the American concept of humanity *The Hindu* reproduces an othering discourse.

In the wake of the second anniversary of 9/11 *The Hindu* report "India, Israel can keep watchful eye on fanatic Islam" (Baruah 12 September 2003) clearly reproduces the Western narrative of othering Islam in the name of terrorism. Bringing "an exclusive interview" with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, Yosef Lapid the report essentializes "fanatic Islam" as the manifestation of terror everywhere and reproduces the global discourse on terrorism into local contexts. On the third anniversary of 9/11 *The Hindu* report "Islamists target Putin" reconstructs such a generalizing discourse arguing that "Islamists are known to have plotted to assassinate Mr. Putin at least on three occasions" (Radyuhin 11 September 2004). Similarly, *The Hindu* report "Zarqawi -terrorist or Islamist crusader?" reproduces the Islamic link claiming that "his aim, like Osama's, is to recreate a pan-Islamist caliphate across West Asia and beyond, headed by himself or a like-minded individual"(MacAskill and McCarthy 25 September 2004).

With ideologically targeted titles the above reports follow the Western media's othering process of interchanging terrorism with "Islamism." Moreover, generalizing the terrorist activity as "Islamic Crusade" *The Hindu* clearly constructs the othering discourse evoking the historical notion of "crusade" and "caliphate." This kind of othering process by media has pointed out by Poole and Richardson (2006) arguing that the threat, fear, and misunderstanding of Islam and Muslims have influenced the content of journalism and that reflected in the news.

On the fourth anniversary of 9/11, *The Hindu* report "Join hands to fight terrorism" cites British High Commissioner Michael Arthur:

> Islam is a peace-loving religion and Muslim leaders in our country have extended full support to our Government's commitment to eliminate terrorism. We also need to learn from India, which with its Sufism and 150 million-strong Muslim population has shown how to live in peaceful co-existence (*The Hindu* 11 September 2005).

Though the report gives space to counter the stereotypical narratives on Islam and Muslims it reproduces the othering discourse interlinking the terrorism discourse with Islam on the very day of remembering 9/11. However, with references to the diversity of Islam the report reproduces an "acceptable Other" image of Islam in global and local contexts as Poole (2002) noted. Ultimately, the reports during the 9/11 anniversaries kept the "us" versus "them" binary by reproducing the debate of Islam versus West. The reports also followed othering/orientalizing process by essentializing terrorism as "Islamism" and by generalizing terrorists as Islamists or Islamic crusaders.

***The Hindu* Coverage of Indian Parliament Attack**

Apart from 9/11 attacks the major terrorist acts in India have evoked media discourse on Islam and Muslims. The attack on Indian parliament building in New Delhi on 13 December 2001was carried out by five militants that resulted in the death of all five militants and six security personnel. Because of the strategic importance of the targeted place the incident was widely compared with 9/11 attacks in the U.S. that also retrieved the discourse on Islam and terrorism. In this regard, *The Hindu* reports on this terrorist attack are analyzed focusing on how they reproduced the othering discourse on Islam and Muslims in such a crucial context.

While the early reports on the attack restrained from naming any community or linking it to any ideology *The Hindu* editorial piece "Ugly terror strikes again" even rejected narratives of othering:

> …the plain truth is that little, or nothing, is known about who planned or organised the siege yet. In this context, it is important to observe a measure of restraint and not fall prey to the easy temptation of indulging in conjectures and, more importantly, resorting to a tired and superfluous jingoism (*The Hindu* 14 December 2001a).

However, later reports such as “Jaish denies hand in attack” (Reddy 18 December 2001) and “Unravelling the conspiracy” (*The Hindu* 18 December 2001) started to generalize “Islamic militants” and “fidayeen attack” as ideologically motivated that constructed an othering discourse on Islam and Muslims. Brown (2006) has pointed to the media method of generalizing a “fanatic Other” to target the ideological aspect of terrorism, mostly Islam, in 9/11 context.

This process of targeted othering is evident in *The Hindu* report “The factory which produced ‘jehadis’” that generalizes the terrorists as “jehadis” and essentializes their ideological link with Islam:

> A combination of radical Islamic teachings and stringent training made them battle-hardened soldiers who were ready to move into destinations across the globe in the cause of `jehad'(Aneja 14 December 2001).

In the wake of the terrorist attack on Indian parliament, such a narrative defiantly reproduces the post-9/11 discourse that equalizes terrorism as “jihad” and generalizes Islam as the ideological force behind. Though an opinion piece, “Islam is not the issue, Muslims are” (Suroor 19 December 2001) did not mention parliament attack it also reproduced the post-9/11 othering discourse in such crucial context in India. Lankala (2006) has noted on the ideological aspect of othering process by Indian media by reproducing post 9/11 American rhetoric on “Islamic terror” and normalizing Hindutva claim of Muslims as “enemy within” (Lankala 2006: 94).

The Hindu Coverage of Akshardham Attack

The terrorist attack on Akshardham Temple in Gujarat on 24 September 2002 was carried out by two militants resulted in the death of 32 people including the perpetrators. Rather than the casualties of this attack the context (months after the 2002 Gujarat communal violence) and the target place (a Hindu temple) made an impact on the media discourse. Various studies (Ahmed 2010; Varadarajan 2003; Lankala 2006) have discussed the media coverage of Gujarat violence and pointed out the different patterns of reporting in both vernacular and English media in India.

The coverage of Akshardham attack should be analyzed considering such a local context that was very important in the discourse on Islam and Muslims in India.

The first report on the attack titled "26 killed as terrorists storm Gandhinagar temple" just cites police sources on the suspected terrorist groups (Dasgupta 25 September 2002). Though the report brings the panic response of Muslim community in the city it keeps away the othering discourse. Another report "Terrorism on its last legs" brings the official statement of Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, who claimed the end of "terrorism throughout the country" and declared the fight as part of the "global war against terrorism"(Jayanth 25 September 2002). As the report interconnects the local and global war against terrorism it reproduces the post-9/11 discourse that essentializes Islam as the force behind such atrocities.

Such a discourse is evident in *The Hindu* report titled "Anti-Islamic" that brings apologetic responses of Muslim leaders:

> Islam does not permit killing of innocent civilians. I appeal to Muslims and our Hindu brethren to join hands to wipe out terrorism from the country's soil… the attack as a …conspiracy to defame Islam and Muslims… The attack is against the teachings of Islam and this kind of anarchy is unacceptable to Indian Muslims (*The Hindu* 25 September 2002a).

Though the report gives space for counter voices it actually essentializes Muslims responsible to condemn every terrorist attack. Reproducing such apologetic responses *The Hindu* stigmatizes the "acceptable Other" image of Muslims.

Similar stigmatization of the community is evident in a report "PM says 'salaam' to J&K people" that generalizes the community response to the attack on Akshardham(*The Hindu* 25 September 2002b). As the report praises the people for using their democratic choices it also generalizes the stereotypical image of Kashmiris regarding their religious identity. Poole (2002) has noted on this kind of othering process by media that construct a new image of "acceptable Other" to stigmatize the "evil Other".

The targeted stigmatizations of Muslims is more evident in a report titled "Temple siege ends" that generalizes the signs and symbols of a document found on

the body of dead terrorists. Despite arguing that "the identity of the terrorists is still not known" the report official sources:

> two unsigned letters found on their bodies… written in Urdu, using red, blue and black ink…wanted "revenge" for the violence against Muslims in the recent Gujarat riots (Dasgupta 26 September 2002).

With stereotypical narratives on the identity of the terrorist and generalizing the motive of the attack the report constructs an othering discourse on Muslims.

The same process of targeted generalization is seen in a report "Clue points to Pak. Nationality" that reproduce the othering discourse on "fidayeen" attack as a "revenge for the killing of Muslims during the Gujarat riots" (Vyas 27 September 2002). Meanwhile, reports such as "Attack not revenge" (*The Hindu* 27 September 2002) and "A fallout of Gujarat riots" (Reddy 28 September 2002) reproduce official statements of Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf that ultimately reiterates the Islamic factor behind the attack.

Though it was not related to Akshardham attack an editorial "Continued provocation" brings certain counter-voices by exposing the repeated othering narratives on Muslims made by Mr. Modi. Apart from "justifying the minority-targeted pogrom after the Godhra carnage" Modi is criticized for "incendiary insinuations against Muslims by evoking the distasteful stereotype of a community that breeds fast" (*The Hindu* 25 September 2002c). However, the above reports show that *The Hindu* in its coverage of Akshardham attack reproduced the othering discourse on Muslims through stereotypical generalizations and targeted stigmatizations regarding their response to terrorism. This kind of media process of othering not only reconstructs the otherness of Islam and Muslims but also imparts power over them, as Brinks et al. (2006) noted, as America used "militant Islam" a catchphrase to wage a larger war globally.

Comparative Analysis and Discussion

The comparative analysis of the othering/orientalizing aspect of the media representations of Islam in Russia and India is carried out by figuring out the

similarities and differences. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* kept certain similarities and differences in their representations of Islam and Muslims in the wake of 9/11 attack, its anniversaries and during terrorist attacks in Russia and India during the years 2000-2005. Similarities can be listed as 1. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* generalized the ideological link between Islam and material force of the Muslim world behind the terroristic act of 9/11. 2. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* reproduced orientalizing narratives that stigmatized the Muslim world as "uncivilized Other" who celebrated the 9/11 attacks, "unethical Arabs" who financed terrorism, and "jihadi Mullahs" who distributed fatwas against the West. 3. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* essentialized the otherness of Islam generalizing the extremist voices while diverse views were given comparatively lesser space. 4. during the anniversaries of 9/11 and terrorist attacks in Russia and India *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* ideologically targeted Islam as the force behind "global network" of terrorism. 5. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* constructed othering narratives reproducing ethnic, national and cultural stereotypes on Muslims and Islam within Russia and India.

However, both these papers have shown differences in their discursive process of othering/orientalizing Islam and Muslims such as 1. While *Izvestia* essentializes the 9/11 attack as Islamic war against civilized world *The Hindu* generalizes it as the manifestation of "jihadi Islam" 2. *Izvestia* emphasizes on the "Orientalist" civilizing mission whereas *The Hindu* essentializes the "unchanging Other" image of the Muslim world. 3. *Izvestia* orientalizes the Islam and Muslim as "un-integrated Other" in the West while *The Hindu* stigmatizes them as "inferior-Other" lacking Western values. 4. *Izvestia* reproduces the "Orientalist" stereotypes on ethnic and national diversities of Islam and Muslims in Russia and *The Hindu* stigmatizes the cultural otherness of Islam and Muslims in India. 5. *Izvestia* generalizes the globally connected "evil Other" behind the local terroristic attacks such as "Nord-Ost" and Beslan whereas *The Hindu* stigmatize the locally motivated "reactionary Other" behind the attacks on Parliament attack and Akshardham.

Given such similarities and differences, we can argue that both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* used certain discursive methods to construct othering/orientalizing discourse on Islam and the Muslim world. Apart from reproducing "Orientalist" stereotypes, the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" was widely used in the representations of Islam and Muslims at home and abroad. The contrasting images of "civilized Self" against "uncivilized Other" were used to stigmatize the otherness of Islam and Muslim world. The dichotomy of "inferior Oriental Other" versus "superior Western Self" was used to orientalize the Islam and Muslims in the Western countries. In representing the domestic Islam and Muslims in Russia and India the image of "irrational and unchanging Other" was used to essentialize the otherness.

A few examples of such othering/orientalizing process through generalizing narratives, essentializing images and stigmatizing stereotypes are given below: The discursive process of othering is explicit in *Izvestia*'s generalization of 9/11 attack as an act "In the name of Allah". It's also evident in generalizing the response of Western forces as a "civilizing mission" and essentializing the civilized world's war as the "fight for Islam." *Izvestia* uses "Orientalist" exotic images of Muslim men who "all the time spent reading the Koran" and Muslim "women fasting with cracked lips and bleeding from the nose" to stigmatize the Muslim world to be modernized. It also generalizes the images of "despotic Islamic Other" that hardly "integrated to Western civic culture" to construct othering discourse on Islam and Muslims in Western countries. In spite of reproducing the stereotypes on "illiterate people in Islam," *Izvestia* essentializes the otherness of Islam in Russia arguing that many Slavic Muslims who embraced Islam were "mostly educated, people."And the Islam and Muslims in Russia are also stigmatized for "fatalism" and "aggression" regarding the tragedies such as "Nord-Ost" and Beslan.

Similar examples of othering/orientalizing process are there in *The Hindu* as it reproduces the stigmatizing discourses such as "Islam is not compatible with the rest of humanity" and Muslim world is "irresponsible to the civilized world order." *The Hindu* constructs othering discourse generalizing the 9/11 attack as the

beginning of the war "between the Western civilized world and the Islamic barbaric world." Generalizing the prejudice that "Arab part of the Muslim world harbored against the West" *The Hindu* constructs a dichotomy of "barbaric Other" that celebrates the attack on "civilized Self". It also essentializes Islam as a "despotic ideology" defended by war and violence and stigmatizes the "rulers of extremist Islamic countries" for "medieval otherness". *The Hindu* orientalizes "Islamic Other" in the West for being takers of conspiracy theories. The Islam and Muslims in India are essentialized as "fanatic and reactionary Other" during the attacks on Indian Parliament and Akshardham temple.

Therefore, in the discursive process *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* used generalized narratives, essentializing images and stigmatized stereotypes to construct othering/orientalizing discourse on Islam and Muslims. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* also used the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" and reproduced "Orientalist" stereotypes in the representations of Islam and Muslims at home and abroad.

Filed Work Data: Social Perceptions and Lived Experiences

Given such a context of media representations of Islam as an "Oriental Other" here we bring the current discourse on Islam and Muslims based responses and lived experiences collected and observed by the researcher through fieldwork in Russia and India. Such a fieldwork-based analysis is included to reflect upon the nuances between media discourses and the everyday life experiences and narratives of people from both countries regarding Islam and Muslims.

1. Russian Experience

The "Orientalist" notion of othering Islam and Muslims are not as much part and parcel of the popular perception of the people on the streets, markets and universities in Moscow, Petersburg, Kazan, and Ufa. Through participatory observation and conversations, the researcher could face diverse experiences and responses from university students, teachers, people on the street, market, mosques and security spots. While students and teachers of Moscow State University (MSU) responded

positively and helped very professionally to make the life easy in Russia. The social milieu on the markets, shopping malls in Moscow where you find Halal Shops, Halal foods and people in Muslim dress codes and traditions do normal business and earn for their daily life. People like Ismail from Algeria and his colleagues from Central Asian countries were working freely in shopping malls and young men like Shameel from Dagestan, a graduate in medical science, are looking for a job in Moscow.

a. Community Perspective

Certifying the coexisting attitude of religious communities in Russia, Intigam from Astrakhan, research scholar and teaching assistant at political science faculty of MSU, admitted that he "feels nothing bad being a Muslim and Russian" (Intigam 2017). Similarly, Shamil who came for Friday *jumua* at the famous Moscow Cathedral Mosque (*Московская соборная мечеть*), waiting to meet the Imam to ask some fatwa on personal matters, unequivocally responded that he didn't feel any othering in Russia even in job sector but is annoyed with the extremists in his home republic and says "they create a lot of problem for common people." Shamil had a friend from Egypt who was a Christian and they kept good relations with other religious people (Shameel 2017).

Most of the migrants from Central Asian countries who came for Friday prayer and spend time with fellow believers in Cathedral mosque responded negatively on their relations with Russians. However, Tamirlan, a student of Moscow Islamic Institute, gave positive views on Islam and Muslims in Russia. Though he admits that Russian media generally don't report good things about Islam and TV shows give a negative image, Tamirlan suggests that most of the people don't know the essence of Islam (Tamirlan 2017). However, a young man (preferred to be anonymous) from Dagestan working in the souvenir shop near the Mosque, with a skull cap and beard, a student of economics speaking English fluently, reacted that there would be fear and hypocrisy in answering about Islam and Muslims in Russia. Since the condition of Islam and Muslims in Russia is not appropriate to

answer the questions of othering, enemy imaging he suggested that the best answer for such questions will get from the internet.

Being the representatives of the official Muftiate, both Mubarak, the duty Imam of Cathedral Mosque, and Dr. Marati Irshaif, an official in the department of religious affairs remain careful in their responses and avoided any controversial statements especially regarding the relations between State, Christianity, and Islam. Although they avoided answering many questions both agreed that global discourses on Islam have an impact on local narratives and 9/11 has influenced media representation of Islam in Russia. But they didn’t explain the way it affected Russian Islam and Muslims. However, they were vocal about the return of Islam and Muslim cultures after Soviet atheism (Mubarak and Irshaif 2017).

They praised the leadership of Ravil Gainuddin for making things better and claimed that “under his leadership now we have better Islamic system like Arabs and Islamic institutions, mosques and education are getting more acceptances among Russians now” (Mubarak and Irshaif 2017). They explained that under the leadership of Gynuddin Russian Muslims get very good relations with people in Russia and with Muslim countries and others and it has an impact on their view and relations with Russia. And Mufti Gynuddin was invited for a meeting with President Putin and President of Kyrgyzstan which underlines that Islam and Muslim leaders are playing an important role even in the international relations of Russia whereas the culture and language also play a role in Russian relations with the Muslim world as Muslims in Russia and Central Asian countries share a Turkic language. Thus, both Mubarak and Irshaif underlined the return of Islam from a situation when there were no mosques during the war years in Russia. Once democratic governments came to power Islamic and Muslim institutions get more convenience to return to its earlier stage where educational and religious institutions that government never interferes (Mubarak and Irshaif 2017).

In his brief reply on othering Imam Shamil Alyautdinov of Memorial Mosque in Moscow, who is very famous for his active social life and community

interactive programs, responded that "until now, the media is dominated by an Orientalist, atheistic mode of analysis on what is happening in contemporary Islamic and Muslim regions. Their authoritative opinion dominates" (Alyautdinov 2017).

However, Asa`ad the *Muadin* (one who performs *adhan*) of Memorial Mosque was very positive to respond that:

> The relations with Christians are good because Islam is directing to help each other with good deeds as Quran advises that Allah doesn't prevent you from dealing fair with those who do not war with you and until they expel you from your homes and it also directs to do justice to others and Allah verily love those who do justice. Thus we are in good relations (Asa`ad 2017).

Responding to the question of the relations with state Asa`ad replied:

> We have the same relationship with the government. The government cooperates with Muslims and it helps to organize annual conferences of Muslims and thus every year we conduct international competition of *hifzul-Quran* in Moscow. And we organize Iftar in all 30 days of Ramadan in which Muslims and non-Muslims (around 1000 people every day) participate and government cooperates for all such activities clearing documents and official approvals (Asa`ad 2017).

However, Asa`ad admitted that there are technical issues behind this:

> There are problems to construct Masjids and Madrasas because of land issues. And there are only four Mosques in Moscow whereas there are more than a thousand Churches. You must have witnessed that there is no space for believers in masjid and people praying outside on Friday. And the situation is same in Cathedral mosque which is the biggest among the four in Moscow (Asa`ad 2017).

Asa`ad also underlined the cultural cooperation between religious communities in Russia pointing out that:

> This Mosque is known as *'Masjidu-Shuhada'* (memorial mosque) and on the other sides of this park, there is a Memorial Church and a Memorial Synagogue. This park and worshiping places were built in memory of the soldiers killed in Russian war against Germany during World War II. People from all religions fought for Russia against Germany and sacrificed their lives for the country and these are their memorials (Asa`ad 2017).

Responding to his experience in Russia Sunnath, a Tajik pharmacist pointed out that he has been to Russia for nine years and didn't face any problem, especially in Moscow. In the wake of the recent bomb blasts in Saint Petersburg, Sunnath,

responded that “we don’t have any problem. I don’t know the situation in Petersburg. In Russia Islam get support from the people” (Sunnath 2017).

Similarly, Imam Khairuddin of the mosque in Sennoy Bazaar in Saint Petersburg responded that Islam is in good condition and Muslims are in good relations with Christianity and others in Petersburg and Russia in general. Rejecting the radical views he reminded that Allah has directed to be in good relations especially with *Ahl-Kitab* that’s Christians. He denied any kind of difficulties even for migrants after the recent bomb blasts in Petersburg metro (Khairuddin 2017).

Meanwhile, sharing the experiences of Muslims in different areas of Russia, Jambolt, a Chechen student at Kazan Islamic University responded that:

> In Chechnya, Muslims are in quite free for following Islam and practicing it. Women are following hijab and Islamic traditions. And now Chechens don’t face problems in other parts of Russia. Identifying your face police may ask the identity cards and verify and let you go free. Chechens even don’t face problems after any terrorist attack. But there are problems for Muslims in Siberia and Dagestan (Jambolt 2017).

With his official experience as a representative of Muslims of Bashkortostan, Artur Suleimanov Rector, Russian Islamic University in Ufa, proudly argued that “there is no othering or enemy imaging of Muslims in our country and when some terroristic acts happen the blame falls on the criminals or terrorists, not on the Muslim” (Suleimanov 2017). His colleague Damir also added that “in Russia media and channels treat Islam in a bad way but it tries to say that Islam has very old and deep roots in the country and the Muslims living here are natives and not outsiders” (Damir 2017). Suleimanov further argued that:

> The government in our republic also helps the Muslims to develop madrasas and universities for better religious education. In Russia, there are total 7 Islamic Universities located in Ufa, Kazan, Moscow, Grozny, Dagestan and Caucasus which get every help from the government. If we don’t have the support of the government we could not provide educational facilities for around hundreds of students in our universities (Suleimanov 2017).

Responding to the general negative representation of Central Asian people, Suleimanov clarified that:

> Russians may feel the problem of migrants from Asian countries because the level of education and civilization in Russia is higher than in Central Asian countries. After the Soviet disintegration Central Asian countries have faced problems with education and medical health systems. And the Asian people often could not understand some traditions in Russia and that's why Central Asian people are employed in cleaning and cooking and etc. (Suleimanov 2017).

The above discussion shows the diverse view among Muslims of Russia regarding the othering discourses and media representations of their identity and religion. While ordinary migrant people feel a kind of othering and targeted by media most of the religious representatives respond positively regarding the relations with other communities. This trend challenges the media-constructed notion of Islam and Muslims as "civilizational Other" in Russia. Contrary to the othering discourse on Islam as a religion of migrants or of people without links to established local Muslim institutions, as Agadjanian (2000) argued, the above discussion underlines the will of Muslim communities to situate them in a contemporary Russian, and global Islamic community (Agadjanian 2000: 79).

b. The perspective of Fellow Community People

The common indifference to the religious identity of fellow people explicitly came out in an informal talk with Russian research scholar Mark from MSU, who claimed to be an atheist because as a student of physics he doesn't believe in miracles, but categorically admitted that he doesn't feel any problem with Islam or any other religion and he never thought of any Islamic or Muslim threat in Russia (Mark 2017). In an interaction with Natasha, student of Oriental Studies, Saint Petersburg University, on how do they know about Islam responded that "I think our studies here can give adequate information about the situation in the world which is happening about Islam and genuinely I can give sober judge. I am not that much dependent on media" (Natasha 2017). Responding to the question of othering Islam and Muslims Natasha noted that "it depends upon the context of the situation. In certain parts of Russia, there is Muslim population in Tatarstan but we don't feel any

negative attitude toward them and they are not involved in any negative stuff" (Natasha 2017).

However, Natasha replied that the relationship between Orthodox and Islam is pretty good and peaceful and there is no racist element although the particular event of 9/11 had a big impact on the cues of the society on Muslim situation. Moreover, some other events that happened in some regions of Russia also have a direct influence on our judgment on Islam. Natasha also admitted that she keeps a balanced view of Islam and Muslims while common people are ignorant about the things and perceive things with prejudices. While she praised the artistic beauty of the centuries-old mosque and other Muslim heritages of cafeterias and oriental cuisines her friend Renat, whose father (owner of a restaurant) is Syrian, admitted that he feels no kind of othering in Russia and never wanted to go back to Syria. However, walking along Sennoy Bazar, which is known as Muslim pocket flooded by migrants from Central Asia, both Natasha and Renat warned of pickpocketing and theft (Natasha and Renat 2017). Their remarks on the market reflected the general perception of Russian people on the migrant Muslims in a "modern" cultural space like Saint Petersburg.

Apart from experiencing the hospitality of Dr. Anna Chelnakova of Saint Petersburg State University and her husband Zhenia, an army officer, the researcher could talk to them about their experiences with Islam and Muslim communities. Originally from Chechnya, Zhenia liked to talk about the mountain and hill people and their traditional cultures. As an army officer who led a team in Chechnya Zhenia noted that Chechens are not ready to work properly and even dropped military service but they blame others especially Russians for everything. He was not impressed with their traditions like horse riding and gun firings during weddings. He feels that Russian government could control the situation there. Responding to the question of Muslim representations in Russian military Zhenia said he couldn't find Muslims on the top level (Chelnakova and Zhenia 2017).

Similarly, Anna's student Gleb explained his interest in Islam and its traditions as part of his research on Indian Sufism focusing on Chishti poet Malik in Awadh. Gleb has been to India and visited Sufi shrines of Ajmer and Nizamuddin and closely watches Isalm and Muslims in Russia and India. Despite being an atheist Gleb admitted the dominance of Orthodoxy and the mutual support of Church and state and he questioned popular media discourses on Islam and Muslims in Russia especially after the Saint Petersburg bomb blast. He argued that "the blast was organized by criminals but immigrants were easily blamed and there are opposition leaders who accuse President Putin's role behind such acts to cover some political controversy during his visit to Petersburg" (Gleb 2017). However, Gleb suggested that the normal relationships between Muslims and others continue despite their religious identities and diverse practices (Gleb 2017).

While walking along the Sennoy Bazar, the same area Natasha and Renat warned not to visit, Gleb reminded that this is the place where you can feel and observe the living Islam and Muslims in Russia. Being a usual visitor to this place he was familiar with the different restaurants, shops and market mostly run by people from Central Asia. In a temporarily arranged masjid on top of a building in the market, Gleb met the Imam to get permission for him as a Christian to enter the masjid. Contrary to the media constructed images of Mullahs and masjids it was truly exciting that the Imam Khairuddin warmly welcomed both of us to the masjid and Gleb waited to watch the evening namaz and prayers. When the Imam appreciated Gleb for his interest in research on Islam he amused to see the Imam responding to my questions since he was known for just saying "Masha Allah" for any important questions regarding Islam and Muslims. Being a young scholar on Islam and Muslim cultures Gleb expressed his fascination with the confluence of cultures during a live concert by Ustad Shujat Khan that marked the blend of cultures as Muslim qawwals represent India in a Christian dominated land (Gleb 2017).

Similarly, on the way to Qulsharif Mosque in Kazan, Dimitry, from Oriental Studies at Kazan Federal University (KFU), explained on the culture of cooperation

between Muslims and Christians with 50/50 share in the population. Being a protestant Christian Dimitry described that Orthodoxy and traditional Sunni Muslims as the main sects respectively in Christianity and Islam and explained the history of a surviving Cathedral in the street (oldest in Kazan), the statues of martyrs with Arabic inscriptions on the wall of Kremlin and a tower inside. Dimitry explained the cultural exchange of Qulsharif Mosque and Annunciation Cathedral located side by side behind the Kremlin walls while he could enter the mosque and witness the Friday prayer (Dimitry 2017).

Daniel, a student of Oriental Studies at KFU, explained the ignorance of people about the nation of Islam and therefore the unwanted blaming of Muslims for every problem in the society (Daniel 2017). Sharing her experience living with Muslims Xenia, a receptionist in a hostel in Kazan pointed out that:

> Kazan and Tatarstan have a confluence of Christians and Muslims in a 50/50 range but only 15 percent may be practicing religion and the rest are not affiliated with religious communities but atheists. And there are Russian and Tatar mixed families and continue traditions like celebrating Easter and Muslim festivals. I have a lot of Tatar friends but I don't think of them as Tatar. Most of my female friends are Tatars. And for last 20 years, things are normal here thanks to the presidents like Shamiaev practice propagate tolerance towards every community (Xenia 2017).

However, through her direct experience Xenia kept fascinating perspective on Caucasian people arguing that:

> I lived in Caucasia for 3 years among 600 hundred scientists in a kind of Russian oasis surrounded by Caucasians who had no civilization (laughing) who were riding horses. They are Muslims and I have met them and talked to them and found that Caucasians don't have money and good education but they are true to their religion. When I told them that I sing in the Church they respected me for my religiosity (Xenia 2017).

But Xenia has a very different approach towards her native people in Tatarstan:

> I don't think such things happen with Tatars because they spend more time with Russians. Since we won Kazan in 16th century and Russians came here it was a terrible time. Tatars moved from central part of Kazan to the west of Kremlin and made a Tatar settlement. Historically the Eastern part of the canal was Russian and western Tatar but now it's mixed. The Qolsarif mosque is built on the memory of an Imam named Sharif who was killed in the 16th century. Now the old Tatar settlement

has a lot of old mosques. It's now like a Muslim ghetto. Historically Tatars are good traders and their houses are beautiful and their families are rich and they live on the ground and very hospital people. Living on the ground means that they live very simple life like common men because Russians are like pagans living somewhere in nature but Tatars are very simple (Xenia 2017).

The response of people from fellow communities regarding Islam and Muslims in Russia also represent the diversity in the perception other than the media-constructed essentialized images of "Other within." However, stereotyped images of "Oriental Other" popularized by media are reflected in the remarks on different Muslim nationalities and migrants. And this trend underlines what Malashenko (2006) observed on the general Russian perception of Islam and Muslims as as alien or friendly is depended on political situations (Malashenko 2006: 28-29).

c. Expert Views

Responding to the question of othering, Dr. Ugena Venina, Indologist at Institute of Oriental Studies and Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, argued that "we Russians love and live in cooperation and there is no issue for Muslims to live here since you can get Islamic and Muslim tradition in every Russian home" (Venina 2017). Venina claimed that if there are many Muslim enclaves where you cannot go in many Western countries, there are no such exclusions in Russia whereas we share the traditions, share the dinner, and there is a food chain opened by a Muslim lady that serving even pork (Venina 2017).

Though Venina argued that Russians never make distinctions between Central Asian people since they are living for years since Soviet times, she expressed the discontent with the young migrants who are allegedly creating a problem. To establish her point Vienna pointed the example of the Cathedral-mosque, where local Russian Muslims lived here for centuries and used to go to this mosque, now they are unhappy, they prefer other masjids because there are a lot of Central Asian people coming to this mosque who are not ready to accept Russian Muslims. She also remarked that Russian President receives leaders of religious communities very

warm and he talks with religious people while Putin himself inaugurated the Cathedral-mosque and we have traditional religious concepts of four confessions (Venina 2017).

As an expert on Islamic Studies, Dr. Vassily Kuznetovn at the same institute, responded that the media coverage of 9/11 could not bring much impact in Russia whereas the public perception and civil opinion in society regarding Islam in Russia was more dealt with Chechen wars and it may be dealing with Afghanistan war may be. Responding to the Orientalist discursive practice Kuznetovn noted that there is partially Russian Orientalism as you can find Orientalism everywhere. However, he argued that:

> At the same time Muslims and Islam is part of our civilization and more or less we feel it. Of course, there is a problem with some local national tradition were included in global Russian culture. For example, many Tatar authors are not known for non-Tatars. Not only of Islamic Tatar culture but also some person like Ğabdulla Tuqay were not known for non-Tatars and the same thing with Caucasian people. But at the same time, there are a number of Muslim artists who were part of global Russian culture who adapted to the Russian language (Kuznetovn 2017).

Dr. Nargis Nurulla of the same institute responded to the question of whether there is a "Muslim question" like in the years of Russian Empire arguing that:

> It's not in that sense since Muslims are more incorporated in and are more adapted into Russian society. Western writings might be projecting Russian Islam as a question because of Syrian case and all other issues and since western countries use foreign literature it's quite difficult to judge (Nurulla 2017).

Regarding the Orientalist approach among Russians on modernizing Islam, Nurulla suggested that "it might be but there is mosaic kind of opinion and the official-side is quite clear and the general trend is somehow acceptable" (Nurulla 2017). However, she argued that:

> There are different kinds of dealing with the people from Central Asia as foreigners since generally Russians accept your nationality but there are quite opposite responses that as an intellectual I feel very complicated to respond like a journalist. You may find a newspaper in the morning saying its first time to have Muslim in the society. The practice of othering may differ in different contexts. Other in Moscow may be different from other in Kazan. Otherness is not so obvious and diversity is there not much like in India though it's not that much different (Nurulla 2017).

Meanwhile, Dr. Alikber Alikberov of the same institute explained that they develop Orientalism scholarship through joint works of different schools of scientific and religious programs to explain Islam and to engage in discourse like "Grozny fatwa scandal" that tried to exclude one community from Islam. And he noted that:

> If you talk about the Saidian version of Orientalism in Russia we had no negative version of Orientalism, it was there in Soviet times and we call them Orientalist because they were atheists. Actually, in Russia, we have many Muslims who have created faculties and departments working in Universities and they were originally Arabs, Persians and Turks originally from their countries worked as professors at our academies where we had people from Germany, Dutch and from across Europe (Alikberov 2017).

Regarding the colonial aspect of the Russian empire, Alikberov admitted that:

> We had some kind of colonialism during Tzar-time and when the colonized people joined the Russian aristocracy they were known as "*Podeneie"* (people of the king) not as a citizen, with more rights and were better than *"Kryposniey"* (Russians who were working in field or tenants who followed Christianity) and Muslims got more freedom than Russians. In Europe, there were feudal people and feudal rules and they changed the rules only later. We have some specificities that's why even Said did not include Russia in his Orientalism project (Alikberov 2017).

Talking about the current Russian media discourse on Islam Prof. Viktor Kolomiets of Department of Sociology of Mass Communications Faculty of Journalism, MSU argued that:

> There is a kind of "Orientalist" approach since we still are mentally Western people and Russian culture is closer to the West though we don't have a point of references for this "Orientalist" tradition. Even some correspondents of Russian media from Central Asian countries cover about that but it's very difficult to attribute "Orientalist" approach to the pre-dominantly Western media we have. Russian journalism was affected very much by Anglo-Saxon model of journalism which is very much Western. Therefore the format of media like Al-Jazeera and other TV channels is not understandable. I would say that we have lack of this. But it would be nice to have different views (Kolomiets 2017).

In a detailed conversation on different issues of Islam and Muslims in contemporary Russia Dr. Guzel Sabirova, of HSE Campus in St. Petersburg / School of Social Sciences and Humanities / Department of Sociology, pointed out to a social phenomenon, the so-called conservative turn in Russia such as beginning Orthodoxy

lessons in schools. While Islam is the second religion in Russia after Orthodoxy, Sabirova argued that:

> Though the representation of Islam plays the important role we cannot just say Islam is part of Russia actually though officially its part of Russia. During the Soviet time, for example, the main mosque in Moscow was always open. It played a representative role for all the foreign communist Islamic countries. The Soviet Union was politically unifying communist countries including Islamic countries thus Moscow had to show its support to them. Exactly till 1929 the religion was very much supported in the Soviet Union and there were religious newspapers, schools and Jadidsm had developed. Even the Caucasus was like a Muslim republic or something like with currency with Arabic letters but there is no much literature on that period. From 1930s Stalinist repression started till 1942. But during the war period, there was softening of the politics because they understood that religion is the source of the solidarity of the people. And even in that period, there was some repression of religious Mullahs who came back home from their camps. And historically also it's difficult to say the place of the religion of Islam since it was very different even in Russian empire too (Sabirova 2017).

In the wake of such a historical evolution of Muslim identity question Sabirova pointed to the current discourse on "Muslim Question" suggesting that:

> Now I don't think there is such a discourse. Some people had tried to construct the "Muslim Question" at the beginning of the 90s after the dissolution of Soviet Union and it was considered as part of the nationalist movement and national revival. And the major places of this revival was North Caucasus especially Chechnya and secondly Tatarstan (Sabirova 2017).

Addressing the different approaches of Islam in Russia, Sabirova argued that, Gradirovsky articulated "Russian Islam" as a concept that preaches in mosques is taught using the Russian language. Gradirovsky was not a scientist but one who represents the state or authority. And Rafael Hakimov, one of the closes to the Shamiaev the president of Tatarstan, developed the idea of "Euro Islam" as a different concept.

Therefore "Traditional Islam", "Euro Islam" and "Russian Islam" were the big political projects in the way how Islam framed in post-Soviet Russia (Sabirova 2017). Meanwhile, responding to the othering of Islam and Muslims Sabirova admitted that:

> There is a kind of othering not only Chechens but also people from Dagestan and North Caucasus in general. So, someone who looks like Caucasian nationality has been stigmatized all these years. And this stigmatization is a new phenomenon with Central Asian migrants developing probably since 2005 massively. And this helps somehow introducing a new image of othering, because earlier only people from North Caucasus, Chechnya, Dagestan were very much stigmatized. They were called with not nice words and often used by newspapers to describe them and were used in everyday life and xenophobia was very high. And partly, of course, it is connecting to Islam too. I would say that we are existing in the common field of interactions. I would not culturalize these differences. Actually, there should be the rule of relationship not rule of othering and I could not say this is good and this is bad. The idea of Islam is even partly in crisis in current times to convey its messages (Sabirova 2017).

Moreover, responding to the trend of orientalizing of Muslim nationalities Sabirova admitted that:

> Of course, there is 'orientalization' but othering and 'orientalization' are interconnected. I myself a Tatar and if somebody knows that, they will call me an eastern woman. Partly I felt a kind of othering in Russia because we are living in gender-sensitive society and some professors can easily misuse it. Like eastern woman eastern men also are stereotyped as the famous Soviet song goes "if I were a Sultan I would have four wives" and like the saying "if you scratch a Russian you will find a Tatar" and "a Tatar is the worst piece than an uninvited guest." This is the result of very strong 'orientalization' as Adeeb Khalid and others noted (Sabirova 2017).

Regarding the Russian claims of positive discrimination towards Islam and Muslim societies Sabirova observed that:

> It is a very difficult discussion and only through postcolonial studies, we can discuss such history. However, as a counter-discourse, we have developed a project, creative fields of inter-ethnic inter-religious interactions. My idea is to find cultural spaces where ethnicity and religion don't matter. Unified like these University spaces accommodating different identities knowing each other and understanding. I think it's very important to show the common space and not to create 'others' but to consider them as part of society. We have people who work on such social projects arranging tables in the yards of neighborhoods. During Muslim holidays like Nauroz and Qurban migrant, people will prepare food and share the table with the people from neighborhoods and they eat together. There was a Soviet concept of nation-building called 'friendship of the people' in which people will share their festivals in different costumes dancing and singing. Now in Saint Petersburg also there are

> attempts to educate and spread tolerance through different cultural activities including foot dancing. Many are skeptical about the effectiveness of such activities because to change and a hostile society and make it more open is very difficult. It's not particular only to Muslims (Sabirova 2017).

Responding to the media coverage of Islam, Timir Shykhitdinov teacher in Journalism Department KFU, pointed that at the federal level Russian media cover the Muslim celebrations, *Qurban Byram,* and others because of the importance of Muslims. Shykhitdinov also suggested that:

> The relationship between Muslims and Christians are very good. In an international conference, people from Arab world praised our relationship with Christian community because in Islam you should keep good relations with neighbors. In Arabia your neighbors are Muslim but in Tatarstan, it could be Christians and we keep a good relationship (Shykhitdinov 2017).

Though the expert views include observations that challenge the narratives constructed by media on Islam and Muslims, there are revealing perspectives on the othering and orientalizing practice in media and society. With personal experiences and participatory observations, many of them admitted the "Orientalist" othering practice not only in the discourse but also in dealing with Isla and Muslims. At the same time, there are responses that reflect the media-constructed "Other" image of Islam and Muslims in Russia. And this notion of "Other" ultimately reminds the Russian "Orientalist" tradition as Browerand Lazzerini (1997) and Adeeb Khalid (2000) argued.

2. Indian Experiences

The participatory observations and unstructured discussions with people across Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Kochi also evoked diverse experiences on perspectives of othering Islam or Muslims in India. While the Jama Masjid in Delhi and Makkah Masjid of Hyderabad represent the meeting points of diverse cultural milieu the universities, markets and Darghas keep the culture of exchange between communities. And it would be quite unbelievable to find Jama Masjid (Muslim) Naina Devi Mandir (Hindu), Benjamin Yunas (Parsi), Gurudwara Sisganj Sahib

(Sikh) and Central Baptist Church (Christ) in a single space, Chandni Chowk in Delhi. The similar coexistence of religious places and communities can be witnessed in Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Kochi underlining the spirit of cultural confluence despite religious differences. People like Ghulam Rasool, who coordinates the qawwalis at Nizamuddin dargah in Delhi and Santhosh Kumar, who performs the puja at Hanuman Mandir in Hyderabad unequivocally declare that none of them can think of othering fellow communities and their religious practices.

a. Community Perspective

It was surprising to hear Husaini, the caretaker of a mosque in Aminabad, Lucknow responding supportively of a recent ban on meat products arguing that it could check the health problems of people and can end the adulteration practices followed by food sellers. However, he highlighted the coexistence of diverse cultures on Lucknow streets without any othering practices between Hindu and Muslims (Husaini 2017). This phenomenon could experience, having kulfi from famous Prakash Kulfi shop with Akram and Imran, middle-aged Qureshi men (who are engaged in meat business), who responded that all the measures restricting meat business are politically motivated and things will be normal since Lucknow can't live without kababs (Akram and Imran 2017).

During a break time for qawwalis at Nizamuddin Dargah in New Delhi, the qawwal Ghulam Rasool replied to the questions on the pretext that he is not an expert in serious matters. However, he pointed that "what we know is that Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian people coming in the Dargah are praying for the better and may Allah hear this anyway" (Rasool 2017). Responding to the controversies regarding Islam and Muslim personal laws Ghulam Rasool said that:

> The literate people may watch the media and understand things but there are thousands of people across the country who living in the slums and streets don't know about these things. Since the prime minister repeatedly asking that is there any problem for Muslims under my government, we have to say that there may be debates for example on the number of saints but we cannot afford any question on the basic tenets of our religion (Rasool 2017).

Responding to the question on media coverage of Islam, Fayyaz Ahmad, Imam of Toli Chowk Mosque, Hyderabad noted that “the media reports on Islam are mostly wrong and it affects the Muslims badly” (Ahmad 2017). However, Ahmad rejected any othering experience arguing that:

> The relationship between Hindu and Muslims is in good condition and those who want to disrupt it have personal political ambitions. Narendra Modi, who was unknown before the Gujarat riots of 2002, is the best example of utilizing communal tension to become Prime Minister. Only after becoming Prime Minister, people came to know that he was a ‘tea vendor’ and nobody was aware of it when mass murders happened (Ahmad 2017).

Meanwhile, Irshad, a student of nearby college who attended the evening prayer in the mosque, also responded that “the news are mostly negative on Islam is the main target of attack by media and others. And such news hurt me as a believer” (Irshad 2017). However, he denied any othering and admitted that “there are good relations between Muslims and Hindus as I belong to a village where we celebrate all religious festivals united. But media rarely covers such matters of unity and hardly tells the truth” (Irshad 2017).

After paying tributes to a dargah nearby Hanuman temple, Nizamuddin who is originally from Bihar and working as a school teacher in Hyderabad pointed that “the brotherhood between communities still sustain as you see the dargah and mandir survive side by side” (Nizamuddin 2017). Nizamuddin explained the way how othering narrative will develop “now people may spread that mandir is the oldest and dargah came later. The brotherhood between communities only can bring progress to the country otherwise the nation will destroy (Nizamuddin 2017). Sheikh Gafoor, a juice vendor on the streets of Hyderabad, also feels no difficulties in relations with Hindus and he remembers the controversy in his village in Anantapur district regarding construction of a road through a masjid compound. “Though the issue was very volatile in the beginning, things became normal and no communal tension resulted and we keep in good relations”(Gafoor (2017).

The above discussion on the responses of community members explains the diversity of views on othering of Islam and Muslims in India. The media-constructed

essentializing narratives on the "Other asset" of Muslims and Islam are challenged by everyday experiences of the people. However, certain responses reflect the influence of media-constructed discourse of othering/orientalizing Islam and Muslims in India. As Hasan (1994) noted, unlike other religious groups, such an "Other asset" of Muslumis in India is constructed through the notion that "they constitute a community, ordered, unified and homogeneous" (Hasan1994:443).

b. The Perspective of Fellow Community People

It was unusual to see a temporary deity is installed under the banyan tree a few yards of the main gate whereas a dargah is venerated near the academic buildings of Lucknow University. Explaining such a shared life of Muslims and Hindus in his hometown Lucknow, Rajiv Tiwari, Research Scholar at Institute for Social and Economic Change, Banglore noted that he couldn't imagine Lucknow without the sounds of adhan and bhajans that he used to hear from young ages. Tiwari rejected all the calls for silencing voices of religious diversity which is the crux of Indian culture. He expressed the discontent on othering of a community restricting their non-vegetarian food culture which has been popular even among Hindus.

The displeasure of shutting down of the kabab shops such as *Tunde ke Kabab* could be understood from the response of Tiwari and other fellow Hindu merchants and common people who used to the kabab-biriyani culture of Lucknow. There were many including rickshaw drivers, domestic and foreign tourists roaming around the streets talking about and looking for the cultural cuisines of Lucknow while the voices of othering Muslim cultural symbols echoed in media and political spheres (Tiwari 2017).

Responding to the question of relations with the fellow Muslim community, Prabhu, a student of Hyderabad Central University noted that "we Hindus and Muslims are equal and no issues with Muslims in my city Madanappally and there are no terroristic activities. Muslims are busy in business" (Prabhu 2017). Since Muslims in his city eat beef only in festivals Prabhu "feels bad in Hyderabad because

here Muslims and Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes 'categories' from Hindus eat beef" (Prabhu 2017). Being a member of an upper caste Hindu family Prabhu doesn't consume beef and he suggests that "eating beef is not good for health." Though he reiterates that Muslims and Hindus are in good relations in his hometown Prabhu has no clear answer about the relationship with Muslim students in the University (Prabhu 2017).

In a brief conversation after his evening puja, Santhosh Kumar, a priest in Hanuman temple adjacent to a dargah in Tollychowk Hyderabad, pointed out that:

> For 120 years my family serves as the priests in the temple while Dargah is also present there for almost same years and we don't have any clash between Hindus and Muslims. We share the festivals and the devotees visit both temple and dargah." This area is dominated by Muslims but we don't have to face any problem. There are Muslims who even give money to this Hanuman temple and ask for praying to full fill their wish. And Hindus visit dargah and there would be big gatherings on Tuesday (special day for devotees of Hanuman). And there are similar temples and dargahs along this road (Kumar 2017).

Similarly, Chandra Shekhar, a taxi driver living for 30 years in Hyderabad, paying homage in front of the mandir, responded that "being a converted Christian doesn't feel any difficulty in living with Muslims or Hindus" (Shekhar 2017). Shekhar who is working under a Muslim Sait argued that "there are good and bad people among Muslims but never faced a communal othering" (Shekhar 2017). Shekhar reminded that "I am Christian, you are a Muslim and we are standing before a Temple we are praying to the same god in different ways. I feel old generations were better Muslims than the youngsters who even in Ramazan go for drinks in the night time" (Shekhar 2017).

Spending a day in Kochi in the house of a friend (liked to be anonymous) with different cultural affiliations, evoked the experience of cultural coexistence. The "Onam gathering" and the feast arranged by a friend (liked to be anonymous) also brought the similar experience of sharing the cultural diversity and tasting the cuisine of mutual understanding that negates othering discourses.

Therefore, the responses of fellow community people on Islam and Muslims expose the biased discursive process of media. While most of the people from different walk of life perceive Islam and Muslims from their immediate neighborhood the on media-constructed narratives get minimum space in public discourse. However, as Engineer (1999) noted the "Other" image of Muslims in India is partly the result of stereotypical media constructuion of this minority community as homogeneous and orthodox-sectarian (Engineer 1999:2134).

c. Expert Views

In his response regarding the Orientalist discursive practice of othering of Islam and the Muslim world at large, Prof. AK Ramakrishnan, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, observed that:

> There are two aspects of othering; one is the global monolithic image created on Islam as an enemy of western civilization, democracy and etc. The other one is a long-standing Indian idea about minorities in general and Islam in particular from partition days. Interestingly now these two things are playing together. There are two hegemonic discourses on Islam. So, the society at large and media, in particular, are influenced by the global and national hegemonic discourses on Islam. If the American and European centered media are reproducing the monolithic, Islamophobic notions here the far-right nationalist forces are at the forefront of spreading anti-Islamic notions (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Tracing the colonial legacy of such a discursive practice even before 9/11 Ramakrishnan argued that:

> 9/11 was not the starting point of such trend but it increased this flow. Said was writing "Covering Islam" or media representations of Islam in early 80s to expose such a trend prevalent in western media. The colonial Orientalist baggage has been with western media along with new imperialist interests and requirement. That kind of image building in a particular direction portrays Islam as a kind of enemy of Western democracy. On the one hand, it was based on a general notion about Islam that media reproduced without going to the diversity of Muslim cultures across the world or considering the historic contributions of Muslim intellectuals and Islamic political systems, philosophers and others. And the very diversity not only in the practice of Islam in various countries but the diversity of the thoughts and the diversity of political notions that existed among Muslims were neglected. Some of these diversities are brought forth and much of the hegemonic image of Islam has been broken. What media is actually doing is not only harming the independent

> reporting or coverage but not showing these diversities are buying to the hegemonic discourses (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Moreover, Ramakrishnan elaborated how Indian discourse on Islam has been influenced by the Western “Orientalist” notions:

> In India, there is a kind of replication of western imperialist orientalist notions rather than a reversal flow. The global and national are going hand in hand not one against the other. The monocultural notions about India and hegemonic cultural nationalist discourses perceive India as a singular entity. And the contributions of Islam into the Indian culture are not recognized. The long-term history of India’s trade and cultural interactions with Arab world even before the beginning of Islam will never be recognized if we construct our history in a monocultural way. The Islamic cultural element has shaped us and in a way, Islam has been a part of Indian culture for centuries. The extreme nationalist political view and the purified notion of Indian culture, in the nationalist historiography, has undermined or camouflaged the contributions of Islam (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Historicizing this process of othering Ramakrishnan argued that:

> It’s not a recent development the far-rights construct such debates but it has developed over a period of time. Even in the modern historiography by prominent people failed to give proper attention to the Islamic contributions and there is a lack from the very beginning. However, if there were certain lacks in historiography the recent attempts are to totally obliterate contributions of Islam and on the other way around making an enemy image of Islam. As a major change, the earlier undermining of Islamic elements has now turned into animosity towards Islam. In the place of total neglect now an actual image of the enemy is framed on Islam. It’s a qualitative change for the worse (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Discussing on the discursive practice of Indian media, Prof. Thirumal of Department of Communication, University of Hyderabad, argued that “if you take the dominant representations and media in India there are only a few islands of very sensitive media and the large oceans are of simply capitalist or rightist varieties” (Thirumal 2017). Historically approaching the media discourses on Islam Prof. Thirumal noted that “I don't believe that prior 9/11 there was more sensible understanding of Islam” (Thirumal 2017).

During their visit to Delhi, Daya from Kochi and Kritika from Bangalore, now working for an International foundation for education in Telangana, shared their views on media images of Islam and the othering discourses. Being graduates of

media studies both of them admitted a kind of negative representation of Islam is prevalent in Indian media. Regarding 9/11 incidents Daya argued that:

> It had a huge impact on the global discourse on politics and religions which affected even our country. Though many similar incidents happened around the world the US projected 9/11 as the major event of history and started moral policing others and civilizing the countries (Daya 2017).

Kritika also supported the argument by saying "the US made the 9/11 moment as the central point of terrorism in the 21st century. They had no worries about the schools bombed in Pakistan and they don't care about the sufferings of people in other countries than the US" (Kritika 2017). However, Kritika says "unlike the old people the young generation has the access to alternative media sources to know the other sides of stories" (Kritika 2017). Daya underlined this point "in the time of 9/11 we were kids and came to know about the incidents through one newspaper but now we have different sources for information and next generation would get more options" (Daya2017). And Kritika argued that "unfortunately media is the only source to know about the world around us and we are dependent on them" (Kritika 2017).

Similar to Thirumal's argument, Sreedevi Gopinath of All India Radio, New Delhi, pointed out that "even before 9/11 Indian media has been influenced by western media since we get mostly the western version of history and news" (Gopinath 2017). However, responding to the discourse of othering Gopinath admitted that "as an Indian, I never feel Muslim or Islam as other. Media try to enforce their viewpoint on us. Actually, we don't have an objective media. Everybody tries to convey their versions of news and views" (Gopinath 2017). Gopinath shared her experience of living with people from the Muslim community:

> Actually, I still have Muslim people stitching my dress and I had Muslim friends, since my school days, with whom we shared food and visited each other's houses and never felt our religion as a problem for keeping such relations. My mother used to donate to Masjid, Church, and Temples and we got the cultural traditions from such experiences (Gopinath 2017).

Rejecting the orientalizing of Islam Gopinath argued that every religion has its originality which could be respected unless it spread immoral and inhuman practices like 'Sati' and human sacrifice which have negative impacts on the society.

"We are ready to accept any positive aspects of every religion" (Gopinath 2017). Moreover, Gopinath questioned the Western media attitude towards the Muslim world asking:

> How come the West can ask for modernizing other communities when the West itself is yet be modernized. We could clearly understand this point taking the cases of Syria or Turkey and analyzing the media reports. Before 9/11 Syria was a peaceful place where people were living their life normally and now the Western forces turned this country into a mess. Why do Western forces demand to oust ruler of another country? (Gopinath 2017).

Gopinath further argued challenging the Orientalist 'civilizing mission' of Western forces:

> It's equally wrong to say that westerners civilized the people of the Middle East who developed their hospitable culture through trades for centuries. In Kochi, we keep the coin until to the ages of Alexander but we had centuries-old trade relations with Arabs who brought pearls and all to our land. Actually, the westerners were envious of the Arab trade monopoly. For westerners, Vasco de Gama may be the discoverer of India but we consider him just as a pirate. Since the westerners manipulated our history we treated them as our liberators (Gopinath 2017).

The expert views on othering/orientalizing Islam in India generally reject the media-constructed "Oriental Other" image of Islam. The personal experiences and critical observations help them to recognize the stigmatizing discourse constructed by media. However, their responses reflect how far media narratives on Islam and Muslims are important in defining the dominant discourse. Therefore, the orientalizing process of media reminds what Lau (2009) observed on re-orientalizing practice through stereotyped narratives on the "Oriental within".

Conclusion

The post-9/11 "neo-Orientalist" global discourse is reflected in the othering discourse in the media representations of Islam in Russia and India. Rather than countering the Western narratives *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* reproduced the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" that orientalizes Islam and the Muslim world. The generalized, essentialized and stigmatized narratives on Islam and the Muslim world constructed

othering discourse contrasting “superior Self” against “inferior Other”. In the reporting terrorist attacks either in Russia and India *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* kept the similar pattern of generalizing “jihadi Islam” as the common factor whereas local factors were overlooked. Though both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* could accommodate counter-narratives on Islam and Muslims the stigmatized narratives on an “unchanging Other” eclipsed the image of an “acceptable Other.”

Though the media representations of Islam and Muslims in Russia and India are not directly reflecting in social perceptions the general talk on Islam and Muslims in Russia and India could underline the “us” versus “them” dichotomy of othering at a certain level. Rather than knowing the “Other” from the neighborhood, the media discourse has been the general reference point for many people to frame Islamic traditions and Muslim practices in both countries. However, the in-depth understanding of the common past, present, and future of the religions and traditions at the social level somehow can undo the dominant othering discourses reproduced in media.

Chapter IV

The Enemy Imaging of Islam in Russian and Indian Media

Similar to the othering/orientalizing practice of media the enemy imaging aspect of the media representations is very important in the discourse on Islam in Russia and India. This chapter analyzes *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* reports from 11 September 2001 in order to understand the enemy imaging discourse that constructs and reproduce the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" through generalizing, essentializing and stigmatizing themes. This chapter revisits the post-9/11 reports used to analyze the representation of Islam in the "othering" themes in the previous chapter. It also tries to understand the circulation of "clash of civilizations" thesis and Islamophobic narratives by media in global and local contexts. The method of analysis, the nature of samples and the structure of the chapter would be the same as used in the previous one.

Post-9/11 Media Reports on Islam in Russia: Enemy Imaging of Islam/Muslim World

The post-9/11 global context of the media representation of Islam in an enemy image has covered by various studies focusing on the recurrence of Huntington's thesis of "clash of civilizations" and Islamophobia (Kellner 2004; Mishra 2006; Abu-Lughod 2006; Poole 2002; Esposito 2011; Cesari 2011; Brinks et al. 2006; Powell 2011). These studies have pointed out the reappearance of the archaic "Orientalist" enemy images that evoke threat and fear in the media discourse on Islam and Muslim world.

Izvestia Reports after 9/11: Islam/Muslim World

In the previous chapter, we have explored how *Izvestia* used phrases, themes, and narratives to construct binary discourse on Islam and Muslim world. In this sense *Izvestia* report titled "In the name of Allah" by Alexander Arkhangelsky not only uses religious concepts in the title but also adopts Huntington thesis in its early coverage of 9/11 attacks:

> …war of civilizations…the war of God with Jesus, the poor to the rich, the barbarian to civilization. Neither God nor Jesus had nothing to do they are only signs, lettering war of the worlds…unprecedented terrorist attacks aimed to replace major world religion…Islam, not Christianity…to plant the new name of Allah as the only true doctrine by means of nuclear warheads…from now on terrorism is the way of establishing a world order in the name of Allah (Arkhangelsky 11 September 2001).

With targeted stigmatization of Islamic concepts and stereotypical generalizations of a terrorist attack as an ideologically motivated war against the civilized world, the above report reproduces a kind of "neo-Orientalist" Islamophobic discourse. Apart from evoking "clash thesis" *Izvestia* constructs an enemy image of Islam essentializing the global terrorism as an act in the name of Allah. Powell (2011) has pointed to this kind of discursive process followed by media to construct a fear of international terrorism in the form of "Muslims=Arabs=Islam" waging war against "Christian America" (Powell 2011:96).

The enemy imaging process is evident in an interview with Pakistan Ambassador Murshed in which *Izvestia* reporter Georgy Bovt asks questions on the pretext that every Muslim country might have enjoyed the 9/11 attack. The report includes Islamophobic questions and conclusions such as:

> …the suicide bombers who believe they are acting in the name of Islam? ...clash between the Islamic East and the Christian West could become a reality if the West will continue to ignore the conflicts where Muslims are the victims (Bovt 14 September 2001).

Apart from essentializing the Muslim world as inhuman for alleged celebrations on 9/11 *Izvestia* generalizes the suicide attacks as ideologically charged by Islam. Also by reproducing the discourse of "clash" *Izvestia* constructs the "us" versus "them" dichotomy that reasserts an Islamophobic narrative. According to Esposito (2011) media uses such generalizations to conclude that "where there are Muslims there are problems that result in rampant Islamophobia" (Esposito 2011: xxiv).

Similar enemy imaging discourse is constructed in *Izvestia* report titled "America got its Afghanistan" by targeted stereotyping of Islam and Muslims: "for now, Islam definitely needs to find an enemy…they begin to unite against the outside world" (Bai 14 September 2001). This kind of Islamophobic narrative is

further asserted in *Izvestia* report “Let him speak” by generalizing statements of Bin Laden who justified his acts:

> We are not against any of the Muslim countries, but against those Muslim leaders who have turned their country into slaves of infidels… Allah permits to wage jihad that is to kill infidels (Bychkov and Dunayev 7 October 2001).

As the title of the above report indicates *Izvestia* actually allows the extreme voices to generalize their radical views in the name of Islam. Regarding this kind of media representations Rane (2014) has observed that Islamophobic discourse is constructed by media through generalizing the “fear and prejudice towards Islam and Muslims” (Rane 2014:32).

Meanwhile *Izvestia* report “World War on a voluntary basis” brings out an ambiguous debate:

> In numerous discussions about the role of Islam in the current catastrophe, two extremes have sharply emerged…according to the popular opinion in the present nightmare, the Muslim religion is guilty because of its aggressive nature. The adherents of Islam with the Koran in their hands prove the opposite (Bogomolov 10 October 2001).

As the report generalizes the extreme view as a popular opinion, it definitely reconstructs the enemy imaging discourse on Islam. Despite giving space for counter-narratives the report essentializes the “aggressive” image of Islam and it conforms to the post-9/11 Islamophobic discourse. *Izvestia* report “Iraq: the most fierce opponent” clearly reproduces Huntington’s “clash theory”:

> One of the main goals of terrorists organized the "American tragedy" on September 11, was to cause a clash of civilizations, the confrontation of the Christian world and the Islamic... Millions of people who have nothing and who have nothing to lose, therefore, are the ideal social environment from which "jihad fighters" and "shahids-kamikazes" grow up (Yusin 18 October 2001).

With generalization of terrorist attacks as the trigger for the clash between Christian and Islamic the report reproduces enemy imaging discourse. Using the stereotyped images of “jihad fighters” and “shahids-kamikazes” the report also essentializes the “evil Other” image of the Muslim world threatening the civilized world. As Kellner (2004) argued the “clash of civilizations” model adopted by media brings binary of

Islamic terrorism versus civilization that leads to the construction of a “global enemy” (Kellner 2004:41).

The targeted stigmatization of Islam and the Muslim world is also evident in *Izvestia* report “Talib on the bunk” that reproduces the extreme views of Taliban soldiers and constructs Islamophobia regarding 9/11 attacks:

> …jihadis killed more than five thousand people in the United States…what then wait for us in Russia if we separate from the Taliban only a narrow strip of land on which our "soft underbelly."…fighters of Islam…Muslim fanatics….sitting in jail for 3-5-7 years…engaged in the study of the Koran and group sodomy…obediently go to war and die…to establish the kingdom of Islam on earth (Khokhlov and Bahauddin 29 October 2001).

The report not only generalizes the terrorism as “jihad” and terrorist as “fighters of Islam” but also essentializes the “Orientalist” stereotypes on the Islamic world as engaged in reciting Koran and group sodomy. With enemy imaging discourse on Islam as a threatening force at home and abroad *Izvestia* also reconstructs the dichotomy of “us” versus “them”. O’Rourke (2012) has pointed to this kind of media discourse that denigrates and stereotypes Islam and Muslims as potential holders of threatening ideologies that evoke the public need for security at home (O’Rourke:2012:3).

Similar threat perception is constructed in *Izvestia* report “Where dangerous to go on holiday?” regarding countries of the Muslim world such as Malaysia, Maldives, UAE, and Egypt arguing that:

> …in which of the countries listed, tourists from Europe can face this year with manifestations of Islamic extremism? ...Indonesian Islam is considered moderate…even in Indonesia, Islamic radicalism has recently been felt…The countries of the Persian Gulf...fundamentalist Islamic groups enjoy great influence here. Public opinion in the countries of the Persian Gulf is largely hostile to the West...these people are the most susceptible to Islamist propaganda today…And one Allah knows how they will react to you after that - they can remember the past "sins" in Afghanistan, and Chechnya, and Russia's current support for the United States (Yusin 30 October 2001).

With targeted stigmatization of Islamic world as hostile to the West and Russia *Izvestia* generalizes the “clash” thesis and reproduces the discourse of victimized “us” versus hostile “them”.

In this sense, *Izvestia* opinion piece, “Renegade” by Novoprudsky constructs an essentialized image of the Muslim world that criticizes “Americans for the war on Afghanistan as a battle for Islam” whereas the war is depicted as a “decisive battle of civilization against terrorism” (Novoprudsky 4 November 2001). Apart from generalizing the “clash thesis,” the article stigmatizes the Muslim world accountable for terrorism:

> Russian diplomacy should…push the leaders of the Islamic religious choice in favor of the anti-terrorist coalition…if Islamic leaders did not dare stop championship of Osama, then Islam automatically becomes the embodiment of universal evil…there is no time to wait for the Islamic community to rescue Islam from Osama and his practice of supporters since it is the last chance for salvation of Islam and humanity (Novoprudsky 4 November 2001).

As the article essentializes the Muslim world and Islam as the force behind terrorism it constructs a stereotyped enemy image of Islam as an embodiment of universal evil. Moreover, evoking the notions of civilization and humanity against Islam, *Izvestia* reconstructs the dichotomy of civilized “us” versus inhumane “them.”

Similar ideologically targeted generalizations are evident in *Izvestia* report titled “War and Peace” that urges the “civilized world” to acknowledge the Soviet war in Afghanistan as a fight “against militants and militant Islam.” And the enemy imaging of Islam is practiced by *Izvestia* essentializing the “Islamic terrorism - voluntarily or not - plays the role of catalyst supranational union of the Islamic world” (Novoprudsky 21 September 2001). Semmerling (2008) has pointed out to this media practice of evoking “Orientalist fear” that is more about defining the “Self” than depicting stereotyped Arabs and Muslims in general (Semmerling 2008: 223).

Amidst such enemy imaging narratives *Izvestia* brings certain counter-voices that would accommodate Islam and the Muslim world as an “acceptable Other.” In this regard Arab leader Rafiq Al-Hariri is cited:

> Islam is not involved in terror. It is a religion of tolerance and peace. We should not impose on the Islamic world is responsible for terrorist attacks which committed the person does not represent Islam or Muslims (*Izvestia* 31 October 2001).

However, in an interview with an expert like Zbigniew Brzezinski *Izvestia* reproduces the "clash theory" asking him "do you think that the world is moving toward a confrontation between the two religions?" (*Izvestia* 1 November 2001). Despite this kind of generalization of "clash thesis" regarding 9/11 attacks Brzezinski is quoted otherwise:

> I do not think that the conflict against terrorism requires a certain religious confrontation… many of the terrorists are Muslims, although in recent years terrorist acts were perpetrated in Europe and Asia by non-Muslims… Islam brings together 1.3 billion people and most of them are neither fanatics nor supporters of the religious wars (*Izvestia* 1 November 2001).

Similar counter-narratives are included in *Izvestia* reports such as "Holy month Ramazan" (Emelianenko 16 November 2001) and "Holy month" that even argues that "Russian Muslims are the most true Muslims in the world" and quotes Leo Tolstoy "please consider me as a good Mohammedan" (Mitrichev 16 November 2001). However, Mamdani (2002) has noted that these kinds of counter-narratives by media actually reconstruct stigmatized discourse on "good Muslims" versus "bad Muslims" rather than terrorists from civilians (Mamdani 2002:766).

Izvestia Reports: Islam/Muslims in Russia

The post-9/11 discourses have influenced not only the enemy imaging narratives on Islam and the Muslim world but also the Islamophobic representations of Muslims and Islam in Russia. In this section, we analyze *Izvestia* reports on Russian Islam to find out the enemy imaging discourse they constructed through generalized, essentialize and stigmatized themes and narratives.

In this regard *Izvestia* report titled "The party in the name of Allah" constructs a stigmatized narrative on Muslim political activism:

> …green is no longer a banner of the Ecology color, the color of the struggle for survival…true Muslims, they claimed, deny terrorism (Vinogradov 16 September 2001).

With a stereotyping title that evokes ideological prejudices, the above report stigmatizes the Muslim political activism as the emergence of "green peril" in the body politic of Russia. And by essentializing the apologetic position of "true

Muslims" regarding terrorism the report also constructs the enemy imaging discourse on Muslims at large. Similar targeted-generalizations are evident in Izvestia report "Second front" that reproduces the global discourse on terrorism into local context:

> The terrorist attacks in the United States and Chechnya are the links of one chain… The consequences that the American war against Islamic fanatics will have on life in Russia will be serious (Chuikov and Chubarov 17 September 2001).

As the report generalizes the terrorist acts in U. S and Russia as one and same and essentializes the Islamic fanatics as an imminent threat to the life in Russia it constructs an enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims in Russia. According to Brinks et al. (2006), the media use this kind of enemy imaging discourse after 9/11 to confirm the emergence of a new enemy "militant Islam" to replace the "red peril" of previous decades (Brinks et al. 2006:4).

Generalizing the stereotypes on Muslim population is another method used by *Izvestia* to construct an enemy imaging discourse on Muslims and Islam in Russia as its evident in a report titled "How many of us Muslims" (Yusin 16 October 2001). Though the report rejects the numbers of "the mythical twenty million Russian Muslims" it predicts that the number of Muslim population "will reach 13 million" or less comprising 9 percent of the total population (Yusin 16 October 2001). In another report, "Terrorism: War in the first person" *Izvestia* stigmatizes Muslims in Russia suggesting that "we have a huge number of the Muslim population, we are severely affected by drug trafficking and terrorism" (Eugene 19 October 2001). Poole has pointed out this kind of ethnocentric vision that dominates media representations of Islam and Muslims which are reductive and predominantly negative (Poole 2002: 18).

Similar Islamophobic and ethnophobic narratives are explicit in *Izvestia* report titled "Salvation is by faith" that constructs fear regarding the:

> displacement of Tatars and Bashkirs as priests…by people from the Caucasus who have long been trying to alter historically the non-Caucasian of the Russian Islamic traditions…self-styled "heirs of the Prophet" are trying to blow up the world by assigning the right to speak in the name of Allah…there has been a split between Muslims and Christians…we want to protect them from the moderate, civilized

> Islam that Islam, which for many hundreds of years there in Russia, our Islam without Wahhabi jihad fanatics and suicide bombers (Alimov 16 October 2001).

With targeted stigmatization of Muslims from the Caucasus and generalizing them as a threat to the Russian traditional Islam, the report constructs the binary of "good Muslim" versus "bad Muslim" as Mamdani (2002) observed. The report also evokes Islamophobic discourses as it juxtaposes the stereotypes of "civilized Islam" against "fanatic Islam" that ideologically challenges its own diversities.

Apart from ethnophobic narratives *Izvestia* report titled "The Islamic Future" reproduces the "clash theory" constructed by Russian intelligentsia who predict a "demographic threat" of Islam in Russia:

> In 20 years a third of Russians would be "ethnic Muslims" and in both capitals, the number of Muslims will reach 40 percent and in the army up to 50 percent (Popova 21 December 2001).

The similar method of essentializing "Islamic threat" is explicit in an interview with Minister Shaimiev that includes ideologically biased question such as:

> …does Russia faces the Islamic threat? ...what do you as the president of a secular republic within Russia, are concerned in the process of the revival of Islam in the regions of the country? …What can we oppose attempts to radicalize Islam? (Alimov 16 October 2001).

Even though *Izvestia* gives space for clarification by Shaimiev that "Islam itself cannot be a threat to society, the state, or of other religions", the report clearly constructs an enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims in Russia.

This process of enemy imaging is more evident in *Izvestia* report "Jihad Mercenaries", that cites head of the Defense Committee of the State Duma Andrey Nikolaev who warns that:

> …there is recruitment of citizens of the Russian Federation to participate in military operations in Afghanistan…young people…even girls…Tatars and Russian converts to Islam are among the volunteers of 'jihad' who are willing to help the wounded (Chubarov 15 November 2001).

As the title of the report denotes the stigmatized images of people converted to Islam constructs an Islamophobic discourse in Russia. Regarding this kind of enemy imaging discourse Esposito (2011) argued that it would result in a "growing climate

of suspicion, deterioration of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims and the growth of Islamophobia" (Esposito 2011: xxxiii).

In this sense, Islamophobic "clash thesis" is reproduced in an *Izvestia* interview with Sergei Kiriyenko, the presidential envoy in the Volga Federal District. The notion of enemy imaging is evident in the very question, "are we almost on the verge of war between Christian and Muslim worlds?" (Akopov 21 December 2001). And the answer is more explicit in constructing an archaic enemy image of Islam even in Russia:

> …the threat of escalating conflict with terrorism which developed after September 11 is the conflict between Christianity and Islam… the threat of radical political Islam, calling for the overthrow of the existing system of government…is a threat to national security of Russia (Akopov 21 December 2001).

As Karim (1996) argued this kind of generalization of "Islamic threat" actually constructs an image of a domesticated "enemy within" who are not far away in a different geographic location.

This notion of "enemy within" is evident in an interview with Talgat Tajuddin, one of the Muftis of Russia, in which *Izvestia* asks about "Muslim youth from the Republic of Tatarstan allegedly going to take part in the hostilities on the side Taliban" (Kwiatkowski 19 November 2001). Despite giving space for Mufti to clarify Russian Muslims' reaction to the 9/11 attacks calling Bin Laden as "a freak in the Islamic family" *Izvestia* generalizes the radical elements of Wahhabism and constructs an Islamophobic discourse on Muslims in Russia. Malashenko (2006) has pointed out how the official ideology made difference between "alien" or fundamentalist Islam and "native" or traditional Islam to promote the separation of religion from politics and resist "political Islam" (Malashenko 2006: 28-29).

Similar discourse is reproduced in an interview with Islamic scholar Heydar Jamal, introducing him as a man with "very radical views on Islam". Regarding the 9/11 attacks *Izvestia* essentializes the enemy image of Islam suggesting that "it is clear, the plot, and its organizers, who are none but Islamic extremists" (*Izvestia* 25 December 2001). Despite repeating his lack of interest in Bin Laden and his acts

Jamal was forced to answer Islamophobic questions like "are you in favor of bin Laden? What do you answer those who say that you work out the money of foreign Islamic radical organizations?" (*Izvestia* 25 December 2001). Thus with targeted stigmatization of even Muslim scholars as sympathizers of terrorists *Izvestia* constructs the "neo-Orientalist" fanatic image of Muslims at large as Kerboua (2006) argued.

Though it generalizes the Islamic link behind terrorist attacks in Russia certain counter-counter narratives are included in *Izvestia* report "Return" that cites Chechen leader Akhmad Kadyrov:

> All Muslims condemn terrorism and the death of innocent people…Russia does not conduct a war against Muslims and Islam in Chechnya. We know that Moscow's actions are not directed against Muslims, but against bandits hiding behind Islam (Veretennikova 23 September 2001).

In a similar pattern, *Izvestia*'s conversation with popular writer Fazil Iskander essentializes the Islamic links behind the terrorist attacks concluding that "fanatic kamikazes were Muslims." However, it gives space for counter voices like "when some people acting on behalf of Islam, they are doing the greatest brutality, we can firmly say that Mohammed would not have approved them" (*Izvestia* 5 October 2001). Ultimately, the post-9/11 reports in *Izvestia* contain themes and narratives that construct enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims in Russia. As Rane (2014) argued the post-9/11 media discourse has led to "fear and prejudice towards Islam and Muslims" namely 'Islamophobia' (Rane 2014:32).

Izvestia Reports: "Islamic Enemy" in the West

The post-9/11 *Izvestia* reports cover the Islam and Muslims in the Western countries and reproduce global discourse to the domestic audience. Thus *Izvestia* reports on Islam and Muslims in the west are analyzed to explore the construction of enemy imaging discourse. In this regard, *Izvestia* report titled "Needless to Paris Friday prayers" brings generalizing stereotypes on Muslims citing ultra views such as:

> I know all about Muslims, We need to fear them! ...three million Muslims living in France are a major headache for President Chirac and Prime Minister Jospin (Huseynov 24 September 2001).

With targeted stigmatization of Muslims in France and the financial sources of "many terrorist Islamic groups" *Izvestia* constructs the "hostile Other" image of Islam in the west at large.

In this sense, another report "Mujahideen from Catholic families" constructs an enemy image of Islam essentializing Islam as the source of terrorism, unlike Christianity. As it generalizes the motive of terrorists as "terror and Islam was their only homeland," *Izvestia* reproduces the very stereotyping discourse that if there are terrorists, though Christians, they would be "mujahideen" and would be working for "the struggle of Muslims in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan" (Huseynov 27 September 2001a). Using a different title and theme *Izvestia* report "gangsters in France "collected" the money for jihad" drops the Christian/Catholic link of terrorism. On the other hand, it essentializes Islamic link of the "members of Muslim gangs, bringing terror to the suburbs of the French capital" (Huseynov 27 September 2001b). Apart from ideologically stigmatizing Islam and Muslims in the West, the above reports essentialize terrorists as mujahideens irrespective of their identity. Sardar (1999) and Kerboua (2016) have argued that media construct this kind of enemy imaging discourse by creating the binary of a "demonized" and "vilified Other" raising against the "victimized Self."

Targeted stigmatization is evident in a report titled "If your neighbor is Muslim" that reproduces Islamophobic discourse citing data from Holland:

> More than 60 percent of the citizens after September 11 expressed the hope that all Muslims somehow supported the attacks in the United States…600 Moroccans (the largest Muslim ethnic communities in the country) as much as 21 percent are strongly in favor of jihad against the United States…non-white immigrants, particularly Muslims, are not integrated, and not going to, the traditional European culture (Bovt 3 October 2001).

As the title of the report generalizes the fear of a Muslim being neighbor it also essentializes the racial and xenophobic stereotypes on Muslim communities in

Europe. Stigmatizing Muslims as non-integrated to the multicultural context of Europe the report clearly constructs an enemy imaging discourse that juxtaposes the "Islamic Other" against the "European Self". Semmerling (2008) has pointed to this media practice of reproducing "Orientalist fear" on "evil Arabs" that actually defines the "Self" than depicts stereotyped Arabs and Muslims in general (Semmerling 2008: 223).

Similar "Orientalist fear" is reproduced in a report titled "At the end of the tunnel" that depicts the call for prayers from Mosques as "the mournful voices of the muezzins". The report portrays this Islamic practice as an "oriental cry Allahu Akbar!...something like a volley of all weapons" (Voinovich 12 October 2001). Though the report compares Northern Irish Catholics with Muslim suicide bombers it stigmatizes the later as for rampaging globally threatening death worldwide. With ideologically targeted stereotypes and Islamophobic narratives, the report exclusively demonizes, as Brown (2006) argued, the "Islamic Other" in the west.

Generalizing odd responses of migrants in France *Izvestia* report "they attack early in the morning" constructs an enemy imaging discourse:

> What is happening in Afghanistan, it's hard for Muslims…. if France joins the United States in this war, the attacks will start here…if in every mosque in France has accumulated the same amount of anger, questions, doubts, and bitterness it would be a problem…oh, what problems are waiting for this beautiful and well-fed country(Huseynov 28 October 2001).

Apart from ethnophobic stereotyping of migrants from Islamic countries, the report misrepresents the extreme voice to essentialize the enemy image of Muslim migrants in France. As it targets the mosques as the source of the threat the report reproduces the post-9/11 Islamophobic narratives. Cesari (2011) has observed how the modern secular anti-Islamic discourse caused Islamophobia with the integration of Muslim immigrant communities (Cesari 2011:21).

If the above report stigmatizes Muslims in the Western contexts, *Izvestia* in an interview with Iranian scholar Javad Tabatabai essentializes Islam as an ideology that promotes terror. Regarding the post-9/11 contexts *Izvestia* raises questions like:

> Why Islam become exposed to the influence of ideas of terrorism, violence, why is becoming less common with modern democratic Western civilization…It had something to do with the growth of terrorism in Islamic societies? For the fundamentalist, Islam has become a source of totalitarian ideas. Smoking linked Islam and totalitarianism, Islam and Marxism? (Huseynov 27 December 2001).

Though the report gives space to clarify the misrepresentations of Islam the questions raised by *Izvestia* clearly construct an enemy imaging discourse on Islam. In spite of ideological stigmatization, these questions also evoke fear of "green peril" similar to Communism. Kellner (2004) has pointed out to this enemy imaging practice of media through "Manichean discourse" that constructs a binary opposition between good and evil, us and them, civilization, and barbarism representing West and Islamic terrorists similar to the "Evil Empire" of Soviet Communism (Kellner 2004: 41).

Izvestia Coverage of 9/11 Anniversaries

The post-9/11 media discourse on Islam gets recurrence during the anniversaries of the attacks on the U.S. Although most of the stories in this section were analyzed in the previous chapter here we explore the Islamophobic and enemy imaging frames of the same reports. In this regard, *Izvestia* report titled "Islamic boom" on the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, reproduces a threat perception on Islam. The report constructs an Islamophobic narrative reproducing priest Franklin Graham's ideologically targeted narratives on Islam as "an evil religion" and the Prophet Muhammad "a demon and a pedophile" (Bay 1 September 2002).

Similar stigmatizing discourse is reconstructed through a series of opinion pieces "If I were Osama bin Laden" by Oleg Osetinsky:

> The first lesson of September 11, we learned that there are many enemies of the civilization…the end of the Christian civilization, the war of the worlds…they support Bin Laden and collect money for jihad against America… we had finished this Gorynych Serpent-Gorynych in 1552 in Kazan, but!...who has allowed illegal and to immigrants buy up whole streets of Moscow?... it is absolutely clear that today Muslims and Christians together in Europe cannot get along" (Osetinsky 12 September 2002).

Generalizing the terrorist act as a jihad against the West the article not only reproduces "clash thesis" but also evoke Islamophobic narratives on Islam and Muslims at large. The article also stigmatizes the image of migrant Muslims in Russia and constructs enemy imaging discourse by dichotomizing Muslims and Christians as opposing cultural identities in Europe. Abu-Lughod (2006) has pointed out to this kind of essentializing hegemonic practice of media that reduces Islam to "Islamists" and "terrorist and reproduces the dichotomy of "West of freedom and civility" against "an irrational and deeply disturbing Muslim East that breeds those who attack without reason (Abu-Lughod 2006: 5).

Similar targeted-stigmatization is evident in the second edition of the article "If I were Osama bin Laden" that constructs Islamophobia regarding the domination of Muslims in Moscow:

> We, ordinary Russian people, are against immigrants, the Islamists, the Wahhabis, Muslim…Muslim terrorists are the blasters of twin towers in New York…we have ten times more Muslim people decided to do, and not only in Chechnya!... do you think, in these mosques, taught to love Russia? (Osetinsky 25 September 2002).

Apart from ethnophobic stereotypes on Muslims in Russia, the article constructs enemy imaging discourse on the Islamic texts and religious places. And the third part of the series follows the similar method:

> Its explained in the Quran (almost everywhere), that the highest duty of every believer has the spread of Islam with a sword!...basic Islam directly encourages and glorifies aggression!…jihad is a holy war for the conquest of non-Muslim territories (Osetinsky 2 October 2002).

The article uses ideologically targeted narratives to reiterate the "clash theory" and essentializes the enemy image of Islam misrepresenting its doctrines. As Esposito (2011) argued this kind of narratives used by media construct Islamophobia through series of closed views that attribute negative and derogatory stereotypes and beliefs to Islam and Muslims (Esposito 2011: xxiii).

In the second anniversary of 9/11 *Izvestia* report "The first call" reproduces such Islamophobic narratives constructed by so-called experts generalizing the "conservative and militant Islam" preached by a few among the five-million Muslim

community of France. The report also constructs the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" contrasting the civic multicultural approach of French community against the radical turn of Muslims (Shestakov 17 September 2003).

Similar enemy imaging discourse is constructed in a report "Al-Qaeda under the nose" ideologically targeting the "Islamic spies work under the noses of the Americans" (Bay 24 September 2003). As the report essentializes the army officials converted to Islam as ideologically influenced by terrorism it clearly constructs Islamophobia. Semmerling (2008) has noted how media use such essentializing narratives to define the "Self" than depict stereotyped images of Muslims in general (Semmerling 2008: 223).

In the wake of Beslan attack reports such as "How to treat Islam after Beslan?" reconstructs the fears of 9/11 with Islamophobic narratives:

> The fate of the world in the twenty-first century is in the hands of Muslim theologians like Mullah Omar who, not he is one, supported September 11, 2001, in New York (*Izvestia* 15 September 2004).

With stigmatized images of Muslim scholars and generalized narratives on terrorists, the report clearly constructs an enemy imaging discourse. At the same time, *Izvestia* report "Cat Stevens sues America" brings stereotyped images of "good" versus "bad" Muslims: "Yusuf Islam really has repeatedly condemned the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001" (Bay 27 September 2004). As Mamdani (2002) argued when media purposefully differentiate "good Muslims" from "bad Muslims" rather than "terrorists" from "civilians" it clearly reproduces the enemy imaging discourse on Islam (Mamdani 2002:766).

In the subsequent years, *Izvestia,* however, brings certain counter-narratives through reports such as "Appear in hijab in Moscow is like to go out naked" that covers the effect of Islamophobic media discourse. The report exposes the growing intolerance in Russia as officials conduct operation "Fatima" to check all the women in long robes and headscarves (Granik 28 September 2004). The similar counter voice is included in *Izvestia* report that covers the opening of both Kul-Sharif Mosque and Annunciation Cathedral in the Kazan Kremlin with great fanfare that

marked the coexistence of cultures (Nikolaev 23 September 2005). Despite such counter-voices, the *Izvestia* coverage of 9/11 anniversaries generally reproduced the enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims through ideologically targeting narratives and stigmatized images and generalized stereotypes.

***Izvestia* Coverage "Nord-Ost" Seige**

As we discussed in the previous chapter certain tragic events such as "Nord-Ost" attack and Beslan siege in Russia evoked media discourse on Islam and Muslims. Although most of *Izvestia* reports on "Nord-Ost" attack were analyzed in the previous chapter the Islamophobia aspect of those reports is explored here. In this regard, a couple of reports such as "The capture of hostages in Moscow" (Shvedov 24 October 2002) and "The terrorist act in Moscow" (*Izvestia* 24 October 2002b) generalize the participation of female terrorists and the release of Muslim hostages to construct Islamophobic discourse.

Moreover, *Izvestia* reports such as "We have cut you, Russian pigs, in Chechnya and will cut them here!" (*Izvestia* 25 October 2002) and "It's all over. Everything goes on" (*Izvestia* 27 October 2002) reproduce targeted stigmatization and ethnophobic stereotypes.

Apart from ethnophobia "clash thesis" is reproduced in *Izvestia* report "Country-hostage" that asserts that:

> Nationality (Chechens) and religion (Islam) is only a pseudonym, ideological camouflage, cover our common enemy…we are engaged in a war of civilizations (Bovt and Novoprudsky 24 Octoberober 2002).

As the report essentializes the terrorism as an ideological representation of Islam it reconstructs the post-9/11 Islamophobic discourse that framed Islam as the common enemy of civilizations. Such a discourse is evident in the *Izvestia* article "New York, "Nord-Ost"-and further everywhere" that includes an ideologically targeted question that "who is our enemy?" and stigmatizing answer that "fanatics for whom the whole world is divided into the soldiers of Allah and the enemies of Islam" (*Izvestia* 18 November 2002). Regarding this kind of media representations Poole (2002) has

noted that media often follow the academic and political discourses and act as a key player in connecting the “clash” thesis with “fear of Islam” (Poole 2002: 18).

Stereotypical generalizations of Chechens and their religious identity are intertwined in *Izvestia* reports such as “We do not put on our knees” (*Izvestia* 28 October 2002), “Crime and nationality” (Sokolov 30 October 2002) and “Shamil Basayev took responsibility for the terrorist attack in Moscow” (Demchenko 1 November 2002). Meanwhile, *Izvestia* brings Primakov’s article “The war with Islam can split Russia” that warns against reproducing the anti-Islamism:

> …numerous publications that claimed that Islam itself is an aggressive, militant religion and that the Islamic world is growing aggressiveness…the roots of terrorism are not in the Koran…Islamic extremists, overwhelmed with the desire to subordinate their ideas throughout the Muslim world, resorting to the Koran (Primakov 4 November 2002).

As the article declines the post-9/11 Islamophobic trend in the West it produces a kind of counter-narrative to the enemy imaging discourse. However, the reports on “Nord-Ost” siege generally reproduce Islamophobia through ideologically targeted generalizations and ethnophobic stigmatizations.

***Izvestia* Coverage Beslan Attack**

As we analyzed in the previous chapter Beslan school hostage was another tragic event that caused stereotyping debate on Islam and Muslims. In this regard, early *Izvestia* reports on the attack stigmatize the ethnic identity of the attackers (Spirin 2 September 2004) and essentialize the religious link of the terrorist using phrases like “shahid belts” (Bovt 2 September 2004). Comparing the Russian response to the attack on Grozny and Beslan with the U.S during 9/11 the reports also link the global terrorism discourse and enemy image of Islam.

Similar ideologically targeted narratives are there in *Izvestia* report “The boy slept sweetly until the moment of his salvation” that cites terrorists cry “Allah Akbar!” (*Izvestia* 2 September 2004). Generalizing such Islamic angle of the attack *Izvestia* article “Unity of the country is now very little threat” points fingers to the “Islam Buli” (*Izvestia* 6 September 2004a). These reports reconstruct enemy imaging

discourse through stereotyping questions such as “who is our friend and who is our enemy” and generalizing conclusions like “the reaction of the entire civilized world to terrorist attacks is quite clear” (*Izvestia* 6 September 2004a). *Izvestia* reports on American support for Moscow in the fight against terrorism strengthen the enemy imaging discourse by reproducing the post-9/11 global discourse that evoked Islamophobic narratives.

The targeted stigmatization of Islam as the ideological element behind the attack is more evident in *Izvestia* article “How to treat Islam after Beslan?” that narrates the events in a biased way:

> …with a cry of "Allahu Akbar!" terrorist killing people, bringing them to sacrifice their religious idea…the use of women as suicide bombers in Russian territory have recommended by Wahhabi ulema of Saudi Arabia…Islamic leaders in Russia are politically correct to believe that terrorism in the name of Islam is first and foremost because of terrorism, and its essence is anti-Muslim activities…the world of Islam is responsible for Islamic terrorism (*Izvestia* 15 September 2004).

Therefore, with generalized narratives on the identity of the attackers and targeted stigmatization of Islam as the ideological motivation *Izvestia* reports on Beslan attack reproduce enemy imaging discourse and reiterate the “clash thesis”. Rane (2014) has noted on this kind of “media-generated Islamophobia” through generalizing the “fear and prejudice towards Islam and Muslims” (Rane 2014: 32).

Post-9/11 Media Reports on Islam in India: Enemy Imaging of Islam/Muslim World

If the local dimensions of Indian media discourse on Muslims and Islam were subject of study for Rajagopal (2001, 2009) and Ram (2011) the shift in the post-9/11 context has been pointed out by Lankala(2006) and Narayana and Kapur (2011). In this regard responding to the global discourse on Islam and Islam, *The Hindu* has produced news and views that needed to be analyzed considering the method of constructing enemy imaging discourse through essentialized narratives, stigmatized images and generalizing themes.

The Hindu Reports after 9/11: Islam/ Muslim World

Here we analyze *The Hindu* reports after 9/11 to find the representations of Islam and Muslims in enemy images by reproducing themes of "clash of civilizations" and Islamophobia. Though most of the reports were analyzed in the previous chapter here they are revisited to uncover the enemy imaging discourse they construct. In this regard, *The Hindu* report titled "America under attack: World Trade Center Collapses" essentializes Islam and the Muslim world as the force behind the attack:

> warning from Islamic fundamentalists close to bin Laden…thousands of Palestinians celebrated the attacks, chanting "God is Great" and handing out candy (*The Hindu* 12 September 2001).

With generalization of the ideological affiliations of the terrorists and targeted stigmatization of Palestinians enjoying the event chanting"God is Great" the report constructs an "evil and depraved" enemy image of the Muslim world.

The same fake story of Palestinian celebration is repeated in an oped-article "Dealing with terror" to reassert the Islamophobic narrative:

> …people in Palestine do not agree. They have been jubilant. Similar feelings must be widespread in many parts of the Islamic world…. Rulers of extremist Islamic countries are in greater danger of their lives than Western rulers are… That disease is the fanatic idea that Islam is not compatible with the rest of humanity and that Muslims cannot live in a non-Islamic state (Indiresan 15 September 2001).

As it generalizes the Muslim world as jubilant on the 9/11 attack and essentializes the dichotomy that Islam is un-integrated to humanity *The Hindu* constructs not only an enemy imaging discourse but also reproduces the "clash thesis". Kerboua (2016) has pointed out this kind of enemy imaging in the post-9/11 context through the processes of culturalist and reductionist reading not only of Islam but also of Muslims (Kerboua 2016: 24).

Similar generalizing themes are evident in *The Hindu* report "U.S. on trail of jehad financiers?" that uses the Islamic concept of "jehad" to represent global terrorism:

> Osama is only a franchise-holder for jehadi operations worldwide…there are people who provide financial help or forces that promote a world-view behind him… the media and the public…ignoring the other aspects of the phenomenon of

> jehad…there has emerged a network of financiers in West Asia and elsewhere who contribute liberally to global jehad (Menon 13 September 2001).

Generalizing the network of terrorism as "global jehad" and stigmatizing the Muslim world as financiers of the phenomenon the article clearly constructs a "neo-Orientalist" fanatical and violent image of the Arab and Muslim world.

Apart from such Islamophobic narratives *The Hindu* oped-article "Merchants of terror" evokes the "clash thesis":

> …global jehad has been defined on the basis of its tactics its true nature as a menace to civilisation has been obscured…There has been a hesitancy in the West to apply the term jehad to international terrorism in its current form. This is probably on account of a distaste for provoking the proverbial clash of civilisations…In its true sense as one of the five pillars of Islam, the obligation for jehad, or struggle, is little different from similar obligations in other religious systems (Menon 16 September 2001).

As it criticizes even the West for not essentializing international terrorism as jihad the article conforms to the Huntington thesis. Moreover, ideologically stigmatizing "jehad" as "one of the five pillars of Islam" *The Hindu* clearly constructs enemy imaging discourse on Islam.

A similar notion of "clash" is evident in an oped-page article, "Clash of terrors?" though it rejects such a narrative in the wake of "war on terror":

> …the so-called intellectuals see the present situation in terms of a civilisation conflict between Islam and Christianity…idiocy of equating the madness of some terrorists with Islam and American interests with Christianity (Agnivesh and Thampu 19 September 2001).

The above articles show what Kellner (2004) argued on media's discursive process of establishing binary dualism between Islamic terrorism and civilization that resulted in the construction of a "global enemy" (Kellner 2004: 41).

In this sense, targeted stigmatization of Islamic concepts is evident in *The Hindu* report "Ask Osama to leave, clerics tell Taliban" that generalizes an odd "fatwa" that suggests "under the Islamic Shariah.. jehad is obligatory for the Muslims of a country which is attacked by infidels" (*The Hindu* 21 September 2001). As the report generalizes the extreme voices that misrepresent Sharia and Islamic concept of "jihad" it ultimately constructs Islamophobic discourse.

The Hindu article "The brazen face of terror: Faceless enemy" reproduces such Islamophobic narrative essentializing the Muslim countries as "jehad factory":

> the fulcrum of the pan-Islamic terrorism against Kafirs is located in Pakistan and Afghanistan …recruits volunteers from all Islamic nations and Muslim populations settled in the West…The financial contributions to run this Islamic Army of Terror are primarily received from three sources… Jehad… is an interventionist ideology that divides the world between Dar-ul-Islam (Muslim majority) and Dar-ul-Harb (non-Muslim majority area to be converted to Muslim majority) (Verma 23 September 2001).

Very similar to the post-9/11 global Islamophobic discourse the above article essentializes Islamic countries as the hub of all extremist forces and jihad is misrepresented as the ideology of terror. It also generalizes the dichotomy of Muslim and non-Muslim countries that evoke the "clash thesis".

This kind of targeted stereotyping narrative is repeated in *The Hindu* report "An alliance against global jehad" in which Pakistan is depicted as "the master-refiner of the global jehad" that indoctrinates the youth and trains them to wreak havoc in the name of an "Islamic cause" (Menon 25 September 2001). In this regard, O'Rourke (2012) has argued that Islam and Muslims are routinely stereotyped by media as potential holders of threatening ideologies even "to satiate the public need for perceived security" (O'Rourke 2012:3).

The enemy imaging process is followed by *The Hindu* in a report "U.S. response may polarise opinion in Muslim nations" that generalizes the response of Indonesian Ulemas Council to the proposed "war on terror." Apart from stigmatizing the Indonesian leaders who argued that "aggression directed at Afghanistan could be seen as hostility towards Islam and Muslims and a new form of imperialism" (Baruah 27 September 2001) the report also reproduces the "clash thesis". *The Hindu* report "No base for attacks on Muslims" (*The Hindu* 1 October 2001b) cites the comments of Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan and generalizes the Muslim world's response to the "war on terror" as provoking "clash" between Islam and the West. Regarding this media practice, Poole (2002) has noted that media reproduce the

academic and political discourses and play a key role in connecting the "clash" thesis with "fear of Islam" (Poole 2002: 18).

The enemy imaging discourses on Islam and the Muslim world are constructed through ideologically targeted narratives in a number of reports. In this sense, a report titled "The intellectual basis of jehad" misrepresents the "intellectual underpinning" behind extreme forces arguing that "jehadi terrorism is not as mindless as it seems nor is it something produced solely by the social and political conditions of the Muslim world" (Menon 1 October 2001). Similar targeted notions on Islam is evident in a host of reports such as "'Osamaism' may only grow in strength" (Menon 9 October 2001), "Osama urges Pakistanis to defend Islam" (*The Hindu 2* November 2001), "Pak. scientist wanted more Islamic States nuclearised" (*The Hindu* 26 November 2001). As these reports generalize the extreme voices as representations of the Muslim world it clearly constructs enemy imaging discourse. Powell (2011) has pointed to this media trend in post 9/11 terrorism discourse that contributed a lot to the reinforcement of the "clash" debate and Islamophobic representations (Powell 2011).

Stereotypical narratives on Islam and Muslims are often reproduced through reports such as "Rushdie's poser to Muslims" that urges "Muslims to ask themselves why Islam breeds so many violent mutant strains" (Suroor 7 October 2001). Apart from essentializing Islam as a religion that breeds terrorists, the report cites Rushdie evoking an Islamophobic remark that "Islam needs to face up to its bin Ladens" (Suroor 7 October 2001). As Semmerling (2008) noted, media in this sense constructs the image of "evil" Arabs and Muslims who are not ready to go with the Western ideals that ultimately produces "Orientalist fear" (Semmerling 2008: 223).

Amid a series of enemy imaging narratives an opinion piece titled "Conflicting perceptions" brings certain counter-voice challenging the post-9/11 global discourse on "Huntington theory":

> …notwithstanding the success of some U.S. policy-makers in creating an enemy out of Islam and temporary isolation of the Muslim world, never can such erroneous

understanding of the concept civilisation - as narrowly defined in Huntingtonian discourse (Dastider 9 October 2001).

In this regard, *The Hindu* quotes Prof. Noam Chomsky who argued that "Afghan war not a clash of civilizations" and exposed the U. S war on terrorism as the "fighting its own creation" (*The Hindu* 12 November 2001a). *The Hindu* brings such counter voices through reports like "Attacks on U.S. terrorist act" that highlights the demand to bring a definition of "terrorism" to distinguish it from national resistance to foreign occupation (*The Hindu* 2 Octoberober 2001). Contrary to a generalizing perception that women participation in suicide terrorism is new with Muslims *The Hindu* opinion piece "Suicide terrorism" suggests that it has been normal among the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka to avoid serious security checks and attract more cadres (Chandran 6 October 2001).

The Hindu also brings counter-narratives in reports such as "Islamic States to discuss terrorism" (Mohan 6 October 2001) and "Khatami denounces violence in Islam's name" that represent diverse views from Muslim world (*The Hindu* 15 October 2001). Another report "Brutal, anti-Islamic" brings counter voices regarding the "massacre of Christians in Pakistan" rejecting the narratives that legitimize terrorism in the name of Islam (*The Hindu* 30 October 2001). A report titled "Fears of Muslim backlash exaggerated?" covers the "outrage" in the Muslim world especially regarding the "U.S. double-standards in letting the Jews (i.e. Israelis) kill Muslims" while blaming Muslims for "killing other Muslims" (Menon 11 November 2001).

Despite such counter-narratives, *The Hindu* reports after 9/11 generally constructed enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslim world through generalizing narratives on jihad, ideologically targeted stigmatization of Muslim countries and essentialization of the conflicts as "clash of civilizations". Brinks et al. (2006) have pointed to this kind of media practice that promotes "cataclysmic myths" that could confirm the emergence of a new enemy "militant Islam" in the post-9/11 context (Brinks et al. 2006: 4).

***The Hindu* Reports*:* Islam/Muslims in India**

A host of studies Rajagopal (2001, 2009) Ram (2011) Lankala (2006) Mecklai (2010) and Narayana and Kapur (2011) have explored the diverse aspects of media representations of Muslims in India. However, the enemy imaging discourse constructed by media on Islam and Muslims in India has to be analyzed considering the post-9/11context when Islamophobic narratives and "clash thesis" were circulated globally. *The Hindu* reports after 9/11 are analyzed to know how enemy imaging discourse is reproduced through targeted generalizations, stigmatizations, and stereotypical essentialization.

In this regard, *The Hindu* generalizes the extreme responses of Shahi Imam of the Jama Masjid, Syed Ahmad Bukhari regarding 9/11 attacks and "war on terror" and represents it as the reactions of Muslim leaders in India. A host of reports such as "Shahi Imam threatens protest" (*The Hindu* 16 September 2001a) highlight Imam's warnings like "any attack on Afghanistan will be considered as an attack on the entire Muslim world" (*The Hindu* 20 September 2001). Despite giving space for counter-statements like "Indian Muslims will not support Taliban" (*The Hindu* 20 September 2001) and "Muslims condemn Shahi Imam's remarks" (Ansari 24 Octoberober 2001) the overemphasis on Bukhari's statements clearly constructs the enemy image of the Islamic community in India. Kerboua(2016) has observed on this kind of media process of enemy imaging through giving emphasis exclusively on what is considered negative dimensions and components of Islam and Muslim community (Kerboua 2016:24).

Stereotypical stigmatization of Muslim response to the "war on terror" is evident in *The Hindu* reports such as "U.S. flag burnt in Lucknow" (*The Hindu* 22 September 2001) "Muslims offer special prayers in Mumbai" (*The Hindu* 11 October 2001) "A quiet U-turn at Jama Masjid" (Jha 13 Octoberober 2001). These reports essentialize the reactionary images of Muslims in India regarding their protests on American led war on Afghanistan. In this sense, *The Hindu* report "Fatwa against sale of Anglo-American goods" (*The Hindu* 21 Octoberober 2001) stigmatizes the

boycott call by Islamic institutions and leaders as a religious "fatwa" to reconstruct Islamophobic discourse. As Esposito (2011) argued media in this sense reproduces hatred and hostility towards Islam and Muslims by attributing negative and derogatory stereotypes (Esposito 2011: xxiii).

Similar ideologically targeted Islamophobic narratives are reproduced in a report that cites Vishva Hindu Parishad leader's allegation that "terrorism was spreading because of certain principles of Islam" (*The Hindu* 23 September 2001). This kind of essentializing discourse is repeated in a report "SIMI has extensive pan-Islamic links" that generalizes "jehad" as "the vanguard of Millat-e-Islamia and the harbinger of Islamic revolution" (*The Hindu* 28 September 2001). *The Hindu* report "Farooq demand on jehadis a manipulation" (Naravane 6 Octoberober 2001) reasserts such stereotypes by framing the terrorism in Kashmir as "jehad". Thus targeting Islam and Muslims as proponents of terrorist ideology these reports construct Islamophobic discourse on "enemy within" as Karim (1996) observed.

The essentialized images of Islam and Muslims are reproduced in a host of reports such as "From a calm 'moulvi' to a dreaded militant" (Bukhari 17 Octoberober 2001) and "Taliban are welcome in Kashmir" (Bukhari 28 Octoberober 2001). Generalizing the extreme views of people like Sajjad Afghani of Harkat-ul-Ansar and Asiya Andrabi of Lashkar-e-Jabbar (LeJ) these reports reassert the enemy image of Muslim and Islam. The stereotypical stigmatization is more evident in a report "VHP seeks 'homeland' for Hindus in Bangladesh" that reproduces the Hindu nationalists' claim that "jehadis being produced by the 'madrasas'" and many terrorist attacks are "the handiwork of the jehadis from madrasas" (*The Hindu* 4 December 2001). As Poole (2002) suggested media constructs such enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims by the portrayal of extremist images which are reductive and predominantly negative (Poole 2002: 18).

Amidst the post-9/11 Islamophobic debates on "clash of civilizations," *The Hindu* brings an opinion piece titled "Religion and civilization" that highlights the Indian model of coexistence among religions. Though the article admits the history

of Indo-Muslim encounters it argues that the “clash of civilisations theory, or the supposed enmities dating back to the early Arab or Turkish invasions, is refuted by the process of widespread acculturation that has taken place in Indian society for centuries” (Hasan 2 November 2001). Similar counter-narratives are produced through reports such as “Babri Masjid demolition anniversary 'peaceful'” (*The Hindu* 7 December 2001) that challenge the enemy image of Muslims in India who resort into constitutional methods to resolve the major challenge the community faced after independence. However, reports such as “All Muslims are not terrorists” (*The Hindu* 22 December 2001) reproduces the Islamophobic notion of “good Muslim” versus “bad Muslim” as Mamdani (2002) noted.

Ultimately, *The Hindu* reports after 9/11 constructs an enemy imaging discourse through generalized narratives on the extreme response of Muslims, targeted stigmatization of terrorism as “jehad” and stereotyped images of Islamic institutions like madrassas. Poole and Richardson (2006) have pointed out to this media process of enemy imaging by reproducing threat, fear, and misunderstanding of Islam and Muslims. Engineer (1999) and Rajagopal (2001) have observed the role of media in constructing such enemy imaging discourse on Muslim minorities especially in the post-independence context in India (Engineer 1999: 2134; Rajagopal 2001: 10-74).

***The Hindu* Reports*:* Islam/Muslim in the West**

The Islamophobic media discourse on Islam and Muslims in the Western countries in the post-9/11context has been explored by various studies (Poole 2002; Brown 2006). Indian media’s role in this discourse has to be analyzed regarding the reproduction of Islamophobic narratives and construction of “clash thesis”. Though most of the reports during this period were analyzed in the previous chapter the enemy imaging aspect of those reports on Islam and Muslims in the West is explored here.

In this regard, *The Hindu* report titled "Fear of anti-Muslim backlash in Britain" generalizes the Muslim response to the growing anti-Muslim incidents in the West (Suroor 15 September 2001). Stigmatizing Muslims as a reactionary group who usually goes for violence in such contexts the report constructs an Islamophobic narrative. Ideologically targeted stereotyping of Muslims in Britain is evident in *The Hindu* report "Treason law to deter Muslim jehadis":

> …treason law to deter British Muslims from going to Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban against allied forces… The move follows reports that a large number of Muslim youths, mostly from Pakistan, are enlisting for the so-called ``jehad" and some have already gone to Afghanistan (Suroor 1 November 2001).

As the title itself generalizes the notion of "Muslim jehadis" the report reconstructs an enemy imaging discourse on Muslims living in the West as "potential recruits" for war in Afghanistan. Though the report warns that "exaggerated claims about Muslim youths queuing up to sign up with the Taliban would fuel the simmering anti-Islam backlash" (Suroor 1 November 2001) it constructs an Islamophobic discourse by stigmatizing Muslim youth as possible terrorists. Cesari (2011) has pointed out to this kind of anti-Islamic discourse on Muslim immigrant communities reproduced by media especially after 9/11(Cesari 2011: 21).

Similar ideologically targeted stigmatization of Islam is explicit in *The Hindu* report "This is about Islam" that quotes Salman Rushdie who blames the West for not calling the war in Afghanistan a campaign against Islamic terrorism:

> …let's start calling a spade a spade. Of course, this is about Islam…that Islam and terrorism are in any way related …if this isn't about Islam, why the worldwide Muslim demonstrations in support of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida?...Islam is to be reconciled with modernity (Suroor 4 November 2001).

With an essentializing title and stereotypical narratives, the above report reproduces the enemy imaging discourse that stigmatizes Islam as the source of terror and Muslims as supporters of bin Laden. In another way, an essentialized image of Muslims in the West and around the world, regarding their response after 9/11, is reproduced in *The Hindu* opinion piece "Islam is not the issue, Muslims are" (Suroor 19 December 2001). As the titles of both reports denote *The Hindu* stigmatize Islam

and Muslims as a central factor of the problems either in the West or East especially in the post 9/11context. Regarding this kind of media discourse Kerboua (2016) has noted that the image of essentialized and stigmatized "reactionary Islam" is constructed to evoke the notion of a "hostile Other."

However, certain counter-voices are included in the report "Don't blame Islam for terrorism" that quotes British Prime Minister Tony Bliar who rejected the idea of "civilizational clash":

> Mr. Tony Blair has spoken out strongly against attempts to turn the campaign against terrorism into a fight between the Christian West and Islamic East…What happened in America was not the work of Islamic terrorists, it was not the work of Muslim terrorists. It was the work of terrorists, pure and simple (Suroor 30 September 2001).

Though the above report brings a counter-voice to the anti-Islamic rhetoric regarding the 9/11 attacks *The Hindu* reports on Islam and Muslims in the West generally follow the Islamophobic narratives produced by global media. Targeting Islam as the ideological source of terrorism and stigmatizing Muslims as the possible recruits to terrorism *The Hindu* also constructs enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims in the West. As Rane (2014) observed this kind of media discourse after 9/11 reasserted the "fear and prejudice towards Islam and Muslims and strengthened the Islamophobia (Rane 2014: 32).

The Hindu **Coverage of 9/11 Anniversaries**

Since the anniversaries of 9/11 attack is the time that retrieves the media discourse on Islam and Muslims *The Hindu* reporting during 9/11 anniversaries are explored to find whether they reproduced Islamophobic enemy imaging narratives. Most of the reports in this section were analyzed in the previous chapter and the enemy imaging aspect is analyzed here. In this regard, *The Hindu* opinion piece titled "Remembering September 11" (Mehta 10 September 2002) on the first anniversary of the 9/11 brings back the generalizing discourse on Islam and Muslim. On the one hand, the article is a counter-narrative to the Western "anti-Islamism" and theory of "clash of

civilizations" on the other hand it's the reproduction of such Islamophobic discourse into local contexts like India.

In this sense, *The Hindu* opinion piece titled "The world order" also includes certain counter-voices as well as stigmatizing narratives on the Muslim world.

> …militarists and hegemons among the Republican right are blinded by their innate hostility towards Islam and the Muslim nations. Yet, there is, in all the recent trends, no clash of civilisations…Muslim states, though afflicted with Islamist ideas and movements, neither desire nor can they afford the risk of confrontation with the West…jehad was not made the sixth pillar of the faith, since in theory, it was merely a temporary instrument to establish ultimate peace, rather than a permanent article of the faith (Hasan 24 September 2002).

Despite rejecting the claims of "clash" between West and Islam the article stigmatizes Muslim states and movements as takers of "Islamist ideas". And the article reproduces Islamophobic narratives reviving the discourse on "jihad" and confrontation with West. Regarding this kind of enemy imaging process O'Rourke (2012) has observed that media follows "dialectical reversal" from positive images to negative ones on Islam and Muslims essentializes stereotypes of Muslims as potential holders of threatening ideologies(O'Rourke 2012: 3).

The similar discursive method is used in a report titled "Address causes of terrorism" that generalizes the terrorist activities in Indonesia and Philippines as an attempt to the creation of a "pan-Islamic state in South East Asia" (Suryanarayana 23 September 2002). Essentializing the "fanatical and violent" stereotypes of the Muslim world the report reconstructs an enemy imaging discourse that evokes Islamophobia. This trend is explicit in an oped-piece "One year of the war on terror" that generalizes the links of Osama's family "spread over the entire Islamic world" (Sreedhar 26 September 2002) to construct what Poole(2002) noted the "evil other" image of the Muslim world deprived of human values.

The targeted stigmatization of Islam is evident in *The Hindu* report "India, Israel can keep watchful eye on fanatic Islam" that reproduces the global discourse on terrorism with Islam. As the title denotes the "exclusive interview" with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, Yosef Lapid, on the second anniversary of 9/11, generalizes

the "fanatic Islam" as the "hostile enemy" (Baruah 12 September 2003). On the third anniversary of 9/11, *The Hindu* brings similar narrative in a report titled "Islamists target Putin" (Radyuhin 11 September 2004). With an ideologically targeted title, the report essentializes the terrorists as "Islamists" that clearly constructs an enemy imaging discourse.

This is more evident in a report titled "Zarqawi-terrorist or Islamist crusader?" that generalizes the terrorist activities as an attempt "to recreate a pan-Islamist caliphate across West Asia and beyond" (MacAskill and McCarthy 25 September 2004). Contrasting the images of "terrorist or Islamist crusader" the report ideologically targets Islam as the motive for a crusade. Moreover, the report reproduces the discourse on "crusade" that would revive the "clash theory" and reassert the "hostile Other" image of Islam as Kerboua (2016) argued.

On the fourth anniversary of 9/11, *The Hindu* report "Join hands to fight terrorism" reproduce the discourse generalizing Islam and terrorism. The report brings certain counter-narratives acknowledging the diversity among Muslims and highlighting the Indian experience of "peaceful co-existence" (*The Hindu* 11 September 2005). However, the as the title of the report denotes the discourse on Islam is essentialized to the debates on terrorism. Thus *The Hindu* reporting during the anniversaries of 9/11 reproduces the generalized stereotypes and targeted stigmatization of Islam and the Muslim world that ultimately construct enemy imaging discourse. Regarding this trend, Abu-Lughod (2006) argued that media representations of Islam since 9/11 has become hegemonic that reduces Islam to "Islamists" (Abu-Lughod 2006: 5).

***The Hindu* Coverage on Parliament Attack**

As we analyzed in the previous chapter the attack on Indian parliament was another occasion when Indian media focused on discourses Islam and Muslims. In this regard, the early reports such as "Ugly terror strikes again" (*The Hindu* 14 December 2001a) kept aside the ideological links of the attacks whereas it appeared in the later

ones. Contrary to the initial restraint *The Hindu* reports such as “Jaish denies hand in attack” (Reddy 18 December 2001) and “Unravelling the conspiracy” (*The Hindu* 18 December 2001) started targeted generalization of Islamic element behind the attack. With stigmatizing notions of “Islamic militants” and stereotyped narratives on “fidayeen attack” these reports constructed enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims.

This discursive process of enemy imaging is more evident in a report titled “The factory which produced `jehadis” (Aneja 14 December 2001) that ideologically targets Islam as the source of terror:

> A combination of radical Islamic teachings and stringent training made them battle-hardened soldiers who were ready to move into destinations across the globe in the cause of `jehad'(Aneja 14 December 2001).

As the title of the report generalizes the terrorists as “jehadis” it constructs an Islamophobic discourse in the wake of a terrorist attack on Indian parliament. The similar targeted-stigmatization is explicit in an opinion piece, “Islam is not the issue, Muslims are” (Suroor 19 December 2001) that essentializes the role of Muslims as troublemakers.

Therefore, *The Hindu* reports on the attack on Indian parliament reproduce the Islamophobic western discourse generalizing terrorists as “jehadis” and essentializing Muslims as the source of problems. Regarding this trend, Lankala (2006) has observed that Indian media followed the post 9/11 discourses generalizing the concept of “Islamic terror” and normalizing Hindutva claim of Muslims as “enemy within” (Lankala 2006: 94).

The Hindu Coverage on Akshardham Attack

The terrorist attack on Akshardham Temple also witnessed the debate on Islam and Muslim since it happened months after the tragic Gujarat violence (2002). In this regard, the report titled “26 killed as terrorists storm Gandhinagar temple” (Dasgupta 25 September 2002) attributes the attack to terrorists and spares Islamic link. As it covers the panic response “in the minority-dominated Old City areas” the report

brings the community angle into the attack. Another report titled “Terrorism on its last legs” (Jayanth 25 September 2002) however reproduces the post-9/11 discourse generalizing terrorism as part of global Islamic network that constructs an Islamophobic narrative.

In that sense, reports such as “Anti-Islamic” essentializes the role of Islam in terrorist acts reproducing the apologetic response of from Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid and Maulana Jameel Illyasi who condemned the attack as “against the teachings of Islam and this kind of anarchy is unacceptable to Indian Muslims” (*The Hindu* 25 September 2002a). As the title of the report denotes Islam is being ideologically targeted for every terrorist attack and Muslim community is forced to be apologetic that actually constructs an enemy image of Islam and Muslims. This kind of stigmatized discourse is evident in *The Hindu* report “PM says 'salaam' to J&K people” (*The Hindu* 25 September 2002b) that generalizes the response of the community to the attack. Esposito (2001) has pointed out how this kind of media discourse produces a climate of suspicion in the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims and results in the growth of Islamophobia (Esposito 2011: xxxiii).

In a similar pattern, a report titled “Temple siege ends” essentializes certain symbols and statements to frame the attack as part of Muslim solidarity:

> two unsigned letters found on their bodies… written in Urdu, using red, blue and black ink…wanted "revenge" for the violence against Muslims in the recent Gujarat riots (Dasgupta 26 September 2002).

As the report generalizes such symbolic materials and odd statements it reconstructs an enemy imaging discourse on “reactionary” Muslim community. The similar targeted-stigmatization is evident in a report “Clue points to Pak. Nationality” that essentializes the attack as “fidayeen… revenge for the killing of Muslims during the Gujarat riots” (Vyas 27 September 2002) which clearly evokes Islamophobic notions. Reports such as “Attack not a revenge” (*The Hindu* 27 September 2002) and “A fallout of Gujarat riots” (Reddy 28 September 2002) carry the official responses of Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf and essentialize the Islamic factor behind the attack.

Meanwhile, *The Hindu* editorial “Continued provocation” (*The Hindu* 25 September 2002c) exposes the stereotyping narratives produced by Chief Minister Mr. Modi on Indian Muslims regarding their birth rate. Therefore, the reports on Akshardham attack generalize Islam as the ideological force behind the attack and stigmatize the apologetic identity of Muslims to construct an enemy imaging discourse that evokes Islamophobia. Regarding this kind of media discourse Poole (2002) noted that media often worked like an instrument of public ideology demonizing and portraying Islam as a threat whereas it constructed and sustained the ideology necessary to subjugate Muslims even at local levels (Poole 2002: 18).

Comparative Analysis and Discussion

The comparative analysis of the enemy imaging aspect of the media representations of Islam in Russia and India is carried out by figuring out the similarities and difference. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* maintain certain similarities and differences in their framing of Islam as an enemy in the wake of 9/11 and various attacks in Russia and India during the years 2000-2005. Similarities can be listed as: 1. Both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* have targeted Islam as an ideology and the Muslim world as the force behind the 9/11 attacks, 2. Both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* used the fake story of celebrations in Palestine on the tragedy to generalize the Muslim world’s response to 9/11, 3. the “clash of civilizations” thesis was widely used as to stigmatize Islam as a threat at global and local levels, 4. Ideologically targeted narratives and stereotyped images of Islam and Muslims were reproduced during the anniversaries of 9/11 and during the terrorist attacks in both countries to link terrorism with Islam and Muslims, 5. Despite giving space for counter voices both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* reproduced essentializing Islamophobic narratives to construct enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslim in Russia and India.

However, there are certain differences in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* regarding their discursive process of constructing “enemy image” of Islam. Major differences can be listed as: 1. While *Izvestia* generalizes the post-9/11 developments as

“civilizational clash” *The Hindu* stigmatizes it as the spread of “jehadi Islam”, 2. *Izvestia* reproduces global Islamophobic narratives during the anniversaries of 9/11 whereas *The Hindu* includes more counter-narratives, 3. *Izvestia* essentializes the ethnic and national identities regarding Islam and Muslim in Russia whereas *The Hindu* focuses on the religious and communal identities of Islam and Muslims in Indian, 4. while *Izvestia* brings interviews of Islamic clerics as counter-voices *The Hindu* generalizes their apologetic reactions to major attacks, 5. *Izvestia* uses the West as a reference point to essentialize the enemy image of Islam whereas *The Hindu* uses India-Pakistan relations to stigmatize the image of “hostile Other.”

Given such similarities and differences in the representations of Islam and Muslims, we could identify a few discursive methods used to construct enemy imaging discourse by *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* in their coverage of 9/11 attacks, its anniversaries and different terrorist attacks in Russia and India. Despite differences in the coverage of the Islam and Muslims at home and abroad the “clash” thesis and “Islamophobia” were themes reflected in the enemy imaging discourse both in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu*. A number of “neo-Orientalist” Islamophobic binaries such as “Savior Self” vs. “demonized Other” and “acceptable Other” vs. “threatening Other”is used to stigmatize the Islam and Muslims in Western countries. Apart from the stereotypical images of “fanatic” and “reactionary” Islam and Muslims the dichotomy of “good Muslim” versus “bad Muslim” are also used to construct the discourse on “enemy within.” Both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu*, in general, used the dichotomy of victimized “us” against hostile “they” to construct enemy images of Islam and the Muslim world during the tragic events in Russia and India.

To show media’s enemy imaging process through generalizing narratives, essentializing images and stigmatizing stereotypes a few examples from *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* are given below. The discursive process of enemy imaging by *Izvestia* using “clash theory” is explicit in its generalization of 9/11 attacks as “the war of God with Jesus …to plant the new name of Allah”. *Izvestia* generalizes the “demonized Other” arguing that “they support Bin Laden and collect money for

jihad" to stigmatize the hostile image of Islam and the Muslim world. *Izvestia* uses "neo-Orientalist" themes such as "fighters of Islam… obediently go to war and die…to establish on earth the kingdom of Islam" to essentialize the imminent threat of Islam that constructs Islamophobia.

Stigmatizing stereotypes such as "Mujahideen from Catholic families" and "If your neighbor is Muslim" are used to construct the image of a "threatening Other" in the West. To essentialize the enemy image of Islam and Muslims in Russia *Izvestia* highlights the narratives on "good Muslim" such as "Russian Muslims are the truest Muslims in the world", "green is no longer a banner of the war", "in Russia, our Islam without Wahhabi jihad fanatics and suicide bombers." Ideologically targeting Islamophobic narratives such as "New York, "Nord-Ost"-and further everywhere?" and "How to treat Islam after Beslan?" are used in reporting terrorist acts in Russia to essentialize the "enemy within."

The generalization of the "clash thesis" is evident in *The Hindu* reports essentializing the Muslim world's response to 9/11 attacks. Stigmatizing narratives such as "Palestinians celebrated the attacks, chanting "God is Great", "merchants of terror", "global jehad" and "Clash of terrors?" are used to reproduce the "clash thesis" in representing Islam and the Muslim world. The Islamophobic "threatening Other" image is constructed through stereotyped themes on "Muslim populations settled in the West", "Islamic Army of Terror" and "West's new enemy in the new century". The dichotomy of "good Muslim" versus "bad Muslim" is used in themes such as "All Muslims are not terrorists", "Islam is not the issue, Muslims are" and "This is about Islam" to essentialize the "evil Other" image of Islam and Muslims at home and abroad. Ideologically targeted themes such as "Islam and terrorism are in any way related", "Islamic militants", "fidayeen attack" are used in reporting terrorist attacks to stigmatize the "enemy within" image of Islam and Muslims in India.

Therefore, despite giving space for counter-narratives, *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* used generalized narratives, essentializing images and stigmatizing

stereotypes to construct enemy imaging discourse on Islam and Muslims. Apart from "clash thesis" a host of "neo-Orientalist" Islamophobic narratives were used by *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* that stigmatized the enemy image of Islam and Muslims at home and abroad.

Field Work Data: Social Perceptions and Lived Experiences

Considering such a discursive process of media constructing enemy images here we explore the social perceptions on Islam and Muslims based on responses and lived experiences collected and observed by the researcher through fieldwork in Russia and India. The social perceptions are included to know the everyday life experiences and narratives of people from both countries in the wake of Islamophobic media discourses after 9/11. Most of the respondents were introduced in the previous chapter.

1. Russian Experiences

Notwithstanding the enemy imaging media discourses on Islam and Muslims the popular perception of the people on the streets, markets and universities in Moscow, Petersburg, Kazan, and Ufa are diverse and different. Though teachers and students of universities give an informed response regarding Islam they are worried about the growing terrorist activities across Russia. Since the very day we landed in Russia witnessed bomb blasts in Petersburg metro and people were talking about ISIS, most of them suggested dropping the plan to visit the city. However, people on the streets, markets, and religious centers were responded in a diverse manner distinguishing between terrorists or extremists Muslims and religion Islam. While most of them were happy to accommodate "traditional Islam" they blamed the "Wahabi" version of Islam as the new enemy.

a. Community Perspective

Regarding the "hostile Other" image of Islam and Muslims in Russia Intigam (2017) denies any kind of enemy imaging while Shameel from Dagestan feels there are extremists in his home republic who create a lot of problem for common people but

he personally never felt any threat from fellow communities (Shameel 2017). But as we pointed earlier the young man in the souvenir shop near Cathedral Mosques talked about the Islamophobia especially towards the people from Muslim republics prevalent in Russia. Despite their anxiety over the spread of "Wahabi" ideology that spreads puritanism in Islam most of the migrant believers congregated in the Mosque also shared the growing intolerance towards Islam and Muslims.

However, Tamirlan admits that there is no fight between Muslims and Christians even though the government is more supportive to Church and he didn't face any problem after terrorist attacks (including the latest Petersburg blast on 1st April 2017). Tamirlan further argued that there are a few Russians who treat Muslims as foreigners or aliens while most of them treat Muslims as brothers and their attitude depends upon their way of understanding religion (Tamirlan 2017).

Imam Mubarak and Irshaif of Cathedral Mosque responded positively regarding the image of Islam and Muslims in Russia and denied any negative impact of terrorist attacks like Petersburg on relations between communities. Both of them highlighted the viewpoint of Mufti Ravil who undoubtedly declared that the people who do terrorist acts have no relations with Islam and criminals are among every nationality. It's not exceptional among Muslims. And neither Quran nor Hadith permits these kinds of acts in the name of Islam. With the help of verses from Quran and Prophet's sayings such as the killing of an individual is equal to the killing of entire mankind and both killer and the killed are in the hell Irshaif underlined the official position of Muftiate regarding terrorism (Mubarak and Irshaif 2017).

Irshaif (2017) further argued that now most of the people don't understand the real meaning of jihad whereas there was a time of World Wars when people didn't make any difference between their religion and nationality. Russian Muslims perceived that:

> The love of the homeland as part of iman (piety) and they fought united with non-Muslims against fascist forces of Germany. And if this was the history now many people conduct blasts and attacks which have no relations with religion either Islam

> or Christianity but Islam has become the main victim of these atrocities (Irshaif 2017).

However, Imam Alyautdinov of Memorial Mosque underlined the role of media in creating an enemy image of Islam and Muslims arguing that:

> Until recently 99 percent of the media reports carried Islamophobic frame reporting terrorism. And only during the last three years media started to separate crimes from Islam and Muslims, but this is still insecure, awkward. Mostly, the media highlight the military confrontations and terrorist acts regarding Muslims and Islam. There is no healthy creative information. The media do not talk about the real values of Islam, they do not need it (Alyautdinov 2017).

Meanwhile, Asa`ad argued that the Muslims relations with Christians are good in Russia because Islam is directing to help each other with good deeds as Quran says: Allah doesn't prevent you from dealing fair with those who do not war with you and don't expel you from your homes. He reiterated that "Quran directs to do justice to others and Allah verily loves those who do justice. Thus we are in good relations" (Asa`ad 2017). Responding to the Russian disagreement with Wahabism and Asa`ad argued that:

> Such perceptions are due to the ignorance about these things. I have been to Saudi Arabia studied there and lived in the society and didn't find anything wrong. People are treated equally and well there but we discuss trivial things and drop important points (Asa`ad 2017).

Similarly, Sunnath responded that Muslims in Russia may be facing some problems in times of terrorist attacks but he admitted that "I follow traditional Islam and I don't understand Wahabi madhab and I am very angry with the kind of Wahabi Islam because Islam is a religion of peace we have Sufi traditions in from Tajikistan" (Sunnath 2017).

Imam Khiruddin, of Petersburg mosque, also suggested that Islam is in good condition and Muslims are in good relations with Christianity and others in Petersburg and Russia in general. Rejecting the radical views he reminded that Allah has directed to be in good relations especially with *Ahl-Kitab* (people of the book)

that's Christians. He denied any kind of difficulties even for migrants after the recent bomb blasts in Petersburg (Khairuddin 2017).

Similarly, Suleimanov of Islamic University of Ufa rejected the applicability of "clash theory" in Russia arguing that:

> Islam has long years of ancient tradition in Russia and the people of Russia do not understand Islam as an alien that comes from outside. The Russians all time understand that Tatars are Muslims and we Tatars always know that Russians are Orthodox Christians and the same is Caucuses. And we don't have clashes and people of Russia understand that we have our traditional Islam that can live with peace with other religious people and there is another kind of radical Islam that came from outside with Wahabi influence. Therefore only Wahabis and people who follow radical Islam have problems in Russia and Muslims, in general, have no problems with the federal and republican government (Suleimanov 2017).

Apart from claiming that there is no enemy imaging of Muslims in our country, Damir argued that when some terroristic acts happen the blame falls on the criminal or terrorist, not on the Muslim:

> Al-hamdulillah here there is no any kind of Islamophobia. And Russia always tries to differentiate between Islam and terrorism. Having good relations with Syria and Iraq Russia clearly took a stand saying that the recent developments are terrorism and extremism and even helped Muslims against radical forces (Damir 2017).

Though there is no widespread enemy imaging of Muslims and Islam Suleimanov admitted that:

> Whenever some crime happens by Central Asian peoples the common Russian people think that most of the people from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are criminals. To avoid such misunderstanding we always preach in Masjids that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism but such activities actually bring blame the religion (Suleimanov 2017).

Moreover, both Suleimanov and Damir jointly argued that no Muslims from Russia or India can agree on somebody from Iraq as the *Khalifa* and his claim for *Khilafat*. Though Jambolt from Chechnya admitted that there was a time of enemy imaging of Chechens in other parts of Russia he suggested that now the situation has changed (Jambolt 2017).

The above discussion underlines the diversity in the community perception of enemy imaging of Islam and Muslims in Russia. Unlike the media-constructed

narratives on growing radical trends, the community members reject such tendencies and keep warm relation with other communities. However, there are people who believe that the Islamophobic narratives constructed by media are either intentional or products of ignorance to the diversity of Islam and Muslim cultures. Malashenko (2009) has pointed out to this trend across political and media spheres as people like Hahn (2007) argued that post-Soviet Russia's Muslims are part of global '*umma'* and potential recruits for the "Islamo-fascist revolution" (Hahn 2007:ix).

b. The perspective of Fellow Community People

Natasha at Petersburg University keeps a different view on Islam and Muslims while she admits that it may differ from the common people's perception that mostly derived from the fear and enemy image of the Caucasus and Central Asian people. She admitted that being in academics she doesn't rely on Islamophobic images from media but old generation are very much affected by the images given by TV. And because of the work of propaganda the first person who thought to be a terrorist should be a person looks like a Muslim who has a beard and turban (Natasha 2017). In the context of the recent bomb blasts at Petersburg metro, Natasha noted that any Muslim name didn't come in the first place but the situation in Russia is now too complicated because of the ISIS. And the initial media reports on bombing were not really about the people behind the attack (Natasha 2017).

However, Chelnakova (2017) shared her experience regarding the Islamophobic environment in the city:

> On the second day of the bombing in Petersburg, I was with my 8 years old son on a public transport and he asked me in a louder voice what Islamic State is and what do they want. I started to explain that they want their own state and their own *Khalifa*. Once the word *Khalifa* spelled out, everybody on the bus was looked feared and I even thought of getting down next stop. People now get afraid of all the things they do not know and the situation has become like anything related to Muslim culture is automatically considered to be dangerous. When we left the bus, I told my son that he shouldn't ask such questions in public (Chelnakova 2017).

Meanwhile, Gleb questioned popular media discourses on Islam and Muslims in Russia especially after the Petersburg bomb blast. He believed that the blast was organized by criminals and immigrants were easily blamed. However, he suggested that the normal relationships between Muslims and others continue despite their religious identities and diverse practices (Gleb 2017).

Zhenia had a fascination with the mountain and hill people and their traditional cultures in his native republic the Caucasus but denied any kind of enemy image towards Chechens or other nationalities of Muslim republics (Zhenia 2017). Dimitry of KFU also pointed to the absence of Islamophobia and asserted on friendly relations between Muslims and Christians in Kazan and in Tatarstan in general (Dimitry 2017). However, Daniel at KFU blamed the ignorance of people about the nation of Islam and therefore the unwanted blaming of Muslims for every problem in the society. Being a student of Oriental studies h familiar is with Islam and Muslims and know their history and traditions thus “don’t follow the media hypes connecting terrorism to Islam and Muslims” (Daniel 2017).

Mark from MSU argued that he never thought of any Islamic or Muslim threat in Russia while he categorically asserted that “the Petersburg blast is organized by criminals who have nothing to do with religion” (Mark 2017). Regarding the media’s role in spreading fear during such contexts Xenia pointed out that:

> I do watch negative things about ISIS on media and I think it’s going to hell and feel very scared about it. I don’t think it’s true that these things happen because of religion. I think terrorist attacks like in Petersburg happen because of the absence of culture inside, lack of education and family problems. I cannot imagine somebody kills other for religion. I can’t do that. The years of war against Chechnya was a terrible time for Russians and most of them think about the Chechens as a terrorist. Now the government spends a lot of money to Chechnya to end conflicts. (Xenia 2017).

Therefore, the fellow community members in Russia don’t feel any threat from Islam and Muslims around them. However, the media coverage of terrorist attacks and the activities of ISIS bring Islam and Muslims into the frame and an

enemy image is constructed. Rather than a real threat, many of them perceive a kind of Islamophobia in the media discourse on Islam and Muslims especially migrants and people of Caucasus. Verkhovsky (2004) has pointed out to this enemy imaging trend among Russian nationalist who perceive Islam as a hostile force and immigration as a danger and as part of the expansionist designs of "world Islam"(Verkhovsky 2004:137).

c. Expert Views

Timir Shykhitdinov of KFU expressed his surprise hearing that there are media reports and articles say that there is an Islamic or Muslim threat in Russia. Shykhitdinov pointed out to the real issue underlining that:

> There are some problems and conflicts but they are not Islamic. Terrorist acts are crimes. And the immigrants from southern republics could act better in Moscow and people have negative relations with them. And it's a demographic, not a religious problem. And in general, the conflicts are political. And the issue is regarding national stereotypes and national discrimination etc. And the negative attitude towards Islam is mainly circulated in social media by people afraid of terrorism and mainstream media have no influence on this. But western media show another picture regarding these issues in Russia (Shykhitdinov 2017).

However, Shykhitdinov was skeptical about the role of global media in constructing discourse on Islam in Russia:

> Global discourse has not much influence in local media even though papers like *Shahrikazan* often bring such reports. However, 9/11 has an impact globally but probably not in Russia. But many other terrorist attacks like in St Petersburg, Moscow, Nord-Ost and Europe have an impact. Internet plays a role in connecting people to such events. Local media rarely talk about terrorism but they provide materials saying ISIS is not Islam. But at the federal level, many political issues like terrorist attacks are covered and people are thinking that Islam is connected to terrorism. Media don't try to equalize terrorism with Islam but the reports of terrorism and special reports on ISIS connect with Islam (Shykhitdinov 2017).

Shykhitdinov also pointed out to the difference between typical media outlets and social media in representing terrorism and Islam:

> I would say that mainstream media don't try to give Islamophobic narratives. But such Islamophobic images and reports come from social media networks during

> terroristic attacks. If mainstream media report terrorism they only give facts and try to say that the attacker is from this or that terrorist band (Shykhitdinov 2017).

Talking about the different schools of thoughts in Russian Islam and their ideological oppositions regarding extremist tendencies Rezeda Safiullina, of K.F.U argued that:

> There is a Wahabi influence but we call them as soft Salafis or moderate Salafis. There are "experts" (quote and unquote) who try to justify their existence of so-called jihadists. I personally didn't meet any jihadist yet. I know some Muslims who graduated from religious Universities or Madrasas from countries like Saudi Arabia but I couldn't find any dangerous activities from such people (Safiullina 2017).

Meanwhile, Nurulla (2017) asserted the resurfacing of the kind of "hostile Other" image of Islam in different occasions:

> Currently, there is no kind of enemy image of Islam in Russia though occasionally the discussions on the 9/11 come across when something like Beslan happens and migrant people are framed. And there are different discourses on dealing with the people from Central Asia as foreigners. Generally, Russians accept your nationality. But there are quite opposite responses that as an intellectual I feel very complicated to respond like a journalist. You may find a newspaper in the morning saying its first time to have Muslims in the Russian society (Nurulla 2017).

Venina (2017) underlines that "the crime is terrorism, not Islam but the migrant workers, influenced by radicalism back home, are behind the blast in Petersburg" (Venina 2017). Claiming it as revenge to Russian action in Syria against ISIS, she rejected the accusation of Putin's role behind the blast as "none sense because Petersburg is President's mother city and his popularity is growing more than 84 percent" (Venina 2017). Venina reminded the terrific shock of Beslan attack since it happened on the day of festivity in schools as opening day and even Muslims were victims of the tragedy:

> Radicalization is getting stronger among Muslims to that extent that a few people even prohibit celebrating Christmas and receiving gifts from Santa. Muslim leaders like Ramzan Kadyrov opposed this trend asking that is it a sinful practice to give gifts to children (Venina 2017).

Venina argues that the radicalization trend is spreading due to the inflow of migrants from Central Asian countries who lack modern education and seek a job in Russia. People from post-soviet Central Asia don't need visa documents since their Soviet relations with Russia. Though many people demands introducing visa Putin is committed to the CIS norms (Venina 2017).Venina also noted that:

> Russian people are still ready to treat these migrants better if they don't behave wrongly. There are good migrants who do their jobs respectfully. In my locality, we have a lady doctor from Uzbekistan. She got respects from all and even got citizenship. Russians never make distinctions between migrant people since Soviet times and they are living here for years. We have many colleagues from Central Asia (Venina 2017).

Venina is also worried about the young people from Central Asia who create problems even for the older generation from the community:

> Even the local Russian Muslims who lived here for centuries used to go to Cathedral Mosque but now they go but not happily whereas they prefer other masjids because many migrants coming to this mosque not accept Russian Muslims. These migrant young men, absolutely uneducated and sometimes very aggressive, misbehave with their fellow Muslims and some of them influenced by radicalism behave very badly treating even elder Muslims saying you are not pure Muslim and blaming them for not knowing how to pray (Venina 2017).

Responding to the question on the situation in Chechnya, Dagestan and Caucasus Venina observed that "lots of Imams and Mullahs were killed because they stood for peace and were against radicalism" (Venina 2017). However, she noted the different experience from Muslims in Tatarstan when radicals burned churches at night in Kazan the Muftis there responded that "it's the matter of pride of Muslims to rebuild these churches and collect money for this because we are living in friendship with Christians and we don't want to feel them bad" (Venina 2017). And she rejected any enemy image of Islam in Russia and argued: "the President always receives leaders of religious communities very warm and Putin himself inaugurated the Cathedral-mosque and he talks with religious people since we have traditional religious concepts four confessions" (Venina 2017).

Meanwhile, Kuznetovn (2017) argued that global discourse on Islam has a major impact in Russia "since the public perception and civil opinion in society regarding Islam in Russia have been more dealt with Chechen and Afghanistan wars. But don't think 9/11 had that much impact" (Kuznetovn 2017). However, Kuznetovn is very optimistic on Russian media regarding their difference from Western counterparts:

> Russian media really try to be very accurate and very dedicate to the 15-20 million Muslims here, therefore, they can't follow the anti-Muslim Islamophobic framing of Western media. So Islam, in general, is not represented as something bad. However, liberal media like *Ikhmoscovi* radio and *Dosth TV*, transmitted through the internet and critical of Kremlin, usually follow Western agenda and they are influenced by Western media in the point of view of contents and it is normal for example in the Libyan case. Once *Dosht TV* show's topic was how Russia will assert Islam challenge? I called them and asked how can you discuss this topic; there are 30 millions of Muslims here, is that for Islam is a challenge? They don't try to attract Muslim audience (Kuznetovn 2017).

Kuznetovn also noted the difference of representations in different media according to their political and ideological differences:

> While the official TVs like Channel-1 doesn't try to talk about Islam media like *Sergrat* TV, a strong Orthodox media, give balanced representation. And among papers, *Novaya Gazeta* talks about Islam. But it's a paradox that it's critical of Kremlin. And it's normal to criticize Kremlin politics but when they criticize religious politics they support Salafis and in fact, there is a paradoxical link between liberals and Salafis. And it's not special to Russia but everywhere and it's dangerous (Kuznetovn 2017).

Responding to the question of prevalence of Islamophobia in general Kuznetovn admitted that:

> Of course Islamophobia is there, unfortunately, it's partly by media images and partly by Muslim society's response. It's very difficult to take a position for Muslim leaders here as everywhere to be attractive to be interesting people you cannot always follow the government administrations. At the same moment when you start to criticize the government's official politic, you can be accused or targeted by some security services. So it's very difficult situation as a result Muslim leaders are much more Putinist than ours. Especially if you make a comparison between Muslim leaders and Jewish leaders in Russia, Jewish leaders are always liberals very free that are why as a result the official Islam is not relative. There is another problem that after every terrorist attack what Muslim leaders would say is nothing other than

> Islam is the religion of peace and etc. Maybe it rocked the first time but every time nobody would be interested (Kuznetovn 2017).

Kuznetovn also pointed out to the failure of leaders in the case of community leadership:

> There is a problem with Muslim community, problems with perception of Islam and there is quite a problem in the intellectual representation of Islam not only in Russia but in the West the same. There are some interested representations for example like Sufism but in fact, some hipsters are very crazy about Sufism and they don't associate Sufism with Islam (Kuznetovn 2017).

However, he noted that the relations between Islam and Christianity are normal since there is no problem at the top levels like intellectuals and political elites since people like Usmanov and Alikberov share business and administrative spheres in Russia. There are cordial relations between intellectuals. However, Kuznetovn admits that:

> At the local level, there are problems in Tatarstan. There may be discriminations between Russians and Tatars in the job and this divide is more ethnic than religious. Slavs feel the superiority so ethnic people like Muslims are becoming victims of this discrimination. There is positive discrimination still at the local level. In Russia, the Muslim community is very younger than others and they live in very depressive regions in an economic point of view and politically their governance is not very developed as clan system continues and the socio-economic bases for radicalization are very crucial". If a region has a young population with a lot of socio-economic problems and bad governance of course population can be radicalized through religious motives. And in such situations, even the official Islam have to be more Orthodox more traditional and stronger than it could be under normal conditions (Kuznetovn 2017).

Regarding such an Islamophobic environment in Russia Alikberov (2017) argued that:

> Islamophobic discourse arises in Russia mostly connected with the terrorist attacks and any rhetoric would say just like "global communism" there is a "global jihad." In Russia, there are some experts or alarmists who trying to enlarge the terrorist attacks and threat. Some of them are against Islam because of their personal origin like Jews who look on Islam based on Israel/Palestine conflict. Terrorists are terrorists but could not expend the terrorism to every aspect of religion and cultural aspect (Alikberov 2017).

However, Alikberov elaborated the ethnic and nationalist context of extremist tendencies among Muslims:

> Russian Islam is so tolerant and it has the big practice of coexistence with other religions and they don't want to create any new potential conflicts and people here living for centuries. But now the nationalist ideas are understood in a different way and Salafism works as an umbrella of different groups but that unity is not possible. Jihadist groups are there in Russia. This group may be just 0.2 percent in all population of Dagestan, most dangerous place in this regard but they are very active and we cannot ignore them (Alikberov 2017).

Kolomiets (2017) also pointed out to the different ideological streams of Islam in Russia that reflect in their representations:

> There are two kinds of Islam in Russia. 'Moderate local' and 'native Islam' confessed by mostly Tatar and some ethnical groups in Volga region. And there is 'radical Islam' confessed in Caucuses region and Dagestan. It could be tolerated but with the influence of Saudi Arabia and the idea of Wahabism, we can observe radicalization of Islam. It doesn't affect too much traditional Russian Islam, but they are coming to these areas and make troubles (Kolomiets 2017).

Responding to the question of the influence of global discourse on Islam in Russia Kolomiets observed that:

> I won't say global discourse influence local representations because global discourse on Islam is very much overloaded with labels. Once when I was a speaker in a seminar on cooperation and security in Europe I strongly condemned the usage of word Islam in connection to so-called Islamic State. We journalists could find another name for this organization prohibited in Russia. But this association with Islam because it's named self-sovereign it plays a very negative role. Russian media tried to avoid this title some years ago; still, I won't say we succeeded in such an attempt (Kolomiets 2017).

Regarding the presence of Islamophobia in Russia Kolomiets argued that:

> Yes if you mention Islam and Muslims in a very negative context like terrorism and danger it naturally raises some concern in audience mind. I won't call it Islamophobia but some distance some kind of concern that may grow into Islamophobia. I visited Poland and local colleagues find that Polish society is getting more and more Islamophobic though they don't have any contact with any Muslim or Islamic people. But because of media discourse raise Islamophobia (Kolomiets 2017).

However, Kolomiets approved Malashenko's argument on Russian media practice of orientalizing or vilification of Muslims or Chechens:

> If there is a crime, in fact, it's not good to journalistic ethics to mention ethnical group or religion of the murder for example. But very often media mention people from the Caucasus. The latest issue is the blasts in Petersburg metro. Very immediately a local mosque in Petersburg became the focus of the media arguing that this terrorist who committed suicide and killed several people had attended this mosque. It may be important for many people but it's as well stereotyping and tracing Islam for the wrong reason (Kolomiets 2017).

In her response to the question of global media influence in Russian counterparts Sabirova (2017) argued:

> Russian media follow global discourse but it's difficult to say how they follow. Currently what is happening in Syria with ISIS is one of the main focuses and TV news is filled with ISIS and Ukraine. Among these two topics, the first one is very much connected also to the Islam and to the religion and to find how these media discourse influences Islam images you have to go deep. Actually, the question of Islamophobia in Russia is very complex and complicated. It is not easy to answer but of course, we can say there is a kind of Islamophobic environment that is easy and definitely. When you look at what is behind this Islamophobia and how it is coming, what it is part of, here the picture is really very complex. Of course, it depends on your approach how you are going to approach in general (Sabirova 2017).

However, Sabirova pointed out to the diverse context of views among people on Islam and Muslims at large:

> If we generally speak about the perception of Islam by the majority population there are different issues which play a role and of course, they are differently represented in mass media. And the terrorism is framed and constructed as connected to Islam. You can probably find discourse on terrorism and Islam as two separate things but it's not in the majority perception. Moreover, there is terrorism and 'migantophobia' especially highlighted since the last event of blasts in Petersburg. And this is the first time in the history of new Russia a migrant coming from Central Asia is linked to terrorism. Earlier it was Caucasian people from North Caucasus, Chechnya, and Dagestan not from Central Asia. And again now things are connected to Islam and radicalization of Islam (Sabirova 2017).

Meanwhile, Sabirova noted the shift in perceptions and approach towards different nationalities:

> The developments of 9/11 and all other terroristic attacks happening in Russia are still quite problematic. So the general real picture is still quite Islamophobic. There is a kind of enemy imaging and othering of not only Chechens but also Dagestan and North Caucasus in general. Someone who looks like Caucasian nationals was stigmatized all these years. And this stigmatization is a new phenomenon with Central Asian migrants developed probably since 2005 massively (Sabirova 2017).

Responding to the radicalization of Muslims and the extremist tendencies Sabirova noted that:

> It has negative effects but from our side, if everything were smooth in Russia the Wahabi idea would not have developed. Salafism is a global phenomenon and it's widespread as a generational phenomenon. Rather than saying there is the threat of Wahabism I would say there is the threat of terrorism. You can study the roots of terrorism it can be different and I don't think that it's even connected to Islam. But they are connected to different issues like inequalities, injustice, unemployment and etc. After the Paris attack, Oliver Roy has pointed out to this phenomenon. Of course, Salafism has problems but it has different aspects (Sabirova 2017).

Therefore, the expert views on enemy imaging of Islam in Russia are diverse in terms of their approval of partial existence of Islamophobic situation and denial of media-constructed threat perception on Islam. While many of them point out the radical turn of the migrants and ideologically influenced young Muslims nobody wants generalization of this phenomenon. However, the experts not only reject the media-constructed discourse on globally connected Islamic threat in Russia but also admit the vested interests behind those Islamophobic narratives. While Hunter (2004) admits the growing anti-Muslim sentiments-Islamophobia Merati (2017) has pointed to the diverse perceptions currently existing on Islam in Russia which questions the notion of "Islamic factor" as a "threat" rather than an "asset"(Hunter 2004: 6; Merati 2017).

2. **Indian Experiences**

People on the streets, markets and religious places of Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Kochi the students, teachers, and professionals in universities and companies are little worried about their fellow Muslims but are concerned about the enemy images of Islam spread by media. While the common people are celebrating the confluence

of culture and faith at Masjids, dargahs and food points, the university and professional spaces give more knowledge on Muslim friends and their religion. Nobody could find a “hostile Other” in Delhi Juma Masjid where hundreds of Hindu, Sikh, Christian people join for the last Iftar and celebrate the announcement of Eid in 2017. And the “clash theory” seems inappropriate to describe the love and piety shared by people from different countries of diverse religion sitting on the floors of Nizamuddin Dargah and persuading the qawwals to sing the verses of love.

Nobody could feel Islamophobia in the air of Lucknow streets and markets where adhans from the Masjids and bhajans from temples echoes simultaneously. There are Muslims, Hindus, and Christians living on the same streets of Hyderabad and Kochi struggling for their livelihood without waging war on imagined enemies. And the university and professional spaces here are contesting the notion of “Islamic threat” constructed by media and extremist discourses.

a. Community Perspective

The Imam of Masjid near Nizamuddin dargah refused to respond on the pretext that media always misquote Muslim leaders to run their agenda depicting Muslims and Islam as terrorists. Meanwhile, Ghulam Rasool and his fellow qawwal just wanted to remind the media and critics who link terrorism with Islam that:

> The word *mumin* (a true believer in Islam) means who has benevolence in his heart. Thus no ‘mumin’ can do any offends towards others. The Prophet Muhammad has directed to keep away the goats when the fellow goat is butchered thinking that even the animal doesn’t feel hurt. We are concerned over the unlawful activities carried out by a few Muslims. And such Muslims do bring bad image for Muslims and Islam (Rasool 2017).

Husaini pointed his fingers to the shops and people working inside the Aminabad Masjid Lucknow asking that “how those Hindu brothers can live and earn their livelihood if Muslims were their enemies” (Husaini 2017). Rather than blaming Hindus for making issues of the ban on kabab-culture, Husaini alleged traders for food adulteration and underlined that it could not create any enemy image of Muslim cultures here (Husaini 2017). The Qureshi men talking about the beef-ban and

closing of Tunde ke Kabab also underlined that "all these sound and fury are just for political gain and no link with Muslim fear" (Akram and Imran 2017)

Being frustrated with the negative images spread by media on Islam and Muslims Imam Ahmad in Hyderabad believes that there is a kind of conspiracy behind such a media agenda:

> It's very bad that media focus on Islam during every terrorist attack and it's because most of the media are controlled by non-Muslims. Even the Urdu media, which are generally known as pro-Muslim, can't resist the dominant voices thus follow other media discourses on Islam. Actually, there is a conspiracy behind the 9/11 incident because Jews were video graphing and celebrating the fall of twin towers (Ahmad 2017).

Mentioning about the relations with other community people and their response to the Islamic practices Irshad (2017) admitted that:

> During my college days, we had restrictions to put on the beard whereas there were other colleges that give such freedoms. However, I never felt any kind of Islamophobia in college or in the village. We were friends irrespective of religion and nobody wanted to blame others on the basis of religion. Islam teaches to allow others to follow their religion (Irshad 2017).

Regarding the media discourses that help the growth of Islamophobic narratives on Muslim political activism in Hyderabad; Nizamuddin (2017) responded that:

> There is no point in spreading rumors of growing Muslim threat because since Nizam's days Muslims never tried to harm Hindus or oust them from the city. However, media try to portrait Muslims as terrorists. I would suggest them to check the identity of those who killed in terrorist attacks. If those who have that much arms and ammunition how themselves become victims. And those who go for suicide attacks are none other than who lost their parents and brothers whose sisters are raped and killed. If there are peace and security nobody will go for a fight. If you and family are happy people will go for a better life than killing themselves. And Islam and Prophet teach us the model of accommodating non-Muslims who even attacked and exiled him from the homeland (Nizamuddin 2017).

Being from a remote village where people live in harmony despite certain disputes in Gafoor was happy to share that:

> We feel no difficulties in our relations with Hindus. We had to face a controversy in our village in Anantapur district regarding construction of a road through a masjid compound. Though the issue was very volatile in the beginning things became

> normal and no communal tension resulted and we keep in good relations (Gafoor 2017).

Therefore, the community members are more worried about the media discourse on Islam and Muslims than their relations with people of different faiths in India. Most of them rarely remember enemy imaging experience in the social life but feel threatened through media-constructed narratives regarding Islam and terrorism. And the media discourse on Islam and Muslims as the enemy within hardly reflect in the response of community regarding their relations with different cultures and traditions in India. However, Rajagopal (2001) and Nadadur (2006) have pointed out the role of media in India in popularizing the ultra-nationalist rhetoric on the imminent "Islamic threat" and generalizing Muslims as the enemy within (Rajagopal 2001: 74; Nadadur 2006:89).

b. The perspective of Fellow Community People

Sharing his experience of living in a city like Lucknow where Islam and Muslims have part of the cultural milieu Tiwari (2017) rejected the "clash theory." Instead of a cultural or social threat, Tiwari understands Islam and Muslims as the immediate neighbors who make the life better with diverse food and cultural festivities. Tiwari played down the media and political propaganda of enemy imaging of Muslims as eve-teasers and beef eaters as just propaganda for political gains (Tiwari 2017).

Despite his difference towards the culture of beef-eating Prabhu (2017) neither felt Muslims as a threat nor did he hear about terroristic activities in his hometown:

> Muslims are busy in business and keep good relations with fellow communities. They are equal to Hindus in the local town. Muslims in Hyderabad is different because they eat a lot of beef. There is no hostile attitude to Muslim students in the university (Prabhu 2017).

Being a converted Christian, Shekhar who has been living for three decades in Hyderabad in a Muslim locality admits that:

> There are good and bad people among Muslims but there is no any communal tension. I feel very happy when at least 10 Muslims join if any of their brothers

> being attacked or become victims whereas Hindus never turn for the help of others (Shekhar 2017).

Shekhar underlines that unlike the media images of Islam and Muslims he didn't experience any threat from Muslims but feels happy working under a Muslim Sait who gives proper salary and deal very well (Shekhar 2017).

With his experience of communal amity and cultural exchange between communities, Priest Kumar of Hanuman Mandir responded that:

> Despite this area is dominated by Muslims we don't have to face any problem. We don't have any issues with the political gains of Muslim political parties whereas they visit and cooperate with us and we also approach them if have to get any official things done (Kumar 2017).

Instead of any "clash" between cultures, Santhosh argues that "Muslims and Hindus respect the Mandir and Darga and help each other not only in festivals but also in the day today religious practices" (Kumar 2017). The same kind of responses and relations from people in Kochi neither supported the "clash theory" nor evoked any hate to Muslims and Islamic culture but proved the opposite of understanding each other in proximity.

Therefore, the diverse response of fellow community people on the enemy image of Islam and Muslims in India challenge the media narrative on the emergence of an enemy within. Though many of them are familiar with media-constructed Islamophobic narratives the personal experiences and cultural exchanges define their relations with Islam and Muslims. However, they admit that the enemy imaging discourses constructed by media have a recurrence in the general perception regarding Muslims and Islam. Though Engineer (1985) points out to this kind of construction of "hostile Other" through circulating distorted factors Bandukwala (2006) underlines that the relations between Hindus and Muslims would be the main factor deciding the narrative on Islam in India (Engineer 1985:205; Bandukwala 2006: 1341).

c. Expert Views

Being the graduates of media studies and experts in social service Daya and Kritika shared the role of media in enemy imaging discourse on Islam especially after 9/11. Daya pointed out to the biased reporting of media:

> Generally, the media reports on terrorism and extremist activities keep a bias on Islam and Muslims. Even without knowing the real culprit of crimes media give some kind of hints towards Muslims/Islam with a prejudice to construct an enemy image (Daya 2017).

Kritika adds to this point that "the media has brainwashing role in depicting Islam and Muslims the perpetrators behind most of the shootings and crimes happening in the world" (Kritika 2017). Daya noted that "nowadays ISIS is almost covered as the representation of Islam" (Daya 2017). And Kritika argued, "actually radicals take things out of context and use the religion for their purpose" (Kritika 2017).

Elaborating the role of media in hiding the role of America and others in global terrorism Daya argued that:

> Studies show that America funded Taliban and media try to blame Pakistan for whole evil. There are terrorist groups in Pakistan and there are terrorist groups everywhere. The long war in Syria is the example of how the powerful countries make benefits out of such wars through arms trade (Daya 2017).

Moreover, Kritika questions why the media are not interested in exposing the imperialist agenda in the Muslim world where they want governments at their will:

> Three-four dictators in the world were supported by America with military and economic means but once they raised voice against the U.S these countries were branded as enemies and raged war against them. But media don't do justice to their responsibility to cover everything (Kritika 2017).

Regarding the media constructed Islamophobic discourses Kritika pointed out that:

> The media is deliberately propagating Islamophobic narratives and automatically the trend has been created. But when you personally know Muslims and personally talk to them you find the opposite. I have such personal experiences with Muslims and find that you can't associate a person's every activity with his/her religion (Kritika 2017).

Daya supported this point by saying that "everybody may have an affiliation with different religions and different practices. I don't have a problem with other's

religious practices and I can't think anybody as a different person in such a different religious practice" (Daya 2017).

Given the global media constructed binaries of civilized west vs. uncivilized Muslim world Gopinath (2017) questions the moral ground of the Western powers to carry on the civilizing and modernizing mission when they are the masters of creating humanitarian crisis across the world (Gopinath 2017). Elaborating the western propaganda to construct the enemy image of the Muslim world after 9/11, Gopinath argued that:

> We could clearly understand the western agenda if we look into the cases of Syria or Turkey and analyzing media reports. Before 9/11 Syria was a peaceful place where people were living their life normally and now the western forces turned this country into a mess. Why do western forces demand to oust of a ruler of another country? (Gopinath 2017).

Gopinath also pointed out that there is no scope for "clash theory" in India because of mutual understanding and cultural exchanges. Rejecting the narratives on Muslim enemy destroying Hindu civilization Gopinath argued:

> The Quran and Gita have a bunch of stories that guide us to a better life. The conquering and expansion of kingdoms were part of empires in the past and we can't say religion was the motive behind it since we can see Nadirsha attacking Ibrahim Lodhi. We can see the plundering and conquests by Alexander but he is renowned as Alexander the Great. And the British Empire did the same colonizing the world (Gopinath 2017).

Exposing certain interest groups for a long time keeping Indians divided into religious blocks and spreading enemy images of each Gopinath observed that:

> Still, I think India is the only country where Muslims can live peacefully. Just think of Pakistan and how they infiltrate terror in Kashmir to keep the conflict continue. And globally Syria totally becomes a war zone now Turkey is being targeted since that country is getting developed and becoming secular. Western powers need terrorism for their economic and commercial purpose they fund terrorists and sell arms to them. They do research on methods of killing humans through arms and drugs and sell it to the people who don't have means to survive (Gopinath 2017).

Responding to the question of growing anti-Muslim rhetoric globally Ramakrishnan (2017) underlines the role of imperialist powers in constructing the enemy image of Islam to advance their political economy globally:

> The emergence of United States as a major power in cold war era and their media houses controlled by the state lacked the earlier intimacy with Islam. Even though there was a reproduction of "Orientalist" images of Islam the American version was a more sharp projection of Islam as the enemy. Thus the projection of Islam as a total "Other" and a complete "enemy" was the result of American Orientalism. This American Orientalism has influenced Indian discourses on Islam (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Moreover, Ramakrishnan traces the historical evolution of the phenomenon namely Islamophobia and how it defined the discourse in different contexts:

> Islamophobia has a long history in the polity and culture of India where it was used at certain moments in order to develop particular kind of hegemony in different times of modern history. During the British rule to content the nationalist movement there was a need for othering process and Islam was one element of "Other" for the self-assertion of nationalism. Even in the secular fabric of Indian nationalism, there was a mainstreaming of Indian culture as something assumed to be not including the religions and cultures that originated somewhere else. And the place of the origin of the culture was a very important thing. Therefore, by definition Muslims did not fall into the mainstream. This kind of nationalism was developed during the last one century or more. Now the global dimension of the hegemonic othering of Islam is added to the national political and cultural hegemony already existed. And this combination process has become deadly at this point of time (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Regarding the enemy imaging discourse that getting stronger through ultra-nationalist forces in India, Ramakrishnan noted that:

> The growing violence over Muslims and the fear spread over the country send the message that you are not in the mainstream or not part of national imagination. There is a strong propagation of fear with an Islamophobic element which is historically rooted in common sense that Muslims do not belong to India. This common sense prevalent because the right wing forces could propagate culturally through various methods including education and media that Islam is an alien to India. Thus the kind of Islamophobia existed in India anyone could tap to overcome any kind of political crisis in the country (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Despite resistance from different quarters to challenge this enemy imaging tendency the established forces in socio-political spheres continue to survive it for their benefit:

> The dominant ideology of nationalism always put Islam as the "Other" and Islamophobia sustain in India for a long period of time. It remained unseen because of the inclusive politics followed by important leaders at various times despite the slow development of 'common sense'. Now all kind of local resistance to such hegemonic discourses became extremely difficult due to the overwhelming of the global boggy of Islamic terrorism forcing everybody to address this phenomenon. Thus the resistances were pushed into the wall at different times (Ramakrishnan 2017).

The expert views on enemy imaging discourse confirm the spread of Islamophobic narratives in the country with the help of media. While the personal experiences and learned observations help them to reject any threat perception on Islam and Muslims, they admit the role of global and local media discourses in the construction of narratives on an enemy within. This kind of threat perception is reflected in Rao's generalization of the threat of "radical Islam" in India as part of "religion-inspired terrorism" (Rao 2008: 722).

Conclusion

The post-9/11 media discourse in Russia and India reflect the global discourse on "clash of civilizations" that could generalize an enemy image of Islam and Muslims at large. Both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* essentialize "jihadi Islam" as a globally unified ideological representation of terrorism without looking into the local contexts of the extremist tendencies. Rather than giving space to counter-narratives from the Muslim world both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* generalizes the extremist versions that make the "Orientalist" "hostile Other" image of Islam reinforced. The "neo-Orientalist' Islamophobic discourse on unintegrated "evil Other" is reproduced by *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* in their coverage of Islam and Muslims in the Western countries. Reporting on Islam and Muslims in their home countries *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* constructs Islamophobic narratives that stigmatize the image of an "enemy within." Despite giving space for counter-voices the misrepresented "demonized Other"

images of Islam and Muslims in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* not only reproduce the Huntington thesis but also reinforce the Islamophobia.

Whilst the media discourse keeps the "hostile Other" image highlighted, the social perceptions regarding Islam and Muslims in India and Russia contain diverse views and experiences. From common people to university graduates are exposed to the media discourse on Islam connected to "jihad" and terrorism even though they don't feel any "civilizational clash" within their neighborhoods. Notwithstanding the common historical experiences and contemporary challenges of the people in Russia and India, their socio-cultural confluence is often overshadowed by dominant ethnic, nationalist and communal discourses. And this is reflected in the media-constructed threat perception prevalent even among informed people and academic experts. However, lived experiences and learned observations help people in both countries to differentiate between media-constructed "Islamophobic frames" and socially connected realities.

Chapter V

The Gender Stereotyping of Islam in Russian and Indian Media

Having discussed the discursive process of othering and enemy imaging, this chapter analyzes the representation of Islam in Russian and Indian media with gender stereotyping narratives on Muslim women. The discourse on Muslim women regained new currency when debates on Islam increased after 9/11 and many studies have explored the stereotyping aspects of such discourse (Jawad and Benn 2003; Posetti 2006; Eltantawy 2007; Khiabany and Williamson 2008; Hasan 2012; Amin-Khan 2012; Özcan 2013; Khalid 2017). This chapter analyzes post-9/11 reports of *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* that cover issues of Muslim women especially the hijab/veil in order to understand the stereotyped gender representations of Islam. Different from previous chapters, in which reports of selected occasions were taken as samples, reports from 11 September 2001 to 11 September 2005 are taken for analysis given the limited reference to women during this period. The structure of the chapter and method of analysis are same as used in previous chapters. However, personal experiences of selected women are included in the final part of the chapter in order to get a closer understanding of discourses on Muslim women in Russia and India.

Media Reports on Islam in Russia: Gender Stereotyping

The post-9/11 *Izvestia* reports include narratives on Muslim women across the Muslim world, Russia and Western countries. And such narratives on Muslim women are analyzed in this section to understand the discursive process of generalizing, essentializing or stigmatizing Islam on gender issues especially freedom of women in veiling and dress code.

Izvestia Reports: Orientalizing Women of the Muslim World

As part of the discursive process of stereotyping women of the Muslim world, *Izvestia* uses an orientalizing method by contrasting Muslim traditions with that of the West. In this regard *Izvestia* report titled "At the end of the tunnel" by Voinovich juxtaposes the West with the Muslim world in terms of civilizational difference:

> …full freedom in all senses, for which the European civilization has been going for a long time…And that to another world…in one of the Arab Emirates...Strict morals, women are closed from the crowns to the ankles…(Voinovich 12 October 2001).

The above report stigmatizes the women in hijab/veil as a symbol of a "closed" civilization contrary to the European civilization that enjoys "full freedom." The similar notion of civilizational superiority over Islam regarding gender relations is reproduced in *Izvestia* report titled "La Dolce Vita in the UAE" that essentializes women in the Muslim world as no way equal to the "liberated ladies from Europe and Russia" (Shumilin 4 March 2002). This kind of discursive process, as Said (1978) noted, not only orientalizes the Muslim women in hijab but also asserts the superiority of the "Western Self" over the "Oriental Other" (Said 1978: 3).

Juxtaposing two "Oriental" images, *Izvestia* article titled "Where dangerous to go on holiday" generalizes the stereotypes of Muslim women from Indonesia and Arab world comparing their approach towards photographing:

> …in the Middle East, the tourist who inadvertently photographed the local people, especially women, may lash out with fists…Indonesians, on the contrary, seeing the camera will run for several quarters asking to make a joint frame (Yusin 30 October 2001).

On the one hand, the report stigmatizes the women of Middle East as "hostile" to the modern culture; on the other hand, it constructs the stereotype of Indonesian women as poor "Orientals" who still run to make a joint frame with "civilized" people. Poole (2002) has pointed out to such media practice of reproducing "Orientalist" frames in the representation of the Muslim world and Muslim women as "backward and unchanging" compared to the Western counterparts (Poole 2002: 18).

Izvestia reporter Shestakov's interview with an Iranian scholar Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Taskhiri reconstructs such an orientalizing discourse through a couple of questions;

> …Whether Shirin Ebadi's Nobel Prize victory is recognition for a Muslim woman? ...What do you think about the current number of countries banning the wearing of Muslim headscarves in schools? (Shestakov 19 October 2003).

The earlier question problematizes Ebadi's achievement despite being a "Muslim woman". And the later one essentializes the "Muslim headscarves" as an issue the Western countries are forced to address. Through this kind of discursive process, *Izvestia* stigmatizes Muslim women as "Harem Queens" or "veiled subjects," as Jawad and Benn (2003) noted, rather than acknowledging them as Nobel laureates.

Generalization of extreme voices and practices is the method *Izvestia* used in a report by Shestakov titled "The last concert" to essentialize gender relations in the Muslim world. Stigmatizing Pakistan as the "island of radical Islam" and "Mullah Regimes," the report generalizes the ban on male doctors to treat women and male athletes to train females and essentializes Islamic Sharia law as "oppressive to women" (Shestakov 26 October 2003). In this sense, another *Izvestia* report titled "Deliberate blasphemy" highlights the controversy when the editor of a newspaper in Pakistan charged for blaming "Quran and Prophet for permitting Muslims to have more than four wives" and declaring the practice as "unabashedly male chauvinism" (Babasyan 14 July 2003). Through ideologically targeted generalizations of the radical elements and odd practices among Muslim societies these reports reproduce, as Amin-Khan (2012) argued, the "gender oppressive" image of the Muslim world (Amin-Khan 2012: 1596-58).

In a report on Ferghana Valley's protest against American president Bush on Iraq war *Izvestia* uses even offensive gender stereotypes to explain the situation of local Muslims:

> …extreme poverty forces many women of this region famous for its religious prostitution. Today it services "prostitutes" per night cost just two dollars that is about as much as a kilogram of meat (Namangan 10 April 2003).

Stigmatizing the women as "religious prostitutes" the report constructs the stereotyped gender discourse on women of the Muslim region regarding their ethnic and religious identity. Posetti (2006) has noted on such gender stereotyping media discourse through "generalizations and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes" (Posetti 2006: 2).

The similar stigmatizing stereotypes are reproduced in *Izvestia* report that covers a debate in Afghanistan on the "rights of women sing and dance" (Shesternin 20 January 2004). With a stereotyping caption; "will Afghan women singing and dancing in public" *Izvestia* reinforces the "Orientalist" stereotypical image of Muslim women. Despite President Karzai's explanation that "Afghan women are singing on Television for 50-60 years" *Izvestia* repeats the stigmatized narrative that "female TV presenters appeared in Afghanistan two years ago" (Shesternin 20 January 2004). As Carter and Steiner (2004) argued media through such discursive process actually construct "hegemonic definitions of what should be accepted as reality" (Carter and Steiner 2004: 4).

Double Stand on Hijab

On the one hand, *Izvestia* highlights the liberal values of Europe in banning hijab/scarves, on the other hand, it essentializes the same action in a Muslim country as discrimination. *Izvestia* report titled "Women in headscarves will not be allowed on the anniversary of the Republic of Turkey" brings such an ambiguous discourse:

> Muslim women in headscarves are subjected to discrimination…there were no women in Muslim headscarves … the prime minister did not take his wife to the reception, who is, of course, wears a headscarf… (Babasyan 28 October 2003).

While the report generalizes the ban as discrimination by a Muslim country it also brings contradicting voices stigmatizing the hijab practice as well as supporting it:

> …hand kerchief is the first step towards Islamization…the Islamic revolution in Iran began with the fact that women wearing headscarves… those who want can wear them… there are places, such as in eastern Turkey, where almost all the women wearing Muslim headgear (Babasyan 28 October 2003).

However, the ideologically targeted stereotyping of the Muslim world is evident when *Izvestia* contrasts Turkey with Europe and Russia in terms of tolerance towards hijab:

> Muslim attire is tolerated…in France…in Germany…in Spain…in Russia…Supreme Court and Interior Ministry allowed Muslim women to be photographed in headscarves even for passport despite earlier refusal from Kazan court and President Putin's support for such a verdict (Babasyan 28 October 2003).

Thus *Izvestia* ultimately takes a double stand constructing a contradicting discourse on the right of Muslim women to wear hijab. This kind of stigmatizing practice of media has pointed out by Said (1978) and Eltantawy (2007) arguing that it ultimately essentializes the stereotypical image of "veiled oriental women." Amidst such orientalizing narratives on Muslim women of Muslim world *Izvestia* report titled "Muslims will hold their own Olympics" (Byrdin 8 April 2005) brings counter-narratives reporting the attempt of Sports Forum of Muslim Women since 1993 to conduct Olympic model games for women in which women from more than 50 countries arrived in Saudi Arabia. However, *Izvestia's* representations of women in Muslim world generally reconstruct the "Orientalist" gender stereotypes.

Izvestia Reports: Muslim Women in Russia

The general discourse on Muslim women in Russia covers different aspects regarding their identity, tradition, culture and religious practices (Silantyev 2005; Gradskova 2012; Sabirova 2011). And this section analyzes *Izvestia* reports to understand the gender stereotyping aspects in the media representations of Muslim women in Russia. In this regard, generalized narratives are reproduced by *Izvestia* to orientalize the Muslim women in Russia as poor in a civilizational sense.

In a report on the Congress of Muslims of Russia *Izvestia* stigmatizes the political participation of Muslim women suggesting that "not only men but two ladies" (Vinogradov 16 September 2001b). Moreover, the participation of women was even declined in an earlier report (Vinogradov 16 September 2001a). And *Izvestia* essentializes the Muslim women's response to the honoring of victims of 9/11 as "uncivilized" because they "swayed their scarves" along with "some men

demonstratively remained seated" (Vinogradov 16 September 2001b). The above report not only constructs gender stereotypes of Muslim women regarding their political activism but also stigmatizes their cultural practices.

In the same sense, culturally targeted stereotypes on Muslim women are constructed in an article "If I was Osama bin Laden" by essentializing their family and sexual life; "they also breed like rabbits and relatives go to them and ride" (Osetinsky 25 September 2002). Apart from stigmatizing the Muslim women for not following family planning the report constructs an offensive gender discourse regarding their sexual life. As Eltantawy (2007) has noted through this kind of stereotyped image the media constructs the notion of "inferior and backward Islamic Other" (Eltantawy 2007:10).

The stigmatizing of Muslim institutions in Russia regarding the hijab and gender relations is evident in an *Izvestia* interview with the head of "Saudi schools in Moscow" (Shumlin 3 July 2002). The Muslim management is forced to be apologetic; "girls cover headscarves, but the faces are open, they do not wear the burqa. They are trained in mixed groups of boys" (Shumlin 3 July 2002). As this report stigmatizes Muslim schools on its treatment of gender/identity of students it reproduces a stereotyping discourse. Similar orientalizing gender stereotypes are reproduced in a report titled "Filippok goes to madrasah" in which *Izvestia* brings the stories of different of Muslim women in Russia:

> Ekaterina Sergeeva is a teacher. In Madrassah "Makhinur"...press secretary of the Nizhny Novgorod Spiritual Administration of Muslims. At the meeting she came in a white Tatar scarf, her hands were closed to her wrists, her skirt reached to her ankles…Muslim Sergeeva is like a pious Russian peasant from the XIX century (Mitrichev 16 July 2002).

Moreover, the *Izvestia* reporter expresses wonder for finding some women "not in a burqa" in a mosque where a library was attached with "a fresh edition of the Muslim poetry; "We will forever praise the woman, whose name is the mother" (Mitrichev 16 July 2002). As the report orientalizes an educated Muslim woman as a "XIX century Russian peasant" just for her Islamic dress code it reproduces "Orientalist"

stereotyping narratives. And through culturally stigmatizing Muslim women's engagement with books and poetry the report clearly constructs gender stereotyping discourse. Brower and Lazzerini (1997) have pointed out this kind of orientalizing discourse as an attempt to enforce "cultural superiority" over "savage natives" (Brower and Lazzerini 1997: xvii).

On Hijab Controversy

Izvestia constructs an ambiguous discourse on hijab by supporting the rights of Muslim women as well as stigmatizing them for lacking liberal values. In this regard, a report titled "White handkerchiefs" supports the right of Muslim women to be photographed with a headscarf even citing the Muslim officials and public saying:

> …to be photographed without a headscarf, humiliate Muslim women…Such a ban is the oppression of Muslim women…we must respect national feelings. What law can be higher feelings of women, especially oriental woman? (Bovt 2 August 2002)

At the same time, the report accommodates voices that argue the demand for photographing in hijab/burqa is not different from demand "to be photographed naked" (Bovt 2 August 2002). On the one hand, the report evokes the civil ethos of Russia towards "oriental woman" on the other hand it reminds Muslim women that Russia is a secular state and has the legacy of Enlightenment and scientific thinking. Such a discourse, as Khiabany and Williamson (2008) noted, actually stigmatizes the veiling as a pre-modern practice and hijab as a symbol of Islamic "refusal" to embrace "modernity" (Khiabany and Williamson 2008: 70).

In the wake of the French "hijab debate" *Izvestia* report "Scrap of Shackle" reproduces similar discourse in Russia highlighting the contradiction of religious and civil rules in a secular state. The report gives space for Muslim women to explain her part; "Indeed, for a Muslim woman to remove her headscarf before a strange man is like having to undress" (Huseynov 27 April 2003). At the same time, *Izvestia* underscores that "Qur'an is not a source of law in Russia" (Huseynov 27 April 2003). As the title of the report denotes *Izvestia* stigmatizes the hijab as an Oriental practice not compatible with modern Russia.

The ambiguous debate on hijab is reproduced in a report on the judgment of Moscow Chamber of Appeal of the Supreme Court to allow Muslim women photographed in headscarves for a passport (*Izvestia* 15 May 2003). Apart from stigmatizing the Muslim women "in hijabs filled the courtroom" the report stereotypes their celebrations in "unfamiliar language." Moreover, the report cites Russian President's support to "the judicial authorities of Tatarstan" for banning Muslim women to be photographed in headscarves for a passport as well as his willingness to allow hijab as a fashion (*Izvestia* 15 May 2003). However, the report brings counter-narratives from Muslim women like Anar who converted to Islam:

> …this is a brilliant decision of the court…but we won a very important victory. For now, not only Muslim women can be photographed according to religion. Orthodox nuns will also be able to be photographed for a passport in a scarf (*Izvestia* 15 May 2003).

On the one hand, the report constructs a culturally stigmatizing discourse on Muslim women's practice of hijab, on the other hand, it highlights the Russian tolerance towards such oriental traditions. Moreover, citing the president's support for the ban and his tolerance to hijab as a fashion *Izvestia* reproduces, as Poole (2002) argued, an orientalizing discourse on an "acceptable Other."

Meanwhile, *Izvestia* brings certain counter-narratives exposing the threat perception constructed on Muslim women in hijab as suicide bombers. In this regard *Izvestia* report titled "Appear in hijab in Moscow is like to go out naked" argues that "scarf and long clothes are now associated with the image of the suicide bomber … suicide bombers blew themselves in ordinary clothes" (Granik 28 September 2004). *Izvestia* brings the story of a local Muslim woman who faced threats after the Beslan tragedy:

> …I was surrounded by a pack of skinheads. Men shouting "shahid! Get out"… And now to appear in a hijab in Moscow is like to go out naked…And the police stop every hundred meters (Granik 28 September 2004).

The report also covers the stories of foreign Muslim women who were forced to remove their headscarves in Moscow after terrorist attacks like "Nord-Ost" while Interior Ministry started an all-Russian operation "Fatima" to check all the women in

long robes and headscarves (Granik 28 September 2004). As the report exposes the public and official discursive practice of stereotyping "women in hijab" it underlines what Özcan (2013) argued on how "the representation of the veil has come to signify multiple and shifting meanings, ranging from women's oppression to Islamic terrorism" (Özcan2013: 429).

Stigmatizing of converted Muslim women as recruiters of suicide bombers is another discursive method used by *Izvestia* to reproduce "gendered Islamophobia". In an interview with Zara Murtazalieva, who was booked for alleged recruitment of Muscovites, *Izvestia* constructs such a discourse with a title "I once asked how to become a shahid" and a caption "Anna Kulikova and Masha Grachev wants to fight against the Russian army in Chechnya" (Rechkalov 18 June 2004). A series of questions raised by *Izvestia* also underline the culturally targeted stereotyping of Muslim women:

> …how is it that you baptized Russian girl suddenly converted to Islam?…would you like to be a Chechen woman? Would you like to marry a Chechen? (Rechkalov 18 June 2004).

Through such generalizing questions, *Izvestia* gives an impression that a "civilized" Russian girl cannot think of converting to "oriental Islam". And culturally and ethnically targeted gender stereotypes are reproduced in the questions on Chechen women. As Posetti (2006) argued the report reinforces the stigmatized image of Muslim men and women from Chechnya through "generalizations and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes" (Posetti 2006:2).

Ultimately, *Izvestia* reports construct culturally targeting and ethnically stigmatizing discourse on Muslim women in Russia. Gibatdinov (2007) has pointed to this kind of orientalizing discourse on Muslim women as "a creature of the lowest breed" (Gibatdinov 2007:279). In this regard, the "lady in headscarf," according to Sabirova, has been stereotyped by the state and contemporaries in Russia (Sabirova 2011: 340).

Izvestia Reports: Muslim Women in Western Countries

Izvestia reports also include narratives on Muslim women living in Western countries. This section analyzes *Izvestia*'s such coverage of Muslim women to understand how the gender stereotyping discourse is constructed by contrasting the "Oriental Other" with the "Western Self." In this regard, *Izvestia* reporter Nataliya Babasyan brings a few stigmatizing questions and conclusions in an interview with philanthropist Hani El-Banna in Britain:

> …You mentioned your wife. How many of your wives? ...she wears the hijab or burqa?...in Iran, for example, all the women go to the hijab, as in Afghanistan so far, most are hidden under burkas…the right choice exists only in Western society. In Iran, in Afghanistan and in many Muslim countries, such a right does not exist (Babasyan 7 August 2002).

The questions reflect the stigmatizing of Muslim women as deprived of freedom of choice in their marriage, dress code compared to their counterparts in the West. The interviewee gets space to compare the Muslim practice with the traditional dress codes followed by Christian (Nuns and even Our Lady), Jewish and Hindu women (Babasyan 7 August 2002). However, the report constructs, as Eltantawy (2007) noted, the binary of the "superior West" and the inferior and backward "Islamic Other" in terms of gender relations. Saving Afghan women from their own savage men is the civilizing mission of West in the "War on Terror" campaign (Usha 2008).

Similar narratives are reproduced in *Izvestia* report titled "Islamic flag over Trafalgar Square" in which Muslim women are stigmatized for lacking freedom for "relationship with a man outside marriage" (Babasyan 30 August 2002). In another report titled "French Muslims are complaining of Chirac" *Izvestia* covers the controversy on hijab and constructs a stereotyped image of Muslim women who are hardly ready to integrate into European culture (Shestakov and Huseynov 18 December 2003). The above reports not only orientalize the Muslim women in the West but also stigmatize them as "cultural threat" to the European values.

In this sense, French "hijab controversy" was covered by *Izvestia* using a few binary themes such as secular versus sacred, European versus Oriental and modern

versus conservative. A report titled "Scrap of Shackle" essentializes the Muslim protests for the right for hijab as against the Western values:

> ..the demand for women to wear a traditional strict headscarf in all public and private institutions and photographed in a headscarf on passport and other official documents …is the best proof of the deep crisis which corrodes the French society(Huseynov 27 April 2003).

To underline such a stigmatizing discourse, *Izvestia* argues that "a simple female headscarf has caused acute confrontation of Islamic radicals and secular France" (Huseynov 27 April 2003). Thus the report, as Khiabany and Williamson (2008) argued, really constructs the stereotyped image of hijab as a symbol of Islamic "refusal" to embrace "modernity."

Izvestia report on French controversy on "hijab in swimming pool" also reproduces gender stereotyping discourse regarding hijab. As the report stigmatize the "Muslim lobby" for demanding the right to practice hijab:

> …most of the French departments of Muslim organizations demand local authorities to allow schoolgirls wearing headscarves and force educational institutions special room for religious ceremonies (Shestakov 16 July 2003).

This kind of discourse represents Muslims demands for hijab as a threat to the civil order of the society and a threat to normalcy. Another report titled "First call" covers the choice of students in selecting Muslim schools in France where hijab "is not mandatory." However, the report actually generalizes the headscarf as a uniform and stigmatizes Muslim schools as very different from normal schools because of "hijab" (Shestakov 17 September 2003).

Izvestia also constructs gender stereotyping discourse by generalizing certain extreme responses from Muslims. In this regard, a report titled "Our constitution the Koran" essentializes Muslim demand for hijab as a call for "superiority of Sharia law over secular law" (Babasyan 23 November 2003). The report also brings culturally targeting stereotypes on issues related to Muslim women;

> Muslim schoolgirls sued their right to go to school in hijabs and Muslim women demanded separate time in the pool…certain Muslim traditions, polygamy, forcible issuance of the girls married and repudiation of her husband (Babasyan 23 November 2003).

With a title that constructs an “us” versus “them” dichotomy, the report generalizes certain practices as Muslim traditions and stigmatizes them as a threat to “our way of life” or “our values” of liberal gender concepts. The similar notion of orientalizing is reproduced in *Izvestia* report titled “Sharia reached Canada” that stigmatizes the victim image of Muslim women stuck between the civil and Sharia law. The report gives space for a counter voice from Alia Hogben, president of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women asking “why Muslim women to be treated differently than other Canadians?" (Bielecki 17 June 2004). However, through culturally targeted stereotypes on Muslim women regarding matters of marriage and divorce *Izvestia* constructs a discourse, as Altwaiji (2014) argued, that produces an “Orientalist” theme in gender debate around Islam.

Therefore, the *Izvestia* reports on Muslim women in Western countries construct gender stereotyping discourse through orientalizing narratives, stigmatizing stereotypes and generalizing images that contrast with their counterparts in the West. Regarding this kind of gendered portrayal of the Muslim woman Amin-Khan (2012) argued that such discourses have marked her “both as a target of racist vitriol and as an object to be rescued from herself and her faith” (Amin-Khan 2012:1601).

Media Reports on Islam in India: Gender Stereotyping

In the post-9/11 reports, *The Hindu* also has brought narratives on Muslim women across the Muslim world, India, and the Western countries. A host of issues ranging from personal freedom to hijab related to Muslim women have become subject of debate in the news and views appeared during 2001-2005. Given such diverse aspects of narratives on Muslim women, this section analyzes *The Hindu* reports to understand the gender stereotyping aspect in the representation of Islam.

The Hindu Reports: Orientalizing Women in the Muslim World

Many studies (Jawad and Benn 2003; Eltantawy 2007; Khalid 2017) have pointed out the orientalizing discourse on women in the Muslim world constructed by Western media in the post-9/11context. In this regard, *The Hindu* reports on Muslim

women in Muslim countries are analyzed to understand the construction of gender stereotyping discourse through stigmatized images and generalized narratives on their identity, traditions, and cultural practices.

Generalizing extreme practices is the method used in *The Hindu* report titled "Woman suicide bomber rattles Israel" to construct gender stereotypes of Palestinian women. The report stigmatizes the Muslim identity of Palestinian women:

> The use of female bombers marked a dramatic tactical shift by Palestinian groups seeking to exploit the security forces' hesitation to search Muslim women…stricter checks on Palestinian women will inflame passions at a time of already high tension (*The Hindu* 29 January 2002).

The report constructs the Islamophobic stereotypes of Muslim women by essentializing their identity as a tool used for defense. At the same time, the Muslim women are also generalized as a possible threat because their Muslim identity restricts security checks. Özcan (2013) has pointed out this kind of representation of Muslim women and their veil as a symbol of "Islamic terrorism" (Özcan2013: 429).

Culturally targeted stigmatization of Muslim women is evident in *The Hindu* op-ed page article titled "Saudi women step out" that reproduces the gender stereotypes:

> The religious mandate to wear the black veil, or the *Abaya*, is not the main issue before women in Saudi Arabia. Even if that restriction were lifted most Saudi women might continue to wear the *Abaya* (Mohan 25 April 2002).

As the title of the article denotes *The Hindu* reinforces the stereotyped narratives on Saudi women as inferior to come out to challenge the restrictions they face. And it also stigmatizes the cultural affinity of Saudi women with *Abaya* and their unwillingness to drop it even if they got a chance. Moreover, to generalize the veiling practice as a threat to the life and career of Saudi women the article interlinks a tragic incident in which fifteen girls became victims of fire in a school near the holy city of Mecca when religious police "prevented them from leaving the building because they were not wearing their *Abayas*" (Mohan 25 April 2002). Though the story focuses on the specific case of Saudi women it brings, as Posetti (2006) argued, gendered stereotypical images of Muslim women as "veiled victims" at large. At the

same time, *The Hindu* constructs fear of "veil" through reports like "Veil set off mosque fire" that covers a fire accident in Iran during a Muharram congregation and generalizes the threatening image of the veil of Muslim women (*The Hindu* 16 February 2005).

The post-9/11 Western media discourse on "modernizing mission" for the Muslim women is reflected in *The Hindu* opinion article "Women's rights in Afghanistan" that covers the debate on women's rights in the draft constitution. The report essentializes the new fight as an "intense tussle between traditionalism and modernity" whereas it reminds that "women were made equal citizens with men in the 1964 Constitution" (Mukarji 21 February 2003). Stigmatizing them as stuck between traditionalism and modernity the article constructs a "victim" image of Afghan women who need "liberation" by external forces. Regarding this kind of discursive process Eltantawy (2007) has noted how the media construct of binary between "superior West" and the inferior and backward "Islamic Other" through stereotypical narratives on Muslim women in Afghanistan (Eltantawy 2007: 10).

The stigmatized image of Muslim women is also constructed through essentializing or contrasting their religious identity with that of Western liberal counterparts. In this regard, *The Hindu* editorial titled "A noble Iranian" portrays the nomination of Iranian human rights activist, Shirin Ebadi for Nobel Peace Prize as a "surprise and disappointment of many" and endorses the doubts on her "eligibility for the award" (*The Hindu* 18 October 2003). And *The Hindu* evokes stereotyped gender narrative on Muslim women as it argues:

> Ebadi deserves the Peace Prize…as the representative of Iranian women…who are in the forefront of a wider campaign to promote gender equality in the Muslim world… This year's choice must be seen in an international context in which the West and the Islamic world confront each other on various fronts… it specifically noted that Ms. Ebadi is a devout Muslim… they attempt to do so while preserving the core values of Islam (*The Hindu* 18 October 2003).

On the one hand, *The Hindu* doubts the eligibility of a woman from the Muslim world for such recognition, on the other hand, it stigmatizes her Muslim identity and religiosity as not a barrier for such achievements. The editorial also constructs a

stereotyping discourse on devout Muslim women of the Islamic world by contrasting their achievement against Western liberal values. As (Posetti 2006) argued the report essentializes the image of women in the Muslim world through "generalizations and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes" (Posetti 2006: 2).

While *The Hindu* brings reports on women empowerments it contrasts the stereotyped images of their counterparts in the Muslim world. In this regard, a report titled "UAE names first woman Minister" contrasts the changing aspect of Arab women with "Saudi Arabia where women do not even have the right to drive a car" (*The Hindu* 3 November 2004). In a similar pattern, another report titled "Women can run for presidency" constructs an orientalizing discourse on Iran since women were refused to run for the Presidential post for 25 years (*The Hindu* 23 January 2005). If a report titled "Saudis vote in 'men-only' municipal election" generalizes the absence of women's participation (Aneja 11 February 2005) another report "Bahraini lawmaker makes history" brings story of Alees Samaan becoming "first woman in the Arab world to chair a session of Parliament" (Aneja 21 Apr 2005). As these reports contrast the essentialized images of inferior and backward "Islamic Other" it ultimately stigmatizes the "unbelievable change" of the Muslim/Arab woman usually stereotyped as "passive victim or active political agent" (Eltantawy 2007: 10).

Despite acknowledging the "unbelievable change" of women in the Muslim world *The Hindu* opinion piece titled "Eroding women's rights" brings back the orientalizing narratives:

> …regime of the mullahs over women…would legalise polygamy; divorce by talaq; honour killings; stoning and public beheadings of women for alleged adultery (Owen 29 July 2005).

While the article blames western powers for playing into the hands of hardliners through regime change in Iraq it reproduces the "Orientalist" stereotyped images of Muslim women as "veiled subjects" who were waiting for the Western saviors. This narrative is more evident in an opinion piece titled "New dark age for Iraqi women" that essentializes the status of women in post-Saddam Iraq for the "new sense of

religiosity and resurgence of tribal authority” (*The Hindu* 15 August 2005). As the title denotes the report constructs a stereotyped narrative on Iraqi women returning to “dark age” and “tribal authority” despite the “civilizing mission” of Western forces.

The “Orientalist” notion of Islam as a misogynist idea is reflected in another opinion piece “Women fear Iraq Constitution” that stigmatizes the Muslim world for not imitating the West in gender discourse:

> …it's unclear whether Islamic law or Sharia would override the civil law…it would be a disaster…it would be a humiliating setback for United States President George Bush, who has cited women's equality as one of Washington's objectives in Iraq. Islamic law would leave women vulnerable to political and domestic oppression and women could be stoned and beaten (Carroll 16 August 2005).

The report contrasts the stereotyped images of Muslim women in Saudi Arabia and Iran with “liberated” women in Iraq under Western principles to generalize their “victimhood” under Islamic law. As the report highlights the U.S mission in Islamic countries and reproduces the liberal fear it clearly constructs a kind of “gendered Islamophobia” that represents Islam as “misogynistic and oppressive to women” ”(Hasan 2012: 55).

Ultimately, *The Hindu* reports on the women in the Muslim world contain culturally targeted stigmatization of “veiled subjects” that evoke “Orientalist” civilizing mission. Through essentialization of Muslim countries as unchanging assets and by generalization of the Western liberal fear on Islamic law *The Hindu* constructs gender stereotyping discourse in the representation of Islam at large. As Khalid (2017) observed, the post-9/11 discourse on women in the Muslim world not only reproduced “Orientalist” notions but also constructed gender stereotypes that were used for military invasions in Afghanistan and Iraq (Khalid 2017: 2).

***The Hindu* Reports: Muslim Women in India**

The post-9/11 reports also include narratives of Muslim women in India which cover the issues regarding their identity, freedom, traditions and cultural practices. Many studies (Engineer 1994; Hasan and Menon: 2004, 2005; Vatuk 2008; Narain 2013: Patel 2013; Lakshmi 2014) have discussed various aspects of gender debates but the

media constructed discourse on Muslim women in India has to be explored. In this regard, this section analyzes *The Hindu* coverage of Muslim women in India to understand how the media construct gender stereotyping discourse through generalizing narratives and stigmatizing images.

In the wake of militant attacks and forceful practices of veiling in Kashmir, *The Hindu* brings a host of reports that stigmatize the hijab as a symbol of oppression. In this sense, an editorial titled "Kashmir in purdah" generalizes the "veil of fear over the Valley" (*The Hindu* 11 September 2001). Though the editorial sharply criticizes the criminal leaning of "purdah diktats" it constructs a discourse that, as Hasan (2012) pointed out, creates a kind of "gendered Islamophobia." Reports such as "Kashmiri women bear the brunt again" (*The Hindu* 14 September 2001b) reproduced the statement of Ms. Asiya Andrabi, spokeswoman of a militant group Lashkar-e-Jabbar (LeJ) to generalize the campaign as part of Islam.

In this regard, an opinion piece titled "Return of the Dark Ages" stigmatizes the veiling practice by generalizing the extremist "fatwa on burqa" as a religious act performed at the behest of Islam/Muslim community (*The Hindu* 16 September 2001b). Though the article criticizes the religious practices of veiling such as (purdah) in Islam, (virginity) in Christianity and (ghunghat) in Hinduism, the overemphasis on "purdah" constructs a stereotyped image of Muslim women as the only "veiled victims" as Posetti (2006) argued. *The Hindu* brought counter-narratives on resistance from Muslim women through reports like "Women's group condemns 'diktat'" (*The Hindu* 22 January 2003) and "Women ignore militants' diktat" (Puri 24 January 2003). However, a series of reports on the forceful "burqa campaign" in Kashmir thus constructed a discourse that helped to generalize the militant version of gender discourse in Islam.

Apart from stigmatizing the hijab, *The Hindu* cover issues like child marriage, literacy, and personal law that evoke gender stereotyping discourse on Muslim women in India. In this regard *The Hindu* report "Muslim women urged to follow 'shariah'" essentializes the call of Muslim leaders "to guard the shariah" (*The*

Hindu 12 November 2001b). And their demand for encouraging education for women and fighting social evils like dowry is sidelined to stigmatize the "victimized Islamic Other." Reports such as "Marriage of pubescent Muslim minor girl valid" (*The Hindu* 3 July 2003) generalize the child marriage as high among Muslims despite the fact that Muslims keep a record of marriage compared to other communities. Özcan (2013) has pointed out how the "biased images of the Muslim women" are used to construct a gender-stereotyped image of Islam (Özcan2013: 429).

Stigmatizing narratives on Muslim women's movements and empowerment steps are constructed to essentialize the "civilizing Other" image. This kind of discourse is evident in an opinion article titled "Feminists or reformists?" critically acknowledges Muslim women's movements in India but essentializes them as "reformist rather than feminist" to argue that "there is no feminist scholarship of Islam in India" (Bhatty 16 March 2003). At the same time, another opinion piece titled "On the march to modernity" covers the stories of Muslim women in Hyderabad coming out in "burqa" and engaging in public life to challenge the stereotypes (Alam 27 April 2003a). Despite claiming that burqa is identified with conservative even fundamentalist Muslims the above article gives space for counter-narratives such as:

> the purdah has not been a hurdle, but rather the means by which women are coming out of their homes….you see more burqas on the streets because there are more women coming out to study and work…'burqas' to hide their "old and worn-out clothes"(Alam 27 April 2003a).

In a similar way, an opinion piece titled "New horizons" with a caption "more and more Muslim women in Hyderabad are getting an education and taking up jobs" brings counter-narratives:

> …these women disprove the common stereotype regarding the reluctance of Muslims to educate their women…the veritable revolution in education among the Muslims of Hyderabad led by its women (Alam 27 April 2003b).

And a report titled "A bold venture by a Muslim woman novelist" brings the story of Salma with a stigmatizing narrative that "there is virtually no Muslim woman

novelist" among Tamil Muslims. However, the report quotes Salma saying that "but Muslim women are no different from their counterparts elsewhere and their emotions are the same" (Subramanian 26 December 2004). While these reports cover the changing nature of the Muslim women in India the stigmatized narratives are intertwined to keep the gender stereotypes alive. Such a discursive method will sustain, as Posetti (2006) argued the "generalizations and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes" of Muslim women despite they are no different from women of other communities" (Posetti 2006: 2).

Amidst the narratives on the "victim" image of Muslim women within the community, their "double victimization" became the subject of discourse during Gujarat communal violence in 2002. And *The Hindu* brought a number of reports and opinion articles that exposed the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" that got recurrence in the victimization of Muslim women during the violence. Those reports are not considered for analysis because such a narrative is not coming under the scope of our research.

On "Victim" of Personal Law

Unlike any other issues, the personal law always evokes generalized narratives on Muslim women in India stigmatizing them as the "most vulnerable victim" compared to women in other communities in India. In this regard, *The Hindu* brought a series of opinion articles such as, "The Shah Bano legacy" (Modi 10 August 2003a), "Muted voices of change" (Modi 10 August 2003b), "Muslim personal laws are the only problem" (Modi 10 August 2003c) and "Laws of inequality" (Modi 10 August 2003d). Though these reports highlight the Muslim women's search for justice the overemphasis on Muslim personal laws constructs a stigmatizing discourse on Muslim women. Such a discourse actually essentializes, as Eltantawy (2007) argued the stereotypical image of "victimized and helpless Muslim women" who are in need of saviors.

Contrasting the “victim” image of Muslim women in India against women in Pakistan and other Islamic countries, an opinion piece titled “Crimes against women” (Nayar 23 December 2002) stigmatizes the former as the victim of different interpretations of Islamic personal laws. Talukdar and Deoli (2013) have observed that this kind of perpetuating debate on the personal law would actually evoke various stereotypical images of Muslim women in India as one who faces “double discrimination”(Talukdar and Deoli 2013: 5).

On “Triple-Talaq”

Unlike any other issues “triple-talaq” is the most debated one in the media and it has been used as a tool to construct gender stereotyping discourse on Muslim women in India. In this regard, *The Hindu* report “Muslim Personal Law Board to discuss `Talaq' issue” generalizes the phenomenon as “sensitive” and “prevalent” among Muslims. And the report essentializes “the only female member of the Board” Begum Nasim Iqtedaar Ali as “very progressive in her views” (*The Hindu* 30 June 2004). The report not only constructs a stereotyping discourse on “triple-talaq” as “prevalent” phenomenon but also stigmatizes the female member of a Muslim body with progressive views as an “exception” among Muslim women.

However, *The Hindu* brings a couple of editorials that discuss the issue as specific to India and provides diverse interpretations across the Islamic world. An editorial titled “Triple Talaq” questions the legal recognition of “triple-talaq” in India while it’s legally restricted in many Islamic countries (*The Hindu* 13 July 2004). Another editorial titled “Three words still mean divorce” generalizes “triple-talaq” as a “reactionary custom” and “a male entitlement” questions even its religious validity:

> …not recognized by the Koran…not practiced by Shias and is legally banned across Islamic countries, notably Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, and Tunisia(*The Hindu* 5 May 2005).

Although the above reports and editorials contain certain “Orientalist” negative representations of Islamic law and Muslim traditions *The Hindu* tries not to reproduce the communally targeted narratives especially in issues related to Muslim

women in India. As Vatuk (2008) argued even the so-called secular media in India usually try to reinforce existing negative stereotypes of Muslim women and sensationalize their issues which ultimately help the communal forces (Vatuk, 2008: 515-16). However, a report titled "Meet today to discuss problems of Muslim women" reproduces certain stigmatizing narratives such as; "the status of Muslim women in India was low, compared to women of other religions despite the protection of their rights by the Constitution" (*The Hindu* 25 November 2004). In this regard, Shukla (1996) has observed that though Muslim women are more "true victims" of gender discrimination they are part of issues that equally affect all Indian women" (Shukla 1996: 6-8).

Amidst the reports on stereotypical "victim" image of Muslim women, *The Hindu* report "Muslim women oppose model `nikahnama'" brings the response of Muslim women's groups against the ruling bodies (Sharma 4 May 2005). As the report cites diverse voices among Muslim women that oppose model 'nikahnama' it brings the counter-voices of stereotyped "voiceless" Muslim women. Unlike the stereotyped images of what Eltantawy (2007) noted "victimized and helpless Muslim women" such reports represent the counter voices within the community.

On "Victim of Fatwa Politics"

The gender stereotyping discourse is also constructed through generalization of "fatwas" or interpretations of Muslim scholars regarding the rights and demands of Muslim women in India. In this regard, *The Hindu* report "Imrana case: Deoband Muftis rule out change" generalizes the response of Deoband Ulema regarding the divorce of Imrana who was raped by her father-in-law (*The Hindu* 1 July 2005). Though the report carries counter-voices from scholars of different schools the overemphasis on "Deoband fatwa" produces a stigmatizing discourse.

At the same time, reports such as "Muslim women plea in Imrana case" bring counter-narratives from Muslim women who strongly condemn the "communalisation and sensationalisation" of the Imrana case (*The Hindu* 7 July

2005). Despite their strong disagreement with the "fatwa" issued by the clergy Muslim women question the "sensationalization" every time when any "case of violation of a Muslim woman's rights occurs" (*The Hindu* 7 July 2005).

However, in a report titled "End fatwa politics, demand women" *The Hindu* essentializes a protest of Muslim women as an "unusual morcha" because "many wearing the hijab" (*The Hindu* 24 July 2005). While the report cites women strongly question the "politics of fatwa" and "extra-judicial authorities" it also stigmatizes their choice of religious practices such as the hijab. In this regard, Sahu and Hutter (2012) have argued that Muslim women in India "are not passive followers of religious norms but have the agency to bring change in their own lives" (Sahu and Hutter 2012: 521).

The Hindu Reports: Muslim Women in Western Countries

The post-9/11 *The Hindu* reports also included narratives on Muslim women in Western countries. Although studies (Jawad and Benn 2003; Eltantawy 2007; Khalid 2017) have explored the Western media coverage of Muslim women in the West the Indian media discourse in this aspect has to be studied. In this regard, this section analyzes *The Hindu* reports on Muslim women in Western countries to understand the generalized narratives and stigmatized images that construct a gender stereotyping discourse.

The culturally targeted stigmatization of Muslim women's hijab as a challenge to the Western liberal values is a discursive method used by *The Hindu* in reproducing gender stereotyping discourse. This kind of narratives is evident in the extensive coverage of the hijab controversy in France and Europe at large. For example, a report titled "Islamic militancy, a cause for concern" brings the story of Moroccan girl Fatima Elidrisi attending "school with a hijab" after "a semi-private Catholic school had refused to let her wear it in classroom" (Naravane 15 March 2002). As the title of the report denotes the image of a Muslim girl in hijab

constructs a narrative on “veiled woman” as a symbol of threat to the Western way of life as Khiabany and Williamson (2008) noted.

Similar narratives are constructed in *The Hindu* report titled “Scarf: show flexibility, France told” that endorses the French President, Jacques Chirac's move to ban the headscarf. And the report underlines French president’s commitment to secular principles “banning the headscarves, the Jewish Kippa or skull cap or inordinately large crosses from state schools” (Naravane 25 December 2003). To stigmatize the hijab practice *The Hindu* also quotes some rights-groups who argued that “headscarves as a sign of religious extremism and female subservience” (Naravane 25 December 2003a).

In the same sense, *The Hindu* opinion piece titled “Banning the headscarf” constructs such a stigmatizing narrative:

> …ban started in 1989 when three girls were expelled from school...for wearing the Muslim headscarf…violating the principle of laicity…and French republican values…a symbol of women's subservience and inferiority (Naravane 25 December 2003b).

As the report stigmatizes Muslim headscarf as a challenge to “republican values” it orientalizes the “Islamic Other” in the West. Moreover, the report quotes French president arguing that the “real fears behind the headscarf ban that Islamic fundamentalism was gaining ground in France” (Naravane 25 December 2003b). Such a discourse ultimately reiterates the serotypes of “veiled woman” as the mother of radicalism.

Through an editorial titled “The Headscarf Controversy,” *The Hindu* endorses French Government’s right to strengthen the secular principles and guard against anything that undermines them. And it generalizes the dramatic growth in the number of Muslim girls wearing headscarves in school as “the provocation for the banning law” (*The Hindu* 3 February 2004). Meanwhile, a report titled “French debate ‘secularism' law” covers the response on banning of religious symbols as it is “seen as an attack primarily on the Islamic headscarf worn by an increasing number of defiant Muslim schoolgirls” (Naravane 4 February 2004). As *The Hindu* contrasts

the French secular views against Muslim reactionary responses, it constructs a stereotyping gender discourse on Muslim women. This kind of stigmatizing discourse is evident in a report titled “French MPs back ban on religious symbols” that generalizes the “angry reactions” of Muslims within France and the Islamic world (Naravane 4 February 2004).

Meanwhile, *The Hindu* opinion article “France -facing up to a reality” brings culturally targeted stereotypes on Muslim migrant “slum dwellers” in France arguing that th eir daughters land in militant Islam (*The Hindu* 30 May 2004). Thus these reports not only orientalizes the Muslim women in the West but also construct “gendered Islamophobia” representing Islam as “misogynistic and oppressive to women” as Hasan (2012) argued.

Similar to the French hijab-controversy *The Hindu* report “From hijab to jilbab” brings stigmatizing discourse on Shabina Begum who became the poster girl of a “campaign by radical Muslim groups to push for an “Islamic” dress code in British schools” (Suroor 24 June 2004). As the report essentializes her demand as part of radicalization and links the campaign with radical groups it constructs an ideologically targeted discourse on Muslim women issues. This kind of discourse, according to Özcan (2013), uses biased images to represent the veil as a symbol of women’s oppression and Islamic terrorism (Özcan2013: 429).

Amidst such stereotypical images of Muslim women, *The Hindu* report “Monica Ali Shortlisted” for the 2003 Booker Prize highlights the achievement of an “oriental Other” in the West (*The Hindu* 18 September 2003). However, a report titled “Monica Ali's book ‘despicable’” (Suroor 6 December 2003) essentializes Ali as a “Bangladeshi descent” and compares the controversy with that of Salman Rushdie’s Satanic Verses to evoke stereotyping discourse on ‘Islamic Other.’ Another report “Hirsi Ali returns from hiding” (*The Hindu* 19 January 2005) endorses her willingness to face the challenge of radicals regarding her writings on women in Islam. In a similar sense, a report titled “Laila does Ali proud” brings the story of a Laila daughter of Muhammad Ali becoming “the first woman to win a

World Boxing Council title" (*The Hindu* 6 June 2005). As these reports bring the images of so-called liberated Muslim women in the West it also constructs a discourse that differentiates "good Muslims" from "bad Muslims" (Mamdani 2002:766).

Ultimately, the reports on Muslim women in the West stigmatize them as "un-integrated" to the Western liberal values and essentialize their practicing of hijab as the move into radicalization. And the narratives on modernized Muslim women are celebrated to generalize the stereotypical image of an "Islamic Other."

Comparative Analysis and Discussion

The qualitative textual analysis of both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* has uncovered certain similarities and differences in the discursive process that construct gender stereotyping discourse on Islam. Similarities can be listed as; 1. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* use the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" in representing Muslim women regarding their identity, freedom, and rights 2. *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* reproduce politically and culturally motivated "Orientalist" stereotyped gender narratives on Muslim women at home and away. 3. Both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* stigmatize the hijab-debate in "enlightened" versus "fundamentalist" perspective and produce a kind of "hijabophobia." 4. Despite giving space for counter-narratives of "modernized" Muslim women, both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* generalize it as the victory of liberalism over religiosity. 5. Rather than acknowledging the role of local traditions that influence the gender discourse of Muslim women both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* attribute every deficiency to Islam and bonus to liberalism. 6. Without presenting much comparative analysis on the status of women of fellow religions both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* stigmatize the "victimhood" of Muslim women.

However, both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* keep certain differences in their representations of Muslim women such as 1.While *Izvestia* gives importance to radicalism, hijab, and Islamophobia issues *The Hindu* focuses on personal law, talaq and child marriage issues regarding Muslim women. 2. *Izvestia* depends more on

Western gender discourses *The Hindu* heavily reproduces local narratives on Muslim women. 3. While *The Hindu* often compares Muslim women's issues with that of fellow religious women *Izvestia* hardly produce such narratives. 4 The ethnic/national identity gets prominence in *Izvestia* whereas the minority/religious identity is highlighted by *The Hindu* in the discourse on Muslim women. 5. While *The Hindu* brings opinion pieces and editorials *Izvestia* goes for interviews and lived experiences to represent counter-narratives of Muslim women.

Given the similarities and differences in the discursive process of representing Muslim women both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* follow certain patterns in their construction of gender stereotypes on Islam. Orientalizing dichotomies such as "us" versus "them", "Western Self" versus "Oriental Other", "liberal Self' versus "Islamic Other" were used *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* to generalize the "Other" image of Muslim women. And through culturally and ideologically targeted stereotypes both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* constructed a discourse that evoked kind of "gendered Islamophobia."

A few examples of this kind of generalized narratives and stigmatized images are given below for further the discussion. In its coverage of women across Muslim world *Izvestia*, brings themes comparing "complete freedom" of "European civilization" with "strict customs....women covered from the tops to the ankles" of Muslim countries. The images of "liberated ladies from Europe and Russia" are juxtaposed with the victims of "religious prostitution" and "male chauvinism" in the Muslim world. Though the hijab is stigmatized as "symbol of discrimination" in Muslim world *Izvestia* contrasts it with Europe where "Muslim attire is tolerated." As the Muslim women in Russia are culturally stereotyped for demanding hijab *Izvestia* often constructs ethnic prejudices asking how Russian girl can convert to "Oriental Islam."

Similarly, *The Hindu* reproduces the "Orientalist' stereotypical narratives such as "Saudi women step out" and "New dark age for Iraqi women." And it doubts the eligibility of Muslim woman for Nobel Prize just because "Ms. Ebadi is a devout

Muslim". *The Hindu* constructs "gendered Islamophobia" in a generalizing discourse such as "Kashmir in purdah" and "Return of the Dark Ages". By stigmatizing the "Islamic other" for lack of "feminist scholarship of Islam in India" *The Hindu* makes the contrast between the "inferior Other" with "superior Self." *The Hindu* also uses selective cases of "triple-talaq" to portray Muslim women as the "only victims" of Personal law in India. Apart from reproducing Western liberal ethos to depict "headscarves as a sign of religious extremism and female subservience" *The Hindu* stigmatizes Muslim women's demand for headscarf in the West as a threat to the liberal values.

Field Work Data: Social Perceptions and Lived Experiences

While the media construct gender stereotyping discourse on Islam through generalized narratives and stigmatized images of Muslim women this section brings the current discourse on Muslim women based on responses and lived experiences collected and observed by the researcher through fieldwork in Russia and India. The social perceptions of people and their everyday life experiences and personal narratives from both countries can reflect upon the media discourses regarding Islam and Muslim women.

1. Women in Hijab on Russian Streets

Despite media discourses on "hijabophobia" Muslim ladies in hijab were seen in shops and markets in Moscow, Petersburg, Kazan, and Ufa working in cafeterias and souvenir shops. Most of the women in hijab working in a *halal* food outlet of a shopping mall near Moscow State University were from Central Asia who either came with their husbands or alone to earn for livelihood. And there were women in hijab from South East Asian countries shopping in malls and roaming on streets.

It was quite interesting to see a good number of women in full and partly hijab attending Friday *jumua* at the famous Moscow Cathedral Mosque (*Московская соборная мечеть)*. And many of them waited for next prayer time attending the counseling of Imam and getting prayed for them. An old woman was seen

approaching an official in the mosque and asking to pray for her quite in public. Meanwhile, Jamila (2017) working in a Cafeteria near, in traditional Central Asian dress code, responded that she didn't feel any problem in the practicing hijab and it has become part of her life. The ladies in the souvenir shop around the Masjid also follow hijab.

However, Dinara (2017) who works in the educational department of Council of Mufti Ravil Gainuddin, said she doesn't follow hijab and don't feel any difficulties for those who follow it. Tamirlan (2017) also responded that he could find a Muslim girl coming in hijab into his Institute and doesn't feel Muslim women are oppressed by hijab in Russia though he could watch a Youtube video a Muslim woman in hijab being harassed by police. However, Tamirlan explained that Muslim lawyers raised the issue and the head of the police department apologized and fired the culprit (Tamirlan 2017).

In Petersburg women in hijab were seen quite often in public but were common in Sennoy Bazar as saleswomen. Being Muslim populated regions women in *hijab* were seemed quite normal in Kazan and Ufa and it seemed like a fashion choice especially for young ladies in universities, markets, and shopping malls. There were women in hijab attending Friday prayer at famous Qulsharif Mosque and many of them spending time with family near around Kazan Kremlin. In Kazan, there are a lot of cafeterias like Medina which are run by women in hijab even after nine at night and girls from Central Asia are working in shops at Sennoy Market in traditional hijab.

And it was very unusual to see female teachers and staffs even at the front office of the rector of Russian Islamic University, Ufa since madrasas are usually depicted as male-dominated spaces. Though the rector Artur Suleimanov (2017) and his colleague Damir(2017) confirmed that there are female students the researcher couldn't find them in public during my visit.

a. Community Perspective

Regarding the conditions of Muslim women and their life in Russia, Imam Mubarak and Irshaif (2017) unanimously responded that there are issues and difficulties in practicing of hijab in Russian dominated areas like Moscow. They admitted that only a few people follow hijab and a very few schools allow hijab though it's practiced in Muslim dominated areas like Kazan. Irshaif (2017) admitted that there are Muslim women who do not follow hijab even when they come to mosques for Friday prayers may be due to the impact of non-Muslim cultures (Irshaif 2017).

Women in hijab were also seen for the Friday prayers at Memorial Mosque in Moscow and many of them were waiting to meet Imam Shamil Alyautdinov to get counseling on religious issues. In his response on media image of Muslim women Alyautdinov (2017) argued that "false stereotypes are still predominant in media coverage of Muslim women in Russia." However, Asa`ad responded that "the status of women regarding hijab is better nowadays in Russia because hijab is now permitted even in the passport which was banned earlier" (Asa`ad 2017).

Meanwhile, Nurulla (2017) admitted that there is a kind of gender stereotyping especially towards the migrant women but it's different age to age:

> Western hijab discourses have an impact in Russia though we don't have much experience of this and because the diversity is not much popular. Muslim women especially those from Central Asia may be stereotyped because of their traditional dressings but they have to adjust to the situation in Russia (Nurulla 2017).

Regarding enforcement of hijab in Russia Nurulla replied that "it might be existing in regions like Tatarstan and Bashkortostan because Islam is not a new religion here it was there for centuries" (Nurulla 2017). And she admitted the media nowadays frame Muslim young women as radicalized because they wear hijab:

> Depicting or projecting the hijab as a threat to the nation is depended on the nature of the media. There are more westernized media focusing on these matters and some from the liberal side which keeps balance. It may be difficult to comment on a general trend. Now there is a debate on Islamic factors and Islamization outside of Russia and people feel very scared and panic regarding Islam, particularly in

> Western Europe and America and the politics in the Middle East, also influence this trend (Nurulla 2017).

Meanwhile, Suleimanov (2017) claimed that the women in Muslim dominated republics like Bashkortostan can follow their religious traditions without any issue:

> Muslim women in Bashkortostan don't have any issue in following the hijab and even in state universities, they practice hijab, namaz, and fasting. And nobody will object to their practice there. Role of women is very strong and very big in the survival of Islam in our country when the men were killed and the religion was under threat. First of all 'mother, herself is madrasa' and Muslim women saved our religion during communist times when religion was banned. Muslim women used to go to houses of people and recite Quran, conduct prayers (Suleimanov 2017).

However, Suleimanov pointed to the limited areas where Muslim women can engage because of the religious and familial commitments they have to meet:

> The role of women in our society at different times was not so big but they had a role. We don't neglect women's role that's why we prepare women teachers here in our Islamic University. Moreover, men in our society are working for livelihood and therefore children should get the religious and moral teachings from mothers. Since we don't have a religious atmosphere and our children are studying in general schools and universities they get a religious education only from the home (Suleimanov 2017).

In her brief interaction about the educational and cultural status of Muslim women, Safiullina (2017) argued that "the educational status of Tatar women is similar to men whereas Tatar women are very active". While Dimitry (2017) suggested that women activism is excessive in Tatarstan and Safiullina agrees on it laughingly and underlined that:

> We have the phenomenon of 'Abystay.' Abss is originated from *Hafiz* it doesn't mean that they memorized Quran and all but they know Islam. They are very active and study in the courses of Mosque. 'Abystay' are old women say. And half of the teachers in Islamic University are Women as well as administrative staff. And in the history of Tatar, the Islamic religious things were kept in Soviet times by women. Some of the Imams of today remember their grandmas offering *Namaz* and reciting *Quran* that influenced their relations with Islamic culture. It was the influence of women that families reserved Islam in homes and there are studies on Tatar women activities (Safiullina 2017).

Meanwhile, Shykhitdinov discussed on the media coverage of Muslim women in Tataristan and argued that:

> The local media have several programs regarding gender and Islam in Tatarstan. There are fewer gender stereotypes as Islam in Tatarstan is quite different. Here the discourse is very different from the Arab world. It's decorated and is a fashion in the Islamic world. There is a huge national influence in Islamic style of hijab. And there is no negative stereotyping of hijab in Tatarstan as hijab is normal here. You can find women wearing hijab in universities. And it's normal in Islamic University where you will get facilities even for praying *namaz* (Shykhitdinov 2017).

Daniel also approved that there are lots of students in Islamic center of KFU who wear hijab and use the special room for prayer. And Shykhitdinov continued that:

> For a Muslim girl student, it is not a negative tag to wear hijab in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Dagestan, and Chechnya. There may be a negative image of hijab in another region in Russia like Moscow. But even region having different nationalities and have a good strength of national culture there is the normal attitude to other cultures. And I don't think there will be a negative attitude towards Muslims in Komi or Mari EI Republics (Shykhitdinov 2017).

Therefore, the community perspective on gender stereotyping and hijab in Russia shows the diversity even among the people of religious authority. While most of them consider the hijab as part of their tradition and religious practice the media constructed-discourse on hijab as a symbol of radicalization is hardly reflected in the community response. However, some of them pointed out to the negative image that media has constructed particularly on hijab and Muslim women in general. Silantyev (2005) and Gradskova (2012) have notonly rejected such stereotypical images but also noted examples of Muslim women's diverse experience in community and social life.

b. The Perspective of Fellow Community People

Comparing religious and ethnic traditions Natasha (2017) responded that there are similarities between Muslim and Christian women in Russia because the Orthodox Russian tradition has historically influenced the role of women. Regarding the status of Muslim women and their traditions in Russia, Venina (2017) observed that "in Russia, we share the traditions, share the dinner, and there is a food chain opened by a Muslim lady that serving even pork" (Venina 2017). However, she was a little bit cautious about hijab practice arguing that hijab or burqa is getting popular in the

West especially in France, England and even India rather than Hyderabad hijab that she says is a conservative trend. Although these countries offer freedom for hijab, Venina argues "there are many Muslim enclaves where you cannot even visit but in Russia, there are no such exclusions" (Venina 2017). And she further argued that:

> In Russia, we have a free culture of gender relations, But now things are changing in Russia also because of the influx of migrants though it did not become the order of the day things are getting worse here also. We are ready to accommodate them but they have to behave like local Russian people do. But there are good migrants who do their jobs respectfully. In my locality, we have a lady doctor from Uzbekistan and she gets respects from all and maybe even she got citizenship. Mostly migrant women from Central Asia come with husbands and get into jobs (Venina 2017).

Meanwhile, sharing her experience with fellow Muslim friends in Tatarstan Xenia (2017) observed that:

> Only 15 percent may be practicing religion and the rest may be affiliated with religious communities but are atheists. And there are Russian and Tatar mixed families and continue traditions like celebrating Easter and Muslim festivals. I have a lot of Tatar friends but I don't think of them as Tatar. Most of my female friends are Tatars. They don't observe hijab. I know only one girl who practiced hijab and I consider it as traditional. I could hear that in 1950s Tatar women didn't follow hijab but now they hide their hair and wear long skirts and all. So I wonder how the hijab became traditional now. The women in markets and shops wearing hijabs are mostly from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries" (Xenia 2017).

The response of fellow community people on Muslim women and their practice of hijab in Russia reflect the diversity of perspectives and experiences. Most of them agree with the role of traditional and religious values attached to the issues of women and their practice of hijab. Though, the media-constructed "hijabophobia" is reflected in a few responses it's more related to the threat perception on migrants from Muslim countries. And these responses also challenge the the "Orientalist" ethnically targeted stereotypes of Tatar women as inferior creatures (Gibatdinov 2007: 279).

c. Expert Views

In a discussion on media coverage of Islam and gender Kuznetovn (2017) responded that "media is very crazy and love to talk about gender and Islam women and Islam. Actually, there are traditional cultures followed which has no connection to religion" (Kuznetovn 2017). However, he elaborated the debate on gender and hijab within the Muslim community:

> There are different views. Unfortunately, the Muslim community is really sometimes preservative. The official Muslim response to *hijab*, women, gender and gay issues as now happening in Chechnya are not positive (Kuznetovn 2017).

Regarding the debates on hijab and women rights issues surfaced in the Muslim dominated republics like Chechnya Alikberov (2017) observed:

> In Russia hijab is not related to gender question but we have some gender issues in Chechnya such as issues of early marriage which became a public debate. We have rules but not followed and its case of pedophilia, and nikah or religious marriage are not permitted in law but practiced in Caucasian republics and many have one two three wives. Polygamy is practiced and people even boast that they have many wives and show that they have four houses and a lot of money. Two wives are normal. Rich people keep two wives, one younger with the separate house and give even salaries. Ten years before, it was out of the thing in public opinion but it became normal now (Alikberov 2017).

Regarding the gender discourse and media representations of Islam Kolomiets (2017) responded that:

> Islam is very masculine religion. The status of women is very low. It's our perception. At the same time, we see that in Pakistan, for example, there was a lady became prime minister and in some other countries, ladies are represented even in Iran which is known as very conservative at the moment. People don't remember what and how Iranian society before the tenure was, it was a free society and recognized now it's different. But still the gender stereotype I would say that contrary to Christianity or Judaism Islam is the most probably masculine religion (Kolomiets 2017).

In the wake of public debates and legal mobilizations regarding the practicing of hijab among Muslim women in Russia Kolomiets argued that:

> Hijab is very hot debate recently in Russia because Muslim community insists to permit hijab for ladies and school girls. But local authorities normally prohibit and they do not allow doing this. And again there is a stereotypical perception that lady

> or women are in so low position in Islam that's why they have to wear this discriminative cloth (Kolomiets 2017).

The expert views on hijab and issues of Muslim women in Russia underline the scope of comparing the gender relations in Islam with other religions and the Muslim world. While most of the responses point out the gender discrimination prevailed among Muslims they don't perceive the hijab as a threat as media try to portray. Sabirova (2011) has pointed to the media's growing attention to religious symbols especially hijab and depicting it as "return to the Middle Ages" (Sabirova 2011: 327).

d. Personal Experiences

Unlike the previous chapters, the personal experiences of Muslim women are included in this section to get deeper understanding of the issues they face. Being an expert in gender issues Sabirova (2017) was very keen to share her personal experiences as a woman born and brought up in a traditional Tatar Muslim family. Going back to her days in school and University Sabirova noted that:

> I was born in a religious family my father and grandmother were very religious people. They sent me to the school in the city where the language was Russian and itself became controversial in the family. When I return home in summer vacations my family tried to ask me to follow religious things. During my University years in Ulyanski, it was a little bit easier since at that time I had grown up and ready to say no to family pressures on religious things. It was my choice not to wear hijab but it has been very difficult to face the questions of people in mosques regarding my identity as a Muslim and not following religious things. It's not easy to be liberal because you are part of a religious community. However, since I belong to Muslim tradition I felt very uneasy when stereotypes regarding Islam were portrayed by mass media and my colleagues discussed it (Sabirova 2017).

Despite being a liberal in her views and practices Sabirova admits that:

> Partly I felt a kind of othering in Russia because we are living in gender-sensitive society and some professors can easily misuse it. Apart from 'eastern woman' 'eastern men' also are stereotyped as the famous Soviet song goes "if I were a Sultan I would have four wives" and like the saying "if you scratch a Russian you will find a Tatar" and " a Tatar is the worst piece than an uninvited guest (Sabirova 2017).

Regarding the "Orientalist" root for this attitude, Sabirova responded that there is "Orientalist" tradition and othering and orientalization are interconnected. "I myself a Tatar and if somebody realizes that, they will call me 'eastern woman'." This is the result of very strong Orientalization as Khalid Adeeb and others noted"

(Sabirova 2017). However, Sabirova argues that women have to face other than religious issues “there are a lot of other issues like inequality, patriarchy, stereotypification, and stratification to be faced in societies like India and Russia. I think India has much more difficult social scenario regarding caste system and all” (Sabirova 2017). Regarding the general perception of public and media regarding Muslims and the women in special Sabirova argued that:

> Its part of the same phenomenon as the image of the male Muslim is also not so positive one. It’s violent, abusive to women and media highlight such images. Now the migrants from Central Asia are portrayed in stereotyped images similar to Caucasian males who don’t allow young women go to the streets. In general, I think the image of Chechnya is very important on how the Islam is perceived in Russia (Sabirova 2017).

In the wake of the reports from Chechnya of attacks on women not wearing hijab, Sabirova admitted that:

> In Chechnya, there are forceful attempts to wear hijab in schools and universities and there were attacks on women in this regard. But there must be totally constructed things I am not sure. We have a team researching in Dagestan on these things. But sometimes it’s constructed in connection with Islam (Sabirova 2017).

However, Sabirova argues that:

> In Russia, the hijab is stereotyped as everywhere in the world during terroristic attacks. There were some female suicide attackers in “Nord Ost” tragedy. This event was very crucial one because it was the first time women have been seen among terrorists. And it was almost first time we saw the dead body of women on TV. It was very new and was not usual. In that period the situation was probably same in the Caucasus also. When the McDonald attack happened women wearing hijab were saying that even their parents stared at them with a fear that they will make terroristic attacks (Sabirova 2017).

Responding to the reports of threat image of hijab in public in Moscow or Petersburg Sabirova said that “I think it’s specific to that period. And there are different perceptions and but until there are no reports of violence probably things are not that much worse. But there is likely a kind of distancing” (Sabirova 2017). However, she admitted that:

> The French discourse on hijab has influenced the law on headscarves on 2013 has brought news the discussion on banning hijab. And the debate is now entered into villages like the famous Biladeriya with the strong religious Muslim community in

> Mordovya republic, the students and teachers follow the hijab in schools (Sabirova 2017).

Generally speaking on the impact of tradition and culture in defining Russian women's role in politics and public life Sabirova argued that:

> Sometimes the Russian tradition regarding women's role in public life is probably similar to that of Muslim communities. In general, it's connected with the crisis level of orthodox religiosity which is quite high. And religious women can understand better the fellow religious people but for non-religious women, the image of Muslim women in the scarf is difficult to accept (Sabirova 2017).

While Sabirova expressed her views from a liberal point of view, Ralina (2017) was quite passionate to talk about her family and professional life in hijab and the challenges she has to face to sustain it. Ralina confidently noted that:

> I have studied both Islamic and non-Islamic Universities and followed hijab without any difficulties. I studied design engineering and computer science and now I am a teacher of the computer science. And there is no much problem for Muslim women to study and work in universities. Since my family members are Muslims and I didn't find any difference between men and women. There may be the difference in status of women and men in religious affairs but it's not in worldly things (Ralina 2017).

Responding to the status of the Muslim women in Russia and Bashkortostan Ralina noted that:

> Mostly, they are not treated differently and their educational standards are par with men. Women are participating in every field of studies and I am proud to be known as a teacher here. There are differences between the status and treatment of Russian and Bashkir women. But actually, the gender differences are internalized and practiced by the family and parents have a big role in this matter (Ralina 2017).

Regarding the issues that Muslim women have to face in their family life Ralina noted that:

> The issues of marriage and divorce are depended upon the level of religiosity and culture of families. If they are highly educated and religious things would be smooth going. In Russia generally, women are not dependant on men and they don't put every burden on the men in family life. The couples share the responsibilities even in the economic matters. Since the women earn and contribute to the family she keeps the right to ask for her share whenever she wants. Here we have no much experiences of 'triple talaq' and other practices of unethical divorces. In the traditional family conditions of girls are controlled and guided by parents and family whereas the boys are free from such controls and directions (Ralina 2017).

However, Ralina observes that Muslim women face the constraints similar to the women of other religions:

> There are no too much problems for Muslims relatively to non-Muslim women. You can find Muslims with and without hijab in offices. There are Muslim students graduated from universities working in different fields including teaching, journalism and etc. But the female graduates of Islamic universities mostly not go for jobs in media and other sectors. And the main problem of the Muslim women here is in their orientation towards the religion and professional life. It's a paradox that women who study and practice Islam hardly think about professional career such as doing business while women focusing on professional life hardly consider religion as part of their life (Ralina 2017).

Responding to the attitude of religious leaders towards women who are working or doing job Ralina criticized the general attitude:

> There are Muftis who permit the women to go out for studies and job but most of the religious leaders are not in favor of the professional life of Muslim women. There is no sympathy or support for divorced women whereas men can lead a normal life. People think Muslim women can't follow hijab and go for a job and that's why they remain in homes. But myself wearing hijab and doing my job and there are many women do follow this way though their numbers are very few (Ralina 2017).

Rejecting the idea that the hijab practice is a very recent trend because of radicalization Ralina argued that:

> It's not a new trend to follow Islamic hijab because the old women among Muslims also did follow the hijab but in a meager way but now the young people are practicing hijab in Islamic way though it's very rare to see. Unlike the old women, the young people have the opportunity to get Islamic literature to know about the religion (Ralina 2017).

Regarding the response of students and teachers about female teachers, Ralina says "the people even in universities consider the women on the basis of her dress code and physical structure and a very few recognize their knowledge" (Ralina 2017). Ralina strongly opposed such attitude saying:

> Muslims focus on minute differences in sharia and that's why Islam couldn't develop much. As a woman, I don't care about the body and style of the men and I don't mingle with the male teachers here. I know that for last one year a man from my locality is teaching here and I didn't see him until today. Muslim women should advance in different walks of life competent with others (Ralina 2017).

Through their personal experiences, Sabirova and Ralina express different aspects of being a Muslim woman in Russia. While Sabirova admits the stereotyping of Muslim women in terms of ethnicity and tradition Ralina is not concerned with challenges faced for being a practicing Muslim. Therefore, the media-constructed narratives on Muslim women are challenged with diverse experiences of people who are part of the culture and tradition. Therefore, as Giuliano (2005) argued rather than being a "coherent homogenous group" that follow common beliefs and practices Russian Muslim women also "are highly diverse practicing various forms of Islam"(Giuliano 2005: 197).

2. Women in Hijab on Indian Streets

Unlike in Russia the visibility of women in hijab/burqa is prevalent across Indian cities, of Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Kochi. Though there are differences in the proportions of hijab observing women comparatively in large Muslim populated cities like Hyderabad and Lucknow, there is a considerable number of Muslim women with hijab/burqa in public places, markets, shopping malls, universities, and offices everywhere. Women in hijab were seen attending prayers in Juma Masjid in Delhi, Makkah Masjid in Hyderabad and selling and buying in malls and shops in Lucknow and Kochi. Students and teachers in hijab is not an unusual scene in minority-oriented campuses such as Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi and Maulana Azad Urdu University in Hyderabad whereas it's very few in numbers in other campuses. And those who follow hijab, despite getting uncomfortable remarks from fellow Muslim friends than others, didn't hesitate to admit that its part of their choice of dress code.

a. Community Perspective

An attempt to have a conversation with Imam of Khilji Mosque (didn't share his name) near Nizamuddin Dargah, the place popular for syncretic cultural milieu, didn't succeed because the Imam was so uncomfortable once he heard the subject of conversation; Muslim women. Thinking that he is going to be interviewed on the

controversies of "triple-talaq," Imam responded that he cannot trust media people who come for the statements and they publish their own views misquoting the statements (Imam 2017). Imam was pointing to a recent controversy when a media misquoted statements of Muslim scholars regarding personal law and triple talaq.

Meanwhile, Rasool, one of the qawwals who perform in front of the dargah, was busy inviting women of every religion even foreigners, who covered their heads with scarves like their fellow believers in Islam, and arranging places for them to enjoy the cultural piety of Muslims. As he criticized the media and politicians for making a hue and cry on Sharia and Muslim women's issues Rasool suggested that "nobody wants to enforce the rules over anybody and you can witness that here in and around dargah" (Rasool 2017).

However, being an Islamic scholar who believes Muslims have every right to preach sharia rules Ahmad (2017) of Hyderabad masjid argued that hijab of Muslim women is part of their religious practice:

> Since hijab is part of Islamic rules women are advised to observe it when they come out of their home. If women come out to market they should think that water and fire can't unite one place. It's better to keep away from wrong ways and evil circumstances (Ahmad 2017).

As the personal law and triple talaq was the subject of prime-time debates in the media across the country Ahmad noted that:

> Muslims generally follow Sharia in our personal laws and it's permitted in India. And the Muslim Personal Law Board has clearly stated that talaq is an issue concerning the Sharia law of the community. And if you look at the female feticide, suicides and atrocities regarding dowry are much bigger than the issue of talaq. Actually, the root cause of atrocities against women is dowry and if the government decides it can be stopped. I would suggest that if the government does work for ending dowry Hindu, Muslim and Christian all will support it since girls of 25-30 years remain unmarried due to lack of dowry to pay for them (Ahmad 2017).

Similarly, Irshad who believes that any practicing Muslim has nothing to worry about the question of women and Sharia because "Islam has given freedom for women but there some restrictions like wearing purdah, husband-wife relations and family obligations to be followed as a believer" (Irshad 2017). Meanwhile, Gafoor was apologetic in his response about hijab because his wife, who helps him to run a

sugarcane juice shop in Hyderabad, couldn't follow hijab being busy in a manual job. However, Gafoor proudly said that:

> We are Shaikhs and therefore we observe Ramzan and other religious obligations and my wife follows Islamic rules but because of daily job conditions, she couldn't follow the hijab. There may be problems in wearing the burqa but we didn't face such issues yet in our family or village. Since she wears burqa I have bought a new one from a shop near Charminar in Hyderabad (Gafoor 2017).

The response of community members reflects the controversy created by media regarding the issues of Muslim women in India. Many of them pointed out to the targeting of Muslim women in issues related to Sharia and personal laws whereas the issues of women suffering are much similar in every community in India. Rather than media-constructed stigmatization of hijab as symbol of radicalization the community perceives it as part of their religious practice. Actually, the stereotypical images of Muslim women in India hide the "double discrimination" in the forms of gender discrimination from traditional patriarchy and discrimination against religious minorities (Talukdar and Deoli 2013:5).

b. The Perspective of Fellow community People

With their professional and personal experiences with Muslim friends, Daya and Kritika argued that despite the stereotyped media images, the lived experience of people defines the relations and perceptions. In this regard Kritika observed:

> Very long back I used to feel bad to see Muslim women in burqa and thought that they were forced to wear it. But I had a friend in school and she clarified that she was not forced to wear hijab but she chose to wear it. Once I asked her why she wears hijab she told me its part of my religion and I read Quran and want to do it just because I want to do it. Then I felt that it was my stupidity to think that she is forced to do that because I read in a newspaper somewhere that women are oppressed in hijab and all (Kritika 2017).

Meanwhile, Daya added that "not only the media but the literature you read also usually depict the Muslim woman character as one who tries to get out of the burkha. The same stories are there in books you read and movies you watch" (Daya 2017). Regarding the liberal demands for modernizing and civilizing Muslim women Kritika observes:

> The trend of modernizing mission for Muslim women has no meaning without knowing how they are living with all religious practices. There may be a different section that wants to do it but we should not forget that the choice is always there. Media just only covers the acts of extremists who misuse the religion resulting that the readers and viewers think that Muslim women are forced to follow the hijab. I could hear people say Muslim women are oppressed because they are getting married early. But I know Hindu girls who are victims of child marriage. And there are people who force wearing certain dress code for Hindu girls (Kritika 2017).

Although the debates mostly focus only on Muslim women Daya finds certain commonalities between practices of women in different communities. Daya shares her views based on her religious experience:

> Christian women are supposed to wear scarves when going to Churches. Every religion may have its own practices. But in India, the women are discriminated in different means and methods. If you feel the religion is curtailing your freedom you should have choices to come out just we came out from the practice of *Sati*. I had Muslim friends who wear the burqa in colleges run by Christians. I felt in school that I can't be friends with these girls who cover their heads but later realized that nothing is wrong with them. Though we had very few Muslim friends in hijab during school days there was a lot in college (Daya 2017).

While the educational and professional status of Muslim women has been the taboo to stereotype the community as backward Kritika observes:

> In our educational services, we know a lot of unmarried Muslim women working as teachers at lower income private schools. These women also face some problems as there are oppressions on women in every community. However, they are determined to go with the job and married life (Kritika 2017).

When Daya argued that "the case of women in different communities is same" (Daya 2017) Kritika added that:

> There are certain practices that are not particular to Islam or Muslims, and that is why India is India. In cities, people are ready to accept new things and get to know diversities but in villages, people are more stick to their known families and community(Krtika 2017).

Meanwhile, Daya pointed to the media dependency of urban people in their opinion building on issues without having any personal experience:

> The problem in cities is that the people are more dependent on media to know about the things than going to talk to the people and know them personally. Regarding the patriarchy, the things are all most similar among all religious communities,

> especially in villages. Things will change only when you go out and start questioning the practices (Daya 2017).

As a solution for women problems Krtika (2017) suggests that "women can just come out and know there are ways to overcome the problems they face. The feminism has opened that way of thinking" (Krtika 2017). However, she agrees that "the feminist who doesn't have experiences of the life of Muslim women are becoming the spokespersons for their cause especially in the case of Middle East. And media around the world give too much focus on issues in the Middle East" (Krtika 2017).

The response of people from fellow communities reflects the diverse views on issues related to Muslim women in India. With their personal experience and observations, many could identify the problems faced by Muslim women are not peculiar to one community. And they decline the discursive practice of targeted stigmatization of Muslim women not only in India but in the Muslim world in the name of liberation and modernization. Contrary to such liberal notions Sahu and Hutter (2012) have pointed out to the diverse approach among Muslim women , not only in India ans the Muslim world also, who "are not passive followers of religious norms but have the agency to bring change in their own lives"(Sahu and Hutter 2012:521).

c. Expert Views

Despite admitting the "Orientalist" notion in the construction of gender stereotypes on Muslim women, Ramakrishnan (2017) argued:

> There are issues and questions of Muslim women to be addressed. But the extreme Western model that enforces "civilizing mission" on "others" to ape "us" has been colonial in character. At the same time, the "colonial" view held by many in Indian context not should be an excuse to deny the gender justice. The matter of concern is why there is a special kind of attention to the issues of Muslim women compared to other communities in India. That notion comes from the imperialist "civilizing mission" (Ramakrishnan 2017).

Given the Indian context of cultural and traditional similarities between different communities Gopinath (2017) shared her personal experience since childhood:

> In my experience, I didn't feel any difference between Muslim women and others in terms of restrictions and limitations. During my school and college days, any of my family members accompanied whenever I go outside home and I think this kind of tradition is followed by Muslims. I think it's not any kind of oppression. And we can't say that a woman walking in midnight alone in a street is the image of freedom. I can't see that any society has advanced that much (Gopinath 2017).

Though she disagrees with face-covering veiling practice Gopinath (2017) pointed to the context of the hijab became a popular dress code among Muslim women of different countries:

> Hijab is just covering the body and the Muslim women's dress code is connected to the context of Arabia where Islam originated. Regarding the climate and natural condition, there men and women wear a similar dress in different colors. When Islam spread to other parts of the world this dress code also accompanied and it cannot be termed as any gender bias or oppression. In Kerala, even the Brahmin women used to keep an umbrella and somebody accompanied them when they go outside. These kinds of traditions are in Hinduism and it's not special to Islam. Now since we blindly follow Western models and methods all religious and cultural traditions are kept away. And we cannot display our body just like that. I think that's what Islam suggests. However, I am not supporting the veiling practice that covers the face because it makes security issue of identifying people (Gopinath 2017).

Similarly, as the debates surfaced on Muslim women's rights regarding the personal law, triple-talaq, and polygamy Gopinath suggested that:

> Everybody has the freedom to follow their religious rules but I don't think triple-talaq is good for men and women as it may lead to multiple marriages and divorces. Triple talaq has nothing to do with Quran but it came as a social evil. Though I know cases of talaq and polygamy majority doesn't practice it. I had an Afghan friend who clarified me that Quran and Prophet permitted polygamy if you can do equal justice to whole wives (Gopinath 2017).

Despite their disagreement with many practices that deny justice to Muslim women in India the expert views underline the targeted stereotyping of Muslim women in many cases. Agreed that many traditions are prevalent across communities they questions the motive of the civilizing mission aimed only for Muslim women. And the media-constructed stigmatizing discourse on Muslim women is challenged with personal experiences and learned observations. Despite such sociall experiences, Vatuk (2008) has argued that even the so-called secular media in India has been

trying to reinforce existing negative stereotypes of Muslim women and sensationalize their issues that generalize“Other” image of Islam and Muslims (Vatuk 2008:515-16).

d. Personal Experiences

As the subject of the discussion Muslim women from different backgrounds could share their life experience regarding the challenges they face as the members of the community. Shaikh Lulua Beegam, a Post Graduate student of Central University of Hyderabad, shared her experience as one among a few Muslim students who wear hijab at the campus. Being the lone female Muslim student from Madanappally, Chittur district of Andra Pradesh Beegam narrated the challenges she faced to get into higher education especially in a campus like HCU. “Though my family and neighbors in the village were skeptical about my studies and career choice now they applause me since the situation there has developed a lot conveniently for Muslim girls” (Beegam 2017). Regarding her choice of hijab as a dress code, Beegam noted that:

> My village has Islamic atmosphere where girls wear burqa since from 8th standard though it’s not compulsory. Women often wear the burqa by fear as well as to obey Allah. For me, there was no compulsion from family or others to wear a burqa and nobody asked me to wear the niqab. Usually, my friends in college have been wearing hijab and it was not an unusual thing for us to follow it. Due to the prevalence of Islamic culture and education for both girls and boys in my area, there are no difficulties to wear a burqa (Beegam 2017).

Despite being one among a few in the campus to observe complete hijab Beegam feel happy in facing diverse response in such a campus like HCU:

> I feel different from other girls but the hijab makes me secure because people stare away from a girl wearing the hijab. When I joined the University I was the only Muslim girl wearing the burqa in my batch of 169 students of all religions. Instead of othering me or asking me to put off hijab they were supporting my dress code and my religious motives. It also encouraged me to be one among them without distinguishing friends on religious identities. Among the students and teachers I was known for my hijab and they enquired about my absences but all that never created problems for me (Beegam 2017).

Experiencing the cultural understanding among teachers and fellow students Beegam continued that:

> Though we have Muslim women teachers who don't follow hijab my professors never objected me wearing hijab as they suggested following the conscience. And in entire University nobody discriminates students as Hindus and Muslims or as conservative and liberals and thus never opposes my dress code, as well as nobody, blames those coming in skirts. Everybody has the freedom to follow their culture and traditions (Beegam 2017).

Rather than being a blind follower of the traditions, Beegam narrated the cultural influence of hijab and its varieties arguing that:

> We are influenced by Arab culture that's why Muslim women follow hijab in their style. However, we are in India and have influenced by other culture we follow many things, such as our marriage functions which are not practiced in Islamic countries. Actually, the rules and restrictions put by Islam for girls have its contexts and it should not be violated. But there are things like four wives which make difficulties for women. So it's good to consider the feelings of women when going for more wives (Beegam 2017).

Strongly opposing the "Orientalist" stereotypes and the Islamophobic "veiled victim" image of Muslim women Beegam noted that:

> I am totally against those who want to blame Islam for every problem faced by women. And hijab doesn't prevent our career since there are Muslim women in hijab in Muslim countries working as journalists and professionals in different fields. In Hyderabad, I could find two types of Muslim women. There are pious women who strictly follow Islamic doctrines while others despite following Islamic dress code and all are a bit modern in attitude and lifestyle (Beegam 2017).

Regarding the media coverage of Muslim women's issues, Beegam suggested to look into the trend in a different angle:

> To my knowledge, what media highlight on Muslim women issues are mostly related to the old practices of curtailing Muslim girls' education beyond 5th standards and forcing them to get married at early ages. Of course, there were no facilities to educate the girls beyond 5th standards but now we need to empower the Muslim girls (Beegam 2017).

In the wake of growing debate on 'triple-talaq' and Muslim women's issues, Beegam expressed her views:

> I am not that much aware of the media reports regarding 'triple-talaq' and other issues, but I would say talaq is not a good thing though the sound of clap never comes with one hand and sometimes there may be mistakes on both sides. And the

> so-called polygamy, that prophet practiced, was nothing but to help widows and helpless women. It cannot be applicable to just multiply the number of wives. Thus the permission for four wives could be possible when things are so helpless(Beegam 2017).

As she hopes better discourse on Muslim women when they get more educational and career opportunities Beegam finds the security concerns as the main obstacle for girls' higher education. And Beegam firmly says that "I want to become a lecture. Nowadays 75 percent of people will not do the mistake of getting married and bring child without having education and job for their wives" (Beegam 2017).

Being an Information Technology professional working in WIPRO for last five years Shereena, Senior Software Engineer at Info Park, Kochi shared her experience as a Muslim woman wearing hijab in the workplace. Shereena started explaining how she became familiar with hijab:

> Though I used to the hijab since my high school days I didn't give much importance to that during my college days. However, nobody criticized me either for observing hijab or not. Only later in the professional life I personally took the initiative to observe hijab. It helped me to assert my identity but until today didn't feel it as a taboo or negative choice (Shereena 2017).

However, in the early days Shereena could experience certain negative responses from the colleagues and friends:

> My colleagues and friends in the firm often ask me why you follow these kinds of dress code even in 21st century. But all such remarks actually helped me to reassert my identity as a Muslim woman. Despite my explanations on my choice, many continued their negative attitude to my dress code while others respected my view. Anyhow, any such negative remarks or comments never had any influence on my choice of hijab (Shereena 2017).

Despite such informal remarks and attitudes Shareena confidently says she didn't face challenges in a professional career for being in hijab:

> I didn't face any embarrassing situation from my group leaders or managers rather I could earn little bit respect from their side because of my dress code. In every sense, I feel very comfortable in this choice of hijab and it didn't hurdle my growth or career achievements. Moreover, hijab provides a kind of security to actively engage in professional life without fearing any uncomfortable situations (Shereena 2017).

Rather than getting embarrassed Shareena pointed to some positive changes that she could experience because of her modesty in dress code and attitude:

> I could feel the change in myself and my friends once I switched over to full purdah a couple of years after joining the company. Now I can find many Muslim colleagues wear hijab or at least take care of their dress code. With my five years experience in IT sector, I can assure that nobody would face any bad experience because of hijab or their modest lifestyle. Despite all debates on Muslim women's issues including the hijab, I could claim that asserting to my identity and personal choices never made any negative impact on my life or career though we can't generalize it because maybe there are different experiences and narratives (Shereena 2017).

Therefore, the personal experiences of Muslim women reflect diverse aspects of religiosity and choice of dress. Rather than stigmatized narratives constructed by media, the life experience of Muslim women in India shows the challenges they face are not particular to Islam. And Muslim women's choice of practicing hijab even in educational and professional career, challenges the stereotyped images of "veiled victim" circulated by media. As Shukla and Shukla(1996) these diverse perspectives also reject the the homogenization of the form of discrimination or backwardness of Muslim women while there is the difference in data and experience that never make them an "undifferentiated masses"(Shukla and Shukla1996: 1).

Conclusion

In the representations of Muslim women *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* use certain generalized narratives and stigmatized stereotypes that reinforce the "Orientalist" gender stereotypes regarding Islam. Apart from imitating the Western discourse of "civilizing mission" in generalizing the issues of Muslim women, the media in India and Russia essentialize the "veiled victim" image in a liberal sense irrespective of different cultural contexts. Though both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* include counter-narratives the stigmatized "oppressed Other" image of Muslim women also evoke a kind of "gendered Islamophobia."

However, the social perceptions in both Russia and India are mostly dependant on social interactions and personal experiences. While the community perceives the hijab and Sharia rules regarding women as part of their religiosity they neither want to be legally or socially stereotyped as "victims." With their cultural

and social interactions with Muslim women, fellow religious people could differentiate between the media constructed images and the real experience on the ground. Even though they admit the problem of gender disparity in issues related to Muslim women experts in Russia and India neither perceives it as peculiar to Islam nor they deny the role of “Orientalist” misrepresentations in highlighting the negative images. Despite experiencing taboos the women who practice hijab could personally feel the changing gender discourses within and without the community. Therefore, the gender stereotyping of Islam in media representations in Russia and India can be understood as the reflection of post-9/11 “neo-Orientalist” global discourses on Islam that strengthened the dominant discourses in respective national contexts.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

This study seeks to explore media representation of Islam in Russia and India in a comparative perspective on the themes of othering, enemy imaging and gender stereotyping. Islam has been subjected to politics of reconstruction of meaning through western media narratives especially after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on America. Such narratives influenced globally even in secular societies like Russia and India. Media in Russia and India began representing Islam in negative light ignoring Islam's peaceful coexistence, social cohesion and inter-relations with other cultures, religion and traditions. Hence this study explores the cases of Russia and India.

Media representations are not just re-presentations of realities of the world around because the media construct certain meanings in different contexts. Being the products of discursive practices in a given social context media texts not only "reflect and represent" the "social entities and relations" but also "construct and constitute" them. Therefore, the understanding of the politics of media representation and misrepresentation of any identities around the world is as important as the understanding of the discourse itself. And the "reproducing" role that media play in global and national contexts explicitly reflects in the representations of "Other" or "alien" cultures and people. Whilst the media work as the "ideological apparatus" of the dominant forces the representations keep the historical continuity of the discourse on socio-religious identities in particular socio-cultural contexts.

Neither the media nor its texts, in any format, news, views, images and etc. can be considered as an individual entity but as the products of a discursive process. In spite of factors such as the nature of the media systems, management, and market interests, the ideological perspectives of the media define and determine the nature of the texts it produces. As the media texts represent the discursive process of power-

knowledge production, the qualitative analysis of the media texts can expose the politics of representation. Regarding these aspects of media discourse, this study analyzed the texts of two national dailies, *Izvestia* and *The Hindu*, Russia and India respectively to explore their representations of Islam in a particular historical context, after the 9/11 attack in the US.

The review of relevant literature on the subject shows the discursive methods used by media and experts in the representations of Islam are mostly considered as products of the “Orientalist” approach of representing the “Other”. Among the vast array of such discursive methods, othering/orientalizing, enemy imaging and gender stereotyping were considered for this study given the very recurrence of these themes across the media. Generalization, stigmatization, and essentialization are the main tools used by media to construct the discourse on Islam in the above three themes.

The othering/orientalizing is the discursive process of constructing binaries of “superior Self” and “inferior Other” in which the later is misrepresented with all negativities contrary to the former that embodies the virtues. Being the part of such dominant discourse the media use “Orientalist” stereotypes, narratives, and tropes to represent Islam as an “Other.” The enemy imaging in the media representations is the process of juxtaposing the image of “hostile Other” against the “victim Self.” Such images are employed by media through “neo-Orientalist” Islamophobic narratives like “clash of civilization” and “good Muslim” versus “bad Muslim.” The gender stereotyping is the reproduction of negative images and narratives especially on feminine gender regarding their traditions, culture, and lifestyle. In the media representation of Muslim women certain generalizing binaries such as “primitive” versus “modern” and stigmatizing stereotypes such as “veiled victims”, “oppressed” and “unchanging” are used to construct gender stereotyping discourse on Islam. Therefore, this study focused on these three discursive frames, othering/orientalizing, enemy imaging and gender stereotyping to analyze Russian and Indian contex.

The historical background of the discourse on Islam in different national contexts is very important to understand the continuity and discontinuity in the

media discourse on the same in a particular point of time. In this regard, the historical and contemporary discourse on Islam and Muslims in Russia and India keeps certain similarities and differences especially in the narratives on arrival of Islam, the question of socio-political identity and the issues of relations with dominant communities. The history of Islam in both countries reflects the "Orientalist" historiography that essentializes the "Muslim invasion" despite the fact that there were motives other than the religion for invasions by Tatar and Mongols in Russia or Ghaznis and Timurs in India. While historians highlighted the "Tatar yoke" in Russia and the "despotism of Muslim rulers" in India the cultural and trade relations via Volga and Malabar with the Islamic world were overshadowed.

Apart from the political encounters with the Muslim world in the later centuries, the socio-political identity questions also shaped the discourse on Islam in Russia and India. The "Muslim Question" and "Jadidist" awakening surfaced during the Russian empire whereas the "modernizing mission" and reformist movements set the discourse on Islam under colonial rule in India. While the Sovietization affected the religious and ethnic character of Muslims in Russia the anti-colonial movements and the quest for national identity shaped the narratives on Muslims in India in the last century. As the revival of Islam was the subject of dominant discourses in last decades of Soviet Russia the political and cultural assertion of Muslims in post-independence India defined the debate on Islam. Similar to the ethnic and nationalist upsurge in Muslim republics of Russia the growing communal tensions in India set the nature and direction of debate on Islam since 1990s. Moreover, the relations between Muslims and Orthodox Christians in Russia and Hindus in India played a critical role in the discourse on Islam over the years according to the administrative policies and socio-political environments of the respective countries.

During the last century, international factors including the Iranian revolution, Afghan war and the relations with the Muslim world along with domestic issues of migration, demography and the activities of Muslim organizations decided Russian perceptions of Islam. Similarly, international issues such as partition of the Indian

subcontinent into India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the border conflicts with neighboring Muslim countries and the relations with the Muslim world as well as the domestic issues including the personal law debates, Babri Masjid demolition, Muslim political and educational activities defined the perceptions on Islam in India.

However, the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S shifted the "Orientalist" global discourse that largely focused on Muslims to "neo-Orientalist notions" that specifically targeted Islam. While this shift has been widely explored in Western countries its implications in non-Western countries are least studied in an international comparative perspective. Therefore this study focused on the global-local interlink in the contemporary orientalizing narratives, the threat perception of Islam and the gender stereotypes of Muslim women in the post 9/11 media representations of Islam in Russia and India.

Postcolonial studies have noted that the orientalizing of Muslims and their traditions is not a new phenomenon either in Russia and India. Russian orientalism under the empire and Soviet regimes constructed ethnic and national stereotypes while the "Orientalist" tropes of "medieval despotism" developed by European colonial masters were circulated in India. A host of binaries of "Self' versus "Other" such as "civilized", "human", "patriotic""secular" and "liberal" against "backward", "inferior", "savage", "counter-revolutionary" "Oriental" have been common in the "Orientalist" discourse on Muslims. Despite Russia and India are geographically treated as "Other" of the so-called Occident/West, a kind of orientalizing or "re-orientalizing" practice is evident in the historiography which became explicit even in the history textbooks both in Russia and India. However, the 9/11 marked a new shift in the orientalizing discursive process that overwhelmed the local contexts and narratives by hegemonic "neo-Orientalist" global discourses on Islam.

The enemy imaging or Islamophobic narratives on Muslims also have roots in the historical discourse that constructed an image of "threatening Other" in Russia and India. The descriptions of Mongol-Timur-Ghazni-Guari invasions, the xenophobic, nationalistic and communal narratives on "enemy within" have been the

part of discourses on Muslims for generations. The stigmatized images of "reactionary", "barbaric", "hostile", "radical", "fundamentalist" and "sectarian" Muslim being projected as a "demographic" "cultural" and "societal" threat defined the historical narratives on "enemy within" in Russia and India. And the 9/11 became a new turning point in interlinking the global-local Islamophobic notions of "clash of civilizations" and depicting Islam as the force behind "global jihad" against "civilized world."

The "Orientalist" discourse in Russia and India also made Muslim women the subject of various stereotypes that caricature Islam as a "misogynist" religion. Notwithstanding many similarities between Orthodox, Hindu and Muslim women in cultural and traditional terms only Muslim women always became the target of modernizing mission under imperial Russia and colonial India. While Tatar Muslim women were treated as "Oriental Other" in Russia the "lady in headscarf" has been depicted as the victim of "double discrimination" in India. The Western-centric gender discourse on Islam got space in these countries through essentialized narratives on Muslim women as "true victims" of gender discrimination and the source of "demographic threat". With 9/11 the locally popular stereotypes of Muslim women were strengthened with global exotic tropes that resulted in the construction of a discourse producing a kind of "gendered Islamophobia."

Given this socio-political background, a comparative analysis of the post-9/11 reports both in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* could find certain similarities and differences in their discursive process of othering/orientalizing in the representations of Islam. *Izvestia* generalizes the ideological link of Islambehind9/11 attack as an act "in the name of Allah" and the response of Western forces as the response of "civilized world" in the "fight for Islam." *The Hindu* essentializes Islam and the Muslim world as "irresponsible to the civilized world order" regarding their response to 9/11. Both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* reproduced orientalizing narratives that stigmatized the Muslim world as "uncivilized Other" who celebrated the 9/11 attacks, "unethical Arabs" who financed terrorism, and "jihadi Mullahs" who distributed fatwas against

the West. With stereotypical images of Muslim men, "all the time spent reading the Koran" and Muslim "women fasting with cracked lips and bleeding from the nose" *Izvestia* orientalizes the Muslim world. And *The Hindu* generalizes the "medieval otherness" of "Arab part of the Muslim world harbored against the West" and somehow depicts 9/11 as the turning point in the tussle "between the Western civilized world and the Islamic barbaric world."Questioning the Islamic community's indifference to the attack on American or western ideals *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* suspected their "moral" support to terrorism to generalize the "Other" image of Islam.

Similar to the post-9/11Western discourse, both dailies orientalize the "un-integrated""Islamic Other" in Western countries whereas the "domestic Islam" is stigmatized for "fatalism" and "aggression." Muslims are essentialized as "fanatic and reactionary" in *Izvestia* coverage of tragedies such as "Nord-Ost" and Beslan and *The Hindu* reports on attacks on Indian Parliament and Akshardham temple. While both dailies constructed othering discourse generalizing the extremist voices the diverse views among Muslims were given comparatively lesser space. Covering the anniversaries of 9/11 and terrorist attacks in Russia and India *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* ideologically targeted Islam as the force behind "global network" of terrorism. And there are certain differences between *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* in their othering/orientalizing discourse on Islam. While *Izvestia* essentializes the 9/11 attack as Islamic war against civilized world *The Hindu* generalizes it as the manifestation of "jihadi Islam". *Izvestia* emphasizes on the "Orientalist" civilizing mission whereas *The Hindu* essentializes the "unchanging Other" image of the Muslim world. *Izvestia* orientalizes the Islam and Muslim as "un-integrated Other" in the West while *The Hindu* stigmatizes them as "inferior-Other" lacking the Western values. *Izvestia* reproduces the "Orientalist" stereotypes on ethnic and national diversities of Islam and Muslims in Russia whereas *The Hindu* stigmatizes the cultural otherness of Islam and Muslims in India.

Therefore, the qualitative textual analysis of news and views of *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* could find out that the post 9/11 “neo-Orientalist” global discourse is reflected in the media representations of Islam in othering/orientalizing themes. Rather than countering the Western narratives that orientalize Islam and the Muslim world both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* somehow reproduce the same through different binaries of “us” versus“them”. With ideologically and culturally targeting stereotypes an “Oriental Other” image is constructed in the discourse on Islam. The counter-narratives on an “acceptable Other” in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* are overshadowed by stigmatizing narratives and stereotyping images of Islam and Muslims as an “unchanging Other.”

At the same time, the social perceptions on Islam and Muslims unveil different aspects of othering discourse in Russia and India. While the media discourse generalizes the dichotomy of the inferior “they” against the superior “we” it’s part of public perception to a certain extent. Despite the experiences with the “Islamic Other” in the neighborhood, the media discourse has been the general reference point to perceive Islamic traditions and Muslim practices even for many informed audiences in both countries. However, the media-constructed dominant othering discourses are challenged by deep understanding at the social level on the common past, present, and future of the religions and traditions in Russia and India.

A comparative analysis of the post-9/11 reports in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* also has exposed certain similarities and differences in their representation of Islam in enemy imaging themes. Apart from stigmatizing “jihadi Islam” as the force behind the 9/11 attacks, the “clash” theory was widely used to generalize the enemy image of Islam. While *Izvestia* generalized 9/11 attacks as “the war of God with Jesus” *The Hindu* essentialized it as the beginning of “global jehad.” Reproducing the fake story on Palestinian celebrations on 9/11 attacks both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* constructed an Islamophobic narrative on the Muslim world’s response to the attack. As *Izvestia* stigmatizes the emergence of “mujahideen from Catholic families” in Western countries, *The Hindu* generalizes the presence of “Islamic army of terror” as

the "new enemy in the new century." The notions of "good" versus "bad" Muslim are constructed when *Izvestia* declares that "Russian Muslims are the truest Muslims in the world" and when *The Hindu* acknowledges that "All Muslims are not terrorists."And ideologically stigmatizing Islam, *Izvestia* asks "how to treat Islam after Beslan?" and *The Hindu* generalizes the "Islamic militants" and "fidayeen attack" during the anniversaries of 9/11 and the terrorist attacks at home.

However, certain differences are maintained by *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* in their construction of "enemy image" of Islam. *Izvestia* generalizes the post-9/11 developments as "civilizational clash" while *The Hindu* stigmatizes it as the spread of "jehadi Islam", Islamophobic narratives get more space in *Izvestia* while *The Hindu* includes comparatively more counter-narratives in covering 9/11 attacks and its anniversaries. Culturally stigmatizing the "enemy within" image of Islam the ethnic and migrant-phobia is reinforced by *Izvestia* whereas the communal threat is generalized by *The Hindu*. However, *Izvestia* includes interviews of Islamic clerics as counter voices while *The Hindu* generalizes their apologetic reactions to major attacks. To essentialize the "enemy image" of Islam *Izvestia* takes the West as a reference point whereas *The Hindu* refers to India-Pak relations to stigmatize the image of "hostile Other."

Therefore, the textual analysis could find that the post-9/11 media discourse in Russia and India reflect the global discourse on "clash of civilizations" that eventually essentializes an enemy image of Islam and Muslims at large. Without looking into the local contexts of the extremist tendencies *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* generalize "jihadi Islam" as a globally unified ideological representation of terrorism. The "Orientalist" "hostile Other" image of Islam is reinforced by *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* by generalizing the extremist versions whereas the counter-narratives from the Muslim world are overshadowed. Both dailies reproduce the un-integrated "evil Other" image in their coverage of Islam and Muslims in the Western countries. And culturally targeted "enemy within" image is constructed to generalize the "ethnic", "demographic" and "communal" threat perception on Islam in Russia and

India. Ultimately, notwithstanding many counter-narratives the misrepresented "demonized Other" images of Islam in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* not only reproduce the Huntington thesis but also reinforce the "neo-Orientalist" Islamophobic discourse.

Meanwhile, the social perceptions regarding Islam and Muslims in India and Russia reveal diverse views and experiences despite the "hostile Other" image generalized by media. Though people of different backgrounds couldn't experience any "civilizational clash" within their neighborhoods they are somehow exposed to the media discourse on "jihadi Islam."Since the dominant ethnic, nationalist and communal discourses overshadow the common historical experiences, the media-constructed threat perception on Islam is prevalent even among informed people and experts in Russia and India. However, lived experiences and learned observations help people in both countries to differentiate between media-constructed "Islamophobic frames" and socially connected realities.

The analysis of media texts also unveils certain similarities and differences in the representations of Muslim women in *Izvestia* and *The Hindu*. Both dailies stigmatize Islam using the binary of "liberal Self' versus "IslamicOther" in gender relations. *Izvestia* juxtaposes the "liberated ladies from Europe and Russia" with women in the Muslim world being victims of "religious prostitution" while *The Hindu* stigmatizes the "new dark age for Iraqi women." Apart from reproducing culturally targeting "Orientalist" stereotyped gender narratives on Muslim women *Izvestia* essentializes the hijab as "symbol of discrimination" and *The Hindu* constructs a kind of "hijabophobia" stigmatizing the practice as a "return of the dark ages." Despite giving space for counter-narratives of "modernized" Muslim women, both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* generalize it as the victory of liberalism over religiosity. Rather than acknowledging the role of local traditions that influence the gender discourse of Muslim women both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* attribute every deficiency to Islam and bonus to liberalism. Without presenting much comparative analysis on

the status of women of fellow religions both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* stigmatize the "victimhood" of Muslim women.

However, certain differences in the representations of Muslim women can be identified as *Izvestia* highlighted the terrorism, hijab, and Islamophobia issues while *The Hindu* focused on personal law, talaq and child marriage issues. *Izvestia* depended more on Western gender discourses whereas *The Hindu* circulated local discourse on Muslim women. While *The Hindu* often compares Muslim women's issues with that of fellow religious women *Izvestia* hardly produce such narratives. The ethnic/national identity gets prominence in *Izvestia* whereas the minority/religious identity is highlighted by *The Hindu* in the discourse on Muslim women. To include counter-narratives *The Hindu* brings opinion pieces and editorials while *Izvestia* goes for interviews and lived experiences of Muslim women.

Given the similarities and differences in the discursive process of representing Muslim women both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* follow certain patterns in their construction of gender stereotypes on Islam. Orientalizing dichotomies such as "us" versus "them", "Western Self" versus "Oriental Other", "liberal Self' versus "Islamic Other" were used *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* to generalize the "Other" image of Muslim women. In their attempt to emulate the western discourse on "hijab" the media in India and Russia essentialize the "veiled victim" image of Muslim women in a liberal sense irrespective of different cultural contexts. And through culturally and ideologically targeted stereotypes both *Izvestia* and *The Hindu* constructed a discourse that evoked kind of "gendered Islamophobia."

Though the media-constructed "stereotyped" images have reflections in the general discourse on Muslim women the social perceptions in both Russia and India are mostly dependant on cultural interactions and personal experiences. While the community perceives the hijab and Sharia rules regarding women as part of their religiosity they neither want to be legally or socially stereotyped as "victims."The cultural and social interactions with Muslim women have helped the fellow religious

people to differentiate between the media-constructed images and the real experience on the ground. Even though they admit the problem of gender disparity in issues related to Muslim women experts in Russia and India neither perceives it as peculiar to Islam nor they deny the role of "Orientalist" misrepresentations in generalizing the negative images. Despite experiencing taboos the women who practice hijab could personally feel the changing gender discourses within and without the community. Therefore the post 9/11 "neo-Orientalist" global discourses on Islam and the dominant discourses in respective national contexts have reflected in the gender stereotyping of Islam in media representations in Russia and India.

Findings of the Study

Based on the above analysis of the discursive process and patterns used by Russian and Indian media for the representations of Islam the main findings of the study are the following.

- The media as an ideological apparatus reproduces the politically and culturally motivated dominant narratives in Russia and India and construct the binaries of "us" versus "them" in their representations of Islam.
- Apart from the local contexts, the post-9/11 global discourse has become a primary reference point in the local media representations of Islam in Russia and India in later years.
- The media both in Russia and India follow the Western media discourse in the process of othering Islam as an "Oriental Other" that can be a threat to the "civilized Self."
- Rather than referring to the terrorism of all kinds, extremists attacks by suspected Muslims are generalized as "jihad" and Muslims are stigmatized as the sympathizers of this cause that ultimately construct an "enemy image" of Islam in Russia and India.
- The overemphasis of Russian and Indian media on the dress code and personal laws reinforces the stigmatizing gender stereotypes of Muslim

women while the diversity in gender discourse among different religious communities is rarely acknowledged.

- The media in Russia and India are heavily dependent on post-9/11 Western discourse on Islam rather than looking into the local frames of references and daily experiences of the people within and out of national boundaries.
- Notwithstanding such media narratives, the social perceptions are very diverse in terms of othering, Islamophobia and gender stereotypes regarding Islam.
- While there are a lot of people who depend on media narratives for their reference on Islam many of them frame their perspectives through lived experiences and cultural interactions with Islam and Muslims.

These conclusions and findings validate the three hypotheses of the study. The media in Russia and India reflect and reproduce the dominant nationalist narratives and post-9/11 "neo-Orientalist" global discourses in their representation of Islam as an "Other". The Islamophobic global discourse on "clash of civilization" has been an influencing factor in the Russian and Indian media construction of an enemy image of Islam. The "Orientalist" gender stereotyped images of Muslim women are reproduced in the media representations of Islam in Russia and India.

Further Areas of Research

The study identifies the following areas for further research.

- The comprehensive study of audience perspectives and experiences on the impact of media discourse and representations of Islam in different national contexts is an area needed further research.
- The self-representations of Muslims and Islam in diverse media space of India and Russia can be studied further to identify the global-local interactions of discourse within the community space.
- The impact of social media on the global-local media discourse on Islam and Muslims in different national contexts.

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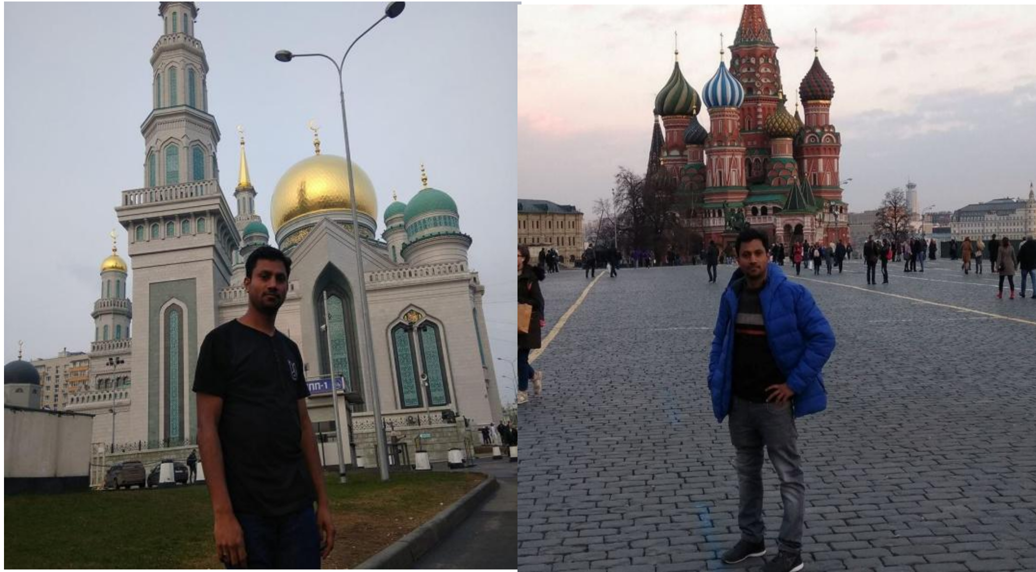
Appendix

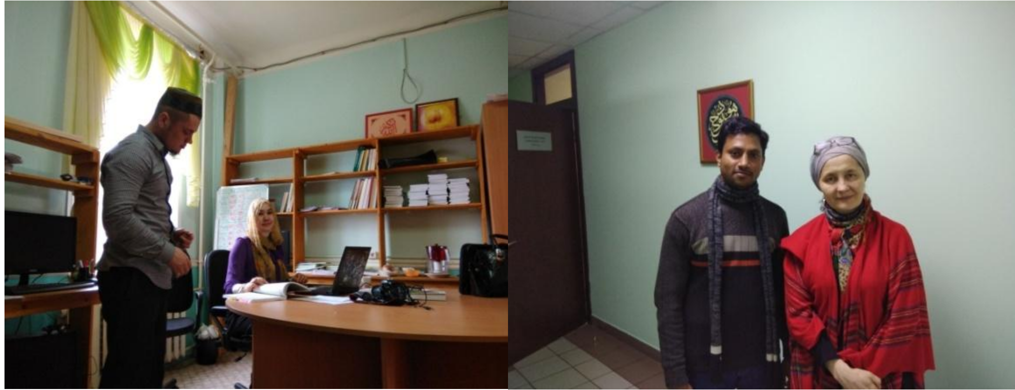


The Moscow Cathedral Mosque (*Московскаясоборнаямечеть*) and St Basil's Cathedral in Moscow remind the history of war and peace between Russians and Muslims especially Tatars.

TheKul-SharifMosque (*мечетьКул-Шариф*) located in Kazan Kremlin and the Quranic verses on the walls of Kremlin represent he cultural confluence of religious traditions in Russia.

The Russian Islamic University and the Temple of all religions in Kazan are symbols of peaceful cultural co-existence.

The Islamic University in Ufa is the centre of learning and cultural exchanges between Muslims and others in Bashkortostan.



Ralina at Islamic University of Ufa and Safiullina at Kazan Federal University express their freedom in practicing traditional dress codes/hijab

The social milieu at Nizamuddin Dargah and Juma Masjid in Delhi represents the surviving composite culture of Islam in India despite the memories of war and peace in the past.

The Dargah and Mandir situated side by side in Hyderabad also remind the cultural co-existence in the time of growing intolerance.

Mandir and Dargha at Lucknow University campus offer the opportunity to learn the culture of living in peace at the cost of hatred and enmity.

The diversity of cuisine in India also represents the plurality of the culture and traditions that negate the scope of enforced homogeneity.