

Islamophobia or Islamophobias: Towards Developing A Process Model

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Abstract

This paper attempts to explore Islamophobia and assumes it to be a composite and multi-dimensional construct with its epistemic/symbolic dimensions having different connotations, the meaning of which needs to be distilled through its explication into less abstract dimensions. This study assumes Islamophobia to be a mediated construct which is variegated; hence, it appears as a corpus constituted of Islamophobias.

This exploration attempts to conceptualize and operationalize the said construct so that its nexus with the media and other social antecedents can be empirically examined.



Introduction

Many events have a catalytic effect on the course of history; some of them even have the potential to alter that course. The contemporary world has witnessed a series of events which have had dual effects on the conventional flow of history and its capability to change its course as well as cause the escalation of its momentum. The epochal event of 9/11 is one of them. Consequently, the relations between nations have changed, new foes have emerged, friendly nations have become either enemies or friendlier than before. Few events like the assassination of Duke Ferdinand in 1914 or the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 have transformed the fabric of the world polity in the way 9/11 has. As the above-mentioned events of the past were not captured by the media, only narrated history could bring out their gravity. But 9/11 occurred when the media had become firmly consolidated as the main recorder of contemporary realities.

Moreover, a series of dramatic incidents including the London blasts of 07/07, the ever worsening lethal war in the Gulf and the Afghan 'war on terror' generated massive material for the media world over, which it relentlessly showered on the ears and eyes of the people around the globe. The

main players of the lamentable scenes were, of course, Muslims and Islam. This “corporate picture of Islam”¹ and Muslims, to use an expression coined by Edward Said (d. 2003), sharpened the phenomenon of Islamophobia, which was not altogether non-existent in the past and could have been observed in its various forms such as racial or cultural prejudice, hatred towards Muslims and Islam and their depiction as a threat to world peace.

The present work is focused on the study of this very phenomenon, Islamophobia. In its essence the phenomenon is subtle, hard to understand, and too complex to measure. Nonetheless, it is conspicuously observable all across Europe, Australia and USA. In this paper we shall attempt to unveil the hidden aspects of the phenomenon and to trace its origins, setting it in its historical context. We shall also critically analyze its various definitions and observe the way it has been measured as a social and/or a media construct. We shall also address some of the issues related with Islamophobia that have not been adequately investigated in previous studies. The paper will conclude with presenting a process model to explain the development of Islamophobia with clearer identification of the variables involved. We shall also attempt to highlight the significance of this complex construct which is spreading like a jungle fire. Its manifestations are alarming in so far as they are widening the gulf between the West and the Muslims, making our world a dangerous place and the future even more unpredictably perilous.

In the present days Islamophobia appears to be a heavily mediated construct. Hence, it is pertinent to observe the involvement of media in the process of constructing it. This is thanks to the power of the media in conveying, explaining and articulating specific discourses that help represent or misrepresent a social group or minority.² Media critics argue that media misrepresentation has been influential in the spread of Islamophobia in the West.³ Media develop stereotypes by framing the attributes of a community or

¹ See, *The Nation* (26 April, 1980), available online at website: <<http://www.thenation.com/doc/19800426/19800426said/1>>, we retrieved it on February 25, 2008.

² See, Simon Cottle, *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000); idem, *Mediatized Conflict* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2006).

³ See, Elizabeth Poole and Richardson John, eds. *Muslims and the News Media* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); Paul Gilroy, “The End of Antiracism” in James Donald & Ali Rattansi, *Race, Culture and Difference* (London: Sage, 1992), 49–61; Akbar S. Ahmed, *Living Islam: from Samarkind to Stornoway* (London: BBC Books, 1993); Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (London: Runnymede Trust, 1997); Chris Allen, “From Race to Religion: The New Face of Discrimination” in Abbas Tariq, *Muslim Britain: Communities Under Pressure* (London: Zed Books, 2005), 24–47; Elizabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims* (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2002); Barbara Zelizer & Allan Stuart, *Journalism after 9/11* (London: Routledge, 2002).

individual more often in a systematic way. The Australian experience shows that media portrayed Muslims as alien and foreign to the Western society,⁴ as a “backward, uneducated, vulgar, violent”⁵ community which consequently strained the relations between Muslims and other Australians. Thus, while discussing and explaining Islamophobia, we shall also dwell on the media’s role in framing the Muslims and Islam for it shapes the way people understand them, eventually generating Islamophobia or Islamophilia as a process of binary schematization.

Histories

Intolerance towards other religions or doctrines is universal and perhaps as old as humanity itself. The worst of its manifestations have been the wars spanning over centuries—crusades, genocides and deep rooted hostility on the basis of religious identities. Islam, at the time of its emergence in history, faced severe opposition since some quarters represented it as a ‘problem’⁶ to the world.⁷ This negative representation of Islam has marked the human history especially that of last 14 centuries by mutual hostilities despite the affinity that could bind Muslims, Christians and Jews the as ‘people of the book,’ as Prince of Wales rightly pointed out during his speech at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies on 27 October 1993.⁸

The Byzantine Christians, Greek monks and the Church establishment, threatened by the rapid spread of Islam from Arabia to its close and remote neighbours, started an obdurate campaign of slander and vilification against Islam, depicting it as a mere “apostasy”⁹ and a sort of “barbaric paganism.”¹⁰

⁴ See, B. Lowe, ed. *Islam in Australia* (Sydney: New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board, 1985), 55–62.

⁵ Islamic Council of New South Wales (ICNSW), *Submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Inquiry into Racist Violence: Submission no. 4.28* (Zetland: Islamic Council of New South Wales, 1989), 26.

⁶ This is mentioned in the first edition of Humphrey Prideaux’s *Mahomet: The True Nature of the Imposter Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet* (London: William Rogers, 1697).

⁷ See, E. Fahlbusch, J. M. Lochman, J. Mbiti, J. Pelikan, L. Vischer, G.W. Bromiley and David B. Barret, eds. *Encyclopaedia of Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 758–762; A. Hamilton, *William Bedwell: The Arabist* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 67; R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

⁸ See, H. R. H. The Prince of Wales, “Islam and the West,” *Arab Law Quarterly*, 9: 2 (1994), 135, available online at: <<http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speechesandarticles>>, retrieved on March 20, 2009.

⁹ See, <http://www.islamonline.net/english/In_Depth/mohamed/1424/aboutmohamed/article05.shtml>.

¹⁰ See, OIC, *First OIC Observatory Report on Islamophobia: May 2007 – March 2008*, available at: <<http://www.oic-oci.org/oicnew/is11/english/Islamophobia-rep-en.pdf>>, retrieved on April

The foundation of this antagonism against Islam was articulated in the early Islamic period mainly by John of Damascus (676–749), a Christian scholar of the Umayyad period, by declaring Islam to be a “pagan cult,” and heaping derogations on the Prophet (peace be on him).¹¹ For long, his writings and accusations remained the major source of the writings against Islam.

In addition to Christian scholars, the church elders regarded Islam as evil and “absolutely alien to God.”¹² Alexander Gainem, a freelance journalist, also observes that the campaign to reject Islam and Muslims touched its peak in Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy*.¹³ Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) was an Italian poet, known as “the Supreme Poet,”¹⁴ and his work is one of the masterpieces in the Italian language, in fact, Western literature as a whole. Hence, his views had a strong impact on the European attitude to Islam.

Some religious stalwarts in 14th century also saw Islam as a “theological heresy” at the level of morals and practice.¹⁵ Around this period, the Council of Vienna met between 1311 and 1312,¹⁶ declaring that Muslims could not be converted or persuaded and thus an academic onslaught should be initiated against them.¹⁷ The Qur’ān was also subjected to criticism in the meetings of the Council.

Early 15th century witnessed further hostility towards Islam and Muslims when the controversial painting ‘The Last Judgment’¹⁸ by Giovanni Da Modena (c. 1409–c. 1455) was displayed in Italy. It attacked the Prophet (peace be on him), thereby further widening the already existing gulf between Islam and Christianity.

12, 2008; Robert Payne, *The History of Islam* (New York: Dorsey Press, 1990), xii, originally published as, Robert Payne, *The Holy Sword: The Story of Islam from Muhammad to the Present* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1959); Reginald Bosworth Smith, *Mohammad and Mohammadanism* (London: Smith Elder & Co., 1874), 75–85. G. E. von Grunebaume, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), 80.

¹¹ See, for more details, Ziauddin Sardar, *Orientalism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999), 18.

¹² See, *An Introduction to Spread of Islam*, (anonymous), available at <<http://www.al-shia.com/html/eng/books/spread-of-islam/09.html>>.

¹³ See, Robert Salaam, “Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia,” available at: <<http://salaamsblog.wordpress.com/2006/12/07/anti-semitism-and-islamophobia/>>, retrieved on August 7, 2009.

¹⁴ See, Robert Hollander, “Dante” in William Chester Jordan, ed. *Dictionary of the Middle Ages, Supplement 1* (London: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2003), vol. 4.

¹⁵ See, Ziauddin Sardar, *Orientalism*, 23.

¹⁶ See, “Council of Vienne,” available at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Vienne>, retrieved on March 10, 2009.

¹⁷ See, Ziauddin Sardar, *Orientalism*.

¹⁸ See, “Terrorist Attacks Thawrted in Italy” available at: <<http://neveryetmelted.com/?cat=456>>, retrieved on March 10, 2009.

The sensitivity of the issue was further aggravated by the introduction of the concept of *La Raza* in the 15th century. *La Raza* was a campaign to create a 'mix' of conflicting races. The 'mix' was desired to be different in its outlook, having prominent attributes of the dominant cultures, but, with least cultural incompatibility. José Vasconcelos (1882–1959) in his work titled *La Raza Cósmica*¹⁹ attempted to trace the historical outline of the phenomenon from 15th century and hoped it to be the 'Fifth Race'²⁰—an acceptable blend of all human races irrespective of colour, creed and caste in order to develop a new civilization, '*Universópolis*.'²¹ Referring to *La Raza*, an American scholar has suggested that the efforts in this regard emerged from Spain where the existence of races seemed more consciously observable. He adds that even Columbus's voyage to America was racially biased since the slaves he brought with him were mostly Muslims.²²

Another important name in the history of the Christian version of Islamophobia is that of Humphrey Prideaux, who saw the emergence of Islam as a part of God's inscrutable purposes: i.e. as a punishment for the sins of Christians.²³ He took the establishment of the Muslim continental rule as a scourge to Christians and expected it to continue till they mend themselves. Some of his contemporaries like Peter Heylyn (1599–1662) in his work *Cosmographie*²⁴ and Alexander Ross²⁵ (c. 1590–1654) in *Pansebeia* were grossly illogical in condemning a religion with a large body of followers. Following in the footsteps, *Broughton's Dictionary of All Religions* (1745) categorized the world religions into 'true religions' (Christianity and Judaism) and 'false religions' (all others).²⁶

The same attitude towards Islam prevailed during the 19th and 20th centuries. J. Alley published *Vindicia Christiana* attacking Islam, Hinduism

¹⁹ José Vasconcelos, *La Raza Cósmica*, first published in 1925 (Mexico: D.F. Espasa Calpe, 1948), 47–51.

²⁰ See, Wikipedia, "La Raza Cosmica," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Raza_C%C3%B3smica>, retrieved on March 10, 2009.

²¹ See, *ibid.*

²² Dr Junaid Rana, assistant professor of Asian American Studies and Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, opined so while referring to *La Raza*. <http://groups.google.com/group/soc.culture.usa/browse_thread/thread/67206651d554a591/359663d2b49a9312>, retrieved on July 03, 2009.

²³ See, footnote 7 for bibliographical details of his work.

²⁴ Peter Heylyn, *Cosmographie: Historical Cultures & Geography, 1600–1750*, repr. (New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2003).

²⁵ See, <[http://www.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-8304\(193709\)4%3A3%3C180%3ATECOPL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H](http://www.jstor.org/sici?sici=0013-8304(193709)4%3A3%3C180%3ATECOPL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H)>, retrieved on May 10, 2009.

²⁶ See, E. C. Dewick, *The Christian Attitude to Other Religions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 117–118.

and other religions on grounds of being “perpetual falsehood, pernicious and extravagant.”²⁷ The Balkan War of 1912–1913 was depicted, mainly by the British press, as a ‘Crusade against Islam.’²⁸ More recent web bloggers and literary artifacts like *The House of Apostasy* keep the door open for hurling blasphemy and libel at Muslims as ‘intellectually weak’ and as people who ‘enjoy killing.’²⁹ William Miller says, “Islam is Satan’s most brilliant and effective invention for leading men astray,”³⁰ and John Laffin condemns the “Islamic” concept of “holy war” and stresses that the treaties with infidels be broken.³¹ Of course, Salman Rushdie and Taslima Nasrin are just recent manifestations of indignation against Islam and Muslims;³² nevertheless, media contributed substantially to making their works world famous.

Medieval literature is fraught with hostility towards Muslims and Islam, and modern writings seem to be supplementing it. At times, the contemporary literature on the subject has been seen to be adding some new dimensions to the hate discourse. Epistemological augmentation of social psychology has provided new landscapes to the phenomenon—in tracing its history from various perspectives including anthropological, while focusing on the axiology and ontology of the subject. ‘*Orientalism*’ which, until recent past, consisted of fictions and fables, has come to provide a perspective for studying Islam and its relations with other civilizations.³³

Edward Said’s renowned book *Orientalism* substantiates the “subtle and persistent Eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic people and their culture.”³⁴ Focusing on European prejudice towards ‘others,’ he uncovered another facet of Islamophobia which sees Muslims and Islamic culture as “static in both time and place, and incapable of defining themselves” as compared to the West which is considered to be a “dynamic, innovative and expanding culture.”³⁵ He imaginatively divides the world geographically into two disproportionate parts, the outsized and ‘different’ one called ‘the Orient’

²⁷ Quoted in Thomas W. Arnold & Alfred Guillaume, *The Legacy of Islam* (Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1997), 40.

²⁸ See, De Lacy O’Leary, *Islam at the Crossroads: A Brief Survey of the Present Position and Problems of the World of Islam* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1923), 55.

²⁹ See, <<http://kuffar.squarespace.com/>>, retrieved on February 26, 2009.

³⁰ See, William Miller, *A Christian’s Response to Islam* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co, 1976).

³¹ See, John Laffin, *Holy War: Islam Fights* (London: Collins Publishing Group, 1988).

³² See, Salman Rushdie, *Satanic Verses: A Novel* (New York: Viking Press, 1988); Taslima Nasrin, *Lajja (Shame)* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993).

³³ See, Ziauddin Sardar, *Orientalism*, 1–5.

³⁴ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 56.

³⁵ Ibid.

and the other, also known as ‘our world’ called ‘the Occident’³⁶ or ‘the West.’ The notion of ‘the Occident’ as opposed to ‘the Orient’ covertly provides legitimization of Western supremacy and colonial power.³⁷

Much before Said had exposed the underlying purpose of dividing the world into the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Occident,’³⁸ Norman Daniel had shed some light on the historical divergence between the ‘two,’ tracing the origins of Christian hostility towards Islam.³⁹ James Kritzeck⁴⁰ and Elizabeth Poole reviewed and referred to this acclaimed work to support the thesis that anti-Islam polemic was used to limit the growth of Islam as a power threatening the West.⁴¹

John L. Esposito also recognized the ideological differences between Islam and the West in his renowned work *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* At the outset, he asks, “are Islam and the West on an inevitable collision course?” and “has fundamentalist Islam replaced Marxism-Leninism as our main enemy?”⁴²

Homi K. Bhabha, following Said, presented overlapping binary oppositions like centre-margin, civilized-savage, enlightened-ignorant, etc. that characterize the Western self-understanding *vis-à-vis* other cultures,⁴³ and this seemingly reflects what Said had said in *Orientalism*. Bhabha considers these binaries to be the compulsions of the West to colonize and dominate others.

Fred Halliday has also attempted to present a binary schematization between Islam and the West; however, his endeavours were primarily centred at breaking the confrontational myth between the two entities.⁴⁴ Interestingly, Hall seems to have anticipated Samuel P. Huntington’s (1927–2008) thesis that conflicts in the future between different entities would take place not on the basis of economics or politics but culture. Huntington’s hypothesis seems to

³⁶ See, *ibid.*

³⁷ See, Bryan S. Turner, “From Orientalism to Global Sociology,” *Sociology*, 23: 4 (1989), 629–638.

³⁸ See, Edward Said, *Orientalism*.

³⁹ See, Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1960).

⁴⁰ See, James Kritzeck, “Book Review on Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 81: 2 (1961), 139–140.

⁴¹ See, Elizabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims* (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2002), 33.

⁴² John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 3.

⁴³ See, Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London; New York: Routledge, 1994); Edward Said, *Orientalism*.

⁴⁴ See, Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003); *idem*, *Revolution and World Politics: The Rise and Fall of the Sixth Great Power* (New York: Palgrave, 1999).

be carrying forward the academic and intellectual efforts of Hall which replaced the biological notion of race by cultural definitions labelling it “cultural racism” associated much with ethnicity as race.⁴⁵

The evidence presented above indicates that Islam has been perceived primarily as a contra religio-political force with a great potential to threaten the West. It appeared to be the ‘new enemy’ of the West, providing the latter with justification of hoarding ammunitions and pursuing its designs of expansionism. ‘Cultural anomie,’⁴⁶ ‘opposing cultural ecologies,’⁴⁷ a ‘challenge’ and ‘threat’ to the western world,⁴⁸ a ‘threat to western security,’⁴⁹ ‘present terror of the world,’ ‘the Other,’⁵⁰ and ‘fifth column’⁵¹ are some of the labels that have been applied to Islam in the recent past. Strangely, the confusion underlying this contrast between Islam, a religion, and the West, a geographical area, has scarcely been noticed.⁵²

Coming to the contemporary posture of the problem, we find that Islam appeared to be a ‘powerful’ socio-politico-religious force of the medieval times when other religions were passing through their ‘Dark Age.’ This presents a passive-active relationship between the West and Islam which was negatively viewed by Christianity and instead of improving that relationship, the West resorted to jingoistic policies, which finally resulted in the Crusades—a struggle to balance out dominant socio-politico-religious forces of the time. The antagonism towards Islam spanning over centuries has led to the emergence of anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim racial and cultural sentiments in contemporary times. Not long ago, the ‘political’ or ‘active Islam’⁵³ in the

⁴⁵ See, Stuart Hall, “New Ethnicities” in A. Rattansi and J. Donald, ed. *Race, Culture and Difference* (London: Sage, 1992), 298.

⁴⁶ See, A. Bishara, “Islam and Politics in the Middle East” in Jochen Hippler & Lueg Andrea, eds. *The Next Threat: Western Perceptions of Islam* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 87.

⁴⁷ See, Hamid Mowlana, “The New Order and Cultural Ecology,” *Media, Culture and Society*, 15: 1 (1993), 9–17.

⁴⁸ See, A. Ahmed, *Living Islam: From Samarkind to Stornaway* (London: BBC Books, 1993); Maxime Rodinson, “The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam” in Joseph Schacht and C. E. Bosworth, eds. *The Legacy of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 9; R. M. Savory, *Introduction to Islamic Civilization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 25.

⁴⁹ See, E. P. Djerejian, “The Arc of Crisis: The Challenge to US Foreign Policy,” *Harvard International Review: In the Name of God, Islam in Politics and Power*, 19: 2 (1997), 32–33.

⁵⁰ See, B. S. Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islam* (London: Zed Books, 1997).

⁵¹ See, Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (London: Runnymede Trust, 1997).

⁵² See, Jochen Hippler & Lueg Andrea, *The Next Threat: Western Perceptions of Islam* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 21.

⁵³ See, definition of “Political Islam,” on <<http://www.pwhce.org/islamism.html>>, retrieved on April 15, 2009.

Muslim world, especially the Arabian peninsula and Iran, added insult to the injury and cultural and racial prejudices turned into threats from Islam and the Muslims. Thus, Islamophobia is more than mere hostility, or else we would have found it in the former USSR, a home to a large Muslim population, and in India, Thailand, and Malaysia (with a Muslim population almost equal to that of non-Muslims).

It is quite strange that although the racial and cultural prejudices against Islam and Muslims are fairly noticeable, Islam can hardly be found as a threatening 'other' in literature. It was the demise of communism that gave impetus to the portrayal of these stereotypes in the media. Therefore, communism—a great 'threat' to the West and the rest of the world—was replaced by Islam as a threatening 'other.'⁵⁴ This seems to be the replacement of one threatening 'ideology' with 'another.' The fact that the contemporary Muslim world is suffering from problems like those of terrorism, subjugation, subversion and animosity substantiate the western notion that Islam and Muslims are 'threatening others.'

Another dimension of the difference between Islam and 'others' rests on the concept of 'race.' 'Race' was a concept in Arabic literature which referred to a lineage of animals, particularly applied to horses, while 'ethnicity' referred to people with common histories, languages, rituals, food, songs, etc.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the Spanish literature took 'race' to be synonymous with 'blood' and 'religion.' New terminologies were introduced. People of the newly discovered America were labelled 'mestizo'—mixed blood—, and the mixed breed of Spanish and black as 'mulatto.'⁵⁶ Thus, while tracking the traces of difference between various segments of humanity in history, we find that not only 'blood' but 'colour' was also thought to be an ingredient of the concept of 'race.'

Islam became a victim of racial prejudice due to its rapid expansion worldwide in a very short span of time. Its erstwhile tendency to grow swiftly challenged the West theologically, politically and culturally.⁵⁷ As a result of mass conversions to Islam,⁵⁸ the West found it easier to demonize this religion

⁵⁴ See, G. Nonneman, "Muslim Communities in the New Europe: Themes and Puzzles" in G. Nonneman, T. Niblock & B. Szajkowski, eds. *Muslim Communities in New Europe* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1996), 3–24.

⁵⁵ See, Walter D. Mignolo, "Islamophobia/Hispanophobia: The (Re)Configuration of the Racial Imperial/Colonial Matrix," *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 1: Fall (2006), 19.

⁵⁶ See, *ibid.*

⁵⁷ See, John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, 25.

⁵⁸ See, R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1992), 250.

and its followers than to take up the challenge to understand it.⁵⁹ Islam and Muslims were thus labelled with demonizing racial stereotypes meant to arouse hatred towards them. The long stretched ‘Crusades’ further aggravated the situation and institutionalized the racial prejudice between ‘us and them.’ Today, these prejudices, having historical reasons, and the growing unrest and rise of ‘*jihadi*’ movements across the Muslim world, are responsible for augmenting the process. Hence, new terminologies have been constructed for the historic differences which seem to continue apace. Thy name is Islamophobia.

Analyzing the Concept

The question of the first use of Islamophobia as a term has been given different answers. Zaid Shakir,⁶⁰ Walter Laqueur,⁶¹ famous for his work on Fascism, Islamic Fascism and Anti-Semitism, and Mohammad H. Tamdgidi claim its first use in the 1980s.⁶² However, Abdul Jalil Sajid notes that the term Islamophobia was first used in 1991.⁶³ However, none of these writers has referred to any writing or recorded speech using the term.

Even after a decade of the release of Runnymede Report which explained the term in detail, the definition of ‘Islamophobia’ is a perplexing assignment. Hardly any dictionary of repute provides its appropriate and agreed-upon definition. The construct is explained as a combination of two words: Islam and phobia. Islam, of course, is a religion while ‘phobia’ is defined as “an abnormal, intense and irrational fear of a given situation, organism or object.”⁶⁴ Replacing ‘situation, organism or object’ in this definition with ‘Islam,’ ‘Islamophobia,’ can be defined as “an abnormally intense and irrational fear of Islam.”

Using the definition of ‘phobia’ provided by the *Chambers Study Dictionary*,⁶⁵ ‘Islamophobia’ can be defined as “an obsessive and persistent fear

⁵⁹ See, *ibid.*, 38.

⁶⁰ Zaid Shakir is an American Muslim scholar, teaches law, history and Islamic spirituality in Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California. See, his online article, available at: <<http://www.mereislam.info/labels/Islamophobia.html>>, retrieved on June 17, 2009.

⁶¹ See, Walter Laqueur, “The Origin of Facism: Islamic Facism, Islamophobia and Antisemitism,” available at: <<http://www.laqueur.net/index2.php?r=2&rr=4&id=49>>, retrieved on June 17, 2009.

⁶² See, Mohammad H. Tamdgidi, “Probing Islamophobia,” *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 1: Fall (2006), vii–xii.

⁶³ See, Abdul Jalil Sajid, “Islamophobia: A New Word for an Old Fear,” *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, 12: 2–3 (2005).

⁶⁴ See, *Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus*, 3rd edn. (Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004), 893.

⁶⁵ See, *Chambers Study Dictionary* (London: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd, 2002), 578.

of Islam.” Similarly, *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines ‘phobia’ as “strong unreasonable fear or hatred of something.”⁶⁶ Hence, in the light of this definition, ‘Islamophobia’ will appear to be the “strong unreasonable fear or hatred of Islam.”

The definitions constructed above show that ‘Islamophobia’ involves strong emotional and psychological propensities against Muslims and Islam; hence, no dictionary or encyclopaedia describes Islamophobia concretely. *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies* explains it as “an outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike of Muslims, which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination.”⁶⁷

Interestingly, Islamophobia seems to have negative connotation towards Islam as a religion in most of the literal meanings and their inferences. Earlier descriptions of the history of hate and antagonism towards Islam as a religion have probably been reflected in this definition. While the Muslims were probably not affected very substantially by the development of Islamophobia among non-Muslims in the medieval period, they are gravely threatened by it at the present.

The use of the word ‘phobia’ to describe antagonism towards Islam can be criticized since it stands for strong irrational fear while the manifestations of Islamophobia involve more than mere negative emotions including offensive actions and attacks against Muslims. This fact makes the construct a controversial one. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, nonetheless, resolves the problem by including ‘hatred’ as part of the definition of ‘phobia’ besides ‘fear.’⁶⁸ Hatred and dislike can stir offensive acts on the part of those who suffer from the phobia. The extreme feelings of fear might be relieved by committing offensive actions. The element of perceiving danger is added to the definition by two dictionaries. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, fear (as noun) is defined as “an unpleasant and often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger.”⁶⁹ Similarly, *Oxford Dictionary* also defines ‘fear’ as “the bad feelings that you have when you are in danger.”⁷⁰

Thus, Islamophobia implies fear of Islam and its followers. This fear generates feelings of hatred which in turn provide reason(s) for offensive actions. Hence, Islamophobia manifests itself in various forms of behavioural

⁶⁶ See, Sally Wehmeier, *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 7th edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1132.

⁶⁷ See, Ellis Cashmore, ed. *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies* (London & New York: Routledge, 2003), 215.

⁶⁸ See, n. 66, above.

⁶⁹ See “fear” in *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, available online at: <<http://www.webster.com>>, retrieved on January 13, 2009.

⁷⁰ See, Sally Wehmeier, *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 7th ed., 561.

patterns (all negative) against Islam and Muslims. An important question that should be paid attention to, however, is whether Muslims are hated for being followers of Islam or rather Islam is hated because it is the religion of Muslims. We hope that the section of this paper titled 'histories' has already shed some light on this question.

During the last ten years or so, the gulf between Muslims and the native population in Europe, Australia, Canada and the United States has widened. Many research organizations have studied the rise of hate-crimes against non-natives. Primarily, they have studied the problem and highlighted its fallouts for the governments of the world for appropriate reprisal. Some of the organizations have also specifically focused on Islamophobia. In what follows we provide a summary of the way these organizations have viewed Islamophobia or offensive actions against Muslims in Europe and other parts of the world.

A web based organization pronounces that Islamophobia is a "neologism used to refer to an irrational fear or prejudice towards Muslims and the religion of Islam."⁷¹

The Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) is a charitable organization based in the United Kingdom which was founded in 2001 with the aim to eliminate Islamophobia and racism from the British society. FAIR recognizes Islamophobia as a form of racism and believes that the construct has many similarities with 'anti-Semitism.' It observes the manifestation of Islamophobia in the form of verbal or written abuse, discrimination at schools and workplaces, harassment and outright violent attacks on mosques and individuals.⁷²

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is an American organization which fights against Islamophobia. The Council was created in June 1994 with the aim of developing understanding of Islam and fighting for the rights of American Muslims. It defines Islamophobia as the "unfounded fear of and hostility towards Islam."⁷³ In its view growing Islamophobia is the cause of the acts of violence against Muslims, their exclusion from mainstream politics and construction of stereotypes of various sorts.

The leading role in creating a better awareness of Islamophobia, however, was played by the Runnymede Trust in the UK. The Trust which was established in 1968 published a report *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* in

⁷¹ See, definition of "Islamophobia" in the main logo of the website: <www.Islamophobia.org>.

⁷² See, for more details, introduction of the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism at: <www.fairuk.org>, retrieved on January 20, 2009.

⁷³ See, for more info, <<http://www.cair.com/Issues/Islamophobia/Islamophobia.aspx>>.

1997, wherein the term ‘Islamophobia’ was first used in print. The Report contended that an Islamophobic perception of Islam characterizes it as a monolithic block, indifferent to change, inimitable in cultural values, irrational and primitive, violent, sexist, and a clashing ideology.

Some of the academicians working on the subject have considered prejudice to be one of the most significant elements of Islamophobia. The ideological and racial components of prejudice have been extensively investigated in the past to unveil irrational responses to various interacting counterparts in a social system. Prejudice as a subject of psychological studies in 1920s, mostly on the issues of American and European racial conflict, was unfolded as “mental superiority of the white race.”⁷⁴ However, in 1930s and 1940s the focus of these studies shifted to colonialism and anti-Semitism.⁷⁵ Following the line, as mentioned earlier, Stuart Hall characterized biological racism as ‘cultural racism,’ having a strong association with ethnicity.⁷⁶

Islamophobia, however, is not a matter purely of racism but it has an ideological backdrop since Islam is posited as a threat replacing communism, the previous ideological other. This is not to deny that Islamophobia primarily originates from prejudices against a ‘non-white’ race. Hence, Islamophobia seems to combine ideological differences and racial prejudice.

Wilhelm Heitmeyer and Andreas Zick considered Islamophobia as a posture of group-oriented enmity and a general attitude of rejection of Muslims and Islam.⁷⁷ The explanation provided by this report seems to be based on group dynamics according to which strong inter-group affiliation gives birth to rejection of or enmity towards the non-members. However, Islamophobic attitude can also be characterized as xenophobia i.e., fear of others.

In the year 2007 the Mayor of London initiated a project for studying Islamophobia and it was coordinated by Insted Consultancy. As the findings of the study were published as *The Search for Common Ground: Muslims, non-Muslims and the UK Media*. This report revisited the Runnymede Trust’s definition of Islamophobia and redefined it as “a shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam—and, therefore, to fear or dislike of all or most

⁷⁴ T. R. Garth, “A review of racial psychology (1916–1924),” *Psychological Bulletin*, 22 (1925), 359.

⁷⁵ See, T. W. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper, 1950).

⁷⁶ See, Stuart Hall, “New Ethnicities,” 298.

⁷⁷ See, Wilhelm Heitmeyer, and Andreas Zick, *Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Group-Focused Enmity in Germany* (Bielefeld: University of Bielefeld, 2004), also retrievable from <<http://www.efc.de/ftp/public/minorities/heimeyerreport.pdf>>. We retrieved it on May 19, 2009.

Muslims.”⁷⁸ Anne Sophie Roald similarly defined Islamophobia as a “fear of the religion of Islam and Muslims.”⁷⁹

From the views on the nature of Islamophobia outlined above we can arrive at the following conclusions:

- Some quarters consider Islamophobia as a subset of xenophobia—fear of strangers;
- One approach (for instance that of European Commission on Racism and Intolerance) (ECRI) is to define it as racism and intolerance towards Islam and Muslims;
- Almost all definitions of Islamophobia mention fear and hatred directed towards Islam and Muslims as constituting the concept;
- In sum, most of the scholars contend that no definition of the phenomenon is generally agreed upon, while different dimensions of Islamophobia have been essayed by various definitions. We can, however, summarize all the different aspects mentioned by this or that definition of Islamophobia, as given below. Islamophobia consists of perceiving Islam and Muslims as cultural, political and/or security threats on the basis of racial and mediated prejudices. This perception at times translates into hostile actions against Muslims. Although racism forces a part of the concept of Islamophobia, and sometimes Islamophobia might be identified with institutionalized racism, there are ideological components to it as well.

Redefining Islamophobia

The above review of the definitions of and thoughts on Islamophobia was made with a view to index various dimensions of its meaning and then to synthesize the relevant elements into a new definition.

Therefore, we submit the following definition of Islamophobia: “Islamophobia is an essentially negative though ‘cognitive, affective, and conative’⁸⁰ posturing of individuals towards Islam and/or Muslims.”

⁷⁸ Greater London Authority, *The Search for Common Ground: Muslims, non-Muslims and the UK Media* (London: Greater London Authority, 2007), 110.

⁷⁹ Anne Sophie Roald, “From ‘People’s Home’ to ‘Multiculturalism’: Muslims in Sweden” in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 101–120.

⁸⁰ Cognitive, affective and conative (behavioural) are the three components of this attitude. *Cognitive component* refers to our thoughts, beliefs, and ideas about something, while *affective component* refers to feelings or emotions that something evokes, e.g. fear, sympathy, hate. *Conative component* denotes a tendency or disposition to act in certain ways toward something. See, for further discussion on these components of attitude, A. R. Pratkanis, S. J. Brekler & A. G. Greenwald, eds. *Attitude Structure and Function* (Hillsdale, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 1989), 6; L. Berkowitz, ed. *Advances in Experimental*

Since Islamophobia has been defined as an audience attribute, our definition makes the following assumptions:

- It assumes Islamophobia to be an attitude with three basic components: cognitive, affective and conative.
- The words ‘negative attitude’ can have many connotations; hence, they are further specified into hatred and threat.
- Since negativity exists at the attitudinal level the threats are termed ‘perceived threats.’
- Perceived threats are further categorized as cultural, political and security threats.
- Hatred has been assumed to be a result of racial prejudice.

Islamophobia—Predominantly a Mediated Construct

After 9/11, Islamophobia has been found to be a manufactured attitude. Mass media are central to the development of a threatening environment and hatred of Muslims and Islam.

Old and recent studies on the role of media in social system show that media play a crucial role in the construction of social identities.⁸¹ From Walter Lippman and Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw to Colin B. Grant, most of the studies have demonstrated the media’s significance as political information provider and a vehicle of attitude change.⁸² Shanto Iyengar has contended that audiences are sensitive to ‘contextual cues’ and their “explanations of issues like terrorism or Islamism greatly depend on the reference points furnished by the media.”⁸³ Iyengar’s explanation of media treatment and framing of specific or particular issues seems relevant in studying Islamophobia. He has categorized framing into episodic news framing and thematic framing. Episodic framing depicts “concrete events that illustrate issues,” while thematic framing presents “collective or general evidence.”⁸⁴ He further comments on the effects of such framing by saying that “the subjects shown episodic reports were less likely to consider society

Social Psychology (New York: Academic Press, 1989), 17: 248; J. Botha and A. Brook, *Introduction to Marketing* (Cape Town: Paarl Print, 2005), 48.

⁸¹ See, David O. Sears and P. J. Henry. “Ethnic Identity and Group Threat in American Politics,” *The Political Psychologist*, 4: 1 (1999), 12–17.

⁸² See, Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: The Free Press, 1922); Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, “The Agenda-setting Function of Mass Media,” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36: 2 (1972), 176–187; Colin B. Grant, *Uncertainty and Communication* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁸³ Shanto Iyengar, “The Accessibility Bias in Politics: Television News and Public Opinion,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 2: 1 (1990), 1–15.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

responsible for the events, and subjects shown thematic events were less likely to consider individuals responsible.”⁸⁵ For instance, on the question of unemployment in the country, the subjects did not consider individuals responsible for the anathema, but the society and the government as a whole. Keeping in view his intellectual endeavour, framing of Muslims seems to be thematic where the subjects think that Islam as a religion has caused the Muslims to become terrorists, irrational and undemocratic.

Mass media affect all levels of human attitude development, and the construction of social realities. Their (mass media’s) functions, as Niklas Luhmann has argued, are neither determined by the values of truthfulness, objectivity or knowledge, nor by specific social interests or political directives. Rather, media are regulated by their internal system of news selection, value judgment and overall policy of the media organization, and this fact makes it least concerned with the overall political and social environment.⁸⁶ Probably these were the reasons which forced Pew Global Attitudes Project to argue that the support for US led ‘war on terror’ is on the decline. The Project report criticized the absence of a constructive policy on message design, its repetition and clarity.⁸⁷ Thus, the attitude developed, the behavioural response seen and the image constructed by the media representation of the United States and other Western countries, especially in the Muslim world as a result of the coverage of 9/11, the Gulf war, and the London blast of 07/07, were quite opposite to expectations.

Without having any strategic designs in view, the media created Islamophobia in the West and Islamophilia in the Muslim world with the result that there has come to be an ever-increasing gulf between the West and the Muslim world.

As is generally agreed upon, media create stereotypes and shape perceptions and understanding of social groups in a complex social system, the distance or proximity between different social groups is what the media portray. This seems to be true in the case of Islamophobia too. Probably media have portrayed Islam and Muslims in a way that has helped the public in the West to develop stereotypes about Muslims and Islam and has generated gaps between Muslims and the rest of the communities resulting in racial discrimination.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ See, Niklas Luhmann, *The Reality of the Mass Media* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2000), 1-24.

⁸⁷ See, “America’s Image Slips, But Allies Share U.S. Concerns Over Iran, Hamas,” at: <<http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=252>>, retrieved on February 29, 2008.

Misrepresentation of Muslims and Islam by the media has not only created fear about Muslims in the West, but has also adversely affected the image of the West in the Muslim world. Just as the Muslims are being portrayed in the West and Europe as barbaric, irrational and intolerant, the West is also being represented as intolerant and anti-Muslim by the media in the Muslim world. A similar representation of Muslims can be seen in the international television channels like CNN or BBC and some magazines with wide circulation in the Muslim world. One fears that these two phenomena, i.e. Islamophobia and anti-Americanism which are growing at more or less the same pace may eventually give rise to another era of cold war.

Operationalizing and Measuring Islamophobia

‘Operationalization’ is the process of defining a concept so as to make it measurable through variables consisting of specific observations. To make a concept measurable, we have to set its domains, something which helps us identify the necessary, sufficient, and both ‘necessary and sufficient’ conditions of its instances. The constructs of social science are often ‘abstract’ concepts and in order to observe them (i.e. to collect concrete data about them) we ‘need to point out instances or indicators’ of the concepts involved.⁸⁸

While making an attempt to operationalize the concept of Islamophobia, it is significant to mention that this paper takes the phenomenon in question as an attitude, as enunciated earlier, which amounts to feelings of affection or hatred towards some object.⁸⁹ Islamophobia as a social construct is too much of an abstraction and must be translated into its more concrete and tangible manifestations in the form of variables which can be observed on certain indicators. Nevertheless, before developing its indicators, the variables, it is expedient to identify the variables which reflect the construct within its domains. These domains are set by our nominal definition of Islamophobia.

As mentioned earlier, Islamophobia is an essentially negative though cognitive, affective and conative posturing of an individual towards Islam and/or Muslims, thus the phenomenon can be studied broadly under two categories; viz. the meanings or nature (of Islamophobia) and its dimension.

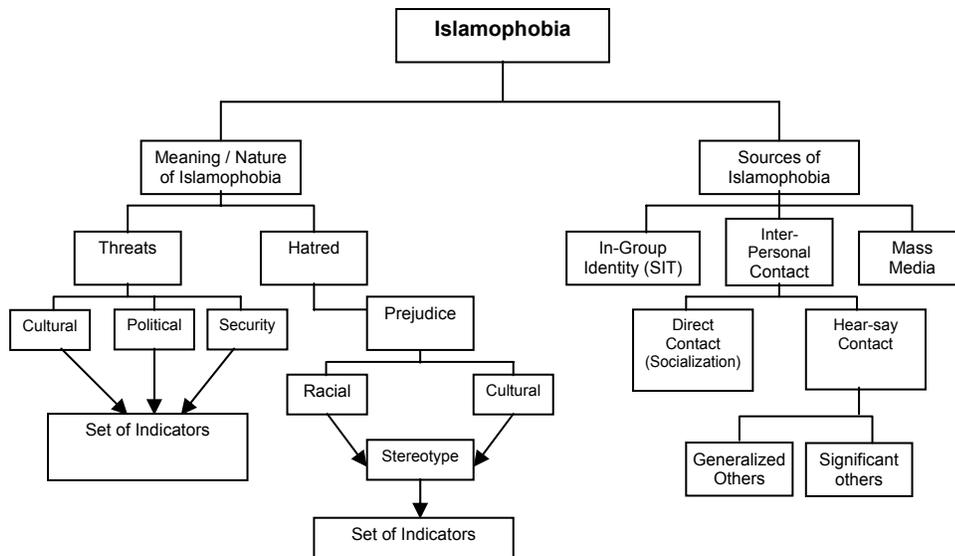
⁸⁸ See, David De Vaus, *Surveys in Social Research* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2002), 47–48.

⁸⁹ See, Henk Dekker and Jolanda van der Noll, “Islamophobia and its Origin,” paper presented by the authors at the 4th ECPR Conference, Pisa, on 6–8 September 2007, Political Science Department, Leiden University, Netherlands; M. Fishbein & I. Ajzen, *Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behavior* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co, 1975), 11; I. Ajzen and M. Fishbein, *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980), 54.

There could also be a third category of the construct pertaining to the process of its development. This is taken up toward the end of the paper.

As the chart given below indicates, the meanings dimension has two further dimensions; first, the dimension of fear/threat and the one related to hatred. The fear/threat dimension can be further classified into three aspects—cultural, political and security. Each of these three aspects will be indexed through a set of indicators that successfully identify various aspects of Islamophobia enabling us to measure it. Similarly, the hatred dimension can be further specified into racial or cultural prejudice.

The source or historical dimension may have three aspects: ‘in-group identity,’ ‘inter-personal contact’ and ‘Mass Media.’ The first may be further divided into two categories; viz. ‘direct contact’ and ‘hear-say.’ The ‘hear-say’ category may have a further division into categories of ‘generalized others’ and ‘significant others.’



Mapping the Variables

A few words explaining some of the variables presented above are in order. The concept of cultural threat emanates from the symbolic representation of Muslims and Islam as a distinct and pervasive entity capable of drastically and swiftly influencing neighbouring cultures. In other words, Islam is perceived as a mighty agent of cultural and social change with, according to Westerners, a great degree of intolerance towards ‘other’ religions and ways of social life. Since Islam is a religion covering all aspects of human life—private as well as

social—it appears to the Westerners to be more threatening than any other ideology like communism. This symbolic appearance of Islam supposedly poses a great political threat to the ‘West.’ Similarly, in the context of the historic record of armed conflicts between Muslims and the Christian West, Islam is also perceived in the form of security or terror threat by the ‘West.’ Of course, all facets of this perceived threat, whether symbolic or not, contribute to the spread of Islamophobia.

In what follows, some indicators have been devised to observe these variables and measure them along with their degree of intensity. It is pertinent to mention that intensity can be well measured by applying Likert scale with 5-points like ‘Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree’ and the nexus of Islamophobia can be developed with any of the antecedents/sources given in the diagram. However, an important aspect which we have yet to discuss is the process of development of Islamophobia as a result of a nexus between its meanings and antecedent(s).

To make the concepts related to Islamophobia more lucid, some set of indicators for the variables are indexed below from a Western perspective:

- Hatred
 - ◇ Prejudice (Racial and Cultural)
 - *‘Us’ and ‘Them’*
 - *Biologically different: white and non-white*
- Threat Perceptions
 - ◇ Cultural Threats (set of predictors)
 - *‘Islam is intolerant to ‘other’ cultures!’*
 - *‘Islam is a threat to our civilization!’*
 - *‘Islam is hostile to western ways of life!’*
 - ◇ Political Threats
 - *‘Islam is anti-democracy!’*
 - *‘Islam is anti-women!’*
 - *‘Muslims are a burden on our economy!’ (unemployment as a political issue)*
 - ◇ Security Threats
 - *Subjugation through ‘jihad’*
 - *‘Islam is a threat to our peace and normalcy!’*
 - *‘Islam propagates violence!’*

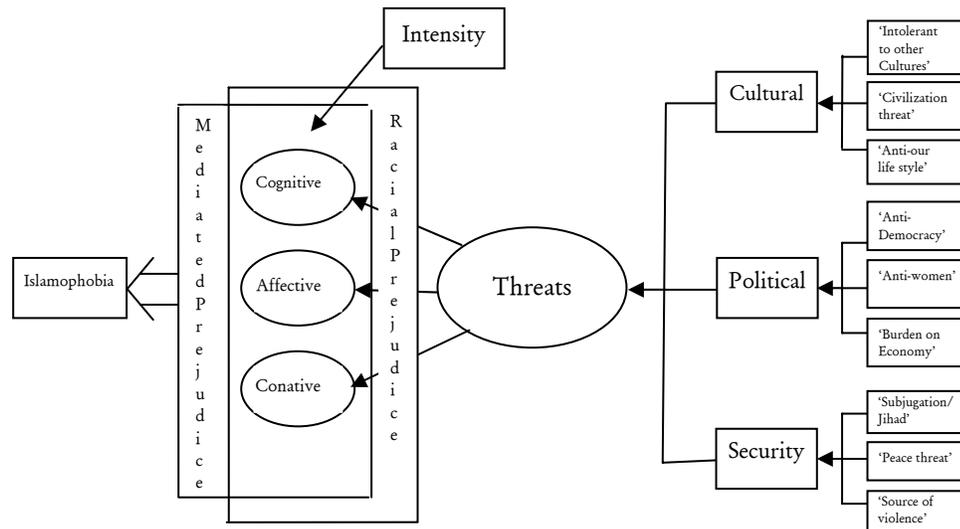
In representing an attitude, the construct should be tested on three basic postures that an attitude can assume cognitive (pertaining to knowledge/beliefs), affective (pertaining to feelings) and conative (pertaining to actual

actions) dimensions.⁹⁰ For instance, to test the cognitive aspect of the attitude of Islamophobia, questions like ‘Whether or not Islam is a threat to world peace?’ may be asked. Also, its intensity may be measured by using Likert Scale. A set of indicators may be developed for all the threat perceptions enunciated above in different attitude domains.

The two-way operationalization process of the construct opens up many ways to its study. We can develop a nexus between various variables, represented in the following diagram, and test the nature of relationship in its intensity. For the students of media studies, the relationship between mass media exposure and Islamophobia may be a research question where further subtleties in operationalizing the mass media construct may be developed. Similarly, the relationship between Islamophobia and inter-personal contact can attract the sociology readers, and there are certain questions for those interested in psychology and social psychology as well.

Let us now discuss the process of the formation of Islamophobia as an attitude. Some discussion on its building process with a conceptual model is given as follows.

Process Model of Islamophobia



⁹⁰ See Frank A. Spooncer, *Behavioural Studies for Marketing and Business* (Leckhampton: Stanley Thornes, 1992).

This model is based on the following theoretical assumptions:

- Islamophobia is an attitude, acquired not inherited.
- Perceptions are attitudinal predispositions received through sensory organs.
- Three components of attitude—cognitive, affective and conative or behavioural, will help measure the intensity of the phenomenon on an attitude measurement scale.
- Islamophobia may be due to racial prejudice or media exposure or both. Simultaneous occurrence of both may intensify Islamophobia.

In our discussion of various definitions of Islamophobia we saw that it represents an irrational fear/threat. This model can help us understand whether particular threat perceptions are rational or irrational. Here, the cognitive segment of an attitude indicates the level of information/knowledge about a subject. Thus, we might in the end be able to develop principles like ‘the less the cognitive structures on Islamophobia, the more the irrational fears towards Muslims and Islam,’ once other variables are settled and studied scientifically. Similarly, the affective dimension of the attitude also represents the feelings that one develops over time for being part of a system, race or an ideology without having sufficient reasons to justify his/her feelings about objects, organisms or situations.

There are three major components of the process model of Islamophobia: manifestation of Islamophobia (hatred and threat perceptions); its intensity (the attitude structure), and its determinants. Manifestation of Islamophobia can be seen through a set of indicators developed under the variables of our conceptual definition of Islamophobia.

We can develop another set of indicators of behaviour for hatred and racial or cultural prejudice in order to study the second important dimension of the meaning/nature of the construct. In the absence of mediated prejudice which is the product of media contents where Muslims and Islam are seen in negative frames, racial prejudice takes a prominent place. Nonetheless, the process may get accelerated if many factors which can contribute to develop Islamophobia are in action.



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