

**A Study of Reporting about Terrorism on Two Pan-Arab Television News  
Channels**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined TV coverage of terrorism from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya using media framing analysis. The study attempted to address two main objectives. These objectives are exploring the terrorism issues in both Arabic news channels under the period of study and the extent to which the two networks differ or agree; and identifying the factors that might have influenced each of these two news providers' news selection processes and the framing of terrorism on broadcast networks. Using a framing approach, this study initially used content analysis to examine a number of framing devices based on past literature such as types of news frames, framing perspective, geographical location of terrorism coverage, sources used, perpetrators of terrorism, victims of terrorism, episodic versus thematic frame, and responsibility frames. Furthermore, discourse analysis was applied to understand the link between discursive practice and the broader social and cultural developments and structures. Language extracts taken from both TV networks' broadcasts were compared, taking into consideration different contextual factors that contribute to the production and consumption of news discourse about terrorism.

This study found that the stereotype that 'the terrorist is a Muslim' prevailed in the news coverage that was analysed. Furthermore, contrary to the pattern among western news sources, both networks were consistent in at least implying that the majority of terrorism victims are Muslims. In addition, the findings reveal that too much media focus was placed on disseminating and supporting official positions and decisions, and that humanitarian suffering from terrorism is seldom brought to the attention of the public.

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## **Chapter 1 Background and Introduction to the Study**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Years after the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, media and news sources still devote considerable attention to terrorism and terrorist related activity. More than 5,000 stories concerning terrorism were broadcast by US national news networks in the years 2002-2006 (Gadarian, 2007, cited in Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 99). Much attention from media scholars in recent years has therefore understandably turned to investigating the representation of terrorism (see Domke, 2004; Fried, 2005; Norris *et al.*, 2003; Ryan, 2004). A general trend in terrorism coverage is that Western media are more likely to label Islamic violence as terrorism, as compared to Christian or Jewish violence (Nacos, 2002). Kimberly Powell (2011) for example, examined media coverage of eleven acts of terrorism that occurred in the US between October 2001 and January 2010. She found that during the labelling of terror suspects, three common labels emerged: Muslims, al-Qaeda, and terrorist (Powell, 2011: 90-91). With a consideration of the fact that the 9/11 attacks and most of the post-9/11 terrorism acts have been committed by Islamic extremists, it is not surprising that Muslims are frequently portrayed in the media as perpetrators of terrorism (Zeng & Tahat, 2012). Simultaneously, however, the fact that most victims of terrorism are Arabs and Muslims is generally overlooked (Perl, 2007; Stolbery, 2010, cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 433).

Where terrorist activity is threatened, societies and their general public require accurate and appropriate information to minimize uncertainty (Schlesinger *et al.*, 1983). Media provision of information is crucial to determining and influencing public understanding of, and responses to, any developing crisis situation. Contemporary research into terrorism and related topics has therefore turned its attention to media reporting of the issues and events involved, particularly whether their reports constitute accurate and unbiased coverage (Azeez, 2009). Over recent decades various research studies have considered the responses to terrorism offered by traditional media such as TV, newspapers and film (Banuri, 2005; Dowling, 1986; Martin, 1985; Peresin, 2007; Winter, 1980, cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 433). However, comparatively few researchers have paid attention to the media coverage of terrorism in Arab and Muslim countries. Insufficient evidence has been uncovered to reveal whether and to what extent specifically Arab media and news sources reflect the position of Muslims and Arabs as targets and victims of terrorist activities. Furthermore, western media have a history of negatively stereotyping Muslims and Arabs,

and particularly since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 have sometimes drawn them as violent, threatening and uncivilized (see for instance Kumar, 2008; Nelson, 2008; Saeed, 2007; Poole, 2006). In light of this, questions of balance and bias in the Arab media's reporting and labeling of terrorist organizations and perpetrators of political violence should also be assessed.

This study examines the coverage of terrorism by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, two leading Middle Eastern news networks. Each receives significant backing from governments in the region, Al-Jazeera from Qatar and Al-Arabiya from Saudi Arabia, each having also initially been established with direct financial assistance from these respective sources. Over the past decade they have become the two leading news channels in the Arab world (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 434). The findings of this study will allow us to appreciate trends and tendencies in the coverage of terrorist related activities in the Middle East, and will offer a platform for comparison between western and Arab media.

### **1.2 The Importance of the Study**

This section explores the key reasons behind the decision to use framing theory for the study of news reporting in the Arab world. It also highlights the importance of the study and what it could offer to the wider academic research literature in this field. Despite growing interest in framing over the last decades, its application has been limited in Arab countries.

Several attributes contribute to the timelines and significance of the study:

1. There has been little previous framing research on this subject in Arab countries (see Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Fahmy & Al-Emad, 2011). While many comparative studies have been carried out about the framing of terrorism across different news media in different nations (Weimann & Brosius, 1991; Reese & Lewis, 2009; Entman, 1993; Papacharissi & Oliverira, 2008; Ryan, 2004; Ambrosio de Nelson, 2008; Poole, 2006), such research has been rare in the Arab world. How different Arab media in general, and Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya in particular, frame violent events remains a neglected area of scientific inquiry and the proposed research represents a substantive effort to remedy this deficiency. Thus, this work is important because it adds to the growing body of comparative media research published in this study.
2. Terrorism and violence are among the most sensitive issues in the Arab world. They are related to the instability of Arab social, political and economic environments (Hamada, 2003: 101). Into the 1990s, Arab countries witnessed a rise in the number of terrorist attacks perpetrated by Islamic groups against governments, foreign targets,

and citizens. According to the US State Department Annual Report (2010), the majority of the powerful and notorious terrorism organizations in the world (e.g., Al Qaeda in North Africa, Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and Pakistan) are located in the Middle East. In addition, this region has witnessed the longest war on terrorism in history, and more terrorism victims as compared to other parts of the world (Zeng *et al.*, 2012: 443); US Government data that states about (60%) of fatalities based on terrorism are from Middle Eastern countries (The US State Department Annual Report, 2010).

3. There is growing interest in Middle East news. For instance, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, Al-Jazeera emerged as a leading news source on the world media stage, challenging major Western news outlets with its controversial coverage of the United States' "War on Terror" (El-Nawawy & Iskandar, 2002, cited in Schulthies & Boum, 2007: 143). Although Al-Jazeera drew a lot of criticism for its airing of Bin Laden video tapes, live reporting in Kabul during the 2001 US led invasion, and the footage of captured and slain American soldiers in Iraq in 2003, the network refuses to accept the Western portrayal of its coverage as propaganda. It continues to assert its claim to objective journalism within an Arab-Islamic view, as embodied in its motto: opinion and its counterpoint.

### 1.3 Study Objectives

The main objectives of the study were to:

1. Explore the differences and similarities between Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV news channels in framing terrorism. These TV networks were selected for analysis because they are the leading regional providers of Arab broadcast news; because of their positions of influence within Arab media; and because they each have a distinctive political leaning (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 434). Al-Jazeera is Qatar-owned and has often taken anti-American and anti-Western tones (Lynch, 2006). Al-Arabiya, meanwhile, is owned by the Saudi-controlled *MBC* group and has sometimes been accused of being too friendly to Western interests (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 10). It is important to know how stations with major sway over Arab public opinion, but with different ownership styles, cover terrorism. Such an analysis is especially important given the sensitivity of terrorism issue in the Arab world.
2. Identify the factors that influence each of these two news providers' selection processes and framing of news stories that deal with terrorism on broadcast networks.

Through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of TV network news reports, this study sets out to compare the coverage of terrorist events on the two channels. Investigating two different TV networks of different political and organizational routines regarding violent events “helps to reveal the critical choices that journalists subjectively make that would otherwise remain submerged” (Entman, 1991: 6). Neuman *et al.* (1992) suggested that “the media give the story a ‘spin’, taking into account their organisational and modality constraints, professional judgments, and certain judgments about the audience” (p: 120).

Quantitatively, by using a framing approach, this study examined a number of framing devices identified in previous research, including types of news frames, framing perspectives, geographical location, sources attributed, primary terrorist groups, victims of terrorism, episodic and thematic frames, and responsibility. Qualitatively, discourse analysis was applied in this study to understand the link between discursive practice (power relations) and broader social and cultural developments and structures. By using discourse analysis, the author compared and contrasted the use of language by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya channels, and provided a textual analysis of language extracts from the two TV networks, whilst taking into consideration different contextual factors that contribute to the production and consumption of news discourse about terrorism.

To achieve the objectives stated above, the study addressed several related issues, divided into questions of content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The content analysis questions focused on eight areas of study: the types of news frames used; the framing perspectives; geographical locations; identification of perpetrators; identification of victims; episodic vs. thematic framing; and responsibility frames. In this way, the researcher extracted one main question reduced to seven sub-questions, guided by the content analysis approach, and one main research reduced to four sub-questions developed for the critical discourse analysis. These questions are as following:

RQ1: Did terrorism stories in the two news channels differ in types of frames they used?

RQ1.2: Did terrorism stories in the two news channels differ in their framing perspectives?

RQ1.3: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in the use of attributed news sources?

RQ1.4: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in identifying terrorism perpetrators?

RQ1.5: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in terms of which geographical locations were featured most often?

RQ1.6: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in identifying terrorism victims?

RQ1.7: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in the use of episodic versus thematic frames?

RQ1.8: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in using responsibility frames?

The second set of questions is related to critical discourse analysis. These questions are as following:

RQ.2: Which ideology can be recognised in the news coverage of terrorism at Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV news channels?

RQ2.1: What kind of lexicalization and predications can be seen in the news coverage of Al-Jazeera?

RQ2.2: What kind of lexicalization and predications can be seen in the news coverage of Al-Arabiya?

RQ2.3: What kind of intertextuality and framing can be recognised in the news coverage of Al-Jazeera?

RQ2.4: What kind of intertextuality and framing can be recognised in the news coverage of Al-Arabia?

#### **1.4 Why TV Networks?**

Research has consistently confirmed the importance of television as a public news source and this is true in particular of where people seek news about acts of terrorism (Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008). A telephone survey conducted by Stempel and Hargrove (2003) found (91%) of the respondents said television news was a useful source of information about terrorist attacks, while (67%) indicated that newspapers were a useful source (p: 56).

Researchers from a variety of perspectives and theoretical traditions have argued that television is more emotionally arousing than are print media (Cho *et al.*, 2003: 309; Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 100). Inspired by the ideas of Marshall McLuhan (1964), some scholars have argued that television, with its combination of audio and visual tracks, its apparent real-life tempo, its nonlinear juxtaposition of video images taken at different times and locales, and so on, interacts with human senses in a unique way. It is thus capable of producing its own forms of thinking and communicating (Meyrowitz, 1985). Some also argue that these technical attributes interact with market forces to create a unique “media logic,” a format of presentation that integrates visual images, tempo, and rhythm in the unfolding of a news story, depictions of personalities, and dramatisation of human emotions to make television

news qualitatively different from print-based journalism (Altheide *et al.*, 1991, cited in Cho *et al.*, 2010: 310-11).

Other scholars have argued for the uniqueness of television by focusing not on its technological attributes but on the social uses of the technology (Cho *et al.*, 2003: 311). As Schudson (1982) pointed out, “the way technology is used has a relation to, but is not fully determined by, the technology itself” (p: 97). To these scholars, the technological potential of the television medium is cultivated in a market-driven “showbiz” context. As a result, television news coverage is driven by broadcasting organisations’ overreaching desire for “good visuals,” “good stories,” and personalities—the key elements for conjuring higher ratings. In routine news coverage, such desire gets translated into “episodic” coverage (Iyengar, 1991), namely, concrete occurrences or events with little contextual or thematic connection. When a major news event occurs, television broadcasting goes “live,” creating not only an enormous news hole, as is the case with 24-hour non-stop news coverage (Zelizer, 1992), but also excitement in both newsrooms and society (Jacobs, 1996). Live television broadcasts turn celebrity journalists and authoritative figures into “star performers” (Becker, 1995) of an unfolding melodrama. They also turn news events into occasions for collective experiences of emotions (Dayan & Katz, 1992, cited in Cho *et al.*, 2003: 311).

Television coverage of the terrorist attacks is said to have all these characteristics, including the networks’ 90-hour-plus, non-stop coverage, the repeated showing of horrific images and citizens’ reactions, and news anchors’ controlled but clearly visible displays of emotions as “Americans” (Carey, 2002; Schudson, 2002). Research has provided evidence that in terms of covering events such as terrorist attacks, television news tends to focus on stories about specific acts excluding related historical, economic, or social context (Ansolabehere *et al.*, 1993: 51-53). Iyengar (1991) found that for news coverage of terrorism, episodic reports outnumbered thematic reports by a ratio of three to one (cited in Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 164). Other content analyses have also identified similar patterns in television terrorism reports (e.g., Altheide, 1987; Paletz *et al.*, 1982, cited in Cho *et al.*, 2003: 311).

The strengths of the television medium in covering “breaking news” are said to be partly responsible for a subtle but significant shift in the orientation of print media. Newspapers have started to focus on providing in-depth, analytical coverage on existing issues, which has been called the “new long journalism” (Barnhurst & Mutz, 1997). Such in-depth, thematic, and analytical coverage is exemplified by the New York Times’ coverage of the 9/11 terror attacks (Schudson, 2002).

To Cho *et al.* (2003), these theories provide a foundation to expect major differences in language and tone of television and newspaper coverage of terrorist attacks. Indeed, the nature of the terrorist attacks as a “what-a-story” news event (Berkowitz, 1992) provided the conditions (including drama, uncertainty, and live breaking stories) that should amplify the emotional differences between television and newspaper content. In addition, television journalists scrambling for information and reporting live from such scenes as “Ground Zero” and the Pentagon were able to capture the real-time reactions of political leaders and ordinary citizens as the events were unfolding (pp.: 311-12).

Much of the verbal content of television coverage was spoken “spontaneously” by emotionally-involved individuals rather than written deliberately by print journalists. As a result, television coverage was likely to be not only more episodic with clear visual markers of actors and scenes, but also more emotional in terms of verbal expression. Television cameras were also able to reveal the emotional reactions of television journalists who, as Americans, shared a collective sense of shock, grief, and anger (Ibid, p: 312).

### **1.5 Overview of the Chapters**

This thesis consists of nine chapters including this introductory chapter. The second chapter introduces the definition of terrorism, which includes a historical account of terrorism, typology of terrorism, and its relationship with media. The third chapter provides a literature review and a theoretical framework and identifies the theoretical positioning of this research. The chapter focuses on the development of the framing theory concept and examines key assumptions of the theory. The elements of this approach and its previous applications in different aspects are at the centre of this chapter. The fourth chapter considers the results of previous studies assessing media coverage of terrorism pre-and post-September 11th, 2001, including public responses to terrorist-related news reporting, summarising and providing examples of US and foreign media reaction to the 9/11 attacks and their after-effects. The fifth chapter discusses Arab satellite television services. It introduces a brief historical background of Arab satellite TV channels. The development of pan-Arab TV is outlined, with special focuses on the Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya news channels.

The sixth chapter will describe the methodological procedures of data collection regarding the study. The chapter presents the two methods of gathering data: content analysis and critical discourse analysis. In addition to this, the data collection design and analysis plan is described, and the research questions are presented. The focus of Chapter Seven is centred on exploring media framing. The results of the content analysis from the two news networks,

## Chapter 1 Background & Introduction

Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, will be described to find out how terrorism was framed by the channels. Chapter Eight presents the main results of the critical discourse analysis. It examines the three-dimensional analytic framework of critical discourse analysis: textual analysis, discursive practices, and social practice. Chapter Nine discusses the outcomes of the study in the broader context of theory and other related empirical work, and, finally, presents the direction for future research and recommendations. Before all this, however, we need to consider the core concept of this study, namely ‘terrorism’, what it means and how it has been variously defined and framed. This is the subject we will examine in Chapter Two.

## **Chapter 2 Definitions, Roots and Causes of Terrorism**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of this chapter is to understand the nature of terrorism as a concept and as an activity, its roots and causes, and its relationships with the media. The first section of this chapter discusses the varied definitions of terrorism. The second section will introduce literature about the roots and causes of terrorism. The roots of terrorism will be examined from three different but equally essential perspectives (Crenshaw, 1981: 380). At the level of the individual terrorist, the discussion will examine individual psychology, including the mental state of the terrorist, his psychological justifications for violence, and his interactions with the terrorist group. At the level of the terrorist organization, the discussion will examine organizational goals and motives for engagement in terrorism. Finally, from an environmental perspective, the discussion will focus on social, political, economic, cultural and religious conditions that give rise to terrorism. The third section will briefly discuss the possible consequences of terrorism from three perspectives; economic, psychological, and political consequences. The final section of the chapter briefly examines the relationships between terrorism and the media.

Martha Crenshaw (1981) argued that three seemingly interrelated questions define the study of terrorism: “why terrorism occurs, how the process of terrorism works, and what its social and political effects are”. Focusing primarily on the first question, Crenshaw concluded that a terrorist campaign could be a “rational, political choice” (p: 385).

Ross identified the three key theories that dominated the terrorism literature during the early 1990s. He maintained that the causal models fall into three categories of psychological, structural and rational choices. Structural approaches generally maintain “the causes of terrorism can be found in the environment and the political, cultural, social, and economic structure of societies” (Ross, 1993: 317). In his opinion, the structural model had an advantage in terms of operationalization, metrics and predictive power. However, the structural model of analysis had several serious methodological problems including sloppy classification schemes or selective and incomplete case studies. Ross (1993) proposed a most different system (MDS) approach to the causal modeling of terrorism with a minimum of three groups and including domestic, transnational and state sponsored terrorism (pp : 317-29).

In exploring the different level of analysis that yields different insights into the causes of terrorism, researchers have focused on the psychological motivations of terrorism.

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Crenshaw noted that “the advantage of psychological analysis of terrorism is that it links several levels of analysis from individual up to societal. She concluded that, while critical to the understanding of terrorism, causal explanations should be one part of terrorism studies and other avenues should be explored, including the analysis of terrorist groups moderating by ceasing their campaigns” (Crenshaw, 2000: 417-18).

Krueger & Malečková (2003) conducted a meta-analysis review of the literature that focused on the connection between poverty, education and terrorism. Policy prescriptions to combat these causes have proliferated since the 9/11 attacks. However, the authors argued that “any connection between poverty, education, and terrorism is indirect, complicated, and probably quite weak” (p: 119). Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (2006) argued that poor human rights conditions create a conducive atmosphere for terrorism (p: 680). Newman (2007) and Piazza (2008) explored the idea that weak or failed states served as incubators for terrorist groups. This claim is often made in reference to Afghanistan and Somalia. Using the *United Nations Human Development Index* and the *Failed States Index* as indicators to measure state capacity, correlation analysis concluded that “contested” states, rather than failed states, are more attractive to terrorist groups, although failed states that do produce terrorism tend to produce more deadly terrorism (Newman, 2007: 484). The following sections discuss these analytical frameworks in greater depth. However, before discussing the roots and possible causes of terrorism, it is essential to establish a working definition of terrorism for the purposes of this study. Understanding the definitional complexities of terrorism is important to any analysis of its media coverage (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 31).

### **2.2 Definition of Terrorism**

The attack the Twin Towers is often called terrorism, while the invasion of Iraq is not (Goktepe & Ercikti, 2007: 394). “Terrorism means different things to different people in different situations; politicians, academics, and legal experts have long struggled to determine which acts of violence qualify as terrorism and which do not” (Gaines & Miller, 2008: 397).

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines terrorism as:

“A system of terror. 1. Government by intimidation; the system of the ‘Terror’ (1793-4); ...A policy intended to strike with terror those against whom it is adopted; the fact of terrorizing or condition of being terrorized” (cited in Williamson, 2009: 39). According to Hoffman (2006), “rather than learning what terrorism is, here one instead finds firstly an historical and anachronistic description, and secondly a definition so broad as to apply to almost any action that scares us” (p: 2). “Though an integral part of

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“terrorism,” this definition is insufficient for the purpose of accurately defining the phenomenon that is today called terrorism” (Hoffman, 2006: 2).

According to *Al-Mujim Al-Waseet* Arabic dictionary, “a terrorist means whoever practices violence and terrorism for realizing a political objective.” *Al-Munjid* Arabic dictionary defines a terrorist “as one who resorts to terrorism for assuming power, while *Al-Raed* Arabic dictionary defines terrorism as the panic created as a result of violent acts such as murder, explosions and sabotage.” To summarize, the term terrorism linguistically denotes fear and panic (Abdelhammed *et al.*, 2003: 210).

### 2.2.1 Academic Consensus on Definition

The term’s meaning has frequently shifted during the past two hundred years (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 16). As Walter Laqueur writes, “no definition of terrorism can possibly cover all the varieties of terrorism that have appeared throughout history” (Laqueur, 2001:7). Thus the interpretation of the classification of terrorism is important in the development of definition of terrorism (Armistead, 2004: 91).

It is said that between 1936 and 1986 more than 100 definitions of terrorism were provided (Schmi, 1984: 88). Though many of these definitions are similar, they are subtly different, often projecting the agenda of the author (Tuman, 2009: 9). Martha Crenshaw (1995) has written that “terrorism is a conspiratorial style of violence calculated to alter the attitudes and behavior of multitude audiences” (p: 76). To Tuman (2009) “though Crenshaw’s definition recognizes that terrorism is directed at certain audiences, she also limits her definition to small-group activity, effectively precluding any discussion of state-based terrorism” (p: 9). Walter Laqueur has suggested that, terrorism is “the use or the threat of the use of violence, a method of combat, or a strategy to achieve certain targets...[I]t aims to induce a state of fear in the victim, that is ruthless and does not conform with humanitarian rules... [P]ublicity is an essential factor in the terrorist strategy” (Laqueur, 1987: 143). To Schmid and Jongman (1988) “terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent, employed by (semi-)clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons” (p: 28). “Threat-and violence-based communication processes are used to manipulate the main target audience(s), depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought” (Ibid, p: 28).

Terrorism can be also defined as “an act of violence or threat of violence against civilian populations to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives” (FBI, 2001,

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cited in Gershon *et al.*, 2008: 236). These violent acts are usually committed by non-state groups or individuals who attempt to sow panic to undermine confidence in the government and political leadership of their target country (Kawilarang, 2004: iii). Terrorism is therefore “designed to have psychological effects that reach far beyond its impact on the immediate victims or object of an attack. It is meant to instill fear within, and thereby intimidate, a wider “target audience” that might include a rival ethnic or religious group, an entire country, a national government or political party, or public opinion in general” (Hoffman, 2006: 41).

According to US State department, ‘the term terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against a non-combatant target by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience’ (cited in Siegel, 2008: 328). The FBI further describes terrorism as “either domestic or international, depending on the origin, base, and objectives of the terrorist organization” (White, 2012: 7). The FBI (p: iv) defines domestic terrorism as activities that involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the US or of any state; appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the US [18 USC 2331 (5)] (p: iv, cited in Hess & Orthmann, 2012: 385). Both the State Department and the FBI definitions of terrorism “share a common theme—the use force intended to influence or bring about a course of action that furthers a political or social objective” (Maniscalco & Christen, 2010: 3).

### **2.3 The Roots of Terrorism**

### **2.4 Psychological Explanations of Terrorism**

The following section discusses the individual perspective, which will focus on the psychology of the person who joins or leads the terrorist group. It will examine how individual terrorists justify the use of violence against civilians who are not engaged in the battle against them. Moghadam (2006) notes that identifying a psychological abnormality in terrorists, if one exists, would help governments to stop terrorists in advance and thus help prevent attacks and save innocent lives (p: 17). Psychological approaches to explain terrorism mainly examine the effects of internal psychological dynamics at both level of the individual and the level of the group. Major tasks in this field would be to identify why individuals join a terrorist group in the first place, and secondly, why they continue to stay with the groups (Crenshaw, 1990: 109-10). Other related research questions on the individual and group

levels of analysis would explore the psychological mechanisms of group interaction (Kegley, 1990: 99-101).

### **2.4.1 Individual-level Explanations**

The psychological motivation for terrorism derives from the terrorist's personal dissatisfaction with his life and accomplishment (Whittaker, 2003: 19). Formerly, it was believed that all terrorists have a common negative psychological profile (e.g., Hubbard, 1971; Ferracuti & Bruno, 1981; Taylor, 1988), but major recent studies (e.g., Silke, 2003; Segeman, 2004; Horgan, 2005) show that terrorists from different ideological motivations were not depressed, did not suffer from mental disorder nor had ever suffered from any childhood trauma (Çelik *et al.*, 2012: 13). On the contrary, many studies have found that terrorists are psychologically much healthier and far more stable than other violent criminals (e.g., Lyons & Harbinson, 1986; Duyan *et al.*, 2010). This not to say however, that people suffering from psychological disorders are never found in terrorist groups. They are, but these are the exception and not the rule (Silke, 2008: 104). Such people lack the discipline, rationality, self-control and mental stamina needed if terrorists are to survive for any length of time (see Taylor, 1988). When they are found, they tend to be fringe members of the group and not central characters (Silke, 2008: 104).

Since the September 11, 2001, attention has shifted to the psychology of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. Post *et al.* (2003) conducted semi-structured interviews with thirty-five incarcerated Middle Eastern extremists, including twenty-one Islamic religious terrorists from Hamas and its armed wing, Izz a-Din al-Qassam, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah, as well as fourteen secular terrorists from Fatah. Most had a high school education; some had additional schooling. (However, the subgroup of suicide bombers among the Palestinians was described as ages seventeen to twenty-two, "uneducated, unemployed, unmarried") most came from respected families that supported their activism. Peer influence was cited as the major reason for joining a terrorist group, and joining increased social standing. Membership was described as being associated with a fusion of the young adult's individual identity with group's collective identity and goals (Post *et al.*, 2003, cited in Victoroff, 2005: 10).

Sageman (2004) collected biographical data on a sample of 172 members of the worldwide *Salafi* jihad, a fundamentalist Islamic movement of which the Al-Qaeda network is one component. There was little evidence of anything other than petty offending in the histories of those who subsequently promoted or enacted major terror outrages (cited in

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Dernevik *et al.*, 2009: 510). Applying DSM-IV criteria, Sageman explored his dataset to locate symptoms of any major mental illnesses in the sample, such as psychosis, overvalued ideas, or delusions, and followed this with a search for evidence of antisocial personality disorders. He was led to conclude: [F]ailure of mental illness as an explanation for terrorism is consistent with three decades of research that has been unable to detect any significant pattern of mental illness in terrorists (Sageman, 2004: 83). He also examined the specific possibility, derived from psychoanalytic theory, that the actions of terrorists are an expression of unresolved childhood trauma, potentially leading to the emergence of a narcissistic personality disorder. On the basis of descriptions of the childhoods of 69 Mujahedin, Sageman concluded: '[A]s a group, they had surprisingly little trauma in their lives' (p: 85). Overall, alongside findings from other research, Sageman's results indicated: [T]here was no psychological profile for terrorism ... the personality pathology thesis is not relevant' (p: 91). Parallel conclusions have been drawn by others who have carried out investigations of this issue (Moghaddam, 2005; Ruby, 2002, cited in Dernevik *et al.*, 2009: 510-11).

In sum, Randy Borum (2004) stated that: there is no terrorist personality, nor is there any accurate profile-psychologically or otherwise-of the terrorist (p: 38). Because of the lack of evidence for psychological abnormalities, Silke (1998) has argued for taking a 'normality' perspective on terrorist offenders and for the need to look at other factors (e.g., environmental factors: social, political, economic, cultural, and religious) and models of explanation. Neither is there any empirical support for the notion of a 'terrorist personality' (p: 53). It is possible to assume that there could be personality traits that do not fully meet the criteria for a diagnosable personality disorder, but such attempts are 'built on unsteady empirical, theoretical and conceptual foundations (Horgan, 2003, cited in Silke *et al.*, 2003: 23).

### **2.4.2 Group-Level Explanations**

Crenshaw (2001) also argued that shared ideological commitment and group solidarity are much more important determinants of terrorist behavior than individual characteristics (p: 409). Bandura (2004) agrees: "it requires conducive social conditions rather than monstrous people to produce heinous deeds" (p: 138).

The terrorist group influences the psychology of its individual members in several ways. Membership in the group itself provides the terrorist with a sense of belonging, purpose, perceived social status, and empowerment that he would otherwise not enjoy. Terrorist organizations can provide the individual an opportunity for excitement, glamour,

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and fame, as well as a chance of demonstrating courage and an opportunity to avenge personal humiliations (Moghadam, 2006: 23).

Individuals tend not to join the jihad as isolated individuals. Rather, it is within small groups that individuals gradually become radicalized (Sageman, 2004; Bakker, 2006, cited in Silke, 2008: 111). In his analysis of 242 jihadists, Bakker (2006) found that these individuals tended to become involved in terrorism through networks of friends or relatives and that generally there were no formal ties with global *Salafi* networks. In short, the individuals were not becoming radicalized because of the efforts of an al-Qaeda recruiter, but rather the process was occurring almost independently of established jihadists. Within the group context, individuals gradually adopt the beliefs and faith of the group's more extreme members (in a psychological process known as 'risky shift'). Individuals' new *Salafi* faith resulted in their becoming more isolated from older friends and family, and led to an ever-increasing dependence on, and loyalty towards, the group. With an increasing focus on this small group, their religious faith became more important and more intense. The polarization experienced within the group, combined with an increased sense of group identity and commitment, helped to radicalize individuals and facilitate their entry into the jihad in a way that was approved by their new social peers (cited in Silke, 2008: 111-12).

### **2.5 Organizational Explanation of Terrorism**

Terrorism is rarely carried out by individuals acting on their own (Crenshaw, 2000: 409; Moghadam, 2006: 30), and is usually conducted by members of more or less identifiable organizations, groups, or smaller cells that form part of a larger network of groups. For example, organizations may provide the many resources and services necessary to sustain a prolonged and "effective" campaign of suicide terrorism; (including fund-raising, the procurement of weapons and technical know-how, recruitment, training, and indoctrination, intelligence-gathering, target selection, and public relations (Stern, 1999, cited in Moghadam, 2006: 31). Apart from the motives of individuals, the execution of a suicide attack also requires organizational motives—a concept that is closely linked to the goals of organizations in general (Moghadam, 2003: 77).

Terrorist organizations are a particular type of political organization, their distinguishing feature being that they rely on violence to achieve their political aims. Due to their conspiratorial nature, members of terrorist organizations must be able to maintain secrecy if they want to resist government efforts to defeat them (Barnard, 1938: 216; Wilson,

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1973: 30-6). Organizational theories and terrorism analysis generally agree that the overarching goal of any organization is its own survival (Barnard, 1938: 216; Wilson, 1973: 30-36).

Organizational theorists distinguish between “official” goals on the one hand, and “operative” goals on the other. “Official goals tend to be more general because they provide a focus for the organization as a whole, whereas operative goals are more concrete goals that “focus attention on the issues that require effort on the part of specific units and particular employees” (Hatch, 1997: 120-21). Intensifying the psychological warfare against the target audience, including through the media, is an additional operative goal of organizations. Terrorist organizations are well aware of the fact that “terrorism and the media are bound together in an inherently symbiotic relationship” to use Bruce Hoffman’s description (Hoffman, 2006: 142). At times, the sheer manipulation of their target audience may become an operative goal. Hamas, for example, often announces a series of ten or more suicide bombings in order to increase the psychological pressure on Israelis (See e.g. Moghadam, 2003).

### **2.6 Political Explanations of Terrorism**

#### **2.6.1 The Origins of Political Terrorism**

Historically terrorism has come in a variety of shapes and forms. If one defines terrorism to include assassinations, then terrorism dates as far back as the ancient Greek democracies and Roman republics. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most movements and groups that employed terrorist tactics were predominantly religious in character, although their actions were at times politically motivated (Moghadam, 2006: 47). In modern political terms, the word terror entered the Western vocabulary having a fairly narrow meaning; it was label for the actions carried out by French revolutionaries against their domestic enemies during the 1793-1794 Reigns Of Terror, killing between 18,500 and 40,000 people (Leurs, 2007: 9); Tilly (2004) describes this form of terrorism as an example of state-organized inflexible justice (pp: 8-9). Historians note that the French Terror served both as the founding act of modern state terror and as the model defining and delineating the strategic use of violence by a state apparatus (Chaliand & Blin, 2007: 101).

Thereafter, the scope of the term has fluctuated continuously. The label was used for describing governmental intimidation of citizens during the Russian Revolution of 1917, and more recently to describe clandestine attacks carried out by domestic groups such as the

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Basque separatists in Spain (ETA), the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). In addition to this, ethnic cleansing and genocide also came to be included under the heading of terror (Tilly, 2004: 8-9). 'The way the label is applied indicates conceptual shifts in the understanding and application of the term terrorism, variously used for both 'top-down' governmental acts against certain groups and 'bottom-up' acts by clandestine non-governmental groups against governmental targets' (Leurs, 2007: 9).

In modern terror, religion has become an important factor, although historically in the cases of Armenian, Macedonian, Irish, Cypriot, French Canadian, Israeli and Palestinian struggles the aim was the establishment of secular states. The act of suicide bombing, "reminiscent of anarchist bomb-throwing efforts" has become the weapon of choice, and the United States increasingly began to be perceived as the main opponent of the Middle East. Middle Eastern states increasingly opposed the presence of US soldiers in their region, while Al-Qaeda already "regarded America as its chief antagonist immediately after the Soviet Union was defeated" and Iran soon after labeled the US as the "Great Satan" (Rapoport, 2006: 17-21). This brief overview serves to remind the reader of the fact that the phenomenon terrorism is nothing new. Through its history, terror has grown into a concept with an ambivalent nature, as it was in the past both the label for state violence, as well as actions directed against these very states (Leurs, 2007: 10).

Rapoport (2006) distinguishes between four waves of modern international terror: "Anarchist", "anti-colonial", "New Left" and "Religious". These waves, lasting about a generation each, were driven by different energies and all had their own momentums. Out of the Russian anarchist movement which arose in the 1890's (Otte, 1997: 56-57; Rapoport, 2006: 7-9) there developed the concept of "propaganda by deed", discussed below. Rapoport labels the second cycle of activity as the "anti-colonial" wave, noting that terrorists were instrumental in the establishment of new states including Ireland, Israel, Cyprus and Algeria; this wave symbolizes the success of terrorist activity (Rapoport, 2006: 9-12). The third wave, the "New Left", was stimulated by the Vietnam War, as Western groups arose, who saw themselves as "vanguards for the Third World masses". Theatrical targets were chosen and this preference is reflected in the popularity of international hijackings, kidnappings and the assassinations of prominent figures (Ibid, pp: 12-17). The fourth and final wave of "Religious terrorism" marks a shift in the application of religious motives by terrorist groups: terrorist groups are now increasingly being driven by religious motives (Ibid, pp: 17-21).

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The idea of “propaganda by deed” is contemporarily understood as the use of acts of violence to gain publicity and enable a terrorist group to spread the word of its insurrection and expand its base. Merari (2007) notes that this doctrine has rarely succeeded because terrorists rarely attract public sympathy and support (p: 41). Historically, “propaganda by deed” had the most success (albeit limited) in Spain, where anarchist terrorists used the strategy well into the twentieth century (Hubac-Occhipinti, 2007: 120-21).

Political scientist Brigitte Nacos has widely applied the “propaganda by deed” concept in her writing about terrorism, in which she also highlights the importance of the media to terrorism as it is practiced today. While her work builds on the history and causes of terrorism, Nacos also considers the implications of modern terrorism somewhat differently by adding media to the mix in a central way. Interest in the relationship between the media and terrorism has intensified since 9/11, but generally speaking, the media emerged as a relevant part of the study of terrorism in the 1960s. In explaining the term “mass mediated terrorism” Nacos writes: “The idea here is that most terrorists calculate the consequences of their deeds, the likelihood of gaining media attention, and most important, the likelihood of winning entrance-through the media-to what I call The Triangle of Political Communication. In mass societies in which direct contact and communication between the governors and the governed are no longer possible, the media provide the lines of communication between public offices and the general public” (Nacos, 2007: 20, cited in Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 30-31). Hoffman (2006) also describes how the media are also critically important to the general public’s understanding of what constitutes terrorism. He has suggested that, most people have a vague idea or impression of what terrorism is but lack a more precise, concrete and truly explanatory definition of the world, because they learn about terrorism from the media. Yet, the way the media define and report about terrorism varies widely (p: 1).

### **2.6.2 Types of Political Terrorism**

Scholars (e.g., Barnett & Reynolds, 2009) agree that separating terrorism as a strategy for political change from other forms of political violence is useful. Merari (2007) begins by broadly categorizing violence in four ways: state versus state, state versus citizen, citizen versus state, and citizen versus citizen. Typically, state versus state violence takes the form of conventional war, (p: 17), while citizen versus citizen violence commonly occurs in the form of individual crime that is not typically politically motivated (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 17). Terrorism as a strategy generally falls under the remaining two categories-state versus citizen

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and citizen versus state (Chaliand & Blin, 2007: 6-7). The legal process a state uses to enforce its laws is not considered terrorism, unlike “illegal violence used by a government to terrorize and intimidate, usually with the intention of preventing opposition to a regime” (Merari, 2007: 17).

Some scholars (e.g., Moghadam, 2006; Gurr, 1989; Chaliand & Blin, 2007) distinguish among several types of terrorism: state-sponsored terrorism, revolutionary/left-wing, right-wing, ethno-nationalist/separatist, guerrilla war, and religious terrorism. The categorization presented here is not the only way in which terrorism can be classified, and there is no agreement among terrorism analysts about any single “typology” of terrorism. Neither are these categories mutually exclusive, and in fact many terrorist groups can be placed in several categories at once. The Irish Republican Army (IRA), for example, is ordinarily understood as an ethno-nationalist/separatist organization, but its doctrine also contains revolutionary and left-wing thought (Moghadam, 2006: 54-55).

### **2.6.2.1 State-Sponsored Terrorism**

An offshoot of state versus citizen violence is state sponsored or state terrorism that broadens the forms of violence a state can perpetrate against citizens to install fear (Barnet & Reynolds, 2009: 17). Governments have long engaged in the systematic use of terror against foreign and domestic enemies (Moghadam, 2006: 58). Behind religious inspired terrorism, ‘state sponsored terrorism is the second leading justification represented by internationalist terrorist groups today. By contrast with religious terrorism, state sponsored terrorism is older and more established. State sponsored terrorism can achieve strategic ends when the use of conventional forces is not feasible. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and several of its Eastern European client states operated as state sponsors of terrorism in their relationship with Western European terrorist groups, Marxist guerrillas in central and South America, and numerous Middle Eastern groups’ (Aubrey, 2004: 44).

During the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Iranian students, instigated by revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini, seized the US embassy in Tehran and held over 50 Americans hostage for 444 days. For Iran, and subsequently for other state sponsors of terrorism, supporting terrorist groups was a cheap and relatively low-risk method of using proxies to attack stronger or distant enemies. For terrorist groups that enjoy state sponsorship, support by the state dramatically increases the funding of the group, which in turn enables it to purchase weapons and materials (Moghadam, 2006: 59). A contemporary example of state

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terrorism can be seen in some Latin America countries' use of death squads manned by a government's security forces (Barnet & Reynolds, 2009: 17).

State terrorism, as it is understood today, "applies to the support provided by certain governments to terrorist groups, but it takes many forms" (Chaliand & Blin, 2007: 7). Chaliand and Blin (2007) consider the doctrine of "strategic bombing" as developed in the West in the 1930s as an example of this, because the doctrine was based "entirely on the terror incited by the mass bombing of civilian populations to compel governments to surrender"; they suggest that is this doctrine that resulted in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Others would argue this is just one technique used in conventional warfare and is not a form of state terror. Regardless, many scholars point out that the lines between top-down and bottom-up terrorism is often blurred:

"We have all seen today's terrorist become tomorrow's head of state, with whom governments will have to deal at the diplomatic level. Menachem Begin exemplifies this typical metamorphosis. Western tradition considers violence legitimate only when it is practiced by the state. Such a limited definition takes no account of the terror practiced by those who have no other means of redressing a situation they deem to be oppressive. The legitimacy of a terrorist act lies in the objectives of its agents" (Chaliand & Blin, 2007: 7).

State terrorism may be one of the hardest categories for people in democratic societies to understand (Barnet & Reynolds, 2009: 18). Chaliand and Blin suggest that there is a "dangerous confusion between the moral interpretation of political act and the act itself, which clouds our understanding of the terrorist phenomenon" (Chaliand & Blin, 2007: 7).

### **2.6.2.2 National or Ethnic Terrorism**

The "goal of some terrorists is to use violence to secure a homeland for their group. This is often categorized domestic terrorism in that the terrorist group is battling the government for control of land" (Purpura, 2011: 17). These are sometimes called separatist groups, especially if they are attached to a certain territory that they regard as their national homeland, such as the Basque Homeland and Freedom organization (ETA), a group that fights for self-determination of the Basque people in an independent Basque homeland (Euskadi) in the region bordering Spain and France (Moghadam, 2006: 55). Other nationalist terrorist groups include the Irgun (Etzel) and Lehi, two Jewish terrorist groups that fought to oust the British from Palestine and establish an independent Jewish state of Israel; the PLO, which has aimed its terrorism at Israel, seeking to create a Palestinian state; the Algerian National Liberation

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Front, which opposed French rule in Algeria during the 1950s; and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) seeks to create an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey and parts of neighboring states (Ibid, p: 55). According to Moghadam (2006) “perhaps the best-known ethno-nationalist terrorist group of the twentieth century was the IRA. The IRA formally renounced terrorism in 2005, though various splinter groups of the IRA continue to use terrorist methods” (p: 56). “Factions in North Ireland have fought with the British for many years over the issue of independence; this conflict overlaps religious terrorism because of violence between Catholics and Protestants in North Ireland” (Purpura, 2011: 17). The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Tamil Tigers) are a further example (Maras, 2013).

### **2.6.2.3 Revolutionary: Left-Wing Terrorism**

Revolutionary terrorism can be defined “as the use of ‘systematic tactics of terroristic violence with the objective of bringing about political revolution’. It is characterized as a group, not an individual phenomenon, justified by some revolutionary ideology or program, with leaders capable of mobilizing people for terrorism” (Wardlaw, 1989: 14). Modern revolutionary terrorism is heavily influenced by Marxist and other socialist and communist thought. Revolutionary left-wing terrorist organizations were frequently active in Western Europe and the US from the late 1960s to early 1980s (Moghadam, 2006: 56) and included Weatherman in the US (Rapoport, 2006: 71), the Red Army Faction (RAF) in Germany (Merkl, 1995), and the Red Brigades in Italy (Porta, 1983, cited in Moghadam, 2006: 57).

### **2.6.2.4 Right-Wing Terrorism**

“Terrorism on the right in the modern era is an outgrowth of fascist, National Socialist (Nazi), Falangist, and other reactionary movements that existed in Europe between the first and the second World Wars” (Sütalan, 2008: 15). These were often mass movements that waged a concerted struggle against communism and the Western style of democracy (Martin, 2006: 245). That interwar period has been recaptured in the ideologies and activism of the modern right in the post Second World War era and even in the emergence of ‘neo’ versions of the rightist ideologies like neo-fascism. Modern activist and extremists have chosen specific facets of certain right-wing movements for their causes (Sütalan, 2008: 15).

Less prominent now than in the 1980s, German extremists use neo-Nazi slogans, symbols, and doctrines, as do some racial supremacists in the United States. Italian activists have adopted fascist traditions and values (Martin, 2006: 246), and anti-communist ideas (Heitmayer, 2005). Right-wing terrorist groups have risen as a reaction to perceived domestic

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ideological and ethnic enemies. In this respect, right-wing terrorism can be said to be carried out by representatives of the majority against a minority (Heitmayer, 2005: 145). These groups do not share an overarching ideology similar to Marxist theory on the left; in essence, right-wing terrorism develops characteristics that arise out of unique political environments that are peculiar to their respective countries. In Europe this has involved small groups or clandestine terrorist cells, while in Latin America, right-wing terrorist groups have tended to be paramilitaries that engage in terrorist campaigns arising out of destabilized domestic environments (Martin, 2006: 256) with the aim of establishing dictatorships to restore stability (Heitmayer, 2005: 145).

### **2.6.2.5 Guerrilla War Terrorism**

Guerrilla warfare is one of the oldest forms of war, fought in relatively small formations against stronger enemies (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 19). As Marighella (2008) wrote, the “primary task of the urban guerrilla is to distract, to wear down, to demoralise the military regime and its repressive forces” (Marighella, 2008, cited in Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 19). “One of the most important differences between terrorism and guerrilla warfare is that unlike terrorism, guerrilla warfare as a strategy seeks to establish physical control of a territory” (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 19). Terrorism as a strategy does not rely on “liberated zones” as staging areas for consolidating the struggle and carrying it further. As a strategy, terrorism remains in the domain of psychological influence and lacks the material elements of guerrilla warfare (Merari, 2007: 24-25).

As discussed previously, no agreed definition for the term terrorism exists, but despite the definitional challenges, scholars and terrorism experts agree that terrorism as a strategy for insurgency has common elements (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 19). These common elements still allow for the fact that terrorism is “a complex and multivariate phenomenon” involving different forms with different objectives in different parts of the world (Richardson, 2006: 2).

There is nothing inherent in either insurgency or guerrilla warfare that requires the use of terror. While some of the more successful insurgencies and guerrilla campaigns employed terrorism and terror tactics, and some developed into conflicts where terror tactics and terrorism became predominant, there have been others that effectively renounced terrorism (Bennett, 2007: 128). Unlike a guerilla campaign, a terror group does not require and rarely has the active support or even the sympathy of a large fraction of the population. Terrorism

does not attempt to challenge government forces directly, but acts to change perceptions as to the effectiveness or legitimacy of the government itself. Ultimately, the difference between insurgency and terrorism comes down to the intent of the actor. Insurgency movements and guerrilla forces can adhere to international norms regarding the law of war in achieving their goals, but terrorists are by definition conducting crimes under both civil and military legal codes (Ibid, p: 128).

### **2.6.3 Political Motivations for Terrorism**

Few connections have been found between terrorism and other widely suspected factors such as poverty or poor education. Analyzing data pertinent to this, Krueger and Malečková (2003) were led to the conclusion that terrorism ‘resembles a violent form of political engagement’ (p: 142). Terrorism may be motivated by political, religious, or ideological objectives. In a sense, terrorist goals are always political; as extremists driven by religious or ideological beliefs usually seek political power to compel society conform to their views (US Army, 1993, cited in Goodin, 2006: 44). Terrorists can also be influenced by a variety of grievances and motivated by a desire to improve political, social, or economic conditions. The political grievances that can affect a group’s decision to use terrorism include government repression, foreign occupation, and the lack of political freedom. These grievances tend to create feelings of humiliation, which in turn weaken the belief in the righteousness of the government. Ideology plays a role in formulating the grievances and suggesting a remedy (Moghadam, 2006: 60).

Power has long been recognized as the central issue of politics in general and it is fundamental to our understanding of terrorism (Dougherty & Jr, 2001: 53-54). According to Hoffman (2001) “terrorism is ineluctably about power: the pursuit of power, the acquisition of power, and the use of power to achieve political change” (p: 14). During the French Revolution’s Reign of Terror and in other instances of state-based oppression, terror was often designed to maintain the state’s power by suppressing the so-called enemies of the state (Moghadam, 2006: 61). Terrorist organizations are motivated not only by the desire to acquire political influence, but also to weaken that of their enemies. They do not always have a workable plan to unseat the government to which they are opposed, and their political objectives are often ill-defined. Nevertheless, the allure of power and influence is what leads to the formation of many terrorist organizations, and it is what keeps the organization motivated (Ibid, p: 61).

### **2.6.3.1 Grievances: Repression, Occupation, and Humiliation**

Grievances rooted in “collective ethnic and religious injustice generates anger and sometimes armed resistance. Often the driving force behind fanatical hatred is individual despair born of collective humiliation” (Weiss & Thakur, 2010: 140). In the aftermath of 9/11, a number of factors were believed to have contributed to the hatred of the US and the terrorist attacks against America. One factor was the widespread discontent of Arabs and Muslims about the US foreign policy vis-à-vis the Middle East (Moghadam, 2006: 61). The list of grievances included historical Western colonization of Arab states and holy Muslim territory; American support for Israel and some Arab regimes deemed repressive; the exploitation of natural resources, most importantly oil; and the poverty of Middle Easterners linked to Western exploitation. The argument was that US policy infuriated and humiliated Arabs and Muslims, and led a tiny, yet extremely radical fringe to adopt terrorist tactics (Ibid, p: 61).

Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, territory populated by Palestinians, is perhaps the best contemporary example of the link between occupation and terrorism (Moghadam, 2006: 62). The Hamas movement, for example, would like to see the creation of an independent Palestinian state; individuals join Hamas, at least in part because they too share political grievances against Israel (Daly & Cragin, 2009: 12). Support for Hamas is unquestionably linked to popular disdain for Israel’s policies in the West Bank and Gaza (Lebovic, 2007: 115).

Terrorism, however, is not necessarily the product of foreign rule. Historically, terrorism has also emerged and intensified as a tactic against homegrown authoritarianism and government repression (Moghadam, 2006: 63). The Russian Tsar’s brutal response to the populist movement in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a factor in the development of the Narodnaya Volya, a group who assassinated Tsar Alexander II (Crenshaw, 1995: 385). One reason why severe government repression can lead to terrorist violence is the desire for revenge that it will provoke (Moghadam, 2006: 63). According to Martha Crenshaw (1995), “if there is a single common emotion that drives the individual to become a terrorist, it is vengeance on behalf of comrades” (p: 394).

There is an ongoing academic debate on whether a democratic system or an autocratic regime is more prepared to deal with terrorism. While the former can offer non-violent means of voicing dissent, it is also constrained in its efforts to realize ‘hard’ counter-terrorism (Li, 2005). The latter can capitalize on its capability of ‘hard’ repression but may at the same time also generate grievances linked to political disenfranchisement (Kirk, 1983). James

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Forest (2006) notes that terrorism “comes in the form of opposition to political corruption. When a government fails to adhere to the conventional social contract ... citizens become disenfranchised and seeks the power to force change. Extremist religious ideologies exploit this frustration by providing an alternative to the corrupt regime in the form of a religious state governed by the more legitimate laws of God, rather than by the whims of corrupt, apostate, and authoritarian rulers” (p: 5). As Fawaz Gerges (2005) notes, in many authoritarian regimes, there is “a vacuum of legitimate political authority,” with religious movements entering this vacuum with their own ideological claims regarding legitimacy. Wiktorowicz *et al.* (2005) argues that “since political movements are banned under most authoritarian regimes, [religious] activism becomes a natural vehicle for political discontent.” Some argue that religious extremism finds resonance because it is the most viable alternative to authoritarianism” (p: 187).

In a study exploring the alleged causal relationship between the democratic deficit in the Middle East and Islamist terrorism, Hafez and Noyon (2003) argue for a connection between the absence of democratic politics and Islamist violence. In response, Dalacoura (2006: 5) argues that although there is some evidence to support the causal link between the democratic deficit in the Middle East and Islamist terrorism, such evidence is not conclusive- and that therefore the relationship remains unproven (cited in Dalacoura *et al.*, 2013: 147-48).

Political participation, rights of individuals and the freedom of opinion are the common characteristics of democratic systems, which provide numerous alternative ways to individuals and groups to explain their deprivations, dissatisfactions, inequality or discontent (Çelik *et al.*, 2012: 11). But this does not mean that one can never observe terrorism in democratic countries. In some cases, political repression, a lack of constructive and peaceful political participation, lack of self-determination, peace processes, political reform and economic developments can lead adversary groups to resort to violence (Ibid, p: 11).

Political transformation and instability are also named as causes to terrorism, in particular in popular discourse (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011: 7). Changes in a political system may create political vacuums which terrorist groups can use to push their agenda. These groups are less likely to be challenged by an unstable government, individuals may find it more attractive to join or support a radical organization because there are few non-violent alternatives, and instable countries may serve as schools of international terrorism (Campos & Gassebner, 2009). State failure (as the most drastic form of instability) is therefore commonly seen as one root cause of terrorism, as it is expected to maximizes the promoting

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effects of instability on terrorism. Failed states are seen as safe havens for terrorist organizations (Rotberg, 2002). Political transformation may amplify terrorist behavior, where the exact influence may be contingent upon the degree of instability that accompanies transformational processes (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011: 7).

However, Moghadam (2006) argues that grievances alone do not explain the emergence of terrorism in all situations, and it is unclear why some societies react to certain grievances by producing terrorist organizations when other societies do not. In addition, terrorism has occurred in countries where there are relatively few grievances, such as Western Europe or the United States. It is reasonable to conclude that there is no objective standard by which we could measure when a grievance would produce terrorism. In thinking about grievances as a cause of terrorism, it is more useful to look at how societies and groups perceive grievances than to analyze the actual degree of discontent (p: 64).

### **2.6.3.2 The Role of Ideology**

Ideology is defined as “a system of beliefs, derived from theories that explain the human social and political condition. Ideology guides the world view and manner of living for individuals, groups and nations, and may be constituted by political, social, economic, religious, racial and ethnic systems of beliefs” (Martin, 2006: 42). Ideology can serve as a “strong tie and mobilization asset for group members, and has always had a symbiotic relationship with terrorism” (Combs, 2006: 9) “since ideology can justify acts of political violence to generate sympathy and support from the masses. Terrorism has appeared in many ideological disguises so far, including anarchism, fascism, separatism, nationalism, racism and religious fanaticism” (Çelik *et al*, 2012; 11).

While most terrorist groups espouse some form of ideology, their commitment to it is often weak (Seliger, 1976: 7). Groups have, at times, shifted ideologies or combined ideologies. Both the IRA and ETA, for example, have shifted their ideological orientations from nationalism to socialism, and now each group seems to have combined the two. The Palestinian Hamas combined a religious and a nationalist ideology (Moghadam, 2006: 64-65). The case of Hezbollah illuminates how adaptable ideologies can be. In 1982, when Hezbollah adopted the tactic of suicide bombings, it was undeterred by the fact that Islam strictly forbids Muslims to commit suicide. Religious scholars associated with Hezbollah simply reinterpreted religious doctrine to make it fit with the group’s tactical needs (Ibid, p: 65).

## 2.7 Economic Explanations for Terrorism

There is a widespread belief that terrorism is caused, at least in part, by economic distress. One strand of the empirical literature argues that poor socio-economic development causes terrorism; that is to say, poverty and inequality are believed to be among the root causes of terrorism. Indeed, some empirical analyses support this hypothesis (Krieger *et al.*, 2013: 80). For instance, Blomberg and Hess (2008) find that economic progress is negatively related to the generation of terrorism (cited in Krieger *et al.*, 2013: 80). Moorhead (1986) argues that terrorism derives principally from poverty and misery, which are bred by exploitation and repression (p: 5-9).

Gurr (1970) puts forward the idea of ‘relative deprivation’, where violence is generated when there is a discrepancy between what individuals think they deserve and what they actually receive through the economic distributive process. Poor structural economic conditions create frustration, which in turn makes violence more likely. Terrorist organizations may find it easier (less costly) to recruit followers when economic deprivation prevails. The lack of non-violent economic activities may also fill the ranks of terrorist organizations by lowering the opportunity costs of violence. With respect to the target countries of terrorism, economic success may attract attacks when economic deprivation is assessed globally (poor vs. rich countries) (cited in Williams, 2011: 80). Robinson *et al.* (2007) also found that levels of foreign direct investment correlate with reduced transnational terrorism over time. Paxson (2002) uses Richard Rose’s survey research in Northern Ireland and finds that Protestants with higher incomes and higher levels of education profess more moderate views and less support for terrorism. Among Catholics, however, income does not seem to matter, although more education is also associated with rejection of “hardline” views. Lia and Skjolberg (2004) test the contention that terrorism happens least in the world’s poorest countries (e.g., Sub-Saharan Africa) (cited in Noricks, 2009: 28).

Further studies construct indirect linkages between a country’s level of socioeconomic development and terrorism. For example, Li and Schaub (2004) show that higher levels of economic integration are negatively related to terrorism through the beneficial effects of economic development. Similarly, Burgoon (2006) argues that social welfare policies reduce terrorism by ameliorating socio-economic grievances (e.g., through redistribution). Basuchoudhary and Shughart (2010) find that high levels of economic freedom (e.g., property rights protection) also reduce terrorist activities (cited in Noricks, 2009: 28).

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However, the empirical mainstream does not support the idea that terrorism has economic roots. For instance, using several different methods and types of data (Hizbollah militants, Palestinian suicide bombers, Israeli Jewish Underground members), Krueger and Malečková (2003) found no relationship between poverty and terrorism, both at the level of the individual terrorists and at the aggregate level of their country of origin. In contrast, they found some evidence that individuals with higher incomes and higher education levels are slightly more likely to join a terrorist group. Sageman's (2004) research on the *Salafi* jihad movement uncovered that its leadership and its largest membership cluster had come mostly from the upper and middle classes. Robert Pape's (2005) recent study of suicide bombers' demographic profile indicated that only (17%) were unemployed or part of the lower classes (cited in & Fishman, 2014: 196). Berrebi (2007) found a positive correlation between a higher standard of living and participation in Palestinian terrorism in Israel (p: 30). In Lebanon, the poverty rate among members of Hezbollah was lower than the poverty rate among the Lebanese population at large, and Hezbollah fighters were more highly educated. Similarly, extremists from a Jewish terrorist group were found to be mostly well educated with high-paying occupations. This suggests that the connection between poverty, education, and terrorism is indirect and weak (Krueger & Malečková, 2002: 13-19).

One explanation is that terrorist organizations tend to avoid recruiting the extremely poor, for a simple reason: Terrorists from a middle-or upper-class background are better suited to adjust to a foreign environment, something that a particular mission will often require. To conduct the 9/11 attacks, for example, al-Qaeda placed a terrorist cell in the German city of Hamburg and would-be hijackers lived in Germany for several years and appeared to adjust to the Western way of life with an ease that might have been difficult for a member of the lower class (Moghadam, 2006: 69). As terrorism expert Michael Radu put it, al-Qaeda has no use for illiterate peasants. They cannot participate in World Trade Centre-like attacks, unable as they are to make themselves inconspicuous in the West and lacking the education and training terrorist operatives need (Radu, 2002). The poorer elements of society may constitute the social base of support for terrorist groups, but they lack the financial and political resources necessary to assume leadership roles in terrorist activities (Moghadam, 2006: 69).

Although poverty is not a direct cause of terrorism, it would be improper to conclude that poverty has no effect on terrorism at all. Poor countries often serve as safe havens for terrorist groups for various reasons; these countries might be failed states, their governments

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unable to exercise control over some or all of their territory. Terrorists in these places may be allowed to roam freely (Ibid, p: 70). In other situations, poor countries harbor terrorist organizations because they are able to reap financial rewards. Two of the poorest countries in the world, Afghanistan and Sudan, have in past provided shelter to Osama Bin Laden and his al-Qaeda movement in return for monetary or military benefits. (See the 9/11 Commission Report, 2004: 66).

A second way in which poverty can indirectly affect the occurrence of terrorism is through civil wars. In a study on a civil war and insurgency between 1945 and 1999, Fearon and Laitin (2003) demonstrated that property is a positive predictor of violence, along with general political instability, rough terrain, and large population levels, because it is related to “financially and bureaucratically weak states” and aids insurgents in recruitment. However, they do not find ethnic or religious diversity within countries to be a significant predictor of civil war (pp: 75-90, see also Collier & Hoeffler, 1998).

Finally, poverty makes it easier for the usually more well-to-do leaders of terrorist organizations to exploit the real grievances of the economically disadvantaged masses. While it is true that some terrorist organizations, including various left-wing and ethno-separatist groups, have claimed to act for the sake of the poor and disadvantaged, groups like al-Qaeda have not placed poverty at the top of their agenda. They have, however, taken advantage of the real hardship that many people in the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of Asia face - including poverty, income inequalities, and low-quality education (Moghadam, 2006: 70).

The Arab and Muslim world, where many contemporary terrorist groups originated, suffers from a number of economic deficiencies - lack of productivity; dependence on foreign countries for extraction of raw materials; lack of economic competition - all of which results in low levels of economic growth (Moghadam, 2006: 72). As the 2003 Arab Human Development Report stated, despite the popular perception that Arab countries are rich, the volume of economic product in the region is rather small, only slightly exceeding that of Spain (Arab Human Development Report, 2003). Whether terrorists are genuinely concerned about the needs of the impoverished and despondent masses is difficult to ascertain. Their willingness and ability to put the anger of the masses to their own use, however, is beyond doubt (Ibid, p: 72).

### **2.7.1 The Effects of Modernisation on Terrorism**

As shown in the literature, poverty has an indirect rather than a direct effect on people's decision to pursue in terrorism. Meanwhile, some scholars suggest that terrorism is fostered by the process of modernization. Modernization encompasses economic change (e.g., economic growth), new forms of communication and lifestyle (e.g., shift from agricultural to urban societies) and new ideas (such as Western ideologies) (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2008: 5). These factors may create grievances associated with socio-economic and demographic strain (Robison *et al.*, 2006). Economic growth may be associated with a restructuring of labor markets, and modern forms of communication may challenge traditional elements of a society, generating social conflict (Robison *et al.*, 2006: 2022-23), while terrorist organizations may use modern means of communication to disseminate their opinions more effectively (Ross, 1993). During the transition from a traditional to a modern society, terrorists are able to capitalize on the grievances of 'modernization losers' linked to economic dissatisfaction, new forms of alienated living or other challenges to traditional societal patterns, thus making recruitment, financing or other forms of support more likely (Ross, 1993: 322).

Other researchers have an optimistic view that modernization leads to prosperity and political development (e.g. Strange, 1998), generating social conditions that will eventually lead to political stability and reduce the likelihood of conflict. However, modernization has introduced technologies such as explosives, modern transportation systems, and more powerful weapons, all of which terrorists have exploited to their advantage (Moghadam, 2006: 77). In fact, it may not be modernization itself but the transition to modernization that has dangerous effects on a society. If society or some part of it is not capable of keeping up with the modernization, some groups may be disadvantaged and thus be frustrated. This can easily result in the weakening of the legitimacy of the government and even the regime, constituting ground for conflict and use of violence (Çelik *et al.*, 2010: 10).

### **2.7.2 Globalization's Impact on Terrorism**

Globalization can be defined as the "global integration of markets, nation states, technologies, and goods to an unprecedented level, and is characterized by the spread of free enterprise, exchange of information, information technology, and free movement of capital and people around the globe. It affects nearly every aspect of human life, including politics, economics, warfare, and culture" (Moghadam, 2006: 77), and enables individuals, corporations, and states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper, and cheaper

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(Friedman, 2000: 9). A recent report by the National Intelligence Council described globalization as an overarching “mega-trend” (Mapping the Global Future, 2004: 10).

Çelik *et al.* (2010) indicated that globalization has affected the social, economic and political life of the society immensely since 1968. Within this context, the world becomes a global village, where the importance of the national borders has disappeared, causing the fragmentation of identities. Those with certain frustrations who are seeking a clear identity may be drawn to extremist movements or acts of violence. Thus a new type of nationalism, micro-nationalism (ethnic nationalism) has emerged (p: 10). An individual from the Iraqi city of Mosul may see himself as a Kurd or a Muslim first and as an Iraqi citizen second; a person from the northern part of Sri Lanka may regard herself as Buddhist or an ethnic Tamil before she considers herself a Sri Lankan. This shift of identities is fertile soil for violent xenophobia towards those who are believed to be a danger to traditional cultures (Stevens, 2002: 34).

Researchers using statistical data on 112 countries demonstrated that trade and foreign investments-economic hallmarks of globalization-have “no direct positive effect on transnational terrorist incidents with countries.” Instead, they found that the economic development of a country reduces the number of terrorist incidents inside the country (Li & Schaub, 2004: 232). Like poverty, then, globalization does not seem to have a direct effect in creating more terrorism.

### **2.8 Cultural Explanations of Terrorism**

The question of whether or not terrorism is a cultural phenomenon had long been debated. Traditions such as revenge, blood feuds, and clan-based warfare are common to certain regions of the world including the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. These traditions may in part explain violence in some of these regions (Pluchinsky, 1998, cited in Moghadam, 2006: 91). Before we consider this view, however, a definition of culture is essential. Simon Carter (2000) defines culture simply as “learned patterns of thought and behavior that are passed from one generation to another and are experienced as distinct to a particular group” (p: 865, cited in Hollins, 2008: 18). “Culture affects the way people behave, communicate with one another, and look at various aspects of life. Culture is a learned phenomenon and hence not part of the human genetic code” (Moghadam, 2006: 91).

An understanding of culture can help us understand more about the motivations of terrorists by placing the terrorist and the act of terrorism in a specific cultural context. For example, thousands of Chechens have been killed in two violent wars between Chechnya and

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Russia, and Chechens have responded with guerrilla and terrorist attacks that in turn killed at least 5,000 Russian soldiers, as well as hundreds of civilians (Sapozhnikov, 2003). Personal grievances such as the loss of family members, friends or homes play a large role in encouraging Chechen terrorism. In addition to such grievances, Chechens also have a culture of resistance. Throughout their history, the Chechens have resisted Russian attempts to subjugate their homeland. So, Chechen cultural tradition, ingrained with resistance, is likely to play a role as an additional motivating element in the use of terrorist tactics (Moghadam, 2006: 92).

Islam, like other religions, can be thought of as an overlapping and linked set of beliefs and practices (Soroush, 2001). For potential *jihadis*, their identity as devout and pious Muslims comes both from their faith in the interpretations of truths provided by the religion but also by their ability to practice this faith in order to live a just life. Abdulkarim Soroush (2000) notes that this pre-eminence of Islam as identity, rather than as faith, for parts of the population is what is driving the current violence. He argues “some people are saying, we’re neither Americans, nor Iranians, nor Arabs; we’re Muslims and this is our identity and we’re at war with the US in the name of our Islamic identity” (Soroush, 2001, see also Simons, 2006: 39). This broader concept of threatened identities is also common to other types of terrorists; Freeman (2007) argues that “identity creation often is the primary reason that culturally aware individuals become terrorists: they fear that their cultures and way of life will be swallowed by those of rivals” (p: 47).

An understanding of culture may help shed light on how certain groups and societies justify acts of terrorism. The widespread public support among Palestinians for suicide bombings in the West Bank and Gaza is a case in point (Moghadam, 2006: 94). According to Heath & Klimo (2006), “the idea of martyrdom in becoming a suicide-murderer now permeates the Arab world, right down to children” (p: 272). Jessica Stern (2003) writes that “suicide bombing entails a willingness not only to die, but also to kill others. The situation in Gaza suggests that murder/suicide can also be spread through social contagion; “Martyrdom operations” are part of the popular culture, asked to name their heroes, young Palestinians are likely to include suicide bombers” (pp: 52-53). This “cult” of the suicide bomber is among the most important reasons why there seems to be a steady flow of Palestinians willing to sacrifice themselves (Moghadam, 2003: 36-38). The overwhelming cultural message, Giovanni Caracci (2000) notes, is that “immolating oneself to destroy other lives is not only acceptable but highly desirable...There is no known antidote to this culturally sanctioned

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meaning of such extreme forms of violence...unless it comes from within the culture itself” (cited in Moghadam, 2006: 94).

Cultural aspects may influence the wider societal response to an act of terrorism; this is especially true for nationalistically or religiously motivated terrorist groups, which depend heavily on their larger societies’ moral and practical support. The Provisional IRA, for example, is believed to have several thousand local and international sympathizers. In the case of al-Qaeda, social support in the Arab and Muslim world for this radical Islamist movement is widespread. A 2003 poll conducted by the Pew Research Centre found that in several Arab and Muslim countries, including Jordan, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, and the Palestinian Authority, between (44%) and (71%) of respondents had a favorable view of Osama Bin Laden (Pew, 2003). With regard to a more generalized popular support amongst the international Muslim community it is important to understand that much of this support can be characterized as supportive of the aims of al-Qaeda while not necessarily of its tactical approach. “Although the vast majority of Muslims reject violent tactics, they support the stance against Western domination in the Middle East” (Schanzer, 2007: 91).

### **2.9 Religious Explanations for Terrorism**

This section examines religious causes of terrorism throughout history; it will establish that nearly all religions of the world have produced religious terrorists, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Prior to the nineteenth century, religion was the main justification used for terrorism (Rapoport, 1984: 659). Moghadam (2006) notes that we should keep in mind that religious terrorism should not be viewed as completely separate from other forms of terrorism, for example, it is usually also politically motivated (p: 101).

The earliest terrorists may have been the first-century Jewish Zealots (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 25), who attacked their Roman occupiers but also killed Jewish citizens whom they accused of siding with the Romans (Moghadam, 2006: 102). The thuggee were a group that committed acts of religious terror in India beginning in the seventeenth century. Until they were suppressed in the mid-nineteenth century, they killed an estimated one million people, more than any other terrorist group in history (Hoffman, 2006: 83). Another early religious terrorist sect was the Assassins, who were an Islamic correlate that for two centuries (the 11<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup>) made its name through the assassination of Muslim dignitaries (Morgan, 1997: 40-41). Chaliand and Blin (2007) note that “Christian sects did not use terror to the same effect as the Zealots and the Assassins, but mention the Taborites of

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Bohemia in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and other messianic movements that believed that the world would be transformed by an event marking the end of history” (p: 3). Terror was a widespread tactic used by the medieval Christian Crusaders. In 1097, Crusaders catapulted the severed heads of Turkish corpses in the town of Nicaea, in Asia Minor. When the first Crusade reached Jerusalem in 1099, the Crusaders staged a five-week-long siege that was followed by a massacre of Jerusalem Jewish and Muslims populations. The Crusaders goal was to turn Jerusalem into a purely Christian city (Moghadam, 2006: 102).

After the French Revolution in 1789, terrorism motivated by religion became a less common phenomenon. The late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries gave rise to secular ideologies, such as nationalism and Marxism. These ideologies also affected terrorism, which was increasingly justified in secular terms. From around 1800 to the late 1970s most terrorist attacks were perpetrated either by nationalist groups or by groups that espoused radical political, not religious, ideologies (Ibid, p: 102).

Religious terrorism gained new impetus with the Islamic Revolution that swept Iran in 1979, and the effects of this event are still felt in the Middle East and elsewhere today. Initially many attacks were perpetrated by radical Islamist groups such as Hezbollah, a radical organization in Lebanon based on Shiism, a form of Islam dominant in Iran and Iraq. However, a few years after the Iranian revolution, religious terrorism was adopted by groups from other religions as well as more obscure sects and cults (Moghadam, 2006: 102-3).

### **2.9.1 The Nature of Religious Terrorism**

Moghadam (2006) distinguishes religious terrorism from other types of terrorism in several important respects. First, religious terrorism has resulted, on average, in much higher fatalities than terrorism committed primarily for nationalist or ideological reasons. For instance, nearly 3,000 people were killed in the attacks of the September 11, 2001. Thousands of other casualties have resulted from religiously motivated terrorist attacks in places as diverse as Spain, Russia, Morocco, Turkey, Indonesia, Yemen, and Pakistan (p: 104).

Second, religious terrorists define their targets in relatively broad terms and tend to strike at highly symbolic targets. Members of other religions-or even of other sects within the same religion-are regarded by religious terrorists as “non-believers” and hence as legitimate targets. Politically motivated groups, in contrast, tend to concentrate their attacks on more specific targets such as political, business, or military leaders. Killing as many people as

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possible is not necessarily in the interest of politically motivated terrorists, whose main goal often is to install fear and draw attention to their cause (Ibid, p: 104).

Third, religious terrorists consider the use of violence to be a holy act perpetrated in accordance with divine will. By invoking a higher source of authority, terrorists are able to abstain from the “normal permission” to engage in violence. Religious terrorists often assert that they are merely defending themselves against aggression. They frequently perceive their religious community to be under attack, either militarily, politically, or culturally (Ibid, p: 104-5).

Fourth, religious terrorists generally frame their struggle against their victims in absolute terms. Religious terrorists believe that Allah is on their side and that they are engaged in a total war of good against evil. Religious terrorists tend to invoke only favorable images of their historic past, a selective view that can encourage them to attempt to reinstate past glories by pursuing violence (Moghadam, 2006: 105-6; Juergensmeyer, 2001: 145-63).

Fifth, religious terrorists seem less concerned about influencing an outside audience than do politically motivated terrorists. Political terrorist organizations such as the IRA, for example, generally refrain from employing large-scale violence because public opinion is very important to them. For religious terrorists, convincing an audience that their cause is just is not a high priority goal (Moghadam, 2006: 106).

Finally, religious terrorists differ from secular terrorists in the scale of their goal. The goals of secular groups such as the IRA are limited; for religious terrorists, however, the struggle against the “infidels” is almost limitless, and fulfilling the absolute demands of religious terrorist groups is very difficult (Ibid, p: 106, see also Scheuer, 2004).

### **2.9.2 Radical Islamism**

The following sections will be devoted to radical Islamist terrorism, the most acute terrorist threat of our times. As the September 11 Commission Report States, the threat posed by Islamist terrorism-especially the al-Qaeda network, its affiliates, and its ideology [is a] catastrophic threat at this moment in history (The 9/11 Commission Report). It therefore deserves special mention among the common manifestations of religious terrorism.

Whereas Islam is a religion and is therefore in the same class with Judaism and Christianity, Islamism should be understood as an ideology. “Islamism denotes the entrance of Islam into the political sphere” (Moghadam, 2006: 110). It is important to note that the overwhelming majority of Muslims around the world are not Islamists. Likewise, not all

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Islamists are terrorists or even advocate terrorism as a legitimate tactic. Hence, while it is difficult to cite precise numbers, radical Islamist terrorists constitute a tiny fraction of all Muslims. Indisputably, the vast majority of Muslims condemn terrorism (Ibid, p: 110).

The overarching goal of the Islamist movement is to reshape states in accordance with the conservative formulations of Islamic law, known as *Sharia*. Islamism comes in various branches, such as *Wahhabism*, which is dominant in Saudi Arabia; the *Deobandi* movement, which established Islamic schools known as *madrassahs* in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, from which many militant Islamists are recruited; and the Muslim Brotherhood, which has branches in several Arab and Muslim countries. Each of these branches advocates a puritanical form of Islam (Moghadam, 2006: 110-11). Scholars (e.g., White, 2013; Aubrey, 2004) agree that while Islamism came into existence in the 1920s, the latest and most violent manifestation of radical Islamism emerged in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. This revolution succeeded in inspiring smaller radical movements to fight against “unbelievers” and attempt to establish states ruled on the basis of Islam (Moghadam, 2006: 111). For instance, Hezbollah, the Shiite Muslim organization created and sponsored by Iran in 1982, emerged in Lebanon as one of the groups of the Islamic Jihad movement. Hezbollah’s use of suicide boomers against occupation forces in Lebanon forced the complete withdrawal of American and French troops in 1983 and the partial withdrawal of the Israelis on 1985. The Shiite organization’s operatives had been trained by Iranian Revolutionary Guards sent by Tehran specifically for this purpose (Atwan, 2008: 93).

### **2.9.2.1 Al-Qaeda and Global Jihad**

Another place to which many of the smaller radical movements flocked soon after the Islamic Revolution was Afghanistan, a country that borders Iran and had been invaded by a military force of “unbelievers” from the Soviet Union (Moghadam, 2006: 111). Al-Qaeda has its origins in the *Mujahideen* resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, (Picucci, 2008: 75). During the resistance Osama Bin Laden utilized his resources to fund recruiting operations, run training camps, and is known to have distinguished himself in direct action (Bergen, 2001: 54-7; Burke, 2003a: 74-6; Scheuer, 2006: 303). After the Soviet withdrawal (1988-89), Bin Laden’s growing disillusionment with increasing divisions amongst Afghani militants culminated in his return home to Saudi Arabia and the decision to continue the jihadist cause outside of Afghanistan (Bergen, 2006: 74-88; Burke, 2003a: 79). In April of 1991 Bin Laden and a core group of followers were able to transfer their operations to Sudan

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at the behest of Sudan's National Islamic Front (Scheuer, 2006: 137-40). Training camps were established and connections were made to a number of other militant organizations around the world. During this time Bin Laden was linked to a number of anti-Western attacks such as the November 13, 1995 bombing of US facilities in Riyadh and the Khobar towers bombing on June 25, 1996. In late 1996, under intense US pressure, the government of Sudan asked Bin Laden to leave, at which point he returned to Afghanistan, now under Taliban control (Scheuer, 2006: 155-59), and the transformation from a small group of followers devoted to Bin Laden to a formal organization began in earnest (Picucci, 2008: 76). In 1998 Bin Laden, Ayman Zawahiri, and several other jihadist leaders declared the creation of the "World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders" (e.g., Christians), and called upon all Muslims to kill Americans and their allies, including both civilians and military personnel, wherever they were located (Bergen, 2006; Burke, 2003a). It is this organization that is most commonly referred to as al-Qaeda. The Arabic word *Jihad* means "to strive" or "to exert oneself". In Islam, jihad takes two forms: a peaceful "struggle" against one's evil inclinations (such as the consumption of alcohol), and the struggle of "the sword", which is called for when Islam is perceived to be under attack (Moghadam, 2006: 114).

Most analysts conclude that al-Qaeda exists primarily as an ideological umbrella for numerous Islamic militant groups around the world that may have little or no connection to the formal al-Qaeda organization (Picucci, 2008: 77). In 2003, the Council of Foreign Relations estimated that autonomous, underground cells affiliated with al-Qaeda are present in hundred countries. Al-Qaeda had established relationships with some thirty Islamist terrorist groups, whom it inspired and assisted in attacking national and international targets (Moghadam, 2006). Formal al-Qaeda groups have largely disappeared in favor of a dispersed cellular networked structure, similar to that of past incarnations of the Provisional IRA (BBC News, 2006a; BBC News, 2007a, Haggani, 2007, cited in Picucci, 2008: 80).

Tactical operations carried out by al-Qaeda and affiliated groups have included bombings, hijacking, kidnappings, assassinations, and suicide attacks; however the primary mode of operation has been the use of suicide bombings that exhibit high degrees of technical and tactical coordination. The attacks on the USS Cole, the African embassy bombings and the 9/11 attacks were all relatively sophisticated operations requiring the coordination of multiple participating units (Picucci, 2008: 87). Operational design for attacks has generally come from outside the core elements of al-Qaeda, with the notable exception of the 9/11 operation (Burke, 2003a: 208).

### 2.9.2.2 Goals and Beliefs

The core beliefs of much radical Islam has its roots in the writing of authors such as Hassan Al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and Ayed Abdullah Maududi, founder of al-Gama'a al-Islamiyah (Islamic Group or IG), although Al-Banna specifically argued against militancy (Al-Banna, 1982: 82, cited in Picucci, 2008: 80). At the heart of much Islamic revivalism is a kind of rejection of Western social structures and influences within the Muslim world. Only through a return to those teachings would the Muslim world be able to demonstrate the "excellence of Islamic principles of collective organization, and their superiority over everything known to man until now" (Al-Banna, 1982: 82). The modern phenomena of Islamic radicalism differs most strongly from the revivalism of Al-Banna and Maududi in the means by which this demonstration will occur: the use of violence, the emphasis on revolutionary rather than gradual change, and the reliance upon a "vanguard" to demonstrate the way to the rest of the Islamic people (cited in Picucci, 2008: 82). The duty of the vanguard was no longer to merely demonstrate the superiority of the Muslim society but was to defend the society against the predations of the non-Muslim world and to take the battle to them (Gerges, 2005: 295).

Later revivalist writers such as Sayyid Qutb would distort Al-Banna's beliefs to include "an uncompromising hatred of the West and all its works" (Bergen, 2001: 199). Qutb argued the need for a more militant version of *jihad*, concerned with violent action against those perceived to have turned their backs on Islam. Qutb is sometimes credited with the concept of an offensive *jihad* that carries the fight to non-Muslims wherever and whenever possible, and his work is cited as the intellectual basis behind the exhortations of al-Qaeda (Eikmeier, 2007: 89-90).

The established of the state of Israel, numerous instances of domestic interference in the Middle East, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the pervasiveness of Western culture, all have been portrayed as evidence of a concerted effort to destroy Islam and therefore serve as justification for the need to use violence as a means of striking back. This emphasis on militant action is epitomized in Abdullah Azzam slogan "Jihad and the rifle alone: no negotiations, no conferences and no dialogues" (Azzam, 2001, cited in Picucci, 2008). Azzam used these events to present a vision of a Muslims world in its entirety under direct assault by the non-believers. This brought a renewed sense of pan-Islamism to the radical Muslims and intentionally extended the battlefield globally. The concept of pan-Islam, the unification of Islamic society was still primarily concerned with *jihad* against secular Arab regimes, and the

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return of historically Islamic lands from non-Muslim rule. It was not until the mid-1990s and failures against the near-enemy (particularly in Egypt) that al-Qaeda would seek to reorient global *jihad* against the far-enemy: the US and its allies (Gerges, 2005: 14-25).

### **2.10 Economic, Psychological, and Political Consequences of Terrorism**

#### **2.10.1 Economic Consequences of Terrorism**

The economic consequences can be largely broken down into short-term direct effects; medium-term confidence effects and longer-term productivity effects (Nedelescu & Johnston, 2005).

The direct economic costs of terrorism, including the destruction of life and property, responses to the emergency, restoration of the systems and the infrastructure affected, and the provision of temporary living assistance, are most pronounced in the immediate aftermath of the attacks and thus matter in the short run. Direct economic costs are likely to be proportionate to the intensity of the attacks and the size and the characteristics of the economy affected. While the 9/11 attacks on the US caused major activity disruption, the direct economic damage was relatively small in relation to the size of the economy. The direct costs resulting from the terrorist attacks were estimated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development at \$27.2 billion (Bruck & Wickstrom, 2004), which represented only about (1/4%) of the US annual GDP (cited in Kulkarni, 2012: 26).

The indirect costs of terrorism can be significant and have the potential to affect the economy in the medium term by undermining consumer and investor confidence. A deterioration of confidence associated with an attack can reduce the incentive to spend as opposed to save, a process that can spread through the economy and the rest of the world through normal business cycle and trade channels. Likewise, falling investor confidence may trigger a generalized drop in asset prices and a flight to quality that increases the borrowing costs for riskier borrowers (IMF, 2001b). The size and distribution of the effects over countries, sectors, and time would depend on a range of factors, including the nature of the attacks, the multiplier effects, the type of policies adopted in response to the attacks, and the resilience of the markets (Bruck & Wickstrom, 2004, cited in Kulkarni, 2012: 26-27).

The 9/11 attacks primarily affected the major industrial countries through a fall in demand generated by the loss in confidence about the economy and its impact on output. Emerging markets were affected by slowing external demand and a flight to quality in

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financial markets. Other developing countries may have been affected through commodity markets (IMF, 2001b, cited in Nedelescu & Johnston, 2005: 4).

Despite having been the direct target of terrorism, which materially affected the market infrastructure and operations, following the 9/11 attacks, the financial market demonstrated resilience and a capacity to return to normalcy quickly. This allowed the financial markets to perform one of their key functions: that of digesting the information on the economic and financial impact of the terrorist attacks after an initial shock and efficiently incorporating the information into asset prices so that it could be integrated into decisions about the future (Nedelescu & Johnston, 2005: 4).

Financial instruments involve commitments over time and therefore price and provide a hedge against uncertainty. While the initial effect of any major crisis may involve a financial market overreaction because of higher levels of uncertainty as the new information is being assessed and absorbed, once the long-term impact of the crisis is assessed, markets return to their pre-crisis condition. Therefore, financial markets shift up or down according to investors' perceptions of how the crisis will be resolved (Taylor, 2004, cited in Nedelescu & Johnston, 2005: 4).

Finally, over the longer term, there is a question of whether the attacks can have a negative impact on productivity by raising the costs of transactions through increased security measures, higher insurance premiums, and the increased costs of financial and other counterterrorism regulations (Ibid, p: 4).

### **2.10.2 Psychological Consequences of Terrorism**

Under the definition of terrorism provided in the first section of this chapter, terrorists intend their acts to influence a wide audience, wreaking fear among a broad range of people. Fear is a psychological state (Krueger, 2008: 119), and terrorist attacks have been found to have the following effects on individuals: increases in psychological health symptoms such as anxiety, depression and fear; post-traumatic stress disorder; inability to concentrate; sleep disturbances; increased alcohol consumption; feelings of helplessness; and negative attitudes towards 'outsiders' (Burke & Cooper, 2008: xvi).

Stein *et al.* (2004) studied psychological and behavioral reactions following 9/11 in a nationally representative sample of 560 adults, resurveying them about two months later (n = 395). (16%) had persistent distress at both measurement periods. Adults with persistent distress reported accomplishing less at work (65 %), avoiding public gathering places (24%),

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using alcohol or other medications or drugs to relax, sleep, or feel better about terrorism (38%). Felton (2004) reviewed the impact on mental health of the 9/11 attacks, finding that rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression were heightened immediately after the event. Individuals far away from the attack could also be affected: over 1.2 million New Yorkers received one or more face-to-face counseling sessions or public education services (cited in Burke & Cooper, 2008: xvii-xviii). There is evidence that after 9/11, alcohol consumption increased by (25%) and medical visits increased (Reader, 2013: 17). It should be noted that others (e.g., Knudsen *et al.*, 2005), found no increase in alcohol consumption in their studies (cited in Burke & Cooper, 2008: xviii).

Studies have divided the consequences of terrorism into short-term and long-term effects. For example, Shalev (2004) observed that some individuals not under threat themselves but witnessing body parts or bodies burned beyond recognition, may experience more long-term distress than survivors of an attack. This notion might explain the reactions of these watching events on television or first responders such as police, firefighters and emergency service personal (p: 6). It is likely that some survivors of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks, some first responders, and some soldiers fighting terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries will show signs of PTSDs. According to Burke *et al.* (2007), the best research on US veterans of the Vietnam War (Dohrenwend *et al.*, 2006) found that (19%) had developed war-related PTSD during their lifetime and (9%) were suffering from PTSD eleven to twelve years after the war. Hoge *et al.* (2006) reported that (19%) of those serving in Iraq and (11%) of those serving in Afghanistan reported symptoms of PTSD or other mental health problems, although Bonanno (2004-2005) has found that the vast majority of adults return to relatively stable patterns of healthy functioning (cited in Burke & Cooper, 2008: xviii-xix).

### **2.10.3 Political Consequences of Terrorism**

The aim of terrorism is to further political goals, such as causing an occupying army to withdraw, influencing the outcome of an election, or replacing an autocracy with a theocracy. By sowing fear in the population, and perhaps engendering anger or frustration with a specific political party, terrorists may cause voters to elect a new government or to pressure an existing government to change its policies. This is presumably why terrorism targets democratic countries more often than autocracies (Krueger, 2008: 129).

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For example, the March 11 2004 bombings in Madrid are felt by some commentators to have contributed to the government's defeat in the general election held three days later (Bali, 2005: 129), although the bombing in London on July 7 2005 did not have a noticeable immediate impact on British politics (Krueger, 2008: 130). Although the research is not unanimous, terrorist attacks are in fact often found to influence political outcomes (Krueger, 2008: 131). Davis and Silver (2004) found that those who perceived terrorism as a greater threat shortly after 9/11 were more likely to approve of George W. Bush's performance as president, but by the middle of 2004 this relationship had reversed, and those who viewed terrorism as a more serious threat were less pleased by his performance (p: 3). Eugenia Guilmartin (2004) studied the relationship between the lethality and frequency of terrorist attacks and presidential approval rating, using monthly data from 1949 to 2000. Other things being equal, she found that approval rating tends to rise slightly for Republican administrations following lethal terrorist attacks. Yet research on the effects of terrorism on political outcomes in the US is still at an early stage, and conclusions may change once additional data and more sophisticated methods of analysis are brought to bear on the question (p: 131). Analysis of the effectiveness of terrorism in altering political outcomes is further clouded because terrorist organization may not seek immediate electoral goals (Krueger, 2008: 131).

### **2.11 Performing Terrorism**

There is a one leitmotif in the literature that terrorism is a form of communication that uses violent actions to deliver a message (see e.g., Crelinsten, 1997; Gressang, 2001; Schmid & Graaf, 1982; Wieviorka, 1988; Wieviorka & Wolton, 1987). For Ronald Crelinsten (1987):

“Terrorism can be viewed as a form of political communication or a form of protest in which the terrorist attempts to gain the attention of those in power to promote some cause, vis the combined use of threat and violence. The terrorist resorts to violence because he [sic] feels-rightly or wrongly-that he has been excluded from the political process. In his view, terrorism functions as a form of “propaganda of the deed” in which the terrorist sends messages to those in power, as well as to the general public. On a purely symbolic level, the message is equivalent to shouting “look at me!” or “listen to me!” (Crelinsten, 1987: 419 cited in Archetti, 2013: 35).

Juergensmeyer (2003) conceived “terrorism as politically engaged violent street theatre” (p: 128). Delving into the performance of terrorist action is therefore of chief importance as some terrorists have quite explicitly underlined the fact that they structure their

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terrorist performance for the media. The reported founder of al-Qaeda, Osama Bin Laden, for instance, stated that: “God willing, you will see our work on the news” (cited in Schmid, 2006: 94). A non-identified former terrorist active in the German Red Army Faction and Italian Red Brigades elaborates on the ambiguous relationship broadcasters have with terrorist organisations:

[“W]e give the media what they need: newsworthy events. They cover us, explain our causes and this, unknowingly, legitimate us [...] You must understand: the media are very interested in our actions. They look for contacts with us, they try to get information from us and they are eager to report everything we do and say [...] Take for example the news agencies - within half an hour after calling them and briefing them, which we did quite often, you are in the headlines all over the world [...] All you need is one phone call with a threat or a declaration [...] Those [terrorists, KL] I know managed to establish contact and close contact with selected journalists. And the activity is often planned with the media as central factor. Some actions are planned for the media” (Weimann & Winn, 1994: 61).

Juergensmeyer (2003) stated that “the dramatic violence of terrorists is part of their strategic plan. He envisaged the theatrical display of violence as constructed symbolic events with a distinct demonstrative nature: At centre stage are the acts themselves-stunning, abnormal, and outrageous murders carried out in a way that graphically displays the awful power of violence-set within grand scenarios of conflict and proclamation” (p: 124). The terrorist performance as such is a coercive tool aimed at the exploitation of the susceptible state of our society (Leurs, 2007: 14).

Performance can embrace a wide range of human behaviours. The performance of terrorist action can be grasped by taking it into account from the perspective of cultural studies. Within cultural studies, performance is broadly defined as a form of “repetition with a difference”, a behaviour “which can be repeated, rehearsed, and above all recreated” (Roach, 1995: 46). More specific, and in line with how terrorist performances are grasped here, is the application of the term by British cultural studies scholar Hartley *et al.* (1994): “the concept of performance directs the analyst’s attention [...] to the formal, rule-governed actions which are appropriate to the given per-formative genre [...] it is clear that there are per-formative protocols in play that require skill and creativity” (p: 223).

Terrorist actions are to be perceived as performances based on the use of certain (stylistic) methods out of a certain repertoire, established over time. Fundamental for this research is that I contend that the news media frame these performances in a certain way. The

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repertoire differs from one terrorist organisation to the other. To understand the actual workings of terrorist performance one must take into account that the coercive tool receives its strength from two factors. On the one hand, the terrorist performance is structured to reach more people than those that are directly affected with the attack. On the other hand, the fact that the terrorists are willing to give their own life's for their cause intensifies the performance (Leurs, 2007: 15).

The terrorist performance is shaped to reach the broadest audience possible. The message is devised to damage the experienced peacefulness of the world of the receiver, not necessarily to kill as many people as possible. The 9/11 attacks are a good example. In this case, the suicide bombers reached a truly global audience, as the news media disseminated the symbolic images throughout world, in real-time. Terrorists were capable of damaging symbols of what in some ways can be seen as the centre of the financial world, and thereby they have demonstrated their immense capacity to instantaneously spread terror (Ibid, p: 16). As such the aphorism uttered by the American security and terrorism specialist Jenkins that many terrorists simply “want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead (cited in Baumann, 2004) can also be understood. Repeatedly, starvation and natural disasters have resulted in greater loss of life than for instance 9/11; however the incidental terrorist performance remains ‘breaking news’, as the performance generates a more powerfully amplified message. Additionally, Schmid (1983) interprets terrorist actions as “message generators”:

“Threat-and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target audience(s), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands. Or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion or propaganda is primarily sought” (p: 70).

### **2.12 Summary**

This chapter has examined the causes of terrorism from several interrelated perspectives. At the level of the individual terrorist, the discussion focused on individual psychology, including the mental state of the terrorist, his psychological justifications to engage in violence, and his interactions with the terrorist group. At the level of the environmental perspective, the discussion focused on social, political, economic, cultural and religious conditions that give rise to terrorism. Terrorism occurs in diverse and divergent social,

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political and economic conditions and needs to be viewed through historical, cultural, demographic, economic, social and political lenses.

Empirical studies have not been able to link terrorism to poverty or any other social, economic, political or psychological factor that may be construed as a cause (Crenshaw 2003: 92-105). It appears terrorism is too complex and diverse to be explained on the basis of a single cause or even a set of causes. The commonly held belief that terrorists are ‘madmen’ is unfounded; there is no evidence of a ‘terrorist mind’ or ‘terrorist personality’, or of any psychological factors that directly give rise to terrorism (Post, 2006: 17-28). Political discontent, marginalization and alienation are often associated with terrorism, as are religious fanaticism, but they are all insufficient to explain the rise of terrorism in any specific time and locale. Poverty is not a cause of terrorism, nor is it a cause often advocated by terrorists. Structural inequalities on the national and international levels may be underlying conditions or correlates of terrorism, but they are insufficient to explain or predict terrorist attacks. The impacts of globalization, rapid modernization and socioeconomic and cultural disruptions may be associated with the rise of terrorism, and are often exploited by terrorists. However, they do not explain the phenomenon (Roy, 2006: 60-63).

Much has been made by the press and by academics of the quote “one man’s terrorists another man’s freedom fighter” (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 21). Merari (2007) argues that presenting the two terms together as mutually exclusive is in general a logical fallacy. He says that the terms “terrorist” and “freedom fighter” describe two different aspects of human behavior, because one is a method and the other is a cause. Some terrorist groups undoubtedly fight for self-determination or national liberation. On the other hand, not all national liberation movements resort to terrorism to advance their cause. In other words, some insurgent groups are both terrorists and freedom fighters, some are either one or the other, and some are neither (p: 27). Meanwhile, the term “terrorism” remains politically loaded. Using Marari’s distinction of method and cause, the method is determined and named based on the perceived legitimacy of the cause. This is also true when one examines much of the media coverage of terrorism because the media often adopt state, political, and/or cultural notions of what terrorism is (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 22).

Rapoport (2006) suggests that by the 1970s the media had corrupted the term by often describing identical persons on the same account alternatively as terrorists, guerrillas, militants and soldiers. In Rapoport’s view this inconsistency has also plagued academic accounts. The misunderstanding intensifies when some former terrorists became legitimate

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political leaders; such were the cases of Nelson Mandela and Yasser Arafat (p: 4). One of the challenges in discussing and studying terrorism is that terrorism has become so broadly applied to all forms of political violence that many would argue it must be un-categorically condemned as a strategy for political change (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 22).

Although various authorities have defined it in many different ways, for the purpose of this thesis, terrorism will be understood to be the use or threat of use of violence to achieve a political objective through intimidation. In this respect, terrorism has become a global phenomenon, evolving from a local, national, or regional threat into a multinational and even a global one. There are several reasons given for the use of terrorist activity. Among them are: to create high profile impact on the public with the goal of undermining public confidence in their own government; to make routine social activity difficult; to inflict as much as damage as possible; to seek vengeance; and to create physical pain and emotions such as panic, chaos, unrest, fear, paranoia, anxiety, anger, grief, and a sense of tragedy (See for instance Ardila, 2002; Furnish, 2005; Hudson, 1999: 27; Lawal, 2002; McCauley, 2002; Reid, 2002; Thackrah, 2004, cited in Loza *et al.*, 2006: 17).

In this thesis, for the analysis of news stories reported by Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya, if an act carried out by a particular group or an individual involves killing or threatening civilians or non-combatants or destroying public or private property, and it is indicated or generally suspected that the act was carried out for specific or non-specific political purposes, then that act will be considered a terrorist operation.

The use of the term “terrorist” in public discourse has generated a great deal of interest and contention among researchers, journalists and politicians. Some regard the term as a political tool, because the simple act of labeling an act of violence “terrorism” can influence people’s attributions of the behavior, as well as their assumptions about what should be done to stop it (Cooper, 2001: 883). The analysis of the data in this study will not be based on the labeling of groups, individuals, or actions described by the media, because the media often adopt prevailing political and cultural notions of what terrorism is (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009). However, because this study is based mainly on the concept of media framing, this study will examine how groups, individuals and actions were described and labeled by both channels. For instance, past research indicated that terms like “terrorism, terrorist,” and “Islamic fundamentalism” have often been used interchangeably by the Western media, particularly after September 11, 2001 (El-Nawawy, 2006: 4). In this regard, the first frame considered in this research is the term “terrorism” itself. The study focuses on

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news broadcasts issued by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya by shedding some light on their respective use of terms like “martyr” versus “suicide bomber” and “insurgent” versus “terrorist”.

## Chapter 3 Framing Theory and the Study of Terrorism

### 3.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of literature relating to framing theory, in order to establish and describe the theoretical foundation of the current study. This literature review covers important background information relating to frame theory, offering key definitions, and an assessment of how frames are classified. In doing so, it relates and describes certain processes relating to news creation and the use of narratives in news provision.

This study comprises a comparative framing analysis of how Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV services report news about terrorism. The aim of this analysis is to identify whether specific news channels appear to use the same standards of objectivity in their reporting of terrorism or whether differences between the ways they told the same stories reflect ideological biases within the organizations themselves. Framing is one theoretical concept that many political science and mass communication scholars have repeatedly applied to study of media coverage of terrorism (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 47), because framing is one of the most relevant approaches to explaining how the media influence audiences' attitudes toward wars and conflicts (Fahmy & Al-Emad, 2011: 218).

Weaver (2007) pointed out a “pattern of dramatic growth in framing studies from the first half of the 1990s to the present” (p: 143). He added “it is clear that this term has become much more common in communication research articles than agenda-setting<sup>1</sup> in past decade” (p: 145). Frame analysis moves “beyond the latter to consider not just what the producers of news talk about or insert into the issue attention cycle but how problem selection, emphasis and definition facilitates what becomes most recognizable about the phenomena receiving media attention” (Watkins, 2001: 85). Frames, it is important to note, “do not determine what people think. What is perhaps most important about frames is their capacity to make certain aspects of a problem appear more salient than others. The potential effects of frames, then, are determined not only by what they include but also by what they exclude” (Entman, 1993: 51-58).

Communication scholars use framing theory to look beyond objectivity and bias to analysis the concept of a message (see e.g., Tankard, 2001). The notion of objectivity is often

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<sup>1</sup> The agenda-setting theory says the media (mainly the news media) aren't always successful at telling us what to think, but they are quite successful at telling us what to think about (McCombs & Shaw, 1972-1973).

### Chapter 3 Framing Theory & the Study of Terrorism

discussed as a journalistic routine norm (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 40). According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), “objectivity, although a cornerstone of journalistic ideology is rooted in practical organizational requirements” (p: 112). One accepted definition of objectivity is “fairness and balance in decision making, information seeking, and information presentation” (Drew, 1972: 165-173). Others define objectivity “as a ritual—its primary purpose is to defend the product, or media content, from critics” (Tuchman, 1977: 660-679). Wang (2003) explained that “objectivity is the opposite of bias” (p: 4). “The term “media bias” implies a pervasive or widespread bias contravening the standards of journalism, rather than the perspective of an individual journalist or article. The direction and degree of media bias in various countries is widely disputed” (Goldberg, 2001); news media are consistently criticized for a lack of objectivity” (cited in Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 40).

Severin and Tankard (2001) argued that although mass media attempt to be objective, objectivity is difficult to achieve because the training, upbringing, religious, political and cultural orientations of journalists tend to influence how they report and analyze events and issues (Severin & Tankard, 2001, cited in Alozie *et al.*, 2007: 216). In this context, Tankard *et al.* (2008), argued that, “the concept of media framing is important because it offers an alternative to old “objectivity and bias” paradigm, it helps us understand mass communication effects, and it offers valuable suggestions for communication practitioners” (pp: 94-94). Hackett (1984) has argued that “researchers should shift their focus from the study of objectivity and bias to the study of ideology in the news. He suggested “the concept of framing as one useful approach because it has the potential of getting beneath the surface of news coverage and exposing the hidden assumptions”. According to Hackett, “the concept of ideology transcends the concept of bias.” He argues that “ideology provides a framework through which the news media often present events” (cited in Tankard *et al.*, 2008: 96).

According to Tankard *et al.* (2008), “framing differs from bias in several important ways. First, it is a more sophisticated concept, adding the possibilities of additional, more complex emotional responses and also adds a cognitive dimension (beliefs about objects as well as attitudes). Second, framing recognizes the ability of a text-or a media presentation-to define a situation, to define the issues, and to set the terms of a debate. Convincing others to accept one’s framing means to a larger extent winning the debate” (p: 96). Framing “also reflects the richness of media discourse and the subtle differences that are possible when a specific topic is presented in different ways. Framing may even give quantitative researchers a means to examine the hypothesis of media hegemony, one that has been difficult to validate

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empirically. Media hegemony can be viewed as a situation in which one frame is so dominant that people accept it without notice or question. Thinking in terms of framing might force researchers to be more specific about media hegemony and pose some testable hypotheses” (Ibid, p: 96).

While the news information that a frame may provide is important, frames are particularly significant in understanding how news frames influence audience perceptions. According to Nelson *et al.* (1997), “frames tell people how to weight the often conflicting considerations that enter into political deliberations. Frames may supply no new information about an issue, yet their influence on our opinions may be decisive through their effect on the perceived relevance of alternative considerations” (p: 226). Johnson-Cartee refers to the “influence of news story frames on viewers [or readers] as an observable “framing effect” (Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 26). She explains that when news consumers have not yet formed strong beliefs or opinions toward an issue, news framing is likely to have a significant influence on an individual’s personal concerns, preferences, and decision making” (Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 26). As Nelson *et al.* (1997) explain, “frames affect opinions simply by making certain considerations seem more important than others, these considerations, in turn, carry greater weight for the final attitude” (p: 569). Newspaper editor Steve Smith has stated that “choosing a frame for a story is the most important decision a journalist makes” (Smith, 1997). He argued that “journalists often reflexively choose a conflict-frame-who are the antagonists or opposing forces in this situation? He links the concept of framing with civic journalism and says journalists need to make more use of civic framing-framing that deals with public life and focuses on process” (cited in Tankard *et al.*, 2008: 97).

### **3.2 Early Work**

Early research on framing focused on the study and development of Goffman’s (1974) framing analysis. Erving Goffman (1974) first developed what he called the primary framework, which states that framing relies on other frameworks to identify meaning and implication. To Goffman the primary framework takes place when an individual reacts to a particular event. This reaction derives from previous understanding of things experienced and acceptance of societal norms. These frameworks activate when the individual is faced with a certain situation triggering certain schemata of interpretation, which categorise previous events and occurrences (Goffman, 1974: 21). This cognitive organisational structuring system

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guides interpretation of social reality and the person's reaction to it, consciously or unconsciously (Blue, 2008: 8).

Goffman (1974) developed two broad classes within primary frameworks: natural and social. Natural frameworks classify events and occurrences through regular acts without human interpretation; events such as inclement weather or natural disasters fall into this category. Social frameworks classify events and occurrences through human interpretation, providing background understanding for events that incorporate the will, aim, and controlling effort of intelligence (Goffman, 1974: 22). Newscasters' reports of the effects from inclement weather or natural disasters fall into this category. The main difference between these categories is that meaning is implicated: one deals with deeds, not mere events (Goffman, 1974: 23). This distinction provides researchers with a tool for discerning meaning and categorising content (Blue, 2008: 8).

Media studies benefited from Goffman's (1974) framing analysis because he developed an outline for understanding news and its construction of reality (Tuchman, 1978: 8). Journalists and editors gather information and decide what is important by including and excluding certain facts and quotes to fit certain narratives derived from social meaning. Basically, they give meaning to facts about news by organising them in a coherent manner (Tankard *et al.*, 1991: 3).

Many researchers have used framing to understand media effects, especially through its coverage of certain phenomenon (Tankard *et al.*, 1991). For these researchers, the most important element of framing is perspective and that is exactly what the news media creates:

“News is a window on the world. Through its frame, Americans learn of themselves and other, of their own institutions, leaders, and life styles, and those of other nations and their people. The view through a window depends upon whether the window is large or small, has many panes or few, whether the glass is opaque or clear, whether the window faces a street or a backyard. The unfolding scene also depends upon where one stands, far or near, craning one's neck to the side, or gazing straight ahead, eyes parallel to the wall in which the window is encased” (Tuchman, 1978: 1).

This definition highlights the importance of perspective, the manner in which framing exists, and the human being involved (Blue, 2008: 9).

### **3.3 The News Media and Framing**

While the concept of framing in mass communication research is not new, there is no one universally accepted definition of framing (see D'Angelo, 2002; Reese *et al.*, 2001). Part of

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the challenge with defining news frames is their intangible nature; another challenge stems from the fact that frames have been discussed not only as part of media coverage but also as part of people's cognitive schemas (Entman, 2004, cited in Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005: 404). Scholars from across the social sciences have defined and applied the concept of framing in a variety of ways. Erving Goffman (1974), one of the first to employ the concept, asserted that "in order to negotiate, manage, and comprehend a complex social world everyone practices framing" (cited in Blue, 2008: 10). Still, the framing practices employed by groups who accumulate significant measures of symbolic capital (e.g., journalists, politicians, social scientists) are especially important due to the hierarchical divisions that structure the information landscape (Watkins, 2001). Journalists, for example, make sense of the world by creating frames (Tuchman, 1980). The frames created by journalists can be organised and communicated verbally (e.g., radio, television), visually (e.g., newspapers, the internet) (Watkins, 2001: 84).

Gamson and Modigliani (1987) defined framing as "the central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events" (p: 43). Entman (1993) offered a useful definition of frames. He wrote, "Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p: 52). Entman's (1993) definition highlights that a person's scope of knowledge, conscience or unconscious, dictates their understanding of the world. Thus, a journalist's personality, professional background, attitudes, values, beliefs and professional orientation affect how the news is influenced (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). In a broader context, "the news media purposely act to serve and defend the status quo and reinforce social values" (Tuchman, 1980, cited in Blue, 2008: 10).

Entman (1993) described the four functions of framing as "defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting solutions. Frame operates within the mind of the communicator who may deliberately or quite unconsciously frame the message and in the minds of the receivers who process the frames through an existing belief system. Frames exist in text as stereotypes, keywords, or other devices that provide framework for factual information" (p: 55-6). Finally, "frames reside in and interact with culture. There are common or stock frames that are familiar to particular social groups" (Entman, 1993, cited in Coleman & Perlmutter, 2005: 26).

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Framing “enables journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely [and to] package the information for efficient relay to their audiences” (Gitlin, 1980: 7). This packaging or process of media framing involves the placement of stories, length of stories, headlines, images, and overall tone (Kendall, 2005). It includes “condensing symbols” such as metaphors and tagline along with “reasoning devices” such as moral claims (Gamson *et al.*, 1992; Weaver, 2007). Frames become the means by which the media presents complex issues efficiently and in ways that are understood by audiences (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Journalists rely on pictures, videos, and sounds bytes to make stories newsworthy (Altheide & Snow, 1979). Journalists consider their audiences’ preferences to evaluate newsworthiness (Reese *et al.*, 2001). Journalists use images that are visually thought-provoking and arousing to stimulate the audience’s emotional thought process. Journalists also use images that have emotional impacts to enhance the narrative in an attempt to seize the audience’s attention (Fahmy *et al.*, 2006, cited in Blue, 2008: 11). These characteristics are fundamental for maintaining a regular audience to achieve high ratings. If the audience does not think an image connects with the narrative, they may look elsewhere for images that reinforce their personal frameworks (Blue, 2008: 11).

Journalists do not just report facts, but through framing play a role in the construction of social reality (Schudson, 2003; Tuchman, 1978, cited in Huckstep, 2009: 28). They do so within the constraints of news values and factual information. Schudson explained:

“To say that journalists construct the world is not to say they conjure the world. Journalists normally work with materials that real people and real events provide. But by selecting, highlighting, framing, shading and shaping in reportage, they create an impression that real people-readers and viewers—then take to be real and to which they respond in their lives” (p. 2, cited in Huckstep, 2009: 28).

The news media’s framing of issues is also influenced by criteria used to determine what is newsworthy. Price and Tewksbury (1997) outlined “five common values that make an event newsworthy: conflict, resonance with well-known story, involvement of well-known people, proximity, and timeliness/novelty. The presence or absence of these news values not only determines what stories get covered, they also influence which aspects of news stories are given prominence. For example, the media tend to emphasize conflict and fighting—

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elements believed to reader interest” (Price & Tewksbury, 1997, cited in Huckstep, 2009: 28).

A more deliberate view of news framing traces its source not just to news values but also to the values of the elite. Entman (1993) explained that framing “plays a major role in the exertion of political power-it registers the identity of actors or interests that compete to dominate the text” (p: 55). Influencing behaviour and action in a non-cohesive system of government such as democracy requires selecting certain things to tell citizens and relating those elements’ existing belief system (Entman, 1993). Price and Tewksbury (1997) noted that by “stimulating certain ideas the news media encourages people to think in certain ways about political issues”. For example, in the pre-war debate over Iraq, solution framing included two options-wars now sanctions with war likely later. There was little discourse outside of the framing of these two options (Entman, 1993: 55). “The influence of frames is in their ability to highlight certain aspects of issues while obscuring or ignoring others, which may in turn lead audiences to different conclusions” (Entman, 1993).

While frames can determine what people notice, understand, remember, and act on, they do not influence everyone equally. The salience produced by framing involves an interaction between text and reader (Entman, 1993). The receiver may adopt frames and reach conclusions different from those presented in the text. Media frames compete with whatever is on an audience member’s mind at any particular time. A message may serve to direct though but cannot control the minds or opinions of the receivers (Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997). Shen (2004) found that news frames significantly impact audiences’ attitudes towards stem cell research funding and oil drilling. However, the impact of frames was mediated by an individual’s existing schema. For example, participants who already believed stem cell research raised moral and ethical questions were more likely to respond to the ethical frame (cited in in Huckstep, 2009: 29).

Druckman’s (2001) research revealed that “the power of framing is also mediated by the credibility of the source. The more credible the source is perceived to be the more influence it exerts. Druckman proposed that this influence is the result not of manipulation by those in power but by citizens’ reliance on “credible elites” to help make sense of complex issues” (p: 1045). Further research by Druckman (2004) suggested that when subjected to opposing frames, people are likely to give their true opinions unaffected by framing. Edy and Meirick (2007) found an even more complex process at work. In their study of the framing of the events of 9/11 and its effect on support for the war in Afghanistan, they found that

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respondents combined competing frames to establish their own points of view. Frame adoption was also dependent on age. Those more likely to be sent to war were less likely to express the belief that the perpetrators of 9/11 should be killed in war (cited in Huckstep, 2009: 30).

Despite limitations and intervening variables, the influence of frames is widely accepted. It would be impossible for a person to have direct experience with or knowledge of every issue; therefore, media framing is often a shortcut in deciding which aspects of issues are important. Researchers suggest that since most people are not well informed about social or political issues, they may be heavily influenced by the media framing (Iyengar, 1991; Kahneman & Tversky, 1984; Zaller, 1992). Thus, the role of media framing in defining the causes and solutions of social issues is of particular interest to understand terrorism phenomenon (Huckstep, 2009: 30).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, “framing, although often regarded as a close neighbour of the older “agenda-setting” tradition of research, is conceptually distinct” (Reese *et al.*, 2012: 255). “The agenda setting approach assesses content for its prioritisation of various issues; but news content is of theoretical interest only to the extent that it influences public opinion priorities” (Dearing & Rogers, 1996 cited in Semetok *et al.*, 2012: 255). This way of conceptualising news content as ‘topics’ provides advantages in the analysis of public opinion, but it is less valuable for understanding content (Kosicki, 1993). Framing, by contrast, “offers in its ‘organising principle’ a way to think about how news content itself is structured. The significance of frames, as contrasted to agenda-setting, becomes most noticeable when they take on broad over-arching properties. The war on terror is a prime example, crucially providing the frame for mainstream news about the invasion of Iraq” (Reese & Lewis, 2009, cited in Reese *et al.*, 2012: 255).

### **3.4 Typology of News Frames**

The central dimensions of a frame seem to be the selection, organisation, and emphasis of certain aspects of reality, to the exclusion of others (de Vreese, 2001: 108). Studies of frames in the news have defined frames as “patterns...of presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion” (Gitlin, 1980: 7). Frames are an “organising idea” (Severin & Tankard, 1997) or an “organising theme” (Gamson, 1992), and they “define problems” (Entman, 1993, cited in de Vreese, 2001: 108). De Vreese distinguishes between issue-specific news frames and generic news frames (see de Vreese, 1999; de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001). “Issue-

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specific frames pertain only to specific topics or news events. The advantage of an issue-specific approach to the study of news frames is that it allows for a profound level of specificity and details relevant to the event or issue under investigation” (p: 28). “This advantage, however, is inherently disadvantages. The high degree of detail and issue-sensitivity make analyses drawing on issue-specific frames difficult to generalise, compare, and use as empirical evidence for theory building” (de Vreese, 2005: 28). Moreover, such frames have led researchers to too easily finding evidence for what they are looking for” and to contribute to “one of the most frustrating tendencies in the study of frames and framing [being] the tendency for scholars to generate a unique set of frames for every study (Hertog & McLeod, 2001: 150-151). So far, studies of issue-specific news frames have looked at the framing of the EU Parliamentary elections (Williams & Kaid, 2006), the Internet (Roessler, 2001), labour disputes (Simon & Xenos, 2000), biotechnology (Matthes & Kohring, 2008, cited in de Vreese *et al.*, 2012: 295), an analysis of the coverage of the US national budget deficits (Jasperson *et al.*, 1998), an investigation of US press and television network coverage of two international airline accidents (Entman, 1991), and news framing of the Gulf War (Reese & Buckalew, 1995, cited in De Vreese *et al.*, 2001: 109).

Other frames transcend thematic limitations and can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and in different cultural context. These frames can be labelled generic frames (de Vreese, 2002 cited in de Vreese, 2005: 54). “Generic news frames are general and not confined to a specific issue. This increases the possibilities for making comparisons. A potential shortcoming of generic news frames is that certain issue-specific details may less easily be captured in an analysis” (p: 55). However, generic news frames that are structural and inherent to, for example, the conventions of journalism may prove more useful for understanding general features of news reporting beyond the issue-specific limits (de Vreese, 2005: 55). One well-known study of generic news frames is Iyengar’s (1991) work offering a distinction between “episodic” and “thematic” frames. “The episodic frame focuses on particular cases or discrete episodes, whereas the thematic frame “places political issues and events in some general context” (Iyengar, 1991: 2). These frames are examples of a more generic conceptualisation of a kind of news frame that has the capacity to transcend issue, time, and space limits (de Vreese *et al.*, 2001: 109).

As another example of generic framing, in their analysis of political and especially campaign news, Cappella and Jamieson (1996, 1997) identified “strategically” framed news. “The strategy frame emphasizes the game aspects of politics and focuses on winning and

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losing” (cited in de Vreese *et al.*, 2001: 109). The authors found that strategically framed news dominates over in-depth, information rich, “issue-framed” news in US news coverage of politics (cited in de Vreese *et al.*, 2001: 109). Similarly, in a study of frames used in different news outlets, Neuman *et al.* (1992) identified “human impact,” “powerlessness,” “economics,” “moral values,” and “conflict” as the most common generic frames used by both the media and the audience (pp: 74-75). “The human impact frame focused on the descriptions of individuals and groups affected by an issue. The powerlessness frame referred to “the dominance of forces over weak individuals or groups” (Neuman *et al.*, 1992: 67). The economics frame reflected “the preoccupation with ‘the bottom line,’ profit and loss” (Ibid, p: 63). The moral values frame referred to the often indirect reference to morality and social prescriptions by, for example, including certain quotations or inferences” (p: 63). “The conflict frame referred to the journalistic practice of reporting stories of clashing interpretation and it was found to fit well with news media’s “game interpretation of the political world as an on-going series of contests, each with a new set of winners and losers” (1992: 64). These frames were found in relation to different issues which suggest that the frames are more generally applicable than issue-specific news frames (de Vreese & Semetko, 2004: 95).

Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) made another common classification of generic frames. Based on previous framing studies (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Neuman *et al.*, 1992; Patterson, 1993), they distinguished five generic frames: the responsibility frame, the conflict frame, the human interest frame, the economic consequences frame, and the morality frame (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The responsibility frame attributes accountability for a problem or an event or the responsibility for finding a solution to a problem to the government, a group, or an individual. The conflict frame emphasizes discord between individuals, groups, or institutions to capture audience interest. Research suggests this is the most common frame in US news, exemplified by presidential election campaign coverage, which often reduces complex issues to a simple Candidate A versus Candidate B conflict (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The human interest frame uses an emotional angles or human element to present an entire events, issue, or problem. Semetk and Valkenburg (2000) argue that this is a frame increasingly used in news because, as the news market gets more competitive, news producers are using the human interest frame as a unique way to capture and retain an audience. The morality frame is rarely used, as the goal of journalistic objectivity discourages it. When it does emerge, it is through the editorial choice of quotes

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that contain moral messages. The economic consequences frames reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country (cited in Solsman *et al.*, 2008: 207). It has been suggested that news producers often use the consequence frame to make an issue relevant to their audience (Gamson, 1992). Consequence' and the wide impact of an event have also been listed as central news values for selecting events to become news stories (Graber, 1993; McManus, 1994, cited in de Vreese *et al.*, 2001:110).

### 3.5 Summary

The current research is grounded in framing theory as its theoretical framework. This chapter has explored several areas of empirical and theoretical literature of relevance to the current study. It has reviewed framing theory and its main assumptions, its conceptual underpinning, typologies, function and development.

Scholars (e.g., Goffman, 1974; Entman, 1991-1993; Gamson, 1991) suggested that terrorist events are commonly understood through news “frame” that simplify, prioritise, and structure the narrative flow of events. According to Norris *et al.* (2003), “understanding mass communication through the concept of framing has become increasingly common, whether in the fields of social psychology, public opinion, or media studies” (p: 10). Framing theory suggests that “the media have power to select not only what is covered, but also how items are presented. Journalists filter information in ways that affect an audience’s understanding and interpretation” (Lowrey, 1995: 327). By selecting some facts from a continuous flow of information, and emphasizing specific issues or events over others, they have the ability to influence attitudes, beliefs and behaviour.

“Framing can limit or expand an audience’s understanding of an issue” (Pan & Kosicki, 2008; Callaghan & Schnell; 2001, cited in Perkins *et al.*, 2008: 280). However, from another perspective, “frames allow news audiences to interpret and evaluate information by making it familiar” (Norris, 1995: 259). Some framing researchers have employed a quantitative methodology (e.g., Ryan, 2004; Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Riegert, 2005; Johnson & Fahmy, 2008), while others use a qualitative approach (Barnett & Reynolds, 2002; Lahlali, 2011; Richardson, 2007; Qian, 2010). Frames can be analysed by means of systematic content analysis or more interpretive textual analysis (Weaver, 2007, cited in Fong, 2009: 20), yet few studies (see e.g., Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008) seemed to have combined both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Van Gorp (2007) suggested

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that quantitative methods should be combined with the interpretive prospects of qualitative methods to enhance in-depth data analysis (cited in Ihediwa & Ishak, 2014: 163, see also Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Despite the importance of framing functions, several scholars have described the concept of “news frames” as vague and undeveloped and pointed to a number of specific weaknesses in the literature. Indeed, a review of numerous studies shows that the task of defining news frames is sometimes neglected altogether. Similar to the treatment of concept such as “values” or “trust,” some scholars assume that the meaning of the term “frame” is widely understood and leave it undefined. Other scholars define the concept, but without serious rigor (Woods, 2008: 53). As Entman (1993) noted, the concept is often “defined casually, with much left to an assumed tacit understanding of reader and researcher” (p: 52).

The second problem in the literature relates to the multifaceted nature of news frame research and the fragmentation of the concept itself. Scholars have formulated numerous specialized concepts to examine media coverage of various issues and events. Many of these frames are issue-specific and cannot be easily applied to other research topics. Instead of building on previous conceptualizations, scholars often invent their own concepts even when studying the same topics. For instance, a study of media coverage of the terrorist attacks on September 11 (Li & Izard, 2003) introduced seven distinct news frames. Meanwhile, a study by Lee (2003) addressed the same topic using twelve frames and yet none of them matched the concepts in the Li and Izard study (cited in Woods, 2008: 53-54).

A third problem can be seen in studies that do not clearly distinguish between the concept of news frames (definitions) and framing theories (assumptions about the origins or effects of news frames). In many cases, scholars weave their conceptualization into a theory of framing. Consider, for example, Gitlin’s (1980) widely cited definition of frames “as persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of election, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse” (p: 7). This definition contains a tenuous theoretical assumption about the process through which frames are created (e.g., “symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse”). This is a common conceptual weakness in the literature. Scholars regularly define news frames by explaining their origins or effects, rather than explaining what they consist of or how they can be identified in communication content. In other cases, news frames are produced within rigid institutional setting where a journalist’s choices are restricted, or at least guided by strong organizational roles and norms or ideological parameters (Woods, 2008: 54-55).

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Research into news coverage of terrorism in the Arab world has offered comparatively few systematic cross-national studies (see e.g., Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Fahmy & Al-Emad, 2011). This study will apply the study of generic news frames to the particular context of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya broadcasts relating to terrorist activities within a specific time-frame 2012. Based on past literature (e.g., Valkenburg & Semetko, 2000; Iyengar, 1991; de Vreese, 2005), the study specifically examines a range of news frames such as: conflict frame, military frame, humanitarian frame, episodic vs. thematic frames, and responsibility frame. As previously mentioned in this chapter, one advantage of generic news frames is their capacity to allow analytic comparison between different reports of various events, although it is important to remember that their use brings the potential for specific detail to be obscured or overlooked (de Vreese, 2005: 30). Retaining an awareness of their issue-specific limits, it is nevertheless felt that generic news frames structured around journalistic conventions can be useful for assessing general features of news reporting (p: 30). Frames that can be considered generic are those that can be observed in news coverage relating to a range of societal, political and economic issues, and these are seen as an important feature within an analytical approach to the framing process. They play a valuable role in our theoretical and conceptual understanding of news production (de Vreese, 2005: 44-45). In addition to these generic frames, several further frames were identified as relevant to the current study, including: framing perspective; geographical location; selection of sources; primary terrorist groups; and victims of terrorism.

The next chapter examines in detail how news media have covered terrorism. Reviewing previous literature relating to media framing of terrorism will help us to recognize the theoretical frameworks that have been used, the frames that have been identified, the various research techniques adopted, and ultimately how terrorism has been portrayed by different types of media.

## **Chapter 4 Framing Terrorism**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Relationships between terrorist incidents and media coverage have proven to be a longstanding and fruitful area of research for media and communications scholars. In response to the September 11 attacks, scholars in related disciplines have added depth and breadth to media analyses of terrorist events. Contributions include addressing news narratives, public response, and media coverage as an objective of the perpetrators (see e.g., Walker, 2006). This chapter surveys several studies that are representative of these themes, from a variety of methodological approaches and points of entry into the stream of inquiry.

### **4.2 Terrorism before September 11, 2001**

Terrorism was framed by the American news media before September 11, 2001, by its relationship with the government and the newsworthiness of the terrorist attacks. Previous research implied that terrorism was romanticised, thus causing more terrorism, but these allegations were backed with little scientific evidence (Simmons & Lowry, 1990, cited in Blue, 2008: 16).

Communication researchers began to study how the media used the word “terrorism” to understand its communication value. It was found that terrorism was used by the news media to explain broad amounts of phenomena and that its usage spanned different categories (Lipschutz, 2003; Simmons, & Lowry, 1990). Terrorism was also seen as an international phenomenon because more than (75%) of the news coverage of terrorist acts contained people from the Middle East or took place in the Middle East (Iyengar, 1991). This suggested that the news media’s connection with terrorism involved the Middle East either through acts of terror or the people committing those acts. To further understanding how terrorism is framed in the news media, researchers analysed the narrative developed by the journalist (Blue, 2008: 16).

During the 1980s and 1990s, news media narratives were categorised in frameworks created by the political elite such as the war on terror, the war on drugs, and the war on crime. These narratives were internationally developed to influence the public by presenting themes similar to the ideals of the times (Dobkins, 1992). These themes framed characters such as the political elite in a fight against terrorist groups that sought to destroy Western values and structure for the sake of their own goals and objectives (Dobkins, 1992; Simmons & Lowry, 1990; Wittebol, 1991). Frequent references to American’s vulnerability to terror and US

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government policies to prevent or fight terror, combined with occasional direct linkages to US citizens or news viewers, contribute(d) to an image of a society under siege (Wittebol, 1991: 340). These narratives depicted moral reasoning and created an “us” versus “them” story structure by providing the audience with protagonist and antagonist (Dobkin, 1992). In general, journalists framed terrorism in terms of protecting the state, providing political avenues for stopping violence, and opposing any rogue state (Pednekar-Magal & Johnson, 2004; Wittebols, 1992). Journalists also developed narratives that held a nationalistic bias, influenced by the political elite, which affected how much coverage terrorism received (cited in Blue, 2008: 16-17).

The political elite (government officials) also held an important role in the framing of terrorism for the news media. To Altheide (1991), terrorism is the means through which political leaders are able to define frame boundaries, interpret meaning, and create policy. The news media mainly used government officials in stories concerning terrorism. These officials then framed terrorism through their social construction in order to influence the media’s agenda. Atwater and Green (1988) found during the TWA hijacking that the news media relied on government rather than international sources for information. This produced a nationalistic news frame in which the opinions, whether similar or not, were from the same global perspective and developed within the terms of the nation. Kaplan (2003) posits that:

“If a story touches on threats to, or information’s of, values felt to be central to the nation, such as the death of its soldiers abroad, inauguration of a new president, or execution of a reviled criminal, then it is incumbent upon the press to adopt an explicit narrative voice that aligns the journalist with the nation in praise of its core values or in condemnation of its vicious opponents” (p: 212).

Journalists also relied heavily on the political elite as sources to make narratives newsworthy. The higher the level of government official, the more important the narrative became, Jablonski and Sullivan (1996) found that even though acts of terrorism were at high levels during the 1980s, media coverage dropped because of little US government involvement. In the event that journalists did cover an act of terrorism, government sources became official sources for story credibility (Atwater & Green, 1988). Wittebols (1992) suggests that the reliance on the political elite for definition and context moved the news media from reporting objectively to serving the national interest. Domestic sources also played a role in how terrorism was framed. These sources were used to provide emotional

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context after the event had taken place, the narrative more newsworthy and marketable to the viewing audiences (Dobkin, 1992, cited in Blue, 2008: 18).

The news media can frame terrorism by the amount of deviance committed by the terrorist (Weimann & Brosius, 1991). Since 1968, terrorists have tried to attract the attention of the Western news media to disseminate “information about their mission, credibility and purpose (Jablonski & Sullivan, 1996: 198). They influence media coverage by victimising US citizen and their allies. Then, journalists use the dramatic images (video and picture), sound bites of destruction and savagery, highly emotional interviews and narratives to frame terrorism (Atwater & Green, 1988; Iyengar, 1991, cited in Blue, 2008: 18). This limited audience awareness to “scenes of aircraft hijacking, hostage’s situation, bombing, and similar dramas played out in the mass media (Iyengar, 1991: 26). As a result, terrorism was framed episodically and seldom received thematic coverage.

The news media depended on the government’s classification of whether the deviant act was terrorism or a criminal act. Edy and Meirick (2007) posit the crime frame was seen in the coverage of the Oklahoma City bombing and the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing because the media focused on the incident and perpetrators instead of on the terrorist organisation or their demands. The 1988 Pan Am 103 bombing over Scotland, the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing in New York City, 1995 Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City, the 1996 TWA 800 explosion, and the bombing of the USS Cole were covered by the news media in a similar fashion (Blue, 2008: 19). Major attention was given to these events because terrorism was allegedly involved and the news media were able to use similar pre-existing frames to understand the event (Cobb & Primo, 2003; Durham, 1998). The news media’s coverage of these events flowed from speculation about the cause, through coverage of the mourning and anger of victims and survivors, to reports about political decisions and their rationale, and finally to discussion of the criminal element or the ‘who did it’ (Cobb & Primo, 2003; Simpson & Cote, 2006, cited in Blue, 2008: 19).

Overall, before September 11, 2001, the US news media used the word “terrorism” to describe many different events, which often contained a Middle Eastern element. The news media focused more on the actual event than the issues leading up to the event. The nature of certain terrorist acts created spectacular visual elements and symbolic imagery for a viewing audience. Terrorism was seen as an international rather than domestic problem. Later research on the terrorism revealed that a nation’s self-interest and the political elite played key roles in the decision making process in whether the news media would report an event as

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terrorist act or something else (Blue, 2008: 19-20). Media reports of terrorism before 9/11 tended to deploy episodic and international frames. The episodic news frame focuses on certain individuals or specific events, in contrast to the thematic news frame which places issues and events in a general context (p: 14, see typology of news frames in Chapter 3). Iyengar (1991) demonstrated that narrowly focused coverage influenced audiences to hold individual perpetrators responsible, while thematic reporting was more likely to assign responsibility to societal conditions and public policies (pp: 26-45).

Terror, patriotism, government responsibility, and criminal justice were the most widely used frames regarding terrorism (Dobkins, 1992; Pednekar-Magal, 2004; Wittebols, 1992). News media used certain themes to influence public perceptions through depictions of destruction and the collapse of American social values (Dobkins, 1992; Simmons & Lowry, 1999; Wittebol, 1991). These examples fall into the terror frame and the patriotic frame; the terror frame is employed through the description of victims, terrorist groups, and the amount of destruction caused (see e.g., Atwater & Green, 1988; Jablonski and Sullivan, 1996; Iyengar, 1991); the basis of the patriotic frame lies within the framework of “us” (America) versus “them” (terrorists/Arabs/Muslims etc.). The government responsibility frame takes into account how the government should protect citizens, react to terroristic activity, and promote their plans. The criminal justice frame was employed in media coverage of terrorism to identify the criminal element by asking the question: ‘Who did it?’ (Cobb & Primo, 2003; Durham, 1998), providing the public and the media with a focus for their anger and using a well-known format to help categorise the situation (cited in Blue, 2008: 56).

The relevant literature has also indicated that government sources were favoured by traditional news media. Atwater and Green (1988) described how the news media packaged government officials’ statements within a certain narrative to maintain story credibility and newsworthiness. Journalists relied on official sources to explain why the attacks happened and to formulate an appropriate response (Dobkin, 1992, Nacos, 1994, Weimann & Winn, 1994). Thus government officials have had a dominant voice in framing terrorism, creating content bias because official government perspectives are highlighted while other voices and experiences are covered up and/or side-lined (see Entman, 1991; Dobkins, 1992; Norris *et al.*, 2003).

The next part of this chapter discusses media coverage of terrorism within and after the 9/11 attacks.

### 4.3 September 11<sup>th</sup> and the News Media

Media reporting and framing of terrorism has attracted considerable attention internationally and a substantial body of work deals with this area (e.g., Alali & Eke, 1991; Leurs, 2007; Norris *et al.*, 2003), much of which has been prompted by the September 11 attacks and the subsequent declaration of the War on Terrorism. A considerable amount of research has been devoted to how different media cover terrorism, employing a multitude of approaches. Researchers have focused on addressing different topics including news story frames, terrorist groups' ethnicity or religion, terrorism techniques, geographic location coverage of news stories, and news source attribution (e.g., Filz, 2004; Ryan, 2004; Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Riegiert, 2005; El-Nawawy, 2006; Al-Emad & Johnson, 2008).

Numerous studies have been conducted on the specific frames different media outlets use to portray terrorism coverage (e.g., Semetko & Valkenburg; 2000; Nacos, 2002; Landreville, 2004). Most of these studies categorise news story frames into three main categories: official frames, military frames, and humanitarian frames. Most US media news stories on terrorism depend heavily on official coverage. Also, several empirical works carried out primarily after 9/11 identify an ideological bond between policy makers and reporters (e.g., Norris *et al.*, 2003; Ryan, 2004, Domke, 2004; Fried, 2005). These works offer compelling evidence that media have adopted the official frames. For example, Jaspersen and El-Kikhia (2003: 129-30) revealed that *CNN's* coverage of the war in Afghanistan employed frames that reinforced the administrative position and patriotic messages; official government leaders were cited almost exclusively, and editorial writers not only failed to challenge official views but endorsed and legitimized them (Ryan, 2004: 380). Correspondingly, the Saudi media depended on government briefings and official sources in reporting on 1980s incidents of terrorism (Al-Alkarni, 2005: 19).

Other research carried out by Nacos (2002) found that western news agencies embrace the language of governmental officials (cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 435). Similar research conducted by Hart and Hassencahl (2002) noted that metaphor was routinely used to dehumanise the enemy, who was depicted frequently as animal or aggressor (cited in Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008: 56). These studies bring out interesting perceptions of framing and how the "war on terrorism" frame was supported, showing how the views of officials are reinforced in the media. Others found that magazines frequently juxtaposed terrorism and Iraq and used graphics that linked Iraq to terrorism and terrorists (Fried, 2005, cited in Harmon & Muenchen, 2009: 15). Lakoff (2001) analysed the conceptual system of how the

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9/11 attack on the World Trade Centre was framed by Bush's administration, highlighting the power of visual imagery. Lakoff (2003) also indicates that "metaphors have hidden messages, and could be deliberately misleading to the general audience" (cited in Garcia, 2008: 46).

The media also use military frames frequently when covering terrorism. Past research indicated that nearly all of US media used military frames in coverage of terrorism news stories. For instance, *CNN* coverage the war on Afghanistan focused on the progress of the US military on the ground or the technological advances of the weaponry (El-Nawawy, 2006). Moreover, *BBC*, *CNN* and *NBC* showed soldiers rescuing POWs, taking Iraqi prisoners or moving through empty deserts, in what was described as a "war of liberation" (Riegert, 2005, cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 435). Research by Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) compared US media coverage of the war to international media and found that while US newspapers coverage often used the military conflict frame, the responsibility and anti-war protest frames were common in Swedish reporting (p: 410). Similarly, the editorial writers of the US ten largest newspapers tended to adopt the military frame in their news stories when reporting about the war against terrorism (Ryan, 2004: 17). Kamhawi's (2002) study of the coverage of the Palestine-Israel conflict found that the dominant frame in the coverage was the conflict frame. De Vreese *et al.* (2001) also found emphasis on conflict in the framing of political news in television coverage in four Western European nations. According to Dissanayake, examining the coverage of major conflicts such as military interventions is important not only because it affects national public opinion toward the conflict, but also because it has a direct impact on policy making (Dissanayake, 1984, cited in Dimitrova & Strömbäck 2005: 25).

However, while US media outlets dominantly use official and military frames in terrorism coverage, Arab traditional media have been found to depend heavily on humanitarian coverage. For example, during the war on Afghanistan, Al-Jazeera concentrated on the Afghani death toll, reflecting "humanitarian coverage" (Jasperson and El-Kikhia, 2003: 127). Al-Jazeera was able to focus on the victims of the American offensive, both in Afghanistan and Iraq (Soriano, 2008, cited in O'Donnell & Gray, 2012: 49). In addition, Al-Jazeera highlighted the collateral damage that was caused by the US bombing of buildings, mosques, villages and infrastructure. While *CNN* presented a sanitised version of the war, Al-Jazeera contextualised the war by humanising the personal suffering of the Afghan people, and presented gory images of severely wounded civilians and Afghani mothers wailing by their children's bodies (El-Nawawy, 2006: 38-39). Furthermore, compared with *BBC*, *CNN*

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and *CBC*, Al-Jazeera's coverage of the war in Iraq focused on showing images of blood, tears, fear and anxiety of the Iraqi civilians in what was described as a "war of occupation" (Riegert, 2005, cited in El-Nawawy, 2006: 40); its approach to that war on Iraq focused on the humanitarian aspects, the loss of Iraqi civilians' lives, and the wide scale looting that took place after the fall of Saddam Hussein (Iskandar & El-Nawawy, 2004, cited in El-Nawawy, 2006: 40). Filz (2004) examined how British newspaper, *The Independent*, covered the events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent "War on Terror" in order to gain a better understanding of the British public's mediated "reality" of these events. The author concluded that America was portrayed as a victim and an overly dominant superpower that has been weakened as result of its own actions (p: 2).

Another important element in analysing framing is proximity. A news item must be meaningful for the audience before it becomes news (Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007: 72). Proximity, as Galtung and Ruge (1965) describe it, "makes an event more meaningful for a country and its audiences" (cited in Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007: 72). Researchers found that proximity affects news selection as well as the coverage and framing of news items (Entman, 1991; Grundmann *et al.* 2003; Kaid *et al.*, 1993, cited in Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007: 72). Gurevitch *et al.* (1991-2007) concluded that to be judged newsworthy, an event has to be anchored "in a narrative framework that is already familiar to and recognizable by newsmen as well as by audiences" (p: 72). Media coverage often characterizes terrorism as global or local, depending on the physical proximity and "local angle" of the attacks. For example, Schaefer (2003) found that proximity and local/national frames influenced the amount of coverage of the 1988 Kenya and Tanzania Embassy bombing in prominent African and US newspapers (pp: 110-11). Similarly, in a comparative framing analysis of *CNN* and Al-Jazeera's coverage of the war on terrorism in Afghanistan, meaningful differences emerged (Jasperson & El-Kikhia, 2003: 129-30). A majority of studies both before and after September 11<sup>th</sup>, found a marked tendency for national news outlets to frame international terrorist incidents in terms of domestic agendas (e.g., Achugar, 2004; Fawcett, 2002; Parry-Giles, 1995; Sadaba and La Porte, 2006, cited in Keranen & Sanprie, 2008: 243).

Taking the above findings into consideration, it is acknowledged that proximity is not itself a frame, but is rather a 'news value' contributing to the worthiness of a particular story for reporting by a given news outlet. That is to say, news media are more likely to broadcast stories of events that occur geographically close to their audiences. However, it must be noted that proximity is often a crucial aspect of the framing process, determining the context and

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focus of news frames that are applied to a story. In this sense it is also reasonable to suggest that a kind of binary framing occurs where an event is presented as ‘near’ (and therefore directly important to the audience) or ‘far’ (only indirectly affecting audience interests). Therefore, proximity has been included within the framing categories for the analytical purposes of the current study.

An important aspect when looking at the domestication of the news is a focus on official sources. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) explain: “Attributing statements is a key element of the objective ritual. It protects against accusations that they [journalists] have been manipulated. Source selection is, thus, one of many important framing devices used, particularly because relying on specific sources means framing the news from those sources’ perspectives” (p: 113). Entman (1993) writes that for breaking news events, initial interactions between sources and journalists initiate the framing process (cited in Fahmy, 2005: 384-85). In the discussion of the framing process, Pavlik (2001) and Wanta (2002) suggest sources of a news story determine the basic nature of the story and influence the flow of information through the media (cited in Fahmy, 2005: 384-85). Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) found that the elite newspaper in the US was more likely than the Swedish paper to rely on official government and military sources (p: 410). Scholars suggest that because the US media rely heavily on the government for their sources of information, their coverage typically reflects the US Government perspective (De Beer & Merrill, 2004; McQuail, 2005, cited in Fahmy & Johnson, 2010: 47). This is particularly true during wartime when the media are expected to support the government’s war aims through favourable coverage (Fahmy, 2005, 2007a, 2007b; Murray *et al.*, 2008, cited in Fahmy & Johnson, 2010: 46). Similarly, comparing *Al-Ahram* and *The New York Times*’ pre-war coverage, Ghanem (2005) found that *The Times* relied more heavily on US Sources whereas *Al-Ahram* used more Arabic sources (cited in Dimitrova & Connolly-Ahern, 2007: 156). Stampnitzky (2005) analysed references to experts on terrorism appearing in articles in *The New York Times* began referencing “terrorism experts” as a discrete group beginning only in 1973. However, prior to this time articles on terrorism tended to rely on experts with specific technical capabilities, such as explosives specialists, or military commentators who were not specifically noted as specialists in terrorism (cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 436).

Classifying groups has also been important in framing studies. Classification of groups not only makes it easy to recognise the source of danger, but also makes it easier for the decision makers to pursue appropriate procedures and solutions to encounter terrorism

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phenomena. Terrorism can be classified in terms of religion and geographic areas; in addition, it can be categorised according to the motivations of those who use it, which can be political, economic, or religious. Islamic radical groups have been found to be more likely to be framed as terrorists than any other groups (Nagar, 2007: 19). Analysis of major release film trailers found that the most frequent non-white ethnic group represented in primary terrorist portrayals after 9/11 was the Middle Eastern/Arabic group (Ivory *et al.*, 2007, cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 436). In his study of coverage of Muslims in the American media, Karim (2006) observed that the adjective 'Islam' is frequently used by journalists when describing the criminal activities of terrorists in ways that would not be conceivable when describing similar actions of people from other religions. He also notes that the frames used to portray Muslims are deeply entrenched and draw from cultural assumptions about Islam that have developed over many generations (p: 125). Some research shows that even before September 11, 2001, media frequently linked Arabs with violence and terrorism (Ross, 2003; Shaheen, 2001, cited in Saleem, 2008: 17).

Framing categories applied to victims can also play a role in the extent to which a news story will impact audiences. By being able to identify with the victims or their relatives, the target audience is more likely to feel empathy for their suffering (Fahmy, 2010; Persson, 2004). According to Barnett and Reynolds (2009), "news in the aftermath of a terrorist attack needs to be understood through the lens of nationalistic perception. When citizens are threatened by actual terrorists or the fear of future attacks, calls to consolidate around national identity are quite common" (p: 117). A case study of the war in Afghanistan found that possible civilian deaths as a result of the war were given less coverage because the victims were not American (Craft & Wanta, 2004). Recent framing analysis compares Al-Jazeera's and Al-Arabiya's coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict during the 2008/2009, and during a period of calm one year later. In that study, Elmasry *et al.* (2013) found that both networks used framing mechanisms to highlight Palestinian perspectives over Israeli ones and to frame Palestinian as victims of Israeli aggression. The networks regularly described Palestinian casualties and showed images of Palestinian grief, offered more airtime to Palestinian sources, and personalized Palestinian deaths (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 1).

Weimann and Winn (1994) believe that terrorism events satisfy the 12 determinants of media coverage proposed by Galtung and Ruge (1965) (cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 451). The news media cover terrorism because it frequently develops over a period of time, occurs in exotic locations, offers a clear confrontation, involves bizarre characters, and is politically

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noteworthy,' as well as being 'of concern of the public (Hoge, 1982: 91). This statement suggests that terrorism is in general newsworthy; however, because all such events are not covered equally, some terrorist events must be more newsworthy than others. For example, a suicide bombing at a checkpoint in Afghanistan is not covered as extensively as a train bombing in India, possibly because India is more politically and economically influential than Afghanistan (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 451). Scholars (e.g., Weimann & Brosius, 1991) have studied how factual characteristics of terrorist events, including the number of victims and damage to the infrastructure, affect news coverage. Their study showed that the number of victims, the type of action, and the identity of the perpetrators are the best predictors of the prominence of an event's coverage. Similarly, Weimann and Winn (1994) emphasize the importance of the extent of injuries and fatalities alongside other factors for predicting the prominence of coverage: Doing physical harm is a potent predictor. The presence of injuries doubles the prospects for attention in print and more than doubles the prospects in the case of television. When no one dies, the probability of print coverage is only (22%). But this jumps to (48%) when at least one person is murdered. The presence of one or more fatalities is one of the very highest predictors for both types of media (p: 128).

Another aspect of framing is the use of episodic versus thematic frames. Iyengar's (1991) analysis of television news distinguishes between episodic and thematic news framing. His study found that exposure to episodic reporting makes viewers less likely to hold public officials accountable for terrorist events or to hold them responsible for solving it. As defined by Iyengar, "causal responsibility focuses on the origin of a problem, while treatment responsibility focuses on who or what has the power to alleviate the problem" (p: 8). "By presenting the news in either thematic or episodic form, the story influences attributions of responsibility both for the creation of terrorism (causal responsibility) and for the resolution of terrorism (treatment responsibility)" (Iyengar, 1991: 3). As with television news coverage of terrorism before September 11, the responsibility frame was widely used regarding terrorism post-September 11. Some studies found that the mainstream media coverage, principally television, evoked a dominant frame that advanced twin notions of American victimisation and the need for militaristic justice, providing the de facto lens through which these events were understood. Portraying America as the innocent victim of an unwarranted attack created a context in which retribution was necessary (Monahan, 2010: 65). Powerful visual and verbal frames argued to viewers that the events of September 11

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comprised an horrific act of war, necessitating immediate military retaliation (Reynolds & Barnett, 2003: 86).

Research has shown that the news media tended to frame terrorism before 9/11 episodically rather than thematically (see for example Iyengar, 1991). After the September 11, news coverage of terrorism became thematic; functioning ultimately to reinforce support for political leaders and the security policies they implement (Norris *et al.*, 2003: 1). In the US thematic media coverage of terrorism carried out by Muslims is kept at the forefront, while downplaying terrorist events by non-Muslims who are also US citizens. The excessive coverage of terrorism coupled with how the acts are covered, succeeds in intensifying fear of the other (Powell, 2011: 108). Thus, understanding how terrorism is framed in media can help us understand how a pattern of media coverage develops, heightening fear and supporting the idea of a “clash of civilizations,” which ultimately affects international relations and public policy (Powell, 2011: 93).

Previous research has also demonstrated that official sources are frequently cited in terrorism coverage, with prominence over other voices (see for example Nacos, 2002-6; Ryan, 2004; Entman, 1989; Aday *et al.*, 2005; Groshek, 2008; Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007). Entman (1991-2003) suggests that frames can range from total dominance to total frame parity (1993: 52); dominance represents one-sidedness in framing of a particular issue, and frame parity represents the existence of counter-frames. In order to achieve parity, news must offer a “complete alternative narrative, a tale of problem, cause, remedy, and moral judgment (2003: 418), unfortunately, “frame parity is the exception, not the rule” (p: 418). If the media framing of terrorism is one-sided then individuals will be left with nothing to evaluate (Brinson & Stohl., 2009: 229), only the viewpoints and symbolic images of the dominant media frame can be used in forming judgments. The literature suggests this was the case in the US and other Western mainstream news media coverage in the months before the US invasion of Iraq. Norris argues that “a one-sided message regarding terrorism will influence public perceptions of future risks and threats, and shape public policy agenda” (Norris *et al.*, 2003: 8).

In conclusion, the literature reviewed above indicates that framing analysis has previously been used as a theoretical framework to examine media coverage of terrorism. Framing theory suggests that the media have the power to select what is covered and how items are presented. In this context a frame is a “central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context” and suggests a basis for the “use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and

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elaboration” (Tankard *et al.*, 1991: 3). Media frames organize the world, both for journalists who report it and for consumers who rely on their reports (Gitlin, 1980: 7). Entman (1993) argues that, to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text (p: 52).

### **4.4 Public Response to Media Coverage of Terrorism**

When the social order is seriously disrupted, people usually desire more information to understand what is going on and to minimise uncertainty (Schlesinger, Murdock, & Elliott, 1983, cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 433). Network and cable news, newspapers, the internet, and radio are the main sources of public information and they are enormously accessible (Forest, 2006). For example, the attacks on the World Trade Centre Towers and Pentagon, were captured on film and relayed to billions viewers and internet users worldwide (Frey, 2004: 121-22). At least one survey conducted by *Los Angeles Times* on September 13-14, 2001, found, (83%) of respondents said they watched the news very closely, (15%) closely, and (2%) not too closely (Nacos, 2002: 61). Media in crisis situation such as terrorist events plays a crucial role in shaping the public’ perception of the terrorist threat.

Because terrorist attacks immediately result in increased viewer attention to the media, the content of that media is extremely important (Krueger, 2008:132). The September 11 attacks were mainly aimed to make fear and panic situation among American population, and as result of that, there was a study of 1500 people over the six months following the 9/11 attacks, those findings “confirm the role of television in shaping psychological reactions to a terrorist event. American who watched television news more frequently reported higher levels of fear and anxiety after 9/11. The visual imagery of TV seems to be the key to the heightened levels of fear and anxiety among avid media consumers (Goodin, 2006: 136).

Similarly, Slone (2000) carried out an experiment, where she exposed participants from different groups in society to television news clips of both terrorism and threats to national security, or of other events, not related to terrorism. A significant relation between watching terrorism related news footage and a heightened state of anxiety were found. This experiment researched immediate impact only, and did not consider the longer term effects (Slone, 2000: 514-15).

These longer term effects were researched, for instance, in a study to the effects of the Oklahoma bombing on children living 100 miles away from Oklahoma. The start of the research project, two years after the attack, coincided with the trial against Timothy

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McVeigh, who carried it out. Many children who only knew about the attack from the media (and did not have any relatives or acquaintances who were involved) still suffered from post-traumatic stress symptoms. In addition, this study found that print media have more influence than broadcast media (Pfefferbaum, 2003, cited in Javaid, 2012: 161). At the same time, several other studies found the contrary, namely that broadcast media have a larger impact on the public than newspapers in “dramatic” and “short-term” events such as terrorism (See for instance Leff *et al.*, 1986, cited in Javaid, 2012: 161).

It is important to keep a dissenting argument in mind. Although most literature focuses on how media coverage of terrorist incidents helps terrorists frighten people and thus bring their goals closer, there are some authors that focus on the other side of the coin as well, and argue that media attention does not necessarily lead to an environment that is more advantageous for terrorists. For instance, Brian Jenkins (1981) wrote that “terrorists obtain much publicity through the news media, but not the propaganda they usually want” (p: 3). Paul Wilkinson (2006) has added that “the terrorist believes in the ultimate inevitability of a collapse of will on the part of the adversary. Even on the face of it this is a somewhat naive assumption. Why should people subjected to threats behave with such docility and weakness?” (p: 152). Finally, Bruce Hoffman (2006) remarked that: “While most terrorists certainly crave the attention that the media eagerly provide, the publicity that they receive cuts both ways. The public attitudes and reactions that they hope to shape by their violent actions are both less predictable and less malleable than either the terrorists or the pundits believe (p: 188). Hoffman (2006) could find “only one clear impact on the public resulting from media coverage on terrorism: a reduced willingness to travel by airplane” (pp: 189-190).

In short, previous research suggests that there is some sort of relationship between media attention and the public threat perception, although they often disagree and find it hard to pinpoint the exact variables. The amount of media attention may not be the only factor, or even the most important one. Intervening variables may be involved that intensify the effects. Examples are the sort of media outlet and the news source. At the same time media attention to terrorism may not change public opinion favourably from a terrorist point of view, it may turn out to be counterproductive for them (Transnational Terrorism, Security and the Rule of Law, 2008).

### **4.5 Journalists' Reactions to Terrorism**

The public relies on journalists to report important events as they occur, identify the most salient figures, and explain the happenings in a comprehensible manner (Winfield et al., 2002: 289). The breaking news coverage of 9/11 put different pressures on journalists as compared to traditional reporting (Reynolds & Barnett, 2003, cited in Blue, 2008: 22). Time restrictions made it difficult for journalists to gather enough information and make sure that information was correct. The news media shared content with each other to provide the public with new information as quickly as possible (Kirkpatrick, 2003, cited in Blue, 2008: 22). Journalists us[ed] multiple roles to deliver information including that of expert and social commentator; they reported rumours, sources, and frequently included personal references in their reporting regardless of the role they assumed (Reynolds & Barnett, 2003: 101-02).

As the days progressed, the frame of September 11 moved from a 'sphere of legitimate controversy' (objective and balance) to a 'sphere of consensus' (shared assumptions, views and values) (Jaworski *et al.*, 2005). The news media shifted the frame from reporting facts to developing an interpersonal approach of 'keep in touch' with the viewers because little new information was available (Carey, 2003; Jaworski *et al.*, 2005, cited in Blue, 2008: 23). Journalists used emotion to orient the viewer's so they did not feel alone in the aftermath. Thus, news anchors kept talking with or, more important, without a script. The result ended up with "filled and unfilled pauses, hesitations, false and repetition, expression of uncertainty about the reported facts, hedging, irrelevant talk, mood reporting, interruption, and so on" (Jaworski *et al.*, 2005: 139). The uncertainty of how to frame post-September 11 faded with the government's framework: the "War on Terror" (Blue, 2008: 23).

### **4.6 The US Government and the Narrative**

Media coverage of terrorism post-September 11, 2001, went from informing the public of the events to developing a melodrama (Anker, 2005). To Lule (2002), *The New York Times* offered the myth of the victim, called out for vengeance, and built support for survivors (p: 286). The media set the stage for the eternal battle of 'good' versus 'evil'. They enlisted images and characters through moralistic positions and arranged them with a plot line (Anker, 2005, cited in Blue, 2008: 23). A narrative was structured in which America was knocked down but picked itself up and became the hero. The president exploited that narrative and presented an old framework but with new categories; the 'War on Terror' had been used before to define a broad range of terrorist acts but President Bush on September 20, 2001,

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specifically highlighted al-Qaeda and the Taliban as terrorist groups. From there, “the coverage was for the most part coverage of the actions of the US government, and the main source for that news was the president” (Stemple & Hargrove, 2003: 55).

News media used the frames provided by the government to develop a narrative concerning 9/11. The information cascaded from the administration to other political elites and then to the news media (Billeaudeau *et al.*, 2003a; Entman, 2007). The government created symbolic meaning by discussing future scenarios using the news media as a conduit that echoed the administration’s framework. Furthermore, journalists used government officials as sources to provide context for the framework reinforcing certain symbolic themes and narratives (Ryan, 2004). The news media continued to rely on government officials and sources for story content giving them control over the output of the narrative (cited in Blue, 2008: 24).

Slant bias was prevalent in post-September 11 America. The news media mainly covered voices that were homogeneous (Billeaudeau *et al.*, 2003b), which provided the public with a frame of unified support for the President’s policies to react militarily in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some voices called for the military to move into Saudi Arabia, not into Iraq, but those in the counter frame were not political figures and thus did not receive coverage (Billeaudeau *et al.*, 2003b, Entman, 2007, cited in Blue, 2008: 24).

To Robinson (2007), by refusing access to certain documents and opening others the government shifted the way the news media gathered information. This type of strategic communication or content bias was used to control mediated messages, to create a positive reception for the government’s policies and increase patriotism among the American public. This seemed to have worked; the American public put forth a high degree of American patriotism, with people displaying flags in their homes, at workplaces, and on their vehicles. Once Americans were aware of the terrorist attacks, they were motivated to pray for the victims, give blood, donate funds, and take other actions (Rogers, 2003, cited in Blue, 2008: 24-25).

The 9/11 attacks were not simply an American affair; they also sent shock waves around the world (Dallmayr, 2002: 141). World leaders gave support to the US through condemning the violence of the events and by sharing military intelligence (Buonanno, 2002; Winfield *et al.*, 2002). Support also came through their acceptance and use of the ‘War on Terror’ framework. And, in most cases, the ‘War on Terror’ was recontextualized to fit local

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historical and future actions taken by foreign governments and gain support from the West (Erjavec & Volcic, 2007, cited in Blue, 2008: 25).

Some of foreign news media used the images and narratives from 9/11 to condemn the violence and to show support for the US and their foreign policy (Chakravartty, 2002; Erjavec & Volcic, 2007). This was especially true if the government held influence over social discourse (Alozie, 2006; Yinbo, 2002). In many countries, journalists used government officials as key sources and characters in the aftermath of 9/11. The news media held close ties to the government in countries like India, Serbia, and Russia, became a conduit for their government's perspective and policies. The foreign news media also used the 'us' versus 'them' frame as a premise for their arguments (Erjavec & Volcic, 2007). In many cases, Muslims became terrorist and past events involving Muslims were reset in a negative perspective (cited in Blue, 2008: 25-6).

After 9/11, many countries recontextualized the 'War on Terror' to create policy concerning local terrorism. Government officials in some countries extended the meaning of the word 'terrorism' to all the violent acts carried out by Muslims regardless of the specificities of contents. The 'war on terror' frame was also used to reduce and restrict press freedom by government intervention. In such areas as Russia and the Pacific region including Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia, the political elite, government official, and the leaders from the news media compromised on how to limit reports on terrorism (Pearson & Busst, 2006; Simmons & Strovsky, 2006).

### **4.7 Summary**

The chapter has discussed previous research into media framing of terrorism before, during and after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. The discussion also included the results of previous research measuring public responses to terrorist-related news reporting, as well as providing examples of US and foreign media reaction to the September 11 attacks and their after-effects.

The studies reviewed above appear to suggest that certain frames (e.g., those of conflict, human interest, the military, and responsibility) are more common than others in the media reporting of terrorism (e.g., de Vreese, 2005; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Although different networks will tend to cover the same principal issues, similar stories may be framed differently within that coverage. Past research also indicates that government sources tend to play a major role in news coverage of terrorism. It furthermore reveals that news coverage

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can be influenced by other factors including the norms and values of individual journalists, organisational constraints, ownership, funding, political affiliation, and competition in the news market (Stephens, 1980; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; McManus, 1994, cited in de Vreese, 2005: 43). In the coverage of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, attacks, research has shown that US media tended to focus on the government perspective, which yielded public support for Afghanistan and Iraq wars (Shah *et al.*, 2008: 239). In this regard, the current research will examine to what extent Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya tend to present alternative perspectives in their coverage of terrorism. Entman's functions of media frames are useful in the current study for analysing how the sources used in news broadcasts contribute to defining terrorism, and the placing of blame or responsibility. How Arab journalists, officials and experts framed responses to the problem of terrorism will be a crucial part of the analysis. Based on past research, this study combines content analysis and critical discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is based on the concept that language use is positioned within a wider framework of thought, experience and society (Matheson, 2005, cited in Guzun, 2008: 14). To assess the prominence of coverage of specific news events, researchers have previously used content analysis to consider types of news frames, and the frequency, placement and length of stories (Fahmy, & El-Amad, 2011: 219). However, content analysis does not consider the ways in which news broadcasters add meaning to the news, nor does it provide context. Explicit, manifest content provides only part of a text's meaning (Reese *et al.*, 2001: 31). Symbolic elements of vocabulary, theme, syntax, and rhetoric are also crucial to determining how text creates meaning (see Reese *et al.*, 2001). Discourse analysis is applied in this study to understand the link between discursive practice (power relations) and the broader social and cultural developments and structures. Language extracts taken from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya broadcasts will be compared, taking into consideration different contextual factors that contribute to the production and consumption of news discourse about terrorism.

The next chapter will discuss the development of news broadcasting in the Arab world. It will pay particular attention to the history of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya news channels, the principal subjects of the current research. A review of previous literature concerning the contrasting coverage of events provided by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya will highlight visible differences between the two news outlets, and facilitate an examination of their respective broadcasting strategies. Both networks are subject to different institutional, political and ideological perspectives, and this may impact the ways they deal with their

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respective sponsors' interests in their coverage of political violence and terrorism (Lahlali, 2011: 115).

## **Chapter 5 News Development in the Arab World**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to trace and explore the development of news broadcasting in the contemporary Arab world. It will begin by offering an historical overview of Arab media and the establishment and continuing development of satellite broadcasting channels and move on to discuss the history of Arab media and Arab nationalism. The discussion will also examine in brief the political and social context of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the main founders of Al-Arabiya and Al-Jazeera TV networks. Both channels claim to offer journalistic objectivity and balanced coverage, viewing events from a specifically Arab perspective; however, both are apparently influenced by differing political and institutional concerns (see Auter, 2008, Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 729), which give rise to important differences in their coverage of terrorist activity.

To Fandy (2007), many Western analysts have focused exclusively on anti-American message of Bin Laden's video tapes aired on Al-Jazeera (p: 51). Yet, as Fandy explains, Arab media is not shaped merely by an East versus West conflict, but is driven by intra-regional conflicts, including rivalries between state actors, such as Egypt vs. Saudi Arabia, and more recently Saudi Arabia vs. Qatar and Syria vs. Lebanon, or even Morocco vs. Algeria (p: 39). This chapter will present an example of one such rivalry, namely that between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, (see Fandy, 2007: 39). However, before doing so, a brief historical review of Arab media and satellite channels is useful to help understand and contextualise the development of Arab media.

### **5.2 Overview of the Development of the Arab Media**

The first Arabic printing press was set in Aleppo in Syria in 1706 and in Egypt by Mohamed Ali Pasha in 1819. Then the spread of print media reached Morocco (1802), Egypt (1828), Tunisia (1838), Syria (1865), Iraq (1869), and Libya (1866) (Abd al-Rahman, 1996: 16-22). Egypt was the first Arab state to start radio service in the 1920s (Boyd, 1993: 17), and was then followed by countries such as Tunisia, Morocco, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Algeria and Syria (Lahlali, 2011: 11). Since 1797, when Napoleon invaded Egypt, the Turkish rule of Arab lands, and Christian missionaries have all contributed to the introduction of print media to Arab societies (Ayish, 2001a). These print media and radio were typically under the control of Arab government (Lahlali, 2011: 9).

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Ayish (2001a) divides the development of Arab media into colonial and post-colonial phases; the colonial phase was geared towards developing media technologies in order to promote the colonial propaganda message. The post-colonial phase was different in its focus and approach, characterised by attempts to shape media as a tool in order to serve national transformation and independence (Ayish, 2001a). An increase in literacy brought a growing demand for Arab print and broadcast media. To meet this unprecedented demand, training centres and university courses were established to train journalists and media experts to take on this task (Ayish, 2001a). This stage extended until the end of the 1980s (Lahlali, 2011). The later part of the post-colonial phase was characterised by the advent of new media technologies. These technologies contributed to the rapid distribution of media information in the Arab world, and in some cases managed to circumvent governments' control of media and information (Ayish, 1991). This stage witnessed a revolution in the expansion of digital media. Political developments in the region in the 1990s, including the first Gulf War, gave this media the opportunity to test its technology. One of the key elements of this type of media is its transnational broadcast; viewers across the globe tuned in to watch the war as it broke (cited in Lahlali, 2011: 10).

At first, Arab broadcasting institutions were mostly owned and controlled by the state (Amin, 2001); however, over the last decade or so, Arab governments have opened up to the idea of diverse media outlets that can be owned by private institutions. These media have created a new broadcasting culture where sensitive and taboo issues are discussed and debated within the state code of media practice (Lahlali, 2001: 27). Arab governments have maintained a desire to centralise the media in order to preserve national unity and culture. Radio and television are powerful weapons in the hand of the Arab government because they use them as a channel through which to publicise their political ideas, stifling opposition who lack these means of communication, especially since the majority of the Arab public are illiterate and do not have access to other means of communication (Boyd & Amin, 1993: 79).

Television came rather late to the Arab world, with the first channel launched in the mid-1950s. The arrival of television channels induced governments to invest in hiring expertise and developing means of communication. Universities across the Arab world started focusing on communication and media studies. This phase can be characterised as a governmental attempt to keep both media and expertise under its protective wings (Lahlali, 2011: 28). Historically TV stations in Arab countries operated from within ministries of information and were funded by governments. Overall the media in these countries enjoyed

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few press freedoms and Arab people had little reason to trust the information they received from their government controlled media (see e.g., Rugh, 2004). Governments in the Arab world held a monopoly over television, based on the belief that television should serve as a government operation designed to promote national development goals (Fahmy & Johnson, 2007b). For decades local TV stations in the Arab world mainly presented protocol news. These included shots of heads of state delivering long speeches in line with government policies (Seib, 2007). However, Lynch (2006) and other media scholars suggested that after the first Gulf War the rise of Arabic satellite news stations (such as Al-Jazeera, and Al-Arabiya) largely eliminated Arab governments' monopoly over the news and served to positively transform the Arab region politically and culturally (Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 279-80).

The dominance of *CNN's* unfiltered coverage of the first Gulf War made Arab governments realise for the first time the importance of transnational media (Lahlali, 2011: 34). The success of *CNN's* broadcasting and hegemony over the dissemination of news induced some Arab governments and media organisations to launch new satellite channels (Vogt, 2002). This led to the creation of the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (*MBC*) in 1991, which was geared towards marrying entertainment and education. The inclusion of an entertainment aspect came about because of fierce competition from some private media companies. Also launched in response to *CNN's* dominance were Arab Radio and Television (*ART*), *ORBIT* and the Egyptian Satellite Channel (*ESC*) (Lahlali, 2011: 35). Scholars agree that the rise of these networks has caused Arab governments to use state-of-the art technology and to encourage more professional-style news-gathering and broadcasting (Ayish, 2001, 2004; Johnson & Fahmy, 2010; Seib, 2007). Private television services also experienced an increase. Some of the most active channels were Future Television International (Lebanon), the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (*LBC*), Al-Jazeera, Arab News Network (*ANN*) based in London and Al-Arabiya based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These private media channels have contributed to the dissemination of news information beyond the geographical boundaries of their headquarters. The advent of these satellite channels has put Arab state television under enormous pressure. Arab governments have found it extremely difficult to control the flow of unfiltered information generated by these satellites (Lahlai, 2011; Ayish, 1991-2001, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 730).

These developments of the transnational Arab satellite channels have had a major impact on Arab viewers, and can be seen as a phenomenon that promised to change public opinion in the Arab world (Ghareeb, 2000; Kraidy, 1998). Private Arabic TV channels have

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brought to Arab viewers new programming types that continue to be distinctive features of Arab government TV services (Ayish, 2001).

It should also be briefly noted that the internet is seen as a growing medium of communication across the Arab world. The internet provides Arab users with the opportunity to search information socialise through different social networks, browse the current national news, and access international news and information which is not necessarily compatible with the news and information imparted by the local media. Some Arab users employ the internet to debate issues and express their own opinions on matters related to their own interest (Lahlai, 2011: 42).

### **5.3 Arab Media and Arab Nationalism**

As newly independent Arab states in the 1950s and 1960s tried to define themselves in the postcolonial era, the main role of their media became the consolidation of national identity. The definition of Arab identity and Arab nationalism was essentially a battlefield between various centres of power (Fandy, 2007: 40).

On July 4, 1953, Cairo Radio broadcast its first programme, *Sawt Al-Arab* (Voice of the Arabs) (Lahlali, 2011: 12), airing anti-colonial messages. Later, Voice of the Arabs became a major station, broadcasting the Egyptian regime's ideology for eighteen hours each day across the Arab world (James, 2006); it mobilised the Arab nationalist group who staged a coup d'état in Baghdad in 1958, and contributed to overthrow of the Imam of Yemen in 1962. The royal family of Saudi Arabia were under close scrutiny and constant attack from the Voice of the Arabs in its programme *Enemies of God*. This led the Saudis to launch their own radio station in response (Lahlali, 2011: 13). In 1963, King Faisal announced a plan to launch a national television service in Saudi Arabia. The decision was motivated by several reasons; television was a vital instrument of modernization and there was a need for it in order to cater to a growing Saudi professional class; there was the need to counter hostile propaganda from Egypt, still reaching Saudis through radio; television was also an educational and developmental tool; finally, television would foster national unity (Kraidy *et al.*, 2011: 295-6).

Before discussing media system in Saudi Arabia, a brief review of political system in the Kingdom is essential. Fandy's (2007) argues, ignoring the history of the region and the specific histories of its local politics will undoubtedly limit any analysis of the Arab media (p: 3). Because this study mainly examines the main two media players in the Arab world

“Al-Jazeera” and “Al-Arabiya”, it will pay particular attention to the social and political histories of Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

### **5.4 Political System in Saudi Arabia**

When the Saudi royal family established their kingdom in the Arabian Peninsula in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, they used the fundamentalist religious ideas of Wahhabism, a strict interpretation of Islamic teachings, going back to the preaching of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who rose to importance in the eighteenth century (Hammond, 2007: 96). The tribes of the interior adopted Wahhabism quickly, and began a jihad to spread it, attacking the tribes living on the shores of the Gulf. These attacks continued throughout the nineteenth century, including assaults on tribes of Kuwait, Oman and the Qasimi tribes now living in the UAE, some of whom also adopted Wahhabism (Bahry *et al.*, 2013: 254). It became the ideology of Arab nationalism that was employed by Arab leaders to gain independence from the Ottoman Turkish Empire. When the founder of Saudi Arabia, Ibn-Saud, gained control of the religious centres of Mecca and Medina in the 1920s, he established Wahhabism as the official creed of the new state (Atkins, 2004: 337).

Wahhabism now dominates all aspects of Saudi life, from social relationships to the law. The religious police (*mutawwa*) in Saudi Arabia make certain that all Saudi citizens adhere to Wahhabi practices. Government authorities in Saudi Arabia persecute non-Wahhabi brands of Islam, including other Sunni sects. These officials give special attention to what the Wahhabis consider the “heretical Shi’ites”. Wahhabism has been exported by the Saudi royal government throughout the Middle East and to any place where Muslims reside (Atkins, 2004: 337).

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy under the control of the Saudi royal family, direct male descendants of King Abdul Al-Aziz, more commonly known as Ibn-Saud. Although they have no institutional limits on their power, in practice their authority is confined by tradition, *Sharia* (Islamic law), and pressure groups within the vast royal family. The king appoints his own successor from the royal princes; although in practice his choice must receive the support of clear majority of the approximately 500 potential candidates for this position, following the Basic Law, a decree issued in 1992 by then King Fahd (Bowen, 2008: 14). Saudi Arabia does not have a modern written constitution; the government claims that the only constitution that Saudi Arabia needs is the Quran. Religious leaders can give

advice to the monarch, but his are the final decisions, even in matters of religious law (Ibid, p: 14).

### **5.4.1 The Rise of Islamism in Saudi Media**

In 1967, Arab armies were experiencing humiliating defeats at the hands of the Israelis, while Voice of the Arabs continued to report on fictional military victories (Al-Rabei, 2005, cited in Fandy, 2007: 42). When the Arab public learned the truth about the magnitude of the defeat, this breach of trust created a chasm between Voice of the Arabs and its audience. Meanwhile, one idea that dominated the Arab world after the military defeat was that Israel's religious piety, not its technological or military superiority, led to its victory over the Arabs. The remedy proposed was that for the Arabs to thrive and win the battle against their enemies, they had to return to the teaching of Allah (Fandy, 2007: 42).

As a result, media during the 1970s and later promoted symbols of Islam (e.g., historical dramas of Muslims during the glorious days of Islam). They made use of the new atmosphere of piety and the domains of Islam as a symbol of collectivity. This had interregional effects. In these shows, the attire approximated to that of the Gulf dress and Arabic dialect moved away from the previously dominant Cairo dialect and closer to the dialect of the Gulf region, especially of that of Saudi Arabia (Fandy, 2007: 42). At that time, many workers from all over the Arab world had started to work in the Gulf due to the oil boom. They became familiarised with the habits and customs of the people of the Gulf. These traditional habits were presented as authentically Islamic back home, echoing the message of the historical dramas. Gradually, Islamism started to take hold in most Arab societies (Ibid, p: 42).

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, the Iranian revolution in 1979 has had also an influence on some of Arab regions. A new brand of Islamism emerged with the victory of Khomeini's revolution in Iran. The Iranian revolution was all about media. Everything was reported live on TV. The Arabs became more enthusiastic about their own brand of Islam when they saw seat of Islam being moved from the lands of the Arabs to Persian land (Fandy, 2007: 43). Saudi Arabia later enlisted Egypt and Iraq and the rest of the Arabs to battle the Persian bid for dominance of the Middle East. Saudi Arabia, armed with its particular brand of Islam and with oil money, became the centre of Arab politics (Long, 1997: 19). Saudi Arabia has realized the success and the impact of Voice of the Arabs, thus, the Kingdom adopted a strategy of using the media to drive its own political objectives (Fandy, 2007: 43).

### 5.4.2 The Saudi Broadcasting Media

Historically, radio began in 1949 after the government debated the issue with the Ulema, the religious leaders, who at the beginning rejected the idea of introducing radio broadcast to the country (Amin, 1996: 135). Faisal, soon to become crown prince and later king, was put in charge of Saudi Arabian broadcasting. Radio broadcasting in Saudi Arabia progressed during the 1950s and 1960s because of the government's interest in decreasing the size of the audience of foreign broadcasts. After the October 1973 Middle East War, radio broadcasting witnessed a tremendous improvement due to a greatly increased budget arising from growth of oil revenues. Radio services in Saudi Arabia are composed of the General Programme, the Holy Quran Broadcast, the International Foreign Language Programme, and the European Services. Both radio and television in Saudi Arabia has a religious tone because Saudi Arabia is considered to be the centre of the Islamic World (Boyd, 1993: 137-147, cited in Amin, 1996: 135).

TV transmission in Saudi Arabia started in 1965 covering the major cities of the Kingdom; the whole of the Arabian Gulf had coverage by 1977 (Boyd, 1999 cited in Gunter *et al.*, 2013: 32). Arab countries had launched their own satellite system, ARABSAT, in 1985, and the first Arab satellite television station that came into existence was the Egyptian Space Channel in 1990. This was followed by the introduction of Nile TV International, broadcasting both in English and French (and now in Hebrew), and a second Egyptian satellite channel (Abdulla *et al.*, 2010: 67). As direct broadcast satellite (DBS) technology was introduced to the Arab world, satellite dishes began to penetrate Arab markets as satellite transmissions grew stronger and the cost of satellite dishes declined, and a huge new market for media consumption opened up for investors. Satellite adoption skyrocketed within three to five years, particularly in the affluent Gulf area (Abdulla *et al.*, 2010: 67).

In Saudi Arabia, by the time the Gulf War ended, investors related to or closely associated with the monarchy had realised the importance of satellite channels as a powerful political, economic, and development tool. They reacted quickly by establishing three major satellite networks, the first of which was the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (*MBC*), launched in 1991 and based in London. *MBC* strived to produce *CNN*-style news bulletins, in addition to drama and entertainment for the Arab family. The channel's credibility in terms of news production soon earned it a solid reputation in the Arab world. In 1994, Saudi investors established Arab Radio and Television (*ART*), based in Italy, a private network composed of over twenty specialised entertainment channels which gained popularity in the Arab world as

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well as with Arab expatriates around the world. (Abdulla *et al.*, 2010: 68). Lead investor Saleh Kamel announced: “All of these [channels] are (100%) in conformity with Islamic values” (Fandy, 2007: 44). *ART* does not offer news services on any of its channels (Abdulla *et al.*, 2010: 68-69). Also in 1994, and also based in Italy, the *Orbit* network was established carrying over sixty channels, most of which carry English-language programming (Ibid, pp: 68-69).

Saudi Arabia has a history of controlling the media (Zuhur, 2012: 374). *ART*, although based outside Saudi Arabia, follows censorship rules similar to those of the official Saudi terrestrial television programming, which ban “criticism of religion, political systems or those in authority and [forbid] scenes showing smoking, dancing, consumption of alcohol, gambling, crime, non-Muslim religious symbols or places of worship, female singers or sports-women, unmarried couples alone together or people of the opposite sex showing affection for each other” (Fandy, 2007: 44). There remains continuing government ownership and operation of all channels (terrestrial and satellite) based on Saudi territory. There are currently five channels, including the all-news channels *al-Ekhbariya* which was launched in 2004, within a media reform plan that included revamping existing channels and launching a sports channel, designed to lure Saudi viewers to state television in the wake of their migration to commercial satellite channels (Kraidy *et al.*, 2011: 296).

### 5.4.3 Al-Arabiya Network

Part of the (*MBC*) media group based in Dubai’s Media City, Al-Arabiya was established in 2003 as a direct competitor to Al-Jazeera (Tatham, 2006: 73-73). *MBC* was founded by King Fahd’s brother-in-law Walid Al-Ibrahim, commonly seen as the front-man for the King’s son Prince Abdel-Aziz. Saudis launched Al-Arabiya after 8 years of attacks by Al-Jazeera on the Saudi political order and the Saudi royal family (Fandy, 2007: 53). Al-Arabiya’s director of operations Sam Barnett explained how the channel came about: “There was a perception that Arab media was dominated by Al-Jazeera and that they had a certain line that was populist, heading towards sensationalist, and that there was a gap for a more considered and less sensationalist approach” (cited in Tatham, 2006: 74).

Designed to be an independent voice and modelled on Al-Jazeera’s style of broadcasting, Al-Arabiya tried to provide multiple perspectives on news events, with a focus on news of interest to Arab viewers (Zayani & Ayish, 2006), although it avoided the talk shows that have generated many of the criticisms levelled toward Al-Jazeera (Lynch, 2006),

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Al-Arabiya emphasized instead hourly news bulletins, commentaries, business, sports and documentaries (Zayani & Ayish, 2006, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 730). As Zayani and Ayish (2006) explain:

“Al-Arabiya strives to match Al-Jazeera’s proclaimed independence while avoiding its provocative style, eschewing its sensationalistic appeal, insisting on making a clear distinction between fact and opinion, and steering clear from the politics of other Arab and especially Gulf countries. By and large, Al-Arabiya pitched itself as a neutral channel that cares for Arab interests and staying away from pursuing ambiguous agendas and other parties’ interests” (p: 483).

Indeed, Al-Arabiya has presented itself as being more moderate and mainstream than Al-Jazeera. As chief editor Abdul Rahman al-Rashed explained, “We attract liberal-minded people. Al-Jazeera attracts fanatics” (*The Economist*, 2005). The more moderate tone has even extended to the Iraq War coverage. For instance, while Al-Jazeera focused on civilian and Iraqi resistance during the marine offensive against Fallujah, Al-Arabiya portrayed the event as the storming of a terrorist haven; critics of Al-Arabiya have claimed that its content is more controlled than Al-Jazeera because it reflects loyalty to both Saudi Arabia and the US (*The Economist*, 2005; Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 730). Al-Arabiya has been critical of those championing Arab nationalism and political Islam, both of which have been regarded as a threat to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Lahlali, 2011: 111); some consider Al-Arabiya to have taken the same line as the Saudi government when dealing with Islamists. The Saudi government expressed its commitment to fighting extremist views, especially those calling for the overthrow of the Saudi regime for its collaboration with the West (Hammond, 2007: 5).

Although Al-Arabiya has taken a more moderate approach than Al-Jazeera to the Iraq War (Blake, 2005; Zayani & Ayish, 2006), it has also emphasized the human toll of the conflict in terms of civilian deaths (Fahmy & Johnson, 2007a) as well as broadcast messages from insurgents and shown visuals of slain soldiers (Blake, 2005). Also, similar to Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya has suffered the consequences. Both satellite stations were locked out of official press conferences by the Iraqi government and Al-Arabiya’s Baghdad office was shut down for more than two months. Further, a car bomb exploded outside Al-Arabiya’s compound in 2004, collapsing the first floor and killing five employees (Blake, 2005, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 330-31).

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According to an audience poll by IPSOS-STAT, Al-Arabiya has surpassed Al-Jazeera in ratings among Arab audiences (Snyder, 2006a). However, polls by Zogby International (Aslawats, 2006) and Shibley Telhami (2008), reported Al-Jazeera is the first choice for international news among (45%) of Arab audiences surveyed. Regarding the credibility of Al-Arabiya, in a survey in of a 150 students that were randomly selected from the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, Ayish (2004) found the credibility of Al-Arabiya ranking third, behind Al-Jazeera and the Abu Dhabi TV channels. The Arab Advisors group (2004), however, rated Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya channels as equally credible (cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 731).

### **5.5 Political System in Qatar**

The “majority of Arab world is governed by authoritarian regimes” (Jefferis, 2009: 52). In Qatar, “the Emir, Sheikh Hamad, replaced his father in a palace coup in June 1995 and has been perceived as a representative of a new, progressive generation of Arab Gulf leaders” (Blanchard, 2008; Wright, 2009, cited in Figenschou, 2014: 32). Qatar’s permanent constitution of 2005 formalised the Qatari tradition that the rule of the state is hereditary within the Al-Thani family, added clarity to Qatar’s political system, and underlined the importance of the rule of law (Wright, 2011: 122, cited in Figenschou, 2014: 32). The Emir still exercises full executive power and the ruling elite is also the *de facto* owner of the country’s vast economic resources, which derive mainly from Qatar’s position in the international gas markets (Mansour, 2007; Wright, 2009, cited in Figenschou, 2014: 33). Although a series of national elections and democratic reforms have been held in Qatar recently, the government maintains strict limits on freedom of assembly and association (Blanchard, 2008: 3).

Wahhabism spread to Qatar in the nineteenth century, after conflict between the non-Wahhabi Al-Khalifa family ruling in Bahrain, and the Wahhabi Al-Thani that came to rule Qatar. Religious differences added to tribal and territorial feuds (Bahry *et al.*, 2013: 254). Today the extreme teachings of Wahhabism have been considerably moderated in Qatar, particularly when compared to Saudi Arabia. Differences in lifestyle between Saudi Arabia and Qatar are noticeable, although both are officially ‘Wahhabi’. For example, women in Qatar enjoy much more freedom than they do in Saudi Arabia. They are allowed to work in public spaces, they can vote and run in elections, they have the right to drive, and can follow a more relaxed dress code if they wish (Ibid, p: 254). Qatar has adopted modern, Western-

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style education, albeit with some limits, and encourages foreign tourism. This more relaxed attitude has made the introduction of reforms easier, although Qatar is still a conservative society by Western standards. Under pressure from some of the 1.4 million foreign workers in Qatar, many of them Christians, the Qatari government allowed the opening of churches in Qatar. The first church was opened in 2008 and a second followed in 2009; Saudi Arabia still does not allow churches to open (Bahry *et al.*, 2013: 254).

Lambert (2011) describes the “reform initiatives as instrumental in bolstering Qatar’s external legitimacy-and ultimately the country’s security-by adopting international norms of democracy and gender equality” (p: 90). “Qatar can best be characterised as a ‘democratic autocracy’-an autocratic state where the rulers legitimise their rule by maintaining some form or semblance of a democratisation process, including elections, conditional press freedom, and a semi-independent judiciary” (Rønning, 2009: 31). As underlined by Lambert (2011), “most regimes in the Middle East and North Africa allow some form of electoral politics although some have used political participation to avoid proper democratisation” (p: 89).

Fandy (2007) explains that after the fall of Bagdad in 2003 smaller Gulf States felt vulnerable to both Saudi Arabia and Iran, and that Qatar in particular was wary of a similar invasion to that of Kuwait in 1991, with the aggressor this time would be either Iran or Saudi Arabia. The regime that rose to power in 1995 signed bilateral treaties with the US to guarantee its security in terms of ‘hard power’. On the ‘soft power’ front, it created a media force in Al-Jazeera to respond to attacks appearing in the Egyptian and Saudi Arabian media (p: 45-6). Al-Jazeera gave the emir the power to drive public opinion in directions the Saudis did not necessarily like, and Saudi Arabia subsequently banned Al-Jazeera journalists from within its borders (McPhail, 2010: 294).

### **5.5.1 The Qatari Broadcasting Media**

The Qatari radio service started broadcasting in 1968, and expanded after the country’s independence from Great Britain in 1971 (Amin *et al.*, 1996: 136). Qatar TV broadcasting began in 1970 and transmissions were initially confined to afternoon between 3p.m. to 7 p.m. in monochrome. Transmissions extended to nine hours per day by 1974 at the time of the introduction of colour. It continued to develop until 1982 when Channel 2 in English was launched to broadcast cultural programmes, sporting and other events. In 1998, satellite transmissions were introduced to Qatar to broadcast for more than 18 hours a day. All TV channels were government-owned except Al-Jazeera satellite news channel, which was

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introduced in 1996. Al-Jazeera was considered a private entity even though the Qatar government originally financed it (Gunter *et al.*, 2013: 32-33).

Although the Qatari press is free from official censorship, self-censorship is the norm. Defence and national-security matters, as well as stories related to the royal family, are considered strictly out of bounds. The country's major radio and television stations, Qatar Radio and Qatar Television, are both state-owned, and although Qatari newspapers are all privately owned in principle, many board members and owners are either government officials or have close ties to the government and royal family (American Foreign Policy Council, 2011: 218).

### **5.5.2 Al-Jazeera Network**

Al-Jazeera television was founded by a Qatari royal decree on February 8, 1996. It was a response to regime vulnerabilities on the Islamic front as well as a means of legitimising Qatar's military and economic pact with the US. The Qatari Emir provided Al-Jazeera with \$137 million in start-up costs and continues to fund the network with costs estimated at up to \$300 million annually (Fandy, 2007: 47). The head of Al-Jazeera is Sheikh Hamad Al-Thani, a member of the royal family in Qatar and deputy minister of information; operating funds come from state finances and many of the people actually running the station are state officials. Therefore, it is very difficult to claim that Al-Jazeera is independent (Ibid, p: 47).

However, Al-Jazeera has been known for its willingness to raise contentious issues and to grant airtime to controversial figures ranging from opposition leaders in Arab countries to Israeli officials (Fand, 2007: 47). Already established with Arab viewers, Al-Jazeera came to international attention in 2001, with its coverage of the War in Afghanistan and broadcasts of videotapes featuring Osama Bin Laden (Zathureczky, 2011: 301). One effect of Al-Jazeera has been to enable the creation of an Arabic public sphere where genuine criticism and debate can be aired. This contrasted with existing Arab news media widely seen as beholden to Middle East governments. As such, Al-Jazeera has been seen by many as a democratizing force in the Middle East (Robinso *et al.*, 2012: 184).

By committing itself to presenting the view and the opposite view, the network seems to be providing representatives of opposition groups, including exiled dissidents, with a high-profile platform that resonates around the region (Seib, 2010: 76). This has given it credibility among Arab viewers and led to discontent in official Arab circles. For example, a study found Al-Jazeera ranks extremely high in credibility among Arab audiences (Association for

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International Broadcasting, 2008; Auter *et al.*, 2004), even more than *CNN* or the *BBC* (Johnson & Fahmy, 2008, 2009, cited in Fahmy & Johnson, 2010: 5). Over the years, Al-Jazeera has come to provide comprehensive coverage of news and events, making it an integral part of the political fabric of the region with a potential influence on public policy and public opinion in the Arab world (Seib, 2010: 76). Paul Cochrane (2007) argues that “Al-Jazeera uses Islam and Arabist rhetoric only to promote Qatari interests” (cited in Phillips, 2013: 106). Lawrence Pintak (2009) suggests that “the majority of Arab journalists are, ‘... shaping an emerging “imagined” “Watan” (Nation) through news television” (p: 191). Several authors (e.g., Fandy, 2007; Mille, 2005) agree that all the pan-Arab news stations, whether Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya, broadly promote Arab identity because of the Arabist sentiments of journalists. Interviews with journalists and newsmakers support this assertion. Yousi Fouda, Al-Jazeera’s station chief in 2003 stated, ‘...“you adopt a pan-Arab mentality, this is the number one criterion that will help you decide whether this news item [is something] someone in Mauritania would be interested to know about, someone in Somalia or Iraq or Morocco” (cited in Phillip, 2013: 106).

During its coverage in Afghanistan in 2001, and airing Bin Laden videotapes, Al-Jazeera generated fierce criticism from US government and military officials as promoting anti-American interests in Afghanistan (Bessaiso, 2005: 155-56). Scholars (e.g. Fahmy & Johnson, 2007) and journalists (e.g. *The New York Times*, 2009) have suggested that in the aftermath of a US military action in the region, Al-Jazeera often aired graphic images of civilian casualties. The US government’s complaints intensified when Al-Jazeera started airing Bin Laden’s messages, which the US administration considered to be a threat to its security because they believed the messages held coded signals for al-Qaeda operatives (cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 11). Al-Jazeera, however, defended its airing of the messages, arguing that its audience would be interested in hearing both sides of the story (Lahlali, 2011: 89).

In this context, Fandy (2007) argues that, anti-Americanism on Al-Jazeera should be understood in the context of the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Qatar and not between Qatar and the US (p: 64). He adds the primary function of anti-American stories on Al-Jazeera is to provide a cover for what otherwise could be seen as sleaze stories aimed at embarrassing Saudi royal families. Anti-American programs are an integral part of the underlying tension between Saudi Arabia and Qatar and should be understood in that spirit. In Qatar’s conflict with Saudi Arabia Bin Laden had been seen as the only credible force that could undermine the Saudi royal family (p: 51). Superficially, it is very surprising that Bin

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Laden criticizes the American presence in Saudi Arabia, while ignoring American military bases elsewhere in the Gulf region like Qatar, where the US Central Command was based at the time of the Iraq invasion in 2003. But if one understands the Qatar-Bin Laden tacit agreement that Fandy posts, Bin Laden's reluctance to criticize the American presence in Qatar becomes comprehensible (Fandy, 2007: 51).

Although there is a general understanding that Arab heads of state are not be criticized in the Arab media, Al-Jazeera seems to violate this rule (Fandy, 2007: 47). Al-Jazeera remains a constant source of objection and tension between a variety of Arab governments and Qatar's rulers. Arabic programs such as (*The Opposite Direction*) and (*More than One Opinion*) do not only polarize opinions, but have at times caused strained relations between some other Arab countries and Qatar. Many Arab countries have expressed their discontent with the programs coverage, and have complained directly to the Qatari government. Other have gone further and closed Al-Jazeera's bureau in their country; Jordan, for instance, closed Al-Jazeera's bureau from November 1998 to February 1999 (Bahry, 2001, cited in Lahlali, 2011: 86). Tunisia and Libya have gone even further and recalled their ambassadors in protest at Al-Jazeera giving a platform to their opposition. In March 2011 the Libyan regime arrested Al-Jazeera's Arabic team in Tripoli, accusing them of bias against the government (Lahlali, 2011: 86). Anti-Egyptian government coverage on Al-Jazeera prompted Cairo to recall its ambassador from Doha in 1997. Saudi Arabia responded to the intensification of anti-Saudi programming on Al-Jazeera by recalling its ambassador from Qatar in 2002 (Fandy, 2007: 3); it seems that Arab states are in no doubt that Al-Jazeera, which professes to be independent, is directed by the Qatari government.

Furthermore, to fend off the influence of Saudi and Iranian Islamic credentials, Qatar "gave" part of Al-Jazeera to the Muslim Brotherhood (Fandy, 2007: 48). For example, the former director of the station Waddah Khanfar is a Muslim Brother, Al-Jazeera presenter Ahmed Mansour is a second generation Muslim Brotherhood member, and Sheikh Qaradawi, who has become a household name for many Arabic-speaking Muslims throughout the world after his weekly appearances on the network is also a Brotherhood member (Barkho, 2010: 75). To Fandy (2007), the dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood in Al-Jazeera makes sense if we realize that Saudi Arabia expelled most Muslim Brotherhood leaders when they did not endorse the Saudi position during the 1990 Gulf War. The Muslim Brothers reinforce Qatar's Islamic credentials as well as serving as the spearhead in a media war against Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia has classified the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization, and called on other Muslim countries to follow suit (p: 48).

### **5.6 Saudi and Qatar: Al-Arabiya vs. Al-Jazeera**

The content of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya reflects the political rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The Egyptian critic Mamoun Fandy (2007) has observed a pattern in their news reporting suggesting that the two channels often exchange blows on behalf of their respective governments (p: 45).

For example, on February 25, 2005 Al-Jazeera reported on a State Department Human Rights Report, emphasising the poor Saudi human rights record highlighted in the report. This report on the conditions of human rights worldwide was reduced by Al-Jazeera to become a report about Saudi Arabia. There was no mention of what it said about Qatar (Al-Alami, 2005, cited in Fandy, 2007: 54). A few minutes after this report, Al-Arabiya responded by reporting on the “secret visit” of the Israeli deputy minister of education to Doha. This was an embarrassment to the state of Qatar and Al-Jazeera, which prides itself on being anti-Israeli in public. (Fandy, 2007: 55; see also e.g. Hammond, 2007: 5; Zuhur, 2011: 375). Another example of how the content of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya reflects the rivalry between Qatar and Saudi Arabia is the coverage of the Saudi opposition by Al-Jazeera (Al-Jazeera net, 2004-2005, cited in Fandy, 2007: 56). An Al-Jazeera report in 2006 covered border problems between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The report, which was put together by Ahmed Al-Shalfi from the Yemeni side of the border, exaggerated the problem of families that had been divided by the current border configuration. It presented the problem as if it were similar to the border problem the occupied Golan Heights and Syria (Al-Jazeera net, 2006, cited in Fandy, 2007: 56).

Al-Arabiya on the other hand picks up what Al-Jazeera is reluctant to report. The station’s director, Abdul-Rahman Al-Rashed, once said in reference to its reporting of Qatari affairs, “We did not exaggerate and we did not create the stories ourselves. We simply conveyed real stories ... We know that the Qatari casual and print media ignores them (those stories), but that is their own problem (Al-Arabiya net, 2005, see Fandy, 2007: 56). Another recurring theme in Al-Arabiya’s programming is Qatar’s close association with the United States (Al-Arabiya.net, 2004-5). When the government of Qatar deprived 5,000 members of the Al-Murrah tribe of their Qatari citizenship for their alleged support for the deposed former Emir, the story was discussed in depth both in news reports and talk shows on Al-

Arabiya. The station followed the story for almost three months (Al-Arabiya.net, 2005, cited in Fandy, 2007: 57).

### **5.7 Summary**

This chapter has discussed the development of the rise of Arab satellite channels which have offered Arab public different options for information particularly news from across the globe. Al-Arabiya and Al-Jazeera are two main channels that have been established to serve a common purpose, mainly to support the political stance of their respective founders. Both outlets were launched as result of financial support from governments in the Middle East, with Al-Jazeera sponsored by Qatar and Al-Arabiya by Saudi Arabia. This is felt to have some impact on the way the channels deal with their sponsors in their broadcasting (Lahlali, 2011: 115). For example, Al-Jazeera has been criticized by some for being less critical of the Qatar government and regime (Zayani & Ayish 2006). While it remains critical of other Arab regimes, the channel adopts a silent approach towards its sponsor (Lahlali, 2011: 115).

As shown in the literature, Al-Jazeera's approach is to provide comprehensive coverage of news and events that matter to the Arab and Muslim world, making it an integral part of the political fabric of the region with a potential influence on public policy and public opinion (Zayani, 2005; Lynch, 2003); its constant criticism of US foreign policy has increased the channel's popularity among Arab public (Lahlali, 2011: 116). The channel's approach of covering news from an Arab perspective has cemented its position in most Arab countries. To Lahlali (2011), Al-Jazeera has proven popular because it credits the Arab public's actions and often discredits their governments, and offers its audience news and information in line with their own thoughts (p: 116).

Scholars have identified different reasons for adopting this agenda. The first reason is financial; in the hunt for viewing figures and profits, Al-Jazeera wants to appeal to as wide an audience as possible and hence have attempted to create a pan-Arab discourse (Rinnawi, 2009). Pintak (2007) agrees with this view but also highlights the Arabist ideology of journalists themselves. While their employers might be pushing Arabism for commercial reasons, Pintak sees journalists as genuinely believers in promoting Arab unity. However, it should be not forgotten why the Qatari owners want high viewing figures: to promote the interests and profile of Qatar. The Emir of Qatar uses the Al-Jazeera to gain notoriety for his state rather than for any 'globalised' vision. At a simple level, the station rarely criticises the Doha government, but on a wider scale it acts as an instrument of Qatar's international

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relations. For example, when it has reported negatively about certain Arab governments in the past, they have lodged their complaint by withdrawing their ambassadors from Qatar, addressing the state rather than the station (Pintak, 2009, cited in Phillips, 2013: 108).

Similarly, the aggressive line it has historically taken against the government of Saudi Arabia comes not from any Arab nationalist or Islamist reasons but rather is the product of discord between Riyadh and Doha. While the content and shape of Al-Jazeera's broadcasts may therefore take an Arabist tone to increase its audience figures, the motives behind this are as much as linked to inter-state and intra-Arab rivalries as any perceived Arabist or Islamist visions (Phillips, 2013: 108-9).

Meanwhile, some scholars have criticized Al-Arabiya for having taken the same line as the Saudi government (Lahlali, 2011: 111). Critics of Al-Arabiya have claimed that its content is more controlled than Al-Jazeera because it reflects loyalty to both Saudi Arabia and the US (Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 330). For example, former President Bush favoured Al-Arabiya with multiple interviews and addresses during his tenure, more than any other Arab television station, including the United States' own Al-Hurra network. Likewise, rather than select the most widely watched Arab TV network Al-Jazeera, or the US- sponsored Arab TV network Al-Hurra, President Obama gave his first post-inaugural interview to Al-Arabiya (Nisbet & Myers, 2011: 689).

Al-Arabiya has been also critical of those championing Arab nationalism and political Islam, both of which have been regarded as a threat to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Paul Cochrane (2007) highlights the threat that Arabism is to Saudi national interests and suggests that producers deliberately employ an anti-Arabist stance. Moreover, he states that far from being a promoter of Arabism, Al-Jazeera is simply using Arabist rhetoric to promote Qatari interest. In contrast, Pintak (2009) suggests that since the background of many Al-Arabiya journalists is as former employees of Al-Jazeera, it means that despite their employer's preference, they continue to push an Arabist agenda whenever they can. Several authors agree that all the pan-Arab news stations, whether Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya, broadly promote Arab identity because of the Arabist sentiments of journalists. As with Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya has had to adopt a more pan-Arab content to appeal to the widest possible audience but again, the ultimate goal of attracting this audience has been to promote a positive view of a state, in this case Saudi Arabia (cited in Phillips, 2013: 109).

Similarly, some consider Al-Arabiya to have taken the same line as the Saudi government when dealing with Islamists. The Saudi government expressed its commitment to

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fighting extremist views, especially those calling for the overthrow of the Saudi regime for its collaboration with the West (Hammond, 2007: 5). This approach was tested during the Iraq war coverage. For instance, while Al-Jazeera focused on civilian and Iraqi resistance during the marine offensive against Fallujah, Al-Arabiya portrayed the event as the storming of a terrorist haven (*The Economist*, 2005, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 730). Similarly, during the Israel's 2008 assault on Gaza, Al-Arabiya was very critical of Hamas, and partially blamed them for the escalation of the conflict. The same occurred in Al-Arabiya's coverage of the Hezbollah-Israel conflict in 2006. During the first days of its coverage of the conflict, Al-Arabiya was heavily criticised for not supporting Hezbollah. Some labelled the channel 'al-*ibriya*' (the Hebrew channel) because they believed it supported Israel (Lahlali, 2011: 149).

As the above discussion demonstrates, the two channels have different characteristics which set them apart from each other. While the two networks pride themselves on providing an Arab perspective, with journalistic objectivity and offering balanced coverage of events and issues, both channels remain subjected to different institutional, political and ideological perspectives (see e.g., El-Nawawy 2003; Galal, Galander, & Auter, 2008; Johnson & Fahmy, 2009, Fahmy *et al.*, 2012) that give rise to importance differences in how they covered terrorist events. Tuchman (1978), for example, explains that a particular perspective is inevitable and is a result of routinized, legitimized and institutionalized structures that favour certain ways of reporting the news (cited in Fahmy, 2010: 697).

From a theoretical perspective, this research therefore expands the study of framing theory by examining framing devices used in the coverage of terrorism. How different TV channels portray violent events remains a neglected area of scientific inquiry and the current research represents a substantive effort to remedy this deficiency. A review of past studies indicates that little previous work has examined the framing of terrorism by the Arab media (e.g., Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Fahmy & Al-Emad, 2011). Therefore, this work is important because it adds to the growing body of comparative media research published on this topic.

## Chapter 6 Methodology

### 6.1 Background to the Methodology

This chapter explains and justifies the research methodology used in the current study, detailing the analytical techniques employed in assessing the coverage of terrorism in TV news reporting. The content of chapter is therefore drawn from and supported by the existing literature that was reviewed in Chapters Two and Three, where the strengths and potential weaknesses of framing theory were considered. The current chapter opens with a rationale of the chosen research techniques. Examples taken from past research into media framing of terrorism will be used to highlight certain issues related to concepts of framing as they apply to the current study. This chapter also presents and discusses research questions relating to two key areas: content analysis and critical discourse analysis.

The aim of this study was to compare how Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya frame news about terrorism. “When analysing media coverage, comparative case studies help illuminate the inevitable biases, framing, or other news judgments journalists use in constructing a narrative” (Entman, 1991, cited in Schaefer, *et al.*, 2003: 94). To do so, this study applied framing analysis. As mentioned in Chapters Two and Three, framing analysis can be carried out with quantitative or qualitative methods. Weaver (2007) for example mentioned that “frames can be studied by means of systematic content analysis or more interpretive textual analysis alone” (cited in Fong, 2009: 20). Van Gorp (2007) also observed that some researchers opt for a rather qualitative approach in analysing media frames, such as discourse analysis, while others apply traditional content analysis or other quantitative methods. He argued that “the strongly abstract nature of frames implies that quantitative research methods should be combined with the interpretive prospects of qualitative methods” (cited in Ihediwa *et al.*, 2014: 163). The current research therefore adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches by combining content analysis with discourse analysis of televised news stories.

### 6.2 Farming Methods: Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis

Content analysis is “a systematic assignment of communication content to categorise according to rules and the analysis of relationship involving those categories using statistical methods” (Riffe *et al.*, 2005: 3). Under the consideration of framing theory, researchers are able to conduct content analysis by measuring clusters of messages also known as frames to see how these are then incorporated into their audiences’ schemata (Entman, 1993, cited in Karesa, 2013: 22). Content analysis is essential to finding patterns, based on which scholars

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and researchers can methodically evaluate news media and its use of framing. In turn, this allows for the comparison of possible agenda setters' bias of the events. However, while quantitative framing can allow us to count the headlines, subheads, leads, quotes, and graphics (Tankard, 2001) to provide statistical description, this method does not consider the ways in which news gatekeepers add meaning the news stories nor does it provide context; framing considers the factors that create meaning (Perkins *et al.*, 2008: 279).

Conversely, the qualitative approach “tends” to give greater emphasis to the cultural and political content of news frames and how they draw upon a shared store of social meaning (Reese *et al.*, 2010: 18). For example the “metaphor” of war was used in the concept of the “War on Terror,” as well as the war on drugs and the war on poverty. Each “metaphor” created a “frontline” because these wars, unlike a traditional war between two armies, with a boundary between them being the literal frontline, do not naturally contain one. A war metaphor can link the concept to other actual conflicts in the mind of the reader, such as Pearl Harbour or World War II (Reese *et al.*, 2010, cited in Pearce, 2012: 22). Qualitative methods are particularly marked in critical analysis of underlying power relations, although of course it is entirely possible to combine qualitative and quantitative methodology. Thus, for example, the numerous case studies from the Glasgow Media Group (1976-1980) use both quantitative and qualitative measures to critique the performance of organisations, such as the *BBC*, for coverage of labour relations, war and other controversies (Reese *et al.*, 2012: 255).

Both approaches to content are encompassed to content within the framing perspective, which has become a major thread in political communication research. The notion of media framing has become a widely adopted and multi-perspective research concept. Framing provides a way to tie news content to larger structures and develops new ways of capturing the power of media to define issues visually and verbally, thereby shaping audience perceptions (Reese *et al.*, 2012: 255). Entman's (1993) definition of framing consists of “selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (p: 52). A few other scholars have focused their definitions of framing on specific narratives or interpretations. To Gamson (1992), a frame is a storyline or organising idea (p: 15). Reese (2007), for example, defined frames as “organising principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (p: 150). Thus, framing connects visual and verbal, quantitative and qualitative approaches to content, because they

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can all be seen as helping articulate some underlying organising principle (Reese, 2007, 2009, cited in Reese *et al.*, 2012: 255).

Before moving to discuss the methods adopted by the study in more detail, and since this research undertakes a comparative framing analysis of terrorism reported by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, it will be useful to provide a brief review of some key framing studies to remind the reader of some framing aspects examined in this dissertation. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this review of past research will focus on methodological elements to identify strengths and weaknesses in study designs to guide the design of this research.

### 6.3 Critique of Framing Methods

An important part of analysing frames are the quantitative and qualitative identifications of framing devices (e.g. Entman, 1993; Pfau *et al.*, 2008; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987; Shah *et al.*, 2002; Tankard, 2001; Reese *et al.*, 2010, cited in Fahmy & El-Amad, 2011: 219). Many of these studies suggest the use of particular frames and/or framing devices, which include the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, graphic, metaphors, exemplar, stereotyped images, pull quotes, sources/affiliations and quotes, choices about language, questions, and relevant information', headlines, and leads.

As an example of using quantitative and qualitative analysis in the field of terrorism research, Todd Schaefer (2003) examined news framing in African and US newspapers of the US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania and the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, finding differences between the American and African media. He included in his baseline the following variables: the amount, prominence and nature of the coverage of each event in each newspaper. In particular, editorial, commentary, and op-ed pieces were examined as measures of interpretations of the terrorist attacks, their aftermath and retaliation. Schaefer concluded that "because journalists searched for local angles and reflect the biases in their societies; American and African newspapers were ethnocentric in putting their own concerns and structural frames first and not challenging what they already thought about the other" (p: 110). To Schaefer, "the local angle of terrorism is the most powerful frame in reporting. In this sense proximity (of the event) equals magnitude (of news coverage and reactions)" (p: 110).

Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008) also focused on investigating frames employed when covering terrorism and terrorism-related events in four different newspapers in the US and the U.K. Their objective was to identify and compare frames adopted, as these could

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potentially be associated with different news traditions and policy directions in the two countries. Their research design combined quantitative and qualitative methods, so as to address methodological inconsistencies associated with the coding of frames and to compare wider samples with an appropriate level of analytical depth. In their content analysis, the authors examined news content relating to terrorism by focusing on the following variables: number of articles published per month; article length; and keywords. In their qualitative approach, the researchers examined episodic versus thematic frames, and military versus diplomatic frames. Overall, Papacharissi and Oliveira used quantitative and qualitative methods to enhance the depth richness of the data analysed.

In connection to content analysis, Tankard (2008) remarked that “framing might give quantitative researchers a way to approach ideology, a subject that has been mostly dealt with by critical theories. She adds that framing may even give quantitative researchers a means to examine the hypothesis of media hegemony, which has been difficult to validate empirically. She suggests that media hegemony can be viewed as a situation in which one frame is so dominant that people accept it without notice or question” (cited in Yang & Ishak, 2012: 170). Entman (1993) also recommended quantitative content analysis informed by a theory of framing as a way to identify and describe frames (p: 57). For example, to assess the prominence of coverage of specific news events, researchers looked at the frequency of stories, their placement and length in order to assess visibility, emphasis and importance. Norris (1995) assessed the prominence of international network news in the pre—and post—Cold War periods by content analysing the number and the length of stories, as well as story order (cited in Fahmy & Johnson, 2010: 219).

Weimann and Winn (1994) content analysed the news coverage of terrorist events in the *New York Times* and three major US networks from 1972 to 1980. Researchers used the RAND Corporation’s terrorism database to investigate a list of domestic terrorist attacks, then searched media outlets for reports that mention such attacks. Media attention was measured by the number of newspaper stories, words in newspaper stories, or length of broadcast segments devoted to terrorism, and by content analysis of the coverage these media provided. Researchers found that the location of the event and the nationality of the victims were both significant, especially for television news (see also Chermak & Gruenewald, 2006; Delli-Carpini & Williams, 1987). Weimann and Winn (1994) include a broad range of outlets in their survey, but are still limited to three television networks and eight newspapers from the United States and other Western countries (cited in Walsh, 2010: 3).

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Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) studied the media's role in framing the Iraq war. The authors employed systematic content analysis of the "elite newspapers" in Sweden and the United States, applying the most distinct system design within the framework of advanced (post-) industrial democracies (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005: 408). The specific frames included in their content analysis were: military conflict; human interest; responsibility; diagnosis; prognosis; violence of war; anti-war protest; and media self-reference. Each frame was coded on a presence/absence basis per news article. Their use of contrast led to some interesting conclusions, including: the tone of the war coverage differed significantly between the two countries, with Sweden's being more negative, and the United States based newspapers relying much more heavily on official government and military sources than their Swedish counterparts (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005: 409).

While these authors examined a wide range of media frames, it is important to note that Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) only used one newspaper example per country. Additionally, their content analysis focused only on the immediate coverage of the war in Iraq. Analysing news frames during and in the aftermath of a crisis situation could determine the dominant frames and how they changed during that period. Furthermore, quantitative content analysis of news frames clearly relies on manifest content and thus ignores latent clues.

Other content analysis studies have similarly suggested that media from different cultural and political perspectives create different frames of war and terrorism. Fahmy (2010), for example, viewed frames in terms of the human interest versus technical frame and the anti-war versus the pro-war frame, and explored the use of graphic portrayal and emphasis. The framing study analysed 1,387 photographs to examine contrasting visual narratives employed by English- and Arabic-language transnational newspapers in covering the 9/11 attacks and the Afghan War (p: 702).

For the *International Herald Tribune*, an English-language newspaper, the frames emphasized the human suffering of 9/11 and de-emphasized the civilian casualties and moral guilt of implementing military force in Afghanistan by focusing on a pro-war frame that showed complex military operations and patriotic pictures. For the Arabic-language newspaper, *Al-Hayat*, the frames placed less emphasis on the victims and more on the material destruction of 9/11 and humanized the victims of the Afghan War. Furthermore, it focused on an anti-war frame by running visuals of anti-war protests and using graphic visuals portraying the humanitarian crisis in the Muslim country of Afghanistan (Fahmy,

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2010: 704-5). While Fahmy study revealed interesting results showing how different media from different cultural and political perspectives create different frames, the two cases examined do not provide a sufficient basis for determining whether these visual indicators are common to other transnational media outlets. Moreover, her research did not examine the function of captions in framing photographs of conflicts. It is possible that different captions for identical pictures might produce different ways in which images are interpreted.

Powell (2011) studied the US media framing of Islam since the September, 11, 2001, employing systematic content analysis of major print and Internet media sources including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *CNN*, *MSNBC*, and *Fox News*. The author coded each news story by searching for words or phrases such as “terrorist” and “Muslims” that were repeated within the news stories. Five major themes emerged from the coding: naming of the terror suspect, descriptors assigned to the agent, motive for the act, probability of a future threat, and portrayal of the victim(s). According to Powell, “studying media coverage of terrorism in the US reveals a pattern that feeds Orientalism and a culture of fear of Islam, while heightening the image of the USA. as a good Christian nation. Through naming, descriptors, suggested motives, probability of future threat, and portrayal of victims, a clear pattern of reporting emerged that differed between terrorists who were Muslim with international ties and those who were US citizens with no clear international ties” (pp: 94-95). The author concluded that the episodic coverage of acts of terrorism has become so programmatic as to have created a thematic frame of terrorism: war by Islam on the United States (Powell, 2011: 105).

Using framing theory, Filz (2004), examined how one British newspaper, *The Independent*, covered the events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent “War on Terror” in order to gain a better understanding of the British public’s mediated “reality” of these events. Units of analysis included articles that appeared in the paper during three different time periods between September 11, 2001 and September 12, 2002. News stories and commentaries were examined on two levels: (1) a thematic level that examined the topic of the article; (2) a linguistic level that examined the articles’ descriptive language. The study found that *The Independent* presented both negative and positive images of America during the time periods studied. Primarily, America was portrayed as a victim, but also as a war monger and a weakened superpower (p: 2).

Poole *et al.* (2006) examined coverage of Muslims in the British broadsheet press from 2003 using quantitative content analysis, the aim of which is to measure frequencies.

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She compared this coverage with that from 1994 onwards in order to examine the effects of September 11 and Iraq war on coverage. One of the most significant changes she identified since 2003 was the emergence of the topic of terrorism and the space given to it. While acknowledging positive developments in *The Guardian*, such as stories about increased discrimination experienced by Muslims since September 11, she suggests this oppositional interpretation has been marginalised by the dominance of the conservative interpretative framework (see also Karim, 2002). She argued:

“The huge shift to focus on terrorism now unifies coverage within the orientalist global construction of Islam. One image dominates that of Islamic terrorism” (Poole *et al.*, 2006: 102).

Similarly, in a content analysis study of Western media, Kumar (2008) found five negative discursive frames that have been employed to represent Muslims, Arabs and the Middle East post-September 11. These frames are: (1) Islam is a monolithic religion, (2) Islam is a uniquely sexist religion, (3) the “Muslim mind” is incapable of rationality and science, (4) Islam is inherently violent, and (5) the West spreads democracy, Islam spawns terrorism (cited in Yusof *et al.*, 2013: 106).

Others scholars used a qualitative approach to examine terrorism coverage by media (e.g., Barnett & Reynolds, 2003; Norris *et al.*, 2003; Zulaika, 2005; Graham *et al.*, 2004). Since the events of September 11, 2001, there has been an increasing amount of terrorism research from a critical perspective (Stump & Dixit, 2013: 112). Richard Jackson’s research on US counterterrorism discourse is one of the best-known examples of the study of terrorism as discourse. In his 2005 book: *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-terrorism*, Jackson uses critical discourse analysis to analyse the US’s counterterrorism policy after September 11, 2001. After specifying that “discourses form the foundation for [counterterrorism] practice” (Jackson, 2005: 21), he analyses official documents and speeches by US government officials to note how the identity of the USA, its allies, and its enemies were socially constructed (Stump & Dixit, 2013: 112).

Discussing the meaning-making of September 11, 2001, in official accounts, Jackson points out there were four key features: (1) the attacks were “discursively constructed” as exceptional tragedy; (2) the language used portrayed the attacks as an “act of war” rather than a criminal act or mass murder; (3) the attacks were linked with other “meta-narratives” such as threats against the USA (e.g., Pearl Harbour) and the opposition of civilisation and barbarism, and (4) the way the event was represented closed off avenues for other possible

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meaning (Jackson, 2005: 31). Here, Jackson outlined what a discourse-analytical approach to US counterterrorism strategies can help us understand. Instead of seeing the meaning of September 11, 2001, as natural and self-evident, its socially constructed nature and the mechanics (repeated use of specific term by US officials) of that construction become centralised. Furthermore, Jackson examined how the identity of the “terrorist enemy” as evil, alien, and inhuman is produced through and in representations (Jackson, 2005: 62-63). On related note, the identity of Americans is produced as “good,” as freedom-loving, compassionate, heroic, innocent, and united against this evil terrorist threat (Jackson, 2005: 76-88). On goal of the discourse analysis here is to note the production of self (US state) and others (terrorist, allies of the US, “enemies” of the US) identities (Stump & Dixit, 2013: 112).

While Jackson research’s is considered as the clearest use of discourse analysis in the study of terrorism (Stump & Dixit, 2013: 112-13), there have been however, other scholars who have studied discourse. One of these scholars is Joseba Zulaika. His concern is partly to reduce the mystique of terrorism and make people aware of the loaded connotations of the use of the term itself. In his 2005 book *Terrorism: A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy*, he writes, “terrorism discourse “must be disenchanting if it is to lose its efficacy for all concerned” (Zulaika, 2005: 1). Zulaika writes that “terrorism creates its own reality” but then says “my arguments here go beyond discourse analysis. Terrorism is premised on the will of insurgents, rebels, and fighters, terrorist” (p: 2), this gives a “reality” to terrorism that is extra-discursive, which fits in with the critical discourse analysis method. As such, Zulaika assumes there is something more than discourse that discourse obscures, an understanding that fits in better with critical discourse analysis and one that Jackson (2005) book also presume (cited in Stump & Dixit, 2013: 113).

In another example of the use of discourse analysis to study terrorism, Graham *et al.* (2004) examine George W. Bush’s “War on Terror” discourse and compare it with other “call to arms” in the past. Their work outlines how the war on terrorism was legitimated using what they call a “discourse-historical approach.” In this, they compare Bush’s declaration of a “war on terror” with past declarations, including Queen Elizabeth I in the sixteenth century and Adolf Hitler in the early twentieth century (Graham *et al.*, 2004, cited in Stump & Dixit, 2013: 113).

In addition to focusing on how identities are framed and policies legitimated, studying discourses of terrorism also interrogates and makes transparent the processes of categorisation (Stump & Dixit, 2013: 113). For example, Jackson (2007b) selected a series of

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texts to analyse how the phrase “Islamic terrorism” has been used and the effects of such labelling. Jackson examined “over 300 political and academic texts. He wrote that the categorisation process draws upon previous “Orientalist” scholarship as well as negative media reports about Arabs and Muslims. He concluded that the label of “Islamic terrorism” posits Islam as inherently violent, even terrorist and has the long-term effect of increasing fissures in society. This “making of common-sense” is a key feature of discourse-analytical research: “American “response” to those [9/11] attacks was not obvious, not “natural,” nor based on some objective standard of “common sense.” Policy had to be built on a narrative that could be shared amongst those who felt threatened; and that had to be America’s government and, importantly, American society as a whole (Croft, 2006: 1).

Using a textual analysis of the US newspapers articles during the Gulf War, Hackett and Zhao (1994) documented that interpretive news frames used in covering anti-war protest were all broadly related to a master war narrative. The narrative describes a reluctant USA, with moral responsibility to restore order, forced by enemies to go to war and defeat villains (Hackett & Zhao, 1994, cited in Reese *et al.*, 2012: 255).

While these studies do provide a valuable background to the present study, the research to date has some limitations. First, very little work has applied a methodological framework that combines both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Second, previous investigations of frames in the news have a strong ethnocentric bias, both in terms of the issues examined and the geographical focus of the studies. In general, research on the contents and effects of the news media is often based on national studies, suffering somewhat from “naive universalism” by offering general theoretical propositions based on single-country data (see for example de Vreese, 2001: 108). Little is known about how terrorism is covered by media, particularly TV networks in non-Western countries such as Middle Eastern region. Such countries (Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, etc.) experience a considerable amount of terrorism.

Third, studies of frames in the news have often been carried out in relation to a specific event (e.g., Entman, 1991; Mendelsohn, 1993) or a specific issue (e.g., Jasperson, Shah, Watts, Faber, & Fan, 1998; Nelson *et al.*, 1997; Norris, 1995). Some have attempted to compare the framing of specific events or issues across different media and news outlets (Martin & Oshagan, 1997; Neuman *et al.*, 1992; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Simon & Xenos, 2000; de Vreese, 2004; Yang, 2003; Reynolds & Barnett, 2003-2009). Framing has been studied in a temporally comparative fashion, that is, how frames emerge and develop

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over time (e.g., Patterson, 1993), and from an issue-comparative perspective, that is, comparisons of the framing of different issues (e.g., Neuman *et al.*, 1992). However, little attention has been paid to framing in a cross-national comparative fashion (cited in de Vreese, 2001: 108). This study will take a step forward by examining frames employed by two Arab TV services (Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya) in the coverage of terrorism.

McQuail (1994) stated that “media outlets are entrenched in the socio-political environment that surrounds them” (cited in Dimitrova & Connolly-Ahern, 2007: 162). This study has used framing analysis as its main theoretical framework and examined the coverage of terrorism through Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV channels. A number of reasons make this comparison particularly important. First, the two media samples examined in this research represent different political and institutional backgrounds; while Al-Jazeera is sponsored by the Qatari government, Al-Arabiya is supported by the royal family of Saudi Arabia (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 434). This might have some impact on the way the channels deal with their sponsors in their broadcasting. Second, while Al-Jazeera sees itself as an independent voice for Muslim and Arab people, Al-Arabiya on the other hand attempts to offer a more moderate alternative to Al-Jazeera (Zayani & Ayish, 2006). Finally, the Arab region is known as a theatre of terrorist activities, because a majority of powerful terrorist organisations (e.g., al-Qaeda, Ansar al-Sharia, etc.) are located in the Middle East. In addition, this region has witnessed the longest war on terrorism in history, and has suffered more terrorist victims than other parts of the world (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 443).

### **6.4 Content Analysis Research Questions**

This study addressed several related issues, divided into questions of content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The content analysis questions focussed on eight areas of study: the types of frames used; the framing perspectives; geographical locations; attributed sources; identification of perpetrators; identification of victims; episodic versus thematic framing; and responsibility frames. In this way, the researcher extracted one main research question reduced to seven sub-questions, guided by the content analysis approach, and one main research question reduced to four sub-questions developed for the critical discourse analysis.

Previous literature has identified a handful of frames that occur commonly in the news. Jasperson and El-Kikhia (2003: 116) for example, categorised news frames into three main categories: the official frame, the military frame, and the humanitarian frame. Research

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suggests that Western media tend to heavily use military and official frames, but some Arab media tend to focus on civilian and collateral damage. Therefore this study asks:

**RQ1:** Did terrorism stories in the two news channels differ in types of frames they used?

Frames provide salience for particular aspects of a media message that have been selected by its creator to shape it from a specific perspective (Entman, 1993, cited in Eadie *et al.*, 2013: 20). Past research indicated that news item relating to a terrorist event might be framed from the perspective of the victim, the perpetrator, or local or international authorities, with the same story providing very different details and impressions in each case (see for example Shah *et al.*, 2004). Thus this study asks:

**RQ 1.2:** Did terrorism stories in the two news channels differ in their framing perspective?

Scholars agree that sources influence news frames (e.g., Entman, 1993). Past researcher (e.g., Entman, 1991; Aday *et al.*, 2005) suggest that Western media tend to use official sources in news stories more than other types of sources. Hence, this study asks:

**RQ 1.3:** Did the stories in the two news channels differ in the use of attributed news sources?

On the one hand, official reports indicated that terrorism group organisations are often categorised as Islamic organisations and from Middle East (Banuri, 2005; the US Department of State, 2005). On the other hand, still other reports noted that most victims are Muslims people (Stolbery, 2010; Perl, 2007). Therefore, the study asks:

**RQ 1.4:** Did the stories in the two news channels differ in identifying terrorism perpetrators?

**RQ 1.5:** Did the qualifying stories in the two news channels differ in terms of which geographical locations were featured most often?

**RQ 1.6:** Did the stories in the two news channels differ in identifying terrorism victims?

Frames can be analysed from the perspective of episodic and thematic coverage. Episodic framing depicts concrete events that illustrate issues, while thematic framing presents collective or general evidence (Iyengar, 1991: 2). Iyengar explains, exposure to episodic news makes viewers less likely to hold public officials accountable for the existence of some problem and also less likely to hold them responsible for alleviating it (p: 2).

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Scholars have examined the use of episodic or thematic frames for news stories on a wide range of issues, such as poverty or terrorism. Past research indicated that western media, particularly U.S media more frequently and repetitively used elements associated with episodic framing than any other media (Iyengar, 1991). Hence this study asks:

**RQ 1.7:** Did the stories in the two news channels differ in the use of episodic versus thematic frames?

**RQ 1.8:** Did the stories in the two news channels differ in using responsibility frames?

### 6.5 Critical Discourse Analysis Research Questions:

To study terrorism as discourse, the main two traditions of discourse analysis-critical and post structural-are appropriate (Jackson, 2005). The aim of applying critical discourse analysis in this study is to understand the link between discursive practice (power relations) and the broader social and cultural developments and structures. For Richard Jackson *Writing the War on Terror* (2005), a central aim of “critical discourse analysis lies in revealing the means by which language is deployed to maintain power; what makes critical discourse analysis “critical” is its normative commitment to positive social change” (p: 25). By using discourse analysis, the author compared and contrasted the use of language by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV channels and provided a textual analysis of language extracts from the two TV networks whilst taking into consideration different contextual factors that contributed to the production and consumption of news discourse about terrorism.

There have been many scholars that have studied terrorism in open media discourses (e.g., Reisigl & Wodak, 2001; Richardson, 2007; Lahlali, 2011). For example, Roxanne Doty (1993) asked how US-Filipino relations were described such that it seemed common-sensual for the USA to military intervenes in another sovereign state. Hansen (2006) asks how the meaning of Bosnia became understood as a site (and people) where Western military intervention was permissible. Graham *et al.* (2004) studied how US move to war legitimated (cited in Stump *et al.*, 2013: 14). Qian (2010) and Hulse and Spencer (2008) study media discourses in different countries and how they construct the terrorist identity differently, thus questioning the “natural” response of counterterrorism as well as indicating other meanings of event and actors labelled as terrorism. Jackson (2007a) performed a similar task with reference to academic discourses and the concept of “Islamic terrorism (cited in Stump & Dixit, 2013: 15). De Graaf (2005) studied *CNN* and Al-Jazeera discourse of the withdrawal of

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the Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip in August, 2005. Both *CNN International* and *Al-Jazeera English* were examined on lexicalisation, predicational strategy, topicalisation, intertextuality and framing. Lahlali (2011) studied *Al-Jazeera*, *Al-Arabiya* and *Al-Hurra* discourse of Hezbollah-Israeli conflict 2006. The three channels were examined on their selectivity of lexis, their sentence structure and their naming and labelling strategies. The author followed his critical discourse with small content analysis which contextualised and linked to the channels' main aims and objectives, as well as their strategies.

Based on past literature addressed above, this study examined the discourse of *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* in reporting terrorist events at three levels of discourse analysis "textual analysis, discursive practices, and, social practice, and asked the following research questions:

**RQ2:** Which ideology can be recognised in the news coverage of terrorism at *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* TV news channel?

These two main questions have been reduced to four sub-questions:

**RQ 2.1:** What kind of lexicalization and predications can be seen in the news coverage of *Al-Jazeera*?

**RQ 2.3:** What kind of lexicalization and predications can be seen in the news coverage of *Al-Arabiya*?

**RQ 2.4:** What kind of inter-textuality and framing can be recognised in the news coverage of *Al-Jazeera*?

**RQ 2.5:** What kind of inter-textuality and framing can be recognised in the news coverage of *Al-Arabiya*?

## 6.6 Applying the Methodology

### 6.7 Level One: Content Analysis of News Text

This section outlines the main assumptions of content analysis which constitutes the analytical framework of the first part of my research.

Content analysis has been widely recognized as a useful research tool since the 1940s (Hansen, 2003, cited in Sun, 2009: 79). Berelson's (1952) oft-quoted definition is that "content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (p: 18). This definition identifies what is called classical content analysis today (Carney, 1972).

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Subsequent researchers have extended this definition through redefining research objectives and emphasizing different aspects of content analysis, for example, the ability to make inferences reliable and valid (Carney, 1972; Kolbe & Burnett, 1991; Krippendorff, 2004; Riffe & Freitag, 1997; Stempel, 2003; Weber, 1990). These definitions share emphases on the objective and systematic nature of content analysis (Carney, 1972; Riffe & Freitag, 1997, cited in Sun, 2009: 79). Krippendorff (2004) summarized that “content analysis currently has evolved into a repertoire of methods of research that promise to yield inferences from all kind of verbal, pictorial, symbolic, and communication data” (p: 17).

The method of content analysis has shown itself to be a fundamental and well-accepted approach in the communication discipline. Riffe and Freitag’s (1997) longitudinal examination of the content analysis research articles in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* from 1971-95 shows a 25-year trend of increased content analyses—from (6.3%) of all articles in 1971 to (34.8%) in 1995.

Berelson (1952) suggested that “content analysis is particularly useful and worthwhile when applied from a theoretical perspective that has strong meaning for the analysis” (cited in Sun, 2009: 80). Gamson (1989), for example, argued that employing a “content analysis methodology to framing theory and broadening the idea of frames to multiple stories can reveal complex layers of latent meaning” (cited in Eagleman, 2008: 18). Based on the previous discussions, content analysis when combined with critical discourse analysis is more suitable than other methods to provide descriptive information for the issue explored in this paper. In addition, as noted earlier, there is very few academic research content-analysing how terrorism was framed on Arab media in general, and Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya in particular. The method of content analysis can serve as an empirical starting point to generate new research evidence of reporting terrorism.

Furthermore, content analysis is useful both in the context of justification for establishing patterns which support existing theories (or fail to support them) and in the context of discovery for establishing patterns on which to formulate new theories (Carlson, Grove, & Kangun, 1993: 29). The research questions are developed within the established theoretical framework (namely, framing theory) to retest the correlation between some variables and to further substantiate or weaken this theory. The new findings are expected to help enrich the established theory and inspire future researchers.

A good content analysis should be a scientific, objective, systematic, quantitative, and generalizable description of specific communication content (Kassarjian, 1977, cited in Sun,

2009: 82). Therefore, the study design described in the later sections pays great attention to the sampling method, category construction, coder training, and reliability.

### **6.7.1 Sampling Method**

This content analysis considered stories aired during prime time on Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya news programmes. The sample was taken between 18:00-21:30hrs daily, considered to be prime viewing time, increasing the likelihood of the news items analysed having reached a comparatively large audience (see for instance Iyengar *et al.*, 1982: 849). Television news was selected for analysis as the focus of the current research because its technological capacities for both visual and aural communication (Fiske & Hartley, 2003: 5) can allow particularly nuanced interpretations and reports of terrorist related phenomena.

Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV networks were selected for a number of reasons. First, the two channels are both 24-hours broadcasters and are comparable enough to infer similarities and differences in the form and content of news using standardised measures. Second, these two outlets have been considered as the main news channels in the Middle East. For example, a recent study found Al-Jazeera viewers rated the network as highly credible on all measures (Fahmy & Jonson, 2010: 17). Ayish (2004), in a study of UAE students, found Al-Arabiya ranked a second beyond Al-Jazeera channels. On the other hand, studies by the Arab Advisors Group (2004) found Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya was rated as equally credible (cited in Fahmy & Johnson, 2010: 8). Third, both were launched as result of financial support from governments in the Middle East, with Al-Jazeera sponsored by the government in Qatar and Al-Arabiya by the government in Saudi Arabia. This might have some impact on the way the channels deal with their sponsors in their broadcasting (Lahlali, 2011: 115).

Al-Jazeera has been heavily criticized for being not critical enough of the Qatari government and regime. The same charges have been also filed against Al-Arabiya. Although it covers issues related to Saudi society, it has expressed little criticism of the Saudi regime. In fact, the channel has been very cautious of taking on any Arab government or regime. It is worth mentioning here that Al-Arabiya, since its launch, has benefited from hosting senior US official. However, Al-Arabiya is still rated second to Al-Jazeera in most Arab countries (Lahlali, 2011: 115-6). Finally, both however have demonstrated an interest in the broad coverage of terrorist events and related international news, and so it is to be expected that each would offer a different explanation of terrorism.

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After selecting networked television as the medium, the next step was to define the period in which the study was to be carried out. This decision depended mainly on whether the analysis was intended to map some general dimensions of coverage or to relate to a specific event (Hansen *et al.*, 1998). According to Roberts, Wanta, and Dzwo (2002) one of the critical issues in agenda-setting research is to determine how long an object or attribute remains salient in people's minds. Zeng and Tahat (2012) suggested one year to examine how media framed terrorism on TV networks, whereas Blue (2008) studied a period of two years.

One evening news programme was chosen from each TV network. According to the Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya homepages (2011), these were the highest-rated news programmes in the region. The news programmes were broadcast simultaneously at 8:00pm GMT (11:00pm KSA), '*Hà-Sàd Alyoum*' (Today's Harvest) on Al-Jazeera and '*Akhir Saa*' (Last Hour) on Al-Arabiya, with the Al-Jazeera broadcast continuing 30 minutes longer than the other. Programmes were digitally recorded each day from 3rd March 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012. Exactly 100 news stories per channel were recorded, and from the 200 a total of 171 terrorist-related stories (83 from Al-Jazeera and 88 from Al-Arabiya) were content analysed. Overall (85%) of all the news stories sampled were analysed. This content analysis was enhanced and supplemented by further qualitative analysis, so that despite the potential for increasing sample size, the researcher was confident that sufficient data was made available to address the research questions in depth.

Within the selected period, the total duration of stories representing terrorist events on Al-Jazeera was 4h, 10m, 23s. In the same period, on Al-Arabiya the total duration of terrorist-related stories was 3h, 49m, 51s. On both channels, the dominant news stories in this category were al-Qaeda in Yemen, al-Qaeda in Iraq, and the armed attack on Jewish school in Toulouse, France. Despite the two TV channels reflecting some similarity in the coverage of the same principal issues, similar stories were framed differently within that coverage (See study results in Chapters Eight and Nine).

Stories covering terrorist attacks in Yemen and Iraq ran for just one day in a single report for each. These events were covered for a short period of time partly because of the massive coverage devoted by the two channels to the Syrian uprising during the collection of the study sample. Stories surrounding the Toulouse attacks ran more than one report across a number of days, attracting media attention for longer because these events were synchronised with the French presidential election. Furthermore, the French police investigation took a week to identify the perpetrator, who was eventually killed by French elite forces.

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The data for discourse analysis was assembled through a composite approach, selected carefully from the pool of 171 stories used for the content analysis. The discourse analysis data sources consisted of ten news stories from Al-Jazeera and ten news stories from Al-Arabiya. The sample for discourse analysis was chosen to reflect the main subjects of terrorism-related coverage during the period; including al-Qaeda attacks in Yemen (May 7<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and July 11<sup>th</sup>); separate incidents of simultaneous suicide attacks in Iraqi cities (July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>); and the armed attacks on a Jewish school in Toulouse, France (reported on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>).

The sample for discourse analysis was selected for various reasons. In each case, the selected stories were covered by both stations on the same day. Most of them were played as the leading story in their bulletins, offering the benefit of greater depth and context for analysis. Additionally, they were generally powerful and emotive stories relating violent attacks and suicide bombings which left a large number of victims. These terrorist attacks were all carried out or attributed to al-Qaeda or individuals inspired by al-Qaeda's ideologies.

### **6.7.2 Units of Analysis**

This aspect of the method used applies to the content analysis, which is a quantitative analysis that uses specific measurable units to measure programme content. The decision concerning the unit of analysis depends mainly on what information is required to achieve the purpose of the study (Stempel *et al.*, 2003). Gunter (2000) indicates that the unit of analysis is the entity that is counted during content analysis. It is the smallest element of content analysis, but is also the most important. Various sample units can be examined in content analysis; these might be a single word, a theme or an entire article or story (Berelson, 1952; Bengston & Fan, 1999; Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). For the purpose of this research, where analysis was carried out on two Arabic TV networks, the unit of analysis included the entire news story, defined as "any topic introduced by the anchor person coupled with any report by other correspondents on the same topic and any concluding remarks by the anchor person" (Fowler & Showlter, 1974: 713).

Content analyses were performed at programme level and story level. Criteria considered at programme level included the name of the TV network, that of the news programme, its date and time of broadcast, the number of news programmes broadcast per TV channel; and the length of each news programme. Within this sample, Al-Arabiya's programmes lasted about an hour, while those broadcast on Al-Jazeera were 90 minutes. Al-

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Jazeera's ability to devote considerable resources to big stories like violence and conflict may arise from the fact that it is not a commercial venture. Al-Jazeera is sponsored by the Qatari government with the result that its financial resources are not heavily limited (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 29). Al-Arabiya is a commercial venture operated by the Saudi-controlled MBC Group, owned by shareholders who do not enjoy the type of wealth possessed by the Qatari government (Ibid, p: 29).

Criteria considered at the story level included the number of stories per news programme; reports per news story; headlines; story length including previews and summaries, and story placement within the news programme. Stories were then coded according to certain variables (news frames, framing perspective, proximity, news sources, victims and perpetrators). The results suggest that more than half (62.7%) of the reports that appeared on Al-Jazeera were package stories filed by reporters on terrorism coverage in Yemen, Iraq and France. On the other hand, Al-Arabiya's broadcasts relied heavily on voice-over (61.4% of their coverage), where a studio-based anchor read narration over video footage. This is considerably cheaper than sending a correspondent into the field, but it is also of a lower professional standard because the network is forced to report unverified, second-hand information (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 29).

### 6.7.3 Content Analysis Coding Scheme

Hansen *et al.* (1998) pointed out that "the coding schedule is similar to a survey questionnaire. The schedule should establish clear guidelines and definitions for the coding parachute" (p: 116). Failure to attain a clear coding schedule could mislead the researcher when making conclusions from the finding (Holsti, 1969). In the current study, the coding schedule contains all the variables that met the requirement of the study objectives and answered its questions.

The coding categories for this study were designed to capture both objective characteristics of the stories (e.g., number of programmes, programmes where the story occurred in, and channel on which broadcast) and more subjective characteristics (e.g., presence of various frames).

Based on past research detailed above, this study examined a range of aspects in media coverage, including (official, military, humanitarian, and crimes) frames, geographical location of terrorist acts, perpetrator and victims of terrorist acts, the use of episodic and thematic frames, attributed sources and use of responsibility frames in reporting terrorism

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related coverage (see for example Entman 1993; Iyengar 1991; Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Al-Emad & Fahmy, 2011; Filz, 2004; El-Nawawy, 2006; Riegert, 2005; Ryan, 2004; Jasperson & El-Kikhia, 2003).

### 6.7.3.1 Types of News Frames

Based on Entman's (1993) explanation of framing and following research by Jasperson and El-Kikhia (2003), this study grouped types of frames into the following: [1] officials; [2] military; [3] humanitarian perspective; [4] and crime/catastrophe. "Official frames refer to news frames concerning support for the government and political leaders in a country, including national unity and public support for the government. Military frames refer to depictions of the strategy used in war on terrorism (e.g., operations, strategies of fighting terrorist groups, etc.)" (Jasperson & El-Kikhia, 2003: 116). "Examining the coverage of major conflicts such as military interventions is important not only because it affects national public opinion toward the conflict, but also because it has a direct impact on policy making" (Dissanayake, 1984, cited in Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005: 25). Humanitarian frames focus on the victims of the terrorism deeds, notably the suffering and damage caused by terrorists' actions (Jasperson & El-Kikhia, 2003: 116). Criminal frame identify people responsible for the act of deviance (Blue, 2008: 56).

### 6.7.3.2 Framing Perspectives

Past studies have shown that media coverage affects how the public learns, understands or thinks about an issue (Jamieson & Waldman, 2003, cited in Powell, 2011: 93). Media coverage of an event can be framed from different angles or perspectives leading readers to interpret an issue in a particular way (Shah *et al.*, 2004, cited in Powell, 2011: 93). So, a news story about terrorist event can be framed from the perspectives of the victim, the perpetrator, or the government/officials and the same details can yield different impressions of the event.

Following research by Lypka (2011), this study grouped framing perspectives into six categories [1] story focus is on the event (e.g., on the attacks, rescuer, mourning, investigation, link to other related terrorist incidents, trials), [2] story focus is on the government (e.g., officials view regarding religious, political, military, and international relations deriving from the events), [3] story focus is on assumed terrorists/perpetrators view [4] story focus is on the victim view, [5] story focus is on the consequences, and [6] story others.

### 6.7.3.3 Proximity

Physical proximity and “local angle” are other important factors in the selection of news. Media organisations tend to pay more attention to events that are close to home than to events which occur far away from their readers and audiences. The argument is that “the nearer the location of news events is to the city, region or nation of the intended audience, the more likely it is to be attended to” (McQuail, 1987: 165). The country’s historical background in dealing with terrorism can also affect the quality and amount of terrorism news coverage. When a country has a great deal of experience with domestic terrorism, the media might have more perspective than in those countries that are rarely attacked, and thus the event can be framed in an entirely different manner (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 116). This is consistent with Arian and Gordon’s (1993) evidence that during the Gulf War residents of the Tel Aviv area-where scud missiles were aimed-were more likely to feel fearful than other Israelis. It also fits with evidence that physical proximity to the attacks lead to a greater sense of personal than national threat after 9/11 and heightened levels of post-traumatic stress syndrome (Sandro *et al.*, 2002; Leonie *et al.*, 2002, cited in Huddy *et al.*, 2003: 262).

Following research by Zeng and Tahat (2012), six major categories were used to differentiate regions: [1] Arab countries such as Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Palestinian-Israeli state; [2] Non-Arab Middle East countries include Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan; [3] Asian countries or regions outside of the Middle East, such as China, Japan, and Philippines; [4] Europe; [5] North America includes the US and Canada; and [6] other parts of the world. These six major categories in this original coding were then merged into three categories to better capture the trend in the geographic location examined: [1] Middle East; [2] Europe; and [3] North America.

### 6.7.3.4 Source

Researchers agree that sources influence news frames, particularly the use of the elite sources, such as policymakers and high-ranking military officials (e.g., Dimitrova & Connolly-Ahern, 2007, Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Entman, 1989; Lee *et al.*, 2006). These sources are most commonly used in content relating to security or foreign policy (see e.g., Groshek, 2008; Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007). According to Schneider (2011), “journalists’ ability to choose who speaks (or does not speak) in news coverage enables them to frame news without appearing to do so” (p: 73).

Dimitrova and Connolly-Ahern’s (2007) study of the 2003 Iraq War grouped sources into six categories: [1] government representative, [2] military personnel, [3] individual, [4]

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journalist, [5] terrorist group member, and [6] “other.” Not surprisingly, research revealed that the most frequently used sources in the study across all countries were government and military officials.

To measure attributed sources used, eleven categories were identified: [1] officials/Military police; [2] correspondent; [3] experts; [4] other media sources; [5] perpetrator; [6] witnesses; [7] victims and their relatives; [8] Islamic leaders; [9] health professionals; [10] court; [11] and source not identified.

### **6.7.3.5 Perpetrators of Terrorist Attacks**

Classifying terrorist groups not only makes it easy to recognize the source of danger, but also helps decision-makers pursue appropriate procedures to encounter terrorism (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 436). Past research suggested that Islamic radical groups or those from the Middle East are more likely to be framed as terrorists than groups of other religions (e.g., Nagar, 2007). In an analysis of primary terrorist portrayals after 9/11 in major release film trailers, Middle Eastern or Arabic groups are the most frequently represented non-White ethnic groups, accounting for a third of the total primary portrayals (Ivory *et al.*, 2007). Similarly, Kalyango (2006) found that Islamic groups are the most frequently mentioned terrorist groups in *The New York Times*' coverage of counter-terrorism efforts.

Zeng and Tahat (2012) study of terrorism grouped religious affiliation of perpetrators into four categories: [1] Islamic, [2] Christian, [3] Jewish, and [4] Buddhist. Their results indicated that the vast majority of terrorists identified in both sites were Islamic.

Regarding perpetrators, after watching the raw data, the most commonly used terms for describing the perpetrators were determined. Ten major categories were then used to code for perpetrators: [1] al-Qaeda (al-Qaeda wings: Ansar al-Sahri'a and Ansar al-Din); [2] Muslims/Islamist, extremist/Jihadist/Salfi; [3] terrorists; [4] combatant; [5] perpetrator; [6] attacker/ gunman; [7] bomber; [8] kidnapper; [9] named of attackers is mentioned; [10] and unknown.

### **6.7.3.6 Victims of Terrorism Attacks**

How victims are framed in terrorist attacks also plays a role in how much a news story will reach societal salience. For example by being able to identify with the victims or their relatives, the target audience is more likely to feel empathy for its suffering (Fahmy, 2010; Persson, 2004). Weimann and Winn (1994) large-scale study found that the location of the

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event and the nationality of the victims were both significant, especially for television news (See also Dobkin, 1992; Weiman & Brosius, 1991).

Lypka (2011) analysed the media framing of Bali 2002 and Madrid 2004 terrorist attacks grouped victims of terrorism into seven categories: [1] combatant (e.g., military, police), [2] non-combatant, [3] general, [4] unknown/not applicable, [5] specific (victims' name are mentioned, additional information is provided on the victim), [6] other, and [7] mixed. His results revealed that, victims were predominantly described as unknown or in general.

To examine how victims were portrayed in the both channels, the following six categories were coded for: [1] combatant (e.g., military, police); [2] Non-combatant (i.e., non-military victims civilians, embassy/diplomatic, business people, aid workers, airlines, and religious organisation; [3] general (i.e. those referred to as “killed,” “victims,” “people,” “the number of victims”); [4] specific (victims' names are mentioned, additional information is provided on the victims); [5] mixed (combatant and non-combatants); [6] and unknown/not applicable (e.g., the information is not provided in the story).

### **6.7.3.7 Episodic versus Thematic Frames**

Media framing focuses on the exclusion, organisation and emphasis of certain facts, making some events more salient than others (e.g., Entman, 1993; Gitlin, 1980; Goffman, 1974; Iyengar & Reeves, 1997). Frames organize facts and principles and suggest a connection between concepts and events (Nisbet, 2010, Reese *et al.*, 2010). Frames can be analysed from the perspective of episodic and thematic coverage. According to Iyengar (1991), “the episodic frame concentrates on individual news events, or episodes, while the thematic frames looks at the big picture and give historical perspective” (p: 2).

Mahan and Griset (2007) operationalised episodic news segments as those which focused on specific events, lacked greater context, ignored historical sequence and causes and did not identify larger consequences of the events. Conversely, segments were identified as thematic if they possessed at least one of the criteria (excluding the first). Their findings corroborated Iyengar's (1991) seminal research on television news coverage of foreign terrorism which discovered that the majority of news stories were purely episodic.

Operationalizing episodic versus thematic frames was based on research conducted by Mahan and Griset (2007: 235). Following from their work, I identified episodic news segments as those which focused on specific events, lacked greater context, ignored historical

sequence and causes and did not identify larger consequences of the event. Four categories were coded: [1] episodic frame, [2] thematic frame, [3] both frames, and, [4] undetermined.

#### **6.7.3.8 Responsibility Frame**

Finally, news stories covering terrorism were examined to determine responsibility frame. Responsibility frame presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving to either the government or to an individual or group (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 95; Iyengar, 1991). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) organized the majority of frames used in news into five categories: the responsibility frame, the conflict frame, the human interest frame, the morality frame, and the economic consequences frame. The study found that Chinese newspapers were less likely to present a responsibility frame than US newspapers. The US newspapers articles that presented the responsibility frame blamed China for the spread of SARS.

Based on Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), de Vreese (2001), and Iyengar (1991), three categories were coded to examine the use of responsibility frames: [1] Claimed (if the story mentioned a person or group behind the terrorist attacks); [2] Attributed/ suspected; [3] Unknown/Not applicable (e.g., the information is not mentioned).

#### **6.7.4 Content Analysis Coding Frame**

The coding process in this study followed the structure outlined in research by MacQueen *et al.* (1998). First, the raw material was digitally recorded live and saved as video files in the computer. Each news story related to terrorism was given an identity number based on its transmission date. Al-Jazeera news stories were saved in an independent fill and numbered from one to 100. The same method was repeated with Al-Arabiya news stories and numbered from 100 to 200. In addition, only stories covered by both stations on the same day were considered so that direct comparisons in news content could be made.

Each of the 171 terrorist-related news stories (83 from Al-Jazeera and 88 from Al-Arabiya) was subject to detailed coding for a number of variables (see Appendix A). Story duration was timed by stopwatch. The analysis of each story considered introductory sequences, headlines, the actual news report, previews of upcoming news stories, and summaries. Headlines and summaries were included in their own categories, and the length of these recorded (see Harrison, 2000, 229).

According to Scott (1994), in content analysis, “discrepant interpretations may be controlled by the use of multiple coders” (cited in Sun, 2009: 91). To ensure high reliability

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of coding, moreover, it makes sense for content analysis to employ coders from the same cultural/educational/professional background (Peter & Lauf, 2002). Two Arabic PhD students in the Department of Media and Communication at the University of Leicester, who were proficient in English, were recruited to code all the sampled news stories. Coders were blind to the research questions. They were extensively trained for more than 15 hours to apply the coding scheme to a large set of practice news stories selected from the pool of 171 stories. Coders worked independently of each other.

Specifically, the process of coding along with the coder training and the codebook revision involves the following four stages.

*Stage one:* The two coders were trained on a standardized coding scheme (see Appendix A for this part), which includes detailed instructions, a list of variables, operational definitions, and measurement scales. Then, the coders practiced coding some randomly selected news stories together and consensus-building discussions were conducted during and after the coding. The codebook was revised a little bit afterwards.

*Stage two:* When the coders felt conceptual with coding system, they were instructed to independently code a number of 20 terrorist stories from each channel, which were selected randomly from the pool of 171 stories. The first coder was responsible for Al-Jazeera sample, and the other was responsible for coding Al-Arabiya sample. (25%) of all Al-Jazeera stories were randomly selected to measure inter-coder reliability. (24%) of all Al-Arabiya were randomly selected to measure inter-coder reliability. Precautions were taken to ensure that the coding categories were correctly translated into another language (from Arabic to English).

The inter-coder reliability was formally assessed by using the Holsti's inter-coder reliabilities formula for all variables. The coders achieved complete agreement upon the variable "political, military, humanitarian, crime frames," "frame perspective," "location of terrorist attack," "source attributed," "perpetrator of terrorist attack," "victim of terrorist attack," "episodic vs. thematic frames," and "responsibility frames". Since the variables were defined well based on past research, the discussion between the researcher and the coders brought no issues about the coding system.

Through a five meeting with the coders, questions as well as guidelines in the coding book were redefined to make them clearer, more accurate, and pertinent to the goals of this study. For example, after the coding of a sample of 20 news stories, the "War on Terror"

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frame was included as a key term in the coding book because this frame was present in the news rhetoric particularly on Al-Arabiya channel.

*Stage three:* The coders were trained on the revised codebook. The news stories that selected for a pilot test were used for the second try. After the initial pilot test, the ambiguous coding instructions, key words, categories, questions, guidelines, and definitions were re-evaluated and agreed upon, and the coding process was repeated independently by the researcher and the second coders. The coding results were compared to assess the level of consistency in the coding process. The coders achieved 100% agreement upon all variables. After the coders were agreed upon the level of reliability, they were ready to prepare the formal pilot coding.

*Stage four:* The coders independently conducted formal pilot coding, which can inform the researcher of the overall reliability of coding scheme. The 171 terrorist stories were systematically sampled. Holsti's formula was used for the reliability testing ( $R = 2m / n1 + n2$ ). Where  $R$  is reliability,  $M$  is the number of the items agreed upon by the coders,  $n1$  = number of items for coder 1,  $n2$  = number of coding decisions made by coder 2. The coders achieved complete agreement on all variables.

### **6.8 Level Two: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

This section outlines the main assumptions of critical discourse analysis (CDA) which constitutes the analytical framework of the second part of my research.

This study uses an analytical frame developed by Norman Fairclough (1995) to analyze Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya coverage of certain terrorist events in 2012. Certain primary factors provided the impetus for selecting Fairclough's methodology as opposed to other CDA methods being used today. First, the applicability of Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework for analysis is relevant to this study because it situates the textual data in a larger institutional and social context. Second, the structured nature of the framework is appealing in its rigour.

The decision to use Fairclough's was primarily based on his development of the three-tiered framework for analysis. This framework is commonly used among CDA analysts (Rogers *et al.*, 2005, cited in Mendiola, 2007: 88) and lends itself to an analysis that explores not only the text relevant to the object of study, but also social and linguistic practices and institutions by considering the local, institutional, and larger societal situating of the process (Ibid, p: 88).

### **6.9 Critical Discourse Analysis**

CDA “is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, CDA take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality” (Dijk, 2001: 352).

CDA is, in the word of Caroline Coffin (2001: 99), “an approach to language analysis which concerns itself with issues of language, power and ideology. An interdisciplinary approach to discourse, it rejects the study of language as independent form social studies” (p: 99). Rather, it focuses on language as a form of ‘social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 258), and seeks to examine both the manner in which discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideology, and the manner in which discourse actively plays a role in shaping these relations.

CDA “is clearly political in its objectives. Discourse is a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation” (Fairclough, 1992: 63). “And the word ‘critical’, implies showing connections and causes which are hidden; it also implies intervention, for example providing resources for those who may be disadvantaged through change” (Fairclough, 1992: 9).

This study seeks to analyze the coverage of certain terrorist events in 2012, using the CDA framework presented by Norman Fairclough (1995). This particular framework is chosen because it enables the text to be located within its social and cultural context (Lahlali, 2011: 125).

Historically, critical discourse analysis has been influenced by the writing of Gramsci and Foucault. Some tenets of CDA can also be found in the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. Its current focus on language and discourse was initiated with the “critical linguistics” that emerged at the end of 1970s (Fowler *et al.*, 1979). Since then, CDA has been advanced by other critical linguistics like Norman Fairclough (1989, 1995, & 1997), Van Dijk (1984, 1995, & 1997) and others (cited in Guzun, 2008: 15).

### **6.10 Why Critical Discourse Analysis?**

The word “critical’ signals a departure from the more descriptive goals of discourse analysis where the focus has been more on describing and detailing linguistic features than about why and how these features are produced. A critical approach to discourse typically analyses news texts, advertisements, political interviews and speeches, doctor-patient interactions, counselling sessions, job interviews or other so-called ‘unequal encounters” (Simpson &

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Mayr, 2013: 51). These encounters often employ linguistic strategies that appear normal or neutral on the surface; strategies which are naturalized but which may in fact be ideologically. The term ‘critical’ therefore principally means unravelling or ‘denaturalizing’ ideologies expressed in discourse and revealing how power structures are constructed in and through discourse (Ibid, p: 51).

Fairclough (1995) sums up the idea of ‘critical’ language study as follows:

“Critical is used in the special sense of aiming to show connections which may be hidden from people - such as the connections between language, power and ideology ...Critical language study analyses social interactions in a way which focuses upon their linguistic elements, and which sets out to show up their generally hidden determinants in the system of social relationships, as well as hidden effects they may have upon that system” (p: 5).

Indeed, it is our contention that the term ‘critical’ is itself open to critique, and as this book develops we suggest ways (especially in Web Strand 11) in which we might interrogate, in a more self-reflexive way, our own position in relation to the discourses we analyse (Simpson *et al.*, 2010: 52).

### 6.11 CDA’s Main Principles

Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271-80) summarised the main tenets of CDA as follows:

- CDA addresses social problems.
- Power relations are presumed to be discursive by critical analysts.
- Discourse constitutes society and culture.
- Discourse does ideological work.
- Discourse is intertextual/historical
- The link between text and society is indirect or ‘mediated’.
- Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory.
- Discourse is a form of social action or social practice.

Given these tenets, critical analysts are interested in investigating the relationship between power and language and how the ruling classes of the society use language in order to legitimize their positions and privileges in society. Critical analysts are also interested in how this interconnection between discourse and power leads to the discrimination of some people and in general produces and reproduces social inequalities. Thus, the typical vocabulary of many scholars in CDA will feature notions such as “power,” “dominance,”

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“hegemony,” “ideology,” “class,” “gender,” “race,” “discrimination,” “interests,” “social structure” (Dijk, 2005: 354).

Although Fairclough and Wodak’s tenets are essential to this study, the main focus will be on ideological work. In my analysis of the discourse of the two channels, I shall draw on Lahlali (2011) method by trying to figure out the main difference in the way discourse is produced and ideologically influenced. By doing so, I intend to show how, through discourse; people and organisation can express their beliefs, identities and ideologies.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997) maintain that “text and society are inextricably linked; therefore, in order to understand a piece of discourse, one needs to examine the text in relation to its social, cultural and wider global context. It is the time and space of the production of the text that can at times help us make sense of the elements behind its production” (cited in Lahlali, 2011: 127). Fairclough (1989), pointed out that, “ideas do not come from free heads, by which he means that ideas are ideologically loaded” (cited in Lahlali, 2011: 127).

### **6.12 Structure of News Stories**

As a guiding framework of analysis, this study uses a notion established by Teun van Dijk’s (1987) to analyze news discourse. This popular style of story-telling has been referred to as the “inverted pyramid”. This style was developed by newspaper journalists but has been adopted by television journalists (Gunter, 1987: 311). In his analysis of hard news in the modern press van Dijk (1987) refers to two overarching theoretical categories, respectively the semantic macro-structures and schematic superstructures of news discourse. The macrostructure of a text is its overall organization, a theme or topic which can usually be summed up by one single proposition. Meanwhile, a news report is typically made up of a headline, a lead, the main events, verbal reactions to the story and “comments” (See Table 6.1). Although the latter is usually avoided in news stories in order to maintain journalistic independence and balance, it needs to be investigated how far a commenting function is integrated in other layers. With the expectation that both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya observe journalistic standards of impartiality, special emphasis was given to analyzing whether Al-Jazeera’s differs from the Al-Arabiya in terms of framing, the source of reactions and analysis, as well as the type of background information given.

**Table 6-1 Generic Structure of News Story**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Headline:</b> this tells in a very brief way what the main events.</li><li>▪ <b>Lead:</b> the opening paragraph or two present in capsule form the most important information about the main event.</li><li>▪ <b>Details of the main events:</b> this provides further information on what happened, who was involved, where, how, and why.</li><li>▪ <b>Background:</b> sometimes reporters will fill in background information about the main event.</li><li>▪ <b>Consequences:</b> this explains the larger significance of the main event.</li><li>▪ <b>Comments:</b> this provides insights and opinions</li></ul>
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Adapted from van Dijk (1987)

These are the microstructures or schematic structure of the news report, each element relating to or elaborating on the theme or topic. The elements are hierarchically organised: general information comes first, followed by more details (Thomas, 2008: 79). Microanalysis also identifies other features of newspaper style, such as those which increase the factual quality of news reports. The production of news, because of its tight deadlines, is constrained by various professional routines and values. News stories are direct descriptions and include concrete details, such as numbers, distances and measurements, which are used often to provide credibility. To emphasise the factual nature of a news story, official, well known and credible sources (for example, police and public officials) are often selected. Sources also provide an ideologically coherent perspective, enhance the story line and play down any incompatible propositions (Ibid, p: 79).

The framework developed by van Dijk (1987) formed the basis for the analysis of news stories within the current study, with Bell (1991-1998) adding to the criteria used for analysis. Bell contends that the non-chronological order of the ‘inverted pyramid’ news story is its most striking characteristic. Furthermore, he stresses that a news story must be seen as newsworthy, as determined by the “value” of the news. Events and actors are selected because of their news values, with negativity or conflict regarded as a basic element. Bell uses the news factors described by Galtung and Ruge (1965) as a basis, as well as adding others. Galtung and Ruge refer to values of recency, proximity, consonance, unambiguity, unexpectedness, superlativeness, relevance, personalisation, elite nations and people, continuity and composition. To this list Bell adds “attribution”, the eliteness of a story’s sources and “facticity”, the degree to which it contains facts and figures (See Tuchman, 1978), as important contributing factors in the value of a news story (cited in Thomas, 2008:

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79). These factors are not independent but cumulative; that is, the more of these news values a story can be said to have, the more newsworthy it is. The lack of one factor in a news story can be compensated by its possessing another. He cites others such as continuity, meaning once something is in the news it remains news, and competition, referring to a “scoop”, relating to the news-gathering process and the desirability of being first to publish. There are also elements in the style of the news text, including clarity, brevity and colour that affect its newsworthiness, particularly in the lead sentence. Bell argues that the most important factor in enlivening news stories is to maximise or enhance the news values (Thomas, 2008: 80).

He also relates the categories in news stories to the journalist’s short list of what should be in a story, the “five W’s and an H”: who, where, what, when, why and how. A news story normally begins with the lead. The lead is the most important sentence in the story, covering the main event and sometimes a secondary event. The actors and place involved in the event are also described, so that the lead answers the journalist’s “who”, “what” and “where”. The lead sentence also concentrates the news values of the story, beginning to tell the story as well as summarising it. It is “a directional summary, a lens through which the point of the story is focused and its news values magnified” (p: 183, cited in Thomas, 2008: 80). The body of the story comprises one or more episodes, consisting of one or more events or clusters of events that share a common setting or news actors. In addition, stories may contain background, commentary and follow-up. Any event prior to the current action is termed “background” while “commentary” provides comments on the action, often including detailing how the event happened, and also evaluation and verbal reaction. “Follow-up” covers any action subsequent to the main action of an event (Bell, 1998).

In van Dijk’s (1987) original model, which views news discourse through an inverted pyramid, the most relevant information for the audience is carried in the headline, followed in turn by a paraphrasing of the news event, background information, reactions, and comment. The latter category is often excluded from news reporting in the interests of impartiality, but in the current research it is essential to uncover how and to what extent this type of commentary is integrated into other layers of news discourse. Assuming that Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya both observe and maintain journalistic impartiality, particular attention was paid to analysis of the differences in framing, analysis, reaction and background information provided by the two networks.

### 6.13 Fairclough's Frameworks

As stated above in this section I shall draw on Fairclough's (1995) framework in my analysis of the data. This particular framework is chosen because it enables the text to be located within its social and cultural context (Lahlali, 2011: 125).

Working within the tradition of critical discourse analysis, Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995), proposes a three-dimensional discursive event model based on 'Text', 'Discursive Practice' (production, distribution and consumption) and 'Social Practice'. These levels and their interrelations must be studied when analyzing a specific discourse (Fairclough, 1995: 74). Fairclough provides the following schematic representation of his approach:

#### 6.13.1 Textual Analysis

Textual analysis is the first step in Fairclough's three-part method for discourse analysis. Analysis of text "involves linguistic analysis in terms of vocabulary, grammar, semantics, the sound-system, and cohesion-organization above the sentence level (Fairclough, 1995b: 57). "Vocabulary relates to the words used in a text, grammar with the ways in which words are combined, cohesion with links between clauses and sentences and structure with large-scale properties of texts. Linguistic analysis is applied to text's lexical-grammatical and semantic properties, two aspects that have mutual impact on each other" (pp: 57-58). Fairclough also views text from a multifunctional perspective. To Fairclough, "any sentence in a text is analysable in terms of the articulation of these functions, which he has relabelled representations, relations, and identities:

- Particular representations and recontextualizations of social practice (ideational function)-perhaps carrying particular ideologies.
- Particular constructions of writer and reader identities (for example, in terms of what is highlighted-whether status and role aspects of identity, or individual and personality aspects of identity)
- A particular construction of the relationship between writer and reader (as, for instance, formal or informal, close or distant)" (Fairclough, 1995b: 58).

According to Fairclough (1995), "linguistic analysis is concerned with presences as well as absences in texts that could include "representations, categories of participant, and constructions of participant identity or participant relations" (p: 58).

### 6.13.2 Discursive Practice

The second step is the discursive practice. According to Fairclough (1995: 58-59), “this dimension has two facts: institutional process (e.g. editorial procedures), and discourse processes (changes the text go through in production and consumption)” (pp: 58-59). For Fairclough, “discourse practice straddles the division between society and culture on the one hand, and discourse, language and text on the other” (p: 60).

Discourse processes, however, can be best explained through discussing a core concept in Fairclough’s approach: Intertextuality.

- Intertextuality and intertextual analysis

In this framework, while there is linguistic analysis at the text level, there is also linguistic analysis at the discourse practice level that Fairclough calls “intertextual analysis” (1995b: 61). According to Fairclough (1995b), “intertextual analysis focuses on the borderline between text and discourse practice in the analytical framework. Intertextual analysis is looking at text from the perspective of discourse practice, looking at the traces of the discourse practice in the text” (p: 16).

According to Fairclough (1992) “linguistic analysis is descriptive in nature, whereas intertextual analysis is more interpretative” (p: 16). Fairclough (1992: 84) defines intertextuality as, “basically the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth” (p: 84).

Fairclough (1992: 85) identifies two types of intertextuality: “manifest intertextuality,” and “constitutive intertextuality.” The former refers to the heterogeneous constitution of texts by which “specific other texts are overtly drawn upon within a text.” This kind of intertextuality is marked by explicit signs such as quotation marks, indicating the presence of other texts. Constitutive intertextuality, on the other hand, refers to the “heterogeneous constitution of texts out of elements (types of convention) of orders of discourse (interdiscursivity)” (p: 104). This kind of intertextuality refers to the structure of discourse conventions that go into the new text’s production.

Fairclough (1992) provides several examples of these processes of intertextuality. He analyses an article published in a British national paper, *The Sun*, which is a report about an official document about drug trafficking produced by a committee of the British House of Commons. What he finds are two main points: there are linguistic forms that do not explicitly represent the official document. They are subreports supposedly about the issue that are not

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present in the official document at all; (p: 2) there are linguistic and semantic signs which indicate the merging of the voice of *The Sun* with the voice of the official document. This is evident in the fact that *The Sun* supports the recommendations that the official document makes to the House of Commons, as if they are *The Sun's* recommendations. But at the same time, *The Sun* does not merely repeat the official document but rather rephrases things and expresses them in its own words and language. The paper manages to do this in two ways: (1) by shifting away from the formal language and legal jargon towards a conversational vocabulary and spoken language (e.g. “traffickers” becomes “peddlers”), (2) by converting the written monologue of the official document to a conversational dialogue. That is, the newspaper turns an official document into a popular speech that is appealing to its particular and loyal audiences. This example of intertextuality shows that while *The Sun* report is based on a previous text, it responds to the future utterances, expectations of its readers, by configuring the original text into its own discourse type.

Fairclough (1995) claims that “intertextual properties of a text are realized “in its linguistic features” since it is assumed that texts “may be linguistically heterogeneous” (p: 189). Nevertheless, Fairclough (1995b) asserts that, “linguistic analysis is descriptive in nature, whereas interpretative analysis is more interpretative. Linguistic features of texts provide evidence which can be used in intertextual analysis, and intertextual analysis is a particular sort of interpretation of that evidence” (p: 61).

### **6.13.3 Social Practice**

Fairclough’s third dimension, social practice (or sociocultural practice) advances discourse analysis beyond narrow textual categories and is arguably the most important, yet theoretically fragmented, area (Jones *et al.*, 2004: 47). Through social practice, Fairclough explores notions of ideology and hegemony. Drawing primarily on Althusser, Fairclough (1992) defines “ideologies [as] significations / constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination” (p: 87).

### **6.14 Being Critical about CDA**

Although the CDA approach appears to be appropriate for the analysis of media text, many scholars have expressed their doubt about it (Lahlai, 2011: 128). Much criticism comes from Widdowson (1995, 2004). He states that “the term discourse is vague and fashionable.

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Moreover, he claims that CDA is not an analysis of textual features and context, but interpretation regulated by “pre-textual socio-political commitment” (Widdowson, 1998: 144). That is, he states that “the lack of precise analysis and (often also) the absence of contextualisation cause that scholars only conclude their own biased premises. He also claims that CDA is not a method. He defines CDA as “an approach to interpretation” (1998: 150) considering the vagueness of concepts (for instance, the concept discourse itself) and models.

In response to the criticism, many scholars have shown the benefits of CDA and they have responded by suggesting that not all the given criticism towards CDA is well grounded. The importance of context, for instance, is a factor seriously taken into account in the discourse-historical approach of Reisigl and Wodak (2001). In reply to Widdowson’s critique about the prior judgements, Fairclough states that “CDA is, unlike other approaches, explicitly its own position and commitment” (cited in Titscher *et al.*, 2002: 164). At the same time, CDA has changed, and continues to change, in order to remedy some of its theoretical and methodological weaknesses.

My focus in this part of my research is on linguistic analysis of text and on socio-cultural analysis. Nevertheless, I will also emphasize discursive practice of text on both TV networks. Language has become more salient and more important in a range social process. At the same time, key areas of social life are becoming increasingly centred on the media, especially television. This is notably the case with politics. Politicians now have unprecedented access on a regular basis to huge audiences, providing both better opportunities for them to shape opinion and win support and greater risks of public exposure and discredit (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 259).

### **6.15 Model of Analysis**

Focus of this research is on the linguistic analysis of text. Discourse analysis is a broadly used research tool, so it is not extraordinary that many scholars have developed different kinds of strategies in discourse analysis to analyse texts. Although linguistic analysis is intended to cover elements of sentence structure, grammar and so on, the main focus of the analysis should be on the selectivity of lexis, which reflects opinions, beliefs and values. Most media organisations express their values and beliefs through the production of media texts. The text shapes and shaped by these practices. The selection of lexical items can have a wider implication on the consumer of the text; it can mobilise, arouse feeling of anger and can lead to social actions (Lahlali, 2011: 126). Utilising, for instance, the word ‘extremist’

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rather than ‘religious man’ to address a neighbour might have some implications on the relationship between neighbours (Zidan, 2006); it might have some knock-on effect on the established trust between them. The analysis of these lexical items should take into consideration the context of their production, as this helps in explaining the main reasons behind a particular choice of lexical item (Lahalai, 2011: 126).

In examining the data for this study, different strategies were adopted based on earlier research. The strategies that were used were: [1] referential strategy, [2] predicational strategy, the former and the later based on the discourse-historical approach by Reisigl and Wodak (2001); and lexicalisation based on Richardson (2007). Based on Fairclough’s theory, text were also examined for [3] inter-textuality and [4] framing of voices.

Hence, the following elements were chosen to be analysed: [1] lexicalisation and predications, [2] inter-textuality and, [3] framing of the voices. Below, these different strategies will be further explained.

### **6.15.1 Lexicalisation and Predicational Strategy**

Richardson states that the analysis of words is the first stage of discourse analysis. He declares (2007), a “Words convey the imprint of society and of value judgment in particular - they convey connoted as well as denoted meanings” (p: 47). Allan (in Richardson, 2007: 48) analysed the words used in the US-war against Iraq in 1991. He encountered that words were used that could have been used to refer to the persons, people or actions of both parties involved, but that they had not been used that way. For example, the US had an army, navy and an air force, in contrast with Iraq that had a war machine. The US suppressed and Iraq launched sneak attacks. Richardson (2007) states that the “alternatives in each of these pairings could be exchanged, but the ideological constraints (felt particularly at time of war) meant that they very rarely were” (p: 48). Clark (2003) also relates the use of words with an ideology: “Naming is a powerful ideological tool... Different names for an object represent different ways of perceiving it” (p: 209). Thus, words are commonly taken as neutral reflections of the real world. They may, however, be more accurately regarded as constructions of the real that reflect the interest of dominant groups.

In the analysis, I will also take into account the predications that are attributed to certain groups. Reisigl and Wodak (2001) state that “predication is the very basic process and result of linguistically assigning qualities to persons, animals, objects, events actions and social phenomena. Through predication, persons, things events and practices are specified

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and characterized with respect to quality, quantity, space, time and so on” (p: 54). Reisigl and Wodak (2001) claim that “predications are mostly realized through specific forms of reference (based on explicit denotation, as well as on more or less implicit connotation), by attributes (in the form of, for example, adjectives, apposition, and prepositional phrases), by predicates or predicative nouns / adjectives / pronouns, by collocations or by explicit comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures” (p: 55).

### **6.15.2 Narratives: Inter-textuality and Framing**

News reduces complex series of events whose relationship may not be terribly clear to stories, imposing narrative order upon them’, declares Fairclough (2003) when he writes about news and narrative. “News is, thus, not an actual series of events written on paper or being told on television” (p: 84). News coverage involves constructing what Fairclough (2003: 84) calls “fragmentary and ill-defined happening”. Fairclough (2003) continues by stating that it “includes certain happening and it is excluding others, and it, subsequently, sets these events in a particular relation to each other. A part of making the story is the representation of voices and of speech” (p: 85). Yet again, the issue of selecting arises. The journalist is in control of the process of selecting and of framing the voices or speeches. As Fairclough (2003) states, “journalists are in business of including some things which were said and excluding others (which often means excluding certain voices), selecting particular parts of what was said, and generally ordering what is often a cacophony of speech and writing into separate speech events” (p: 85).

Fairclough (2003: 49) differentiates four ways of reporting: [1] direct reporting, quotation, purportedly the actual words used, in quotation marks, with a reporting clause (e.g., she said, “he’ll be there by now.”), [2] indirect reporting, summary, the content of what was said or written, not the actual words used, no quotation marks, with a reporting clause (e.g., she said he’d be there by then). Shifts in the tense (“he’ll becomes “he’d”) and deixis (“now” becomes “then”) of direct report, [3] free indirect reporting, intermediate between direct and indirect-it has some of the tense and deixis shifts typical of indirect speech, but without a reporting clause. It is mainly significant in literary language (e.g. Mary gaze out of the window. He would be there by now. She smiled to herself), and [4] narrative report of speech act. Report the sort of speech act without reporting its content (e.g., she made a predication).

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The first form of incorporating speech, direct reporting, is a very obvious inclusion of a voice; the other three ways summarize texts. One might wonder how a journalist decides between choosing direct or indirect speech. In the scope of framing, Fairclough (2003) stated, “When the voice of another is incorporated into a text, there are always choices about how to frame it, how to contextualize it, in terms of other parts of the text-about relations between report and authorial account” (p: 53). One can think about the ordering of the voices in relation to each other. Moreover, if one examines the ordering of the voices, an antagonist-protagonist structure can sometimes be seen. Fairclough (2003) gave an example of a text concerning the Lockerbie bombing in 1988. He stated that in the text the Western diplomats and politicians are the good guys, dominantly voiced in the final part of the text, and they are very critical about the Libyans, the bad guys. The latter is prominent in the first part of the text. Especially the contrast between the Libyan voices, which refer to what Libya is doing, and the Western voices which refer to what Libya appears to be doing, makes a distinction between antagonist and protagonist clear.

Hence, when different voices are included, it does not automatically mean that there is no altering of attitudes towards a certain side. Framing voices can make a major difference and they can create an antagonist-protagonist structure. Turning back to narrative and its relation to state apparatus, I will quote some words of Allan (Fairclough, 2003): “If we see news as part of the apparatus of governance, this highlights the sense in which news stories are oriented to regulating and controlling events, and the way in which people respond to events” (p: 85). Taking this into account, I expect that an analysis of intertextuality and the framing of voices will be a valuable contribution to exposing the dominant ideology of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.

### **6.16 Data Collection for Discourse Analysis**

This study examined the coverage of certain terrorist events in 2012. The data for discourse analysis was assembled through a composite approach. Data from the coverage of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya reporting terrorist attacks were collected for the period March 3<sup>rd</sup> to July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The data sources consisted of ten news stories from Al-Jazeera and ten news stories from Al-Arabiya. The sample for discourse analysis was chosen so as to reflect all themes of terrorism coverage, including al-Qaeda attacks in Yemen, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 21, and May 11<sup>th</sup> 2012; suicide simultaneous attacks in Iraqi cities July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> 2012; and the armed attacks on a Jewish school in Toulouse/France March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Stories covered

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Yemeni and Iraq terrorist attacks were run just for one day in a single report for each. The reason why these events covered only for a short period of time, possibly because of the massive coverage devoted by the two channels to the Syrian uprising during the collection of study sample. Other stories covered Toulouse attacks run more than one report across a number of days (March, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> 2012). Each news story consisted of a one single report. The reasons why the Toulouse event has attracted media attention for longer was because these events were synchronized with the French presidential election. In addition, French police investigation's took around a week to identify the perpetrator, who eventually killed by French elite forces.

The whole of each selected news story was considered as the unit for analysis, and the sample was chosen according to prominence and content. Every story selected was subject to coverage by each of the two networks on the same day, and featured at or near the very top of their bulletins. The reports related directly to specific violent attacks leading to multiple casualties, which were blamed on al-Qaeda or on individuals with a similar ideology.

Below, an overview of the stories (for the entire stories, see Appendix B for stories of Al-Jazeera and appendix B for stories of Al-Arabiya) is presented:

### **6.16.1 Stories of Al-Arabiya:**

1. Armed attacks targeted a Jewish school in Toulouse/France in March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
2. Al-Qaeda attack on targeted Yemeni army security points in May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
3. Al-Qaeda suicide attack targeted Yemeni police academy in Sana'a/Yemen in May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
4. Al-Qaeda suicide attack targeted the Yemeni military parade in May 21, 2012.
5. Suicide simultaneous attacks targeted Iraqi cities in July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012.
6. Suicide simultaneous attacks targeted Iraqi cities in July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

### **6.16.2 Stories of Al-Jazeera:**

7. Armed attacks targeted a Jewish school in Toulouse/France in March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
8. Al-Qaeda attack on targeted Yemeni army security points in May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
9. Al-Qaeda suicide attack targeted Yemeni police academy in Sana'a/Yemen in May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
10. Al-Qaeda suicide attack targeted the Yemeni military parade in May 21, 2012.

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11. Suicide simultaneous attacks targeted Iraqi cities in July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012.
12. Suicide simultaneous attacks targeted Iraqi cities in July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

### **6.17 Summary**

The chapter has presented the two research methods used in the study: content analysis and critical discourse analysis. In doing so, the chapter examined in details the sampling rationale, the period studies and data collection. In selecting the critical discourse analysis, the chapter briefly described the three-dimensional analytic framework conceptualised by Fairclough (1995). In selecting the network sample, the chapter also described the trends of the two different news channels: Al-Jazeera as independent voice in Arab world and Al-Arabiya as alternative news channel. Finally, the chapter discussed why the particular TV networks out of all the other mass media in Arab world, were selected in this study.

The next chapter deals with the results of the fieldwork carried out in the content analysis. This includes the differences and similarities between the two channels regarding news frames, geographical location of terrorist incident, sources used, identifying terrorism perpetrators and victims, thematic versus episodic frames, and responsibility frames. Chapter Seven presents the result of CDA. Based on Fairclough (1995) research, three-dimensional analytical frameworks were analysed, (1) textual analysis, (2) discursive practices, and (3) social practice.

## **Chapter 7 A Content Analysis of Terrorism Coverage in Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya Newscasts**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This study has provided content analysis and critical discourse analysis of selected output from two Arab TV news channels; this chapter will discuss the findings and results of the content analysis. It examines data showing how the two foremost Arab TV news channels, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya framed their reporting of terrorist related activity. Based on reviews of previous research, eight framing devices were considered during content analysis: types of news frames, framing perspectives, geographical location of terrorism coverage, sources used, perpetrators, victims, episodic versus thematic framing, and responsibility.

Despite their leading roles among Arabic media outlets, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya differ from each other. While both channels have demonstrated an interest in broad coverage of terrorist events and related international news, Al-Arabiya has been closer to pro-Western governments such as Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, leaning towards what has been termed the moderation axis (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 437). To clarify this perspective, Zayani and Ayish (2006) explain:

“Al-Arabiya strives to match Al-Jazeera’s proclaimed independence while avoiding its provocative style, eschewing its sensationalistic appeal, insisting on making a clear distinction between fact and opinion, and steering clear from the politics of other Arab and especially Gulf countries. By and large, Al-Arabiya pitched itself as a neutral channel that cares for Arab interests and staying away from pursuing ambiguous agendas and other parties’ interests” (p: 483).

### **7.2 Framing News Events**

Before we examine how the two networks framed terrorism, it is important to have a brief reminder of the theoretical concept of framing. Media framing has been understood “as a concept of selecting and packaging on-going issues” (see Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 1991; Ryan, 1991; Ryan & Sim, 1990; Schön & Rein, 1994). As a “schemata of interpretation” (Goffman, 1974: 21), “a media frame allows its audience to understand an event reported in the media” (Zoch & Tuck, 1998, cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 435). The concept of framing involves both inclusion and exclusion. Through including (therefore emphasizing) and excluding (therefore de-emphasizing), media news outputs can prioritize some aspects over others, therefore intentionally or unconsciously promoting one particular interpretation of events (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 435).

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Entman (1993) explains that to “frame’ is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p: 52). Thus, important elements of framing lie in the causal and treatment responsibilities of a news event as framed and presented to the public. As defined by Iyengar (1991) “causal responsibility focuses on the origin of a problem, while treatment responsibility focuses on who or what has the power to alleviate the problem” (p: 8).

Overall the literature indicates that framing reduces possible meanings to limited and conventional categories (Tuchman, 1978, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012:113). News frames can help the public formulate their beliefs and opinions about terrorist events. Through framing, the media simplify, prioritize, and structure the narration of terrorist activities, which allows an individual to quickly sort out, interpret, categorize, and evaluate the events (Norris *et al.*, 2003: 11). A review of the literature suggests for every occurrence there are various possible perspectives to be taken, encouraging an audience or a reader to understand an issue in a certain way (Persson, 2004).

Over the last decade numerous comparative framing analyses of events have been conducted. Past research, for example, by Jasperson and El-Kikhia, (2003) categorised news frames into three main categories: the official frame, the military frame, and the humanitarian frame (p: 116). “Official frames refer to news frames concerning support for the government and political leaders in a country, including national unity and public support for the government. Military frames refer to depictions of the strategy used in war on terrorism (e.g., operations, strategies of fighting terrorist groups, etc.)” (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 438). And humanitarian frames focus on the victims of the terrorism deeds, notably the suffering and damage caused by terrorists’ actions (Jasperson & El-Kikhia, 2003: 116).

Another important element in analysing framing is proximity. Most of the scholarship in news coverage has evaluated proximity as a recognized news value (see for example Burns, 2002; Neveu, 2002; Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Studies found geographic distance affect the volume of news a nation received in another’s media (Rosengren, 1977, cited in Wang, 2008: 6). In examining newsgathering and distribution, Chang and Lee, (1992) concluded that proximity was one of the important factors in determining the newsworthiness of information (cited in Change & Lee, 2010: 74).

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A further key element is the news source. Past literature has reported that news sources reference some ideas and not others. News sources create frames that render ideas more salient and memorable than others. The literature suggests sources of a news story determine the basic nature of the story and influence the flow of information through the media (Pavlik, 2001; Wanta, 2002, cited in Fahmy, 2005: 384-5). In other words, by examining the distribution of sources in news stories, a pattern of coverage can be traced and the media's institutional bias can be revealed (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, cited in Reese *et al.*, 2012: 256).

Classifying groups has also been important in framing studies as well. Researchers have suggested definitional challenges reflect organizational and routine-level issues that impact the resulting news content (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 45). The literature has indicated that perpetrators of a particular attack are usually labelled simultaneously by news outlets as “terrorists,” “guerrillas,” “freedom fighters,” “revolutionaries,”—all depending on the perspective of the news outlets and their interests (Ganor, 2005: 5). Thus, the choice of words describing the perpetrators makes the reader or the audience understand how “ugly” and/or “heroic” they are. How victims are framed in terrorist attacks also plays a role in how much a news story will reach societal salience. For example by being able to identify with the victims or their relatives, the target audience is more likely to feel empathy for its suffering (Fahmy, 2010; Persson, 2004). In the case here, the analysis of how perpetrators and victims are identified not only makes it easy to recognize the source and consequence of danger, but also helps decision-makers pursue appropriate procedures to encounter terrorism. For example, Kalyango (2006) found that Islamic groups are the most frequently mentioned terrorist groups in *The New York Times* regarding the coverage of counter-terrorism efforts (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 436).

Another aspect of framing is the use of episodic versus thematic frames. “Episodic frames focus on the immediate event or incident and give little or no context about underlying issues or context” (Iyengar, 1991: 14). Some researchers have noted episodic coverage focuses on concrete occurrences or events with little contextual or thematic connection (Cho, *et al.*, 2003: 310). Meanwhile, “thematic frames focus on the big picture, for instance, by providing statistics, expert analysis or other information to help the public view the event in a broader context” (Iyengar, 1991: 14). Thematic coverage therefore provides a broader and more contextualized understanding of the background factors contributing towards the issues covered (Norris *et al.*, 2003: 14). Regarding terrorism

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reporting, Iyengar (1991) found that the way episodic frames are used and the references to specific groups that are made within these episodes make viewers less likely to hold public officials accountable for terrorist events and also less likely to hold them responsible for solving it. Researchers have defined a responsibility frame as “a way of attributing responsibility for a cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 96).

The analysis examines how Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya covered news about terrorism. The study addressed several related issues, divided in questions of content analysis. The content analysis questions focused on eight areas of study:

RQ1: Did terrorism stories in the two news channels differ in types of frames they used?

RQ1.2: Did terrorism stories in the two news channels differ in their framing perspective?

RQ1.3: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in the use of attributed news sources?

RQ1.4: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in identifying terrorism perpetrators?

RQ1.5: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in terms of which geographical locations were featured most often?

RQ1.6: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in identifying terrorism victims?

RQ1.7: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in the use of episodic versus thematic frames?

RQ1.8: Did the stories in the two news channels differ in suing responsibility frames?

To examine these research questions, the present study undertook sample materials from Al-Jazeera TV and Al-Arabiya TV. Two evening news programmes (Today’s Harvest 8:00 GMT from Al-Jazeera and Last Hour 8:00 GMT from Al-Arabiya) were chosen. These news programmes were recorded daily from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2012. There were 100 news stories per channel recorded.

The unit of analysis used here was the entire news story. Overall 85% of all the news stories were sampled. A total of 171 terrorist news stories (83 from Al-Jazeera and 88 from Al-Arabiya) out of the 200 news stories were content analysed. Based on past framing research detailed above, each news story was coded for a variety of variables including: types of news frames; framing perspective; proximity/geographical location; attributed news sources; perpetrators; victims; episodic versus thematic frames and use of responsibility

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frames. The coding categories were designed to capture both objective characteristics of the stories (e.g., number of programmes, programmes where the story occurred in, and channel on which broadcast) and more subjective characteristics (e.g., presence of various frames).

The purpose of this study was to conduct a comparative content analysis of coverage of terrorism by two major Arabic-language satellite networks, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. Overall Al-Arabiya presented more stories about terrorism (88 stories) than did Al-Jazeera (83 stories). Content analysis results show some stark differences and some similarities, in the way Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya reported on and frame terrorism and related terrorist events.

### 7.3 Types of Frames

The first research question (**RQ1**) asked whether there were differences in the types of frames employed in the terrorism stories between the two TV services. In terms of types of frames, results showed significant differences ( $\chi^2 = 15.49$ ). As displayed in Table 7.1, more than 90 percent of the stories in Al-Arabiya (92.1%) employed official and military frames, as compared to about 70 percent in Al-Jazeera (73.5%). Most notably Al-Arabiya used a larger percentage of military frames (43.2%) than Al-Jazeera (31.3%) did. However data also showed the ranking of the four types examined were similar for each channel.

Regarding the official frame per se though, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya news outlets were not much different (42.2 % versus 48.9 %) and results were non-significant. Both seemed to embrace the official perspective in terrorism coverage, a trend repeatedly found in previous research on Western media (e.g., Fried, 2005; Nacos, 2002; Norris *et al.* 2003; Ryan, 2004). For example in their coverage of news about the political and security crisis in Yemen, both networks referred to Ali Abdullah Saleh, the former Yemeni president as “the deposed Yemeni president.” A possible explanation for the dominance of this frame in both outlets might be related to their political background. Both outlets are sponsored by Arab governments, which have their own regional political agendas. As a consequence, these channels are expected to support their sponsors’ positions, policies, as well as serving their political interests.

**Table 7.1 Cross Tabulation between Types of News Frames and News Channel**

News Frame (N=171)	Al-Jazeera		Al-Arabiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Officials	35	42.2	43	48.9	78	45.6
Military	26	31.3	38	43.2	4	37.4
Humanitarian	5	6.0	01	1.1	6	3.5
Crime/Catastrophe	1	1.2	03	3.4	4	2.3
Mixed	16	19.3	03	3.4	19	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note:  $X^2 = 15.49$ ;  $df = 1$ ;  $p < .005$ .

In terms of the humanitarian perspective, Al-Jazeera was more likely to pay some attention to humanitarian situations (6.0%) than Al-Arabiya (1.1%) did. That said it is important to note that the numbers of stories were small. Hence, the differences found here are not very robust. Nevertheless one can assume that these results suggest support for findings by Aday and Hebert (2005) who found that the Al-Jazeera had a high percentage of critical reporting with a strong focus on civilian casualties, suggesting that Al-Jazeera gave greater priority in its coverage to humanitarian portrayal such as civilian sufferings and disruption in society (see findings by Barnett & Reynold, 2009) than its Arabic counterpart. Broadly, results of the limited data showed very little use of this frame by both channels (less than 10% overall), however.

Finally the least amount of coverage was related to crime and catastrophe. While Al-Arabiya used this frame in some stories (3.4%), Al-Jazeera had only one story that dealt with crime (1.2%). Finally, it should be noted that Al-Jazeera allocated almost a fifth of its news space (19.3%) to mixed topics, suggesting a wider range of topics covered by this channel than on Al-Arabiya (3.4%).

### 7.3.1 Story Perspectives

The second research question (**RQ2**) asked whether there were differences in perspectives between Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. In comparing the two channels, as shown in Table 7.2, there were significant differences in foci between the two networks ( $X^2 = 21.32$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

**Table 7.2 Framing of Story Perspective**

Story Perspective (N=171)	Al-Jazeera		Al-Arabiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Story focus is on the event	38	45.8	23	26.1	6	35.7
Story focus is on the government views	26	31.3	56	63.6	82	48.0
Story focus is on the victims views	5	6.0	3	3.4	08	4.7
Story focus is on perpetrators views	6	7.2	0	0.0	6	3.5
Story focus is on the consequences	8	9.6	6	6.8	14	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note:  $X^2 = 21.32$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $p = .000$

Results showed nearly half of Al-Jazeera news stories focused on the event itself (45.8%) than Al-Arabiya (26.1%). In contrast, more than sixty percent of news stories in Al-Arabiya (63.6%) focused on the government's views versus about thirty percent in Al-Jazeera (31.3%). Al-Arabiya's focus on the government is not surprising because of its excessive loyalty to the Saudi government that owns it. Critics of the network have claimed that its content is more controlled than Al-Jazeera's content because Al-Arabiya reflects loyalty to both Saudi and the United States governments (*The Economist*, 2005; Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 730).

Most notably was the complete lack of focus on perpetrators by Al-Arabiya. As shown in Table 7.2, Al-Jazeera allocated at least some stories (7.2%) focussing on perpetrators, particularly those reports broadcast from Mali. This might be explained by Al-Jazeera's efforts at covering multiple sides of the story. As media scholar Miles (2005) explains, "Knowing it is scrutinized more rigorously than any other news station, Al-Jazeera is fastidious in presenting both sides of the story" (p: 359).

Finally it is worth noting that the least often covered perspective concerned the consequences of terrorism by Al-Jazeera (9.6%) followed by Al-Arabiya (6.8%).

### 7.3.2 Proximity

The third research question (RQ3) asked whether the two channels differed in terms of the geographic locations featured. As displayed in Table 7.3, results showed no significant differences.

**Table 7.3 Cross Tabulation between Geographic Location of Terrorism and News**

Story Location (N=171)	Al-Jazeera		Al-Arabiya		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Middle East	68	81.9	74	84.1	142	83.0
Europe	10	12.0	4	4.5	14	8.2
USA	5	6.8	10	11.4	15	8.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note:  $X^2 = 4.35$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .114$

Despite the lack of differences between channels, some results are worth noting. On each network, the greatest proportion of terrorist-related reporting referred to events that took place in the Middle East (84.1% in Al-Jazeera and 81.9% in Al-Arabiya). This finding is not surprising considering that the majority of the powerful and notorious terrorism organizations in the world (e.g., Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq, Morocco, Somalia, Afghanistan and Pakistan) are located in the Middle East (The US State Department Annual Report, 2010). In addition, this region has witnessed the longest war on terrorism in history, and more terrorism victims as compared to other parts of the world (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 443).

### 7.3.3 Attributed Sources

The fourth research question (**RQ4**) asked whether the two channels differed in terms of use of attributed sources. Because news channels sometimes mention more than one source per story, each news source was cross-tabulated with each news channel individually as displayed in Table 7.4.

**Table 7.4 Frequency and Percentage of Source Attributed by News Channel**

News Sources (N=171)	Al-Jazeera TV		Al-Arabiya TV		Total		Chi-square
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Officials/military/police	35	19.2	51	44.3	86	29.0	4.26*
Correspondents	43	23.6	34	29.6	77	25.9	2.99
Experts	44	24.2	6	5.2	50	16.8	44.05***
Other media sources	0	0.0	3	2.6	3	1.0	2.88
Perpetrators	18	9.9	0	0.0	18	6.1	21.33***
Witnesses	24	13.2	10	8.7	34	11.4	8.26*
Victims and relatives	6	3.3	0	0.0	6	2.0	6.59*
Islamic leaders	3	1.6	1	0.9	4	1.3	4.34*
Health professionals	1	0.5	1	0.9	2	0.7	.002
Court	3	1.6	0	0.0	3	1.0	3.24
No source identified	5	2.7	9	7.8	14	4.7	1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Please note that the percentage of each source type is calculated as a proportion of the total number of sources identified in each TV channel.

The data showed significant differences between the two channels in six of the variables analysed regarding source attribution: Official/Military/Police ( $X^2 = 4.26$ ;  $p < .05$ ); experts ( $X^2 = 44.05$ ;  $p < .001$ ); perpetrators ( $X^2 = 21.33$ ;  $p < .001$ ); witnesses ( $X^2 = 8.26$   $p < .05$ ); victims and relatives ( $X^2 = 6.59$   $p < .05$ ); and Islamic leaders ( $X^2 = 4.34$ ;  $p < .05$ ). There were no significant differences however between the two channels regarding the use of other media sources, health professionals, court sources and unidentified sources.

Results showed that Al-Jazeera significantly used more expert sources (24.2%) than did Al-Arabiya (5.2%). Regarding the use of official and military sources, Al-Arabiya significantly used more official sources (44.3%) than did Al-Jazeera (19.2%).

Differences were also noted in Al-Jazeera significantly using more sources from witnesses (13.2% versus 8.7%); and Islamic leaders (1.6% versus 0.9%) than did Al-Arabiya. Further as detailed in Table 7.4, Al-Arabiya did not use a single source from perpetrators and victims while Al-Jazeera did. These results support previous research that Al-Jazeera tended to use different sources including sources from terrorists' representatives in its reporting

(Osman, 2006: 7). For example, historically the station did not hesitate to broadcast a tape from Osama Ben Laden, even when it faced potential backlash from the United States government for projecting anti-Americanism (Sakr, 2005, cited in Wu, 2004: 41).

### 7.3.4 Terrorism Perpetrators

The fifth research question (RQ5) asked whether the two channels differed in identifying terrorism perpetrators in their news stories. Because news channels sometimes mentioned more than one perpetrator of terrorism per story, each perpetrator identified was cross-tabulated with each news channel individually as displayed in Table 7.5.

As shown in Table 7.5, eight out of the 10 categories examined were statistically significant. Results of chi-square tests showed that reference to terrorism perpetrators as al-Qaeda ( $X^2= 18.91$ ;  $p<. 001$ ); muslim/extremist/jihadist/salfi ( $X^2= 37.77$ ;  $p<. 001$ ); terrorist ( $X^2= 20.16$ ;  $p<. 001$ ); combatant ( $X^2= 11.99$ ;  $p<. 01$ ); attacker/gunman ( $X^2= 11.99$ ;  $p<. 01$ ); bomber ( $X^2= 5.58$ ;  $p<. 05$ ); kidnapper ( $X^2= 5.33$ ;  $p<. 05$ ); unknown ( $X^2= 31.73$ ;  $p<. 001$ ) differed between Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya news outlets.

**Table 7.5 Frequency and Percentages of Terrorism Perpetrators by News Channel**

Perpetrators of Terrorism (N=171)	Al-Jazeera		Al-Arabiya		Total		Chi-square
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Al-Qaeda	13	13.4	41	25.5	54	20.9	18.91***
Muslim/Extremist/Jihadist/Salfi	6	6.2	44	27.3	50	19.4	37.77***
Terrorist	0	0.0	19	11.8	19	7.44	20.16***
Combatant	13	13.4	1	0.6	14	5.4	11.99**
Perpetrator	1	1.3	7	4.3	8	3.1	3.43
Attacker/gunman	13	13.4	0	0.0	13	5.0	11.99**
Bomber	4	4.1	14	8.7	18	7.0	5.58*
Kidnapper	1	1.3	8	5.0	9	3.5	5.33*
Named of attackers mentioned	12	12.4	22	13.7	34	13.2	2.98
Unknown	34	35.1	5	3.1	39	15.1	31.73***
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Note: \*  $p<0.05$ ; \*\*  $p<0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p<0.001$ .

Please note that the percentage of each perpetrators type is calculated as a proportion of the total number of perpetrators identified in each TV channel.

Results showed that Al-Arabiya identified its largest proportion of terrorist perpetrators as muslim/extremist/jihadist/salfi (27.3%) and al-Qaeda (25.5%), supporting

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previous research that some leading news outlets in the Middle East might disseminate stereotypical information related to terrorism and its affiliation (see Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 443). Al-Jazeera on the other hand had its largest proportion of terrorist perpetrators mentioned unknown (35.1%). This finding suggests that this Arabic news channel specifically moved away from identifying and framing terrorism perpetrators. This shift implies prudent reporting standards by Al-Jazeera regarding crafting how news about terrorism is framed.

### 7.3.5 Terrorism Victims

The sixth research question (**RQ6**) asked whether the two channels differed in identifying terrorism victims in their news stories. The findings presented in Table 7.6 showed statistically significant differences ( $X^2= 12.95$ ;  $p<. 05$ ) between Al-Arabiya and Al-Jazeera. Despite the differences in identifying victims and their relatives, however, it is worth noting that the largest proportion of victims by Al-Jazeera (32.5%) and Al-Arabiya (46.6%) remained unknown.

A post hoc analysis looked at nationalities of the victims and their relatives and found that the largest proportion of news stories identified them as Middle-Eastern (47.0% in Al-Jazeera and 45.5% in Al-Arabiya). This finding is not surprising. It is in line with US Government data that states about sixty percent of fatalities based on terrorism are from Middle Eastern countries (The US State Department Annual Report, 2010).

**Table 7.6 Cross Tabulation between Terrorism Victims and News Channel**

Victims of Terrorism (N=171)	Al-Jazeera TV		Al-Arabiya TV		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Combatant	18	21.7	20	22.7	38	22.2
Non-combatant	10	12.0	15	17.0	25	14.6
General	3	3.6	0	0.0	3	1.8
Specific	1	1.2	2	2.3	3	1.8
Mixed	24	28.9	10	11.4	24	19.9
Unknown	27	32.5	41	46.6	68	39.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note:  $X^2= 12.95$ ,  $df, = 5$ ;  $p = .024$

### 7.3.6 Episodic versus Thematic Frames

The seventh research question (RQ7) asked whether the two channels differed in their use of episodic versus thematic frames. The findings as presented in Table 7.7 showed that Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya did not differ significantly in episodic and thematic frames employed ( $X^2 = .64$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

Despite the lack of differences found some interesting findings are worth noting. As shown in Table 7.7, news coverage was more episodic than thematic in both channels (92.8% in Al-Jazeera and 95.5% in Al-Arabiya). Further reports that included both frames remained scarce (2.3% in Al-Jazeera and 1.1% in Al-Arabiya). These findings suggest that the news outlets failed to give a multi-dimensional background to the viewers about these terrorist attacks reported.

**Table 7.7 Frequency and percentages of Episodic and Thematic Frames by News Channel**

Episodic and Thematic Frame (N=171)	Al-Jazeera TV		Al-Arabiya TV		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Episodic frame	77	92.8	84	95.5	161	94.2
Both	2	2.4	1	1.1	3	1.8
Undetermined	4	4.8	3	3.4	7	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note:  $X^2 = .64$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $p = .728$

### 7.3.7 Responsibility Frame

The eighth research question (RQ8) asked whether the two channels differed in their use of responsibility frames in reporting terrorist related coverage. The findings as presented in Table 7.8 showed that Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya did not differ significantly in the responsibility frame employed ( $X^2 = 12.95$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

**Table 7.8 Cross Tabulation between Responsibility Frame and News Channel**

Responsibility Frame (N=171)	Al-Jazeera TV		Al-Arabiya TV		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Claimed	5	6.0	8	9.1	13	7.6
Attributed/suspected	9	10.8	15	17.0	24	14.0
Unknown	69	83.1	65	73.9	134	78.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note:  $X^2 = 12.95$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $p = .338$

Despite the lack of significant differences between the two news outlets here it is interesting to note the largest proportion of the stories analysed did not place responsibility on any entity (83.1% in Al-Jazeera and 73.9% in Al-Arabiya). In other words, while both networks gave an extensive coverage of terrorist attacks, both outlets did not condemn them in clear and direct language by attributing blame or assigning accountability for example on al-Qaeda for its role in threatening national security.

### **7.4 Discussion**

This chapter focused on how the two leading Arab news channels, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, framed terrorism news. With regard to the research questions posed at the outset, the following important conclusions are indicated in this section. To start with, after content analysing 171 news stories from 3 March 2012 to 30 July 2012 it emerged that the two news outlets focussed much on disseminating and supporting official positions and decisions regarding terrorism. Further results showed limited coverage of humanitarian suffering overall.

In examining differences in the types of frames employed between Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, the two outlets framed terrorism coverage differently. For example, the data showed that Al-Arabiya significantly used the military frames (43.2%) more than did Al-Jazeera (31.3%). Specifically in examining the terrorist events analysed in Yemen, the military frame dominated Al-Arabiya's coverage. A May 21, 2012 story on the war on al-Qaeda mentioned: "The last several days have witnessed fierce fighting between al-Qaeda and Yemeni forces sometimes backed with raids by US drones in the context of the fight against terrorism." Clearly the lack of alternative frames here attests that Al-Arabiya did not challenge the military frames in reporting these events.

In contrast, coverage on Al-Jazeera did not use similar terms such as fighting terrorism to describe the on-going war in Yemen. In fact, Al-Jazeera questioned the legitimacy of using force in Yemen, particularly when it came to the US involvement there. In an interview with a political analyst on May 21, 2012, Mohamed al-Zahari said to Al-Jazeera viewers "the American presence is available more than it should be in Yemen, as it hits outside the framework of international law, and I say with great sadness the Yemeni sovereignty is violated in this context." Al-Jazeera's coverage here therefore supports

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previous findings by Nisbet and Shanahan (2008) regarding the prevalence of negative considerations about the United States in Arab media.

While there were stark differences in the frames employed overall, both channels demonstrated similar trends in their use of official frames (42.2% versus 48.9%). Embracing the official perspective is not surprising however. Both outlets are sponsored by Arab governments, which have their own regional and political agendas. In this case the two networks clearly supported their sponsors' (governments') positions and political interests, as well as served their policies. This trend supports previous research examining Western media (see Fried, 2005; Nacos, 2002; Norris *et al.* 2003; Ryan, 2004). In its coverage of the war in Afghanistan, for example, *CNN* has been observed to employ official frames that reinforce the administrative position and patriotic message (Jasperson & El-Kikhia, 2003: 116-7). Instead of challenging officials frequently cited in news stories, journalists endorse and legitimize official views (Ryan, 2004).

In addition, Nacos (2002) found that western media embrace the language of governmental officials (cited in Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 235). Research into news coverage on *CNN* for example, right after the attack supports these findings (Reynolds & Barnett 2003). Relying heavily on official sources, *CNN's* coverage showed a clear, dominant frame consisting of three thematic clusters that involved war and military response, American unity, and justification. Keywords within the war and military response and justification cluster included statements referring to the United States more frequently as "America" instead of "the United States" and using the words *war* and *an act of war* to describe the attack, labelling the event as "horrific" and "unbelievable." In the coverage, words such as *cowards* and *madmen* were used to describe the terrorists. Moreover, journalists made atypical references to God and the need to pray or for prayer and used words such as *freedom*, *justice*, and *liberty* as simple descriptors of America and its ideals. Michaela Ryan (2004) came to the same conclusion studying the editorials of ten US newspapers after 9/11. Bush's "War on Terror" frame was accepted without any counterarguments and even reinforced by a selective choice of sources.

Further, the data showed limited coverage on terrorism from the humanitarian perspective. Although some scholars have credited Arabic media, especially Al-Jazeera, with caring for civilian sufferings (e.g., El-Nawawy, 2006; Soriano, 2008; Wolfsfeld *et al.*, 2005; Aday *et al.*, 2005), the analysis here showed humanitarian sufferings from terrorism were seldom brought to the attention of the public by either network. One can only observe that

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both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya have a long way to go to provide contextualized and accurate descriptions of terrorism and its consequences (Zeng & Tahat, 2012: 445).

Regarding differences in perspectives, the data revealed significant differences in foci between the two networks. While only (30%) of the stories analysed from Al-Jazeera focused on the government's viewpoint, Al-Arabiya's more extensive focus on the government's perspective (63.6%) was striking in contrast. This suggests alternative sides in the majority of Al-Arabiya's coverage were completely missing. This finding was not surprising though as many of its critics have claimed that Al-Arabiya's content is more controlled than Al-Jazeera's content because of the network's support for the Saudi and US governments (*The Economist*, 2005; Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007). It therefore seems that even though both channels are owned by Arab governments and both tend to focus on using mostly official frames; Al-Jazeera appears to have had more freedom to report the news from different perspectives than its Arabic counter-part.

In fact the data showed Al-Jazeera tried to present both sides of the story by providing perspectives of both governments and perpetrators. Voices of alleged perpetrators, assumed terrorists and Islamic leaders were represented in reports on Al-Jazeera. Al-Jazeera seemed to put forth an effort to be less biased (see Bahry, 2001; El-Nawawy & Iskandar, 2002; Seib, 2005) which was demonstrated by its coverage of the Yemeni conflict. For instance, in analysing stories for this study Al-Jazeera focused on both sides of the conflict by mentioning the human tolls of both official soldiers and al-Qaeda members. This was not the case for Al-Arabiya. In its report on May 7, 2012 from Yemen, Al-Arabiya described the situation as: "due to the aggravation of the terrorism risk in Yemen, a new coordination between the Yemeni government and the US administration has begun. As a result the attacks of US drones against al-Qaeda targets began to escalate recently as part of the war against terrorism."

The findings here therefore support previous literature by Iskandar and El-Nawawy (2004). These scholars examined Al-Jazeera's efforts at covering multiple sides of the story and lauded the station's attempts at communicating with the "enemy", that is, those that stood on the opposite of the conflict. They explained Al-Jazeera does this despite of the fact that during times of war the context in which reporters operate would make such "communication with the 'enemy' unacceptable" (p: 320).

Despite the lack of differences between the two channels regarding the geographic location variable, it was interesting to note that in more than eight out of 10 stories analysed

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the coverage of terrorism occurred in the Middle East. Thus, one should consider perhaps news editors of these channels might have prioritised news events that occurred close to home (e.g., terrorism in Yemen and terrorist attacks that occurred in Iraq and Somalia). This might suggest a strong and significant regional focus. However, this conclusion is not clear as one would need to examine whether during the time of this analysis most of the stories about terrorists acts on these two channels occurred in the Middle East and/or North African locations, that is, within the Arab world rather than outside it. In other words, terrorist events may have been geographically more distributed, and yet Arab news editors still chose to give strong preference to those occurring inside the Arab world. Whether this would be evidence of a news value causing biased reporting needs further examination and is currently beyond the scope of this study.

Regarding use of sources data showed Al-Arabiya significantly used more official sources than did Al-Jazeera. This finding supports al-Dawud and Majid (2004) that found (47%) of Al-Arabiya stories about terrorism attacks in Rayed 2003 focused on the official response to acts of terrorism. While it is not surprising that official sources are popularly used in terrorism coverage (see Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; El-Amad & Fahmy, 2011; Ryan, 2004), past research (e.g., Zeng, 2007) also suggested that officials are considered more biased than experts. One can therefore assume from the data here that Al-Arabiya more likely used more biased sources than Al-Jazeera did<sup>2</sup>

In regard to perpetrators, data showed that Al-Arabiya identified its largest proportion of terrorist perpetrators as Muslim/Extremist/Jihadist/Salfi. This supports previous findings that some of leading news channels in the Middle East, particularly Al-Arabiya, is stereotyping messages to their target audience (see Zeng & Tahat, 2012). Al-Jazeera conversely had its largest proportion of terrorist perpetrators unidentified and mostly avoided using loaded terms such as “terrorist” or “radical” to describe al-Qaeda members. Supporting previous findings (e.g., Barnett & Reynolds, 2009) the analyses here showed Al-Jazeera had more objective standards by using more neutral terms to refer to the attackers including: “fighters” and “attackers.”

In examining how both networks framed victims of the attacks the data showed the largest proportions of victims referred to by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya remained unknown. A

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<sup>2</sup> While it cannot be ignored that most terrorism organizations are located in the Muslim world, many have challenged the stereotypical association of terrorism with Islam. Scholars, government officials, as well as average individuals from the Muslim world have repeatedly reinforced the fact that not every terrorist is a Muslim and not every Muslim is a terrorist.

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later analysis of their origin however revealed that the largest proportion of news stories identified them as Middle-Eastern. This finding appears to be in line with US Government reports that suggest the majority (about 60%) of terrorism based fatalities occur in the Middle East (The US State Department Annual Report, 2010).

Regarding thematic versus episodic framing, data showed that both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya did not provide their audiences with thematic narratives to make sense of a range of diverse information related to terrorism. Examples of thematic framing include information such as comparing each reported event to previous attacks, highlighting its implications for the region and shedding some light on the background of a suicide bomber and his/her reasons for committing such acts. Although in most stories both satellite TV channels included diverse panellists to assess the attacks, reports that included thematic frames remained scarce. These findings are in line with El-Nawawy (2004) who suggested that Arab journalists tend to cover terrorist events more episodically when terrorist attacks take place inside the Arab world. These results also support Iyengar (1991) who reported that television news is overwhelmingly episodic and narrowly focused on specific events, issues, or developments at the expense of thematic approaches that report more extensively on the larger context. In the age of sound bites, there is less opportunity for thematic reporting specifically during conflict. In their analysis of the Iraq War, Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) pointed out that the media's focus on episodic elements failed to present the big picture about the conflict to the general audience.

Moreover, it is important to note that news stories by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya by and large did not place responsibility of terrorism on any entity. This is not surprising especially regarding the way episodic frames have been used to make viewers less likely to hold public officials accountable for terrorism acts (see Iyengar, 1991) and therefore less likely to hold them responsible for resolving any consequences.

Finally it is important to note the purpose of this research was to examine the framing of terrorism based on two Arab TV networks. From a theoretical perspective, this research adds to the literature exploring framing of terrorism and pan Arab coverage of terrorist acts. How different Arab television portray terrorism remains a neglected area of scientific inquiry and the proposed research represents a substantive effort to remedy this deficiency.

The coverage examined here is just one snapshot in time, however. The framing of terrorism has been a top issue on the agenda of every nation that was directly or indirectly impacted by terrorism—including Arab and Middle Eastern nations. Thus, while the numbers

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of stories here were small and the differences noted are not very robust, future content analysis of terrorism should examine more stories and examine coverage under a variety of circumstances. The way Arab and Middle Eastern media portray and interpret terrorism events should continue to be one of the on-going topics in content analysis research.

## **Chapter 8 Critical Discourse Analysis: Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya Coverage of Terrorism**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to provide an in-depth textual analysis of the coverage of certain terrorist events in 2012. Based on this analysis, the research will try to establish a link between language and the socio-cultural and political ideologies that contribute to the production of a certain discourses. Some of these ideologies are represented through language. The language of media is a complex issue: strategies of language are deployed to influence the receiver towards a desired attitude or thought, especially during conflicts. According to Fabiszak (2007), “media language has a significant influence on... public discourse”. She concludes that it ‘is through the media that the social consensus on the conceptualization of social institutions is negotiated and achieved” (p: 13).

In the news coverage of terrorism, critical scholars have found certain dynamics of power and knowledge at work. For example, Thussu (1997) argues that “media manipulates truth about terrorism”, criticizing Israel’s usual description of military operations as “proportionate” and in “self-defence” whereas its opponents’ actions are rejected outright as “terrorism” conducted by “fundamentalists” (cited in Gerhard, 2010: 8). In this chapter, the research aims to shed some light on the theoretical frameworks which underpin my analysis. “Examining the coverage of terrorism from a critical perspective will help to unravel the social, cultural, political and ideological motives behind the production of news discourse” (Lahlali, 2011: 134).

The analysis used in this chapter was drawn from Fairclough’s (1995) framework. This framework was chosen because it enables the text to be located within its social and cultural context (Lahlali, 2011: 125). Fairclough (1995) regards discourse as the complex of three elements: text, discursive practice (text production, distribution and consumption) and social practice. In his view, analysis should be carried out by considering these three elements, and so he accordingly suggests a three-dimensional framework consisting of textual analysis, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice (p: 74).

In the current study, comparisons were made between the usage of language by the two leading Arabic news channels, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, with a textual analysis of language extracts from the two TV networks taking into consideration different contextual factors that contributed to the production and consumption of news discourse. Although linguistic analysis covers elements of sentence structure, grammar and so on, the main focus

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of the analysis should be on the selection of lexis, which reflects opinion, beliefs and values. Most media organisations express their values and beliefs through the production of media text. The text shapes and is shaped by these practices (Lahlali, 2011: 126). Fairclough (1995) gives the example of how violent death at the hands of others can be represented in completely different ways, depending on the motives of the producer. It might be called 'killing', 'murder' or 'massacre', while others might call it a 'holocaust' or an 'extermination' (Fairclough, 1995, cited in Lahlali, 2011: 133).

It is not only combinations of words which suggest a certain reading of a text, but also the way in which sentences are constructed. They may accentuate or mitigate responsibilities, for instance, by foregrounding participants or keeping them in the background, or by using active or passive forms. This is particularly obvious in headlines, which are usually incomplete sentences, thereby permitting very particular mechanisms of emphasis and obliteration (Ginneken, 1998: 154). See Van Dijk (1988b): A headline like 'Police kill demonstrator' puts police in first, subject position and expresses that the police has agent role. In the passive sentence 'Demonstrator killed by police', the police is also agent, but in this case, the phrase referring to the demonstrator is in the subject position, meaning that police are assigned a less prominent role (p: 11).

Finally, the headline 'Demonstrator killed' may make the role of the police implicit. At the same time, the headline becomes syntactically ambiguous: It could also be read as a description of an event in which the demonstrator was the killer or more generally associate demonstrators with killing. Grammatical research on newspaper syntax has shown that this is indeed the case: negative roles of the elite tend to be dissimulated by this kind of syntactic downgrading and implicitness (Dijk, 1988b: 11, see also Fowler *et al.*, 1979; Fowler, 1991).

According to Gimmeken (2005), "this is a very important aspect of selective articulation, although most of the time this is not a conscious choice by journalists, but rather an unconscious reflex" (p: 154).

The Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya news outlets were chosen because both supported by different sponsors. This might have some impact on the way the channels deal with their sponsors in their broadcasting. For instance, Al-Jazeera has been heavily criticised for not being critical enough of Qatari government and regime. While it remains active and critical of other Arab regimes, the channel adopts a silent approach towards its sponsor (Lahlali, 2011: 115, see also Fahmy, 2010; de Graaf, 2005). The same charges have also been filed against Al-Arabiya. Although it covers issues related to Saudi society, it has been very

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cautious about taking on any Arab government or regime (Lahali, 2011: 116). Furthermore, audiences in the Arab world appear to find Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya more credible than other Arab and Western news networks. A joint University of Maryland and Zogby International poll of viewers in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and United Arab Emirates found that Al-Jazeera led with (65%) of respondents saying they view Al-Jazeera more than Al-Arabiya, while thirty four (34%) said they viewed Al-Arabiya more than Al-Jazeera (Hammond, 2007, cited in Lahali, 2011: 112).

### 8.2 Critical Discourse Analysis of Al-Arabiya News Coverage of Terrorism

#### 8.2.1 Al-Arabiya: France March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012

In its coverage of the Toulouse attacks in March 2012, Al-Arabiya appeared to have a clear focus on the state perspective, as evidenced in its choice of what were perceived to be the relevant facts. Three of the five analyzed reports directly adopted the government's stance in their headlines (headlines in bold):

Al-Arabiya (1): President Nicolas Sarkozy, who flew to Toulouse in the wake of the attack, described it as a “national tragedy”.

Four people were killed in an attack on a Jewish school after the killing of three soldiers in the same place and in the same method.

Al-Arabiya (2): French elite forces killed Mohammed Merah with a shot in the head.

French elite forces came under heavy fire after breaking into Merah department.

Al-Arabiya (3): Phenomenon of Extremism

France hosts a conference organized by the union of Islamic organizations next month.

Al-Arabiya (4): Sarkozy has said he will prevent radical Muslim preachers from entering the country as part of efforts to root out extremism in the wake of the recent killing in France.

French president: I indicated to the Emir of Qatar himself that al-Qaradawi was not welcome on the territory of the French Republic.

The headlines by Al-Arabiya presented the reactions of French officials as a news event in themselves. While elements of paraphrasing, background and reaction were all included in the stories, the layer of comment was largely absent although indirectly

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incorporated through the strategic placement of reactions, such as the title of Al-Arabiya (2). Most of the paraphrasing describes how Merah attacked the police and how special forces responded and attempted to restore order, which may be accurate but may also be a means of obscuring the agency of state-sanctioned violence which in turn is legitimized as a responsive action:

Al-Arabiya (5): French elite forces shot Merah in the head after he carried out two separate attacks, one on a Jewish school killing three children and a teacher, and another on French soldiers, killing three of them, a week ago.

The report provided some background information about Mohammed Merah's ideology, and referred to some of the reasons that motivated his attacks, such as poverty or symptoms of mental disorders. Moreover, Al-Arabiya indicated that there was a possible connection between Merah and al-Qaeda:

Al-Arabiya (6): Although the investigation has not been completed yet but there is a possible relationship between Merah and al-Qaeda, French authorities said. Critics say how Merah could remain free after his visit to the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan last year, how could he come back to France and collects all these weapons.

Interestingly, considerable space was devoted to giving background information about the French's government decision that prevented al-Qaradawi and other Muslim preachers from entering French territory:

Al-Arabiya (7): France will bar radical Muslims preachers from entering the country to participate in an Islamic conference next month as part of a crackdown after the shooting by an al-Qaeda-inspired gunman, president Sarkozy said on Monday.

Furthermore, the report linked the recent French government's decision to earlier similar decisions taken by the British government, in order to give a kind of historical significance to the event which was generally absent in Al-Jazeera's reporting:

Al-Arabiya (8): In 2008 Britain refused to allow al-Qaradawi an entry visa because he seeks to justify acts of terrorist violence and expresses views that could foster inter-community violence.

Choosing the story from this perspective suggested that Al-Arabiya tended to adopt the Saudi official stance towards the Muslim Brotherhood movement, which was a banned organization on political and ideological grounds in Saudi Arabia. As stated earlier in

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(Chapter 5) Fandy (2007) stated, to find off the influence of Saudi and Iranian Islamic credentials, Qatar gave part of Al-Jazeera to the Muslims Brotherhood. The director of the station, Waddah Khanfar, is a Muslim Brother, Sheikh Qaradawi, the TV star of the Muslim Brotherhood, has a regular show on Al-Jazeera, and another second-generation Muslim Brotherhood member, Ahmed Mansour, has two shows on Al-Jazeera (p: 48). Fandy adds the dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood in Al-Jazeera can only make sense if we realize that Saudi Arabia expelled most Muslims Brotherhood leaders when they did not endorse the Saudi position during the 1990 Gulf War. The Muslims Brothers can boost Qatar's Islamic credentials as well as serve as the spearhead in a media war against Saudi Arabia (p: 48).

Most of Al-Arabiya's news reports focused on images of the French police and ambulances at the site of the attack, as well as close-up footage of several civilians weeping near the Jewish school in Toulouse. Moreover, some reports chose to lead off with images of the French president and the minister of the interior in official press conferences.

In conclusion, these reports were consistent with the observation that Al-Arabiya tended to present its state's perspective and to re-contextualize reported violence in connection with global Islamic terrorism, indicating some characteristics of a dominant discourse that Western news media have been criticized for. Past research showed that western media portrayed Islam and Arab with a negative context such as violence, terrorism, or fundamentalism (see for example Richardson, 2001; Karim, 2002; see also Persson 2004). Al-Arabiya's coverage of terrorism reflects its approach of a being a 'moderate than Al-Jazeera channel', as Al-Arabiay chief Abdul-Rahman al-Rashed explained "We are not going to make problems for Arab countries... We'll stick with the truth, but there's no sensationalism (Feuilherade, 2003). This task is accomplished by appointing pro-American and pro-Saudi editorial staff, playing down regional or transnational issues, covering Iraq from a more pro-American perspective, and featuring more official Arab governmental or American sources on its talk and commentary shows rather than independent or critical sources (Lynch, 2006a). This also can be seen in above reports. While Al-Jazeera tried to strike a balance in its reporting by referring to both, French government and civilians, officials were the predominant news sources in Al-Arabiya coverage.

### **8.2.2 Al-Arabiya: Yemen May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

In its reporting of the al-Qaeda attacks on Yemeni army security points on May 7<sup>th</sup>, Al-Arabiya appears to have a clear focus on the state perspective, since it began by providing an

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overview of the event and relaying official reactions, before moving on to provide background details on the military operations carried out by the government against al-Qaeda without using independent sources.

Al-Arabiya led off its report with a sound bite quoted from the Yemeni president's speech, saying:

Al-Arabiya (1): The battle against al-Qaeda has not yet started, and will not be ended until the clearing of every village and every city of those killers.

The story then continued with the correspondent giving basic information about the al-Qaeda attack on Yemeni army posts, where it reported the number of Yemeni forces casualties attributed to the attack, which was considered to be in retaliation for the assassination of al-Qaeda leader Fahd al-Qas'a, who was killed in a US drone raid:

Al-Arabiya (2): two days after the Yemeni president vowed to eliminate al-Qaeda in Yemen, the first blow came in the next day as an attack by a US drone in the Yemeni province of Shabwa killed the terrorist Fahd al-Qas'a, one of al-Qaeda leaders, but al-Qaeda launched an attack on a military base just one day after the assassination of al-Qas'a, killing and capturing dozens of Yemeni army personnel.

While elements of paraphrasing and reaction are included, the report continued to provide background about the military operation against al-Qaeda, mentioning that al-Qaeda was able to expand and control Abyan city in southern Yemen because of the security vacuum that followed the Yemeni revolution in 2011, blaming the former president, Ali Saleh. These aspects were also adopted by Al-Jazeera:

Al-Arabiya (3): the battle of the Yemeni authorities against al-Qaeda was escalated almost a year ago, a few months after the Yemeni revolution that toppled the former president Ali Saleh. Al-Qaeda took advantage of the security vacuum left by Yemeni forces in the south. When the army was summoned to the capital Sana'a to support the Saleh regime against the revolutionaries, al-Qaeda took advantage of such gaps and gained control of the province of Abyan.

Interestingly, one of the most dominant frames adopted by Al-Arabiya in its reporting about the conflict between the Yemeni government and the US on one side, and al-Qaeda on the other, came under the context of the "war on terrorism":

Al-Arabiya (4): Due to the aggravation of the terrorism risk in Yemen a new coordination began between the Yemeni government and US administration

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has begun, so the attacks of US drones against al-Qaeda targets began to escalate recently as part of the war against terrorism.

While atrocities conducted by al-Qaeda are clearly pointed out, Al-Arabiya used more loaded terms and phrases like “terrorist” or “terrorism” to describe al-Qaeda members and the organisation; however, these frames were not used by Al-Jazeera.

The Al-Arabiya reporter (May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012) chose to lead off with images of the Yemeni president’s speech and then the report showed still photographs of al-Qaeda leader Fahd al-Qas’a assassination in an air raid, and after that the report moved to distant combat scenes of the Yemeni army in a mountainous area surrounding the city of Abyan. Images used on Al-Arabiya were considerably more conflict-oriented than Al-Jazeera’s coverage on the same day, focusing on soldiers firing machine guns from trenches, airplanes firing missiles and explosions on land. Moreover, the human side was completely absent, with only two scenes of a destroyed building as a result of war operations being shown before moving to photos of Fahd al-Qas’a, which may have indicated the place where he was assassinated.

In conclusion, by opening its report with a quotation from the Yemeni president’s speech whilst relying on images of military operations indicated that Al-Arabiya veered towards a government perspective. Al-Arabiya’s coverage of the war on al-Qaeda reflects its approach of being a ‘moderate channel’. Some, however, might accuse the channel of having been influenced by Saudi government, which took an anti al-Qaeda and other Islamic group stance. Furthermore, the report neglected to provide an in-depth analysis as to the reasons behind the conflict. It is noteworthy that, while some of the military operations took place inside cities and villages of southern Yemen, the humanitarian situation was largely absent, and no direct voice was given to civilians who may have been caught up in the events.

### **8.2.3 Al-Arabiya: Yemen May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012**

The coverage of the May 2012 suicide attack that targeted the military parade in Sana’a also places emphasis on the state perspective, by paraphrasing the events in the form of Yemeni and American official reactions. Again, Al-Arabiya took the angle of the official source, (headlines in bold):

Al-Arabiya (1): The military official said that the toll could rise following the attack.

Al-Arabiya (2): The United States condemns the attacks against Yemeni forces and describes them as outrageous.

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Al-Arabiya's headlines presented the reactions of Yemeni and American officials as news events in themselves. Although the remark in Al-Arabiya (2) was identifiable as a quote, the naturalization of a comment into news' headline suggests the implicit adoption as Al-Arabiya's editorial opinion.

Relatively little space was used for paraphrasing the violence, merely describing the incident as a "deadly" explosion, focusing more on the consequences of the clashes between the Yemeni government and al-Qaeda and making direct accusations against al-Qaeda in raising its attack against Yemeni forces:

Al-Arabiya (3): Al-Qaeda stepped up its war against the Yemeni forces when it carried out a suicide bombing attack on a military parade in the capital Sana'a on Monday, killing almost 100 and wounding about 300 others.

Moreover, more space was devoted to giving background information, including different sources that provide further details about the actual suicide operation:

Al-Arabiya (4): The bomber, dressed in military uniform, detonated his explosives in the middle of a battalion of soldiers. Witnesses said human remains were scattered across the site of the blast.

The report also referred to the responsibility for, and the possible cause behind, the operation:

Al-Arabiya (5) Al-Qaeda affiliated Ansar al-Sharia group issued a statement claiming responsibility for the attack and threatening more attacks if the Yemeni army does not halt an operation against the terrorist group in the south of the country.

Furthermore, considerable attention was given to background details, including different sources which provide information about the suicide attack. Whilst pointing to the size of the operation in terms of the target quality, it was stated that al-Qaeda usually attacks soft targets. It was further reported that this suicidal operation bore many question marks, since it hinted to the existence of facilitation by followers of the former regime in its implementation:

Al-Arabiya (6): The unidentified bomber detonated his explosives as soldiers from the government's central security forces, commanded by a nephew of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, rehearsed for an army parade to mark the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the unification of north and south Yemen, according to the official.

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Al-Arabiya (7): [source: Sami al-Shebani/ political analyst]: I most likely believe that, there is a facilitating by elements from the army still loyal to the former regime, and because the army is not an easy target, especially that the military institution in a state of war with al-Qaeda, so I do not rule out the existence of collusion.

Again, although the United States launched air raids on al-Qaeda sites in Yemen without an international resolution from the UN or without a request from the Yemeni government according to official statements, Al-Arabiya appeared to legitimize these raids as part of the war on terrorism:

Al-Arabiya (8): [Ahmed Nayem: political analyst]: the last several days have witnessed fierce fighting between al-Qaeda and Yemeni forces sometimes backed with raids by US drones in the context of the fight against terrorism.

Interestingly, Al-Arabiya formulated this story with a reliance on different vocabulary choices, for instance, when describing casualties in the Yemeni army, Al-Arabiya employed emotionally charged terms:

Al-Arabiya (9): The Yemeni military institution received a “painful” blow by al-Qaeda in the capital Sana’a.

Al-Arabiya also used several emotionally loaded terms when describing al-Qaeda members/action to imply bias:

Al-Arabiya (10): A suicide attack that targeted a military parade in the south of Sana’a was carried out by a “terrorist” wearing an explosive belt.

Although the attack resulted in a number of casualties, Al-Arabiya employed only three long distance images transmitted from national Yemeni TV of the dead bodies from the Yemeni army soldiers and ambulances which responded to the scene. The report then moved on to using a computer graphic to explain the attack in more detail.

Lastly, Al-Arabiya focused on the state’s perspective. The report did not provide alternative angles on or multiple views of the story, thus neglecting further analysis of the underlying causes of the conflict.

### **8.2.4 Al-Arabiya: Iraq July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012**

Although the simultaneous attacks that targeted several Iraqi cities during July 2012 left many victims either dead or injured, there was no space given to such events on Al-Arabiya news programmes. The coverage was merely provided in the form of in-studio anchor stories.

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The anchor began with an overview of the story, stating that there were explosions caused by booby-trapped cars in a crowded market in central Baghdad, and also referred to the identity of the victims, most of whom were civilians. Moreover, Al-Arabiya mostly used emotionally loaded phrases when describing the bombing, such as “bloody attacks”, in which more than 40 people were killed and more than 100 injured most of them are from Sunni sect.

While the anchor was broadcasting the news, Al-Arabiya moved on to displaying the devastation that resulted from the explosion, such as showing the number of burned cars as well as images of some civilians who were searching for survivors at the scene.

Ultimately, while the event was newsworthy because of the large number of victims involved, the story played on Al-Arabiya was considerably shorter, being less than 30 seconds. Furthermore, although the victims targeted were mostly civilians, it is noteworthy that the humanitarian situation was largely absent from the news coverage.

### **8.2.5 Al-Arabiya: Yemen July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

The coverage of the July suicide attack that targeted the police academy in Sana’a also gives some emphasis to the state perspective by repeatedly paraphrasing the events according to the official reaction:

Al-Arabiya (1): A suicide bomber killed at least 22 people, mostly cadets, inside a police academy in Sana’a on Wednesday in an attack that bore the hallmarks of al-Qaeda, police investigators said.

Al-Arabiya (2) “The suicide bomber blew himself up at the police academy in Sana’a and killed at least 22 people and wounded dozens,” an official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The report allocated a large amount of space to outlining the basic information about the attack, the number and identity of the victims, and this included the provision of multiple sources and interviews with witnesses and experts who were at the scene of the bombing:

Al-Arabiya (3): [source: eyewitness] there was a person walking carrying a bag, passed by the college and when the students gathered he put the bag down and exploded it.

Al-Arabiya (4): Medics at the scene said dozens more were wounded in the explosion at the entrance to the police academy.

Moreover, the story linked this attack and an advanced suicide bombing operation on Yemen’s defence in Sana’a last May, and surmised in its reports that the reason for the

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repetition of such attacks was the failure in tightening security measures, without placing blame directly on the Yemeni government:

Al-Arabiya (5): In May, a suicide bomber in army uniform struck at the heart of Yemen's military establishment, killing more than 90 people during a rehearsal for an army parade in the capital Sana'a.

The report also provided information about the identity of the perpetrators, without indicating as to the motives behind their implementation for such a suicide operation:

Al-Arabiya (6): The bomber, named Mubarik Al-arni from Amran governorate in the north of Sana'a, suffered fatal injuries and died after being taken to hospital, leaving behind him open-ended questions about the terrorist attacks and mysteries beyond that exceeded the security alert of the security services.

While the previous reports assumed a critical attitude when describing al-Qaeda, the negative tone was apparent in this report through the use of certain loaded terms and phrases such as (Islamist militants):

Al-Arabiya (7): Islamist militants linked to al-Qaeda have vowed to carry their fight across Yemen after a US-backed military offensive in May drove them out of strongholds they took last year during protests against former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's rule.

Although Al-Arabiya mentioned the reason behind the attack in its report, which was a failure of Yemeni security measures, the report also pointed to the existence of parties working to undermine the security successes of the Yemeni government in the face of al-Qaeda:

Al-Arabiya (8): The bombing coincided with the visit of the assistant US secretary of State to Yemen, which carried a strong message to the Yemeni authorities and their partners in the war against terrorism, and had connotations that there are still effective strong players who want to abort the successes announced by the intelligence services of Yemen to arrest terrorist cells.

Paraphrasing the story from this angle implied the apportioning of blame on to the former regime as well as the possibility of its own involvement in supporting those attacks. This reporting exemplified a familiar conformity to a particular biased standpoint adopted by Al-Arabiya.

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The report aired some pictures of the bombing incident from the site of the event, where it used images which showed the effects caused by the explosion to buildings and also images of ambulances and the number of policemen as well as some explosive experts at the scene. The report also used visual images of bloodied victims on the ground and wide-angle shots of civilians gathering around in the aftermath of the bombing. The correspondent ended the report with the scene of the bombing seen behind him, as a conscious reference to Al-Arabiya's use of images to transmit facts via the employing of eyewitness and expert statements from the event site.

In conclusion, these reports suggested that Al-Arabiya consistently presented its home state's perspective. Thus, the station invariably raised concerns about the security situation in Yemen and the recurrence of such operations that target the military institution in the country. Although the report quoted news from the site of the event and provided multiple sources, Al-Arabiya neglected to provide background information concerning the social, religious and political reasons behind the conflict.

### **8.2.6 Al-Arabiya: Iraq July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

In its coverage of the simultaneous bombing in July 2012, Al-Arabiya appears to have focused more on the human situation, and given much effort into explaining the underlying causes of violence. This was achieved via pithy paraphrasing of the events and via reporting at length on background and reactions. Most importantly, the government's failure to protect the population is criticized by various sources, including the US government and civilians.

Interestingly, Al-Arabiya tended to adopt the American perspective toward "terrorist" events, whether these events take place either in Yemen or in Iraq:

Al-Arabiya (1): The United States strongly denounced the series of attacks that left 107 dead in Iraq, considering it is a cowardly act during the holy month of Ramadan, and asking the Iraqi government to exert more effort to protect civilians.

Al-Arabiya (2): A series of gun and bomb attacks has wracked Iraq, with unidentified gunmen targeting a military base and car bombs exploding in Baghdad, Kirkuk and elsewhere.

Al-Arabiya (3): More than 100 people are reported to have been killed and 180 injured in at least 19 separate explosions and attacks on Monday morning, officials said.

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While there is space used for paraphrasing the event, merely describing the bombing as an act of al-Qaeda because these bombings were simultaneous, the immediate cause of violence is addressed only indirectly:

Al-Arabiya (4): Some analysts pointed that the recent return of violence to Iraqi cities is due to the imbalance in the structural composition of the Iraqi security services, that is when very important positions are in the hands of one person away from other components of the Iraqi people.

Choosing to view the story from this angle, it seems that Al-Arabiya focused on the events in terms of the political and sectarian conflict. Although some scholars (e.g., Shapiro, 2005) argue that Al-Jazeera demonstrates an Islamic agenda by giving a platform to Islamists, this view is challenged by Paul Cochrane (2005) who argues that Al-Arabiya is more Islamist in outlook than Al-Jazeera as it deliberately stirs up *fitna* (discord) between Sunnis and Shia in its reporting of events in Lebanon, Iraq and Iran (cited in Phillip, 2013: 107). Al-Arabiya is a Saudi-sponsored channel, and it is to be expected that its reporting would conform to the Saudi stance, which supports the Sunni practice (Lahlali, 2011: 143).

Moreover, considerable space is devoted to giving background information, including different sources which describe the human situation. Al-Arabiya transmitted the details of the explosions in Iraq via its correspondent at the event site, and conducted interviews with relatives of the victims and eyewitnesses:

Al-Arabiya (5): [eyewitness]... The first car was exploded and after five minutes the other car was exploded... look at the devastation... look at the number of victims... innocent people they did nothing wrong.

Al-Arabiya (6): [victims]... I lost my daughter; she was one and a half years old. I fought for her and now they have taken her away from me. Those killers have taken her, and she was only a child. I don't know who the next victim will be?

Although the report referred to Al-Qaeda's responsibility for the attack, Al-Arabiya generally avoided using heavily loaded terms, such as "terrorist", when describing the perpetrators. Moreover, in describing the event, Al-Arabiya tended to use emotionally provocative terms, such as "bloody attacks" or "deadly" attacks.

It is noteworthy that, while the civilians were given voice to paraphrase the event, and while the government was criticized for its failure to protect civilians or to prevent the

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outbreak of violence, the Iraqi government position was completely ignored and was not granted any space to explain itself or its action with regards to these attacks.

The reporter chose to lead off with images of buildings destroyed by the explosions and a number of civilians, rescuers and policemen searching for survivors amongst the rubble. The report also transmitted close-up images of victims' faces and their family members as well as a number of those receiving treatment at the hospital. The images were accompanied by the reporter's words which reflected the view of civilian sufferers.

Ultimately, Al-Arabiya provided a narrative of these events that was particularly concerned with the general human situation. However, although the story tried to highlight the conflict within the sectarian context, Al-Arabiya avoided maintaining this approach, and instead focused more on human suffering.

### **8.3 Critical Discourse Analysis of Al-Jazeera News Coverage of Terrorism**

#### **8.3.1 Al-Jazeera: France March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

In its coverage of the Toulouse armed attacks, Al-Jazeera allocated a large amount of space to giving details of the attacks, the identity of the victims and the state's reactions. In three of the four analyzed reports, Al-Jazeera framed the events with reference to the electoral competition over the French presidency that was occurring simultaneously with the attacks:

Al-Jazeera (1): French authorities announced the highest alert against what it described as "terrorism". The Toulouse incidents cast a shadow on the political scene in the midst of the electoral competition that the country witnesses.

Al-Jazeera (2): "It is a national tragedy," said Sarkozy, denouncing the "savagery" of the attack, and vowing to find the killer or killers.

Relatively more space was used for paraphrasing the violence, merely describing the incidents as armed attacks on a Jewish school, and focusing more on the victims. The human suffering of the victims was addressed quite extensively, and mostly reported in direct voice:

Al-Jazeera (3): [Patrick Rouimi, the father of a child at the school]: a man opened fire on a group of people standing at a spot where children were picked up for school.

Moreover, considerable space was devoted to giving background information, including different sources when giving a description of the events:

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Al-Jazeera (4): [Nicole Yardeni, president of the council of Jewish institutions in France]: the children who were killed were the younger siblings of those who attend the school. The gunman was “extremely determined because cameras showed [the attacker] running after the children and shooting at them. He was shooting at them, even catching them and shooting them in their heads.

The background piece on the perpetrator framed the sect somewhat differently than the reports given by Al-Arabiya. Most importantly, in most of the Al-Jazeera reports, no connection was drawn between Merah and global Islamist terrorism, except once after Merah declared that he was trained by al-Qaeda:

Al-Jazeera (5): [Correspondent]: simple information is available about this armed man after authorities surrounded his flat, French authorities stated that he was named Mohammed Merah, Frenchman from Algerian descent, twenty-four years old, and belonged to a banned organization.

Furthermore, Al-Jazeera avoided using emotional terms, such as “murderer” or “terrorist”, when describing the perpetrator, and instead describes him as an “armed man” or sometimes the “suspect”. Interestingly, a change of framework is adopted by Al-Jazeera in narration of the stories as the events developed. For example, at the beginning of the Toulouse attack, Al-Jazeera appeared to be more balanced by referring to all parties of the story, the government, the victim and the perpetrator relatives, but the discourse of the channel seemed to shift and tended to adopt a critical manner toward French government, focusing more on the consequences, especially following the reaction of the French police to the attacks with the arrest of a number of young Muslims and the issuing of the decision to prevent a number of Muslim preachers from participating in a conference organized by the Muslim community in Paris:

Al-Jazeera (6): Police in France have conducted new raids on Young Muslims in the wake of the armed attacks by gunman Mohamed Merah. At least 10 people were arrested as police conducted operations in several locations, mostly in the south. Meanwhile, 13 people arrested in raids last week were charged with what French authorities calls “terrorism” and nine of them remanded in custody.

Al-Jazeera (7): The series of arrests came after days of refusal by the French authorities to allow Islamic figures in enter French territory to participate in an Islamic conference held in the suburbs of Paris. Since the inset of Islam into the electoral campaign, the severity of outbids was raised among the

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presidential candidates, including the leader of the extreme right-wing, Marie Le Pen, who demanded to dissolve those Muslims organization in France.

Moreover, considerable space was devoted to giving background information about the Muslim community, including different sources which provided potential motivations behind the arrest of young Muslims, and which described them as victims of the electoral game:

Al-Jazeera (8): [Source: Hajj Tuhami Yazir, Union of organization in France]: In fact, we have been tired from this issue. Muslims here already confirmed their loyalty to France, we respect the law of this country and we are with the application of the secularism system, which does not distinguish between any religions, however, we strongly refuse that Islam be the topic of electoral propaganda and I think that we have become the victim of this propaganda.

Al-Jazeera went further by providing the historical and cultural context of the perpetrator:

Al-Jazeera (9): [Ibrahim Al-Zayer, Merah neighbour]: I knew Mohammed Merah since he was a child, he was a very kind guy, I know him. I can't believe that he did this, never, never.

Al-Jazeera (10): [Jawad Merah, family member]: I did not expect that Mohammed could be involved in this, he was a good man, and he loves his colleagues and his friends. He was a bright science student, he was normal; he laughed and played with everyone.

In its coverage of the Toulouse attacks, Al-Jazeera used some images similar to those displayed by Al-Arabiya. Al-Jazeera's images included those of French police spreading around the site of the attack as well as some ambulances and civilians gathering at the scene. There were also images of the funerals of the French soldiers killed, and some old footage of Mohammed Merah that seemed to have been taken by a mobile phone when he was driving. Al-Jazeera also used several images of members of the Muslim community in one of the suburbs of Paris, where it conducted interviews with members of Islamic organizations, Merah's family members, and neighbours. Ultimately, it is evident that Al-Jazeera tended to cover the stories from different perspectives by including the opinions of many groups.

In conclusion, although the earlier reports appeared to be more balanced in providing background detail and differing perspectives, Al-Jazeera switched its approach so that its final reports placed more emphasis on the consequences of the attacks. Al-Jazeera adopted a

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critical stance against the French government when it was announced that France would prevent Muslim preachers including Al-Qaradawi from entering the country, and described this action as an electoral propaganda. Al-Qaradawi is an Egyptian and the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, and he has lived in Qatar for 20 years and has Qatari citizenship (Fandy, 2007: 48). Al-Qaradawi enjoys worldwide exposure via Al-Jazeera television, through his weekly program “Sharia and Life”, and has sparked considerable controversy in the West for his support for suicide bombing in Israel and the killing of American soldiers in Iraq (American Foreign Policy Council, 2011: 217).

In contrast, Al-Arabiya described French reaction to Toulouse attacks as part of effort to root out extremism. The channel described the events as phenomena of extremism, and referred to Merah as a terrorist. The network’s willingness to adopt the official line expressed its commitment to fighting extremist views (Hammond, 2007), and should come as little surprise. It can be said that there is bias in the reporting of terrorism that might be attributed to the ideological position of the channels’ owners.

Moreover, while some features are included in these reports such as background of the perpetrator, Al-Jazeera did not provide in-depth analysis about the main reasons and motives behind those attacks. Although Al-Jazeera is at times more considerate in its use of emotionally charged and stereotypical terms—indicating a conciliatory approach, at other times it is more explicit in terms of its linguistic choices when paraphrasing violence in an active way.

### **8.3.2 Al-Jazeera: Yemen May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

Upon initial viewing, Al-Jazeera’s coverage of the May 2012 attacks appeared to contain similar features to that of Al-Arabiya. The report began by paraphrasing the event, then providing background information and reactions from state officials and independent sources, avoiding direct comments. Like Al-Arabiya, Al-Jazeera referred to official Yemeni reactions to the attacks in two of the three analyzed reports:

Al-Jazeera (1) Yemeni President: we say to those murderers who abused our tolerant religion, that the battle has not begun yet, and it will not end until the clearing of every city and every village and displaced people return to their homes and jobs, and the murderers surrender their weapons and accept peace.

Al-Jazeera (2): [source: Saeed Obaid, expert in Islamic groups]: we are not surprised that there are dead and injured, simply because that is al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda kills, al-Qaeda captures, and al-Qaeda destroys, especially if it wants to say we are here.

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Although there was indeed considerable space used to describe the Yemeni government's positions, Al-Jazeera also allowed the use of al-Qaeda sources:

Al-Jazeera (3): [Source: voice recorded, by Salah Jaber, al-Qaeda member]: eight al-Qaeda members were been killed and three were injured by an operation of the Yemeni arm.

Relatively little space was used to give background information, including different sources which give reasons for the Yemeni army's delay in ending the battle against al-Qaeda:

Al-Jazeera (4): [source: Jamal Omar, the UN envoy to Yemen]: there are real challenges where there are armed groups controlling important areas in the south, especially the Abyan region, all of which requires a reforming process in the military and security institutions.

Although Al-Jazeera indicated the number of deaths on both sides, it also referred to the motives behind the suicide operation, stating that it was caused by al-Qaeda in response to Fahd al-Qas's death. Al-Jazeera at no point held al-Qaeda as directly responsible in a clear or explicit way. Furthermore, through the use of government and independent sources, Al-Jazeera laid the blame on the former regime and referred to its involvement in provoking the conflict in Yemen:

Al-Jazeera (5): The remnants of the former regime provoke problems affecting the nation's security and stability, prime minister Mohammed Salem BaSundwa said.

Al-Jazeera (6): [source: Saeed Obaid, expert in Islamic groups]: al-Qaeda wants to control Lauder city but it faces stiff resistance from the people, although it possesses weapons provided by the former regime to trigger areas of tension and confuse president Aded Rabbo Hadi and make him busy with more than one battle at a time.

Moreover, Al-Jazeera generally avoided using emotional or politically provocative terms, such as "radical", "terrorist" or "militant"<sup>3</sup>, to describe al-Qaeda members. When al-Qaeda was mentioned, it was sometimes referred to as "Islamist". Al-Jazeera generally attributes to al-Qaeda terms that suggest a more positive view, such as a "Muslim group" or

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<sup>3</sup> The word "militants" in Arabic connotes a irrational and violent extremists who fight without rules (Almurred Arabic Dictionary, 2000).

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simply “group”, or when referring to the attackers as “Islamic fighters<sup>4</sup>” or “al-Qaeda elements” rather than “militants”.

Unlike Al-Arabiya, Al-Jazeera used images which did not involve actual physical conflict—Yemeni soldiers were shown standing at a vacated building that once belonged to Ansar Al-Shari’a (evident from the painting of al-Qaeda flags and emblems on the walls). Furthermore, military vehicles belonging to al-Qaeda and a number of people on motorcycles waving flags with al-Qaeda emblems were shown. This suggested that Al-Jazeera try’s to strike a balance in its reporting by referring to both sides of the story.

In conclusion, this report provided no further material regarding the underlying dynamics or causes of the conflict. It seems, therefore, that while Al-Jazeera departed somewhat from a state-centric discourse by attributing different sources, it fell short of providing a more profound analysis of the underlying causes of the conflict beyond religious extremism.

### **8.3.3 Al-Jazeera: Yemen May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012**

In its reporting of the May 21<sup>st</sup> 2012 suicide bombing, Al-Jazeera covered the event in a balanced way by referring to all parties in the conflict. The report began by paraphrasing the event, then providing background information and reactions from state officials, independents and al-Qaeda sources (headline in bold):

Al-Jazeera (1): At least 96 people dead in a suicide bomb blast targeting soldiers in Sanaa.

Al-Jazeera (2): Officials have said a bomber dressed in a military uniform targeted soldiers rehearsing for a parade to mark Yemen’s national day.

Al-Jazeera (3): Soldiers were practicing for Tuesday’s national day parade when the blast hit.

Again, although there was indeed considerable space given to describing the state’s positions, Al-Jazeera also used al-Qaeda sources and reactions to the event. For instance, the channel began its story with a quote from an al-Qaeda statement indicating the reason behind the operation:

Al-Jazeera (4): Al-Qaeda’s wing in Yemen said the suicide bombing was in revenge for what it called the US war on its followers in southern Yemen and that it had targeted the Yemeni military brass.

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<sup>4</sup> Fighter means someone who fights for a cause (Almurred Arabic Dictionary, 2000).

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In contrast to Al-Arabiya, little coverage was given to the violence and background information, with different sources:

Al-Jazeera (5): [source: Welghar Green, German ambassador to Yemen]: The complete picture is still not clear, however, this is a “tragedy” and it is not right for a soldier to kill such a large number of his colleagues.

Moreover, as in its reports on the earlier May attacks, Al-Jazeera again mostly avoided using emotional terms such as “radical” or “militants” to describe al-Qaeda members, and instead favored apparently less neutral terms such as “Islamic groups” or “fighters” rather than “militants”. Furthermore, Al-Jazeera tends to use passive sentences in describing al-Qaeda’s acts:

Al-Jazeera (6): It has been said that the attack was carried out by what is described as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

While the report provided some information about the attack, such as the number of victims and stating that some sources attributed it to al-Qaeda, Al-Jazeera avoided directly naming on al-Qaeda as the only party involved in the attack. It further highlighted, through an independent source, that there were other parties who benefitted from such a situation, with reference to former President Abdullah Saleh. This frame is also adopted by Al-Arabiya:

Al-Jazeera (7): [Source: Jaml al-Mlyki, researcher in Yemeni affairs]: this operation occurred before the celebrations for the first anniversary of the new president, this has a special implication, whereas some parties want to send a clear message to the new president Mansour Hadi that there are still other forces controlling the political and security scene. First of those are the remnants of the former regime.

Interestingly, Al-Jazeera adopted critical frames when referring to US participation in the “war against al-Qaeda” in Yemen. While Al-Arabiya described the US drone strike within the context of the “war against terrorism”, Al-Jazeera described it as secret raid:

Al-Jazeera (8): [Dr. Mohamed Al-zhari, Yemeni political analyst]: The American presence is available more than it should be, as it is close to the events in Yemen and embarrasses Yemeni sovereignty. And as you know, that security obsession makes the United States of America feel unrest, as it hits outside the framework of international law, and I say with great sadness that Yemeni sovereignty is violated in this context.

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Unlike the Al-Arabiya report which employed only three long-distance images transmitted from Yemeni national TV of dead bodies of Yemeni soldiers, Al-Jazeera used long distance images of dead Yemeni soldiers in the field where the suicidal operation was carried out. However, the report avoided transmitting close-up images of the victims. The report also showed images of ambulances and a large number of soldiers, who were seemingly preparing for the parade in Sana'a, and in a state of panic and chaos.

In conclusion, Al-Jazeera was substantially negative toward the United States participation in the War against al-Qaeda in Yemen. Furthermore, although the incident was significant in terms of the number of victims killed and the repetition of such operations in Yemen, this report provided no further analysis regarding the underlying religious, political and cultural causes of the conflict.

### **8.3.4 Al-Jazeera: Iraq July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012**

In the attacks of July 2012, Al-Jazeera covered the human suffering in great detail. But it is noteworthy that, while a few residents were allowed to paraphrase the event, the government perspective was less focused on when it comes to official's reaction. Although the government was criticized for its failure to prevent another outbreak of violence, the state's position was granted some space to explain its position and actions, which was apparent in the following opener:

Al-Jazeera (1): A car bomb in a busy market in the southern Iraqi city of Diwaniya killed at least 40 people and wounded 75 others, a provincial council official said.

In its report, Al-Jazeera devoted more space to paraphrasing the violence, including the locations of the attacks and the human casualties incurred as a result of the bombing:

Al-Jazeera (2): [eyewitness]: A car was exploded here and left victims, most of them are children and women; we went to the authorities seeking help, but they refused to help.

Interestingly, Al-Jazeera did not seem to obscure the sectarian component of the conflict. While providing the context that the attack appeared to be a reprisal for previous violence, Al-Jazeera was much more explicit than Al-Arabiya in mentioning the sectarian identity of perpetrators:

Al-Jazeera (3): Shia insurgents often attack Sunni targets to try to reignite the sectarian violence that killed tens of thousands of people in 2006-2007.

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Increased attacks in recent weeks have raised fears that the country could slip back into widespread sectarian violence.

On the other hand, Al-Jazeera also did not fail to illuminate the more profound dynamics and causes of the clashes when it comes to providing background information. A political analyst was quoted as explaining that “the government’s Sunni, Shia and ethnic Kurdish parties have also been locked in political battles that threaten to shatter their delicate power-sharing agreement. Hence, in its coverage of the background to the event, Al-Jazeera appeared to be aiming for a balance between the sectarian and political dimensions of the conflict. However, although there were several places where the report focuses on the political and sectarian dimensions to the conflict, the human situation of the conflict maintains prominence over the government perspective in most parts of the story. The report led off with images which displayed the consequences of the attacks. Most images showed the damage to buildings caused by the explosion, as well as glimpses of burned cars and some of the civilians injured. The report also displayed close-up footage of victims’ blood splattered around the scene of the attacks, but avoided direct focus on the victims.

### **8.3.5 Al-Jazeera: Yemen July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

On its reporting on the suicide attacks of July 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 that targeted the police academy in Sana’a, Al-Jazeera appeared to present the events in a critical manner toward the government but not in explicit way. The coverage began by paraphrasing the event, then providing background information and reactions from state officials and independent sources who doubted the existence of al-Qaeda in the area:

Al-Jazeera (1): A suicide bomber threw himself into a crowd of Yemeni police cadets leaving their academy and detonated his explosives, killing and wounding at least 10 people, a security official said.

The Al-Jazeera report provided basic information about the attacks, giving background about the operation, including different sources from the site of the event:

Al-Jazeera (2): [source: medical professional]: dozens more were wounded in the explosion at the entrance to the police academy.

Al-Jazeera (3): [eyewitness]: while Yemeni police cadets were leaving their academy, we heard the sound of a huge explosion, and then we knew that it was a suicide bombing killing some colleagues and wounding others.

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Although responsibility for the attack was not given to al-Qaeda, the report shied away from adopting a negative tone when describing al-Qaeda and Al-Jazeera pointed out that those activities were not usually al-Qaeda strategies:

Al-Jazeera (4): [Mohsen Khasrof, military expert]: al-Qaeda do not exercise those activities, al-Qaeda do not kill soldiers in masse, do not kill college students in masse, do not bomb factories where citizens are in masse, and do not plant bombs in residential areas, this is a special case of Yemen.

Al-Jazeera tends to avoid portraying al-Qaeda and other Islamic groups in a negative way. This can be seen through the labelling of al-Qaeda elements and their acts. Moreover, in most of their reports, Al-Jazeera never placed responsibility or condemned al-Qaeda operations, either in Yemen or Iraq. Instead, Al-Jazeera refereed to al-Qaeda members as “Islamic groups” or sometimes as “Islamic fighters”. This reflects the Qatari trends towards Islamists as a part of Qatari and Saudi conflict. As Fandy (2007) indicated, Bin Laden, Zawahiri, and the Taliban are portrayed as the victims (p: 47). Contrary to Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya described the US drone strike in Yemen within the context of the “War against Terrorism”. It should come as no surprise that they are each ready to embrace the official perspective. Their Qatari and Saudi government backers have their own internal, regional and international agendas, and the networks are seen to uphold their sponsors’ interests (see Lahlali, 2011; El-Nawawy, 2006).

Al-Jazeera went even further, doubting the existence of al-Qaeda in the area:

Al-Jazeera (5): [eyewitness]: al-Qaeda does not exist in these areas and nobody belonging to al-Qaeda is here, but, moreover, people here do not know even who al-Qaeda is.

In its report, Al-Jazeera used similar images to those in reports by Al-Arabiya. The report led off with images of soldiers, police, ambulances and civilians who were gathering around the scene of the suicide attack.

In conclusion, while the report provided background details about the suicide operation and gave a different perspective through the government reaction and independent sources, no further analysis was conducted regarding the religious, social, and political dimensions underlying the conflict causes.

### 8.3.6 Al-Jazeera: Iraq July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012

The coverage of the July 2012 events put more emphasis on the human situation in the violence. The report began by paraphrasing the event, and then provided background information and reactions from state officials, civilians and independent sources:

Al-Jazeera (1): A series of gun and bomb attacks has wracked Iraq, with unidentified gunmen targeting a military base and car bombs exploding in Baghdad, Kirkuk and elsewhere.

Al-Jazeera (2): More than 100 people are reported to have been killed and 180 injured in at least 19 separate explosions and attacks on Monday morning, officials said.

Al-Jazeera (3): Police say they had identified a third bomb in the same area and had the situation under control.

Al-Jazeera (4): [civilians]: where the national gone? How long can such destruction continue? Even in Ramadan? I would ask authorities, but they claim everything is under control, why? Just poor people died in the attack.

Al-Jazeera's coverage of the event focused generally on the human side of the violence, demonstrating how dozens of Iraqi were killed and injured. The channel also focused on the level of destruction and demolition incurred on the country's infrastructure, which was reflected in the language usage by describing the attacks in emotional terms:

Al-Jazeera (5): Another "bloody" day in Iraq witnessed killing and injuring dozens by a series of explosions and violence in the capital Baghdad, Kirkuk and other cities.

While there was considerable space devoted to paraphrasing the violence rather than giving background information, the report included some references to al-Qaeda as possibly being behind the attacks whilst avoiding any direct accusations:

Al-Jazeera (6): It is certainly a sign that despite all gains made against al-Qaeda in Iraq ... they are still out there," reported Al-Jazeera, adding that the group had recently warned that it was commencing "a new stage" in its campaign.

Most importantly, Al-Jazeera avoided direct criticism of the Iraqi government for its failure to protect the population. Instead, the report placed more criticism on all political parties, linking the political crisis with the escalation of violence in Iraq:

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Al-Jazeera (7): The Iraqi Prime Minister has tried to impose security in the country since he took power, but some political parties took advantage of the security file to impede the work of the government to achieve political goals.

Al-Jazeera (8): [Source: Ali Ahmed, political analyst]: The essential reason behind the return of violence recently is the political crisis witnessed in Iraq for months, the political parties are not in agreement, and that of course affects the security in the country.

Although the previous report put emphasis on the sectarian identity of perpetrators and victims, in this report Al-Jazeera seemed cautious with stressing sectarian identity when referring to the number of deaths:

Al-Jazeera (9): The death toll varies wildly [but] they appear to be attacks, as has been the pattern, on military targets, Sunni as well as Shia communities.

Al-Jazeera initiated its story using computer graphics to indicate the places of simultaneous explosions that targeted several Iraqi cities, and then moved on to the report which transferred images from the scene. Most images on the report focused on destroyed buildings, burned out cars, crowded civilians, rescue teams and a number of security men who were at the attack site. The report also displayed the blood of some victims that were scattered in the place of the attack, yet avoiding direct images of dead civilians. Ultimately, most images used by the Al-Jazeera report focused on the results, the impact of the attacks and the damage to infrastructure.

In conclusion, unlike Al-Arabiya which covered the story in short preview, being less than 30 seconds, Al-Jazeera's report covered the human suffering in great detail. Al-Jazeera's report devoted more space (more than three minutes) to describing the violence, including the locations where the attacks took place and the human casualties. Their report also conducted a number of interviews with eyewitnesses on the ground, and brought new images from the site showing the consequences. In addition, the government position was granted some space; in fact, Al-Jazeera tended to be more sympathetic towards the Iraqi government. Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri El-Malki is a Shiite, and Al-Jazeera is known for its support for Shiite communities across the region (see Fandy, 2007). For example, examining coverage of the 2006 conflict between Hezbollah and Israel, while Al-Jazeera referred to Hezbollah fighters as Islamic fighters or resistance, Al-Arabiya on the other hand referred to the organization as "the Shiite party" (Lahlali, 2011: 147; see also Fandy, 2007: 58).

The findings on both networks' news coverage will now be synthesized in order to draw a more conclusive comparison.

### **8.4 Representation of Voices in the Two Channels**

The concept of intertextuality refers to “the way discourses are always connected to other discourses which were produced earlier as well as those which are produced synchronically or subsequently” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 276). Examples of intertextuality would be direct and indirect quotes in, for example, newspaper articles or political speeches that may relate to other speeches or may be turned into a news story. Intertextuality also applies to text which contain allusions to previous texts, such as the use of proverbs, biblical or literary references, idioms and so on, and where the understanding of which depends on certain intertextual knowledge on the part of the listener or reader (Simpson & Mayr, 2013: 53).

Journalism includes certain voices and excludes others; it selects who is heard and who is not. This incorporating of voices is common in news coverage. According to Fairclough (2003), “framing can be conducive to an interpretation favourable to a group and unfavourable for another” (p: 53). Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya both give voice to different parties, some parties are equally heard in both networks stations, and other parties are more often heard in one of the two. For instance, Al-Jazeera included the voices government, international institutions, expert, and groups such as “al-Qaeda” that were not referred to by Al-Arabiya. Al-Arabiya, on the other hand, the voice of government (fourteen quotations) featured more prominently in its coverage than in those of Al-Jazeera (eleven). In addition, Al-Jazeera gave voice to more experts (five) than did Al-Arabiya (three). It is noteworthy that the humanitarian suffering from terrorism was seldom brought to the attention of the public by both TV networks, particularly in relation to events in Yemen, and few direct voices were given to civilians in other parts.

It is important to focus on how the two TV networks represented the voices involved in the conflict, dwelling mainly on the channels impartiality or lack of it in dealing with these voices (Lahlali, 2011: 137). For instance, most of Al-Jazeera's reports referred to the official, independent, and al-Qaeda's sources. However, in its representation of the voices in their reports on (May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012 Yemen, and March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 France), two main themes emerged: negative tone when mentioning the American involvement in the Yemeni war against al-Qaeda, as well as the French government reaction to Toulouse attacks. From the outset of the conflict in Yemen, Al-Jazeera was very critical when referring to American participation in

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its war on al-Qaeda, and described the US air drone operations in Yemen as confidential and not discussed publicly. The prominent voice given on Al-Jazeera was to express a robust criticism of the American war given its violation of Yemeni sovereignty (Al-Jazeera May 21<sup>st</sup>). Van Ginneken (2002) indicates that “audiences are more trusting of criticism leveled by apparently neutral observers or members of the group in question. That is to say, negative comments made by outsiders concerning a particular group may be subject to greater audience scrutiny or distrust. Thus the credibility of criticism is affected by its source” (p: 107). This pattern was also observed in the Al-Jazeera’s coverage of the Toulouse attacks, when the channel referred to the event as the result of electoral propaganda from French government. Whilst Al-Jazeera exerted a lot of effort to represent all voices, including members of the Jewish community in Toulouse who expressed anger at Merah, the voice of the Muslim community voices featured more prominently in its broadcasts than in those of Al-Arabiya. De Graaf (2005) indicates that “the framing of opposing voices can contribute to an antagonist-protagonist structure in news reporting, suggesting that merely the inclusion of different voices is no indicator of journalistic neutrality” (p: 28).

The member of the Muslim community that was given a platform on Al-Jazeera expressed strong criticism towards the French government, suggesting that Islam and the Muslim community had become victims of political propaganda. Here, Al-Jazeera tries to cover the event from Arab and Muslim perspectives. In this context Pintak argues that while it is highly possible that Al-Jazeera journalists genuinely hope to promote a stronger sense of Arab identity, and even that the Qatari owners see the commercial importance of fostering that sense of Arab collectivism to maintain high viewing figures, it should not be forgotten that the reasons the Qatari owners want high viewing figures is only to promote the interests and profile of Qatar (Pintak, 2009).

To Dijk (1991), “perspective’ should be considered a particularly important aspect of discourse, but one that can be difficult to locate if the writer is not identified with a certain group. Nevertheless, he argues that the items selected for inclusion in the text are often reflective of opinion and thus indicative of an author’s beliefs. Dijk states that a “perspective is not confined only to the selection of words and sentences, but to the way people and their actions are presented in the text” (cited in Lahlali, 2011: 130). Similarly, Fairclough (1992b) observes that “discourse can reveal its producers’ ideological and political perspectives, via various overt and covert means” (cited in Lahlali, 2011: 130).

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In contrast, Al-Arabiya adopted an American perspective in its “war against terrorism.” The voice that was given a platform on Al-Arabiya expressed a pro-war opinion against al-Qaeda in Yemen that was part of the general “War against Terrorism” theme (Al-Arabiya May 21). Furthermore, this was repeated in several stories via direct reporting. In addition, Al-Arabiya’s represented the United States as the strongest ally of Yemeni government in its war against al-Qaeda. Al-Arabiya represented two quotations from US government describing al-Qaeda attacks in Yemen and Iraq as *outrageous* and *cowardly* acts. These voices were left out on Al-Jazeera reports.

Similarly, in its coverage of the Toulouse attacks, Al-Arabiya focused more on the French government perspective. In Al-Arabiya’s news bulletin on 19 March 2012 and afterwards, the French voice featured considerably via the coverage of particular speeches. The channel covered the French authorities describing the events as terrorist and anti-Semitic acts. In addition, each channel referred to the French government decision that prevented Muslim preachers from entering France in order to root out extremism. The channel was explicit in representing their speeches, for instance, it reported directly and indirectly the phrase such as “*radical Muslims*”, or “*the phenomenon of extremism*” when they referred to the Toulouse attacks. Hence, Al-Arabiya appeared to be less critical and more accommodating of the government’s view than Al-Jazeera, which matches ill with the goal of courting the discourse of the government. Al-Saggaf (2006) arrived at a similar conclusion when he stated that ‘since Al-Arabiya is owned and managed by Saudis, it is possible that some of what is broadcast is intended to serve the interests of the government (p: 18).

Similarities can be found, however, on both channels when it comes to placing responsibility on the former regime of Ali Abdullah Saleh in terms of provoking the conflict in Yemen. Both TV networks provided a platform for voices which were very critical to Abdullah Saleh (Al-Arabiya May 7<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, and Al-Jazeera May 7<sup>th</sup>). The question that one might pose here is: why did both channels adopt the same discourse in this instance? In response to this two possible reasons emerge: first, because Ali Saleh was removed from power in 2011 as a result of an agreement sponsored by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) - Qatari and Saudi governments are considered as main players, politically and financially in the organization; and second, since the early of 2011, both channels have expressed strong support for what has been called “Yemeni revolution” against Saleh’s regime. So, it can be said that the channels choose the discourse that is often in line with their network policies and sponsors’ guidelines.

### 8.5 The Selection of Lexis

The two channels' coverage of terrorism reflected to some extent a similarity in the content reported, but there is a wide difference in the selection of lexis. With Al-Jazeera referring to al-Qaeda members as "Islamic groups" or "fighters", and by describing al-Qaeda members as Islamic fighters, Al-Jazeera gave this group an Islamic legitimacy in terms of fighting for Islamic law. The former head of the Libyan National Transitional Council, Mustafa Abdul Jalil made this clearer still by saying: "Doha has been supporting Islamic movements as part of its vision to help establish an Arab regime that adopts Islamic Sharia law as a main source of governance (Russia Today, 2012). Al-Arabiya, on the other hand, referred to al-Qaeda as "Islamist militants".

A further striking choice of lexis is revealed in comparison of the two channels' use of the term "terrorism". Bhatia (2005: 14) states that "using terms such as "terrorist" and "extremist" is an attempt by organizations at "denying the legality of their opponents and emphasizing the need to maintain law and order" (p: 14). Van Dijk (2001) also claims that negative lexicalization, the selection of (strongly) negative words, is used to describe out-groups" (p: 13)<sup>5</sup>. Within the sample, Al-Arabiya uses the term "terrorist"/"terrorism" fairly frequently (six times). When the term appeared on Al-Arabiya, it was directly reported. Furthermore, terms such as "radical Muslims" or "extremist" were used. By describing al-Qaeda and other Islamist groups as a "terrorist organizations" or "militants", Al-Arabiya shaped the nature of debate, and sought to inform the public of the ills of these groups. Through such a practice, the channel sought to mobilize the public against the 'al-Qaeda' in the conflict. This approach has been put into the test in past research. For instance In the Iraq war coverage, while Al-Jazeera focused on civilian and Iraqi resistance during the marine offensive against Fallujah, Al-Arabiya portrayed the event as the storming of a terrorist haven (*The Economist*, 2005; Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007, cited in Fahmy *et al.*, 2012: 730). The editorial policy of Al-Arabiya was also criticized during aforementioned Israel assaults on Gaza because it did not use the adjective 'martyrs' to describe Palestinian victims (Braizat *et al.*, 2011: 126). In additional, the channel has been charged with promoting discord between

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<sup>5</sup> Van Dijk (2001) states that different (discourse) research has proved that ideologies often appear in polarized thought opinions, action, or discourse. This suggests that prejudicial discourse will be characterized by a positive representation of the self (the in-group; 'Us') and by a simultaneous negative characterization of the other (the out-group; 'Them'). Crucial in this case are the representations of social position, of in-groups and out-groups, and of their association with what is defined as good and bad. One way to exhibit these ideological structures in discourse is to identify certain structures and strategies that contain a positive self (in-group) presentation and a negative other (out-group) presentation (p: 13).

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the Sunnis and Shias (Cochrane, 2007). This did not go down well with the Arab audience (cited in Lahlali, 2011: 117).

In contrast, when Al-Jazeera used the word ‘terrorist’, it qualified its use with the phrase “the so-called terrorism”. Al-Jazeera’s perspective on terminology might be informed by important Arab leaders. For instance, in an October 24, 2001, interview with the Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, Al-Jazeera broadcast Qaddafi saying that while “the US have every right to retaliate for the September 11 attacks, he would not label Bin Laden a terrorist until “an international conference agreed on a definition of “terrorism”. He added, “We must sit down at any level without emotions... and after we define terrorism we agree on fighting terrorism” (cited in El-Nawawy & Iskander, 2003: 100). As Ahmad Sheikh, the former deputy editor for Al-Jazeera put it “We do not use term terrorist, because (...) this [is] controversial. Can we agree, first of all, on a definition of what a terrorist act is?” (Japerson & El-Kikhia, 2003: 125).

Al-Jazeera’s caution in using the terrorism label could also come from the *BBC* influence-the network uses the *BBC* as a prime model and many of the Al-Jazeera correspondents came to the network from the *BBC*. Or, it could come from Al-Jazeera’s experiences in covering acts that some would call terrorism (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 44).

Al-Jazeera’s choice of language possibly was deployed to give it the edge over its rival-Al-Arabiya, which used more loaded terms in their coverage of the conflict, and subsequently to appeal to Arab viewers who expected the channel to cover the events from an Arab and Muslims perspectives. Al-Jazeera’s approach is to appeal to the Arab public through covering issues that are related to them (Lahlali, 2011: 116).

According to El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2002), “perhaps one of the reasons for Al-Jazeera’s success is the manner and language in which it presents Arab views. “It is intrinsic within many Arab cultures to consider Palestinians who are killed by Israeli soldiers in the Palestinian territories as *shuhada*’ (“martyrs”)” (p: 53), and Al-Jazeera has been accused by many Westerners of being biased toward the Palestinian cause because it “has the practice of describing Palestinian suicide-bombers who strike in Israel as “*martyrs*”, which many consider a violation of objective news reporting” (El-Nawawy & Iskandar, 2002: 52).

Another difference that characterised Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya was the way they referred to the fallen dead on both sides. Al-Jazeera often used the word “dead” to describe a collective killing, while Al-Arabiya comprehensively used the term “killing or killed”, “bloody or deadly attacks”, and “painful”. Al-Arabiya coverage of these events focuses

mainly on the government side; demonstrating dozens of Yemeni soldiers were killed and captured by al-Qaeda. The type of language was deployed to show the magnitude of the damage or loss inflicted by al-Qaeda and other religious groups. Some might accuse the channel of having being influenced by the Saudi government, which is considered to be one of America's strongest allies in its war against terrorism in the region. Al-Jazeera, however, appeared to be cautious in its coverage, and used less strong language when described the events and groups involved than Al-Arabiya.

### **8.6 Naming and Labeling**

“Naming strategy involves the application of names and labels to particular individuals, groups and cultures, reflecting the values and beliefs of the text's producer. Such strategies are often used to create particular propagandistic ideologies or stereotypical images” (Zidan, 2006: 86). The two channels followed different strategies in naming and labelling activities, actions and events related to terrorism. Al-Qaeda and its members were referred to by Al-Jazeera as “Muslim groups” or “Islamic fighters”, and Muhammed Merah was described as “an armed man”, while Al-Arabiya often referred to al-Qaeda as “Islamic militants” or “terrorists”, “extremists” and “radicals”. This kind of lexical selection and labelling and reflects each channel's political orientation and policy.

It can be suggested that the content of news broadcast by both channels deliberately promotes an Arabist perspective, but the reasons for this are complex. Rinnawi (2009) sees the motivation as primarily financial, arguing that in the hunt for viewing figures and profits, news stations want to appeal to as wide an audience as possible and hence have attempted to create a pan-Arab discourse (cited in Phillips, 2013: 108). Pintak agrees, but also highlights the Arabist ideology of journalists themselves. While their employers might be pushing Arabist ideology for commercial reasons, Pintak sees journalists as genuine believers in promoting Arab unity. However, there is a further explanation: the desire by owners to use their channels to promote their home states' interests (Pintak, 2009, cited in Phillips, 2013: 108).

While both channels tend to adopt the discourse of Arabism, Al-Jazeera is more likely to adopt the rhetoric of Islamism. Several commentators see a distinction between the specifically Arab Islamist agenda of Al-Jazeera in comparison to other stations. Lisa Shapiro (2005) makes the case that Al-Jazeera is viewed by Arab journalists as too Islamist for their taste, citing Al-Jazeera shows such as, ‘Islamic Law and Life’ which offers advice to viewers

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on how to apply Sharia to their lives (cited in Phillips, 2013: 107). Sam Cherribi (2006) wrote that Al-Jazeera used its coverage of the banning of the hijab, a veil, from French schools “to build a global Muslim identity [and] mobilise shared opinion” (cited in Seib, 2008: 99). Others, however, contend that Al-Jazeera’s content is relatively balanced when it addresses religious topics, reflecting the intricate web of Islamism and pan-Arabism that is part of the mind-set of many of the people who live in the Arab world and watch the channel (Seib, 2008: 99). As indicated earlier, to protect itself from Saudi domination in the religious arena, Qatar moved toward adopting elements of popular Islam. Fandy (2007) argues that the Muslim Brotherhood boosts Qatar’s Islamic credentials as well as serve as the spearhead in a media war against Saudi Arabia (p: 48).

Al-Jazeera was also criticized by US government because of its airing of Bin Laden video tapes. Despite Al-Jazeera defended its airing of Bin Laden messages, arguing that the message represented the other side of the story (Lahlali, 2011: 89), Fandy (2007) argues that Bin Laden and other oppositional figures can be explained also in the context of Saudi and Qatari conflict. Embracing Islamists allowed Qatar to build up its “Islamic”, specifically Wahhabi, credentials against those of its Saudi rivals who derived much of their legitimacy from adherence to conservative Islamic codes and their efforts to promote Wahhabi values abroad (Fandy, 2007: 49-50).

Similarly to Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya remains faithful to its sponsor government. Al-Arabiya’s coverage of the war on al-Qaeda reflects its approach of being a ‘moderate channel’. Some, however, might accuse the channel of having being influenced by the Saudi government, which took an anti al-Qaeda stance (Hommand, 2007).

One further point is worth mentioning, namely that most of the reports on the human aspects of perpetrators were published on Al-Jazeera. In its report on March 19<sup>th</sup>, (8), Al-Jazeera described Islam and Young Muslims, who were arrested by French police in the wake of the Toulouse attacks, as victims of electoral propaganda. Furthermore, the reporter described the alleged Toulouse attackers by providing a historical and cultural context and by offering the view of the assumed perpetrator’s family and neighbors in Toulouse: “Mohammed Merah was described as a very kind guy, a bright science student, normal and someone who laughed and played with everyone.” These additional perspectives and the socio-cultural analysis in Al-Jazeera provide the missing link between news frames that remain, in general, uncontested. The humanization of the perpetrator within certain cultural

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norms possibly made it easier for the audience to relate to the person. While Al-Jazeera chose to lead its report with this, Al-Arabiya linked Merah to the al-Qaeda organization.

Fairclough (1989) placed great importance on inter-textuality in understanding the meaning of text, saying: “the concept of inter-textual context requires us to view discourses and texts from a historical perspective, in contrast with the more usual position in language studies which would regard a text as analyzable without reference to other text, in abstraction from its historical context” (p: 155).

Some of the victims were humanized for viewers by Al-Arabiya. For example, the Iraqi mother’s description of her daughter following the Karbala attacks of July 24<sup>th</sup> (Al-Arabiya (6)): “I lost my daughter; she was one and a half years old. I fought for her and now they have taken her away from me. Those killers have taken her, and she was only a child. I don’t know who the next victim will be.” The humanization of victims counterpoints the negative portrayal of the alleged perpetrators and furthers the framing of a battle between good and evil; these frames have been observed in previous literature (see for example Kellner, 2004; Elliott, 2004). According to Dijk (1995), the representation of in-groups typically involves detailed description, with more generalized descriptions applied to out-groups (p: 154). In this way, Al-Arabiya’s depiction of Iraqi civilian victims in its reporting emphasizes their humanity as individuals.

Al-Arabiya’s rhetoric surrounding terrorism was more varied than Al-Jazeera’s across the sampled coverage. Specifically, with regards to the fear of future terrorist attacks, some analysis was provided on the combatants or terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda, and Ansar al-Sharia. The “fear” frame dominated news discourse within Al-Arabiya’s reporting (See for instance Al-Arabiya report on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012). This corresponds with the suggestions made by de Graaf (2005), who discusses the demonization of certain groups by the reporting of potential threat scenarios, and Van Dijk’s (1995) claims that lexical choices including hyperbole, generalization, and religious prejudice can contribute to creating a portrayal of threat. In contrast, Al-Jazeera’s coverage, in Yemen, Iraq and France, was more in-depth and broader in scope than Al-Arabiya’s. Although background reports within the sampled stories were infrequent and were not comprehensive, they were better rounded than the treatment given by Al-Arabiya. Al-Jazeera used less sensational descriptions while presenting multiple perspectives and a variety of sources, including al-Qaeda.

Finally, a conciliatory approach to the conflict could be discerned in the reporting on Al-Jazeera. Al-Jazeera searched for underlying dynamics of the conflict, either in Yemen or

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Iraq, by commenting on the context of social and political struggles rather than presuming religion to be the root cause. In other words, political and social factors were for the most of part back-grounded to avoid the impression of religious fanaticism being the sole trigger of violence. Al-Arabiya avoided the conciliatory approach by placing more emphasis on the religious dimension when reporting on the major instance of violence: “Islamist militants linked to al-Qaeda have vowed to carry their fight across Yemen” (Al-Arabiya July 11<sup>th</sup> (7)), or the phenomenon of extremist radical Muslims (Al-Arabiya March 19<sup>th</sup>, (3))” to evoke associations of militant Islamic fundamentalism amongst its audience. This trend has also been found in past research that examined in western media discourses prior and after the September 11, 2001 (see for example Norris *et al.*, 2003; Hodges *et al.*, 2007). Conversely, Al-Jazeera was at times less inclined to use stereotypical and emotionally charged labels, but on other occasions presented the conflict in binary terms. However, both networks failed to provide a more profound analysis beyond the theme of religious extremism.

### 8.7 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been an examination of the concept of discourse, specifically as it relates to the differing approaches adopted by two Arabic television networks in their reporting of terrorist related activity. These various approaches have their origins in the broader political context of the Arab world, and highlight the role of media organizations in facilitating discourse surrounding conflict and terrorism. With the development of new media, often characterized by competition between media sources, a wide range of discourse genres are presented (Lahlali, 2011: 153), which may variously reflect, more or less clearly, the political and ideological concerns of different parties. The analysis reveals that during the period under consideration both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya made use of a variety of media discourses in their presentation of particular news items, and that these differing discourses affected both the selected content and the implied meaning of stories. The lexical selection employed by Al-Arabiya in their presentation of opposing sides within a given conflict suggests that the reporting they provided was in general informed by the particular stance of the network’s sponsors, while Al-Jazeera provided its coverage of terrorism from a point of view that was predominantly Arab and Muslim.

Overall, the textual analysis results reveal differences in strategies employed by the two networks during their reporting of terrorism. The differing ideological stances of the two networks can also be observed, as demonstrated through their frequently contrasting methods

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of discourse. The analysis shows how ideological standpoints are reinforced through textual, lexical and discursive choices, thus reinforcing the view of Fowler (1991) who stated that “news is more than merely the value-free reflection of facts” (p: 100). The current findings support the notion that no statement about the world exists independently of a particular ideological position (see Fowler 1991: 101). This opinion is restated by Gee (1999) who said: “When we speak or write we always take a particular perspective on what the world is like” (p: 2). Language should rightly be viewed as a “powerful and important force, capable of significant impact on a reader, viewer or listener. Indeed, language is “an instrument of control as well as communication” (Kress & Hodge 1993: 6).

## **Chapter 9 Discussion and Conclusion**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This research was carried out in order to deepen the understanding of media constructions of terrorism, as provided by the two most popular Arab news broadcasters. The study has sought to reveal and explore the framing trends used by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya in their reporting of terrorist activities, and how these frames relate to these networks' respective social, institutional and political circumstances. It has offered important insights into contemporary media reporting of events that have been categorised as "terrorism", in the Middle East and elsewhere. Rather than adopting a narrow formal or content-based approach to media reporting, it has employed framing analysis to explore the cultural contextualization of news stories, thus opening ground for further research. This is in line with the social constructionist approach used by Goffman (1974), Entman (1993) and others, who suggest that "frames contribute to the interpretation and evaluation of society" (cited in Van Gorp, 2007:62).

Overall, as the discussion in this chapter makes clear, certain differences in the two channels' reporting did emerge. These were confirmed by the different methods of study that the research employed, and can be said to indicate the channels' differing underpinning ideological orientations.

This concluding chapter is divided into three parts. The first comprises a rehearsal of the theoretical sources of inspiration for the research. The second comprises a summary and discussion of the main findings of the study, assessing their contribution in the field of framing political violence, briefly restating the research questions and comparing the findings with those of previous related research. The third section discusses certain limitations of the current study, and provides recommendations and offers suggestions for further research.

### **9.2 Theoretical Perspectives Underpinning the Research**

This study used framing analysis to reveal framing techniques employed by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya in their respective coverage of terrorist related events. Previous commentators have noted a comparative lack of research on media framing in a specifically Arab context (e.g., Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Fahmy & El-Amad, 2011). Despite the existence of many studies focused on media framing of terrorism (see e.g., Barnett & Reynolds, 2009; Norris *et al.*, 2003; Ryan, 2003; Dimitrova & Kostadinova, 2013; Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005), little attention of this type has been paid to the coverage of terrorism in Arab and Muslim countries (Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Fahmy, 2010). One aim of the current research is therefore to bridge

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the gap between the relevance of terrorism to the contemporary Arab world and the scarcity of research on this subject (Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Fahmy, 2010). In this respect it should be noted that the literature review accompanying and informing this study is mainly reliant on Western research relating to Western media systems. It is therefore important to consider to what extent this literature can offer reliable theoretical grounding for a study based in the Arab world (see Auter *et al.*, 2005).

Another reason for using this theoretical framework is to investigate the validity of one of the scientific theories which dominated the research thinking about the mass media since the mid of 1970s in the United States and other Western countries. Norris *et al.* (2003) writes that “understanding mass communications through the concept of framing has become increasingly common, whether in the fields of social psychology, public opinion, or media studies” (p: 10). In the field of terrorism research, scholars such as Goffman (1974); Entman (1991-1993), and Gamson, (1991), suggested that “terrorist events are commonly understood through news “frame” that simplify, prioritise, and structure the narrative flow of events” (cited in Norris *et al.*, 2003: 10).

The idea of “news frame refers to interpretive structures that journalists use to set particular events within their broader context. News frames bundle key concepts, stock phrases, and iconic images to reinforce certain common ways of interpreting developments” (Norris *et al.*, 2003: 10-11). “The essence of framing is selection to prioritize some facts, images, or developments over others, thereby unconsciously promoting one particular interpretation of events. Where conventional news frames reflect broader norms and values common within a particular society, dissident movements challenging the mainstream news culture are likely to prove most critical of their use, providing rival ways to frame and interpret events” (Ibid, p: 11).

Frames “serve multiple functions for different actors. Political leaders for example can respond to events and communicate policy priorities simply and effectively by adopting predominant cultural frames to streamline and simplify their message (“I condemn all such acts of terrorism”). Reporters can also ‘tell it like it is’ within sixty seconds, or within brief newspaper headlines, rapidly sorting key events from surrounding trivia, by drawing on reservoirs of familiar stories to cue readers. And the public can use frames to sort out and make sense of complex and unfamiliar events, peoples, and leaders” (Norris *et al.*, 2003: 11). Through frames, apparently scattered and diverse events are understood within regular patterns (Ibid, p: 11), to give just a few examples at random that occurred within the last few

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months, the terrorism frame can be used to explain the Toulouse attacks in France, the suicide attacks against Yemeni army carried out by al-Qaeda, and the suicide attacks targeted civilians in Iraqi cities. Without knowing much, if anything, about the particular people, groups, issues, or even places involved, the terrorist and anti-terrorist frame allows us to quickly sort out, interprets, categorise, and evaluate these conflicts.

The two major objectives of this research have been: (a) to provide an exploration of how Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, as representatives of the Arab media, framed terrorism reporting during the selected period and the extent to which their approaches differ or are consistent; and (b) to identify the factors influencing the two broadcasters' respective selection processes and their framing of terrorism and terrorist related activity. Journalists and newscasters make subjective critical choices in their reporting (Entman, 1991: 6), and these are revealed by exploration and comparison of presentations of conflict across two networks affected by differing organizational and political factors.

In pursuit of the stated objectives, the study addressed several related issues, divided into questions of content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The content analysis questions focussed on eight areas of study: the types of frames used; the framing perspectives; geographical locations; attributed sources; identification of perpetrators; identification of victims; episodic versus thematic framing; and responsibility frames. Critical discourse analysis questions were divided into four sections: lexicalisation and predication by Al-Jazeera; lexicalisation and predication by Al-Arabiya; inter-textuality and framing by Al-Jazeera; and inter-textuality and framing by Al-Arabiya. Within the discourse analysis, three levels of analysis were used: textual analysis; inter-textual analysis; and contextual analysis.

The current study adopted two research methods, namely content analysis and critical discourse analysis, to assess the reporting of terrorism presented by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya respectively. Al-Jazeera proclaims itself to be an independent voice in the Arab world and Al-Arabiya describes itself as an alternative news channel (Lynch, 2006). Content analysis was used to assess the output of each channel according to its manifest textual content. As a methodological approach, content analysis offered several advantages within the scope of the current study; one significant benefit of this method is its economic value in terms of time and money; it also allows repetition of parts of the research more readily than other methods.

Overall, content analysis offers a systematic approach to media content, following certain analytical rules. For example, in the current study extracts of TV broadcasts were

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divided into units for step by step analysis. The resultant information was categorised to provide an accessible pool of data for further scrutiny. Furthermore, this technique offers comparatively greater assurances of reliability through repeated inter-coder reliability. It also has the potential for inter-subjective comprehensiveness, by comparing results with those of other studies. Finally, as a systematic method, content analysis enables the researcher to handle large amounts of data. A number of framing devices were examined using content analysis: headlines, leads, and type of news frames, framing perspectives, proximity, source, perpetrators, victims, themes vs. episodes, and responsibility frame.

However, content analysis can provide comparatively little insight into the specific ways that topics were reported. Discourse analysis was therefore used alongside content analysis, offering a qualitative approach that enabled the researcher to describe the contexts in which certain journalistic choices were made. Frames are rightly considered cultural structures ( Hertog & McLeod, 2001: 147), and their strengths lie in their meanings (Entman, 1991), so framing analysis of news stories provides a vital contribution to understanding the contexts from which information about terrorism, latent content, and news processes are produced.

Tankard (2008) explained how “frames reflect the richness of media discourse, and that important differences become apparent when a topic is presented in different ways. In this respect, qualitative analysis allows deeper exploration of the crucial connections between language and ideologies, contributing to the production and dissemination of certain discourses about “terrorism”. Various social, political and cultural ideologies are reproduced through symbolic elements of vocabulary, metaphor, syntax, and rhetoric, reflecting and determining how text creates meaning around terrorism phenomena” (p: 96). Overall, these various concerns support a growing tendency for researchers to conduct multiple-method studies combining quantitative and qualitative research.

This research has focused its attention on television news reporting, and has intentionally not considered print media. It has been argued that audience responses to television are more emotionally intense than to print (Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 99-100), which is in part due to the emotional strength of the image as a means of non-verbal communication (see Gavriel, 1979; Detenber & Reeves, 1996). At least one survey has shown that the most memorable images used in television news reporting are those displaying pain, crises and human suffering (Newhagen & Reeves, 1992). By using a so-called “journalism of attachment”, television journalists’ emotional involvement can be reflected in their reporting

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(Foerstel, 2001), and during live coverage Arab television reporters often show their emotional reactions to conflict (El-Nawawy, 2004). Jaspersen and El-Kikhia (2003) compared the framing of Afghan War by *CNN* and Al-Jazeera, and found that the Arab station focused more on frames of human cost and personal suffering (p: 120-21).

### 9.3 What Was Learned from the Main Findings

The content analysis revealed differences between the framing techniques used by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya respectively reveal contrasting approaches to news coverage of terrorism and terrorist related events. For example, data analysis shows that Al-Arabiya's use of military frames was significantly more prominent than Al-Jazeera's (43.2% compared to 31.3%). In terms of terrorist activity in Yemen, to give one specific example, Al-Arabiya's presentation of events tended to be framed in a particularly military context. Al-Arabiya framed the events as part of the global "War on Terrorism", with news reports focusing heavily on the details of military action carried out by US and Yemeni forces against al-Qaeda.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the discourse analysis results, which showed that Al-Arabiya used more emotional terms when describing the casualties in the Yemeni army, such as "deadly explosion", "painful attacks", "killing and capturing dozens of Yemeni soldiers" and "terrorism risk in Yemen." Furthermore, although the channel criticised the former regime for its collusion with al-Qaeda, Al-Arabiya often reminded its viewers that the suicide attacks had been prompted by al-Qaeda against the Yemeni army and western targets in Yemen.

Furthermore, analysis of certain visual images (e.g. report of May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012) found Al-Arabiya using scenes and imagery-explosions, Yemeni soldiers firing artillery, and airborne missile launches-painting a far more military picture than was seen in Al-Jazeera's coverage. A similar trend could be also observed in coverage of the Toulouse shootings, where most of Al-Arabiya's reports focused on the French military response to the attacks. Al-Arabiya did not challenge the prevailing militaristic frame when reporting these events, offering few or no alternative frames during its broadcasts.

In line with previous research in Western media, Ryan (2004), found that US newspapers tend to adopt military frames in their coverage of the war against terrorism (pp: 372-73). TV networks, such as the *BBC*, *CNN*, and *NBC*, focus on the progress of the US military on the ground or the technological advances of the weaponry in the war on Afghanistan (El-Nawawy, 2006: 38) and show soldiers in military operations in the war on Iraq (Riegert, 2005, cited in El-Nawawt, 2006: 40). Similarly, Kamhawi's (2002) study of the

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coverage of the Palestine-Israel conflict found that the dominant frame in the coverage was the conflict frame (cited in Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005: 26-27). Other research found a definite positive bias toward US military actions in the *CNN* coverage of the first Gulf War (Kaid *et al.*, 1994). To Dissanayake (1984), “examining the coverage of major conflicts such as military interventions is important not only because it affects national public opinion toward the conflict, but also because it has a direct impact on policy making. One of the major influences of the media in this regard stems from its framing function” (cited in Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005: 25-27).

Meanwhile, and by contrast, Al-Jazeera’s broadcasts concerning the same situation in Yemen were characterized by a lack of terms such as ‘fighting terrorism’. Questioning the appropriateness and legitimacy of using force in Yemen, Al-Jazeera’s overall slant on the story tended towards criticism of American involvement. The discourse analysis confirmed these content analysis findings. Al-Jazeera’s focus on Yemeni affairs reflected its particularly Arabic standpoint, viewing violence there as a national or regional affair, as opposed to an international issue. This was reflected in its lexical choices, referring to American military activity against al-Qaeda in that country as an “intervention in Yemeni affairs” and a “violation of Yemeni sovereignty”. For example, Zayani (2005) argues that Al-Jazeera ‘fits in with Qatar’s attempt to play an active role in regional politics and to achieve regional influence’ (p: 12). El-Oifi (2005) moreover argues that Al-Jazeera’s pan-Arab identity serves the political aims of Qatar, forging a sense of pan-Arab belonging that nevertheless emphasizes a Qatari national one (pp: 65-79); in doing so, Qatar has entered a political rivalry with Saudi Arabia, traditionally the leading Arab state in the Gulf with the most influence over pan-Arab politics (El-Oifi, 2005: 65). Both channels seem to follow what Kraidy and Khalil (2007) call the ‘anywhere but here’ stance, whereby ‘each channel takes the liberty to criticize all countries and policies except the country in which that channel is based or which finances its operations, and to focus on transnational issues to the detriment of local and national issues’ (p: 81).

Reports of the Toulouse attacks, which Al-Jazeera described as a result of French electoral propaganda, also demonstrate the station’s Arab point of view. This type of reporting supports suggestions made by Nisbet and Shanahan (2008), Miles, (2005), and Zayani, (2005) who all found a strong tendency in Arab media reports to present the USA and American activity in a negative light. Certain scholars have gone so far as to view Al-Jazeera’s stance as a “vocal rejection of western cultural values”, which is seen as a response

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to “what is perceived as... anti-Muslim, anti-Arab foreign policy” on the part of the USA (Zayani, 2005: 28). In this context, Fandy (2007) suggested that anti-Americanism in the Arab media is a complex phenomenon that is integrated into the very nature of the reporting of the Iraqi and Palestinian stories. These two stories dominate Arab media; the main message that all Arabs understand is that America supports Israel in its occupation of the Palestinian territories (Arab land), and that America itself is involved in occupying an Arab country, Iraq (p: 90).

Anti-Americanism in Al-Jazeera can also be traced to the rise of transnational journalism and ideological pockets inside the channel. Although the government that owns Al-Jazeera is ally of the US, the people who operate this outlet are interested in stories that carry an anti-American rhetoric: the American occupation of Iraq, the “US-backed” Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, along with the discourses of angry Islamist groups (Fandy, 2007: 90). Anti-Americanism and anti-Israeli stories, despite the controversy they stir in Western societies, are considered as “safe” issues that journalists or analysts can talk about. Put simply, the political cost of anti-Americanism is nil from the perspective of an Arab journalist. Being critical of American policy and US support, unlike criticizing the regime that owns the station, will not incur any personal costs for journalists. On the other hand, criticizing local forces, whether local regimes or Islamist groups, can mean losing one’s life (Ibid, p: 90).

Despite clear and important differences in their use of frames in general, one significant similarity between the two networks’ use of framing was their tendency to adopt and support official framing positions (42.2% and 48.9%). An important example is both stations’ consistent use of the phrase “the deposed Yemeni president” to refer to Ali Abdullah Saleh, the former president of Yemen.

Yet it is important to note in this respect that both stations receive financial sponsorship from Arab governments, who maintain their own agenda regarding regional and political issues. Therefore, the networks’ willingness to adopt the official line should come as little surprise. The two stations are seen to support the political interests of their backers (e.g., particular Arab governments) and to directly or indirectly forward their policies. This is a clear example of the trend demonstrated by various studies researching Western news broadcasters and media providers (see for example Fried, 2005; Nacos, 2002; Norris *et al.*, 2003; Ryan, 2004).

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Various studies have previously found Arab media in general and Al-Jazeera in particular, to be particularly concerned with reporting civilian welfare during crises (e.g., El-Nawawy, 2006; Soriano, 2008; Wolfsfeld *et al.*, 2005; Aday *et al.*, 2005; Jasperson & El-Kikha, 2003). However, the data considered in the current research has revealed that only a limited humanitarian outlook was present in either station's coverage of terrorism, and that in general neither network offered any significant focus on civilian suffering brought about by terrorism. It should therefore be supposed that neither Al-Jazeera nor Al-Arabiya are yet in a position to offer a fully contextualized picture of the effects of terrorism (see Zeng & Tahat, 2012).

Turning to consider the different perspectives adopted by the two networks, the data used within the analysis revealed wide and important differences in their points of focus. Compared with Al-Arabiya's tendency towards a primary focus on governmental perspectives (63.6%), Al-Jazeera's dominant point of view was less than half as likely to be in line with the government's (30%). The inevitable conclusion from these findings is that Al-Arabiya's reports were frequently liable to exclude alternative (non-governmental) points of view. This observation from the content analysis was in agreement with the discourse analysis findings. Al-Arabiya adopted an American perspective in its "war on terrorism", and tended to report from a government perspective in their coverage of events in Yemen, Iraq or France. By contrast, the balance offered by Al-Jazeera between two conflicting sides was often notable.

In fact the data demonstrated an attempt by Al-Jazeera to provide opposing perspectives, offering governments' and perpetrators' points of view. In its presentation of differing attitudes within reports of terrorist activity, Al-Jazeera allowed the voices of alleged "terrorists" and perpetrators of violence to be heard, alongside those of Islamic leaders. There was an apparent demonstrable effort on the part of Al-Jazeera to avoid bias in its coverage (see Bahry, 2001; El-Nawawy & Iskandar, 2002; Seib, 2005), as can be observed in its reporting of the Yemeni conflict. The analysis of broadcast output in this study reveals that Al-Jazeera provided airtime to both sides of the conflict, reporting the casualty figures of government troops and al-Qaeda members. By contrast, a report on the same conflict provided by Al-Arabiya on May 7, 2012 stated: "due to the aggravation of the terrorism risk in Yemen, a new coordination between the Yemeni government and the US administration has begun. As a result the attacks of US drone against al-Qaeda targets began to escalate recently as part of the war against terrorism."

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These findings were perhaps to be expected, as certain previous analysts and critics have described the output of Al-Arabiya as more tightly controlled than that of Al-Jazeera, resulting from Al-Arabiya's support for Saudi and US governments (see *The Economist*, 2005; Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007). It therefore appears that Al-Jazeera is granted greater freedom to approach and report its news coverage from various alternative perspectives, despite the ownership of both networks by Arab governments, and the tendency of each to use official frames in their reporting.

However, while Al-Jazeera claims that airing the messages of al-Qaeda represent the other side of the story, Fandy (2007) argues that, Bin Laden and other al-Qaeda figures can be explained in the context of Qatar's political goals vis-à-vis its confrontation with Saudi Arabia (p: 50). Bin Laden was first and foremost an enemy of the Saudi state even before he turned his jihad against US targets and interest. Al-Jazeera is quick to criticise other Arab regimes, while at the same time ignoring problems with its host government. Similarly, Al-Arabiya criticizes every country in the Arab world except Saudi Arabia (Fandy, 2007: 3-10).

Despite the clear similarities across the geographic locations covered by the two channels' coverage of terrorism, it should be noted that over (80%) of the total number of stories analysed had their focus in the Middle East. It might therefore be assumed that a significant regional focus was present in the prioritising of news stories selected for broadcast, with preference given to those that occurred in local proximity (e.g., various terrorist activities in Yemen, Iraq and Somalia). However, before this conclusion can be reached, it is important to consider whether during the period under review there was a global tendency for terrorist acts to occur within these regions. That is to say, it is not clear from the current data whether there was a bias toward reporting terrorist activity in the Middle East and North Africa, or whether a majority of such activity took place in these areas (e.g., within the Arab world). Further research is thus necessary to determine whether the editors of Arab news channels gave undue prominence to reporting terrorism within a geographically confined location. Such research exceeds the current study's scope.

Regarding the sources used by the two channels, the content analysis data revealed that Al-Arabiya's reliance on official sources was significantly greater than Al-Jazeera's. This concurred with the findings presented by al-Dawud and Majid (2004), which analysed Al-Arabiya's coverage of the 2003 attacks in Rayed and concluded that (47%) of their broadcasts were focused on official responses to terrorist activity. Similarly Al-Alkarni (2005) found that the Saudi media had depended on government briefings and official

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sources in reporting on 1980s incidents of terrorism. There is a reasonable expectation that official sources should be frequently cited in news coverage of terrorist activity (see Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Al-Emad & Fahmy, 2011; Ryan, 2004), although certain research (e.g., Zeng, 2007) suggests that official commentary and responses demonstrates greater bias compared with those of independent experts. Based on the data in the current study, the reasonable assumption is therefore that sources used by Al-Arabiya were more likely to display bias than those used by Al-Jazeera.

These content analysis findings also corresponded with the discourse analysis. The various voices heard during Al-Jazeera's reports include those of government spokesmen (eleven times), international institutions, independent experts (five), and representatives of groups including al-Qaeda and Ansar Al-Sharia. Meanwhile, Al-Arabiya made substantially more use of government sources (fourteen times) than of experts (three). Yet despite Al-Jazeera's apparent attempts to offer the perspectives of opposing sides in conflict situations, its broadcasts revealed a tendency take an Arab and/or Muslim standpoint in its approach. This is demonstrated in certain lexical and linguistic choices, for example reference to American "violation of Yemeni sovereignty" or French "electoral propaganda". Voices from Muslim communities were heard more frequently in Al-Jazeera's coverage of the Toulouse attacks than in Al-Arabiya's reporting of the story. However, the approach taken by Al-Arabiya demonstrated that station's adoption of a frame reflecting an American "war on terrorism." Again, while some scholars (e.g., Fandy, 2007) argue that Al-Jazeera journalists believe in promoting Arab unity, others (e.g., Phillips, 2013) suggest that Al-Jazeera deliberately promotes Arabist and Islamist perspectives because the channel wants to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.

Unlike Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya offered direct quotes from US government sources labelling al-Qaeda's activities in Yemen as "*outrageous*" and "*cowardly*", and according to the network's reports the United States was working in close alliance with the Yemeni government in the war against a common enemy. A similar trend could be seen in its coverage of the Toulouse attacks coverage by Al-Arabiya reports, during which French government responses were prominent. These sources referred to "terrorist" and "anti-Semitic" acts, and in its discussion the station employed terminology such as "radical Muslims" and "phenomenon of extremism". By incorporating government statements into its reporting with a much greater frequency and intensity than Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya can be seen to be less critical of government discourse.

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When considering the perpetrators of terrorist activity, the available data indicated that Al-Arabiya defined the majority of these as Muslim/Extremist/Jihadist/Salafi. In general, the results of the critical discourse analysis are in agreement with the content analysis. Although each channel's output was broadly similar in terms of content, their semantic choices varied widely. For example, Al-Arabiya was more likely to use certain emotive terms in their descriptions of al-Qaeda members and other Islamist groups and individuals, shaping the presentation of the debate with phrasing that included "Islamic militants", "terrorist", "radical Muslims", "extremist", and "phenomenon of extremism."

The effect of these terms is to present such people and their activities in a particularly negative light, shaping public opinion of the conflict in opposition to al-Qaeda. This finding corresponds with previous research concluding that Middle Eastern news sources including Al-Arabiya present stereotypical messages appealing to a certain audience (Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Al-Saggaf, 2006; Lahlali, 2011; *The Economist*, 2005; Zayani & Sahraoui, 2007). It should be noted that this approach is not always straightforward; during the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2008 Al-Arabiya's criticism of Hamas was unpopular with many Arab viewers (Lahlali, 2011: 117). In more recent analysis of the Israel-Palestine conflict in Gaza in 2008-9 by both channels, Elmasry *et al.* (2013) came to same conclusion that, while both channels tended to view the Palestinians as victims and the Israelis as the aggressors, Al-Arabiya was negative towards Hamas, positive towards Egypt, the United States, and the United Nation. Al-Jazeera's on the other hand was the opposite, positive towards Hamas and critical of Egypt, the United States and the United Nation. Furthermore, Al-Jazeera described violent Israel actions in more harsh terms than Al-Arabiya. Neither of these points is surprising because Al-Jazeera has long been sympathetic to Hamas, yet it has been questioned Western involvement in Middle Eastern affairs. Al-Arabiya, on the other hand, has been more sympathetic with Fath, the political rivals of Hamas, and has often tended to support United States foreign policy in the Middle East (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 30-31).

Similarly, Lahlali (2011) comparison of Al-Jazeera's and Al-Arabiya's respective discourse during the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah conflict showed that Al-Arabiya was strongly critical of Hezbollah. Although it criticised the Israeli action and the repercussions it had on civilians, Al-Arabiya often reminded its viewers that the action had been prompted by the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah fighters. Al-Arabiya used less strong language than Al-Jazeera. It used 'campaign', 'killing', 'suffering of civilians', 'scores of dead' (p: 147). According to Lahlali (2011), "the approach taken by Al-Arabiya in its

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coverage of that particular conflict is reflective of its ‘moderate’ outlook. However, he raises the possibility of Al-Arabiya’s having been influenced by the Saudi government’s anti-Hezbollah stance” (p: 147), and he is not the only commentator to note that Al-Arabiya’s approach tends to mirror that of the Saudi government regarding Islamist activity (Al-Saggaf, 2006). Al-Jazeera coverage of the conflict on the other hand, focuses mainly on the humanitarian side of the war, demonstrating how thousands of Lebanese people fled their homes seeking a safe refuge away from the intensive Israeli strike. The channel also focused on the level of destruction and demolition incurred on the country’s infrastructure, which was reflected in its language usage. It often referred to the attack in terms such as: ‘massacre’, ‘destruction’, ‘inhumane’, ‘innocent people are killed’, ‘nothing is spared’, ‘aggression’ and ‘war crime’ (Lahlali, 2011: 146).

Al-Jazeera’s tendency was to apply the terms “radical” and “terrorist” to al-Qaeda, while the perpetrators of terrorist violence within the current data sample were most frequently described as ‘unidentified’. Again, these findings correspond with discourse analysis results. On occasions Al-Jazeera would qualify its use of the word terrorist, as in the expression “so-called terrorism”, and refer to al-Qaeda and its members as “Islamic groups”, “Islamic fighters”, “armed man”, “attacker” or sometime “al-Qaeda elements.” These findings are in agreement with those of Barnett and Reynolds (2009) who suggested that Al-Jazeera demonstrated greater objectivity than other news broadcasters in its use of politically neutral terms such as “fighters” and “attackers” (p: 44). According to El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2002), “Al-Jazeera owes its success in part to its presentation of a specifically Arab outlook, which importantly includes and reflects particular linguistic and cultural factors. Thus, to many Arabs in their audience Palestinians who have died as the result of Israeli military action are by definition *Shuhada* (martyrs), having given their lives to defend Palestinian territories, a phenomenon rarely revealed in Western media reporting but representative of an Arab point of view” (p: 53). It has also been noted that in its coverage of the Iraq war, Al-Jazeera’s stance shifted from implicit rejection of American and allied intervention beforehand, to explicit rejection of its legitimacy after air strikes began (Miles, 2005). Miles (2005a) found that the terminology used in the station’s reporting and its editing and juxtapositioning of visual imagery contributed to the critical outlook expressed regarding the motives and actions of the coalition. He noted that Al-Jazeera was the first network to describe the American and British military presence as ‘invasion forces’ (p: 242). Al-Jazeera was very cautious of its coverage of the conflict either in Yemen, Iraq or France for being

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less critical to Islamic groups, and subsequently to appeal to Arab viewers who expected the channel to cover the conflict from an Arab perspective. In this regard, Al-Jazeera's critics accused the channels of compromising objectivity in an attempt to woo the Arab public (Lahlali, 2011: 147). Previous research indicated that, to attract higher viewership, Al-Jazeera news reports seek to reflect the culture and expectations of its audiences, feeding the desire of the Arab public to support the underdog (Conte, 2007, cited in Wu, 2004: 37)—for example, Al-Jazeera highlighted the US losses in the Iraq war to meet the expectations of those Arab audiences who saw the war as unjust and gained satisfaction from seeing the weaker Iraqis resist the US invasion (Iskandar & El-Nawawy, 2004: 326).

Examining the framing of victims in news reports of terrorist activity, the data analysed shows that in the case of both networks the majority of victims remained unidentified. Further analysis of their origin however revealed that the largest proportion of news stories identified them as Middle-Eastern. This finding corresponds with the US State Department Annual Report (2010) which indicates that approximately (60%) of fatalities directly attributable to terrorist activities occur in the Middle East. Similarly, Elmasry *et al.* (2013) comparison of Al-Jazeera's and Al-Arabiya's coverage of the Israel conflict war against Gaza in 2008-9, showed both TV networks tended to view Palestinians largely as victims and Israelis as aggressors, which is consistent with the prevailing opinion across the Arab World and much of international political and legal opinion (see United Nations Human Rights Council, 2009; Finkelstein, 2010). For example, the results indicate that both networks showed numerous images of grieving Palestinian families, but there were no images of grieving Israeli families, even though there were casualties on both sides of the conflict. Also, both networks reported personal details like names and ages of the Palestinian victims of violence, but neither station personalized any of the Israeli victims (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 30-31).

Discourse analysis reveals that Al-Arabiya's coverage went some way to providing a degree of humanity to the victims (Al-Arabiya report on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012). It has been suggested that humanizing victims of violence contributes to the negative portrayal of perpetrators (e.g., Nacos, 2002) and as such can reinforce frames that present a struggle between good and evil; such framing techniques can also be observed in Western media coverage of terrorism (see e.g., Kellner, 2004; Eliot, 2004).

The possibility of future terrorist attacks, and the associated public fear of this, was a focus of Al-Arabiya's commentary and reporting on combatants or "terrorists" including al-

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Qaeda and Ansar al-Sharia. Particular headlines (e.g., Al-Arabiya 4-5, from Yemen July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012) characterised certain stories such as (“al-Qaeda Al affiliated Ansar al-Sharia group issued a statement claiming responsibility for the attack and threatening more attacks if the Yemeni army does not halt an operation against the terrorist group in the south of the country”), (The bomber, named Mubarik Al-arni from Sana’a, suffered fatal injuries and died after being taken to hospital, leaving behind him open-ended questions about the terrorist attacks and mysteries beyond that exceeded the security alert of the security services), and this “fear” frame dominated aspects of Al-Arabiya’s news discourse. By contrast, the humanity of the perpetrators was more frequently revealed during Al-Jazeera’s reports, particularly in their coverage of the Toulouse attacks. In this case, while describing young Muslims who were arrested as victims of “electoral propaganda”, Al-Jazeera also reported on the alleged attacker’s background. “He was portrayed as kind, intelligent, friendly and essentially normal, thus humanized within a cultural context that allowed audiences to relate to him as a person”.

Considering the contrasts between episodic and thematic framing, analysis of the data indicated a tendency on the part of both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya to offer episodic framing at the expense of thematic narratives. In the context of reporting terrorist activity, thematic framing might include the comparison of a single incident to previous events, consideration of an event’s regional implications, or reporting the background and circumstances of a known suicide bomber. The absence of such thematic framing can prevent audiences from accessing and understanding the broad range of information required to assemble a contextualised picture of terrorist events. While both stations tended to provide comment from a range of sources and individuals when reporting terrorist activity, there was a scarcity of thematic framing among these. This corresponds with the findings presented by El-Nawawy (2004) who suggested that the tendency of Arab journalists was to report terrorist attacks in the Arab world episodically rather than thematically. More broadly, these findings are in agreement with Iyengar (1991) who examined people’s exposure to episodic and thematic news coverage and found that with greater exposure to episodic coverage, people were less likely to hold public officials accountable for social problems and less likely to see them as responsible for alleviating these same problems. This is indicative, Iyengar (1991) said, of television’s power to discourage participation in the political process and to decrease the sense of control people think they have over elected officials. Furthermore, he argued that, by portraying issues primarily in terms of discrete events (episodic framing), television

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news impedes the recognition people have of the interconnections between issues which in the long run may generate inconsistencies in the formation of public opinion (cited in Lembo, 2000: 44). They also correspond with the discussion by Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005), whose analysis of the Iraq war revealed how the media's episodic approach prevented audiences from forming an understanding of the wider thematic picture. In a climate where the quick news flash often dominates our attention, especially in times of conflict, we may miss the chance for broad thematic reporting (p: 412).

It is important to note that in general neither Al-Jazeera nor Al-Arabiya in their reporting of terrorist activity held any group or individuals accountable for the occurrence of terrorist acts. In this respect, episodic frames have the capacity to discourage viewers from placing the blame on public officials (see e.g., Iyengar, 1991) leaving them less inclined to view those officials as responsible for resolving the consequences of terrorist attacks.

Overall, this study points towards three conclusions. First, the stereotype of the terrorist as a Muslim continues to be felt in Al-Arabiya's coverage of terrorism. The frames applied to an event by a news broadcaster will very often affect how their audience perceives it. Although Al-Arabiya do not make the mistake of explicitly suggesting that all terrorists are Muslims, the fact that many of their stories (see Table 7.5) identify the terrorist perpetrators as Muslims may draw viewers into inaccurate generalizations. In this respect, there is little difference between Western media outlets and Al-Arabiya, who present themselves as representing Arab interests and serve an audience with predominantly Arabic origins. Al-Jazeera meanwhile left the largest proportion of terrorist perpetrators unidentified in its reports and tended to avoid terms such as "terrorist" and "radical" when describing al-Qaeda members. Contrary to the pattern among Western news sources, both networks were consistent in at least implying that the majority of terrorism victims are Muslims.

The second conclusion to be drawn is that Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya demonstrate considerable and important differences in their coverage of terrorist activity and counter-terrorist responses. Findings relating to the framing of perpetrators and to the presentation of so-called terrorist organizations reveal that Al-Arabiya pays comparatively greater attention to terrorist events apparently carried out by Muslims, especially those occurring in the Middle East or affecting people from the region, and relies heavily on official spokespersons as news sources. This reflects Al-Arabiya's tendency to correspond with Western, especially US, media responses (see also Zeng & Tahat, 2012; Nacos, 2002). Less bias was evident in the coverage provided by Al-Jazeera, which considers itself an independent international news

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provider, crediting a greater variety of sources and employing comparatively diverse frames of coverage. It should be noted that Al-Jazeera sometimes uses al-Qaeda sources when reporting on conflicts.

Finally, it must be concluded that there remains insufficient coverage of terrorism from a humanitarian perspective. Although some scholars have acknowledged that parts of the Arab media, especially Al-Jazeera, demonstrate concern for civilian suffering (e.g., El-Nawawy, 2006; Soriano, 2008; Wolfsfeld *et al.*, 2005), there is still too much focus placed on disseminating and supporting official positions and decisions. Humanitarian and civilian sufferings caused by terrorism are not generally brought to the attention of the public. Like their competitors in the Middle East, and their Western counterparts, neither Al-Jazeera nor Al-Arabiya have shown themselves able to give contextualized, accurate reports reflecting the full scale and effects of terrorist and counter-terrorist activities.

It has been established that the scale of impact of news events, including for example by numbers of deaths in terrorist attacks, is a criterion that editors take into account when selecting stories to cover (see for instance Weimann & Winn, 1994; Weimann & Brosius, 1991). However, during the period sampled in this study both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya provided little coverage of suffering of innocent people in their reports about terrorism. This raises the question of whether deliberate editorial decisions were taken about these matters, and whether and to what extent this represents an ideological position on the part of either or both networks. The scale of certain events, for example in Yemen or Iraq, would suggest that the humanitarian suffering caused was worthy of coverage. Any decision not to cover such perspectives therefore raises important questions about why such a decision was taken. In these circumstances it appears unlikely that editorial staff would regard the humanitarian perspective as being of insufficient public interest. It is more plausible that in certain cases a deliberate choice was made not to report this suffering, because of their respective sponsors' political interests. According to Abdulaziz (2013), "the Qatari government and by extension Al-Jazeera offer support to parties affiliated to the Muslim Brotherhood, while the Saudi government and Al-Arabiya show theirs towards Wahhabist/Salafist movements" (p: 68) . In both cases, these parties include groups known to be involved with political violence (see Stakelbeck, 2013).

These television networks have considerable influence within the Arab world and beyond. Their coverage of the 'Arab spring' and ensuing events in 2011 and 2012 was widely held to be a factor in shaping opinions and perhaps to some extent influencing the course of

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events (Elmasry *et al.*, 2013: 38). Recent commentators have criticized both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya for their support of Qatari and Saudi regional foreign policies respectively (see Abdulaziz, 2013). Al-Saqer (2013) discusses the ongoing competition between “the two countries, with each seeking to exert political influence among their neighbours and to prevent protests or uprisings in their own territories, and reflects on how this has affected the recent output of the two channels” (p: 9). Abdulaziz (2013) describes “how different types of political Islam are fostered in the two countries, with Qatar and Al-Jazeera offering their support to parties affiliated to the Muslim Brotherhood, while Saudi Arabia and Al-Arabiya show theirs towards Wahhabist/Salafist movements” (p: 70). Al-Saqer (2013) suggests that “this is shown in Al-Arabiya’s discourse, as in its coverage of the ongoing Syrian civil war. Al-Arabiya describes the Syrian opposition, made up of primarily Salafist and Jihadist groups, as a legitimate body deserving political and military support. By contrast it describes al-Qaeda affiliated organizations in Yemen, Mali, and Afghanistan as terrorist groups. Al-Saqer points out that although the two channels each show their clear support for the Syrian opposition factions, Al-Jazeera’s endorsement of the Muslim Brotherhood shaped its coverage of events in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. Meanwhile, Al-Arabiya was more cautious in supporting the uprisings in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt” (Al-Saqer, 2013: 11). Fandy (2007) argues that “the competition between Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya is, as we have seen, part of a larger conflict between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. This conflict is multilayered, involving the Saudi brand of Islam versus the Islam of Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood, the oil of Saudi Arabia and the gas of Qatar, Arab journalists, Bin Laden and the Saudi royal family, the Al-Murrah tribe and the Qatari royal family. To interpret these two channels outside the context of Saudi-Qatari tension is to be misled about the nature of both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya” (p: 65).

It could be suggested that “Al-Arabiya’s ideological stance is shaped by the Saudi government, which has a history of opposition to Islamists and has expressed its commitment to fighting extremist views” (Lahlali, 2011: 111). Meanwhile, until very recently Al-Jazeera had not aligned itself with any particular social movement, because its goal as a media organisation was to attract audiences and gain financial independence (see Iskandar, 2006). In the light of these various findings it can reasonably be concluded that certain biases present in each channel’s output in their reports of terrorist-related activities can be attributed to their respective owners’ ideological positions. However, it should come as no surprise that they are each ready to embrace the official perspective. Their Qatari and Saudi government backers

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have their own internal, regional and international agendas, and the networks are seen to uphold their sponsors' interests.

The analysis provided in this study confirms that the concept of terrorism is inherently debatable, subject to cultural and ideological values, and determined by broader social frames. Inevitably, global media are unable to reach a consensus on a single definition of terror. Since terrorism is in the eye of the beholder, the Arab media reflects the political and cultural values of a diverse target audience by labelling those who carry out politically-inspired violence "terrorists" or "Islamic fighters", according to ideological and commercial interests that are felt the world over.

### **9.4 Limitations and Recommendations**

This study has provided a further step towards understanding the intricacies of framing when applied to cross-cultural and international news broadcasting. However, several limitations and areas of potential improvement present opportunities for future research. These are discussed below, together with recommendations for future analyses.

**1-** A major limitation of this study is that it only examines TV network broadcasting. A significant recommendation for future research is therefore the analysis of other news media (e.g., newspapers, websites etc.). Some media critics have argued that newspaper coverage is more reliable than television in a breaking news / crisis situation because newspapers are less concerned with speed. For example, *Philadelphia Daily News* columnist Stu Bykofsky notes that print media reporters gather material, then compose articles which receive editors' attention, while cable news network's "air stuff they have not properly checked out" (cited in Barnett & Reynolds, 2009: 103).

**2-** A further limitation relates to the duration of the sample. The study analysed news coverage of terrorist-related activities for a six month period of time, from March 3rd 2012 to July 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. The coverage can therefore be held to express media reaction to unique events during that period, including US President Obama's announcement that al-Qaeda in Yemen is considered the greatest terrorist threat to the US and its allies in the region. The same period also witnessed the Toulouse attacks that were synchronised with the French presidential election. It is legitimate to suggest that the timing of these attacks gave them a great importance in terms of media attention. Thus, a recommendation for future research should include analysis of wider samples from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, and the incorporation of other channels including both Western and Arab networks. Analysing a range of media

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outlets with different cultural, political and economic perspectives could reveal important differences in how they covered events of worldwide significance (See for instance Neuman *et al.*, 1992).

**3-** The current study focused only on ‘non-state’ forms of terrorism. Further research is needed to provide a more diverse analysis of news topics. For example, critics such as Jackson *et al.* (2009) indicated that the field of terrorism study has focused almost exclusively on non-state terrorism and has, exceptions notwithstanding, largely failed to examine state terrorism or repression more broadly, including acts of state terrorism carried out by Western states and their allies (Blakeley, 2007). In addition, there has been an over-emphasis on al-Qaeda (including in the current study), and a noticeable dearth of research in the field on subjects such as: right-wing terrorism, Christian, Jewish, and Sikh terrorism, gender terrorism, and the terrorism experienced in developing regions like Africa, India, the Pacific, and elsewhere (Silke, 2009).

**4-** The current study relied on only two methods of analysis, content analysis and critical discourse analysis; a recommendation for future research is to use multiple methods in complementary ways. For example, a study conducted by Neuman *et al.* (1992) provides a model of this strategy in action. The authors used a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, including experimentation, survey research, in-depth interviewing and content analysis, to examine how the media and audience members constructed five different issues. This allowed the collection of evidence that was strong in both internal and external validity, as well as in both breadth and depth (Neuman *et al.*, 1992: 25). Future research employing multiple methods can give framing research improved explanatory power and will overcome some of the criticisms levelled against framing theory.

**5-** This study has examined framing in the context of how the media presents of news stories relating to terrorism. However, an important counterpoint exists and must be taken into consideration, namely the effect of the frames on audiences receiving and processing news content. A review of the research on framing reveals a division between studies examining strategic media framing and those that research audience effects, with a combination of the two being present in a few studies. For example, examining effects of generic news frames on audiences, Cappella and Jamieson (1996, 1997) investigated the effects of strategic framing on public cynicism about politics. Overall, they found that

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participants watching news segments framed strategically reported higher levels of political cynicism. Iyengar (1991, 1996) found that news reports of current affairs framed episodically led people to attribute responsibility to individuals, whereas thematic news fuelled system-level attributions of responsibility. Valkenburg *et al.* (1999) investigated the impact of four different news frames (conflict, human interest, attribution of responsibility, and economic consequences), and found that framing had a significant and consistent influence on audience responses (see also Price *et al.*, 1997). Recent scholars (e.g. Grabe *et al.*, 2001; Hendriks Vettehen *et al.*, 2005-2011) agree that certain news characteristics that are increasingly included in today's news are able to elicit attention and arouse viewers emotionally. Uribe and Gunter (2007) identify six content categories that can be linked to emotional arousal: sex, violence, destruction, humour, celebrity and the portrayal of strong emotion in others. Violence, in particular, has been found to generate neural arousal in viewers (Newhagen, 1998; Grimm, 1996). Scholars including Entman, (1993), Pan & Kosicki (1993), Scheufele (1999, 2000) and McLeod *et al.* (2002) recommend viewing framing as an integrated process that includes news production, content, and audience effects (e.g., de Vreese, 2005). The reliability of the current study will be improved by research onto how audiences respond to the framing of news stories presented by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.

**6-** It must be kept in mind that news production is subject to broad and varied influences, including factors internal to particular journalists and news organisations (such as personal values and norms, specific media routines and organisational constraints) and those that are external (such as ownership, funding, political affiliation, and competition in the news market). Furthermore, a central role in the selection and packaging process is played by news values. News values determine which events and issues are considered sufficiently newsworthy for media attention, and include but are not limited to conflict, narratives of “good vs. evil”, human interest, controversy, proximity, timeliness, and potential consequences. In this context, another limitation of the current study is that no clear relationship has been identified between framing and the news selection process. For example, the media presentation of a story framed in terms of conflict involves the identification of a key news value and the translation of this into a template familiar to journalists as well as audiences (de Vreese, 2005). This crucial phase of the framing process is comparatively understudied and deserves further scholarly attention (see for example

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Scheufele, 1999). Future research should therefore analyse the link between framing and news values.

7- The current study analysed only narratives, yet frames can also be manifest in text and in pictures (Dimirtova & Strömbäck, 2005). Much evidence exists about the power of news visuals on viewers (Coleman, 2010: 234). For example, scholars (e.g., Baran & Davis, 1995: 271) have argued that “all too often, the visual information is so powerful that it overwhelms the verbal” or that “the visual impact of (a candidate) on television and in newspaper photos may have left a very different impression” from the one conveyed in words (Domke *et al.*, 1997: 733). A recommendation for future research is to investigate how different media outlets visually portray violent events. This could provide richer data.

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## Appendix A

### Coding Sheet

**Coder I.D:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. First coder
2. Secondary coder

**Date coded:** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of the media outlet being coded:**

1. Al-Jazeera
2. Al-Arabiya

**Show/ Programme ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Aired:** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Time Aired:** \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ PM

**Story I.D:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of news frames**

1. Official frame:
2. Military frame:
3. Human interest frame
4. Crime frame
5. Episodic vs. thematic frames
6. Responsibility frame

**Story perspective**

1. Story focus is on the event

2. Story focus is on the government views
3. Story focus is on the victims views
4. Story focus is on perpetrators views
5. Story focus is on consequences

### **Proximity**

1. Middle East
2. Europe
3. USA
4. Others

### **Type of sources**

1. Official/military/police
2. Correspondents/Journalist(s)
3. Experts
4. Other media sources
5. Perpetrators
6. Witnesses
7. Victims and relatives
8. Islamic leaders
9. Health professionals
10. Court
11. No source identified

### **Terrorism perpetrators**

1. Al-Qaeda
2. Muslims/Extremist/Jihadist/Salfi
3. Terrorist
4. Combatant
5. Perpetrator
6. Attackers/gunman
7. Bomber

8. Kidnapper
9. Named of attackers mentioned
10. Unknown

### **Terrorism victims**

1. Combatant
2. Non-combatant
3. General
4. Specific
5. Mixed
6. Unknown

### **Instruction**

1. Each coder will be given a number to represent the person coding the information. This number needs to be included on the Coder I.D. line on the coding sheet.
2. Each coder will include the date the story was coded on the Date Coded line. An example of how the date should appear is 20-10-2011.
3. Each coder will circle the channel (Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya) and the show/programme (Today Harvest – Last Hour).
4. Each coder will receive a transcript that will include a Story I.D. number, Date Aired, and Time Aired. An example of how the date should appear is 18-03-2011. An example of how the time aired should appear is (hour/minute) 10:09:00.
5. After filling out the general information, the coder will begin to code the a priori frames by reading the articles and following the directions below.

**Important:** If you cannot easily decide how to code a section, please read through the definition to see if one applies. If one does not easily apply, mark 'other' and describe. 'Other' is only relevant for the proximity section.

**Note:** Please read the entire article at least once before coding.

6. The coder will select the Type of Frame (official, military, human interest, crime, episodic vs. thematic, and responsibility frame) by placing a check mark on the slot provided.

7. The coder will select the Story Focus. Is the story focus on the event, on the government views, on the victims views, on perpetrators views, or story focus is on consequences.
8. The coder will select if the location of the main incident referring to violence and terrorism is in Middle East, Europe, USA, or other.
9. The coder will select if the Source is a Government Officials, military, police, correspondents, experts, other media sources, perpetrators, witnesses, victims and relatives, Islamic leaders, health professionals, court, no source identified. The coder can mark more than one element if there are multiple sources but only one element can be marked, even if they appear multiple times in the story. If the element 'Other Source' is selected, the coder needs to describe what was found.
10. The coder will select if the perpetrator is al-Qaeda, Muslims/Extremist/Jihadist/Salfi, terrorist, combatants, perpetrator, attackers/gunman, bomber, kidnapper, named of attackers mentioned, and unknown.
11. The coder will select if the victim is combatants, non-combatant, general, specific, mixed, or unknown.
12. Once all information is filled out, the coder will continue to coder other stories or further direction will be provided.

## **Definitions**

### **Types of News Frames**

**Conflict frame** refers to news frames concerning support for the government and political leaders in a country, including national unity and public support for the government

**Military frame** refer to depictions of the strategy used in war on terrorism (e.g., operations, strategies of fighting terrorist groups, etc.).

**Human interest frame:** Focus on the victims of the terrorism deeds, notably the suffering and damage caused by terrorists' actions.

**Crime frame** identify the people responsible for the act of deviance.

**Responsibility frame** presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving a problem to the government or to an individual or to a group (Valkenburg et al., 1999).

**Episodic frames** are presented by specifying elements of an event, lacking greater general context including historical sequences, future consequences, and/or general issues. They

usually involve coverage of people in attendance, detailed reports of destruction, and singular coverage. Basically, episodic frames focus on an event, not its past or future consequences (Blue, 2008).

Story focus on **consequences** and on the other views (e.g., the presenter's view, the public's view, protesters' view, terrorist' relatives views).

**Thematic frames** are represented by more in – depth coverage that can provide general context using historical perspectives, future predications and speculation, and general issue. They usually involve talking heads, interviews, and political issues. Stories containing any of these elements are considered thematic. Basically, thematic frames focus on the past and/or future decisions and consequences because of an event.

### **Story Perspective**

Story perspective is on the event (e.g., on the attacks, rescue, disaster, mourning, investigation, links to other related terrorist incidents, trials etc).

Story focus is on the **government's/politicians' view** regarding religious, political military, and international relations deriving from the events).

Story focus is on the (assumed) **terrorist' view**.

Story focus is on the **victim' view**.

### **Proximity**

Proximity refers to the region of the world where the terrorist incident occurs.

**Middle East** refers to Arab countries such as Egypt, Iraq, Somalis, and Palestinian territories. Middle East countries also include non-Arab countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey etc. Other parts of Asia refers to Asian countries or regions out of the Middle East, such as China, Japan and Philippines.

**Europe** refers to all regions within European countries.

**North America** refers to the United States and Canada.

### **Sources**

The sources most frequently mentioned within the story. If two types of sources end up with equal frequency, the one appearing first in the story is considered the dominant source.

Government / official sources includes those who had (ex-) or have (present) a direct working relationship within a government such as prime minister, minister, member of parliament,

organisation leaders, miscellaneous government workers. This includes state and city government officials such as governors, mayors, police and fire officials.

**Military** source includes a person that holds military ranks.

**Correspondents / Journalists** include those people that work for a news agency explaining their experience and / or connect to the terrorist act.

**Terrorist** includes people taking responsibility and / or making demands after a terrorist act.

**Victims** includes civilians, government officials, and military personnel hurt in a terrorist act, people directly involved with those hurt or killed in a terrorist act, or people that viewed the terrorist act.

**Expert** includes those people who have deep and rich knowledge in terrorism issues (e.g., military and security personnel, scholars, and so on).

**Religious Leaders** includes those people who are representatives of Mosque / Churches and other religious organisations or groups, regarding of their religion.

**Witnesses** include those people who are present at the time of terrorism events and thus possess knowledge of what happens as a result of personal observation.

**Health Professionals** include those people who provide health and medical care to victims of terrorism.

**Court** is a tribunal, often a government institution, with the authority to adjudicate legal disputes between parties and carry out the administration of justice in civil, criminal, and administrative matters in accordance with the rule of law.

Any source that did not fall under the aforementioned nine categories was coded as 'other.' If no source was mentioned, the story was coded as 'not mentioned'.

### **Terrorist Perpetrators**

**Al-Qaeda** is a global militant Islamic organisation founded by Osama bin Laden in Peshawar, Pakistan, between 1988 and late 1989, with its origins being traceable to the Soviet war in Afghanistan. It operates as a network comprising both a multinational, stateless army and a radical Sunni Muslims movement calling for global Jihad and a strict interpretation of sharia law. Al-Qaeda has carried out several attacks on non-Sunnis, non-Muslims, and other targets it considers *Kafir*.

**Salafist Jihadism** is a Jihadist movement or ideology among Salafi Muslims. The term was coined by scholar Gilles Kepel (2003-2006) to describe the belief of Salafi who became

interested in violent jihad starting in the mid – 1990s. Practitioners are often referred to as “Salafi jihadis” or “Salafi jihadists”.

**Islamic Extremist** refers to two related and partially overlapping but also distinct aspects of extremist interpretations and pursuits of Islamic ideology: an extremely conservative view of Islam, which doesn’t necessarily entail violence even though it may have an emphasis on Jihad; see Islamic fundamentalism, and the use of extreme tactics such as bombing and assassinations for achieving political and religious goals.

**Terrorism Perpetrators** refers to individuals who commit terrorism crimes (e.g., Osama bin Laden, Aiman Al Dawahery, etc.).

**Attacker / Gunman** refers to a man who uses a gun to rob or kill people, and who is inspired by a particular ideological stance to achieve political and religious goals.

**Kidnapper** refers to a person who kidnaps an individual or group to force government to respond to his / their political and religious demands.

**Named of Attackers** mentioned refers to a person or terrorism organisation member whose name is mentioned in the news (e.g., Bin Laden, Abo-Yahia el-Libi etc.).

Any perpetrator that did not fall under the aforementioned seven categories was coded as “Unknown”.

### **Terrorism Victims**

**Combatant** refers to someone who takes a direct part in the hostilities of an armed conflict such as soldier or police officers.

**Non-combatant** refers to non-military victims such as civilian, embassy / diplomats, business people, aid worker, airlines, and religious organisation who are hurt in a terrorist operation.

**General** refers to general labels used in the story such as “those killed,” “victims”, “people”, the number of victims to describe terrorist act casualties.

**Specific** refers to victim’s names that are mentioned in the story, and additional information is provided on the victims.

**Mixed Victim** refers to combatants and non-combatants.

**Unknown / Not-Applicable** if the information is not provided in the story.

## Appendix B

### Data for discourse analysis from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV news channel.

#### Al-Jazeera News Dates

Monday 19-03-2012

Tuesday 20-03-2012

Wednesday 21-03-2012

Thursday 22-03-2012

Monday 26-03-2012

Monday 07-05-2012

Monday 21-05-2012

Tuesday 03-07-2012

Tuesday 24-07-2012

Monday 23-07-2012

Tuesday 24-07-2012

#### Al-Arabiya News Dates

Monday 19-03-2012

Tuesday 20-03-2012

Wednesday 21-03-2012

Thursday 22-03-2012

Monday 26-03-2012

Monday 07-05-2012

Monday 21-05-2012

Tuesday 03-07-2012

Tuesday 24-07-2012

Monday 23-07-2012

Tuesday 24-07-2012