

Western Media and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Presentation: Response From the Muslim World

Prof. A.Z. Hilali

University of Peshawar

a.z.hilali@uop.edu.pk

hilali007@yahoo.com

Abstract

The controversies and provocations generated by the West and its media over depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are not only related to recent caricatures or cartoons but are also about the display of historical artwork. Recently, many Western organisations, newspapers, magazines, social networks and even websites organised seminars and events like the cartoon “Everybody Draw Mohammed Day!” to hurt and provoke the Muslim world. Muslims believe that visual depictions of all the Prophets should be prohibited and are particularly averse to visual representations of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The key concern is that the use of images can encourage idolatry. Islam does not allow the depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); to do so goes against the faith of the Muslims and hurts their emotions. This article will focus on western media war against Muslims and analysis the distorted images, fabricated views, and overgeneralizations which typically characterize Western representation of the Prophet (PBUH) of Islam with reference to some particular incidents, chiefly the Charlie Hebdo controversy, Danish newspaper, controversial movie Innocence of Muslims, animated films and social networks. This analysis comprises of works by both Western and Muslim thinkers; it also includes biased and moderate/ fair views depicted in the Western media.

Keywords: *Portraits of Prophets (AS), Drawings, Calligraphy, Western Media, Image Building and Muslim Reactions.*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Drawing in Western Media

The Western scholars have argued that the spirit of Islam is perceived to be supporting violence and conflict with the West and exercise of religion given that the real face of faith which is very hostile. The derogatory images of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Western media are not a recent phenomenon. It has been operational in Western conceptualization ever since the ideological clash between Islam and Christianity began (Halicks: 2006, 2-12). During the Crusades and along the Muslim colonization in Europe till the Third Millennium, the West has stimulated normally the same vague and ambiguous portrait of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which is mostly hostile and appeared in graphics of

Dante's poetry (*Divine Comedy*: 1952, 36-78). It has been noticed that since long Christian world has been pejoratively portraying Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Muslim in books and church sermons by scholars, in paintings, literature, poetry, folklore and religious discourse (*Divine Comedy*: 1952, 36-78). The contemporary forms of media - print, radio, TV, video and the Internet are also replete with biases. They have reinvigorated Islamic discourse, developed a series of misconceptions and built up a huge anti-Muslim audience throughout the world which seems fully affected by its historical baggage. However, in the present time, the prophet portrayals escalated demonstration of Muslims in the era of electronic media including internet and has proved that a good number of caricature have been printed in the Western European countries caused protests in Muslim countries and ultimately led to severe violence.

Thus, the visual images and cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the West were always frequent where they have given presentation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in terms of images which invented through the printing press and shown in a very unpleasant way and usually impressed as mention in Dante's *Divine Comedy* (*Divine Comedy*: 1952, 36-78). In general, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has been pictured in European representations in historical and religious books and can be traced out at the United States Law Court in Washington, which comprises leading lawgiver personalities including Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Moses, Hammurabi, Confucius, and others (Personal Witness: 2000). There are numerous Western books which have illustrated picture of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but other than that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is also portrayed in a famous 15th-century portrait under the title of *Last Judgement* which is written by popular Italian artist Giovanni da Modena. It can be seen in the drawing of Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, in the popular worship place San Petronio in Italy (Shop: 2004, 28). In the same way, *Der Spiegel* (The Mirror), the German news magazine in 1999 printed a picture of "Moral Apostles" - Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Prophet Jesus (PBUH), Confucius, and Immanuel Kant (*Daily News*: 2015, 7). Moreover, in 2005, Morgan Spurlock produced TV film in which showed picture of Prophet as a founder of Islam (*TV Episode* 2005 & 2014). However, the Lars Vilks Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sketches polemic started with the arrangement of rough pictures produced by Swedish painter Lars Vilks and signified holily Prophet Muhammad in July 2007 but many painting arcades in Sweden not permitted to show these pictures on high moral grounds (Stone: 2015, 5).

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Muslim Literature:

Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) images in Islamic literature and Art of Calligraphy is a continuous tradition in Islamic history, literature and science. In the early of 8th century at the time of Abbasid Caliphate (c.749 – 1258) such kind of art grew across Egypt, Mesopotamia, North Africa, Persia, Spain, Syria, and Turkey). During Ottoman era, the

Hilya established the culture of Islamic art of calligraphy as a fashion of visual plan of texts and displayed the sketches of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Moreover, depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) could be seen in Timurid and Safavid dynasties and even in Persian literature including in Turkish Ottoman era. In this regards, the stylish age of visuals about Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life completed in 1595 and it can also found in the profile of *Siyer-i Nebi* who was appointed by the Ottoman Sultan Murat III and Mehmed III and has more than 800 photographs (Khan: 2014, 55-58). Thus, during Islamic period, depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Islamic art were normal practice and found a "prominent images of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in variety of forms and this art of work were available in many parts of Muslim world" (Gruber: 2009, 240-241). So, illustrations of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can found in the Persian literature and books. These demonstrated materials in the earliest history known as Islamic depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Grabar: 2003, 235). These depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) were normally published completely in the Persian spiritual art (calligraphy) and other small artwork literary books. Additionally, at the time of Ottoman empire the detail prescription method of Islamic artistic writing in Arabic script basically created by famous 17th century calligrapher Hafiz Osman (Peters: 2011, 160-161). The design usually begins with Bismillah and described by the Holy Quran 21:107: that "the Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a symbol of kindness in the world" (Peters: 2011, 160-161).

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Painting in Different Islamic Era

Historically, there is a great deal of literature available in the initial Islamic era in which sketches or pictures of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) appeared and it was also seen on other occasions (Brockopp: 2010, 130). According to Ibn Wahshiyya and Abu Nu'ayn, Meccan traders in Syria were claimed by Christian missionary that they have seen enormous quantity of depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Abu Bakr (See Interpretation of Dinawari, Faqih, Wahshiyya and Nuaym). Al-Maqrizi also explained the story that Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt, talked with Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) representative and requested him to identify the personality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He saw the portrayal against a portrait of prophet on a part of cloth and it matched with portrait (Asani: 1995, 64-68). In a primitive Chinese writing, the ruler of China inquired about the picture of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and once king seen portrait then converted to Islam (Khan: 2014, 56).

After the fall of Baghdad, collapse of Ottoman and Mughal empire, Muslims scholars became rigid and declined the depiction or images of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and also avoided visual depictions of others religious personalities such as Prophet Abraham, Prophet Moses or Prophet Jesus. So, the act of drawing pictures of Prophets including

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) becomes unacceptable and intolerable to majority of Muslims. For common Muslim masses this practice seems vilest of sins and a serious religious offence. On the other hand, the western media have been denigratively portraying Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) just to provoke the Muslims for their petty interests. In fact, the problem is not religion but its political use because West desires to find a way out and it seems that Muslims are one of the dominant communities in the world which have been involved in conflict with the Christians. In this context, Francis Fukuyama rightly claimed that the world has reached the “end of history” either capitalism has actually succeeded or socialism has just lost the first round (Broder: 2007, 16). This opinion relies on rational ground because Huntington’s narrate that “after the end of the Cold War Islam is a grave potential challenge to the West and one of the supreme cause of violence” in the world (Fox: 2001, 70). Importantly, the Western world trusts that Huntington’s estimate is more logical to believe that religious Muslims are foe rather than friends. Consequently, the fear of the expansion of Islam, whether it is based on truth or not, has the features of a self-fulfilling prediction that may either cause or worsen the spread of conflicts involving political Islam across borders (Hassner: 1997, 17-37).

Portrayals of Prophet and Cinema Movies

Contemporary Muslims normally dislike the depiction and openly censure the portrait of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for all concerns. Majority of Ulama claimed that the portrait act is unethical (haram), and it is not permissible even if some Muslims do that in movies. In 1976 director Mustafa Akkad produced movie ‘*The Message*’, and never directly showed Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) rather where ever the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was necessary to an extract, the camera could present actions from the particular point of view (Grabar: 2003, 27). From this background, Muslim intellectuals of the Azhar University and the Shia scholars from Lebanon clearly banned any kind of picture of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his family as well. The provocative American animated TV humorous programme *South Park* depicted Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a great-hero role in the July 4, 2001 episode “Super Best Friend.” They have also shown Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the episode “Cartoon Wars Part II” which is a popular action of Fox play under the act of Family Guy (Season 10, Episode-4), Episode Guide:2006).

On the other hand, Richard Rich produced an animated film on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in 2004 and presented in the United States and Britain (Stevens: 2004, 9). Producer Oscar Zoghbi, shown desire to produce movie *The Messenger of Peace* which was financed by Qatari media corporation and guided by the Egyptian cleric Yusuf al-Qaradawi who shown Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in physical position and the act perceived to be against the Sunni values (Safi: 1928, 27-91). In fact, many movies were based on the early period of Islam and opposed by many Muslim civil societies and

organisations. However, the short documentary on *The Real Life of Prophet Muhammad* (PBUH), which was produced (2012) by popular film maker Nakoula Basseley Nakoula and supposed to be insulted Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and become cause of strong reaction in the Muslims countries (Stone: 2015, 14). On the other side, depictions of other Prophets and Sahaabah or companions are also common in western movie culture. There are many movies in which Hollywood has shown Jesus Christ and produced idea on the execution, in accordance of the Holy Qur'an (Movies *The Last Temptation of Christ*: 1988). Although Muslims believe that the Christ was not hanged and the Holy Qur'an plainly cited that it was wrong that this should be produced in dramatic form in which a person acts the part of the Christ.

Cartoons in Foreign Media

“The clash of civilizations” among the Muslims and Christians is in struggle to display fundamentals of a post-Cold War hypothesis. The Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* (The Justland Post), on 30 September 2005, published twelve (12) offensively racist caricatures under the title of “*Muhammad Ansigt*” (The Face of Prophet Muhammad) were a direct attack on the Muslims for their faith, culture and self-determination (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2006: 8). Most of the cartoons were significantly provocative in which three sketches depicted the “Prophet Muhammad” as a pedophile devil, with pigs’ ears and having sex with a dog (*Jyllands-Posten*, 2005: 4). The abusive pictures published in *Jyllands-Posten* (2006) but denied by the government and the electronic media including internet service provider to decline. Muslims reaction against the cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) appeared very strong and grew around the globe after the Orebro-based regional newspaper *Nerikes Allehanda* printed sketches on August 18, 2006 and demonstrated in the paper without any moral obligation. Similarly, many other prominent Swedish print media groups or channels had already printed the drawings which provoked Muslims in Sweden and other parts of the world (Asani, 1998: 11-54). The dispute on pictures occurred when the *Jyllands-Posten* published cartoons Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Denmark newspapers followed the same path in 2006. In the succeeding weeks, the magazine was under heavy criticism; received severe criticism, petitions and threats due to publishing the cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In 2002, Italian police claimed that thousands of violent people destroyed 15th century church in Bologna because there was an image of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Gruber, 2013: 34-67). Moreover, in different cartoons the artists has shown the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) wearing a bombshaped turban with a scorching ferocity, printing the distortion of Muslims images as terrorists. The artist showed Muslims as representatives of Islam and has attempted to paint their prophet as terrorist. This action plays into a world-wide furious response by the Muslims and many in the West deliberately push hostility and create panic about Islam and Muslims. According to John Woods, the scholar of Islamic history at the

University of Chicago, the description of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are offensive because it has presented image in the world that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is by and large a supporter of terrorism (Woods, 2015).

On September 17, 2005 the Danish newspaper *Politiken* printed an article “*Dybangst for kritik af Islam*” (Thoughtful panic fear of criticism on Islam) (Bluitgen, 2005: 26), and the writer critically argued about Islam and Prophet Muhammad. One of the writer has written in children’s book *Koranen og profeten Muhammeds liv* (The Quran and the Prophet Muhammad) that Islam is based on Prophet Muhammad’s fabricated ideas (Bluitgen, 2005: 34-56). The followers and backers of the caricatures admitted that they illustrate a vital matter in an era of Islamic fundamentalism and extremist violent activities of Muslims and found appropriate time to defame Muslim migrants in Europe and also claimed that their publication have a moral and legitimate right to publish any matter under the banner of “free speech& freedom of press.” The Western writers and cartoonist claimed that the similar type of cartoons about Christianity and Judaism have been repeatedly published in various parts of Europe including in the Danish newspaper and the Muslims are not exceptional to target in a discriminatory way (*The Economist*, 2006). The cartoonist who had drawn the *bomb inturban* image, it is perceived to be most notorious animation in the contemporary era and provided justification in February 2006 that:

“There are different perceptions about the drawing and most are wrong and improper. The common feeling in the Muslims is that it is an insult of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. It is not the end of opinion because there are definitely some basic features and cannot share with all the people. But the violence spread when hard statements and arguments were given about Islam. It can happen in case some selective remarks about religion produced in a dictatorial and offensive way” (*The Middle East Times*, 2006).

In the same way, the French satirical weekly magazine *Charlie Hebdo* published a series of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad on July 17, 2015 under the tile “*The Innocence of Muslims*,” in which crude printed the illustrations, some of which depict Prophet Muhammad naked and in pornographic poses. The establishment of French *Charlie Hebdo* magazine proclaimed that they will produce an interesting book on the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (*The Telegraph*, 2015). The absurd video and printing images viewed as a provocation and strong emotions have been stirred in many Muslim countries. Thus, *Charlie Hebdo* published absurd cartoons which basically produced by the youth wing of the Danish People’s Party’s (DPP) and disrespected the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and this action also led to renewed tension between Muslims and Christians (*The New York Times*, 2006). After some days a new version of cartoons appeared, when the

Social-Liberal Youth Movement (SLYM) admitted that some members of the party had produce unreasonable portraits of “Muhammad” and wanted to publish in the newspaper (*The New York Times*, 2006). Moreover, the Western conservatives and orthodox-Catholics used Muslims reaction to prove in a bad-light to the masses that Muslims and Islam are emotional, ignorant, intolerant and narrow-minded. Most of the activist elements in the West perceived that drawing religious pictures is nothing to do with religion and the act is a matter of freedom of expression. In the situation, the office of Charlie Hebdo was attacked again on January 7, 2015 and 12 people were shot dead including Stephane Charbonnier, the editor. The attack was widely reported and drew worldwide condemnation. It is also a fact that cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on cover pages of Charlie Hebdo magazine were outrageous, provocative and intended to hurt the sentiments of Muslims across the world.

Muslim Shariah on Drawings

In the contemporary time, Sunni Muslims *Shariah* (not Faqa Jafria) (*The Times*, 2005). formally prohibited any drawing or pictorial features of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). However, historically in different era of Muslim rules it has had permission of descriptions of Prophet Muhammad’s with face covered by cloth (chader) or as an unimaginative position with shade of light. In the modern interpretations of Islam, including *Wahhabism* and *Salafism* are *aniconistic* and have objectionsto pictorial representations and images of Prophet Muhammad (Allen, 1986:113).In addition, Muslim scholars argued that “religion of Islam has strictly forbidden the images of any humans or animals and banned attractive calligraphy or abstract arabesque patterns in Islamic art. So, generally Muslims have destroyed or discouraged images, whether carved or painted, as idolatry” (Valley, 2006). Paul Valley also explained that “the conservative Muslims raised theological objection on images, which was assumed grave sin or illicit activity in ordinary life and this perception ultimately codified in a very narrow form and even applied picture to all kind of animate existences (Arnold, 1973: 270).In the support of “*aniconism*” of Islamic art, it is important to see early Islamic religious art in historical context. The Muslim must release its manifestation for the mosque and identify the difficulties not to cast off *aniconism* and limitation of Islamic religious for figural representation.

Furthermore, Muslims views about visual depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are not flexible; however, verbal (oral) and printed images are normally recognized by all section of Islamic society. There are many *Hadith* which have explicitly prohibited drawing of images of Prophet Muhammad and also banned visual depictions of figures. In general, Muslim *Shariah* does not allow undermining the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) or for that purpose even no other prophet and it is considered one of the most heinous crimes attracting major penalty. The Prophet’s life-time and its thoughts presented through the

Hadith, (Traditions) which was perceived to be the main reflection and source of Islam and ideal for Muslims to follow the true path. Thus, the prophet's *Hadith* (sayings), its depictions called complimentary and idolatrous. As such, the drawing and images of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) cannot be depicted. In this context, *Salafi* or *Deobandi* school of thought claimed that "any kind of abuse and offense to Prophet Muhammad defiantly declared death" (Solomon, 2004: 1-8). In this regard, the Holy *Quran* also denounces idolatry and has no direct bans of pictorial art as such in which Muslims should follow strictly. Thus, the tradition of aniconism in Islam is not permitted and most of art related to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which is calligraphic in nature is not allowed (Atil, 1978: 137-46). Moreover, Muslim never welcomed painting or physical presentation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the beliefs and religion of Buddhism and Christianity have done. Mosques are prohibited to decorate with the picture of religious traits, even pictorial art is also banned and forbidden to display (Arnold, 1928: 43-67). In this regard, a statue of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was removed in 1955 when the ambassadors of Indonesia, Pakistan and Egypt requested to remove from a courthouse in New York City. The monumental sculpture of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) perceived to be inflammatory to Muslims and it is prohibited in Islam. For Muslims, the picture of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the vilest of sins and a serious religious offence.

Tolerance and Arabian Traditions

Socio-cultural patience and tolerance for diversity is a moral condition for cultural harmony but it varies from society to society. In this regard, mainland Arabian society is perceived to be rigid and inflexible and imposed limits on structural art, drawing and painting of figures or pictures and visual narratives. Arabian society normally believes that humans normally have partial knowledge and only Divine Truth is complete but human truths are only relative. Thus, it seems that before Islam the Arabian culture was essentially hostile or indifferent to picturisation or images and description. Normally, Arabian society ignores religious art; where stories can be narrated constantly and hardly figural art to be found in the Islamic world.

However, Abbasid era was perceived to be golden model in Islamic history for cultural tolerance because that time all major religions including, Christians, Muslims, Jews as well as Arabs, Greeks, Persians and Turks worked together and contributed significantly towards social and economic development of the state. Abbasid offered traditional Arab synthesis and enlightenment that worked as a main source of coordination between Greek, Roman, Persian and also influenced the Western Renaissance. This was primarily carried by the authorities of a Dar al-Hikmah by Khalifa Mamun functioning in the 3rd and 4th centuries of the Islamic era. Nevertheless, Abbasid era focused on human art and humanistic culture recognized as an antique art. There is no dearth of secular Islamic

pictorial art, the area which is dominated by socio-cultural disparity in the international community. The *rhetorical paintings or non-physical art* is not popular in the Muslim countries and its status is just a symbolic and not more than a beautification; it is a thoughtful and visually fascinating exploration of pattern. In addition, Wahabism, Salfism and Doubandi thoughts have not given intellectual scope to Islamic art and strength of unique and traditional art, which is derivative from basic human interest as well as its abstract qualities.

In this context, Islamic art is normally away from this classical legacy by leaving artistic narrative to speech and written work, instead of presenting in different pictures, which given message to the common masses in variety of notions in a way of exemplary reference or explicit words: cycles and inscriptions (Ashraf, 2006: 456-478). Moreover, there is no specific Islamic culture and its vary on country to country but normally literature and art did not away from human interests and feeling of masses. However, in the contemporary era, the religious pictures are not pieces of art but it perceived to be deliberate attempt to hurt one particular community and have nothing to do with the modern standpoint. It cannot be called art in any category and cannot be applicable to the Western standard. The non-figural Islamic art is associated with academic balance and uniformity; it is severely self-referential. The real intention is to focus on the direction rather than on organic forms. There is already a freedom of execution, uncertainty, and harmonic inequity in Islamic art. However, the literally sense of figures in Islamic art means the real-life presence but in the language of art it can present the artistic views. Moreover, the growth of an Islamic art dissimilar from the Western traditions is the reaction of a profound cultural redeployment in which Muslims steeped in "Late Antique" tradition which reorganized the Near East's network of cultural relationship and slowly cut loose from its Late Antique past (Pochta, 2001: 37-49).

Huntington's Idea and Muslim Versions

Samuel Huntington's argues in the "Clash of Civilizations" that in the post-Cold War the world future conflicts and wars will be fought not on ideological but nations interest-based lines, due to 'civilizational' and cultural differences and affinities (Huntington, 1993-1994: 22-49). Huntington declared the "new chapter in the world history" will be "the fundamental sources of conflict" not as economic or ideological in nature, but very much "cultural." For Huntington, all popular civilizations have a prehistoric cultural identity and the core "differences in socio-economic and political development among civilizations are evidently based in their different cultures" (Huntington, 1993-1994: 22-49). Huntington warned: "culture and cultural identities...are influencing the shapes of cohesion, disintegration, and conflict in the coming world...The rivalry of the great powers is converted into clash of civilizations." He also started that "the real fault lines between

civilizations and culture will be the battle lines of the future wars,” and the two civilizations i.e Islam and the West are of specifically vital importance in this narrative because both are two different thoughts and “highly opposite civilizations” (Huntington, 1993-1994: 22-49).

The caricature of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) published in one of the *Copenhagen* (Denmark) leading paper and French magazine had become the source of provocation in the Muslim world. The cartoon reflects that the action communicate negative message to the whole world and it was believed to be against the spirit of co-existence. It also created friction among the different cultures, faiths and civilizations because it was the waves of hatred between the two cultures and reduced the chances of reconciliation. Some argued that the era of understanding is over and relationship between Islam and the West have become the victim of contradictions. Although it is not difficult that people from both civilisations can live together with “reconciliation” which is not exceptional and can provide a solid foundation to stay under one umbrella, however, many events happened in the West in which there is no difficulty to analyze that there is no more space of reconciliation between the West and the “Islamic world.” The worst example came out when the United States “holy men” claims that Muslims are evil in the world and ethics have no room in a war against an evil enemy (Graham, 2006). At the moment, it seems that the conflict driven by xenophobes based on fears, anxieties and panic situation has been created in a radically changing world and the circumstances clash of civilizations theories are applicable on the basis of alienation by incriminating others who are involved to convert the world into a disturbed mess. Nonetheless, the world has seen that after the publication of portrayals in satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* Muslim all over the world violently reacted and condemned behavior of Western media. On the other hand, Western leaders connected arms and weapons to lead a protester of millions in Paris (French capital), intonation “*Je suis Charlie*” (I am Charlie) and showed solidarity with the victims and condemned their killers (Ruthven, 2016: 43-67).

Freedom of Speech and Islamophobia

The reaction of Muslim world is obvious which lead to global protests and turbulence. It was merely a rehearsal that in case something would happen in future, the situation could become worst and might be difficult to manage in any part of the western countries. In these circumstances, the West could be ready to face serious incidents if they are not willing to revise their current policy of annoyance. In the post-Cold War era, the West believed that opponent seems to be invulnerable because of priority to death over life, which can be pacified by decent behavior and submissions. In this matter, the West has laws to discourage anti-Semitism to protect different cultures from racial assaults and have given an opportunity to “others” to condemn the prophet of Islam with offensive

cartoons. They have created an environment of animosity specifically for Muslims and failed to prevent Semitism and special rights of minorities in their home countries (Ruthven, 2006).

Thus, Western media defended the freedom of speech in the name of opposing “radical Islam” and deliberately stirring up hatred against the Muslims. According to Noam Chomsky, the West has used freedom of speech as a weapon against the Muslims and oppressed people and has justified their actions to incite religious and ethnic hatred (Chomsky, 2004:25-38). Moreover, these kinds of incidents do not nullify a civilizational method rather it is historically important that the clash between two main communities and civilizations who have ideological conflict for a long time, will still continue. It is also proven that the West portrayed Islam by a prism of fanaticism and offense against the Muslims arrived to such finding which can define in term of “Muslim violence” close-up the idea such as “Good Muslim,” “Bad Muslim” dichotomy (Mamdani, 2004:25-38). Moreover, the foremost presentation of Muslims in the Europe has given perception that religion of Islam is intolerant and prone to aggression (*The Times*, 2002: 11). As a result, the Western attitude toward Islam and Muslims is predominantly based on animosity and agony motivated by religious dissertation which is based on the highly disputed environment where these feelings born. However, the real problem arises when the Western people perceived that they had most modern society and their values are greater than the others and the clash of civilizations is replacing the central phenomenon of global politics (Hanson, 2002: xiv). The West also calculated that the existence of Western culture is threatened by the Muslims, although the situation is diametrically different. On the other hand, the Western people also assumed that Western culture, in all its aspects, is superior to other cultures including Muslims as John Game stated that the West think that Muslims belongs to “inferior culture” (Game, 2006). In these circumstances, the Muslims feel under particular intense cultural pressure by the West through their economic and communication and military domination. The Muslims also believe that all social, political and economic injustices are continuing with them generally at the hands of the West and particularly by the United States.

The Muslim world “spontaneously” protested against the publications of cartoons because the action of the Danish newspaper and French Charlie Hebdo indisputably offended the Muslim community. Muslims staged a demonstration in all major cities of the European countries and also in the Muslim world. In a written conversation to Prime Minister of Denmark, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, diplomats from many Islamic countries requested that “necessary steps” must be taken to avoid an abusive language against Islam (*The Independent*, 2006). On December 6, 2005, the OIC high level meeting held in Mecca and issued an official communiqué and demanded from the United Nations to impose international restriction on Denmark and French magazines (Dawn, 2005). In this regard,

European Union high level delegation gathered in Brussels on January 30, 2006 where the foreign minister of Luxembourg categorically said that the whole responsibility of the matter is on Danish than the European Union” (*Times Online*, 2006). Ursula Plassnik, the Austrian foreign minister went even further and said that “any kind of statements and act which degrade the religion is offensive and we should clearly condemn” (*Times Online*, 2006). The US State Department spokesmen condemned strongly and said “cartoons are offensive, objectionable and unacceptable” (*The New York Times*, 2006).

Mistrust between Muslims and Christian Society

Muslims and the Western people have been the prison of past and caught up in a fourfold vicious stages of misunderstanding and both have still confusion in many areas of religion. The narratives’ root causes of misunderstandings or confrontation are lying in history as well as in contemporary politics. Moreover, material issues and national interests also play a significant role within inter-group encounters, socio-cultural dissimilarities and ultimately forcefully shake the system in which clash is symbolized and conducted. In this way, ethically and culturally charged thoughts which determine the intellectual connotation that alienated groups give to their conflict and the presentation as particular people has given to their imagined differences and also explains the standard of relationship between the Muslims and the West (Esposito, 2003: 53).

Historically, in the past fourteen centuries, the great power system fluctuated at least twice among the Eastern and Western power relationship and there was mutual fear, imitation, dismissal and eventually reluctant to give legitimacy to each-others. The shifting of power structure and civilizations from the Persian and Roman to the Islamic Empires in the 7th to 13th centuries, and then the Renaissance and Reformation and from industrial revolution to modern technological advancement is basically the reminder of the both sides of history. Moreover, thoughts on the Crusades are strong and durable among the Christians and Muslims. Historically, in the battle (1920) of Maissaloun, when the French General Henri Gouraud conquered Damascus (Syria), and visited the famous tomb of the Omayyad mosque and addressed: “Saladin, listen, we have returned.” So, the message is clear to Muslims that Islam has been one of factor to mature the Western identity and constantly playing a leading role between the two communities as a “rival” in theological or ideological manner (Geertz, 1973: 23-54).

The main factor of Muslim retaliation to the West started with the demise of Spain (15th century) and Ottoman role on the Eastern Europe. Moreover, contemporary Muslims know about the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699) and Treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarja (1774) in which they withdrew from Europe and their image decline in the world and Christian empires re-designed the contemporary world. During that time many Muslim states faced

grave difficulties to establish political legitimacy and became subordinate in terms of principles of nationality, ethnicity, and territoriality of religious solidarity. In this regard, the Middle Eastern states faced problem of legitimacy in the post-colonial time which was basically binding by Islamic ideology and by their ethnic and national feelings. Moreover, in the Islamic world, there are many types of perceptions about the West but socio-political confrontation become serious and the ethnic identity and antagonistic descriptions seems more provocative. Thus, cultural confrontation between Muslim and Christian is basically embedded in the socio-political contentions and in the politicized cultural legacies of the past. Moreover, the competition between “Western civilization” and “Islamic civilization” is a symbolic and perceived to be uneasy history of mutual suspicion and recrimination. The west always presents Islam with a crusading spirit and media out of the way perceived that the Muslim religion is based on the pursuit of domination.

Global Muslim Community

The majority of Muslim would like status quo and be happy to stay in history and do not like any kind of change or enlightenment. They are still under the authoritarianism and looking repression, corruption, and incompetence in governance, social and economic hardship and have less chances of democratic culture. The Western norms were derived in the British Magna Carta, (Document of Magna Carta, 1199-1216). the French Revolution (1789), or American Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776); however, Muslims derived from the Holly Quran and *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). So, it is fashion for common Muslims to talk against the Western norms. It seems that Muslims are the prison of the past, have a love for past, like to live in past as a model of daily life. The contemporary Muslim youth perceived that the ideas of democratization, respect to human rights, good governance, liberalism, secularization and individualism have no place in Islam. Muslim scholars are giving greater prominence to Islam but have hesitation to advocate modern values.

Most of the Muslims claim the right to criticize ruling elites and the way of governance. They also oppose ruling elites’ activities and attitude towards the common masses which are oppressive and ruthless. In the situation where Muslim extremists support and even practice violence in all over the Muslim world and particularly in Pakistan, Algeria or Egypt, people normally approach through the democratic system and are subjected to state violence (Hoodbhoy, 2013). Thus, in the contemporary era, extremists are the non-state actors within the country and demanding for change of undemocratic system and respect for human rights but one way and another way things are habitually denied. So, in any society where democratic culture have no tradition then certainly its practice will be precarious. It is necessary to understand because socio-political structure of the country has deep influence on the future of coming generation and its attitude. Thus, extremist

Muslims are not different from modern militants who have violent agenda and do not believe in rationality. Many Muslim organizations run independent social and political programmes and their existence is like a state within state. They are active to provide social services (education, health, accommodation etc) to the needy people particularly to the women who normally migrate from rural to urban areas and look for shelters or assistance. It is the prime duty of the state to provide these facilities but if the state's response is poor then the non-state actors will come forward for the social needs of people. These organizations generally are funded by spiritual charity or from largernet-work of banks and commercial activities. Apart from the conflict between the Muslim and Christian, many liberal Muslim thinkers, writers and novelists criticize the weaknesses of the Muslim society and pragmatically admitted to the backwardness and oppression in the societies recognizing their inability to integrate with the developed Western culture.

Syrian novelist Hanna Mina, who presents in "*Spring and Autumn*" that Muslims are representing deteriorated civilization and have a competition with the developed world and without possessing the courage to face the challenges of the West they cannot overthrow their domination (Mina, 1985: 87). The same views were offered by Sudanese writer Tayeb Salih in his book on "*Season of Migration to the North*" where the writer has stated that the tension between Muslims (Arabs) and the West is basically lies in the history because the Western believed that Muslims are fanatical, violent, and lacktolerance. On the other hand, Muslims thought that the West is selfish, immoral and opportunistic as well as lacking moral values. In this context, the author asked infinite questions to the Westerns which remain unanswered (Salih, 1997: 169). Another distinguished scholar Taha Husainhas written in "*Bird from the East*"(translated by Tawfiq al-Hakim), that East is declining and West is rising because of the spirit of hardship, truth, loyalty, commitment and the Muslims are a unique nation who are happy to stay in the past glory (Husain, 1999: 154). The same arguments have been raised by another Egyptian writer Bahaa Taher in his novel "*Love in Exile*" in which the author has taken absolute perspective about the West and argued that "the values of justice, honesty, love and freedom is the bright side of the world is only possible in the West and East is packed by hatred, arrogance and exploitation (Taher, 2001: 24-165). In this regard, the renowned Islamic scholar Fazal also argued that unless Muslims come out from the paralyzation and stagnationthey cannot face the challenges of the contemporary time (IslamiCity, 2003).

Conclusion

The history of the West and Muslim is not brilliant because it is replete with the incidents of madness, hatred and the dehumanizing attitudes. Both have traditional confrontation on various fronts but equally have history of cooperation and coexistence on uncountable fields and animists lived together peacefully in parts of the world. However, the colonial

domination of the West has given a bitter legacy to the Christian community which is based on anger and distrust with the Muslims. The West left Muslim community with a mental reservation and sensitive imprint that Christians are partial and biased against them, antagonistic, dominant, and brutal. Even the vilification and demonizing Muslims and deionization of Islam likely is to continue in the mainstream of Western society. They are dealing Muslims (Islam) in the manners they want Muslims (Islam) to treat the West and vice versa. They have to recognize each other as equals on humanistic ground and gave importance to freedom of expression. Both should not be abusive and insulting in terms of religions because distorted interpretation of the religion is not a fair deal with any community. Nevertheless, both Islam and the West have commonality and similarity in many areas and have capacity to develop mutual understanding and relationship in the modern globalized world. These relationships should not be on the basis of socio-cultural supremacy but must be on the principles of mutual recognition, respect and sincerity to the cultural diversity. The Muslims (Islam) and Christians (West) are not meant to see each other as adversaries. There should be no doubt that the United States is not a sole representative of the West and only one Muslim country is not a symbol of Islam, however, both can respect each other religious values. So, the West must work to defuse hatred against the Muslims and expand their efforts to construct a bridge of understanding between the two major communities and have to wind up the chapter of hatred and centuries old prejudices. For this purpose, dialogue and cooperation is the best option for understanding and only dialogue can strengthen ties and can reduce perceived differences and violence in the world. Finally, there is a need to fill the gap between the West and Muslim traditions and between socio-political values and the Muslims moral values. This sermon can gain growth provided moderate Muslims come forward and take responsibility to introduce Western moral and political values in the authoritarian Muslim society then they can build a bridge between ethics, values, deeds and words, ideas and realities.

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