The British Broadsheets and the Terrorism Discourse in post-7/7 Britain: A Challenge of New Wave of Terror.

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Introduction :

Terrorism is one of the most serious issues facing the world. The modern-day terrorism is a communal problem and a serious challenge facing all nations globally. Currently terrorism is one of the most widely discussed and inquired topics in the media and in academia. It became more apparent at times when a superpower came under attack on 9/11 followed by Great Britain on July 7th 2005 that became known to the world as the 7/7 bombings.

Notably, it is one of the most serious issues facing the entire world. Evidence shows that the present-day terrorism is a communal problem that has posed a serious challenge and a threat to all nation states globally. However, to a large extent, most sections of the media, politicians and public figures routinely report, present and suggest to ordinary people that terrorism in its present form has links with the religion of Islam. Often, policy

makers, politicians, press and public bodies brand terrorism as "Islamic" and "Islamist" which brings Islam into limelight. The point is that despite the vast amount of scholarly writing and documents that provide evidence that more terrorism happening in the world has no links with Muslims but in fact the perpetrators are non-Muslims such as Hindu fundamentalists, Tamils Nadu's, Buddhists, Jews, Christians associates of various radical organisations (see U.S. State Department, 2017).

Arguably, the discourses on terrorism limit its scope by strictly associating it with "Islam". The reason is that there are no concepts on equal terms such as Hindu terrorism, Baddish terrorism, Christian terrorism and Jewish terrorism. Michel Wieviorka (1998a, 2003b) pointed out that "when individuals who have not succeeded or understood how to find their place in these societies vent their resentment, their feeling of failure, and their rage against the West as a whole living in the western societies" this then become "Islamist terrorism" (Wieviorka, 2003, p. xvi). Surprisingly, in the same book Wieviorka even though acknowledged other forms of terrorism such as "Italian left-wing terrorists to Basque nationalist groups" avoided to link their terrorism to Christianity. It is therefore a valid question to probe that why terrorism is frequently presented as "Islamic"; "Islamist" and "Islamic radicalism", whereas the significant amount of authentic evidence thus suggest that terrorism is a product of different factors that can be political, social, cultural or religious but to solely

describe it as "Islamic" and "Islamists" is outside the brackets of a fairer debate on terrorism.

This study focuses on the representation of Islam and Muslims in the post-7/7 period in two major British broadsheets, *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, over a two-year period (7 July 2005-8 July 2007). Initially, a corpus of 274 news items, including editorials, comments, interviews, and news reports on the London bombings, has been collected and analysed by incorporating a multidisciplinary approach within the broader tent of discourse analysis. The original research questions to be asked include: how do the British broadsheets represent Islam using the 7/7 London bombings event? Is it fair to blame the media for their bad image? It aims to present a narrative of how the London bombings (hereafter 7/7) emerged in these broadsheets based on their reaction to an interpretation and perception of the 7/7 event. However, for this particular paper, the key question is: In what ways the terrorism discourse has emerged and developed in *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* reporting in the wake of the London Bombings. The next sections will provide narrative of terrorism discourse that emerged in two British broadsheets namely: *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*.

This paper argues and provides empirical evidence that, since 7/7, Islam and the representation of Islam in the British broadsheets press reflects a self-constructing reality that means the press relies on ready-made views. Arguably, post-7/7 reporting on terrorism demonstrates that the

suffix "ism" is employed to stand in for 'Islam', thus always associating all 'terrorism' with the Islamic faith.

Method Applied:

The original pilot project inquiry into the representation of Muslims in the British press, I chose Teun A. Van Dijk's approach for several reasons. Firstly, it is well established, widely acknowledged and cited in several major studies such as Wodak and Busch (2004, p.106) and Philo (2007, p.104). Secondly, it is relevant to this study because it examines the representation of Muslims in the British press. Hence, on these grounds it seems that Van Dijk's approach of discourse analysis is logical and more reliable. Van Dijk's study, *Elite Discourse and Racism* (1993), suggests that racism does not necessarily occur in public places but, rather, is a deeply-rooted and institutionalised phenomenon that is "sometimes subtly and indirectly, enacted or preformulated (sic) by various elite groups and their discourses" (Van Dijk, 1993, p.2). Van Dijk includes definitions of racism and racist borrowing from the work of Giddens, who writes: "Racism means falsely attributing inherited characteristics of personality or behaviour to individuals of a particular physical appearance" (1989, p.206), whereas the term "racist" refers to "someone who believes that a biological explanation can be given for characteristics of superiority or inferiority supposedly possessed by people of a given physical stock" (ibid, p.170). Van Dijk argues that most sections of the press, especially the right-wing tabloids, are less inclined to address key

issues related to minorities, such as ,"Xenophobia and discrimination, than in alleged minority crime, deviance, or cultural differences interpreted as a threat to white, Western norms and values" (Van Dijk, 1993, p.1). Van Dijk's study focuses on the "discursive reproduction of racism". Van Dijk emphasises the role of "text and talk" and recommends it as a systematic discourse analysis of the "genres or communicative events that play a role in the reproduction of racism" such as editorials, text and media reports (ibid, p.28).

Several studies relating to ethnic minorities' representations in the media have expressed similar views to those of Van Dijk, including Baker (2012) and Cottle (2000). Many studies relating to the representation of Muslims and Islam in the media, especially after 9/11 and 7/7, suggest that the media are one of the most powerful and key contributors to the rise of "racism" against Muslims in the last three decades since the Iranian revolution (1979) and the Rushdie Affair (1989) in Britain (Brown, 2006; Poynting and Mason, 2007; Richardson 2009).

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure:

I used the *LexisNexis* search engine to collect the stories because of its reliability. It applies the following phrases and connotations - Islam, Muslims, 7/7, terrorism and extremism and jihad - to collect stories relating to 7/7. Several other media studies (such as Allen, 2012; Moore *et al* 2008; Poole, 2011) have used *LexisNexis*. It also considers other search engines such as ProQuest and

microfilm records to ensure that every major development in terms of coverage of 7/7 might be captured in the original study (my PhD thesis). This paper is derived from the original PhD pilot project data, based on that data in which I used several "news hooks" (see Moore *et al* 2008, p.22); these hooks not only helped to identify the predominant topics and themes within the coverage of the event but also helped to pinpoint the way in which these two different newspapers labelled the incident. These hooks or themes were as follows: Islam, Muslims, 7/7, Terror, Terrorism, Extremism and Jihad. Notably, by applying different terms such as "extremism' and 'radicalisation' with connotations like 'or', 'and', etc., the total number of stories further increased.

For example, searching for "Islam", "Muslims", and "Jihad" produced 189 stories in the *Daily Telegraph* for the year 2005 and 181 stories in the subsequent year of 2006. In comparison, *LexisNexis* shows that *The Guardian* published a total number of 257 stories in 2005 and 221 in 2006 when I used the above terms. Similarly, the use of "war on terror" produced 134 stories in *The Daily Telegraph* for the year 2005 and 213 in 2006 compared to 356 stories in 2005 and 371 in 2006 in *The Guardian*.

Next, this study used phrases and connotations such as "Islam Muslim and jihad" or "7/7 and extremism"' which generated 93 stories in *The Daily Telegraph* and 223 stories in *The Guardian*. Since 7/7 occurred after 9/11, it was labelled an act of 'terrorism' which paves the way for the war on terror. Therefore I decided to add a different

version of "Terror" because "Terrorism" and "War on Terror" have been viewed as different in academia. I made use of an option "high" and "Duplicate Option-On High Similarity" in the *LexisNexis* search engine which displays duplicate versions, thus helping to minimise the chances of missing any additional information or source in a particular story.

Initially, three separate logbooks carrying all stories related to the 7/7 incident published during 2005-2007 were kept separately for each newspaper, while a third book contained stories published in July starting from 2005, 2006 and 2007. This enabled me to gauge the change in topics and themes on the occasion of anniversary of 7/7. Hence, the very moment (7 of July or 7/7) and the follow-up on the next day (8 of July 2005) alongside the anniversary commemorations (7 July 2006 and 7 July 2007) were particularly marked to trace the change in the newspapers' reporting patterns.

In an effort to familiarise myself with the data, I repeatedly read all reports, articles and commentaries to work out what the press was saying and how the papers sold their stories of the event. To understand the concealed meanings, ideas and messages inside each article, I marked every paragraph with different highlighters to distinguish between overall topics, sub-topics and changing discourses and themes, an example of this is also attached in this paper.

Discussion and Analysis:

This paper uses the London bombing events reporting in two mainstream British broadsheets namely, *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* to explore the emergence of discourse on terrorism. The overall reporting of the London bombings reflected the emergence of the following discourses that include: 'war on terror', 'Newness in terrorism', 'British way of life', and the 'Britishness' is under threat from "Islamic" and "Islamist" terrorism, and 'religious ideology of radicals'. Of course, it does not mean to undermine the rest of the discourses connected to terrorism. This paper exclusively focuses upon the main discourse on terrorism that is its link with the religion of Islam which makes it as "Islamic" and "Islamist" terrorism.

The Process of Making of an "Islamic Terrorism":

Several scholars assume that the New York and London (9/11, and 7/7) terror attacks became prime reasons of the emergence of a new discourse on terrorism that is branded as an "Islamic terrorism". Bernard Goldberg (2003) study brings another important search which helps to recognize framing and news construction of Islam as "Islamic Terrorism" as Goldberg asked a question that, "What exactly is it in the Koran that so appeals to these Islamic fanatics?" Goldberg declines to consult "Network news" for the answer and suggested that anyone need to find a concrete answer better search "LexisNexis" because "going back to 1991 linking the words "Koran" and "terrorist" produce absolutely nothing that told us what the Koran actually says which might encourage a Muslim, no matter
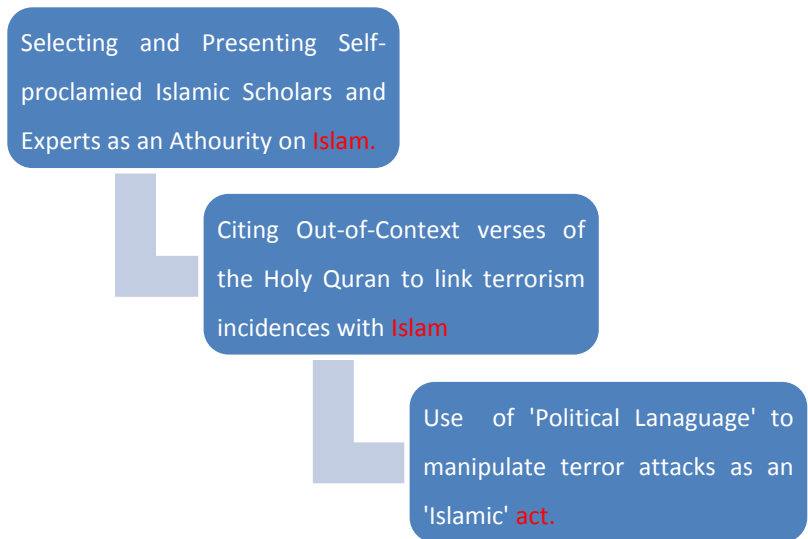
how misguided, to commit acts of terrorism" (Goldberg, 2003, p. 206).

Although the literature on terrorism shows that it is ancient practice, in the current scenario 'newness' refers to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Hence, it is presented as a new phenomenon in terms of a superpower coming under terror attack on its soil. Gadi Wolfsfeld (2011) believes that "The Age of Terrorism" began, of course, on September 11, 2001, when Islamic terrorists flew two jets into the World Trade Centre in New York" (Wolfsfeild, 2011, p.86).

In addition, Matthew J. Morgan (2004) calls the 9/11 as "The Origins of the New Terrorism" whilst Spencer (2006) believes that "new" terrorists are those who want to acquire deadly biological and chemical weapons with which to attack the West and America. Obviously, these authors, including Wolfsfeld, are referring terrorist to Muslims of Arab origin, such as those who carried out the New York bombings. However, from a philosophical point of view, if the "newness" is attached to the notion of biological, chemical and deadly weapons, then the Americans had used such weapons long ago in Japan; hence, does it make sense to say that it started on 6 August 1945?

In brief, the emergence of 'Islamic' and 'Islamist' terrorism can be understood in the following process model that will explain it based upon *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* reporting of the London bombings. Arguably, often it is evident in press coverage of most terror events that are presented to public in a specifically designed

manner which bring Islam into play. A key finding reflects that both broadsheets reporting blends three significant components: self-proclaimed Islamic scholars' and experts' citations; out-of-context Quranic references; and the use of political language.

Selecting and Presenting Self-proclamied Islamic Scholars and Experts as an Athourity on Islam.

Citing Out-of-Context verses of the Holy Quran to link terrorism incidences with Islam

Use of 'Political Lanaguage' to manipulate terror attacks as an 'Islamic' act.

The Process Model: The Process of Making of "Islamic" Terrorism.

(i)- Selecting and Promoting Self-Proclaimed Scholars and Experts on Islam: manipulate

Overall data shows that *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* routinely present number of commentators such as ex-radicals Ed Husain and Hassan Butt who are and self-styled scholars as experts and scholars of Islam and this contributes to build a rather pessimistic image of Islam. These individuals' inflammatory speeches, personal

opinions and inaccurate commentaries formulated the key argument that Islam is inherently violent and endorses jihad against non-believers. One might say at this point that the inclusion of these ex-members of radical organisations also demonstrates the broadsheets' rivalry. Here, *The Guardian* writer Milne's viewpoint is considerable and valid because these two individuals are not considered experts on a sensitive subject (religious ideology) that has emerged as a serious and significant topic of debate. Of course, this does not mean that the views of Husain and Butt should not have appeared in the press but they should not have been identified as experts as this damages the essence of a fair debate. In contrasts mainstream Muslim scholars in Britain such as Professor Tariq Ramadan is presented as 'Radical' and 'Islamist".

Thus, it is significant that if anyone aspires to understand the debate on terrorism and its link with Islam could become easily astray obviously because   certain selected individuals by the media can only feed the readers, audiences and viewers their own wishful thinking but not genuine scholarship. I would argue that, by presenting ex-members of radical organisations as Islamic scholars, both *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* in fact created doubts in the minds of their educated and comparatively better informed readerships. Many British Muslims, readers of these newspapers, do not consider Husain and Butt as scholars or experts on Islam but, rather, as infamous ex-radicals who are self-styled scholars.

(ii)-Misquoting Verses of the Holy Quran:

Relatively, both broadsheets constantly brought Quran into discussion and debates on terrorism in their editorials, features, news reports and special editions on anniversary of the London Bombings that there are verses in the Quran that inspires and radicalise young British Muslims to become martyrs and jihadists. The point is not to deny the existence of young British Muslim jihadists and radicals but to challenge 'wishful thinking' that it is Islam that turned it followers to jihadists. Take a few examples of out of context verses of Quran that include: "There shall be no compulsion in religion" and "Slay the unbeliever…wherever you find him" (*The Guardian*, 22 July 2005). Similarly, *The Daily Telegraph* editorial, which carried a selected verse from the Qur'an, displayed a lack of investigation and out-of-context reporting, "The murders of July 7 2005… ("capture them and besiege them and prepare for an ambush from every angle")…" (*The Daily Telegraph*, 3 September 2006).

Gunaratna offers a specific example of an out-of-context exercise mostly found in the media and polity: "Let there be no compulsion [or coercion] in the religion [Islam]. The right direction is distinctly clear from the error" (ibid, p.85). It is a common practice not only in the media but also in polity and public discussion to misinterpret Quranic texts. Evidence shows that a number of media experts, journalists, novelists and even academics talk of Islam as if they have mastered it. Said comments that "to speak of 'Islam' in the West today is to mean a lot of unpleasant things" (Said, 1978, p.9).

This thesis includes a few examples to show that certain verses can be easily used to misguide ordinary people, both Muslims and non-Muslims, who do not understand the full context. Consider the first line of this verse in the Quran that says "Do not go near prayer" whilst praying five times a day is a compulsory act for Muslims. The next part of the same verse provides the reason for this: *O ye who believe! Draw not near unto prayer when ye are drunken, till ye know that which ye utter, nor when ye are polluted…*, or *O ye who believe! Go not near Prayer when you are not in full possession of your senses…,* or *O you, who believe, go not near prayer when you are intoxicated till you know what you say…*, (*An-Nisa*, verse 43, also see Aasad, 1980, p.111).

Another example is the surah *Al-Asr* verses (103:1 and 2) which say "By time, Indeed mankind is in loss" while the next verse explains, "Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience" (103:3). Several verses in the Quran are explained in subsequent sections and, of course, the Quran addresses the needs of mankind, not just Muslims. This is evident in many surah and verses in the Quran in which Allah SWT (God) uses *An-Nas* in Arabic, which means mankind (Hussein, 2003, p.142).

A number of Islamic scholars, mostly from Arab lands, often respond to misquotations or out-of-context references taken from the Quran for political or any reasons. Abdul-Raof Hussein raises a very important point that the Quran was revealed in sections over a period of 23 years in Mecca and Medina under different circumstances and in response

to different needs of Muslims (Hussein, 2003, p.135). He explains in detail the hidden meanings of some of the phrases that have been made controversial in the Western world because of political gains.

For example, Jews and Christians in the Quran were called *Ahl al-Kitab* (People of the Book, Scripturists) while the word *al-Kuffar* referred to non-believers of the Mecca (The Quraysh); similarly, the word *al-Munafiqun* refers to hypocrites (ibid, p.136). He raises an important point: "The syntactic and semantic bond among Qur'anic chapters and verses makes the entire Qur'an read like a single word"; most importantly, it is not a story book but a message for mankind (ibid, p.435-436). An illustration of the misquoting of the Quran is also evident in Leduff's (2012) work, which includes Angie Moreschi's report in which she uses "New York bombing footage showing voices of screaming people and a graphic image of the Koran floating over images of people running in the streets" (Leduff, 2012, p.226). Frequently, journalists indulge in such practices to tell people that Islam teaches terrorism and horror. In fact, there is nothing in the Quran that preaches anything like terrorism or killing innocent people, just like the, Bible which says, *If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek* (Matthew 5-7); similarly, on the killing of fellow human beings, the Quran is clear, as already mentioned (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:32).

Now let us compare these two paragraphs from two articles in *The Observer* and *The Daily Telegraph*. These interpreted versions describe Islamic rule according to each

newspaper. The first was published in *The Observer* on 22 July 2005 and read: "When Baghdad was conquered by the Mongols in 1258, Ibn Taimiya, a radical thinker often quoted by today's extremists, called on the world's Muslims to go "back to basics" to restore their former strength" (*The Observer*, 2005). The second article, published in *The Daily Telegraph* on 27 November 2006, says:

What Islamic fundamentalism plans to achieve… Muslims were expelled from Spain: a return of the Caliphate, the destruction of corrupt Western values, and the establishment of Sharia law in all countries where Muslims reside. That is what we are up against…This is a war to the death, or until Islamism decides to call a halt (*The Daily Telegraph,* 2006).

Arguably, there is nothing in "Islam" that preaches violence or killings and that Quran is very clear on this subject. For example it says, "…if any one slew a person-unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land-it would be as if he slew the whole mankind: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole mankind" (Al-Quran, 5:32). This is just a one reference from Quran that also says that "…take not life, which God has made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus does He command you, that you may learn wisdom" (Al-Quran, 6:151). In addition, number of *Hadiths* also stresses upon the sanctity of human life for example Prophet Muhammad said, "Do not kill any old person, any child or any women" as

explaining ethic of war (see Bukhari Volume 004, Book 052, Hadith Number 257 and 258) .

(iii)-The Use of Political Language:

The stream of events occurred in the Muslim world several whether political or non-political have provided some of the western media, politicians, policy makers, and commentators availed such opportunities to renovate those event with terms "Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism". Edgar O'ballance (1997) wrote that "when the USSR began to crumble and new enemies were sought. It was visualised that Islamic fundamentalism would swamp the Muslim world and threaten the west, politically, economically and perhaps militarily" (O'balance, 1997, p. vii). Hence, the phrase "Islamic" began to appear conjointly with fundamentalism, terrorism, radicalism, extremism and violence in the media, political and public discourse on terrorism (see Springer, *et al* 2009).

For Karim H. Karim (2002) "Sadly, the uninformed use of the terms related to Islam is endemic in transnational media" [sic] (Karim, 2002, p.139). The frequent appearances of abovementioned phrases are apparent that 'Islamic terrorism' is an intractable development to present to public a new enemy. Other commentators such as Simon Darby has argued that "Particularly after 9/11 and 7/7 things have changed: the new issue is Islam" (*The Observer*, 23 April 2006).

The 7/7 bombers were largely characterised as "Islamic" and "Islamist" terrorists rather than simply declaring them as fanatics, angry disintegrated individuals, or mentally

disturbed young men. Evidently, the British broadsheets press reporting of the 7/7 bombing has demonstrated that it treats the perpetrators of similar nature of terror events as different. For example, the IRA terrorists were not religiously driven but rather accusers of political issues whereas the London bombers were religiously motivated individual that made them "Islamists", "Islamic" and "radicals". Arguably, the British press has reserved two different standards for the perpetrators of terrorism that are two different religions as non-Muslims and Muslims.

 The aggregate reporting evidenced that the discourse on "Islamic terrorism" largely omitted mainstream scholars, particularly Muslim opinions. Here, one might note that Islam as a religion is centuries old; hence, what have the 21st century press and polity now found to link all terrorism to "Islam"? Moreover, for argument's sake, if terrorism is purely an "Islamic" problem, why are the terrorist activities of members of other religions not reported as "Judaist terrorism", "Christian terrorism", "Hindu terrorism", or "Buddhist terrorism".

Karim analysed sequence of terror events and the responsible organisations worldwide that provided him an evidence on the basis of which he has challenged a visible bias in reporting of terrorism events in that is in case the perpetrators happened to be Jews, Christians, Buddhist and Hindus most sections of the media were tentative to use phrases "Jewish Terrorists,", "Christian Terrorists,", "Hindu terrorists," or "Buddhist Terrorist,". Karim cited an illustration of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre

in America, in which initially a Muslim Abdel-Rehman was suspected and named for the bombings (Karim, 2002, p.138). However later on it became public that the bombing was an act of a Christian media didn't use any phrase to link Christianity or all Christians with the incident (ibid). Karim further explained this point borrowing (Said 1993, p.64) study that "the word *Muslim* is less provocative and more habitual for most Arabs; the word Islamic has acquired an activist, even aggressive quality that belies the more ambiguous reality" (cited in Karim, 2002, p. 139).

Figure: Four Types of Shooters: (A Muslim, Black,

Professional and White), courtesy (Omar Alnatour, https://twitter.com/WeTeachLifeSir).

The above caricature by an anonymous artist floats on *Facebook* and *Twitter* (2017) describes four different types of shooters based on their identity starting from the left-hand side a Muslim shooter's act brings the whole (1.3 billion Muslim) community responsible. In comparison to

white shooter on the right-hand side that is been explained as a 'Lone-Wolf' or (parking problem or emotional issues) this trend is evident in the press coverage of shootings, violent killings in Britain and America. The power of phrases dump-down the violent acts of supreme class white and non-Muslims in comparison to Muslims.

Both *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* use political language to essentialise, demonise and sensationalise the 7/7 event. Van Dijk (1977) finds a close link between the identification and description of any event and believes that the representation of an event also depends on the conventional means of language through which we present and view it (Van Dijk, 1977, p.169). Richardson Jackson's (2005) study considers that since the September 11 attack a new language has begun to emerge in the media resulting from the officials who carefully constructed and shaped "a new social reality where terrorism threatens to destroy everything that ordinary people hold dear - their lives, their democracy, their freedom, their way of life, their civilisation" (Jackson, 2005, p. 1-2).

Citing several studies, Jackson suggests that the discourse on the 'war on terrorism' is designed to achieve political interests, such as "to normalise and legitimise the current counter-terrorist approach; to empower the authorities and shield them from criticism; to discipline domestic society by marginalising dissent or protest; and to enforce national unity by reifying a narrow conception of national identity" (Jackson, ibid).

Although *The Guardian* writers debated the legal position of citing "Islamic terrorism", none of *The Daily Telegraph* writers or editorials offered a discussion on the expression "Islamic terrorism" and whether or not it is a valid or problematic concept. Several Western scholars such as Shmuel Bar (2004) has raised questions about linking the word 'Islamic' with terrorism. Bar wrote that "to treat Islamic terrorism as the consequence of political and socioeconomic factors alone would not do justice to the significance of the religious culture in which this phenomenon is rooted and nurtured" (Bar, 2004, p.28). Similarly, Jackson notes that "Political and academic discourses of 'Islamic terrorism' are unhelpful, not least because they are highly politicized, intellectually contestable, damaging to community relations and practically counter-productive in the struggle to control subaltern violence in the long run" (Jackson, 2007, p.395).

A Glimpse of Outcomes:

Since the editorial reflects the position of the newspaper of certain issues. Hence, I have included a finding from the database that shows both broadsheets view of the London bombings and that whether or not it was an act of "Islamist" or "Islamic" bombings. The database shows that both *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* used the term 'Islamic terrorism' in their editorials, thereby reflecting their view of the terrorism issue. Out of 13 editorials in total, *The Guardian* used the term 'Islamic terrorism' twice (2/13*100 = 15.38%). Similarly, *The Daily Telegraph* used the term 'Islamic terrorism' twice in eight editorials

(2/8*100 = 25%). *The Daily Telegraph* also used terms such as 'Muslim extremism' and 'Islamic extremists' fifteen times in headlines and the leads of 87 articles, amounting to 15/87*100 = 17.24 per cent of its total articles, whilst *The Guardian* also used terms such as 'Muslim terrorism' (4/187*100 = 2.1 per cent), 'Islamic extremism', 'Islamic militants', 'Islamic theology', 'Islamic extremists' and 'Islamic radicalism' (21/187*100 = 11.2 per cent) in its articles' headlines and leads. Within the database, in a total of 21 editorials overall, both *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* refer to 7/7 as "Islamic terrorism" (4/21*100=19.04%) in comparison to "Islamist terrorism" (1/21*100=4.76 or approximately 5%). Apart from the editorials, a few writers in these newspapers also used the term "Islamic terrorism" to denote 7/7, twice in *The Daily Telegraph* news reports and once in its comment piece.

More specifically, both newspapers used "Islamic terrorism" twice each in comparison to "Islamist terrorism" which was cited in *The Guardian* editorials just once and did not appear at all in *The Daily Telegraph* editorials within the database. Although *The Guardian* writers debated the legal position of citing "Islamic terrorism", none of *The Daily Telegraph* writers or editorials offered a discussion on the expression "Islamic terrorism" and whether or not it is a valid or problematic concept. In brief, this rhetorical use of 'terrorism' neglects acts of state terrorism that obviously show the West as an equal contributor to terrorism and not the victim. This study indicates that the two broadsheets shared a similar cultural approach in combating Islamist

terrorism, by encouraging the embracing of British values, although their different political orientations led to them differing attitudes over the precise manner in which this should be achieved. *The Guardian* was more concerned about individual liberty and human rights, while *The Daily Telegraph* emphasised the adaptation of tough legislation to combat terrorism.

In the days following the 7/7 attack, *The Guardian* uses the phrase "Islamist terrorism" in its three articles on 2 and 3 September 2005. Notably, one of these articles, "A traitor, but no worse than Philby and Blunt: British society has always faced enemies within who wish us ill", published in *The Guardian* on 3 September 2005, contains the following fragments: "We know that we are likely to see more manifestations of Islamist terrorism…the Islamist terrorist threat to Britain predated the invasion of Iraq and, in the same fashion in Northern Ireland, IRA terrorism began years before Bloody Sunday in 1972".

In this paragraph it is evident that "Islam" as a religion is associated with the act of terrorism. However, at the same, the media excuse "Christianity" for similar attacks on the same city in the same country during the 1970s. Nevertheless, a growing body of scholarship is challenging this delicate notion that most terrorist, violent and criminally-minded individuals establish links with their religions to justify their actions (Buzan 2006; Esposito, 2007; Pratt, 2010). Those who challenge this disproportionate attitude strongly oppose 'Terrorist"

conduct by all means but at the same time point out that reserving one specific word for one religion does not help.

However, both newspapers also acknowledged that the phrase "Islamic terrorism" is not logical although they did so only once. For example, a letter to the editor published in *The Sunday Telegraph* on 20 August 2006 says: "If we must talk of Islamic extremism and Islamic terrorism, why do we not talk of Christian extremism or Catholic terrorists in relation to what were brutal killers in Northern Ireland?..." Meanwhile, *The Guardian* on 11 July 2005 wrote: "The label of Catholic Terror was never used about the IRA: Fundamentalism is often a form of nationalism in religious disguise".

The perception of Muslims as "aggressors", "terrorists", "anti-Western" and "anti-American" fuels negative thoughts. In recent years several incidents were instantly connected to Islam before a proper inquiry could be conducted, such as the Oklahoma City bombings that were the act of a Christian fundamentalist (Paletz and Schmid, 1992; Ballard, 2005, p.65).

Similarly, in the case of the Norway bombings and killings, some sections of the British and American media and polity were quick to call them "Islamic"; as Charlie Brooker admits in *The Guardian* on 24 July 2011, "The news coverage of the Norway mass-killings was fact-free conjecture...Let's be absolutely clear, it wasn't experts speculating, it was guessers guessing – and they were terrible".

Several authors such as Poole believe that, since 7/7, "Islamic terrorism" has been a major concern for the British

government, security and law enforcement agencies (ibid, p.55). In addition, Simon Darby writes that "Particularly after 9/11 and 7/7 things have changed: the new issue is Islam" (*The Observer*, 23 April 2006). Both *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* frequently use the term "Islamic Terrorism", usually in a negative way. But often these citations come from politicians or other high-ranking individuals and clergymen. For example, *The Sunday Telegraph* article published on 14 May, 2006, states: "Given that the Prime Minister has emphasized that Islamic terrorism is "one of the greatest threats we face". In comparison, on 22 July 2005 *The Observer* writes: "Ideology's violent face: Like most systems of belief, Islam is a religion of peace that must accept it can also breed terror".

The Guardian and *The Daily Telegraph* View of 'Islamic Terrorism':

In the days following the 7/7, *The Guardian* uses the phrase "Islamist terrorism" in its three articles on September 2nd, 2005 and September 3rd 2005. Notably, in one of these articles *A traitor, but no worse than Philby and Blunt: British society has always faced enemies within who wish us ill* published in *The Guardian* on 3rd September 2005 carries following fragments: *We know that we are likely to see more manifestations of Islamist terrorism. We are all struggling to grasp its implications, and to decide how best to meet it; The foreign secretary said that the Islamist terrorist threat to Britain predated the invasion of Iraq* and

In the same fashion in Northern Ireland, IRA terrorism began years before Bloody Sunday in 1972.

Both *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* frequently use the term "Islamic Terrorism" although in most cases in a negative sense even though it comes from politicians or other high ranking individuals such as clergyman. For example, according to *The Sunday Telegraph* article published on 14th May, 2006, that says, *Given that the Prime Minister has emphasized that Islamic terrorism is "one of the greatest threats we face".* In comparison, *The Observer* says, *Ideology's violent face: Like most systems of belief, Islam is a religion of peace that must accept it can also breed terror* (*The Observer*, 22nd July 2005).

Of course, all governments punishes people to maintain law and order that does include non-Muslim Chinese, Indian and American governments hangings people for murder and other heinous crimes. In brief, "Islam" and "Muslims" are regularly is presented as "aggressor", "terrorists" however in both newspapers with the period of this thesis once it is acknowledged that religion the phrase is not logical for example, *If we must talk of Islamic extremism and Islamic terrorism, why do we not talk of Christian extremism or Catholic terrorists in relation to what were brutal killers in Northern Ireland? The events of 9/11 and 7/7 were perpetrated by evil people, not "Islamic terrorists" but plain and simple terrorists* (Letter to editor in *The Sunday Telegraph* 20th August 2006) whilst in *The Guardian* on 11th July 2005, it says, "The label of Catholic

Terror was never used about IRA: Fundamentalism is often a form of nationalism in religious disguise".

In fact, the political nature of terrorism is transformed into a religious one tying it with ideology and theology of Islam. In this way the state terrorism that also comes from the Western states is overlooked. It suggests that the West is perhaps on the receiving end and that it is a victim and not the contributor of terrorism in current situation. According to several authors like Poole (2011) who believes that since 7/7, "Islamic terrorism" is major concern for British government and security and law enforcement agencies (Poole, 2011, p.55). In addition, Simon Darby also writes that "Particularly after 9/11 and 7/7 things have changed: the new issue is Islam" (*The Observer*, 23rd April 2006).

Conclusion:

The narrative of the 7/7 reporting during a two-year period (8 July 2005 - 7 July 2007) in *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* reflects a shared view that the London bombings were an act of terrorism. Notably, both broadsheets allowed alternative opinions and varied voices in all their types of journalism. However the descriptions of terrorism based upon the editorials of these broadsheets suggest that it was an "Islamic terrorism" that has roots in a religious ideology which endorses violence and hatred of non-Muslims. More specifically, both newspapers used the term "Islamic terrorism" in their editorials more than "Islamist" and "home-grown" terrorism, which further

strengthened the hypothesis that Islam was directly associated with the 7/7 bombings.

Both newspapers consulted representatives of British Muslims, such as the MCB, but there was still a slight sense of ignorance of a few verses of the Quran which were cited without considering their historical context. Although the two newspapers agreed that community bonding is a solution to combat future terrorist threats, they placed responsibility solely on the wider Muslim community, which developed an impression that terrorism is perhaps to be considered solely a Muslim problem.

Given that the terrorism threat is an on-going phenomenon which may well continue to the next generations, presenting it as solely "Islamic" limits the discourse to Islam. Furthermore, the expression suggests that the followers of the religion of Islam are potential terrorists because it is their religion that endorses terrorism.

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