3. The Framed Arab/Muslim: Mediated Orientalism

When Said established the bridge between Orientalism as literary creation and the impact of the media in *Covering Islam*, there was not yet much of an empirical basis to support his claim. Instead, he trusted the "hermeneutically trained mind" to think critically and act against labels like Arab and Muslim (Said, *Covering Islam* 165). Any contemporary analysis which seeks to investigate the impact of mediated Orientalism on the real world needs to start with a detailed status-quo analysis of what this real world looks like. When acknowledging the complexity of Orientalism, a mere counting of stereotypes does not suffice for this task. When seeking to gain a more differentiated picture of how the mediated image of Arabs is framed, a close analysis of Orientalism and the empirical data provided by Media Studies reveals that Orientalism is a multi-layered concept. This complexity is also reflected on the various levels and layers through which Orientalism is mediated.

3.1 THE IDEOLOGICAL FRAME: ORIENTALISM

Defining What Defines the Orient(al)

Edward Said in *Orientalism* does not provide a single and universally applicable definition of his theory. Rather, the work in its entirety due to its mostly "historical method" serves as a demonstration of how many facets have accompanied and thus created Orientalism throughout the centuries (El-Haj 550). This has not prevented scholars of Orientalism from creating their own definitions of what Said missed or intentionally refused to define. Differentiating between the said and the "Unsaid" in Said therefore brings illuminating insights into the vast desert of definitions circulating in the literature (Varisco 1). While Said did not provide a concise definition of Orientalism, the following passage provides one of the most comprehensive summaries found in his work:

Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. I have found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault's notion of a discourse [...] to identify Orientalism. My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. (*Orientalism* 3)

This passage demonstrates Said's conception of Orientalism in very broad terms. Although he mentions Foucault as theoretical source for his argument (Varisco 254), his inclusion of various discursive realms in society exceeds the narrower definition of Foucauldian discourse as semiotic system.[1] Discourse to Said refers to the "bounded area of social knowledge" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 165). With respect to art, this obviously implies all kinds of cultural production. Only later in the book does Said specify the linkages between Orientalism, discourse, and the role of literature:

Not only is the Orient accommodated to the moral exigencies of Western Christianity; it is also circumscribed by a series of attitudes and judgements that send the Western mind, not first to Oriental sources for correction and verification, but rather to other Orientalist works. The Orientalist stage, as I have been calling it, becomes a system of moral and epistemological rigor. As a discipline representing institutionalized Western knowledge of the Orient, Orientalism thus comes to exert a three-way force, on the Orient, on the Orientalist, and on the Western 'consumer' of Orientalism. (*Orientalism* 67)

Critics in the postcolonial era have exhaustingly written on the implications these and other descriptions have for the struggle of power in a postcolonial world.[2] Un-

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1 Carol Bardenstein provides a clear-cut analytical positioning of Orientalism as a theoretical specification but also limitation of Foucauldian discourse theory. "Said's Orientalism was based on Foucault's concept of discourse," she explains. "The latter was not related to any specific cultural material. Said then provided a case study of the Western production of knowledge on the Middle East and pointed out the operations behind it [...]" (Personal interview). According to Bardenstein, this also sheds light on another aspect of Orientalism, i.e., the common assumption that it is only exercised by *Westerners*. "Said is not saying that only 'Westerners' do that [Orientalize], i.e., construct partial and schematic versions of the more complex reality around them. It is in the nature of human perception," Bardenstein clarifies (Personal interview).

2 While most scholars apply Orientalism as an overarching concept to analyze the representation of various different ethnic groups in the postcolonial era, some reduce Orientalism specifically to the Middle East. Stephen Salaita, for example, discusses Orientalism

fortunately, this has caused them to largely overtress one part of Said's argument while neglecting many others. In other words, critics using Said's short summaries of Orientalism often end up misusing the concept since they focus on Orientalism merely as a theory and not as an approach. An important hint to this necessary delineation is marked by the fact that Said presents various and sometimes contradicting characteristics, such as social circumstances, situational aspects, and actors, which account for Orientalism. The ethnologist Nadia El-Haj points to this multiplicity in arguing that Said presents at least three overlapping definitions of Orientalism in addition to the one given above: 1) The first one deals with the Orientalist as "anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient" (Said, *Orientalism* 2). 2) The second definition is one of Orientalism as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said, *Orientalism* 2). 3) Another definition sees Orientalism as a "corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, and ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient" (Said *Orientalism* 3).

When juxtaposing these three overlapping, yet, distinct descriptions of Orientalism, the full theoretical potential of the concept unfolds. This differentiation targets the *Orientalist* as *actor*, *Orientalism* as binary *thought construct* (Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies* 22), and Orientalism as an *institution* of hegemony. Due to the heavy focus of today'a adherents of postcolonialism on the latter aspect of hegemonic dominance, this distinct theoretical delineation is hardly ever recognized. The first component of Orientalism refers specifically to Orientalism as an active intellectual practice. This underlines the overarching conception of Orientalism as based on knowledge construction; yet, it personalizes the construction of this knowledge. "Knowledge of the Orient, because generated out of *strength*, in a sense creates the Orient, the Oriental, and his world," Said writes in *Orientalism* (40). The focus therefore rests on the individual actor in discourse who creates this knowledge, not on a collective hegemonic power. Even though Said here already links the idea of knowledge with power by using the term "strength," the passage does not heavily rely on a normative concept of instrumentalization. Rather, anyone engaged in knowledge production about the Orient practices Orientalism.[3] In more neutral

in the context of "anti-Arab racism" (qtd. in Cainkar 87). This demonstrates how broadly but at the same time narrowly Orientalism is being perceived in post-Saidian times.

3   In the context of Orientalism as a field of study, Esra Sandikcioglu differentiates between "Western scholars" and "nonprofessional Orientalists," whereby both contribute to the creation of Orientalism by means of fictional and non-fictional accounts. This stressing of professionalism is particularly interesting in light of the fact that Said himself stood for, what he called, "amateurism" (Varisco 280).

terms, Orientalism, according to this separate definitorial element, describes an area of study.[4]

The second definition of Orientalism as constructed in opposition to Occidentalism underlines the binary nature of the concept (Lau and Mendes 5). A vast amount of studies have dealt mostly with the disadvantages of this binary approach, particularly with respect to the constitution of counter-discourse. Walter Mignolo conceives of Occidentalism as "the visible face in the building of the modern world, whereas subaltern knowledges are its darker side, the colonial side of modernity" (20). In addition, according to Mignolo, Occidentalism represents "the overarching metaphor of the modern/colonial world system imaginary" (23). Although this example of post-Saidian Orientalist theory sounds convincing, Said himself did not engage in defining Occidentalism in these competitive terms. In fact, he did not define Occidentalism at all, even though critics later accused him of advocating Occidentalism or "reverse Orientalism" as major strategy (El-Haj 541). This reductionist approach that pits Occidentalism against Orientalism as essentialist categories does not meet the complexity of Orientalist discourse exemplified by Said (El-Haj 542). He obviously described the two concepts as binary oppositions but did not evaluate this binary structure itself. In other words, Said's definition is much more in line with the finding that Orientalism and Occidentalism constitute two separate categories or schemata which are divided by their individual characteristics. This depiction of the relationship between Orientalism and Occidentalism therefore is one of distinction, not one of opposition or political antagonism. Said's conclusion, which often tends to be overlooked by scholars, confirms this finding: "I hope to have shown my reader that the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism" (*Orientalism* 328).

A similar distortion of Orientalism as it was re- and often mis-defined by later scholars can be detected in the case of the third element of Orientalism, i.e., its institutional nature.[5] Said indeed specifies Orientalism as an institution in hegemon-

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4   This definition of Orientalism is the reason why, up to the present day, many academic departments and other scientific institutions connected to the study of the Middle East contain references to Orientalism in their institutional descriptions. Orientalism here merely defines a geographic and cultural region that marks the field of investigation without any intention to misrepresent this object of study.

5   It is interesting to note that Said here uses the term "institution" in the sense that political science defines it. Institution in the realm of international relations refers to "social environments" which emerge as the result of socialization processes (Johnston 488). This underlines Said's interdisciplinary interest and use of terminology. Critics today, however, mostly read the term in a very literal sense and argue that Orientalism works beyond institutions based on "banal" encounter, meaning that inviduals and not organizations spread Orientalist thought (Haldrup, Koefoed, and Simonsen 176).

ic terms whereby the *East* is dominated by the *West*. Most scholars here merely center on the aspect of power while neglecting the importance of the concept of discourse as formative element of Orientalism. As Said states, "the Oriental is *contained* and *represented* by dominating frameworks" (*Orientalism* 40). Said's use of the term "frameworks" here is particularly noteworthy, especially with respect to the fact that he uses the plural.[6] This underlines that, far from the reductionist stance of Said's critics and adherents alike, he did not think of Orientalism only as *one* dominant framework but as the interaction of multiple frameworks. This also sheds light on the meaning of authority and power in his work, which is usually overemphasized and simplified to black-and-white-thinking (Ta 160).[7] If Orientalism first and foremost means discourse, and if the definition of discourse, in turn, requires the idea of dominance, Orientalism naturally implies this feature. The mere existence of discursive dominance therefore does not reveal anything about the specific power relationships within this discourse neither does it answer if these relationships are fixed or dynamic.

This close look at Orientalism as multi-faceted concept above all demonstrates that the concept as envisioned by Said was not merely the binary power conglomerate which many critics today see as the essence of Saidian theory. While this reductionist treatment of Orientalism has already been acknowleged by critics, these thinkers still do not provide alternative analyses of Said's conception of Orientalism. The previous differentiation fills this gap by demonstrating that Orientalism includes the Orientalist actor, Orientalist practice, and Orientalist discourse. While some of these elements are linked to questions of power, their common denominator – despite normative considerations – is their ultimate goal of knowledge production and dissemination. This significance of knowledge is at the center of any discourse. Said's work therefore has to be read as a theory and partly critique of knowledge production in general, not merely as theory of knowledge instrumentalization by the *West* alone. "If the knowledge of Orientalism has any meaning," he thus states, "it is in being a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, at any time" (Said, *Orientalism* 40).

This differentiated view of Orientalism as it was formulated by Said reveals the complexity of the concept. Said in Orientalism did reveal the various constitutive

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6   Said in another instance also named some of the most important frames of Orientalism, e.g., the Middle East conflict and earlier political crises. Only much later would empirical studies show that these frames are indeed highly relevant ones in the public identity construction of Arabs and Muslims (*Covering Islam* xxiii).

7   Although Ta acknowledges that the relations between "East" and "West" have significantly changed in the past decade, she nevertheless perceives of Orientalism as a mere form of "domination" (160). This is characteristic of most critics in the field who overstress the element of power in Said's work.

elements of discourse which define the Oriental in the public. These diverse elements also need to be accounted for when tracing the trajectories of contemporary Orientalist discourse in the media age. This requires a translation of these crucial elements into variables which, based on a coherent methodology, have the capacity to signal the existence of Orientalism as frame of interpretation. Furthermore, such an analysis needs to reveal which role Orientalism plays in the interrelated network of frames surrounding the Arab/Muslim. The significance of binary thinking as constitutive element provides the key to unfolding the overarching function of the Orientalist frame.

Ideo-Logics of Orientalism

Samuel Huntington in his critique of ethnocentrism in the sciences reminds his audience that the "West won the world not by superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non-Westerners never do" (qtd. in Whitlock 26). Although one can as well argue that the superior status of the *West* is a consequence of all of the given factors rather than an either/or question, Huntington's statement points to several characteristics that are crucial to the logic of Orientalism. The most important one is the resulting division into a Western and non-Western world. This highlights the importance of binary thinking in Orientalism. The other reference which Huntington provides refers to the importance of value dominance. Both aspects reveal the logics of Orientalism, which in turn account for the ideological component of the frame.

The etymological origin of a binary describes something "made of or based on two things or parts" ("Binary"). A term which is often used synonymously is the one of dualism. While also describing something which consists of two fundamental elements, a dualism encompasses a more far-reaching philosophical scope. The concept thus describes the "doctrine that the universe is under the dominion of two opposing principles one of which is good and the other evil" ("Dualism," def. 3a). The most commonly recited dualism in Western philosophy is the so-called "mind-body dualism" which propagates the detachment of rational thinking and kinaesthetics, or the separation between soul ("Geist") and "brain" (Verstand) (Slingerland 25; Huddart 59). A third term which is closely linked to the previous two is the one of dichotomy, i.e., "a division into two especially mutually exclusive or contradictory groups or entities […]" ("Dichotomy," def. 1).

The importance of binaries within Orientalist thought is best summarized by a "contrapuntal perspective" in colonial discourse analysis (Armstrong 115; Bayoumi and Rubin xxviii). This concept implies the simultaneous consideration of two opposing positions at a time (Aboul-Ela, "Is there an Arab" 735; Varisco 290). The

most constitutive binary in Orientalism is seen in the opposition of *Orient* and *Occident* which leads to a division of "Occidental and Oriental cultures" (Whitlock 99). Occidentalism thus represents the "antidote" to Orientalism (Ning 64). As this use of the term "antidote" suggests, binaries in Orientalism are not merely seen in neutral terms as mere oppositions based on difference. Rather, the dualism is inherently linked to value judgements and opposing belief systems.

Values constitute a crucial part of human life. Accordingly, the definition of what exactly counts as value is rather vague. As the sociologist Rudolf Rezsohazy states, "[e]verything social actors appreciate, appraise, wish to obtain, recommend, set up or propose as an ideal, can be considered as a value" (16153). Values consequently comprise several dimensions: 1) they are attached to certain objects which are either appreciated or declined; 2) values are inherently linked to judgements about these objects; 3) values become norms when they regulate behavior in a larger-scale social setting; 4) value holders are required to propagate values either individually or collectively. Since the emotional and moral nature of values depends on acceptance, the concept of values also immanently implies the idea of "counter-values" (Rezsohazy 16153). This highlights the importance of a substantial binary within the concept of values itself.

When investigating the significance of the two concepts of binaries and values for the concept of Orientalism, it becomes clear that binaries are always linked to value judgements. This goes along with the notion that value opposition includes hierarchies. The example of "master and slave," as employed by Hegel, wraps this thought into a striking metaphor (Mignolo 67). The two formative elements of a binary are thus not seen to stand in *juxtaposition* to each other but in *contrast*, whereby one is superior to the other. Power imbalance originating in language is thus assumed to inadvertently lead to conflict exceeding the linguistic[8] realm where "conflict is no longer conceived as a contamination of the linguistic but as its properly defining function" (Terdiman qtd. in Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 167). The divisions of *East* and *West* and *Orient* versus *Occident* are thus primarily the products of value separation based on particular values which are thought to be Western or Eastern in nature (Norris and Inglehart 205).[9] This indivisible association of binaries as causes for hierarchies and conflicts has ultimately found its mani-

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8   The normative notion of binaries is also reflected in the linguistic theory of signs as brought forth by Ferdinand de Saussure. A dualism here is conceived of as "binary opposition" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 167).

9   Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart in their differentiated analysis of Orientalist representation in the media rightly point out that the values by themselves were neither of *Western* nor of *Eastern* origin. As they explicate, "*[i]ndividually almost none of these factors was unique to the West. The combination of them was, however, and this is what gave the West its distinctive quality*" (Norris and Inglehart 205).

festation in the social sciences with the "clash of civilizations" thesis developed by Samuel Huntington in his seminal work *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996). Here, the struggle of "politics of ethnicity" and the struggle of superpowers is assumed to lead to an insoluble confrontation (Huntington 28; Norris, "Public Opinion" 205; Naber, "Introduction 38).[10]

When looking at the core characteristics of Orientalism as binary and value-laden concept through the lens of framing theory, it becomes clear that Orientalism is not limited to any specific cognitive frame level impacting the way in which Arabs and Muslims are represented in public discourse. Rather, Orientalism constitutes an overarching "belief-system" and thus an ideology[11] (Steinberg 847-48).[12] Ideology can be defined as "the social (general and abstract) representations shared by members of a group and used by them to accomplish everyday social practices [...]" (Barker and Galasinski 65-66).[13] This underlines the instrumentalist function of ideology that is also connected to the central importance of the concept of truth. As Chris Barker explains, ideology involves "binding and justifying ideas" to support universal truth claims on the part of a dominant power while ignoring the fact

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10   The clash of civilizations thesis counts as one of the best-known concepts in interdisciplinary cultural scholarship, though, severe differences exist with respect to its interpretation. The major debate dividing the humanities and the sciences is on the question whether the "clash" is mostly caused by value differences or by a global economic divide (Norris and Inglehart 206). Norris and Inglehart thus provocatively conclude that the clash of civilizations has also brought about a "clash of scholarship" (222).

11   The concept of ideology is commonly used in opposition to science and truth. What Chris Barker and Dariusz Galasiński rightly call attention to in this division is that science itself represents a "mode of thinking" that bears characteristics of ideology (66). Hilfer exposes this ideological quality of contemporary literary theory by pointing to the fact that the field continues to be ruled by a limited number of theoretical thinkers establishing a theoretical hegemony: "Theory is full of airpockets. It seems odd that a discourse that so professes skepticism, suspicion, and, above all, diversity, has authorized, after searching through all twentieth-century thought, only one political scientist, one philosopher, one 'historian,' and one psychologist: the discursive law firm of Althusser, Derrida, Foucault, and Lacan [...]" (19-20).

12   Said characterized Orientalism as an ideology, although he did not explore the theory of ideology in further detail. Even without this explicit thematization of ideology, Said nevertheless described Orientalism as a "closed system" which is entirely "self-containing" and "self-reinforcing" (*Orientalism* 70). All these characteristics are also essential to the definition of ideology.

13   The nature of ideology as functional also again reverberates back to the theory of discourse. Discourse, based on its strategic use, is thus always ideological in a sense that ideology is produced through discourse (Barker, *Cultural Studies* 482).

that this truth is in fact historically and culturally specific (*Cultural Studies* 482; Foucault, Interview 61). An important feature of ideology is that its logics work through cognitive and normative measures to achieve political ends. "Historically, a combination of (mis)information has worked to construct an enemy image in the popular imagination that has an important function in the maintenance of political power or hegemony through ideology (Merskin 158).

When ordering this quality of Orientalism within the model of framing, Orientalism constitutes a "master frame" on the upper level of the vertical framing axis (Steinberg 846). It therefore occupies an influential role in affecting lower-level issue frames. In order to detect how this ideological frame operates in mediated discourse, the focus needs to shift to the dimension of language (Sandikcioglu). The binary of Orient/Occident here only constitutes one example of a broad register of terms that Orientalism as ideological frame is based on.

The Language of Binary Thinking

Altogether an internally structured archive is built up from the literature that belongs to these experiences [Orientalism]. Out of this comes a restricted number of typical encapsulations: the journey, the history, the fable, the stereotype, the polemical confrontation. These are the lenses through which the Orient is experienced, and they shape the language, perception, and form of the encounter between East and West. (Said, *Orientalism* 58)

Said in this passage again employs a metaphor to demonstrate the workings of Orientalism as a master frame.[14] Orientalism on the ideological level gives way to further "lenses" shaping the vision of the Middle East. Nevertheless, the stories which make up this vision are products of language, and it is in the realm of language where Said locates the severe impact of Orientalism. Two sets of vocabulary and their respective connotations thus form the frame of Orientalism: binary thinking and inferiority/superiority connected to the binary.

When studying the way in which binary thinking is reflected in today's discourse, the opposition of *Orient* versus *Occident* only represents one vocabulary pair on the highest level of Orientalist discourse. Another very prominent binary is the terminology of *East* versus *West*. Said himself summarized the omni-presence of both terms as "over-all identity of something called 'the East' and something else called 'the West'" (*Orientalism* 257). Whereas East and West, on the one hand, underline the geographic nature of the global divide, several other constructions

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14 Despite acknowledging the importance of this passage to Said's argument, Homi Bhabha describes it as "underveloped" and "forgotten" (*Location* 104). This critique does not apply to the critical reception of the passage but to Said directly. Bhabha thus employs the passage to build up his own argument of reading stereotypes as "fetish" (*Location* 106).

involving this binary terminology have evolved. A popular practice is the contrasting of "Western and non-Western" cultures (Shohat and Stam 14). In addition, the terms *West* and *East* are also frequently applied to the individuals living in the respective cultures; meaning that Americans or Europeans are simply referred to as "Westerners" (Whitlock 26). As Armstrong analyzes, the ideological nature of this dichotomy not only emphasizes the awareness of conflict, but it often leads to a polarization in which "the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western […]" (113). A prominent term in this respect, which draws particular attention to the normative superiority of the West, is reflected in the use of the adjective "Westernized" (Tehranian 102).[15]

As Said demonstrated at length, the binary oppositions of *Orient/Occident* and *East/West*, are the products of a plethora of "myths and fantasies" created through language (Williams qtd. in Shohat and Stam 13). The real-world implications of these fables are reflected in the power dichotomy between *East* and *West*. This ideological impact has given rise to another prominent binary, namely, the opposition of *us* and *them*. Assigning who occupies which position obviously depends on the position of the one defining (Sandikcioglu). The history of colonialism and the emergence of science as Western project have ensured that the role division has become universal ideology. It was the *West*, i.e., "we," aiming to bring civilization to the *East*, i.e., "them" (Shohat and Stam 3).

This further division into *us* and *them* as linked to the idea of civilization reiterates the ideological nature of Orientalism. Civilization as Western concept finds its contrast in the idea of barbarism. This reinvokes the implicit reliance of values on countervalues which ultimately find expression in the language of binaries. Further binary pairs can therefore be detected in this repertoire of terms which circulate in the public discourse on Arabs and Muslims. These terms can be categorized according to different social realms. The following table gives an overview of these categories and respective binary vocabulary:

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15 As Raynold Williams points out, the geographical origin of the division between East and West is a fiction in itself due to its relativity. The Middle East from the perspective of China represents Western Asia (333). Shohat and Stam therefore label this complication "The Myth of the West" in one of their subchapter headings (13).

Table 2: Binary Vocabulary of Orientalism

Orientalism	Occident	Orient
Agent	American/European	Arab/Middle Easterner
	Us	Them
Location	West	East
	Here	There
Race	White	Black
Ideology	Enlightenment	Eastern Thought
Social Order	Democracy	Totalitarianism
	Secularism	Religious Authority
	Rule of Law	An Eye for an Eye
Economic Order	Capitalism	"Camel Trade"
Religion	Christianity	Islam
Orientalism	Occident	Orient
Other collective values	Progress	Backwardness
	Civilization	Barbarism
	Power	Weakness
	Maturity	Immaturity
	Rationality	Emotionality
	Stability	Instability
	Modesty	Exoticism

Source: Table by the author based on Sandikcioglu (also see Norris and Inglehart 205; Mignolo 19; Ta 161; Shohat and Stam 2-3; Wöhlert 2).

The ascription of these terms to different categories is not exclusive since some of them also bear characteristics of other categories. Such is the case, for example, with secularism versus religious authority. Depending on the respective theoretical focus, this binary could as well be grouped under the category of "Religion." The order of the categories entails a hierarchy in itself with the first two categories, namely, "Agents" and "Location," being the most inclusive ones. This division overspans the lower-level binary pairs. Most notable here is the significance of the ideology of enlightenment and the associated collective value of rational thought. Both values hint at the normative dimension of Orientalism at large and at the affective component of the binary vocabulary upholding it. Every component of the binaries therefore is linked to a specific value-connotation with *positive* or *strong*

being linked to the *West* and *negative* or *weak* ones with the *East*.[16] Since the Arab/Muslim within Orientalist history has become the object of this dichotomization rather than the "creator of discourse," he/she represents the stereotypical other in the normative binary structure (Aboul-Ela, "Is there an Arab" 737).

Empirical Evidence of Mediated Orientalism

One year after the Arab Spring swept the Middle East, headlines such as the following are daily news. "Bias in West's Response to Arab Spring" (Associated Press). These articles repetitively pit "Western governments" against "Arab autocratic rulers" (Associated Press, "Bias"). Symptomatic about these articles is not so much their specific content but the way in which these articles make use of binary vocabulary in order to convey this content. The term "West" is hardly ever accompanied by long explanations. Instead, this foundational element of binary discourse has found its way into the heads of the readers throughout history in a way that the different connotations of the term are established and need no further clarification. While this example highlights the general impression that Orientalist binaries in fact pervade the contemporary media discourse on Arabs and Muslims, empirical Media Studies have made increasing efforts to document and analyze the specific way in which Arabs, Muslims, and Arab Americans Muslims are represented. What differentiates these studies conducted in the field of Communication Studies from hermeneutical investigations carried out in the field of literary studies is the capacity to provide empirical evidence Orientalist framing as well as for the impact of this frame on the media public throughout several phases of its constitution

The first phase of empirical studies on Orientalism in the press dates back to the 1980s. At the time, empirical methods in Communication Studies such as content analysis became increasingly sophisticated. In addition, events in the Middle East fostered the heigthened interest in the relation between the image of Arabs and Muslims and their mediated representation. Following key events like the Oil Crisis in 1973 and the Iranian Hostage Crisis in 1979, studies with a theoretical focus on framing started to be conducted more frequently.[17] The results of these early[18] ex-

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16 Certainly, this value-connotation is not inherent to the terms themselves but already a consequence of their evaluative use in Orientalist discourse.

17 This went along with a rising interest in the depiction of ethnic minorities in the mass media at large, which has remained stable ever since (Wöhlert 26). This attention to ethnic minority representations in Media Studies also triggered a more nuanced understanding of different ethnic groups. In the U.S., for example, research on ethnic minority coverage for a long time was dominated by African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians in former times (Wöhlert 28).

aminations underline Orientalism as overarching ideological frame for the depiction of Arabs. Orientalism here specifically functioned through "de-contextualization and de-historization" (Cherkaoui 110). Keywords which frequently occur in code-books of the respective analyses include "Orient versus Occident" (Wöhlert 31) as well as the contrasting of civilization versus barbarism (Wöhlert 2). These binaries are often accompanied by the "'us-and-them' dichotomy" (Cainkar 85). The norma-tive charging of these binaries was achieved by references to the Arab as "evil" (Cainkar 289) and "violent" (Wöhlert 28). These results speak a clear language as to how the use of Orientalist terminology fostered the production of Orientalism as ideological master frame (Steuter 259).

The second major wave of studies on Arab stereotypes occurred in the aftermath of the Gulf War.[19] The tendency to present Arabs and Muslims within the Oriental-ist frame peaked during this period (Cherkaoui 125). Orientalism was used to sketch the image of the Arab as enemy,[20] not only in a political but cultural and moral sense. The basic technique to achieve this effect rested on polarization. The language of binaries thus played the most important role to activate and maintain stereotypical schemata (Sandikcioglu). Most obvious in the coverage of the Gulf War was the lack of background information on the conflict. Rather, the coverage was structured within an "*Iraq* and *US*" grid with a very limited thematic focus on diplomatic and military affairs (Iyengar and Simon 180). These findings underline the operation of the Orientalist frame as an ideology. Esra Sandikcioglu, based on

18 Some of the studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s also included media material which reached further back than Shaheen's investigation of *The TV Arab* (Ghareeb 4). The dates of the studies therefore do not necessarily reflect the media representation at the time of publication. An example is Laurance Michalak's comparative study on popu-lar culture films showing Arabs of the 1940s and the 1960s. His conclusion regarding the development of Orientalist stereotyping in the media is sobering. As he states, "the Arab world had changed but the Arab stereotype had not" (qtd. in Cainkar 89).

19 Especially the second Gulf War plays an important role in Communication Studies since it represents the first war of modern history which was completely covered by the media to the degree that the media themselves became the story of the war (P. Taylor 15). It is thus also referred to as the first major "media war" in history (P. Taylor 104). A similar turning point in war reporting was identified in the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. This was the first time when so-called "embedded journalists" reported directly from the war front, a concept which became severely challenged afterwards (Lewis et al. 2).

20 Debra Merskin in her article "The Construction of Enemies" explores the rhetorical and strategic mechanisms underlying the creation of enemies. An important finding is that en-emies compose an essential part of hegemonic politics to serve political mobilization and distract from internal difficulties. Contrary to the assumption that enemies are a negative component in the relations of nations, she thus notes: "Nations 'need' enemies" (159).

an in-depth analysis of metaphors used to taper the *East*/*West* binary, identifies "Orientalism as the 'ideology' behind the metaphorical Gulf War […]."

Empirical studies on Arabs and Muslims in the media again soared in the period following 9/11 (Wöhlert 29). The tradition to frame the Arab/Muslim in the media by drawing on Orientalist ideology thus experienced another upflift in the early years of the new millennium. Respective content analyses indicated that the coverage at this time did not differ much from previous periods. The key terms used to manifest the binary between *East* and *West* naturally stood under the influence of the terrorist threat. Reports predominantly employed terms such as safety, security, peace, and progress in order to contrast them with war and backwardness in the Middle East. As Michael Ryan in a content analysis of 104 editorials published in ten major newspapers observes, 75 contained strongly one-sided stories in order to gain support for the War of the "West" against the "barbaric East" (363; Tehranian 101). Ryan describes this use of Orientalist vocabulary as a "singular narrative" which characterized the coverage. Similar results have been found for other media formats such as TV and radio news (Nacos and Torres-Reyna 150).

With respect to the range of the Orientalist frame, the majority of studies focus on the role of U.S. media. On a domestic level, their framing efforts stressed the propagation of Enlightenment thought[21] to foster "national collectivity" (Wöhlert 42; Naber, "Look, Mohammed" 278). This gave way to a renewed sense of "American Orientalism" (Cherkaoui 85).[22] Evidence of Orientalist framing post-9/11 and before, however, is by far not limited to the U.S. Similar results with respect to the lasting use of Orientalist binaries have been found in news studies on European countries. Respective comparative studies revealed similar frame patterns in countries like Germany and Britain (Wöhlert 16).

Overall, the vast amount of studies conducted on the framing of Arabs and Muslims in public discourse provides overwhelming evidence for Orientalism as ideological media frame. In order to reveal in how far this frame actually transfers to the wider media audience, public opinion data need to be consulted. Not surprisingly, these studies mirror the Orientalist bias. Early opinion polls conducted in 1981 show that the American audience in particular used the adjectives "barbaric," "cruel," "treacherous," "warlike," and "bloodthirsty" to refer to Arabs (Cainkar 88). The

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21 Slingerland critically illuminates that "Western culture" ultimately treats Enlightenment thought and the focus on science virtually like a "religion" by endowing it with superb prestige (221). In light of the fact that this emphasis on science above all is used as secular advantage of the "West" in order to create a distance to the religiously dominated "East," this comment is quite ironical.

22 Cherkaoui identifies American Orientalism as sub-form of Orientalism as a century-old phenomenon which reaches back to the depiction of the Arab as "barbarian Oriental" in 19th-century literature, such as Susanna Rowson's *Slaves in Algiers* (89).

dominance of this binary language has remained fairly stable throughout the past decades. Particularly noteworthy is the affective impact of the frame. Negative depictions thus lead to an overall lack of skepticism toward Arabs and Arab countries. Gallup polls in 2006 showed that 51% of respondents thought that countries in the Middle East cannot be trusted (Wöhlert 1). Again, this impact of the ideological frame proves to be a transnational phenomenon. Opinion polls conducted in European countries show similar results. In the German GFE[23] Survey carried out in 2005, 70% of respondents stated that "Muslim culture does not fit into the Western world" (Wöhlert 1). The latest Pew Global Attitudes Survey documents similar results concerning the culture clash between *East* and *West*. Especially in France and Germany, 62% and 61% of the respondents state that the relations with Muslim[24] countries are bad, followed by 48% in the U.S. ("Common Concerns").

These empirical findings on the constitution of Orientalism as meta-frame and its impact on public opinion underscore not only its relevance but its ideological nature. The Orientalist attitudes prevailing in the various media publics inside and outside the U.S. reflect the value hierarchy associated with Orientalist binaries. Certain values therefore continue to have a positive and thus *Western* connotation while others evoke negative associations in connection to the *East*. This value-attribution in turn shapes the image that Western audiences have of the Middle East not only as geographic and cultural entity, but also of Arabs and Arab Americans as individual representatives of these cultures. "*Arabness*" in its broadest conception therefore gains a negative connotation (Cainkar 85).

This overview of empirical studies conducted on the media framing of Arabs confirms the hypothesis established by Said more than three decades ago. "In the system of knowledge about the Orient," he wrote in *Orientalism*, "the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics [...]. Direct observation or circumstantial description of the Orient are the fictions presented by writing on the Orient [...]" (177). Empirical Media Studies have meanwhile found concise instruments of observation to reveal these "fictions" in the writing on the Orient. In contrast to case studies and hermeneutical analyses on stereotypes in Literary and Cultural Studies, the empirical framing studies in combination with public opinion data reveal that Orientalism is not "an artificial opposition between the East and the West," as Wang Ning suggests (65). Rather, despite its constructed nature, Orientalism represents the empirical reality of past and present media discourse and the perceived reality of the majority of media consumers around the

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23 GFE stands for "group-focused enmity" (Wöhlert 1). The survey is conducted annually to record shifts of collective social attitudes.

24 The report uses the terminology "Muslim" to refer to respondents in predominantly Muslim Arab countries ("Common Concerns" 4). A further differentiation between Muslim Arabs and Arabs is not provided.

world. Consequently, Orientalism maintains the status of an ideology which reigns "civilization and culture" (Said, *Orientalism* 2). It is this encompassing nature which marks its status as a meta-frame. As it is the nature of a meta-frame, Orientalism therefore also leaves its marks on lower-level schemata.

3.2 The Political Frame: Everlasting War on Terror

Orientalism as an overarching ideological framework surrounding the representation of Arabs and Muslims has been a century-old phenomenon (Mignolo 67). Within this meta-frame, further frames have formed which affect "the stereotypical ideas and images regarding *the Orient* which *the West* has still not been able to give up and probably never will" (Sandikcioglu). The distinction between Arabs in general and images of Arabs living in the *West* is however difficult to draw. The lack of personal experience with Arabs in the diaspora in daily life and the high degree of mediatization on Arabs and the Middle East gives way to multiple layers of frames surrounding the stereotype. The most important influence is of a political nature. Theodore Pulcini points out, "one must remember that the voice of Arab Americans is muffled or magnified as a result of political developments in the Middle East. Perhaps no other American ethnic group is so affected by political and military events abroad" (51). This impact of foreign political events on the domestic view of Arabs in America contributes to the maintenance of a political frame which is marked by one key term: terror. A series of military conflicts in the Middle East gave way to the emergence of this frame.

   The first key event that became the subject of high mediatization in the *Arab World* was the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. The occupation of East Jerusalem and Gaza by the Israeli military received intense media coverage around the world, particularly in the U.S. (Ghareeb 6; Palmer 144). The Six-Day-War and the corresponding U.S. policy decisions were the prime news in all major news outlets in the U.S., and they significantly shaped the way in which the global but especially the American public saw the Middle East (Cainkar 84). As Allen Palmer in his study on various media representations of Arabs during the conflict displays, a series of stereotypes which still circulate today originated in this period. Political cartoons, for example, depicted violent Arabs rooted in ancient Islamic practice and Arab oil sheikhs[25]

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25 This image of the rich oil sheikh, that had already shaped early 19th-century travel accounts, later experienced another upswing during the 1973 Oil Crisis (Shaheen, *TV Arab* 15). Even public agencies did not refrain from employing severe racism against Arabs at the time. The example of bumper stickers distributed by the Department of Energy

(146). Altogether, the War of 1967 marks the most crucial event in the media framing of Arabs. It gave way to the "Western version" of a narrative focusing on "Arabs as aggressors" (Cainkar 84). This in turn also severely shaped the self-image of Arabs around the world. Louise Cainkar therefore calls it the "Arab American awakening" (84) and attributes this effect to the racialized and inferior depiction which Arabs during the time had to endure (87). The key event which today is mostly referred to by mentioning the year 1967 and the "mediated events" which accompanied it thus had a long-term impact on the depiction of Arabs in succeeding decades (Fritsch-El Alaoui 138-39). It marked the turning point from which onwards the image of Arabs and Muslims as enemies established the norm in mediated discourse (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 11).[26] Above all, it immensely heightened the political awareness of Arabs and Muslims around the world (Aruri 33).

The second major historical moment in the media framing history of Arabs was the Gulf War. The war was the first war of the modern mass media world which was covered in detail around the clock. Upon the moment when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the eyes of the American public could watch every move (Khadduri and Ghareeb 3).[27] Ever since, numerous studies have shown that the vast majority of reporting during the Gulf War employed Orientalist framing (Wöhlert 32). Sandikcioglu unfolds the argument that "this culture-specific cognitive model helped frame the debate about the Gulf crisis by conceptualizing Iraq as the incarnation of the Orient […] which has been symptomatic of the age-old relationship between the Orient and the West." This Orientalist framing of the war was linked to the manifestation of existing stereotypes of the Arab as backward and violent (Cainkar 90). In result, Arabs found themselves facing severe identity struggles. On the one hand, the real war taking place in the Middle East fired back at the intercultural home front of America. Those who combined Arab and American identity in their biographies therefore faced an identity split. On the other hand, the military war was accompanied by a media war which brought to light the construction of

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demonstrates this. It contained the slogan: "The Faster You Drive, The Richer They Get. ... Driving 75 is Sheik; Driving 55 is Chic" (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 12).

26 In the context of Arab American autobiographies, Said is one of the most outspoken figures showing how much the war of 1967 impacted the life and image of Arabs around the world (Hornung 371). "The Question of Palestine" and its right of existence would become a life-long theme in all his writings (Stein 317). Nadia El-Haj even interprets this immense devotion to the cause of Palestine as an "over-identification" with political purposes and sees it as Said's major legacy (549).

27 Khadduri and Ghareeb even speak of an "American and British media campaign" which directed Saddam Husein to make several public statements critical of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East (87). This underlines the almost theatrical function mediatization and media framing can gain at times.

"identity" and "counter-identity" between *East* and *West* (Sandikcioglu). Both aspects severely affected not only the public image of Arabs and Muslims but their self-image. The Gulf War thus "pitted their Arab and American identities against one another" (Hatem 376). Ideals of multi-culturalism and hybrid identity became unattainable. A radio commentator at the time summarized this lasting impact on binary framing in the following words: "In war there are no hyphenated Americans, just Americans and non-Americans" (qtd. in Hatem 373).[28]

Numerous other events could be added to the long list of military conflicts which shook the Middle East in the past decades. No other events, however, were so constitutive of the media framing of Arabs than the two wars (Wöhlert 19). As meta-analyses in Media Studies conducted on the 1967 War and the Gulf War indicate, the media framing on these events differed from the Orientalism previously in place. Certainly, Orientalist binaries provided the overall-structure of the coverage which again highlights Orientalism's ideological and far-reaching impact. Furthermore, the media coverage of the wars added another layer to the framed representation of Arabs. From now on, Arabs were not only seen within the framework of the exotic other anymore. Rather, political conflict and war as "crisis-laden negative events" started to dominate the characterization (Wöhlert 34).

With respect to the scope of this political conflict frame, it is crucial to emphasize that both key events obviously took place in the Middle East. From the perspective of the American media audience and the one of Arabs living in the diaspora, the Middle East represents foreign ground. The high degree of mediaitization, however, transcended any cultural or geographic boundaries. Framing processes triggered by events in the Middle East and framed representations of Arabs living there were transformed into international frames surrounding the image of the *Arab/Muslim* as global prototype. Arab self- and other-definitions in the U.S. and around the world therefore rely on media frames that are in no way related to Arabs in the diaspora. This impact of international frames on national and personal identity definition gives way to the diffentiation between the "external Arab" (Wöhlert

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28 Even though Iranian literature is not a particular focus of this work, it must be mentioned that this framed depiction of the Gulf War had severe consequences for the relation between the U.S. and Iran. While many Iranian intellectuals at the time made their new home in America and continue to do so up to the present, the negative reports fostered the notion that "Americans are haunted by Iran" (Whitlock 163). This lasting fear of Iranian politics might be an underlying reason for the prevailing interest in Iranian literature which often exceeds the one in Arab and Arab American literature (Whitlock 171). The rise of Iranian literature in the U.S., however, was also clearly influenced by the political event of the Iranian revolution (Whitlock 161).

34) and "internal Arabs and Muslims" (Wöhlert 18).[29] Both images are inherently interwoven and dominate the cognitive frames Americans have of Arabs, as well as the ones Arab Americans have of themselves. Evelyn Alsultany highlights this inseparability: "The image of Arabs cannot really be separated from the one of Arab Americans. The stereotypes of Arabs inform perceptions and experiences of Arab Americans" (Personal interview).

The major impact of military key events in the Middle East obviously had a sustaining impact on the framing history of Arabs (Wöhlert 29). Under the heavy influence of Orientalism, the political conflict frame therefore took the shape of a lower-level frame in and of itself. It is largely due to the significance of violent political events that images of the internal and external Arab can hardly be delineated (Aboul-Ela, "Edward Said's *Out of Place*" 15). This political framing of Arabs, however, is not only a consequence of single key events in the political arena. Rather, ongoing political unrest has further contributed to the lasting association of Arabs with political unrest. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict represents the major ongoing political trouble spot in this respect. As it turns out, the media framing surrounding the conflict is shaped as a well-known biblical metaphor.

Israel in Palestine: David versus Goliath in the Holy Land

Much of the problem comes from the stark reality that Palestinian politics are essentially Arab politics, whereas the U.S. and Western Europe inhabit a totally different world, in which, for example, the media, the academy, and the research institutes, churches, professional associations, and labor unions of civil society play almost as important a role as the central government in political society. (Said, *Question of Palestine* xxvii)

Said in these lines hints at yet another layer of the political frame surrounding the image of the Arab worldwide. The earlier wars in the region, particularly the one of 1967, only marked the beginning of a long conflict-laden political history. Today, this series of conflicts is referred to as "Middle East conflict" (Nacos and Torres-Reyna 147). At the heart of this conflict remains the struggle over Palestine. This supposedly Middle Eastern conflict, however, is not restrained to this geographic location. Rather, the Middle East here, due to the involvement of Europe and the U.S., takes the shape of a political metaphor depicting the cultural war between *East* and *West* as struggle between David and Goliath.

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29 Wöhlert's differentiation between the internal and external Arab stands out among the wide range of studies conducted on the media representation of Arabs. The large majority of these studies do not explore in detail in how far the coverage of foreign political events must always be read in connection to the self-perception of Arabs living in the diaspora.

What is now commonly referred to as the Middle East conflict originated with a series of key events following the 1967 War. Among them are the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the two intifadas, the war in Lebanon 2006, and the failed diplomatic attempts to negotiate peace agreements ("Time-line"). Almost every day, new incidents could be added to this list. What all of these events have in common is their high degree of media coverage. Romy Wöhlert found that before 9/11, 33.3% of all print media articles on the Middle East focused on the Israel-Palestine conflict (92). This result is in line with earlier studies that document the significant dominance of Arab-Israeli relations in the general coverage on the Middle East (Ghareeb 4). This omnipresence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict therefore largely contributed to the emergence of the political conflict frame surrounding Arabs and Muslims. In fact, this specific conflict has become the epitome of political violence in the entire region.

The almost symbolic significance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, however, is not only a consequence of high mediatization as such. Rather, the way in which this media coverage has been characterized reflects a larger power trajectory linked to the image of Israel and Palestine. The key concept which gave way to this notion is Zionism. The term Zionism reaches back to the early days of the foundation of Israel in the Holy Land. It was meant as a "philosophy of Jewish empowerment" (Bouzid 4). Despite the colonial origins of the struggle of the Jewish people to found a state, the concept largely had a religious connotation of improvement and uplift. Meanwhile, Zionism has lost most of its positive resonance. Following the continued settlement efforts of Israelis and countless violent clashes, Zionism today mostly indicates the aggressive expansion policy of Israel (Bouzid 46).

Zionism has therefore turned from a religious to a highly political and ideological concept. Ideology here not only refers to Palestinian-Israeli relations as such, but to the larger power trajectories on an international level. Based on the political involvement of the U.S. and Europe in the Middle East, two major fronts have emerged: the U.S. and parts of Europe as the *Western* supporters of Jewish policy and Palestine as the Arab opponent on the other. This power division of the world with the U.S. as leading hegemon supporting Israel versus Palestine and its weaker Arab partners reflects former colonial relations. The image which emerges from this political conflict is a familiar one: the conflict between David and Goliath.

The media coverage of this binary opposition reflects this ideological battle in a way that pro-Israel sentiment has largely been fostered by the media and in the realm of academia, as critics and Arab Americans have long claimed (Aoudé 145). Zionism here again marks the key word to describe the ideological dimension of this "imbalance" (Ghareeb 4). Muslim students at the University of California in

their magazine *Al Kalima*[30] present their view on the relation between Zionism and media representations with drastic words:

Zionism has been a thorn in the side of the lovers of justice, peace and oppressed peoples around the world. Zionist-controlled Western media gives us a picture of 'Israel' that makes it seem democratic, just and fair [...]. The reality of the situation is that Zionists have been oppressing, torturing, and killing and ethnically-cleansing Christians, Muslims, blacks and whites […]. (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 188)

Studies on the framing of the Middle East conflict have repetitively revealed that this pro-Israeli sentiment which is supposedly spread by the media is not only a subjective feeling on the part of Arabs or a "media conspiracy theory" (Ghareeb 21). The news coverage about the Middle East in U.S. media indeed has been found to be biased throughout the past decades. Studies focusing on the use of language in news reports reveal "classic Zionist rhetorics" and "racist defenses of the Jewish state" (Stein 318).[31] Further studies on the images drawn of Arabs and Muslims in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict underscore this "pro-Israeli bias" (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 190). Major news media thus seem to have adopted a commandment which continues to rule U.S. foreign policy. It states that "thou shalt not criticize Israel [...]" (Aruri 34). Although this favorable media stance toward Israel has slightly changed after 9/11[32] and the public discussion of unjustified

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30 Literally translated, 'al kalimah' means 'the word.' The student magazine is an example of how the identity definition of Arabs and Muslims is linked to the realm of politics. As the editors state in their self-description: "We strive to shift from the stereotypical, apathetic, and insular college experience, and instead move towards gaining a deeper understanding of not only community and domestic issues, but also of international topics as well. By questioning societal norms and expectations, we make it Alkalima's goal to bring back serious intellectual dialogue about the critical issues that students find important, necessary, and impactful" (Alkalima). This intention highlights the value attributed to media publications to convey knowledge about Arab Americans and thus change deceived perceptions.

31 Rebecca Stein identifies particular images and locations which incorporate and display what she calls a "Zionist fantasy" (325). One of these places is the café which, while representing a location of bourgeois intellectual exchange, also constitutes a major target of bombing attacks. Stein terms this "café discourse" which permeates the media (321).

32 Brigitte Nacos and Oscar Torres-Reyna analyzed media biases in the coverage of Muslim and Arab Americans before and after 9/11. As they demonstrate, the amount of positive and supportive reports actually increased in the six-month period after 9/11 whereas negative coverage declined (148).

violence exerted by Israel against Palestine, the conflict between Palestine and Israel remains intertwined with global power relations (Wöhlert 19).[33]

Image 2: "Israeli David and Goliath"

Source: A young Palestinian boy throwing rocks at an Israeli tank (Wrong).[34]

The overall relevance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the media thus exceeds the boundaries of the conflict as a news issue itself. Due to the involvement of the U.S. in support of Israeli politics, the conflict continues to reflect postcolonial trajectories (Stein 331). Zionism hereby seems "to enjoy a near monopoly" in the coverage (Aruri 34)[35] while Muslims and Arabs are struggling to find their own voice in the depiction of the conflict (Nacos and Torres-Reyna 143). The increasing critique of this bias has hardly changed this empirical finding (Stein 317). Read within the hierarchy of frames surrounding the construction of Arab identity worldwide, the Middle East conflict thus contributes considerably to the maintenance of a political conflict frame

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33 A series of publications taking a critical stance toward Israel and the influence of Jews on U.S. foreign policy have started to bring the pro-Israeli stance of the U.S. government to critical attention. The most-often cited work is The Israel Lobby by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt. Even though the authors count as experts in the field of international relations and foreign policy, a huge portion of their work is devoted to the influence of the media in fostering the cause of Zionism and pro-Israel support. As they state in their subchapter entitled "The Media Is the Message" based on McLuhan's influential thesis: "This claim [pro-Israeli media bias] might sound to some like the old anti-Semitic accusation that 'Jews control the media.' It is anything but" (169).

34 N. T. Wrong is the acronym of an anonymous blogger who specializes on the Middle East. In the text accompanying the picture, the author explains: "It's not only sticks and stones that hurt our bones. The 'David and Goliath' metaphor has provided a powerful lens through which to view the Israeli-Arab conflict. Moreover, the metaphor has helped determine the way in which the Israeli-Arab conflict has developed in the real world." This double-metaphor of David and Goliath as "lens" again powerfully underlines the framing effect of the image.

35 The notion of a Zionist bias in U.S. culture, media, and society severely supported the political awareness of Arab Americans. This also led to the foundation of several organizations at the interface of academia and political activism, such as the AAUG (Association of Arab-American University Graduates) (Aruri 34).

around the identity definition of Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. and in other diaspora countries (Wiegand 236; Wöhlert 93). With the events of 9/11, this political frame shaped by Zionism gained yet another twist.

The War on Terror Frame

Although terrorism had already accompanied the political framing of Arabs within the Zionist framework of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, September 11 as most significant key event of the past decades changed the discursive climate considerably. Rebecca Stein critically summarizes the rhetoric of the media landscape following the terrorist attacks: "What one witnessed was a polyphonic discursive sphere in which the language of Zionist coloniality and Palestinian terror competed for space and audibility within the mainstream media in relatively unprecedented ways" (318).[36] The previous dominance of Zionism in the binary discourse on the the Middle East did not become replaced. Rather, Zionism became incorporated into a more inclusive frame that became known as the war on terror.

Today, even those who were still in their early childhood when the twin towers collapsed are only too familiar with the word terrorism.[37] In historical terms, though, terrorism is quite a novel invention of society. The use of the word "terrorist" to refer to politically violent anarchists only became widespread in Europe at the end of the 19th century (Cherkaoui 30). Since then, only a few scholars in the field of Cultural Studies have undertaken the attempt to define the concept before using it. One of them is Pippa Norris who describes terrorism as "*the systematic use of coercive intimidation against civilians for political goals*" (6). According to this definition, terrorism is identified by "the techniques, targets, and goals" it pursues. Norris adds, "all these attributes are regarded as necessary and sufficient for an act to qualify as terrorism. *'Terrorists'* are those who employ the methods of terrorism"

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36 With respect to the impact of the 9/11 attacks on media history, not only the magnitude of the event itself was unprecedented but the way in which it was covered. In the words of communication scholar François Debrix, it was the "'first terrorist attack' in real time" (2). Debrix here refers to the fact that, by the time the second plane crashed into the towers, CNN had already started its live coverage.

37 Reports from young-generation Arab and Muslim Americans illustrate the paradox that, although they did not consciously experience the terrorist attacks due to their young age, they still become the victims of hostilities resulting from 9/11 (Chertoff et al.). The fact that many of those committing these hostilities also were in their kindergarten years when the attacks happened, underlines this as an example of inherited discrimination without immediate experience as motivation.

(6).[38] In the context of present-day international politics, the term terrorism experienced a notable upswing after the 1967 War (Cherkaoui 101). In the following decades, international key events, such as the hostage crisis at the 1972 Olympics, the Lockerbie bombing and violent acts by the IRA and ETA in Spain, continued to boost the use of terrorist vocabulary (Kern, Just, and Norris 285). In addition, the Palestinian resistance to Jewish settlements also has come to be read through the lens of terrorism.

The real upswing of terrorism as dominant media frame thus occurred following the 9/11 attacks (Kern, Just and Norris 290; Ruigrok and van Atteveldt 74). Due to the magnitude of the event, its effect on the role of the U.S. as world hegemon, and the feeling of vulnerability, the familiar connotation of the general terrorist frame did not meet the discourse needs of the public anymore (Ryan 363). In line with the theoretical assumptions explaining frame shifts, 9/11 thus triggered the emergence of a new frame. Following President Bush's declaration of the "war on terrorism," the media quickly took up the terminology and adjusted it to the media logic (Barnett and Reynolds 55; Naber, "Look, Mohammed" 267).[39] As quantitative and qualitative analyses on major U.S. news outlets suggest, the "War on Terrorism" frame quickly became the major news frame in the aftermath of the attacks (Altheide, "Fear, Terrorism" 11; Cherkaoui 103; Barnett and Reynolds 4). Even minor political incidents which did not show a clear relation to 9/11 or terrorism at large came to be presented and interpreted within this "domestic cultural filter" (Weimann and Winn qtd. in Ruigrok and van Atteveldt 73).[40] Research on the CNN coverage right after the attacks shows that the WOT as dominant mode of interpretation was clearly drawn toward military responses and the justification to secure unity (Ruigrok and van Atteveldt 73). In addition, the spread of nationalist sentiment[41] and one-sided media reports sought to push a nationalist agenda (Rajagopal 76). This went along with an affective bias to evoke feelings of fear in the audience

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38 On the basis of this definition, all U.S. military acts following the September 11 attacks show sufficient criteria to count as terrorism. This finding confirms the perception of Arabs who have come to regard U.S. policy decisions in the aftermath of the attacks as "counter-terrorism" (Lyon 20).

39 Barnett and Reynolds conceptualize the WOT as separate dominant frame surrounding Arab American identity definition. In the present study, however, the WOT is regarded as part of a more comprehensive political frame within the multi-level frame model.

40 Ruigrok and van Atteveldt refer to the WOT as "post-cold war frame" (68). This is in line with other studies arguing that the WOT replaced the Cold War as dominant global media frame (Norris, Kern, and Just, Introduction 15). This serves as evidence for the capacity of major key events to replace long-standing cognitive frames in public discourse.

41 Some authors refer to the renewed sense of nationalism after 9/11 and the resulting measures of racial profiling as "neo-nationalism" (Ta 143).

to justify political measures against terrorism (Altheide, "Fear, Terrorism" 12). While counter-voices in favor of alternative schemata to interpret the political events were strategically silenced, designated experts focusing on terrorism manifested the WOT as dominant cognitive frame (Cherkaoui 109). This was reflected in the frequent use of vocabulary directly linked to the WOT, such as terrorism, terrorist, war, attacks, etc. (Cherkaoui 130).

While many studies have focused primarily on the role of the WOT in the U.S., international comparisons with European countries reveal that terrorism became a global media frame (Ruigrok and van Atteveldt 84; Wöhlert 105). Despite the common significance of the WOT across nations, there are also differences as to how the WOT frame was fabricated according to the specific demands of domestic audiences. Affective elements of the media frame constitution therefore vary. A comparative study by Nel Ruigrok and Wouter van Atteveldt under the title "Global Angling with a Local Angle: How U.S., British, and Dutch Newspapers Frame Global and Local Terrorist Attacks" (2007) devotes particular attention to these local nuances. The analysis of four different terrorist events in the U.S. and Europe demonstrates that the coverage of these events is either localized or globalized, meaning that either very specific local circumstances are related to the explanation of terrorism or far-reaching global aspects (80). In the majority of cases under investigation, local angling dominated the picture. This also held true for the coverage accompanying the commemoration of the attacks. "Stories were framed, angled, geared and worded to suit the emotional and cognitive framework of audiences at home," Ruigrok and van Atteveldt conclude (73). This "domestication" of news based on the WOT frame according to domestic and even local needs was also confirmed by further studies (Ruigrok and van Atteveldt 73; Kern, Just, and Norris 293). All these empirical results emphasize the impact of the WOT frame on lower-level national and even local news framing, whereby "national worldviews derived from the international system greatly shape the interpretation and framing of the causes of the terrorist attacks" (Barnett and Reynolds 48).

In order to demonstrate that the WOT frame of interpretation, in fact, was a media fabrication and not merely the result of real-world political developments, the framing dynamics need to be read in comparison to the actual occurrence of terrorist incidents (Kern, Just, and Norris 281). Obviously, terrorism as phenomenon of political violence did not originate in 2001, yet with the introduction of the WOT, the terrorist frame gained a different quality (Allen et al. 257). This change can be read from the background of a long-term development. Beginning in the 1980s, the number of actual terrorist attacks decreased on an international level (Kern, Just, and Norris 282). Whereas figures record an average of 437 incidents per year in the 1970s, the 1980s first witnessed a slight increase, with the absolute figures then falling again in the 1990s to 383 incidents per year (Kern, Just, and Norris 286). The coverage of these events in the media for the most part reflects this real-world

development (Kern, Just, and Norris 290). The tremendous rise of the terrorism frame in the years after 9/11 stands in complete opposite to this trend. An example from the print media is provided by the *New York Times* coverage. Whereas the number of articles referring to Arabs, Muslims, Islam, and terrorism ranged at 37 in the period from September 2000 to March 2001, the number increased to 376 from September 2001 to March 2002 (Nacos 139). This means an overall increase by more than 1,000%. Whereby the actual number of terrorist incidents worldwide continued to decline at this time, the WOT experienced its unprecedented upswing in a way which does not reflect the actual development of global terrorism (Kern, Just, and Norris 289; "Global Conflict Trends").[42] As Pippa Norris and her colleagues in their study on the news framing of the war on terror conclude, it was not terrorism itself that changed its nature after 9/11, it was the public perception of it (Norris, Kern, and Just 4).

Altogether, these findings on the WOT media frame underline the importance of political events for the public framing of Arabs and Muslims. The WOT changed the nature of this political conflict frame in way that it now incorporates many political concepts which had already ruled the public discourse on Arabs in previous times. Consequently, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Zionism are not seen separately from the terrorist framework anymore. The global dominance of the WOT frame further complicates the framed identity definition of Arabs and Arab Americans. Although the rhetoric of "wanted: dead or alive" originally referred to Arabs living in the Middle East, it is now inherently linked to the way in which Arabs living in the diaspora are seen by the public (Merskin 157). This trajectory has especially fostered the conflation of the internal with the external Arab in the eye of the American public. Even worse, the Arab is not merely *Arab or Muslim* anymore, he/she has become the incarnation of a stereotypical terrorist.

The Framed Internal/External Terrorist

Hardly hours had passed after the attacks of September 11 until the U.S. government publicly voiced what the media had been speculating before: Arabs "did it" (Nacos 6). The WOT frame that emerged afterwards targeted Arabs as the enemies of the world. The omnipresence of this frame consequently affected all Arabs and

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42 Due to the different data used by authors analyzing the relation between real-world terrorism and the WOT frame, it is difficult to provide an exact comparison of the dynamics. Whereas some studies reveal a sharp increase in global terrorist attacks in the years after 2001, others identify a steady decline. The reason for these divergences must be seen in different definitions of international terrorist attacks and varying means of data collection. All studies, however, agree on the finding that the absolute number of terrorist incidents post-9/11 is below the one in the 1980s ("Global Conflict Trends").

Muslims in the United States and elsewhere, not just those who "did it." Debra Merskin summarizes this development in the following equation according to which the media presented "all Muslims as Arab and all Arabs as terrorists" (158). This simplified notion of Arabs and Muslims provides a glimpse at the strong impact the WOT media frame had on public discourse. A range of public opinion data confirm that the WOT frame turned into a powerful cognitive frame in the audience (Panagopoulos 608). The distinction between Arab terrorists and Arab American citizens has been lost since then.

Obviously, the impact of the WOT frame on public discourse not only depended on the frequency of the coverage but on the particular set up of the frame. Content analyses of news media representations of Arabs and Muslims post 9/11 confirm the dominance of previous Orientalist stereotypes within the political frame. In addition to these pre-existing stereotypes, the Arab in times of the WOT became increasingly depicted as politically oppressive and dictatorial (Cainkar 85). This contributed to the manifestation of the image of Arabs as "bloodthirsty terrorists" (James Zogby qtd. in Cainkar 86). Moreover, the conflation of religious and political interpretations became reflected in the emphasis on Islamic fundamentalism. The most prominent stereotype which combined all negative characteristics spread within the WOT frame was the one of Arabs as "Bearded Terrorists" (Naber, "Look, Mohammed" 295). This bearded terrorist personified all negative evocations linked to the WOT frame and came to serve as universal emblem of the evil Arab (Tehranian 103; Cainkar 89). As Merskin metaphorically explains, "the 'Face of Terror' is not only that of Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein but also all persons of Arab descent, evoking the simulacrum of all Middle Eastern-looking men as the face of terrorism" (158).

When comparing this media-created image of the Arab as terrorist with the cognitive frames circulating in the audience, the effectiveness of the WOT frame becomes apparent. The specific stereotype of the Arab terrorist fell on fruitful ground for it had been an essential element of the framing of Arabs since the Gulf War. Negative views of Arabs and approval ratings of the war could thus directly be traced to the media framing of the Operation Desert Storm[43] (Allen et al. 257-58).[44]

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43 Operation Desert Storm is the term of the military strike conducted in the first Gulf War. The term is frequently used to highlight the difference to the Iraq War of 2003. The latter is also referred to as second Gulf War (Lewis et al. 27).

44 The analyses of the severe impact of media framing during the first Gulf War also reveal striking mechanisms of "reframing." The coverage of the war was severely shaped by technological and military vocabulary. This register was actively changed, however, when the U.S. accidentally bombed a baby milk factory. The coverage then started to be presented within a humanitarian frame (Allen et al. 282). Officials also promoted that the factory had actually been a bomb factory. As research results by Amy Jasperson and

This time, the stereotypical images conveyed by the WOT frame had a similar but even stronger cultural impact on Americans and their view of Arabs and Muslims as terrorists (Kern, Just, and Norris 293). A figure which strikingly underlines this immediate impact of terrorist framing on public opinion is provided by a Gallup survey. Before the attacks, terrorism was not considered to be a pressing issue. Immediately after 9/11, however, the percentage of respondents stating that terrorism was the "most important problem facing the nation" skyrocketed to 49%. Even by spring 2003, this number remained five times higher than in pre-WOT times (Kern, Just, and Norris 290). Surveys conducted on the views of the American public on Arabs and Muslims also confirm the dominance of the terrorist frame. A poll conducted in September 2002 revealed that 33% of the respondents declared that Arab Americans are "sympathetic to terrorists," a figure which doubled when compared to 18% in October 2001 (Panagopouluos 613). Later surveys show the continuation of this trend. In a poll conducted by *USA Today* in July 2006, 34% of the respondents believed that American Muslims tend to sympathize with AlQaeda (Wöhlert 2). Again, international comparisons show that this strong adoption of the terrorist frame by the media audience was not an American phenomenon only.[45]

What tends to be forgotten with respect to the constitution of the Arab-as-terrorist stereotype in the media audience is the effect the WOT frame had on the self-definition of Muslims, Arabs, and Arab Americans. The available data speak a clear language in this context. Arabs living in the shadow of the WOT frame developed an urgent need to display a collective "Arab identity" to oppose public stereotypes (James Zogby 75). In some cases, this longing led to an increased focus on religion. Nadine Naber expresses this indivisibility of global international and national images in the self-definition of Arabs in the chapter heading: "Muslim First at the Intersections of the 'Global,' the 'National,' and the 'Local'" ("Arab San Francisco" 184).[46] The difficulty of this aim to constitute individual and collective

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Mansour El-Kikhia show, however, this humanitarian frame was an exception during the Gulf War. The authors attribute this to the lack of direct access to respective scenes. Atrocities depicted on U.S. television therefore all focused on violence committed by Iraqis. Al Jazeera nevertheless offered the American public an alternative angle and also showed humanitarian violations committed by U.S. military personnel (120).

45 Cross-national evidence from Europe confirms this pattern with Muslims being considerably more often associated with terrorism than before 9/11 (Ruigrok and van Atteveldt 84). The most recent figures published by the Pew Research Center in 2011 confirm the lasting cross-national impact of the WOT frame. The characteristics of being "violent" (50%) and "fanatical" (58%) still are at the top of the list when it comes to "Western" views of "Muslims" ("Common Concerns" 4).

46 Naber investigates the impact of global stereotypes of Arabs on the self-definition of Arabs/Muslims in the San Francisco Bay area. Her research is based on in-depth inter-

identity beyond terrorism is reflected in the figures documenting the rise of psychological illnesses among Arab Americans who cannot master the cleavage between Arab American self- and American other-definitions. According to a 2006 survey, about 50% of respondents showed symptoms of depression whith could be related to the public discrimination they experiencd in post 9/11-times (Elias). A number of oral and written reports document the longing of Arab Americans to define themselves in opposition to the public media frame and its seeming inescapability.[47]

The empirical data on the reflection of the WOT frame in American public opinion underlines the strong impact media framing has on public discourse (Wöhlert 2). This applies to the American public as well as to the global media public alike. The framing of the Arabs/Muslim as terrorist has become the most dominant stereotype. As Lisa Suhair Majaj puts it, "Arab today mutually means the same as terrorist" ("Arab-Americans and Race" 327). Most important for the maintenance of this guiding mental schema is the conflation of the internal and external Arab. Media depictions of terrorists in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Palestine therefore immediately revert back to the way in which Arab Americans are seen.[48] In other words, the internal Arab American as an effect of mediated discourse is converted into the external Arab terrorist.[49] It can thus be derived that the terrorist forms the central cognitive stereotype of the WOT schema. When integrating this finding into the

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views. One of the major findings of the study is that, in reaction to media images, many respondents identify as Muslim first and Arab second ("Arab San Francisco" 209).

47 In comparison to the multitude of studies conducted on the perception of the Arab as 'other,' the small number of advanced empirical studies on the self-perception of Arabs reflects the lack of scholarly interest with respect to the study of Arab Americans as distinct and culturally heterogenous group. Before 9/11, hardly any specific data could be found on intra-Arab American demographics. Only after 9/11 did the Pew Research Center develop a specific survey to track this group (Wöhlert 25).

48 The impact on foreign news events on the self-definition of Arab Americans is further complicated by the fact that Arab Americans to a large extent have access to satellite TV and are thus exposed to news frames created by Middle Eastern media. As a survey on transnational communications conducted by Mark Tessler in 2003 suggests, about 50% of Arab Americans in the greater Detroit area watched Arab satellite TV. The degree to which these transnational sources of information are used varies amongst different immigrant generations, whereby those born in the United States are less inclined to access foreign media content than the parent generation born abroad.

49 Lisa Suhair Majaj when asked about the separation of Arab and Arab American literature at a reading in November 2011 confirmed this notion: "Since our identity is so much influenced by political events taking place abroad, I do not think one can draw a clear line" ("Geographies").

overall framing model of Arab identity definition, the stereotype of the internal/external terrorist endows the political frame with renewed Orientalist meaning.

The War on Terrorism Frame as (Neo-)Orientalism

Hardly any other words are more prominently associated with the presidency of George W. Bush than his "monologue" delivered following the terrorist attacks. His announcement "you're either with us or with the terrorists," came to represent the guideline for all policy decisions in the remainder of his time in office (Aoudé 147). This triggered an "American Jihad" which is still being fought in the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan (Ta 151).[50] The actual military war surrounding the WOT, however, is only one consequence of Bush's binary division of the world into terrorists and anti-terrorists. Bush's statement also opened up a more far-reaching ideological war between the *West* and the *East*. The binary nature of the WOT therefore also gave way to a renewed version of Orientalism.[51]

Due to the prominence of binary language and familiar stereotypes, the significance of Orientalism for the WOT frame is apparent. "The deeply embedded interpretive frameworks of Orientalism, exoticism, and neoprimitivism that produce the East for Euro-American consumption have hardened in idological support of the war on terror [...]," Whitlock explicates (49). This direct relationship between present-day WOT discourse and century-old Orientalist binaries underscores the persistence of the Orientalist framework. Just like the Orientalism Said referred to, Orientalist discourse today is characterized by normative credentials, meaning that the *West* as morally superior is pitted against the inferior *East* (Altheide, "Fear, Terrorism" 11).[52] This inferiority continues to be framed by "narratives emphasiz-

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50 What tends to be forgotten in the debates on the U.S. military intervention in the Middle East after 9/11 is the fact that about 3,500 Arab Americans serve in the U.S. military. Some of them have been deployed to fight the war on terror abroad. Even though this number represents less than 1% of the overall Arab American population, this situation causes a severe double-bind for the identity definition of these soldiers (Ta 151).

51 The Orientalist legacy accompanying the WOT was not a new phenomenon in the context of U.S. foreign policy. Already in the case of the Gulf War, framing studies revealed that Orientalism was constitutive of the interpretative schemata provided by the media. Esra Sandikcioglu explicitly links this relation to the cognitive underpinnings of framing theory. "The argument is that this culture-specific cognitive model helped frame the debate about the Gulf crisis by conceptualizing Iraq as the incarnation of the Orient and thereby justify a specific political and military approach to the conflict which has been symptomatic of the age-old relationship between the Orient and the West."

52 Rigid claims of moral superiority are especially remarkable after such incidents as Abu Ghraib where American soldiers were presented as acting like barbarians. One can there-

ing the primitivism of Arab and Muslim societies" (Whitlock 109). Another familiar characteristic of the WOT as Orientalist frame is that the "Orient" continues to be represented instead of representing itself. This underlines the maintenance of familiar global power relations between the former colonizers and their subaltern inferiors (Dabashi xi). In sum, Orientalism within the WOT frame remains a "problem of generalization and totalisation" (Lau, "Re-Orientalism" 571). The global media discourse thus continues to be ruled by the "binary, polarized logic of Orientalism" (Salgado 210) and the confrontation between "East and West, insider and outsider" (Salgado 201). When thinking back of Jack Shaheen's early TV studies, one can conclude that the Orientalism conveyed in the WOT frame is nothing but "Civilization versus Barbarism" Episode II (Wöhlert).

When taking a more detailed look at the characteristics of Orientalism within the WOT frame, however, this equalization of traditional Orientalism with the Orientalism observed post 9/11 appears premature. What distinguishes both ideologies is the particular rationale used to explain the division of the world. Whereas the former model of Orientalism mostly relied on a general ethnocentric value-superiority of the *West*, this superiority today relies on a different explanation pattern which is commonly referred to as "neo-Orientalism."[53] The concept emerged fairly recently based on discursive analyses following the 9/11 period (Tuastad 91; Maira 319). Just like traditional Orientalism, neo-Orientalism relies on the image of the Arab as barbaric other. What differentiates the "new barbarism" thesis from the old one, however, is its specific reference to political and partly economic and religious[54] circumstances (Tuastad 591; Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 1).[55] The core

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fore agree that a severe paradox between public image and public behavior exists. Whitlock even predicts that this gap will ultimately bring about the end of the Orientalist legacy. As she states, "[u]ltimately the extremes of Occidentalism – the self-construction of the West in and through its constructions of the other – reach a point of excess where the oppositions they construct collapse in disarray" (31).

53 Neo-Orientalism is to be strictly separated from other variants of Orientalism which were developed in the recent period, such as re-Orientalism (El-Haj 544; Banerjee 301). Many of these concepts derive their theoretical contribution from the assumption that Orientalism is now practiced and sustained by different actors, such as members of the diaspora themselves. Neo-Orientalism, in contrast, does not focus on actors in the first place but on the justification of Orientalism (also see Chapter 3.1).

54 Lynn Ta, for example, provides an alternative definition of neo-Orientalism. She describes it as ruled by the ideal of redefining Islam and of categorizing Arabs into good and bad Muslims (162). Other authors focus on the racial aspect of neo-Orientalism, such as Minoo Moallem who terms it "neo-racist" and Naber who sees the depiction of white superiority as major trait ("Arab San Francisco" 17). Although these religious and racial

assumption of this neocolonialist frame is that Arabs and Muslims are barbaric and backward not simply because they are barbaric and backward by nature but because they are unable to implement or actively resist democratization (Sadowski[56] 14; Tuastad 595). Obviously, this logic does not solely rely on normative essentialism since inferiority is not primarily seen as an immanent human trait. Still, the concept involves essentialism and ethnocentric bias since it establishes a fundamental value division between *East* and *West*. An article in *Newsweek* underlines this reductionist entanglement of political, economic, and religious rhetoric with Orientalism which ultimately culminates in the new barbarism thesis:

> But what are we going to do about countries that are the real source of modern Islamic terror-ism [...]? […] These countries have been the fertile ground on which radical Islamic terrorism has grown. […]. It is clear that Saudi Arabia now exports two products around the globe – oil and religious fanaticism. […] We think of our allies in the Middle East as 'moderates.' And certainly compared with the barbarians of Al Qaeda, they are cautious, conservative rulers. But for decades now the governments in Riyadh and Cairo have resisted economic and politi-cal modernization with disastrous results. (qtd. in Wöhlert 210)

These lines are exemplary of the discourse of neo-Orientalism within the WOT frame. The idea of allies and enemies is thus clearly linked to political, economic, and religious ideals. This is underscored by the historical role of the U.S. as patron of democracy and peace. In addition, the installation of neo-Orientalist discourse particularly served the purpose of justifying U.S. foreign policy rulings and the military intervention in the Middle East (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 17). Critics of neo-Orientalism therefore regard it as a uniquely American phenomenon and refer to it as new "American national ideology" (Tuastad 597) and "new North American Orientalism" (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 269). This ideology con-tinues to be fostered by opinion leaders in politics and in the academy alike. One of the most outspoken proponents of the neo-Orientalist thesis is the scholar and writer

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aspects form part of the neo-Orientalist rhetoric, religion in the vast majority of neo-Orientalist criticism ranges behind the aspect of democratization and modernization.

55 Hamid Dabashi uses a similar definition for his concept of "post-Orientalism" which to him means the constitution of new knowledge and related power constellations (xiv). Since post-Orientalism has been defined differently by other authors as well, the concept will not be used synonymously with neo-Orientalism in this study (see Chapter 7).

56 Contrary to the argument that neo-Orientalism is a post-9/11 construct, the fact that authors like Yahya Sadowski already used the term "new Orientalism" in post-Gulf War years underlines that the concept is not so new after all (14).

Daniel Pipes[57] who has been proclaiming that Muslims have been unable to embrace democracy and modernization for almost two decades (Sadowski 18). Despite the characteristic American features of neo-Orientalism, this interpretive framework is not unique to U.S. public discourse. As Wöhlert in his comparative study of U.S. and German news frames finds, neo-Orientalism has become the guiding schema in European media framing as well (32).[58]

In summary, these findings on neo-Orientalism as guiding principle in post-9/11 media framing highlights the enduring interrelation between "Knowledge and Power in Time of Terror" (Dabashi ix). As the empirical evidence illustrates, neo-Orientalism in fact differs from traditional Orientalism as overarching ideology due to its explicit political and economic rationale. This does not limit the overall message of neo-Orientalism, however, which still advocates the *West's* "oppressive relation to its internal and external 'others'" (Shohat and Stam 3). "Orientalist stereotypes" thus continue to dominate the public media discourse with former stereotypes being replaced by the archaic and fundamentalist Arab/Muslim terrorist (Cainkar 86).

The central importance of the terrorist stereotype allows one to put together the different historical and theoretical fragments which together form the current political frame surrounding the image of Arabs and Muslims. Different political key events in the Middle East have led to the result that Arab identity definition cannot escape political framing in the public. These events were linked to certain interpretative schemata and binary concepts such as Zionism. Each phase slightly altered the explanatory logic of the political frame. At the present stage, neo-Orientalism has come to incorporate all these previous features. It contains the fundamental binary logic of traditional Orientalism and propagates the message of Eastern inferiority. Yet, due its mostly political nature, neo-Orientalism is not as far-reaching as the higher-level ideology of Orientalism which nurtures it. This is also underlined by the central stereotype of the neo-Orientalist schema. In line with the theory of framing, every interpretative schema is built around a major prototype. For neo-Orientalism, this stereotype has been identified as the terrorist who evokes scripts of political violence and barbarism. This script gives way to further prominent

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57 Pipes is best known for launching the site Campus Watch. It encourages students to report on and discriminate against professors who supposedly are "pro-Arabic sympathizers" (James Zogby 34). Along with Martin Kramer, Pipes is one of the most outstanding examples of how neo-Orientalist images find their origin in academic circles.

58 Wöhlert finds strong correlations between a nation's collective self-image and attitudes toward Islam. In the case of Germany, this confirms earlier research results which revealed "that this hostile stereotype [of Islam] reflects the perception on the part of the German Self that the Germans' own societal concept is the only right one and that the Islamic Other is clearly demarcated from this concept (Ates qtd. in 32).

stereotypes that accompany the collective image of Arabs and Muslims in public discourse. All of these stereotypes are again surrounded by various media frames as guiding cognitive schemata. In contrast to the ideological frame of Orientalism and the political frame of neo-Orientalism, these schemata are found on the lower level of issue frames.

3.3 THE ISSUE FRAMES: RACE, RELIGION, AND GENDER

In 1963, the renowned media researcher Bernard Cohen made statements which would guide the entire discipline until the present. Cohen held that "while the media may not tell us *what to think*, they are stunningly successful in telling us *what to think about*" (qtd. in McCombs 71).[59] The question of what to think about ultimately raises the question of prevalent issue frames dominating the public discourse on Arabs and Muslims. These issue frames also stand under the influence of higher-level Orientalist framing. Yet, they provide information for the definition of Arabs in more specific thematic contexts. Again, these issue frames are predominantly built around a central stereotype as cognitive prototype which incorporates the most dominant features of the respective frame. Based on the prevalence of stereotypes such as the veiled woman or the Muslim fundamentalist, it might not come as a surprise to the reader that the most dominant issue frames found in the contemporary media coverage on Arabs are race, religion, and gender.[60]

The Race Frame: Blackwashed and Otherized

In his book *Whitewashed*, the Iranian American author John Tehranian recalls his experience on a flight in the post-9/11 era. A fellow passenger looks at him very suspiciously, until she finally starts a conversation. Among other things, Tehranian in the course of this conversation reveals that he is a lawyer. The lady, however, remains skeptical. As it turns out, this skepticism is linked to Tehranian's *Arab*

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59 Cohen's statement emerged at an early stage of agenda-setting research. At the time, findings on the attitudinal impact caused by framing and priming were not as far advanced, which is why Cohen saw the impact of the media as limited to topic-relevance (McQuail 548). Meanwhile, framing research has indeed found methods to also prove the media's impact on what and how people think about certain issues. This does not lessen the fact that agenda setting remains a primary function of the media.

60 Naber in her study on Arab Americans in San Francisco also reveals gender, race, class, and religion as major "subdiscourses" found to impact the self-definition of the respondents in her sample ("Arab San Francisco" 266). This again underlines the severe influence of media frames on the identity definition of highly-mediatized ethnic groups.

appearance. As the lady replies, "my brother is a lawyer and you don't look like a lawyer" (Tehranian 109). This anecdote serves as a striking example of how *looking Arab*,[61] which often differs from actually *being Arab*, has come to stir evaluations of otherness and inferiority. This observation points to the larger function of race in the discourse on Arab Americans. As the history of Arab immigration to the U.S. reveals, Arabs have undergone several stages of racial identity (mis-)definition by the U.S. government and by themselves. Part of this involved the practice of being "whitewashed," as Tehranian reminds his readers. Current findings on the racial framing of Arabs reveal the opposite movement. Arabs are thus *blackwashed* to a degree where they represent the ultimate stereotype of the racial other in the media and in the general public.

Race in critical race theory is defined as "a fluctuating, decentered complex of social meanings that are formed and transformed under the constant pressures of political struggle" (Haney-López 9). When it comes to outer appearance as visible marker of race, the concept is immanently relational since racial categorization relies on the difference of skin color (Haney-López 20). White identity thus presupposes non-white identity and vice versa, which accounts for the function of race as a "positive mirror" (Haney-López 21). Race therefore constitutes a key element of identity definition. It serves as an "organizing principle" to categorize individuals into different groups (Aoudé 142). This function of categorization is of legal significance as well. Here, race is defined according to specific characteristics such as racial appearance, but also geography, language,[62] and religion (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 322). Since the more or less random choice of these markers determines the legal status of citizens and non-citizens, race can be seen as a "pre-legal phenomenon;" a product of "coercion" and ideology (Haney-López 9-10).

The concept of race is often used synonymously with ethnicity. This equation, however, is misleading as a definition of ethnicity by Chris Barker and Dariusz Galasiński demonstrates. The authors conceive of ethnicity in Cultural Studies as the "sharing of norms, values, beliefs, cultural symbols and practices" (122). Fur-

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61 John Tehranian is Iranian American and therefore not considered Arab.

62 Arab Americans frequently report incidents of discrimination because they are falsely assumed to lack English language skills. An Arab American woman born and raised in the U.S. ironically recalls: "Neighbors are surprised I can speak English without an accent. They assume I'm fresh off the boat and I just haven't assimilated yet" (91). Demographic data in fact reveals that the majority of Arab Americans does not show any deficiencies in the use of the English language but many have never learned Arabic (Kayyali 84). A new trend among the youth generation is the use of so-called "Arabish" (Kayyali 83). It is an interlanguage used to fill in language gaps in either language in everyday or online conversations. It also appears in online life writing, as the example of Salam Pax suggests (Whitlock 11).

thermore, the primary function of ethnicity is seen in "boundary formation" between individuals who are perceived or "discursively constructed" as sharing certain cultural norms and practices (*Cultural Studies* 479). The concept of ethnicity therefore acknowledges the place of history, language, and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity. It relies entirely on the perception of discourse as constructed with all knowledge therein being "contextual" (Hall, "New Ethnicities" 446). In result, ethnicity therefore also serves as "contrasting strategy" to differentiate the ethnic from the non-ethnic (Sollors xiv).[63] Race and ethnicity therefore share this function of classification. In the case of ethnicity, however, classification takes place in a discursive realm, whereby race also fulfills a significant function in the legal realm.

With respect to the history of Arabs in America, race has always been a prominent issue surrounding the public discourse on Arabs and Muslims. When Congress in 1790 restricted naturalization to "white persons," race served as a "scientific rationale" (Haney-López 1-3). Arabs, however, due to their hetereogenous origins, never met the characteristics of legal and facial whiteness. Evelyn Shakir highlights this indefinite racial status in her comment that "Arab Americans come in a range of colors" (*Bint Arab* 113). Consequently, the racial status of Arabs could not be determined based on a simplified rationale of skin color categorization. One result of this confusion was that the decision whether Arabs were black or not became a matter of random choice. A series of court rulings known as the "prerequisite cases" marks this struggle over racial categorization (Haney-López 48; Tehranian 48). According to these cases, Syrians in 1909, 1910 and 1915 were classified as "white persons" but not in the years in-between. In other cases, courts ruled they were "Caucasian" or "Asiatic" (Haney-López 5; 48-49, Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 321; Suleiman, Introduction 7). These early cases were succeeded by a multitude of further legal struggles lasting up to the present period (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 324).[64] Today, Arabs are officially acknowledged as white in the catalogue of America's racial categorization.[65]

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63 Based on the logic that the "non-ethnic" requires the ethnic in order to exist, Werner Sollors explains that this dualism gets complemented by the emergence of alternative ethnicities for self-definition (xiv).

64 In 1944, for example, the court ruled that Arabs were "white enough" to count as white. In another prominent court case decision in 1987, however, a professor was denied tenure due to being of "Arabian race" (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 325).

65 The federal Equal Opportunity Commission divides among six racial identification categories: White, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. Middle Easterners, Turks, Kurds, and Persians are white according to this classification schema (Tehranian 37).

This struggle over the racial classification of Arab Americans in legal terms has left severe marks on their social and racial self-definition. The question of skin color remains at the center of this debate. While the term American still serves as "synonym for white," Arab Americans continue to challenge prescribed categorizations (Haney-López 14; Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 320).[66] They are "not white, not black," as Majaj puts it ("Arab-American Ethnicity 324). This colorless status is also reflected in the way they are perceived by the mainstream American public. Here, they "occupy a contested and unclear space within American and cultural discourse (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 320). In turn, Arab Americans constantly face the challenge to clarify their status (Audi). Racial identity consequently becomes a matter of "choice,"[67] a choice which they are forced to make (Majaj, "Arab-American Ethnicity" 323). Historically, early immigrants tended to make this choice in favor of white mainstream society. They distanced themselves from immigrants of darker complexion to become part of America's predominantly white society. Later generations, especially in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, decided to position themselves on the opposite end of the racial spectrum by taking pride in their ethnic origins and aligning themselves with black African Americans (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 325; Haddad 79). Meanwhile, the climate of racial definitions has shifted again. In the Census of 2000, an overwhelming majority of 80% of Arabs living in the U.S. self-identified as white (Shryock 83). Partly, this expresses the longing of many Arab Americans to be fully accepted by U.S. mainstream discourse without counting as the *other*. In addition, this ethnic self-affiliation is the consequence of severe methodological shortcomings in the census which does not contain a racial category for Arabs and thus forces respondents to checkmark the "other" section of the survey.[68]

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66 This also highlights the function of skin color as a metaphor. The British playwright Simon Stephens at the CDE Annual Conference 2009 in Vienna pointed to the metaphorical role race plays in the performative arts. In his keynote address entitled "Writing Black People" he explained: "Color only operates metaphorically in my plays [...]. Color itself is a metaphor. If I were really white – how frightened would you be and call the physicians to help me [...]?"

67 The idea of ethnic identity as a choice was brought forth by David Hollinger who regards ethnicity as affiliation, similar to religion and other voluntary identity choices (13; Leonard 141). His concept has become known as "postethnicity" thesis (Hollinger 116). Even though the unclear legal situation of Arabs when it comes to racial definition supports this model, the high impact of public discourse on Arabs also shows that racial and ethnic identity is severely constrained by outside factors.

68 The census currently contains more than a dozen racial categories, yet none for people of Arab descent (Manneh). Before the Census of 2010, Arab Americans in the Bay Area therefore started a campaign under the heading "Check it right; you ain't white!" encour-

Image 3: "There Is Nothing 'Other' about Us"

Source: Image of the custom-made t-shirt to support a write-in campaign in preparation of the U.S. Census 2010 to motivate Arabs to check the box for the ethnic self-categorization as "other" in the survey (Manneh)

The self-identification of many Arab Americans as white, however, differs extremely from their public perception, particularly in the post-9/11 era. Arabs are by far not seen as mainstream white Americans. Rather, they lastingly represent the racial and mostly black other. The most important policy measure that has fostered this notion within the WOT movement is racial profiling.[69] It gave the government the official permission to treat Arabs as suspects simply based on their race, i.e., black appearance (Audi; Cainkar, *Homeland* 129).[70] This government-initiated racism in turn inflated a wave of discursive and "cultural racism" based on the logic of "othering" (Naber, "Look, Mohammed" 279). One effect of this cultural racism was the rise of hate crimes committed against Arab Americans following the 9/11-attacks ("Report on Hate Crimes" 11; Audi; James Zogby 16; Merskin 172). In 2002, the FBI reported an increase in anti-Muslim[71] hate crimes by 1,600% (Disha, Cavendish, and King 21). Even though these figures have slightly declined in recent years, they are still above pre-9/11 levels (Disha, Cavendish, and King 22; Bayoumi

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aging Arabs to check the "other box" on the form and write down Arab (Blake). The change of the current census data might reflect the impact of these efforts.

69 According to Ghada Audi, racial profiling means "treating someone first as a 'suspect,' based solely on the false belief that a person's race, ethnicity, and/or religion alone is a sufficient predictive indicator of potential criminal behavior." This definition also stresses the intersectional overlapping of identity categories thus complicating racial profiling.

70 Most remarkable about this reaction to racial profiling is that the poem was written in 1995, long before the 9/11 attacks. This shows that racial profiling, contrary to the assumption that it is a recent phenomenon, ruled the identity definition of Arabs long before the contemporary "paranoia" around national security (Alsultany, "Prime-Time" 214).

71 Since the FBI lacks the category "Arab" in its statistics, this figure only mentions anti-Muslim hate crimes. In states which differentiate between Muslims and Arabs, dramatic increases in assaults against Arabs have been reported (Disha, Cavendish, and King 21).

3).[72] Outside the legal realm, the consequence of the discursive blackwashing of Arabs Americans is lasting media framing along racial lines. Representations here focus on Arabs and Muslims as black other. Connected to this are racial and ethnic stereotypes such as the dark-skinned "camel jockey" and the turban-wearing "suicide bomber" (Audi; Shakir, *Bint Arab* 3; Shohat and Stam 178).

The complex history of racial identity classification in the case of Arab Americans thus reveals the lasting impact skin color plays for the (self-)image of Arab Americans. Public discourse upholds the image of the Arab as black other. The media play a substantial role in the maintenance of this issue frame by representing Arabs as blacks. Overall, this confirms a poignant finding by Mustapha Bayoumi who in his study "*How Does it Feel to Be a Problem*"[73] concludes that Arabs represent the "the new blacks" of America (Bayoumi 2; Sirin and Fine 193).[74] In short, they are blackwashed via public discourse. Another essentialist tendency with equally striking stereotypes can be found with respect to the issue frame of religion.

The Religious Frame: Arab Means Muslim

Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* made a striking observation long before cultural pluralism as a concept became popular. "No one today is purely *one* thing," he acknowledged (336). For Arab Americans in particular, this finding is of special significance. For once, the collective term Arab itself refers to a very heterogeneous group. This stands in fundamental opposition to the homogeneity assumed by the public. For the majority of non-Arabs, Arabs are indeed "purely *one* thing," namely Muslim. This constant conflation of ethnic origin and religious identity again turns out to be the result of a framed media discourse in which the terms Arab and Muslim are used as meaning virtually the same (Shohat, Introduction 7; Majaj, "Arab-

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72 Comparative studies on hate crimes actually revealed that while hate crimes against Muslims and Arab Americans dramatically increased in the period following 9/11, crimes motivated against other minorities, such as African Americans, Asians and Hispanics, actually declined during the corresponding period (Ahmad 105). This raises the question whether the motivation for these offenses actually derives from specific reservations against Arabs and Muslims or whether this group has simply gained more attention among homophobics who commit crimes against any minority.

73 The title plays on Du Bois's famous publication *The Souls of Black Folk* and underlines the similar racial position occupied by African and Arab Americans.

74 As Karen Leonard observes, racism against African Americans has become far more acknowledged than racism against Arab Americans (58). The latter tends to be tolerated and not labeled as such. Majaj therefore provocatively concludes that Arab Americans are the only ethnic group "safe to hate" in the U.S. because racism does not lead to any serious legal consequences ("Arab-American Ethnicity" 321-22).

Americans and Race" 323). Religion thus constitutes the second issue frame which accompanies the representation of Arabs in the media.

The early history of Arabs in America already suggests that the equation of 'Arab equals Muslim' relies on a myth. Early immigrants from Syria and Lebanon were Christians who strongly distanced themselves from any non-Christian background because it would hinder their naturalization procedure (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 323). This dominance of Christians among Arab Americans remained fairly stable at around 90% up to the the 1950s (Haddad 63). After this, with more immigrants coming from predominantly Muslim countries such as Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan, this figure changed. Today, about 60% of Arab Americans are members of a Christian religion whereas about 25% are Muslim ("Demographics").[75] Throughout all immigrant periods, religion remained a very important aspect of self-definition. More than a matter of pure religious testament, Islam has become a "way of life" with a high social significance (Ajrouch, "Family and Ethnic Identity" 134). The term Islam therefore does not stand for a fixed religious tradition but reflects an "amalgam" of religious beliefs (Lambert 91). Often, religious identification gains priority over national affiliation for Arabs from various countries.[76]

As was the case with the ethnic issue frame, the representation of religion and Islam in the media stands in opposition to the given data on actual religious affiliation. Islam here is closely related to the discourse on terrorism (Wöhlert 30). The dominant interpretation within this issue frame is that Islam is the main reason for "aggression, and brutality, fanaticism, irrationality" as well as "medieval backwardness" (Thofern qtd. in Wöhlert 31). Based on the influence of the neo-Orientalist political frame, Islam is thus mostly interpreted as "political Islam," which in turn is equated with "radical fundamentalism" (Wöhlert 32). This also includes the binary representation of the *Western*, i.e., Christian, world versus the

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75 This trend continues whereby Islam is expected to become the most common religion in the U.S. next to Christianity (Shakir, *Bint Arab* 114).

76 Comparative studies have shown that severe cultural differences exist between countries of the Middle East and Europe or North America when it comes to the importance of religious identity. In the case of Jordan, for example, 65% of the respondents in a Pew research study of 2011 consider themselves Muslim first, only 24% give priority to their nationality. These results from Arab countries confirm earlier findings by Nadine Naber in the American context ("Arab San Francisco" 209). In most European countries, the opposite holds true with religion playing a minor role behind national self-identification. This stands in contrast to the case of the U.S., a country which represents a clear exception in the context of religious self-affiliation. Here, the percentage of people who primarily identify themselves as Christians ranges at 46%, which is equal to the ratio of respondents identifying as American first ("Common Concerns" 5).

so-called "Mohammedan world" (Majaj, "Arab-Americans and Race" 323). Since the separation of church and state counts as one of the core pillars of "Western rationality" (Said, *Covering Islam* 9), this interpretative framework underlines the backwardness of Islam (Wöhlert 33).

At the center of this cognitive framework, one frinds a prominent stereotype which combines most of the key characteristics associated with religious framing. This stereotype rests on the dichotomy between the "*good Muslim* and *bad Muslim*" with the latter clearly dominating the picture (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 188). In the praxis of every-day media discourse, this stereotype is framed by the representation of Arabs in connection with religious images and symbols. In addition, explanations given for social or political developments taking place either in the Middle East or among Arab Americans are rationalized based on religious arguments. This trajectory applies to news media content and popular culture entertainment alike. Meta-studies on the representation of Arabs in major newspapers and news frames confirm this interpretation pattern. Religious framing here is especially popular in combination with political topics (Wöhlert 98). These present-day representations of Arabs therefore still represent a familiar stereotype already discovered by Jack Shaheen almost three decades ago. The Arab is contextualized as Muslim fundamentalist (*Arab and Muslim Stereotyping* 1).

When relating these findings on media framing to the patterns in which these frames are absorbed by the media public, one finds high degrees of frame adoption (Wöhlert 31). In a Pew Researchs study from 2011, 70% of American respondents stated that Islam is the most violent religion ("Common Concerns" 23). This is followed by figures showing that American non-Muslims see Muslims above all as fanatical (41%), violent (45%), and arrogant (34%) ("Common Concerns" 26). These figures have remained at fairly high levels throughout the past years. This negative view of Islam is furthermore connected to a severe fear of Islamic extremism expressed by 69% of the respondents in the U.S. ("Common Concerns" 31). This figure stresses the close link between religious framing and political topics.[77]

As the theory of framing suggests, frames are most readily adopted by audience members whenever alternative information is missing and a general lack of background knowledge persists on an issue. This phenomenon becomes most obvious

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77 Additional empirical data confirming the negative stance toward Islam is manifold. A 2009 poll on American opinions conducted by Zogby International, for example, found that 42% of the American respondents tended to believe that Muslims are "religious fanatics" (James Zogby 29). Another study from 2010 furthermore revealed that 46% of the respondents shared the view that "Islam teaches hate" ("American Views" 6). These and other opinion data highlight the strong negative emotions associated with Islam.

with respect to the religious issue frame. Hardly any other stereotype[78] is so much grounded on the lack of knowledge than the one of the Muslim fundamentalist. Studies exploring the knowledge about Islam among American non-Muslims reveal striking shortcomings. Respondents are hardly able to name any of the core pillars of Islam or other details concerning Muslim religious practice. Furthermore, the majority thinks that the term Islam merely stands for "submission" (Joseph 261).[79] The most common answer found among respondents is that Islam is "highly different from their own" religion (Panagopoulos 611). As this response suggests, it is not detaild knowledge[80] about Islam which evokes feelings of difference and opposition but the definition of Islam as different as such. The British researcher Rana Kabbani highlights the importance of this oppositional thinking for the depiction of Islam in *Western* popular culture:

Islam was seen as the negation of Christianity; Muhammad as an imposter, an evil sensualist, and Antichrist in alliance with the Devil. The Islamic world was seen as Anti-Europe, and was held in suspicion as such. Christian Europe had entered a confrontation with the Islamic Orient that was cultural, religious, political, and military, one that would decide from then on the very nature of the discourse between West and East. (qtd. in M. Hasan 33)

Kabbani's explanation of Islam as "negation" strongly confirms the logic of present-day assumptions about Muslim faith in public opinion. Again, the binary which is inherent in Orientalist thought also characterizes the religious framing of Arabs. Moreoever, the intertwinement of religious interpretations with other issues puts additional emphasis on the stereotype of the Muslim fundamentalist. The religious framing of the Arab in public media discourse thus accounts for the fact that

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78 It is important to reiterate at this point that stereotypes are not synonymous with the concept of framing. Stereotypes as simplified representations of objects account for the emergence of cognitive schemata. The latter, in turn, are part of higher-level cognitive frames usually comprising more than one stereotype.

79 The word Islam is derived from the Arabic roots of "*salima*," which is associated with safety and unharmedness, and of the term "*salam*," meaning peace (Joseph 261). In addition, the word Muslim describes someone who fully devotes him-/herself to God, which is different from the concept of submission.

80 The lasting lack of knowledge among the general population runs counter to the rising interest in Islam and Muslims in the academy, especially in Europe. Muslims here count as the most studied immigrant group (Leonard 129). Studies on Muslim identity are characterized by thorough analytical procedures in both quantitative and qualitative works. Often, experimental and novel designs contribute to further research progress. An example is the study conducted by Selcuk Sirin and Michelle Fine who introduce identity maps in their study (xv).

religion as an "umbrella" concept becomes more of a cultural, ethnic, and political[81] marker of difference (Wiegand 237). Islam therefore gains an encompassing meaning that almost exceeds the boundaries of religion as specific issue in public discourse.[82] The journalist Anthony Weiner based on the research for his book *Man Seeks God* summarizes this centrality of Islam for the public debate by comparing the faith to "'800-pound God in the room'" before adding "that everyone has an opinion on it even if they don't express it." A similar pattern can be revealed when looking at the issue frame of gender. Here, the intersection of race, religion, and womanhood culminates in the image of the veiled woman.

The Gender Frame: Veiled Womanhood

In November 2004, news of an assassination spread around the world. A man had been assassinated by what is publicly called an "Islamist" (Wöhlert 2). The man who was killed was Theo van Gough, film director and writer. Van Gogh had directed the movie *Submission* together with the Somali-Dutch women's rights activist and politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali,[83] a short film on the abuse of Muslim women. The movie depicted the story of these women as written on the body of a nude female body wearing a see-through chador (Eyerman 1). The movie caused outrage among Muslims and *Westerners* alike. Finally, it also brought about the death of the director. Hardly any other example from the recent past demonstrates the centrality of gender for the framed view of Arabs better than this controversy. It highlights in a tragic way how much the veiled woman stands in the limelight of the issue frame of gender[84] in the contemporary discourse on Arab and Muslim identity.[85]

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81 The junction of religious with political matters has a long tradition in the history of social discourse studies. Political means have commonly been justified from the background of religious punishment (Merskin 161).

82 Krista Wiegand points to this overarching function of Islam as identity marker in her essay "Islam: Religion or Ethnicity" (239). The author here reveals how Islam can serve, both as unifier and as cause of ethnic conflict. An example is the movement of Pan-Arabism in the context of Islamic revivalism (240).

83 The discourse surrounding Ayaan Hirsi Ali in the aftermath of van Gogh's death underlines some common features accompanying the authenticity and credibility granted to Muslim women in their battle for women's rights. Ali who now enjoys the status of an "international celebrity" and is often accused of using her political goals for the purpose of gaining personal fame (Eyerman 2). This debate has similar features as the ongoing struggle of ethnic writers and activists to counter the accusation of native informanthood.

84 Just like race, gender is understood as a constructed category which relies on cultural assumptions about proper behavior and social code (Barker, *Cultural Studies* 480).

Ever since the first European travelers visited the *East*, there was one issue which pervaded the travel accounts, namely: "Eastern women" (Whitlock 100).[86] *Oriental* women thus became the gendered symbols of the *East* in cultural and literary representation (M. Hasan 31). The issue of gender, however, quickly became enmeshed with the question of physical appearance. It is therefore not the *Oriental* woman as woman who has become the incarnation of the *East* from the foreign perspective but the *Oriental* woman as "the veiled woman" (Yeğenoğlu, "Veiled Fantasies" 554). Meanwhile, this image is attached to a series of further cultural stereotypes emerging from the depiction of the Orient in popular culture:

This [the presentation of Middle Eastern women] often includes association with the words harem, polygamy, belly dancer, sexy, uneducated, oppressed, and veiled. These images are the result of the frequent representation of Middle Eastern women in U.S. popular culture in terms of the character of the belly dancer and seductress, Cleopatra of the Nile, the harem beauty, and the veiled woman with bewitching kohl-circled eyes. (Hamilton 174)

As this passage indicates, the current associations linked to the image of the Arab woman are the products of a long history of popular culture framing which can be

85 Although women indeed constitute the center of the gendered discourse on Arab identity, the gender frame itself also includes the stereotypical depiction of men. This not only applies to the recent depictions of Arabs as mostly male terrorists but also to the historical legacy of Arabs as dark-skinned males as represented in popular culture (Merskin 158).

86 When it comes to the lasting legacy of Orientalism in depictions of the *East* in early American travel literature, critics tend to forget that travels by Arabs and Muslims to America have also become the subject of literary production. As the recent edition *America in an Arab Mirror* demonstrates, Arab travelers to the New World engaged in travel writing as early as in the 17th century, in 1668. Respective accounts continue to be produced in the present. Many of these accounts were written by journalists who focused their observations on the direct opposition between *East* and *West*. An example is the early report by Mikhail Asad Rustum of 1895 which includes a table entitled "The Contrasts Between American Western Ways and [Middle] Eastern Ways and the Differences." (3). The oppositions revealed by the author directly speak to the title of the edition centering on mirror images: "1. We are [Middle] Easterners," he writes, "They are American Westerners" (3). This strong focus on the division between *East* and *West* as conceptual framework for depicting the 'Other' thus also proves to be a feature of travelogues written by the 'Arab Other.' An editorial review recognizes this effect by acknowledging that the "descriptions of America differently engage and revise Arab pre-conceptions of Americans and the West. The country figures as everything from the unchanging Other, the very antithesis of the Arab self, to the seductive female, to the Other who is both praiseworthy and reprehensible" (Rev. of *America in an Arab Mirror*, Palgrave).

divided into different phases and genres (Naber, Introduction 25; Shaheen, *TV Arab* 45). In the realm of literature, especially novels fostered the gendered framing of Arab identity. An early example of this is Margaret Mead's *Sex and Temperament* published in 1926 which contrasts the relationship of *Western* women and men with that of women in so-called "'primitive' societies" (Bahramitash 228). The "harem literature" of the mid-century then (Whitlock 14) became outnumbered by so-called "veiled bestsellers"[87] that reproduce the Orientalist trope (Whitlock 93). One of the most prominent examples is Betty Mahmoody's *Not without My Daughter*. Published in 1991, the book mostly focuses on the struggle of a veiled woman to claim her daughter (Haddad, Smith, and Moore 29).

The depiction of Arab womanhood in the *West* increasingly became accompanied by a high degree of politization, particularly with respect to the feminist cause. From the early history of Orientalism, the veil created a distance (Yeğenoğlu, "Veiled Fantasies" 548) or "border" (Yeğenoğlu, "Veiled Fantasies" 557). This border separated the "Arab virgin" from the "American whore" (Naber, "Arab San Francisco" 36). The veil thus became the central symbol of early feminist discourse sloly taking a more nuanced shape at the beginning of the 20th century (Guindi 595). Especially in the 1960s, the earlier condemnation of the Arab woman as lascivious was replaced by the image of the veiled woman as victim. This substantiated earlier notions which suggested that Arab women must be rescued from the harem (Andrea 4). The discussion of genital mutilation and forced marriage in recent decades gave additional momentum to the veil as central signifier of oppression (Shakir, *Bint Arab* 104; M. Hasan 43).[88] Altogether, this evoked the notion that Arab women are "buried alive behind the veil" (Ahmed 154). With the further differentiation of feminist studies and the emergence of third-wave feminism, this ethnocentric view of Western feminists was slightly altered. Feminist Orientalism thus gave way to Orientalist Feminism,[89] a modern approach to the liberation of

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87 The term "bestseller" is highly problematic, although it is used in everyday language and by literary scholars. The problem is rooted in the varying methodologies used to determine best-selling books. Often, the position of a book on a bestseller list does not merely depend on sales figures but needs to be seen relative to other criteria, such as genre classification (Clabough).

88 The argument of women's oppression based on veiling tends to be discussed as religious legacy used to argue against Islam as submissive religion. As scholars and public critics of this theory keep pointing out, however, veiling as a religious requirement must be questioned, since there are very few references to the topic in the Qur'an (Guindi 588). Veiling here also is interpreted as a means of protection (Yamani 19).

89 Orientalist Feminism, just like its predecessor, is not without criticism. Despite claims of increased cultural relativism within third-wave feminism, the lack of detailed knowledge about the Middle East still upholds a high degree of ethnocentrism (Hamid 82). Further-

women in the Arab world which is supposed to be more culturally relativist (Bah-
ramitash 223). Despite these efforts to move away from ethnocentric views of fem-
inism, the veil continues to be read as a sign of oppression within feminist discourse
(Ahmed 152).[90]

This degree of politization and the prominence of the veiled woman in the pub-
lic media discourse has experienced another uplift in the post-9/11 era in which the
"timelessness of the stereotype of the Muslim woman persists" (Haddad, Smith, and
Moore 26). What differentiates the gendered framing of Arabs and Muslims from
the framing of other groups is the plethora of additional stereotypes connected to
veiled womanhood. All of these stereotypes stand under the strong influence of the
WOT. The central image therefore depicts the suppressed Arab woman as passive
victim with a "veiled and beaten body" (Fadda-Conrey, "Racially White" 177;
Naber, Introduction 37). In addition to the focus on victimhood, the footage encir-
cling the coverage of Arab women in the context of U.S. military operations[91] also
propagates the view of the Arab woman as a threat. The stereotype connected to
this notion is the "female suicide bomber" carrying explosives under her niqab
(Fadda-Conrey, "Racially White" 177). Nowhere is this impression of the female
suicide bomber expressed more vividly than in Mohja Khaf's poem:

> No, I'm not bald under the scarf
> No, I'm not from that country
> where women can't drive cars
> No, I would not like to defect
> I'm already American (Kahf, *E-mails* 39)

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more, the question remains whether cultural relativism in general promises to be the an-
swer to this Orientalist legacy. Progessive feminist critics from the MiddleEast thus ask,
"How far Should We Take Cultural Relativism?" (82).

90 The Orientalist legacy of feminism also remains visible apart from the concepts of Femi-
nist Orientalism and Orientalist Feminism. As Asma Hasan points out, the very concept
of feminism continues to be treated as a "Western" monopoly, since European and North
American feminists remain highly skeptical of Arab feminist movements initiated in the
Arab world, such as "Muslim Feminism" (74). This also leads to the fact that the multi-
tude of non-Western feminist movements in the Middle East, such as "Islamic feminism"
and secular feminism, are hardly acknowledged (Yamani 1).

91 Whitlock even goes so far as to ascribe a military propaganda function to the role of
women in veiled bestsellers (105). It remains to be questioned whether the negative un-
dertone in this critique additionally undermines the productive impact life writing can
have with respect to conveying knowledge about foreign gender concepts.

This tidbit from Khaf's autobiographical and highly political poems demonstrates a larger trajectory behind the depiction of Arab womanhood in public discourse. Discussions of Arab womanhood are strategically employed to convey an image of the Arab world which exceeds the gender topic. News media increasingly focus on gender and the prominence of veiling when dealing with far more comprehensive issues (Wöhlert 155). A *New York Times* report illustrates this mechanism:

Life for women here in rebel-held northern Afghanistan is not without its constraints. Some of the strict Muslim dictates rigidly enforced by the Taliban government that controls most of the country also apply here. But generally the Islam practiced here is far more permissive. […] The women are almost always covered by a light blue cotton burkah, a veil that extends from head to ankle. They rarely speak to men in public and almost never interact with foreigners. […] Family pressure still plays a major role in marriage, but women in larger towns generally choose their own husbands. (Wöhlert 187)

News reports like the one above underline the empirical finding that the contemporary discourse on Arab identity, particularly as it is framed in U.S. media, largely largely revolves around veiled Arab women (Wöhlert 80; Williams and Vashi 271). The gender frame thus becomes a central point of reference, not only for the definition of Arab and Muslism women, but for Arab identity as a whole.[92] This finding gained additional confirmation in the coverage of the Arab Spring where the role of women as "driving force" was given particular prominence (DeLong-Bas). Starting with early reports from Tunisia, the subsuming coverage of demonstrations in the streets of Cairo, and uprisings against the dictatorship of Mohammar Ghaddafi – veiled women came to represent the faces of the revolution.[93]

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92 Another example of this gendered representation of more far-reaching political and cultural issues in the Middle East is the law in Saudi Arabia which forbids women to drive cars. This gender constraint is frequently used by Western media to presumably explain larger trajectories of oppression in the Arab world and to justify attempts to liberalize these societies (M. Hasan 49).

93 At a lecture at the University of Michigan in November 2011, the Yemeni recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize of 2011 Tawakkul Karman strongly highlighted the role women played in the Arab revolution. As she provocatively put it: "Before the revolution, women had three duties in their lives: birth, household, grave." As she furthermore explained, this status dramatically changed in and after the revolution. "In the protests, women did strategic planning, provided medical care in the camps, planned the political future." These words strikingly underline the importance granted to the political involvement of Arab women by *Arab* women themselves and not by *Western* feminists.

Image 4: Women Protestors in the Arab Spring

Source: Women and men protest the government after the EU extended its sanctions on Syria in November 2011 (Guest).

These images of protesting women alongside male demonstrators stand in contrast to former mediated stereotypes of Muslim women as victimized and bound to the home. Their political engagement is attached to ideas of political agency and social influence. Yet, there remains considerable doubt that this altered depiction of women as driving force behind the Arab Spring can change existing patterns of interpretation. The seemingly furious way in which the women pursue their rights is not in line with Western ideals of political deliberation. The framing of these stories of the revolution nevertheless reiterated well-known images of barbarism and chaos. While veiled women might therefore represent progress in their respective societies, to the outside media audience, this progress still seems to take place in a different world and in a different century.

This recent example of the veiled woman as political agent, but also as a lasting symbol of Orientalist framing, highlights the overall significance of the gender frame for the interpretation of the Arab world. The veil, which was originally meant to protect the woman from the view of any outsider, has come to symbolize the "barrier" between the *Oriental* woman and the *Western* gaze (Yeğenoğlu, "Veiled Fantasies" 543). The media presence of veiled women therefore matters beyond gender concerns with the veil representing "one of the most intractable signs of cultural difference [...]" (Whitlock 17). Orientalism is the legacy from which this cultural binary derives and it remains highly gendered, as the title of Mahmudul Hasan's paper "The Orientalization of Gender" suggests (26). Hasan reveals a "double Orientalization" in which the power structure of Orientalism victimizes women as colonized and gendered (31). Feminist scholars of the postcolonial era therefore claim that gender and sexual difference are genuine components of Orientalism as a theoretical concept (Yeğenoğlu, "Colonial Fantasies" 2).

When looking at the impact of the gender frame on popular culture, the figures strikingly confirm the suggested interpretative pattern. In a recent Pew[94] survey on global attitudes, only 22% of *Western* respondents thought that Muslims were re-

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94 Attitudes about the respective 'other' are based on responses given by non-Muslims in a series of *Western* countries, such as the U.S., Germany, Britain and France. Conceptions of "the West" are based on the responses provided by Muslims in predominantly Muslim countries ("Common Concerns" 19).

spectful of women ("Common Concerns" 19). Despite public opinion polls, political decision-making reveals further consequences of the gender frame drawn by the media. Several European countries have become increasingly hostile to the veil. France, for example, banned the veil in public places in 2004 (M. Hasan 47). Furthermore, the omnipresence of the issue of veiling in public discourse also becomes reflected in the scholarly and literary market. Publications dealing with the veiling and unveiling of Arabs and Arab Americans count among the most written and read in the contemporary canon. As is the case with ethnic and religious stereotypes, the production of counter-images can be observed as primary theme here. This abundance of popular discourse on the covered female body confirms that the veil is "pregnant with meaning," as Leila Ahmed suggests (Whitlock 50).

This increasing prominence of veiling as product of framed discourse stands in sharp contrast to the veiled reality of Arab America. Here, the practice of veiling has actually been decreasing in the past two decades. Figures from the 1990s published in the *New York Times* report that about two thirds of Middle Eastern women were wearing the veil (Haddad, Smith, and Moore 31). In the years to follow, a continuous decline appeared. Data from 2011 indicate that out of one million Muslim women living in the U.S., only 48% wear headscarves (Khalid). This steady decline was interrupted only by a slight increase following the events of 9/11, as many women decided to intentionally wear the hijab to publicly identify as Muslim and thus establish a counter-example to the violence of al-Qaida (Khalid).[95] This also hints at the complex motivations of veiling which hardly ever get accounted for in the common media coverage (Williams and Vashi 271). Wearing hijab particularly for the young second-generation of Arab American women above all functions as a "social symbol" (Williams and Vashi 285). It fulfills various needs which do not stand in contrast to American social values, such as the need for individualism and autonomous personal identity.[96] Arab American women today thus place great

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95 The contrary reaction to veiling as sign of solidarity can also be found as the case of a young Arab American woman shows. The woman reports to have stopped wearing the hijab after graduating from college. In her opinion, wearing hijab has an enormous signal function which she experienced as a burden: "When you put the scarf on, you have to understand that you are representing a community," Abdelnabi says on a radio show. "And that is huge. That's a huge responsibility. And I don't know if it's for everyone" (Khalid). This experience reflects the central importance of the discourse on veiling and its impacts on the individual lives of Arab Americans.

96 A study conducted on the religious involvement of young Arab American adults in a midwestern metropolitan area reveals that wearing hijab can be a mere fashion concern used to express individuality (Williams and Vashi 284). Motivations like this, which might easily be discredited as teenage concerns, still need to be registered if engaging in

emphasis on the hijab as symbol of individual choice and conscious religious decision-making (Williams and Vashi 284).[97]

As this comparison between the gendered media coverage, its impact on public discourse, and its empirical circumstances demonstrates, the gender frame turns out to be one of the most complex issue frames surrounding Arab identity. Above all, the borders to the other issue frames of religion and race are difficult to draw since the veil is seen as a cultural, religious, and racialized symbol which is not only attached to Arab womanhood but to Arab identity at large (A. Hasan 71).[98] Arab American women thus feel the most intensive cultural pressure because of their mostly involuntary function as symbols of Arab collectivity. The veil functions as most prominent signifier, especially in the discourse around the WOT (Ajrouch, "Family and Ethnic Identity" 132; Hatem 379). On the one hand, the veil remains a central instrument for the Islamic movement, religious identity definition, and political emancipation (Yamani 11). On the other hand, the WOT discourse and the association of the veil with violence and terrorism, as well as the sustaining image of the oppressed woman, are major causes of anti-Islamic sentiment (Ahmed 163). This altogether culminates in the fact that Arab women in America to a heightened extent find themselves caught "Between Two Worlds" (A. Hasan 71).

Linking the Frames: Ideology, Politics, and Issues

The symbolic position of the veiled woman between two worlds leads to the larger picture of mediatic frames thus encountered. Just like the veil represents a layer surrounding perceived Arab women's identity, a series of frames surrounds the public image of Arab identity. The gender frame represents the third issue frame alongside the issue frames of race and religion. These issues have empirically proven to dominate the media framing in the post-9/11 period. Each issue frame is built around a dominant stereotype and associated keywords that trigger particular interpretative patterns of Arab identity definition on the part of the media audience. Sometimes, these schemata overlap. The same holds true for the frame structure in

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serious research on Arab American gender issues. Unfortunately, these aspects tend to be obscured or neglected due to the heavy emphasis on religion in the discourse on veiling.

97　This focus on individual expression not only refers to the public representation of Muslim identity but also to a function within Arab American family structures. Particularly young women therefore report to wear hijab in order to make a commitment to their roots and separate themselves from their "Westernized parents" (Williams and Vashi 283).

98　This importance of gender roles for cultural and ethnic identity definition is shared by many Arab Americans themselves. As interview studies reveal, especially young Arab Americans place special emphasis on proper female behavior because it is an important symbol of collective ethnic identity (Ajrouch, "Family and Ethnic Identity" 131).

which these issue frames are embedded. These higher-level frames are Neo-Orientalism with a specific political connotation and Orientalism as meta-level ideological frame. From a historical perspective, these frames have developed successively in the course of the past two centuries, with the issue frames reflecting snapshots of present-day media framing.

Graph 3: Frame Levels in Historical Perspective
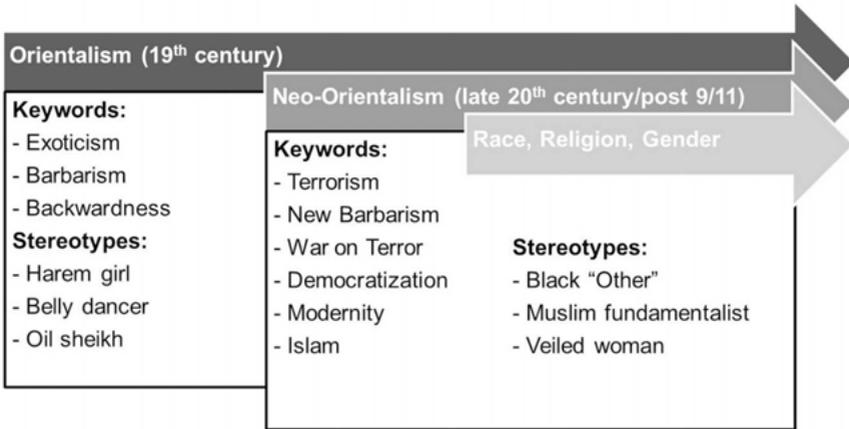
Although the model for the sake of theoretical distinction draws clear lines between the different frames, the identification of specific issue frames gets complicated by the fact that issues often overlap when the media coverage combines different thematic categories. In addition, the influence of Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism still determines the binary character of issue framing. It is therefore impossible to precisely separate each frame level. With respect to the general importance of issue framing within the embedded frame model, however, recent empirical findings suggest that the amount of information around single media events involving Arabs increases. Whereas the coverage before 2001 largely centered on "episodic framing," i.e., the coverage of single events without much background information, "thematic framing"[99] has come to dominate thereafter (Nacos 148).[100] Although this

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99   Some authors use the term thematic frames when referring to the framing of particular events with a specific thematic focus. This definition is similar to the concept of issue frames as chosen in the present study.

100 A study on the coverage of Arab Americans in major American newspapers revealed that the ratio of episodic versus thematic framing was reversed from 60% to 30% in the period before 9/11 to 39% and 49% in favor of thematic framing in the period thereafter (Nacos 148). It remains to be analyzed whether this turn toward more background in-

trend might be welcomed since more information also promises to fill existing knowledge gaps about Arabs and Muslims, the range of issues nevertheless remains very limited. This again reflects the selective bias under the influence of the higher-level ideological and political frames. Whereas in the pre-9/11 era, topics such as Arab culture and customs were part of the media agenda, they have received far less attention in recent times (Nacos 144).

The absence of a cultural issue frame also points to the blurred meaning the concept of culture has for the identity definition of Arabs and Muslims. As the previous overview of the most significant frames derived from framing research illustrates, Arab and Arab American identity has historically been dominated by discursive framing. Identity in this context can be best understood as cultural identity, whereby culture serves as a "mobile signifier" and is determined by public discourse rather than by nationality or ethnic origin (Barker, *Cultural Studies* 477). Due to the strong media presence of Arabs, social identity, i.e., the ascriptions society has of Arabs, clearly impacts the self-identity of Arabs. The additional analysis of public opinion data suggests that the latter often varies considerably from the public view (Barker, *Cultural Studies* 476).

When merging the given findings on the historical emergence of different frames, a hierarchical representation of their interrelation provides further insights into the dynamics ruling the discursive framing of Arab identity. The model highlights the importance of the different frame levels in respect to their cognitive complexity and magnitude. Also, this hierarchical depiction emphasizes the inversive effect of framing, whereby the ideological frame of Orientalism continues to dominate lower-level frames to varying degrees. The neo-Orientalist frame thus reflects basic characteristics of Orientalism as ideology; yet it is more limited to political circumstances. The issue frames on the lowest level of the hierarchy are in turn impacted by both outer frames. Nevertheless, with their more specific thematic focus, they also have the capacity to convey more detailed cognitive schemata.

formation in the long run leads to the emergence of additional media frames since additional cognitive interpretation patterns are constructed.

Graph 4: Multi-Level Framing Model
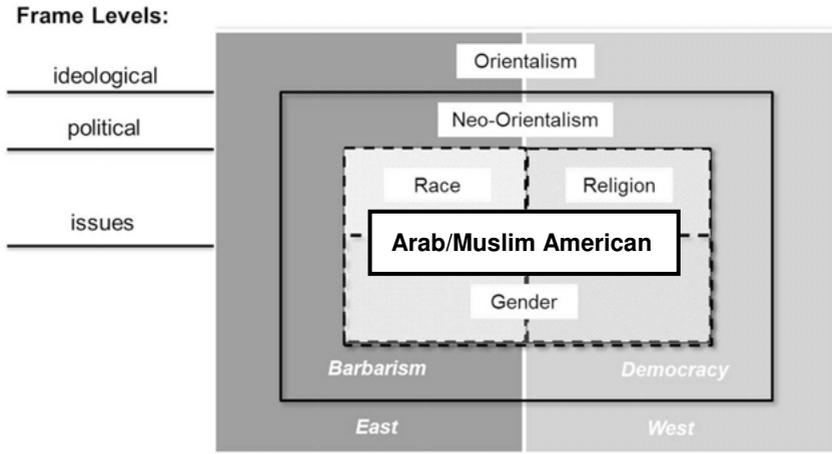
The model depicts two major findings. The first one is that all frames are ruled by dichotomies, such as *East* versus *West*, Islam versus Christianity, or veiled versus unveiled. Arab American identity ascription and self-perception remains locked in this grid of dualistic thinking. This prevents the granting of a higher degree of complexity and internal diversity for collective identity definitions, a situation that Majaj calls the "double-legacy" of Arab Americans ("Arab-Americans and Race" 332). This is linked to the second major finding of the frame analysis stating that the range of issue frames is very limited. All issues which have empirically proven to be most relevant in the present media discourse stand in the tradition of themes that have accompanied Orientalist discourse long before the mass media age.

The resulting multi-level frame model provides the discursive regime surrounding framed Arab identity. Literary production and autobiographical writing take place within this network of mediated discourse. As the critical reflection on previous periods of life writing research has shown, Arab American autobiographies have mostly been read to follow the Orientalist logic they sought to overcome. By conceiving of these life narratives as counter-narratives, critics have thus locked their own scholarly discourse in the same binary trajectory. While entirely focusing on counter-discursive means to overthrow mediated stereotypes, they have neglected the detailed analysis of the dynamics underlying this mediated discourse and its reciprocal effects. The new model of media framing as theory of life writing now allows for this more complex but also more structured analysis of autobiographical writing. It conceives of autobiography as inherent part of mass media discourse. The challenging task then remains to employ this novel methodological lens in order to find out how Arab American life writing actually functions within the complex network of media framing.