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Openness for Dialogue Reached a New Low

- The ascent of IS and Boko Haram has led to a further deterioration of the media portrayal of Islam
- Violent groups dominate reporting about Islam since 2001
- Religious leaders with low share of voice
- Media stereotypes about the “other” undermine openness for dialogue

Coverage of Islam, Muslims and Muslim organizations - including militant groups - Tone of coverage, 2001-2014



**Annual
Dialogue
Report**
on Religion and Values



No place for terrorists in Islam

Shawky Allam, The Grand Mufti of Egypt

Every Muslim has been in utter shock since the senseless, appalling and cowardly attack on Charlie Hebdo in Paris. This horrific attack is a complete violation of Islamic law and norms and the perpetrators are no way representatives of the Muslim people or the religion of Islam. God upholds the sanctity of life as a universal principle. "and do not kill one another, for God is indeed merciful unto you" says the Quran in (4:29). Islam views murder as both a crime punishable by law in this world and as major sin punishable in the Afterlife as well. Prophet Mohammad said, "The first cases to be decided among the people on the Day of Judgment will be those of blood-shed"

This is in keeping with the best of Muslim tradition which abhors terror and violence. This lesson is best contained in the example of the Prophet Muhammad himself, whose honorable birth is being celebrated by 1.6 billion Muslims this month.

For Muslims, Prophet Muhammad is the beacon of mercy, the sparkle of compassion, the spring of wisdom and the perfect guide in their journey towards God.

Ironically, the fanatics and extremists right now have reduced the prophetic example to a set of rituals crooked projections and warped logic that runs counter to the true essence and mission of the Prophet.

They have reduced Islam to slitting throats, burning schools and oppressing women and killing religious minorities, terrorizing and violating the human rights of people in the most blatant manner possible.

They ignore the Prophet's example which is extremely well documented and indisputable. They fail to comprehend that faith is ultimately geared towards inculcating a relationship with God and that cannot be complete unless humans inculcate the Divine attributes of mercy, compassion and kindness and treat their fellow human beings accordingly.

Prophet Muhammad was repeatedly subjected to the worst treatment by his enemies, only to consistently disregard these insults and instead take the path of forgiveness, mercy and compassion.

This is why he is known to Muslims as "the Mercy to all worlds." Indeed, this example is most succinctly summarized in the Qur'an itself, which instructs believers as follows: "The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better."



The world is sorely in need of such lessons, which represent the authentic teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet of Islam. It is important to separate these noble messages from those that are bandied about by those who have no competencies in religious interpretation, Qur'anic hermeneutics or the history of Islamic thought.

Unfortunately, the current state of the Muslim world is such that institutions and structures of legitimate authority have been challenged to such an extent that inflammatory rhetoric has taken the place of thoughtful analysis as a motivator of action and a guide for religious sentiment.

Let me be clear by reiterating that Islam is utterly against extremism and terrorism but unless we understand the factors that provide a rationalization for terrorism and extremism we will never be able to eradicate this scourge. This must be understood in order to build a better future that can bring an end to this grave situation that is destroying the world.

However, it was unfortunate to see hasty responses and reactions which immediately jumped on Islamic faith within minutes of the first news reports of the incident. Blaming an entire religion because of the acts of this not-well men is patently unfair and serves no purpose.

It is important for us at this time of great sadness to stand together and process this horrific incident in a way that is fair and reasonable. It is important that we do not demonize Muslims without cause not because it is good for Muslims, but because our future ability to coexist in peace depends on it.

We are today in desperate need of serious religious leaders who engage the reality of the modern world - complete with its challenges and difficulties - in order to create an environment in which people can coexist. This must be a joint effort from members of all faith groups and cultures.

After Paris is before Paris

My freedom ends where your freedom starts, and your freedom ends where my freedom begins. When it comes to freedom there is nothing else to consider.

All other details and fascinating facets regarding freedom remain just that: Details that further elucidate the above paragraph. There is no freedom of speech debate that leads to anything positive if we try to rank as more or less important freedom of art or freedom of religion or the freedom to wear sneakers at Carnegie Hall when everyone else dons black polished shoes. Freedom is the most precious value mankind has developed and secured briefly in the period since we learned to walk upright.

I am the fifth generation of my family to be a journalist. In that time my family has seen all the best and worst sides of this wonderful profession. My grandfather was among the first to lose their license to write when the Nazis took over in January 1933. In 1970, I found my mother dead in bed the day after she had decided together with my father that he should step down as editor-in-chief after his publisher told him that no Christian Democrat should be criticized in his newspaper. As a daughter of my grandfather, who had to carry his young family through the 12 dark years of Nazi-terror, her memories must have torn her apart after she joined my father in his brave decision. Both had been masters in philosophy, both had embraced the concept of freedom and both had decided after completing their PhDs to serve as journalists.

With this in mind, we publish this latest edition of the Annual Dialogue Report in January 2015, a few days after the killings in Paris. We recognize that while we are almost speechless in the face of this wrongdoing that we all need to improve our attempts at Unlearning Intolerance, a series started at the UN under the guidance of Ramu Damodaran, the Chief of UN Academic Impact.

Media Tenor research on terrorism highlights one aspect: extremists tend to turn to terrorist once they can hope to gain respect or fear or indeed both from their environment. Not only because of this we urgently need to overcome stereotypes. Everywhere and in all parts of professional life.

The following pages unfortunately show that my own profession has not yet excelled at this, rather the contrary.

Roland Schatz, Founder and CEO of Media Tenor International

Summary

- Media coverage of religious protagonists has been focusing increasingly on Islam, reaching a new peak in 2014.
- Religion is not exempt from the general trust meltdown of the 21st century. Reporting about religion and religious groups tends to focus on bad news, regardless of the belief. There are exceptions: Pope Francis is covered extremely positive - underscoring media criticism of the Church.
- Reporting about Islam has deteriorated consistently after 9/11 fuelled by the growing visibility of Islamist terrorists and armed groups - both in the Middle East and in the countries of the West. Over the last years the Palestine conflict has as well been framed increasingly in religious perspective as a confrontation between Islamist Hamas faction and an Israeli government dominated by ultraorthodox parties and settlers.
- Fuelled by the highly effective media strategies of IS and Boko Haram, tonality on Islam reached a new low in 2014. Tonality was even worse than after the 9/11 attacks in 2001.
- Coverage of Islam is focused on violence, war and terrorism, while the every-day life of Muslims, the teachings of the Koran and the Muslim holidays.
- The contribution of Islam and Muslims to social and cultural life in Western society are virtually absent from the news.
- The negative image of Islam is precipitated by the lack of visibility of Muslim organizations, that are based in Western countries, and the virtual absence of Muslim spiritual leaders.
- Muslims are therefore almost totally devoid of an own voice in the news about Islam.
- The growing salience of the “Muslim” threat has driven not only anti-Muslim sentiment in Western societies, but as well caused the rise of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim parties - especially in the 2014 EU elections - and movements in Switzerland and other European countries.
- 2014 is another step back from the ideal of inter-religious dialogue and peace.

The long-term trend 2001-2014

Core issues & the view of the “other”

Steps in the Dialogue: Pope Benedict & Obama

State of the Dialogue - 2014

Appendix

Islam image on an all-time low

Long-term trend, tone of coverage of Muslims, 2001-2014

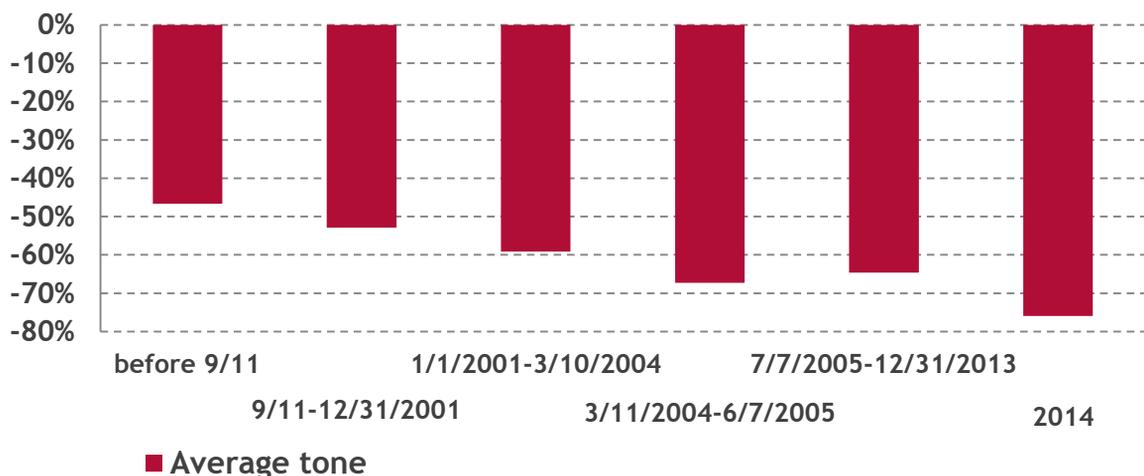
Muslims have not been covered positively at all over the last 14 years - despite the growing concern about the “clash of civilizations”. On the contrary, the ongoing violence has eroded the already limited inventory of balanced or positive stories.

Just after the attacks of 9/11, top politicians, journalist opinion leaders or religious leaders have pointed out the basically irenic nature of Islam, condemning the terror attacks and suicide bombings as unethical and contrary to the teachings of the Prophets. But their voice has become less audible over the years, leaving the international media stage to radicals - both

from within the Muslim World and in the West.

The spread of violence and assassinations from the Middle East region to the countries of the West has contributed to an increasingly negative media image of Islam, reaching already a level of -67% after the Madrid bomb attacks of March 11, 2004. But the year 2014 has witnessed a new low in the tonality towards Islam. The media-focused violence perpetrated by Boko Haram and IS has triggered not only a significant increase in the volume of reporting but a further deterioration in tone. Coverage of Islam thus reached a new quality of hostility in 2014.

Coverage of Islam, Muslims and Muslim organizations - including militant groups - Tone of coverage, 2001-2014



Terror drives coverage of Islam

Long-term trend, visibility of Muslims, 2001-2014

Prior to the Al Qaeda attacks of 9/11 Islam and Muslims barely played a role in international TV news.

The Middle East Conflict was framed as the fight of Israel against the Arab World and cultural differences complicating the integration of migrant people from the Middle East region were not traced back to Islam in the first place. In Germany, for instance, reporting focused on “Kurds” or “Turks” instead of Muslims, when fears about “parallel societies” were discussed in the media.

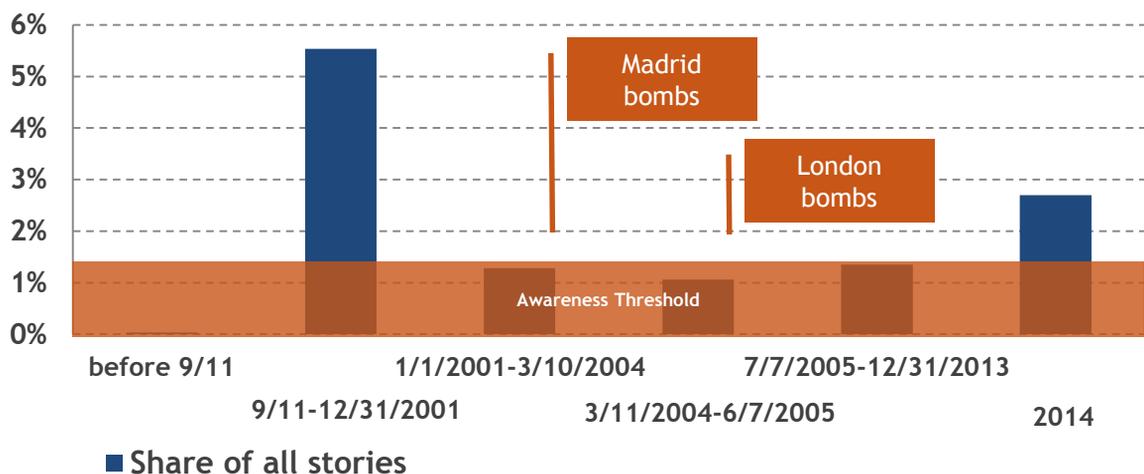
The attacks of 9/11 changed reporting only partially: Whereas militant groups, like Al Qaeda or

the Taliban became more visible, other Muslim protagonists - like national Islamic organizations, religious leaders and Muslim believers continued to be ignored by mainstream media.

The intermittent violence perpetrated against Muslims and non-Muslims alike over the thirteen years after 9/11 has kept Islam visible in the news, consistently raising the awareness of the perceived “threat” from Islam to the Western World. Attitudes towards Muslims have become more negative and hostile accordingly.*

The year 2014 has witnessed a strong increase of reporting about Islam - but mainly on IS.

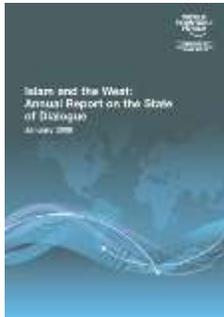
Coverage of Islam, Muslims and Muslim organizations - including militant groups - Share of all news stories, 2001-2014



- **Continuous presence generates trust**
- **Make use of advisory pages**
- **Debates about values offer opportunities**
- **Big events are media events**
- **Shape your topic management**
- **Third-party endorsement can be managed**
- **Diversity of voices**

Analysis on Faith and Values

Media Tenor Research 2000-2015



Islam and the West: Annual Report on the State of Dialogue

In January 2008, Georgetown University and the World Economic Forum worked together to launch “Islam and the West: Annual Report on the State of Dialogue.” The report provided a systemic and thorough overview of how Muslim and Western societies perceive and relate to each other at the political, social, economic and cultural levels.

The report combines a worldwide media analysis by MEDIA TENOR with opinion research results from the Gallup poll for the first time. It was presented at the World Economic Forum, Davos 2009.



Annual Dialogue Report

H.E. Ali Gomaa, the Grand Mufti of Egypt and Co-Chair of the C-1 World Dialogue called on imams, preachers and clerics in the mosques and churches of Egypt and the Arab Muslim world to combat intolerance in their sermons and in their personal contacts. The Grand Mufti responded with this call to the results of the C-1 World Dialogue Annual Report, which show that both in the Muslim world as well as in the Western world public hostility towards other religions continues to grow. Sheikh Ali expressed his views on the occasion of the presentation of the C-1 Annual Report.

“We need a fundamental change in the inter-religious dialogue”, the Grand Mufti told reporters at the launch of the report, “in order to transform the exchange between religions - away from aggressive and negative attitudes toward a spirit of tolerance and coexistence.”



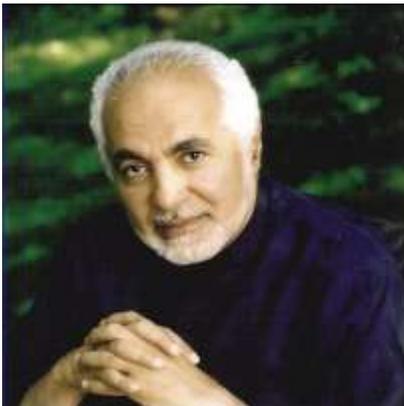
Inauguration C-1 World Dialogue, London, March 30, 2009 by initiative of Prince Ghazi of Jordan and Roland Schatz, Media Tenor.



Shawky Allam in the nineteenth and the current Grand Mufti of Egypt since March 4th, 2013.

Shawky Allam was born in the Nile Delta governorate of Beheira. He received his PhD in 1996 from the Al-Azhar University in Jurisprudence and Sharia law. Prior to his appointment, he served as the chairman of the Department of Jurisprudence at the School of Sharia at Al-Azhar University's Tanta branch. In February 2013, he was elected by Al Azhar's council of senior scholars replacing outgoing grand Mufti, Ali Gomaa. This makes the first time that the Grand Mufti has been elected by Islamic scholars rather than appointed by the president

The position of Grand Mufti is seen as very influential in Egypt as well as throughout the Arab and Islamic world. The Grand Mufti is the first and primary source of religious authority, is seen as the symbolic religious representative of the whole state, and issues fatwas on religious matters. His office, the *Dar al Ifta* (literally, the house of fatwas), an agency charged with issuing religious legal opinions on any question to Muslims who ask for them, issues some half a million fatwas a year in ten different languages, including both the official ones that he himself crafts on important issues and the more routine ones handled via phone and Internet by a dozen or so subordinate muftis.



Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is the founder and Chairman of The Cordoba Initiative, a multi-national, multi faith organization dedicated to improving Muslim-West relations. He has engaged in outreach to moderates of all faith traditions, engaging in interfaith dialogue and forging connections of trust and mutual support.

In 1997, he also co- founded the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA); the first Muslim organization committed to building bridges between Muslims and the American public by elevating the discourse on Islam through educational outreach, interfaith collaboration, culture and arts.

Background: Born of Egyptian parentage and educated in England, Egypt, and Malaysia, Imam Feisal holds a Bachelor of Science in Physics from Columbia University in New York and a Master of Science in Plasma Physics from Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey.

As Imam of Masjid al-Farah, a mosque located in Lower Manhattan, he preached a message of understanding between people of all faith traditions.

Imam Feisal sits on the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Center of New York, serves as an advisor to the Interfaith Center of New York, and is a member of the World Economic Forum Council of 100 Leaders (Islamic-West dialogue).



Roland Schatz, born in 1965 in Bielefeld; journalist in the fifth generation. Study of philosophy, economics, history and political science in Fribourg (CH) and Bonn; journalism training at *Braunschweiger Zeitung*, *epd* and *Freiburger Nachrichten*.

1985 foundation of the InnoVatio publishing house, specializing in media analysis, cultural management and applied education.

1993 development and management of the in-house research institute Media Tenor.

Lecturer in applied communications and strategic information management. Editor of the Annual Dialogue Reports on Religion and Values and the Global Peace Report.

2009 in collaboration with Prince Ghazi of Jordan establishment the C-1 World Dialogue Foundation in Basle.

2010 opening of the Global Media Impact Center in Boston

His father, Dr. Kurt Schatz, was, inter alia, Head of Newspapers and Magazines with Gemeinschaftswerk für Evangelische Publizistik in Frankfurt, author of "Gemeinde-Handbrief" and, collaborating with Heiko Klinge, Managing Director Mediendienstleistungs-Gesellschaft der Katholischen Kirche,, Munich.

Roland Schatz is married and father of two daughters.



Dr. Christian Kolmer M.A. is a media scientist and historian working with the Media Tenor Institute in Bonn. Born 1965 in Essen, he studied history, communication science and economics in Bochum and Mainz. After his MA thesis on the ascent of Christianity as a process of public opinion, he specialised in research on news selection and did extensive research on the media image of the German Treuhandanstalt, the body in charge of the privatisation of the East German state enterprises. After his graduation from Johannes Gutenberg-University in Mainz with an input-output analysis on news selection he joined Media Tenor, where he is responsible for contacts with the scientific community and non-governmental clients as well. His fields of interest centre on agenda-setting research and cross-country comparisons, especially in the field of country images.

Methodology: Content measurement

Statement coding, reports, statements

Statement coding analyzes every single piece of information in an article separately (subject, topic, rating, source, etc.). It is the most sophisticated way of analyzing content and helps to track whether single messages are covered by the media, or negative/positive tone is changing with regard to headlines, etc.

Information entities designed to grab the overall picture of a company and its senior executives in an article.

Every description of either a company or a senior executive (min. 5 lines) results in a coded passage. A report on a company announcing earnings without the presence of senior executives would be coded as a single passage. The rating is coded according to the dominant tone of coverage (e.g. more positive / neutral / negative).

The **single story** on a certain topic. Report-based coding is used to analyze the main topic of a story (e.g. old-age provision) compared to other stories (e.g. war, catastrophes).

Coding example

1) "Allianz triplica sus beneficios en España..."
(Allianz triples its profits in Spain)

Coding (Code):

company: Allianz Spain (46)
Line of Business: Not mentioned (0)
Country described: Spain (221)
Chronological Structure: Present (1)
Topic: Business results (100)
Rating explicit: None (0)
Rating contextual: Positive (1)
Source of Information: Journalist (1)



1) "Allianz Seguros, la filial española del grupo alemán..."
(Allianz Seguros, the Spanish subsidiary of the German group)

Coding (Code):

company: Allianz Spain (46)
Line of Business: Not mentioned (0)
Country described: Spain (221)
Topic: Existing holdings (406)
Chronological Structure: Present (1)
Rating explicit: None (0)
Rating contextual: None (0)
Source of Information: Journalist (1)

3) "...un 7,1 por ciento más"
(7,1 per cent more)

Coding (Code):

company: Allianz Spain (46)
Line of Business: Insurance in general (1)
Country described: Spain (221)
Chronological Structure: Present (1)
Topic: Results, profits (101);
Rating explicit: None (0)
Rating contextual: Positive (1)
Source of Information: Journalist (1)

A total of 20 statements were coded.

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