

The Image of the Arab and Muslim World on the Spanish Media

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■ 1. Introduction

The Arab and Muslim World is still a stranger for the majority of European and United States citizens, even though current societies' evolution has deeply connected these sociopolitical realities during the last decades. Some of the processes that have led to an approach between them are: migratory flows, ideological tensions, intensification of the commercial relations or episodic violence. Thus, citizens have a vision of more proximity, which has not always implied mutual respect. Spain is not an exception to this situation. The links established by History between Islam and its cultural influences and the whole Spanish territory are also out of question. At present, the growing Muslim community struggles to connect with Western lifestyles prevalent in the Spanish society. Besides, its geographical location justifies the need for identification and potentiation of those fields where meetings and common work prevail over cultural clash and confrontation.

The role of the Media is essential in these processes of intercultural dialogue. The Media have great influence over current societies, since they open the door to realities that usually remain out of the citizens' direct experience. Thus, the image many people may have of the Arab and Muslim World generally comes from stories found in the media that are essential on the formation of public opinion.

Taking these premises as a starting point, this report intends to study in depth the image transmitted by the Spanish general press of the Arab and Muslim World. For this aim, we have analyzed the whole journalistic production of six of the main national distribution journals (El País, El Mundo, ABC, La Vanguardia, El Periódico de Catalunya and La Razón) during 2008, searching for any signal of Muslim and Arab presence. Consequently, this is a thorough study, with no precedent in specialized scientific literature and of a high level of depth. By the combination of content analysis and journalistic discourses analysis, we complete a review that equals Spanish research with some other European countries such as United Kingdom or France, where this kind of studies are more common.

The following pages summarize the main findings of a research whose full version can be found on the CD attached to this report. In fact, we strongly recommend reading the full version, since the level of depth and the possibilities of explicit exemplification are much higher. The report is structured according to the scheme of academic research in Social Sciences. After two paragraphs aimed at contextualization and dealing with the theoretical framework and the methodological design, we will focus on presenting the results. In the first place, the main results of the quantitative analysis are shown, whereas the five following chapters detail each of the five main topics detected in the analyzed coverage: the conflict between Israel and Palestine, the relations between Spain and Morocco, the journalistic approach of terrorism, the cultural clash and the building of bridges between the West and Arab and Muslim World.

■ 2. Theoretical Framework

During the last years, specifically since the 2001 attacks in New York and the following ones in Madrid and London, all of them attributed to Al Qaeda, the relations between the Muslim World and the West have occupied a central position in the political debate, but also in the media and, subsequently, in the public opinion. Nonetheless, it is evident that the relation, sometimes conflictive, between both worlds settles on deep historical roots. Without detailing any of these events, there is no doubt that the Crusades (1095-1270), partly as a response to the Byzantine Empire defeat, Muslims ejection of Spain, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt or the expansion and fall of the Ottoman Empire determined, to a great extent, both worlds' way of seeing and relating with each other. Afterwards, Europe's colonial expansion, Israel's creation (1948), 1973 Oil crisis, for which Middle East countries were mostly blamed, 1979 Iranian Revolution or the Iran-Iraq war are some of the facts that explain the resurgence of a social and political movement linked to Islam, and consequently, the antagonistic reaction from the West.

In Spain, Muslim presence during eight centuries involved fundamental social and cultural influences, but also a special relation with a world nowadays located only some kilometers away, in the north of Africa, as well as in the Spanish society, as a result of the intense migration process experienced in the last years. For this reason, Spain constitutes a very particular reality because of its relation with the nowadays known as Muslim World. On the one hand, in some way, the national identity, the constitution of Spain as a nation settles, on the collective imaginary, on the struggle and the recapture against the Muslim invader, on heroic

stories where Spain is unified and Christianity triumphs. However, despite Al-Andalus existence and flourishing and its consequent influence on the Spanish identity and culture, there is still generally, in the Spanish society, a profound ignorance about Islam and Muslim culture and of the reality of Maghreb societies. Nowadays, this ignorance is sprinkled with distrust and resentment due to the mentioned events occurred during the last years.

Someway, these historical facts, together with a scarce intellectual sensitivity have substantially determined the way of representing the Muslim World and consequently, Western perception of it. In the analysis of this representation, we cannot forget Edward Said and his theory of Orientalism, a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the East and the West, where the occident culture and societies are inherently superior to the East ones. Someway, Said focuses on the Michel Foucault concept of speech (1968, 1969, 1974), which considers knowledge and power as the axis of analysis. Thus, Orientalism is a system of ideas that has allowed European culture to create and manage the idea of East in the political, sociological, military, ideological, scientific and imaginative field. Said mainly analyzes academic texts ranging from French and British experts of the XVIII and XIX centuries to contemporary studies of American academics. According to Said, Orientalism has its origin and has supported itself based on this academic work, producer of a Western ethnocentric discourse, developed over unequal relations of power. This discourse states that Islam constitutes a transnational, monolithic and coherent force, which has developed a relation of confrontation with the West throughout history. Moreover, it facilitates the maintenance of a reductionist discourse enabling a cultural generalization consisting on the perception of the East and Islam as a despotic, irrational and barbaric reality, incapable of describing itself. (Said, 1978)

Thus, we face the problem of representing the other, the different one. The ability of some powerful groups to represent the others in a certain and stereotyped way, emphasizing the differences, is what Hall calls 'symbolic power', the ability of marking, assigning and classifying (Hall, 1997). The representation of minorities is the difference between Maghribian country 'They' and 'Us'. This leads us back to the structure of discourse and Foucault, who links language, knowledge and reality. He understands discourse as something that provides a language, a language enabling the representation of knowledge about a topic in a certain historical moment.

There are three different approaches or theories of representation. Firstly, the 'reflective' approach, stating that meaning lies in the object, the individual, the idea or real world event and that the language works as a mirror reflecting the reality just as it is. Secondly, the 'intentional' approach, granting the representation power to the author, who imposes his or her unique way of understanding the world through language.

Finally, according to the 'constructionist or constructivist' approach, the meaning is not constructed by the material world. We construct it through the linguistic system used to represent concepts. But maybe the most suitable option for the subject of our work is an 'ideological' approach to the representation of the other. This approach has the ability of changing or adapting the reality to the ideological vision to represent. This leads to three discourse modalities:

1. An ethnocentric discourse. It considers 'I' as the central part of the discourse. It is 'We' and 'They', or 'Us' versus 'Them'.
2. A domination discourse, based on power and influence. According to this modality, the representation of 'we' and 'they' is based on the superiority of 'we' and on the inferiority or weakness of 'them'.
3. A hypocrite and malicious demonization discourse, which in our case of study degenerates on an Islamophobic discourse. (Ameli, Marandi, Ahmed, Kara, and Merali, 2007).

On this report, the problem of representing the other will be focused on the media representation and, therefore, on the Islam and the Arab and Muslim World image transmitted to the public opinion. In fact, one of our aims is trying to prove or refute whether in the Spanish press case, the same problems of negative representation of the Arab and Muslim World appear. And also, if the line established by the academics and experts, often intuitively, corresponds to the reality of the Spanish media panorama.

We can also add that the emergence or resurgence of Islam as the 'Other', has a lot to do two events: on the one hand, the Iranian

Revolution in 1979 and the crisis on the Embassy of the United States in Teheran and on the other hand, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the communist front. During the Cold War, threats to Western interests came from the Soviet Union. In fact, Muslims were not seen as a threat on the grounds that they were basically opposed to the Soviets. After the Iran-Iraq war, the idea of Islam as a threat resurfaced as well as the orientalist's approaches on the topic. In this context, Samuel Huntington and his 'The Clash of Civilizations' appears (Huntington, 1996), arguing that the New World Order is based on conflict and cooperation models built on cultural identifications or distinctions. Huntington also talks about the danger of Muslims and their tendency to conflict and violence, turning them into a threat. According to this thesis, Islam constitutes a challenge for the West and a danger for its own identity. This way, needs to confirm its identity and defend itself from Maghribian countries its own dissolution (Krammer, 1997). Therefore, Islam has been rediscovered and interpreted as an alternative to the West. The Muslim World meets the need of the West for having a challenging but subordinated 'Other'. Thus, Islam is perceived as a 'global aggressor' (Halliday, 1996). Islam is seen as a problem, as a threat for the vision of a western globalization. Therefore, we face a contemporary manifestation of Orientalism, defined by some authors as Islamophobia (Gottschalk and Greenberg, 2008).

The Role of the Media

So far, we have seen that we face a problem of representing the 'Other', the different one, the unknown, determined by some historical roots. Now, we are going to see which is and has been the role of media and how they contribute to create an image of Islam and of the Arab and Muslim World. Undoubtedly, media occupies a central position in the society and has a huge potential to inform about current affairs. It not only transmits information or ideas but also opinions and presents a particular vision of the reality. Besides, the media has the ability to articulate certain discourses and define the frameworks so that society can understand minorities' reality. The media representation of minorities and of the topics related to them, or even the lack of representation, its absence in the media panorama, determines the perception of minorities by the public. .

In this case, it seems clear that western media has contributed to a great extent to generate a stereotyped image of the Muslim World, an image based on distortion and clichés. Afterwards, we will discuss if this image corresponds to the Spanish press reality. Thus, as Karim H. Karim (2006) explains, from the countless events related to the billion Muslims worldwide occurred every day, only dramatic, tragic or illegal facts appear on the front pages of newspapers or on the main TV news. Somehow, the lack of understanding of these events and of the Muslim societies' history is what causes the wrong approach of their reality. In general, media transmit the idea that Muslims are the 'other', which the collective 'I' must be aware of.

Concerns about the Arab and Muslim World in the European media emerged long before the September 11th New York attacks or the March 2004 Madrid attacks. In fact, the Council of Europe, promoted by the Islamic Culture Foundation (FUNCI) published in 1991 the 1162 Recommendation (Document 6497, Recommendation 1162) about the contribution made by the Islamic civilization to the European culture. This recommendation stated that Islam has suffered and is still suffering from misrepresentation, because of hostile stereotypes. Nowadays, there is very little awareness in Europe of the importance of Islam's contribution and its positive role in the European current society. With no doubt, historical errors, ethnocentric education and the approach of the media are responsible for this situation. (FUNCI, 2009). It would not be strange that currently, 19 years later, the recently created Union for the Mediterranean came to similar conclusions. This is a similar position to the one adopted by the OSCE Ministerial Council fourteen years later, in 2005, when it encouraged people to continue developing and promoting measures to fight prejudices, intolerance and discrimination, and considering the development of measures without risking liberty of expression and information in response to xenophobic stereotypes, intolerance and discrimination on the media and to foster educational programs for children and teenagers about prejudices and bias which can be found on the media or the Internet. (OSCE 2006). We can see how some important European Institutions have shown concern about the situation of the Muslim community in Europe, focusing on the responsibility of the media in the representation of a certain image of this community, majoritarian in European societies.

Elizabeth Poole (2002) analyzed in depth this representation, in a research about Islam on the British press and concluded the existence of a strong relation between representation and public opinion.

In the absence of alternatives, the media contributes to the perpetuation and maintenance of some ideas related to this topic and to the transmission of a stereotyped image, dominated by the foreign policies of Western powers. For example, that Islam is static and Muslim people are reluctant to progress. That they live immersed in old-fashioned and repressive practices that violate human

rights and generally use religion to obtain their objectives. In short, the media representation of the Muslim World legitimates the current social relations of domination, power structures and discrimination, relations based on distrust and alienation. The dichotomy 'They/Us', the representation of the Eastern culture as something strange, as the 'other', is leading the discourse about the Arab and Muslim World on Western media. In fact, according to Poole, an ethnocentric vision dominates the current representations of Islam, which are reductionists and predominantly negative. Muslim people are generally portrayed as fundamentalists, misogynous, threats, manipulators of their faith for political and personal interests, and also ruled by politically unstable governments and movements. (Poole, 2002).

At this point, we need to mention again Edward Said and his analysis of the media coverage of Islam (Said, 1997). According to Said, Islam represents bad news for the USA and Europe public opinion. Media, governments, geopolitical strategists and academics coincide on designing Islam as a threat to Western civilization. This does not mean that we only find negative representations or racist cartoons of the Muslim World in Western media. However, negative images of Islam are predominant, not representing what Islam is like, but what some power groups want to transmit it is. According to Said, malicious generalization about Islam have become the last acceptable form of foreign culture denigration in the West; what is said about the Muslim mind or character or religion or culture as a whole cannot not be said on mainstream discussion about other religions or cultures. Islam's vision is uniform, reductionist and monochromatic. Said pays special attention to the connection produced between Islam and terrorism in the media. Thus, the term 'fundamentalism' is almost automatically associated to the Muslim World. The normal reader identifies fundamentalism and Islam as if they were essentially the same. Islam is reduced to a handful of rules, stereotypes and generalizations about its faith and culture, insisting on the connection with negative aspects such as violence, primitivism, atavism and threat (Said, 1997).

General opinion concludes that Western media portrays a negative and stereotyped image of Islam and of the Arab and Muslim World. Anser Hassan has analyzed some of the main clichés and negative connections associated with Islam in the media and concluding that Islam is associated to 'extremism', 'terrorism' and 'fundamentalism'. In his opinion, representing Muslims as fundamentalists or potential terrorists is also a common stereotype in Western thought. According to experts such as Hassan, the association of Islam and violence is very common on Western media. In fact, this author also stressed the wrong use by the media of the term Jihad: media misinterpret the term Jihad, considering it a holy war, where Muslims irrationally kill infidels, when its real meaning is some of the actions a Muslim may do for the love of God. The way media represent Jihad usually offers a negative vision of Islam. Finally, he also criticizes the way Western media reflect women in the Muslim World. They are victims of a harsh and suppressive religion, and are generally represented without taking into account that there are countries with Islamic population (Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Turkey) that had female heads of states. (Hassan, 1995).

Some authors even talk about 'Islamophobia' because of the way everything related to the Muslim World is represented by the media. Thus, Gottschalk y Greensberg (2008) believe that 'Islamophobia' reflects a social anxiety towards Islam and Muslim cultures based on a sense of difference and on a focus on divergence instead of convergence. The problem lies in the media representation of Muslims as people deprived of any other condition, and as they only exist on their Muslim condition, it is assumed that they live as one community, acting as a responsible body of what their members do. Their presence on the media is usually represented so that their main characteristic is their opposition to the West, especially in terms of human rights: the interests and concerns of the Muslim World only appear in their differences and confrontations with the West. The relation between both worlds is represented as two different visions in a dispute for survival: Western inalienable liberties versus the imperious orthodoxy of Islam (Gottschalk y Greenberg, 2008).

According to what has been analyzed so far, and taking into consideration the influence of mass media on the public opinion, it is common that a great majority of the US and Europe's population has a negative image of Muslim people. Thus, a Pew Global Attitudes Project as of September 2008 reports that ethnocentric attitudes are alarmingly growing in Europe and the US. Opinions on Muslim people are especially negative in countries such as Spain, where 52% have a negative image, or Germany, with 50%. These percentages are lower but not less important in some countries such as Poland (46%), France (38%), United Kingdom (25%) or the United States (23%). This negative trend towards the Muslim community was produced over the last years, especially in the period between 2004 and 2006 (Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2008). Aside from the impact of some events on the population, it is evident that the negative representation of Muslims on the media and, especially, the connection established by the media between them and some terrorist acts is one of the main factors of influence on the negative perception found, to a greater or lesser extent, in Western societies. In any case, and, as we mentioned before, this research will try to learn whether this is also true in the Spanish case.

Therefore, it is important to analyze the media operative dynamic and the causes leading this negative representation. As we have already seen, one of the main characteristics influencing the public opinion perception is the fact that most of the information and opinion articles referred to Islam, the Muslim community or the Arab countries are basically negative, prevailing conflicts, drama, terrorism, war or emphasizing the differences between cultures. The fact that media chose to cover some topics over others, the opinion on certain issues and, therefore, others absence in the informative scene have a great influence over what audiences read and therefore, believe.

Our study is based on the opinion published, on the media coverage, but, as we have seen in some of the mentioned researches, the relation between published opinion and public opinion is very close. Media are a fundamental source of the images of the world present on people's minds, a world out of the majority of the society direct experience. To a great extent, our knowledge about the current affairs, and consequently, about what is happening in the world is based on what we read and see on the media. This determinist role of the media is explained by the agenda-setting theory, developed by Maxwell McCombs y Donald Shaw (1972). Basically, it affirms that media tell us what to think and, therefore, on what to comment. That is to say, people understanding of most part of reality is determined by media. This cognoscitive dependence on the media is confirmed by three aspects: 1) the establishment of the important public affairs through journalistic agenda and the media 2) the hierarchy of the importance and priority of these elements in the media 'agenda'; and 3) the ability of media to structure and organize our own world. This leads to two main consequences: a) a partial understanding of the social reality, since media only publishes part of the reality. Thus, the public ignores some other aspects of significance. b) the audience disinformation through the hiding of relevant aspects.

For our work, it is also important to analyze a second level through the News frame theory (Entman, 1993), focused on the approach given by the journalist to the information, that is to say, the main idea in which the journalist bases to organize information. This suggests a certain perspective of the facts based on the selection of some elements which are emphasized, but also put in a specific frame that includes the whole text. There is no doubt that approaches may have an influence on public. Two dangers may occur if there is bad practice: creation of prejudices on society, since it stresses some attributes of the facts and people which positions them in a positive or negative way, and manipulation of the society, when the journalist neither researches nor contrasts the information.

Both aspects, the agenda configuration and the information approach are fundamental, as we will see in our analysis about the Spanish media in order to study the informative coverage of Islam and the Arab World, its media representation (or lack of representation) and subsequently, its influence on the perception of the public opinion. Likewise, there is another aspect of the journalistic practice very important in order to analyze the informative treatment of this issue and of the sources used to prepare the information. In this report, we will pay special attention to aspects such as... What kind of sources are used, which vision is emphasized or silenced, which attributes are associated to these sources,... John E. Richardson (2006) has also studied in depth this aspect in connection with Islam and the Muslim community resident in the United Kingdom.

Richardson concludes that newspapers only reflect the practices of those with power to determine other's experiences. In the case of Islam and Muslims, news is dominated by a powerful non Muslim bureaucracy or by illegal groups (terrorists). Richardson defends that Muslim community sources are only included when criticizing their own actions or religion. When Muslim activities are not criticized (or simply if these acts are not linked to the Muslim community) Muslim sources disappear, almost without an exception, from the media. Obviously, this approach not only contributes to cause a connection between Islam and negativity, but also creates some dichotomy Muslim/non-Muslim. This symbolically implies that Muslims are only allowed to act as sources when talking about certain events, always negative events. Reporters, agencies and broadcast TV channels consciously decide and determine what to broadcast, how to present it, where, and its approach. In short, the information's constitution process does not flow in a natural way; it is the result of a complex process consisting on a deliberate selection and expression of the events (Gans, 1980).

In short, although settled on deep historical roots, especially since 2002, the relation between the West and Islam and the situation of some Muslim communities in some European countries and USA is being observed with concern. As the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) warned in December 2006, growing cases of discrimination and Islamophobia against European Muslims, ranging from attacks to mosques to assaults have been detected. EUMC also underlines that Muslims often suffer different types of discrimination that reduce their possibility to find a job and affect their academic achievements or their quality of life. This can lead to a feeling of frustration and exclusion of the EU (European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2006).

Media play an important role in issuing a certain image of Islam and Muslim community. The bibliography consulted argues that these topics are usually dealt with in informations related to dramatic or negative events, or with a negative vision on news often related to terrorism, conflict, crime or cultural clash. Moreover, the Muslim World is represented as a monolithic body, usually described as medieval, archaic, old-fashioned or potentially terrorist, contributing to a feeling of suspicion and distrust of serious social consequences. In conclusion, and according to Said and Poole, an imposition of some models and ethnocentric or irrelevant values (or both), as well as a pure disinformation, a constant repetition, a refusal to contextualize and an absence of a new perspective has been imposed. As a result, the world is divided into West and East. A stereotyped image of Islam has been transmitted, a dichotomy 'Them/Us', where the media has played an important role. This attitude perpetuated hostility and ignorance. Sensationalism, xenophobia and an insensitive belligerence are common nowadays, creating in the collective imaginary an unedifying confrontation between Islam and the West. It is just a little bit exaggerated to state that Muslim people in general and Arabs in particular, are basically represented as great oil sheiks or potential terrorists. The absence of a human approach is frequent even in those professionals whose labour is precisely informing about the Muslim World. Instead, we find a portrait excessively caricaturized, according to Said. In Poole's opinion Islam, as antithesis of modernity, prevails in the media discourse, where some aspects like misogyny, fanaticism and irrationality are emphasized, compounding an image of backwardness and primitive society. Besides, an idea of threat is transmitted, but also of inferiority of the Muslim community. This image is represented by mass media which act according to their interests and as representatives of some political and social elites.

The Situation in Spain

So far, we have seen and detailed the situation of the representation of Islam and the Arab World on the international media, analyzing some of the main researches published in the so called The West. Now, we are going to analyze the Spanish case in order to find out whether there is the same problem with negative media representation of Islam.

In the first place, in Spain, as well as in some other European countries and in the United States, there is a problem of social perception of Islam and the Muslim World. To begin with, we have already seen that the Pew Global Attitudes Project declared that 52% of the Spanish citizens had a negative vision of Muslim people, the highest percentage of the countries analyzed. Moreover, according to a research published by the Real Instituto Elcano (Noya, 2007), 80% were worried about Islamic fundamentalism, while 37% had a negative opinion of Muslim religion. Furthermore, 61% do not agree with girls wearing headscarves at school while 96% considers Muslims to be sexist. Consequently, we can see that negative stereotypes are common among Spanish citizens. In fact, 90% consider Muslims to be authoritarian people, and 68% violent. Meanwhile 41% considers them rude, and 44% idle people. The Barómetro del Real Instituto Elcano, conducted on a periodic basis, carried out one of its waves in 2006, coinciding with the so-called Cartoon crisis, when up to 74% of the Spanish citizens consider it as a Clash of Civilizations. Evidently, we are facing a problem of ignorance and stereotyped perception. In fact, this study concludes that Spanish people ignore Muslim countries' realities, even the closest ones. That is why they cannot have a judicious idea of the diversity of a culture as vast as Islam. Therefore, there is an undeniable problem of demand of information, but also of political and journalistic supply. Thus, the Real Instituto Elcano points out the relevance of the role of the media and their social influence on this topic.

In Spain, it is estimated that more than a million people come from countries whose main religion is Islam or consider themselves as Muslims. According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (Bedoya, 2009), more than 40% of the people surveyed stated that they had experienced discrimination. This discrimination affects even schools, where, Moroccans constitute the most discriminated collective among students. In fact, according to data compiled by the Centro de Estudios sobre Migraciones y Racismo of the Universidad Complutense (Centro de Estudios sobre Migraciones y Racismo, 2008), 39,1% of the surveyed students would expel Moroccans from Spain, while 23,7% would be bothered to have a Moroccan or a 'moor/Arab' among their classmates. This survey concludes that undocumented immigrants have been stigmatized, criminalized and demonized, responding to the prevailing discourse on the media and on the streets. And again, we can see that media are the first to blame when talking about the causes of the problem. Moreover, the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) has studied some aspects of this problem in some of their surveys. Thus, in 2007, 30% of Spanish citizens considered acceptable to exclude girls wearing the Islamic headscarf from school, while 40% believed it was acceptable to protest against the construction of a mosque in their neighborhood (Cea D'Ancona y Vallés Martínez, 2008).

Of course, in Spain this negative perception can be explained, to some extent, by some historical events. Thus, the dichotomy 'Them/Us', somehow represented between 'Christians' and 'Muslims', dates back to the Siege of Granada and the fall of the last emirate of Al-Andalus (1492) and the Moorish expulsion in 1609. After that, the threat of the Ottoman Empire increased. From XIX century on, and because of the belligerent relation with Morocco, the image of an 'enemy and threatening' Arab continued to be transmitted through war against Morocco, and its opponents during the so-called 'romantic war' in 1859-1860. In fact, the following wars against Morocco, from O'Donnell's campaign in 1859 to Rif war (1921-26), as well as its 'return' for the Civil War in 1936 together with General Franco, will only reinforce the negative image held of the Arabs and, by extension, of Islam (Madariaga, 1988).

Even so, although it is necessary to mention the historical context in order to explain the current situation, our research will focus on the role of the media as a potential cause of the negative perception of Islam and Muslim World in Spain. In that sense, in the first place, it is worth emphasizing that this is the only study of this depth, approach and methodology focused on Spain. Therefore, now we will analyze some publications that have approached this topic from a more intuitive point of view, as well as some opinions of experts who have published articles or participated in conferences focused on the relation between Islam and media.

In 1994, Communica Press published 'El mundo árabe y su imagen en los medios' (The Arab World and its image on the media), by Adriana Dragoevich and José Bodas, a compilation of reflections from different experts on the field as a result of a seminar held in Madrid funded by the Instituto de Cooperación con el Mundo Árabe (ICMA) and as the first Project of the MED-MEDIA programme of the European Community. As a general conclusion, this publication shows that when the Arab World is mentioned in Western media, stereotypes, half-truths and lies often appear. This conclusion is similar to the one reached by one of the experts who collaborates on this book, Manuel Cruz. He states that, except for rare exceptions (perhaps more in Spain), when Western media refer to Arab people, without specifying nationality or religion (they take for granted that they all are Muslims), they do it as if they were terrorists, illiterate people, fanatics or invaders..., or despotic oil emirs who spend their huge fortunes in Europe's casinos (Dragoevic y Bodas, 1994). It is also worth mentioning the date of celebration and publication of this seminar, 1994, long before the tragic events which spread concerns about the relation between the West and the Muslim World, and about the representation of the latter on the mass media.

Fifteen years later, in 2009 the conclusions reached by the experts are very similar. This is reflected in 'Musulmanes en España. Guía de referencia' (Muslims in Spain, Reference Guide) (Casa Árabe, 2009), which devotes a whole chapter to the representation of Muslims on the media. The book states that, in Spain, as in some other European countries, members of the Muslim community often complain that newspaper headings present a distorted and negative image of Islam, which is usually represented as a monolithic entity equivalent to terrorism and religious fanaticism. They also complain about the minimum space devoted to 'nice' news. Given this situation, this guide concludes that media abuse of the presentation of Islam as the key that explains the future and actions of Arab and Muslim citizens. As a consequence of the importance of Middle East conflicts in the world's media, the portrayal of that 'Islamic' who supposedly represents 'All' is described as a fanatic and fundamentalist. That is to say, on the one hand, the perception dominated by the Orientalist stereotypes prevails and on the other hand, the omnipresence of this region on the media provides our citizens with an exceptional and extremist image, leading them to believe that this is the representation of the social majority of these societies. Also, in Spain, when media inform about the Muslim community in this country, its reality appears attached to the image of immigrants, unqualified workers, undocumented people or immigrants arrived on small boats.

Red Mundo Árabe, a the civil society's entity also settled in Spain, expresses its concern about the representation of the Arab and Muslim societies as a close culture, whose fundamental aspects cannot be modified, resulting in a vision of an inferior or backward culture (bearer of an unchangeable traditionalism, irrationality, aggressiveness), a monolithic, backward world and with no ability of transformation (Red Mundo Árabe, 2008). According to this institution, the majority of newspapers are full of this kind of representations, presenting Islam and Muslims as a collective prone to extremism.

Teun A. Van Dijk, from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, in Barcelona, has also studied in depth this topic. He came to the conclusion that there are some common characteristics in the representation of Islam and the Arab and Muslim World on the media. In fact, this author transmits a negative and pessimist image and, maybe a generalization, as if there was not a distinction among media:

The tendency to (over) generalization — usual in stereotypes and prejudices — especially for Their bad actions. For example:

- The terrorist acts of some of Them are typically associated to the whole collective.
- The frequent confusion between Arabs and Muslims, Muslims and Islamists and Islamists and terrorists.
- The general strategy of emphasizing the bad or negative part of Them, and ignoring the good part.
- The tendency to focus on the most radical and extremists of Them.
- The big absence of knowledge or approach to the religious, political and cultural diversity of the Islamic world.
- The lack of approach to the history, tradition and the current modern, democratic, humanist modern Islam, and its historical influence over Western civilization (science, literature, culture).
- Traditional religious issues in Islam are negatively emphasized as ‘islamists’, more than in Christianity and are associated to cultural threats to our society, our values and the West.
- The coverage of the religious diversity is limited to the exaggeration and problematization of stereotyped situations such as the use of hijab in Europe, often without knowing about the background of this practice or women’s motivations (sometimes political).
- The use of old issues and stereotypes coverage of the Islam and the Arabs presenting them as violent, aggressive, primitive, etc.
- The absence of media coverage of the anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism.
- The discrimination of Muslim and Arab sources and reporters.

Apart from publications and reports, concerns about this topic have caused many important debates at academic level and led to a growing number of seminars and conferences. Among them, we can highlight the conferences ‘El Islam en los medios de comunicación’ (Islam on the media) organized by Centro Cultural Islámico of Valencia in 2008. The reporter Lola Bañón was one of the experts that participated in the conferences. Among its conclusions, she insisted on the absolute dependence on the images in the media coverage, which are usually decontextualized. Sometimes, words also create and ratify realities establishing conceptual associations such as ‘Islamic terrorism’. Bañón considers that it would be better to refer to it as Al Qaeda terrorism, since we also say ETA terrorism, not Basque terrorism. Generalizations are another problem: The Arab World, Islam...media refer to them as a homogeneous whole, when there are very different realities inside the country, such as in Iraq (Kurdish, Shiites, Sunnis...).

In the same conferences, Rafael Miralles, professor of the Universidad de Valencia remarked the prevalence of stereotypes on the Spanish media regarding Muslim people. He declared that media always refer to poor migrant workers, fanatic fundamentalists, wealthy Gulf emirs, or terrorists. Besides, Gema Martín Muñoz, director of Casa Árabe, stated that media offer a dehumanize vision of Islam, where individuals are never present, but masses in moments of special tension. She also highlighted an important aspect, the distinction between the good and the bad Muslim. The good one assumes the discourse of the West superiority dresses like an European and is lay. The bad one is Islamist, fundamentalist, a terrorist. Nevertheless, there is majoritarian centre which does not exist for the media’ (Kalam Agency, 2008). Martín Muñoz has written numerous articles on the topic, and remarks two fundamental aspects of the treatment of information of Islam and the Arab World and its relation with the The West. On the one hand, the importance acquired by the explanation of the facts through the cultural difference, interpreted as a conflict and of the theory of Clash of Civilizations. That is to say, ‘the ‘culturalists’ visions or interpretations are increasing their significance and focusing on the ‘Muslim issue’. On the other hand, the prevailing interpretation of the facts is based on ‘islamic determinism’, making people believe that some events occur because its authors ‘are Muslims’. The culturalist explanation prevails over socio-political one’. (Martín Muñoz, 2004).

Therefore, it seems clear that the different reports published on this topic in Spain, although not based on a systematic and detailed analysis of the media content, agree on remarking some common features, similar to those used by some other experts in communication and Islam (Navarro, 2008). For instance, a stereotyped image, the presence of negative issues on the news related to the Arab and Muslim World, the connection between Islam and terrorism, the tendency to remark the differences and Clash of Civilizations, the image of the Muslim woman as a victim, a dehumanize vision of Islam... The origin of these theoretical contributions from a denouncing or reaction position explains the big presence of a certain theoretical line regarding this topic, opposite to a different vision which probably did not feel the need of exposing its opinion, not detecting any problem in the media representation of the Arab and Muslim World.

As we have seen, many of these conclusions reached by Spanish experts coincide with some of the findings of the main international studies. Thus, we can infer a homogenization in the journalistic practice of the main Western countries, or rather, a determinant influence of the main international news agencies on the Spanish media contents about this topic. Thus, we come back to the configuration of the media agenda, adding a new variable such as the prevalence of an international agenda, linked to the main media and news agencies of the The West. The interests of political and economic elites certainly have an influence in the configuration of this agenda, but that does not limit the responsibility of the media, and especially the way of publishing information. In the end, media determined to a great extent the prevalent perceptions on the society. Published opinion becomes public opinion, going further than those elites capable of influencing media agendas. Generalizing the same conclusions for the different media would be a mistake. In the case of Spain, editorial lines vary considerably basically depending on political positions. That is why informations about the Muslim and Arab World should necessarily include that diversity of approaches. Of course, there are common tendencies and practices, but a comparative analysis reflecting also the differences among the media coverages is also necessary, and that is not very common in the reports published on the topic in Spain.

It is also worth mentioning that in the main Western countries, the presence of local Muslim citizens is getting richer and more influent, as well as their media representation. That reality is still very limited in Spain, where Muslim community does not occupy important positions in the main political, economic or media groups. However, they participate in associations and collectives as well as in communication platforms such as WebIslam or Red Mundo Árabe. Nevertheless, this study will focus on the visibility and representation of this collective and countries on the Spanish reference press, whose agenda still determines considerably the rest of media, and thus, causes bigger social impact. Let us see if the different conclusions and warnings of the diverse studies detailed so far corroborate the regular practice of the main Spanish media through an analysis in depth of the content and the journalistic discourse.

■ 3. Methodology

The solidity of a social research is based on the accuracy of its methodological design. This premise stayed out of debate during the whole analytic phase. That is why this brief chapter is composed of a first part describing the aim of the study and providing a summary of the information offered during the last chapters. Secondly, the research questions used as guidance for this study are posed. After that, it includes information about the dimensions of the sample used. Then, the research techniques used are shown to conclude with a summary of the main variable analyzed. The editorial factor forces us to summarize this section. However, a full version of our study can be found in the CD provided with this book.

Object of Study

The image of the Arab and Muslim World transmitted by the Spanish media is the main aim of this research. The complex relations between Western cultures and the Arab and Muslim cultures are consequently studied from the published opinion point of view. Our starting point is the big influence of media over the public perception of the social reality, since it presents images of the world around us enclosed with a hard to question halo of truth.

In the world of mediated communication, we consider that general information press is one of the main focus of opinion and, from a discourse more structured than other media; their influence over society's perception of the world is higher. Therefore, we think that there is a connection between the published opinion and public opinion, and that a study in depth of the messages launched by the Spanish reference press can help us understand the global functioning of public opinion. In this difficult to define sphere constructed around public opinion, a topic such as the image transmitted by these media about the Arab and Muslim World results attractive, stimulating and necessary.

Research Questions

Once determined the object of study, the following step is to formulate some questions in order to help outline the research process. At the same time, some guidelines are established regarding the research techniques. Some of these questions are:

- * Which is the presence of the Arab and Muslim World in the Spanish press?
- * How is the image of the Arab and Muslim citizens transmitted?
- * Which are the relations established with other collectives in the analyzed news?
- * Which position adopts each collective in the journalistic discourse?
- * How much printed space is devoted to Arab World news? Where do they appear?
- * Which semantic elements (adjectives, connotations, expressions, clichés, value judgments...) are used to refer to the Arab community and its members?
- * Is there any bias or arbitrary discourse when covering Arab and Muslim World news?
- * Which are the differences regarding media representation of Spanish citizens and citizens from other Western countries?
- * Is there any difference between the journalistic treatment offered to the Arab community in Spain and the one used to talk about other Muslim countries?
- * Which sources of information are used in order to cover these topics? Which are the differences between the Spanish and the international sphere?
- * How are international information agencies used? Which is the presence of the Arab information agencies?
- * Which selection criteria are used to include information about the Arab and Muslim World? Do they coincide with the dominant criteria in western journalism?
- * Which topics related to the Arab World prevail in the Spanish media agenda?
- * What kinds of news related to the Arab World are more common? Hard, mild ones, positive or negative?

As we can see, these questions address quantitative and qualitative aspects, justifying the need for an approach using complementary research techniques. In short, this is a very wide list which opens many work lines, and at the same time, determines different methodological needs.

Sample

The notion of reference press is a complex idea that appeals to the prestige of the media in their society. Without entering on detailed or exclusive definitions, we consider that this term can be used to describe the main journals of the Spanish market. Thus, newspapers included in this research are *El País*, *El Mundo*, *ABC*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Periódico de Catalunya* and *La Razón*. This selection is not intended to transmit that these are the only reference press newspapers. However, they were six of the most widely read newspapers in Spain in 2008. They have consolidated editions and they are especially devoted to general information and have a solid national presence. That is to say, these six newspapers are more or less available to the majority of the Spanish citizens. We can find regional level companies that play a bigger referential role inside their areas of scope such as *La Voz de Galicia* or *El Correo Español* but they would not meet the need for comprising the whole Spanish territory as the six selected do.

Until now, the criteria exposed are related to scope, circulation and public. However, the sample composition is also settled on ideology. The diversity of editorial lines guarantees a variety of approaches and opinions about any current topic. Beforehand, while *El País* and *El Periódico de Catalunya* would be located on the liberal field, *La Razón* and *ABC* would remain in the conservative wing. Thus, *El Mundo* and *La Vanguardia* would constitute the centre. The editorial stance, as the findings will show, constitutes a key factor in order to understand the coverage of our object of study. Finally, this selection will also intend to find differences with regards to the place of edition. The inclusion of two newspapers edited in Barcelona such as *La Vanguardia* and *El Periódico de Catalunya*, will allow us to prove the influence of the axe of national identity in the treatment of the Arab and Muslim collective.

Besides, the temporal horizon established corresponds to the whole 2008 year. One of the milestones of the novelty and relevance of this study aims at its dimensions. From the first moment, we tried to cover in depth a wide lapse of time, occasionally bordering on exhaustiveness. Thus, we agree on the fact that analyzing the editorial production of six newspapers during the 366 of 2008 will show solid empiric evidence about the representation of the Arab and Muslim World on the reference press.

The analysis unit used has been the journalistic piece, which is a space published with its own coherence and meaning, an identifiable story in form and content. The search of the pieces among the more than 2100 analyzed newspapers was based on the research of fragments containing explicit references to the Arab and Muslim World, as well as all the news including information about

countries of the Maghreb and Middle East. The distinction between Arab and/or Muslim countries was always respected, since it included all the pieces dealing with Muslim countries which do not belong to the Arab community, as in the case of Iran. Pieces focused on Arab and Muslim communities located in Spain or Europe are also included of the study. Finally, in order to be able to work with a wide but operative sample, we decided not to include all the information related to Muslim countries such as Afghanistan or Pakistan, provided they were not accompanied with explicit references to Islam or Muslim religion.

As next chapter will explain in detail, the sample total volume accounts for 9422 pieces. These figures support the exhaustiveness of this report since they are similar to the total dimensions of the reference universe.

Research Techniques

The design of this report combines the implementation of two research techniques: analysis of the content and of discourse. Regarding the closest aspect to communication studies, both techniques intend to rebuild the message published or emitted by an individual, group or media, aimed at providing with a deeper analytic interpretation. Partly sharing this aim, starting points and puts into practice require different paths.

The combination of both techniques allows a methodological triangulation from two techniques of a proved scientific line. The approach of the analysis of content will allow us to analyze the message published by the most important newspapers regarding general information in Spain, in accordance with a wide list of significant variables for the study of the journalistic production. The analysis of discourse offers a higher level of depth, taking as a reference the constant comparison among the coverages of the newspapers included in the sample. Whereas analysis of content is a mainly quantitative technique, aimed at counting the basic elements of any published piece, the analysis of discourse comes from a qualitative approach, looking for elaborated arguments that go beyond the mere recording and statistical processing of data.

The dimensions where the analysis of content is constructed are a guarantee for this research. The procedure described in its application started with the elaboration of a protocol of analysis of content, a guide defining the questions and possible answers that can be posed to the text. After all, an analysis of content refers to the action of 'breaking the toy to see how it works'. Thus, a protocol of analysis only describes the parts we must study in order to better understand how the journalistic message works.

This protocol of analysis of content consists of 67 variables. Its full version can be found in the documents attached to the report. These analytic categories were organized in the following groups: identificative data, journalistic relevance, used resources, territorial field, treatment of the events, authorship, semantic structure, sources of information and treatment of the main figures. In the majority of cases, variables would only adopt prefixed values, although we included some open variables in order to register qualitative aspects used as an essential resource for the next analysis of the discourse. The protocol was completed with a data registry and a book of codes explaining how to insert data in the computer system.

The phase of selection of pieces of information and its subsequent extraction of information lasted for nine months (June 2008 - March 2009). After that, we proceeded to the statistical process of the information, which is the base of the following chapter.

The analysis of discourse covered five questions, selected according to the data previously collected. These issues structure the rest of the report and deal with the conflict between Palestine and Israel, the relations between Spain and Morocco, cultural conflicts, and finally, connections among cultures. They constitute five wide issues which are the essential structure for the published discourse regarding the Arab and Muslim World.

The purely quantitative approach of these issues had as a starting point the journalistic production. That is to say, these are studies based on the coverage of the six newspapers included in the sample, and its conclusions have been extracted from the published material. It is not an artificial discourse, we have tried to find the differences among newspapers in order to locate them editorially according to their approaches to the Arab and Muslim World.

Finally, the combination of the data obtained after the application of the qualitative protocol of analysis of content with the estimations generated as a result of the qualitative approach to the main issues of the analyzed period led to the elaboration of conclusions summarizing the most relevance aspects of the media coverage of the Arab and Muslim World in the Spanish press.

■ 4. Quantitative Exploitation of the Data

For the quantitative exploitation of the data compiled during the selection process, two levels of analytic depth have been established in order to guarantee, on the one hand, the viability of the research and, on the other hand, the validity and reliability of the results. Thus, the full application of the protocol of analysis of content covered 40 out of 72 months (12 months for each of the six diaries) which have been our subject of study. While the total editorial production of 2008 was selected, compiled and analyzed with regards to its extension and topic, the whole protocol of analysis of content was fully applied to the six newspapers only during the first four months, except for the case of El País and El Mundo.

Consequently, the structure of this chapter is composed of three main parts. In the first place, it offers information about the overall sample, that is to say, statistical data to prove the weight of the information of the Arab and Muslim World on the Spanish reference press. We will merely present the distribution of the selected pieces of each month, as well as an approximation about their extension. These purely quantitative magnitudes will be complemented by an explanation of the main historical context of the year regarding our object of study.

Secondly, the collected data will be compared after the application of the protocol of analysis to the four first months of the sample. Finally, and thirdly, we will focus on the comparative study of the two main newspapers of general information in Spain with regards to sales and readers, El País and El Mundo, extending it and detailing its coverage during 2008.

The following data constitute empiric evidence of high quality and reflects, with high precision, the representation transmitted by the Spanish reference press of this unknown world. In order to obtain a deeper and more detailed analysis, we recommend you to consult the full version of the report included in the CD.

Contextual Magnitudes

The 9422 identified pieces do not constitute the whole editorial production published by these six newspapers regarding the Arab and Muslim World in 2008. That is, the selection criteria applied was not limited to locate the presence of, for example, countries of Muslim religion, since the results of that process would have exceeded the operative abilities of the research team. Instead, we focused on those pieces where the Arab and Muslim World played an important role.

Chart 1. Monthly distribution of the pieces selected for the analysis

	El País	El Mundo	La Vanguardia	El Periódico	ABC	La Razón	TOTAL
Jan.	192	184	165	207	178	69	995
Feb.	152	145	123	86	105	91	702
Mar.	154	139	138	177	144	109	861
Apr.	115	134	107	72	166	58	652
May	149	132	172	89	164	76	782
Jun.	159	94	188	103	104	84	732
Jul.	183	193	258	116	142	118	1010
Aug.	127	111	168	75	113	68	662
Sep.	124	135	131	93	194	66	743

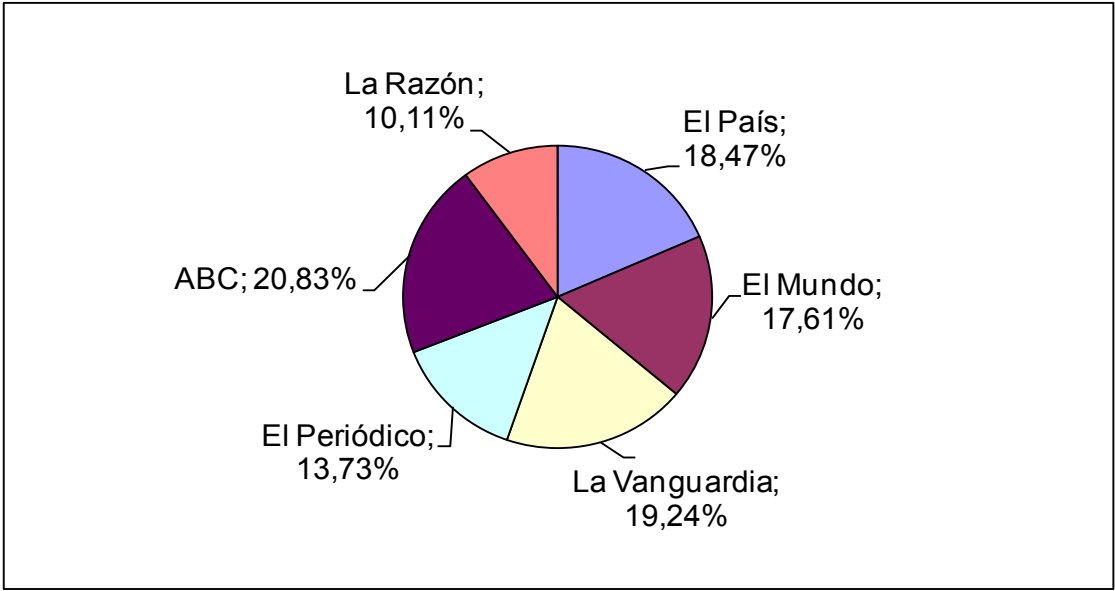
	El País	El Mundo	La Vanguardia	El Periódico	ABC	La Razón	TOTAL
Oct.	100	91	130	68	163	52	604
Nov.	107	157	121	90	247	81	803
Dec.	178	144	112	118	243	81	876
TOTAL	1740	1659	1813	1294	1963	9422	9422

Source: Personal compilation

From a geographical point of view, we especially included pieces related to Maghreb and Middle East countries, including Iran, a non-Arab country, but of Muslim religion and newsworthy. When we started the research, we decided not to include data from further, but non-Arabic Muslim countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan or Indonesia. Nevertheless, if the heading of any news about these countries contained explicit references to Islam or to Muslim religion, the piece was included on the research material.

The results collected in Chart 1 have a much clearer graphic translation in the sector distribution based on the news percentages published by each newspaper. Thus, we can observe a relative balance in five of the six newspapers, with an overall proportion of pieces very similar ranging from 14% to 20%.

Graphic 1. Distribution of the pieces selected of each newspaper. January – December 2008



Source: Personal compilation

The fact of talking about coverages in a wide period of time, together with the tendencies to homogenization dominating the international journalistic production for different reasons which will be explained later, make presence indicators to be considerably similar among the five newspapers.

The political variable was also taken into consideration when selecting the pieces of news. Generally, we can say that the research covers most of the news that make reference to any country of the Arab League, with the mentioned exception of Iran. In spite of this understandable and well-grounded limitation, the size of the sample analyzed guarantees the exhaustiveness of the research. It also involves a high level of security regarding the results validity, since the risk of deviation between the sample and the research frame is minimum.

In order to provide with enough elements of judgement about the main events occurred during 2008 to contextualize the journalistic effort, chart 2 will provide with a summary of some of the 'hot points' of our sample, which are usually related to moments of more presence on the Spanish newspapers.

Chart 2. Chronology of the main newsworthy events in 2008

Month	Days	Newsworthy event
January	3-4	Rupture of the deadlock of the diplomatic crisis between Spain and Morocco
	4-6	Death at the Dakar Rally
	9-15	George W. Bush visits the Middle East
	17-26	Presentation of the Alliance of Civilizations in Madrid
	20-29	The Jihad comes to Barcelona
February	2-22	Controversy in Europe because of the use of the headscarf
	8	Electoral proposal of the PP to forbid the use of the headscarf at schools
	5-16	Worsening of violence between Israel and Palestine
	8-16	Archbishop of Canterbury Proposal on Sharia law adoption
	23-29	Turkey attacks the Kurdish part of Iraq
March	2-10	Hundreds of Palestinian and eight Jewish seminarists die
	12-14	Negotiations between Dubai and Colonial
	15-17	Conservatives seize more power in Iran
	19-25	Fifth anniversary of the Iraq war
	28-30	Dutch MP uploads a video on the Internet against Koran
April	1-6	Turkish justice intends to outlaw Erdogan's party
	14	Bishops do not comment on a survey about Muslims in Spain
	16-18	New wave of attacks in Iraq
	20-24	Carter has an interview with Hamas
May	8-13	Hezbollah takes over Beirut
	9-16	60th anniversary of the creation of Israel
	15-19	George W. Bush visits the Middle East
	27-29	Juan Carlos, king of Spain visits Persian Gulf
June	6-8	Barcelona Jihadists trial
	18-21	Truce between Israel and Hamas
	23	Seventy migrants come in avalanche to Melilla
	21-29	EU hardens sanctions against Iran

July	1-2	Iraq opens the oil tap
	6-11	Tension among Israel, United States and Iran grows
	11-12	Rodríguez Zapatero visits Morocco
	12-19	The Union for the Mediterranean takes shape
	14-17	Religions meeting in Madrid
	28-31	Attack in Istanbul
August	2-4	Clash between Hamas and Fatah in Palestine
	7-12	Coup d'état in Mauritania
	18-26	Militarization continues in Iran
	20	Egypt bans on Muslims and Christians donations
	20-31	Attack in Argelia
September	5-7	Turkey and Armenia get closer
	18-19	Attack against the United States Embassy in Yemen
	23-30	European tourists kidnapped in Egypt
	1-30	Ramadan
October	8-9	6 jihadists acquitted by The Supreme Court
	27-29	The United States attacks Syrian territory
November	1-17	Spanish soldiers die in Afghanistan
	5-9	Spain rejects Bin Laden's son demand of asylum
	27-30	Attack in Bombay
December	16-18	High Meeting between Spain and Morocco governments
	16-18	George W. Bush shoe incident
	19-22	Hamas ends truce
	28-31	War in Gaza
Month	Days	Newsworthy event

Source: Personal elaboration

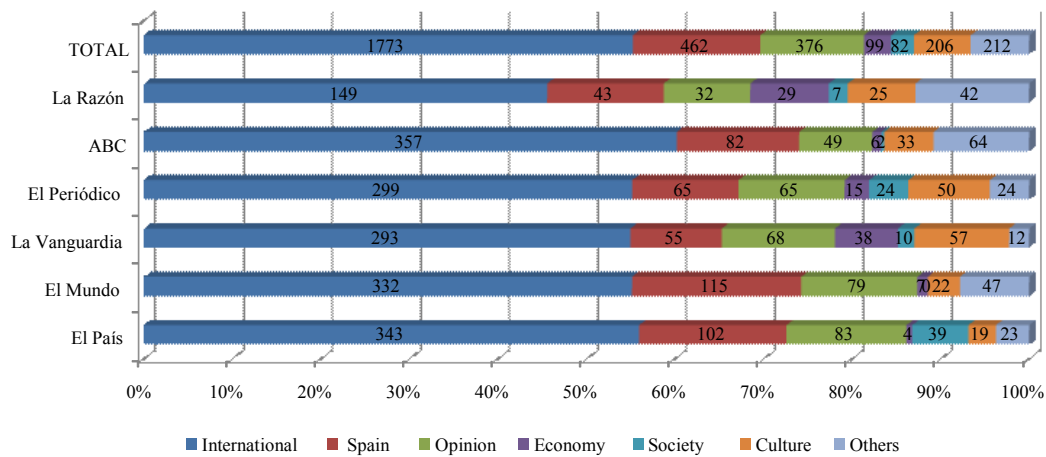
Quantitative Comparison

The full application of the 67 variables composing the protocol of analysis of the content to the 3210 pieces selected during the four first months of 2008, resulted in a collection of data of a depth with no comparison regarding research about the media and their coverage of the Arab and Muslim World.

Thematic Distribution of Information

Uniformity dominates the distribution of news about the Arab and Muslim World. As we can see in Graphic 2, the International section is the one with more pieces, and it is always located over 50%. The only but narrow exception is La Razón.

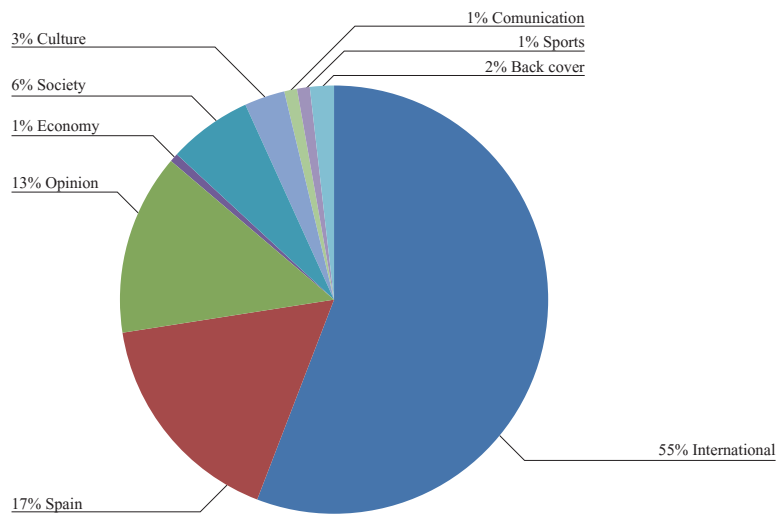
Graphic 2. Comparative of the distribution regarding thematic sections



Source: Personal compilation

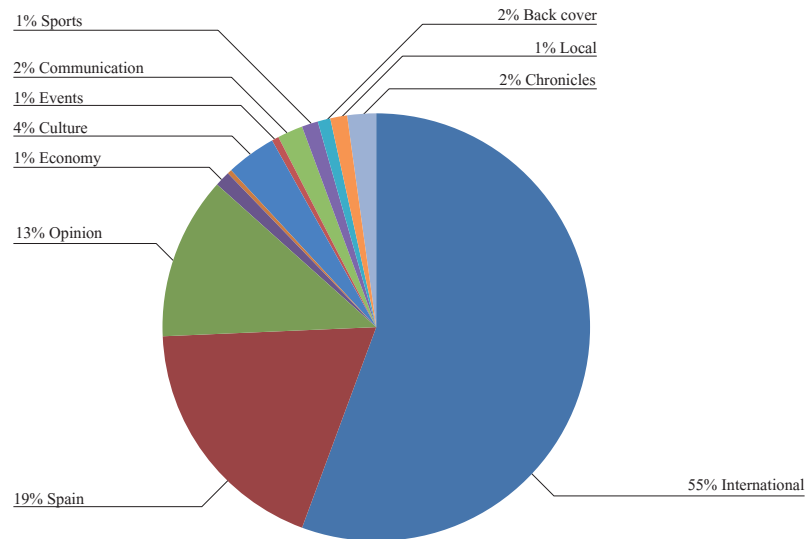
If we look carefully at each newspaper, we will find more singular information. For example, in El País, more than a half of the pieces detected belong to the international information section. The second place is for the Spain section, with 17%.

Graphic 3. Distribution regarding thematic sections in El País



Source: Personal compilation

Graphic 4. Distribution regarding thematic sections in en El Mundo

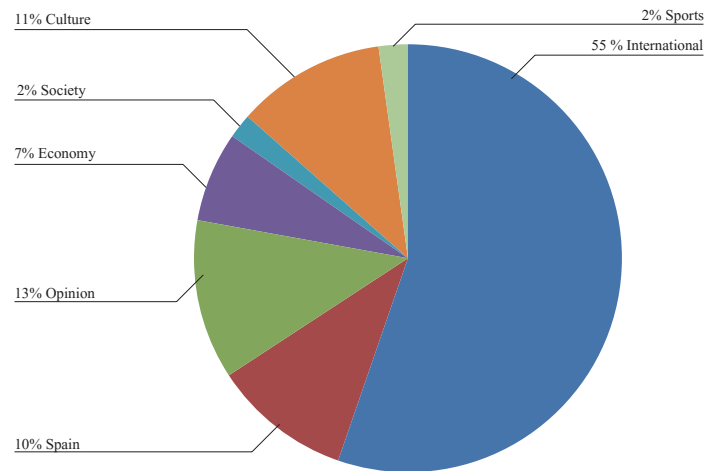


Source: Personal compilation

According to the data, El Mundo distribution is almost identical to the one of El País. Without entering on editorial issues, which will be detailed in the following chapters, the distribution of the news related to the Arab and Muslim World is surprisingly similar.

However, La Vanguardia exemplifies a different behavior. Although the weight of the International section is the same as in the two newspapers edited in Madrid, the Spain section does not follow the same path (in this case, Politics). Instead, and significantly, many of the pieces published by this newspaper edited in Barcelona are included in sections such as Economy (7%) or Culture (11%).

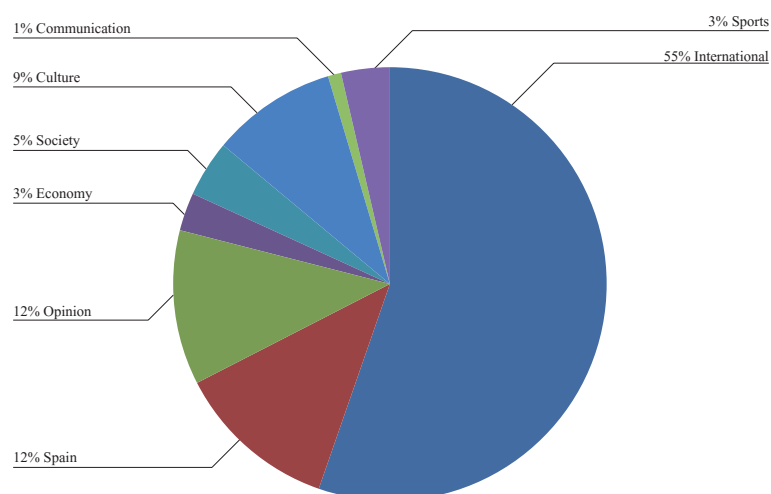
Graphic 5. Distribution regarding thematic sections in La Vanguardia



Source: Personal compilation

The other newspaper edited in Barcelona adopts a distribution very similar to the one of its closest rival. In this case, the Culture section accounts for 9%, whereas the one belonging to the national information stays at 12%, far from El País or El Mundo, which do not reach 5%.

Graphic 6. Distribution regarding thematic sections in El Periódico

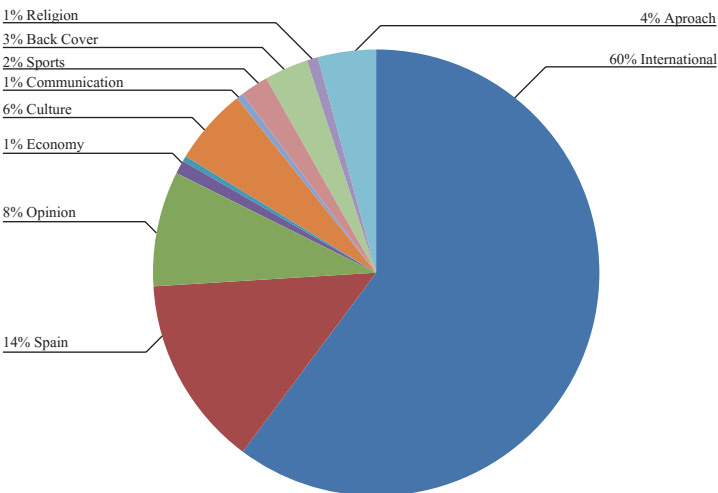


Source: Personal compilation

If we come back to the newspapers edited in Madrid, we will find two example of thematic organization. On the one hand, we find two newspapers (ABC and La Razón) of a conservative editorial line and a different presentation. ABC opts for a tabloid format whereas La Razón prefers colors. As we can see, there is a remarkable difference between them, with a different distribution with regards to information about the Arab and Muslim World.

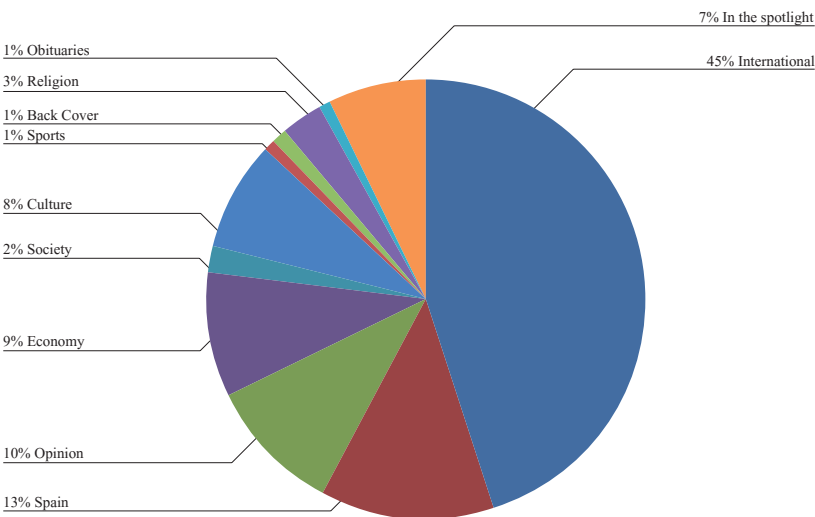
We can see that Religion constitutes a different and separate section in both of them. This is due to the explicit catholic position they hold. Obviously, relations and dialogue among religions justify the existence of a space devoted to inform about Islamic issues, even if it is owed to the thematic proximity with the issues discussed in this section.

Graphic 7. Distribution regarding thematic sections in ABC



Source: Personal compilation

Graphic 8. Distribution regarding thematic sections in La Razón



Source: Personal compilation

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that these two newspapers provide with a higher percentage of Muslim World related information in their cultural section than the two main national newspapers, El País and El Mundo. The rest of thematic divisions follow the

same pattern, although ABC opts for devoting the International section to include information about topics related to the Muslim people, accounting for a 60%. Meanwhile, La Razón includes 9% in the Economy section. This figure, only approached by La Vanguardia with 7%, is positive for the achievement of a more normalized and real treatment of the Islamic reality.

Presence on the Front Page

One of the main indicators of relevance of any informative issue is its inclusion among the most important topics of the day. Now we are going to check the occasions where a piece of news or a heading related to the Muslim World has appeared on the front pages of the analyzed newspapers during the first four months of the year.

El País devoted two front pages to this topic, one referred to the terrorist group who planned an attack in the underground of Barcelona and the other as a result of the pre-election proposal of the Partido Popular to ban the headscarf in the country. El Mundo devoted three more front pages during the first four months of the year, partly due to the attention devoted to the 2004 March 11th attack inquiry and its later replications. This increase may also be explained by another factor: the electoral proposal of Mariano Rajoy, Partido Popular's leader, aimed at regulating the use of the headscarf at Spanish schools. These front covers, now summarized in Chart 3, are available in the full version of the report:

Chart 3. Translation of the front page openings in the analyzed newspapers. January - April 2008

Newspaper	Date	Heading
El Pais	24/01	Islamists in Barcelona Intended to Attack in the Underground
	8/02	PP will Restrict the Use of the Headscarf use in its 'Contract' for Immigrants
El Mundo	6/02	11-M Prosecutor Promoted to Supreme Court by Pumpido
	7/02	Rajoy will Make Immigrants 'Respect Spanish Customs'
	8/02	PP will Restrict Islamic Customs Harming 'Woman Equality'
	24/03	They are Responsible for 11-M but no Doubt They Were Helped
	19/04	Prosecutor Asks for no 11-M Public Hearing
La Vanguardia	11/02	Brains Behind Raval Islamist Cell Was in Pakistan
El Periodico	20/01	Al Qaeda's Big Attack in Barcelona Fails
	21/01	Barcelona Attack, to be Committed by Suicide Bomber
	24/01	11-S, 11-M, 7-J, 19-E
	25/01	3 More Suicides Intended to Attack Outside Spain
	30/01	Guardia Civil Looks for Two More Suicides in Barcelona
	11/02	Taliban Sent Pakistani Cell to Barcelona
	21/03	Bush Predicts USA 'Great Victory' in Iraq
ABC	8/02	PP will Regulate Headscarf Public Use to Avoid Female Discrimination
	19/02	Moratinos Compares Kosovo with Iraq, but Troops will not Withdraw
	16/03	Islamists Stay in Spain After Prison
	20/03	Iraq's Despair Contrasts with Bush' 'Undeniable Success'
La Razon	24/01	Islamists Plotted a Suicide Attack in Barcelona
	8/02	PP will Change Equality Law to Regulate Headscarves at Schools.

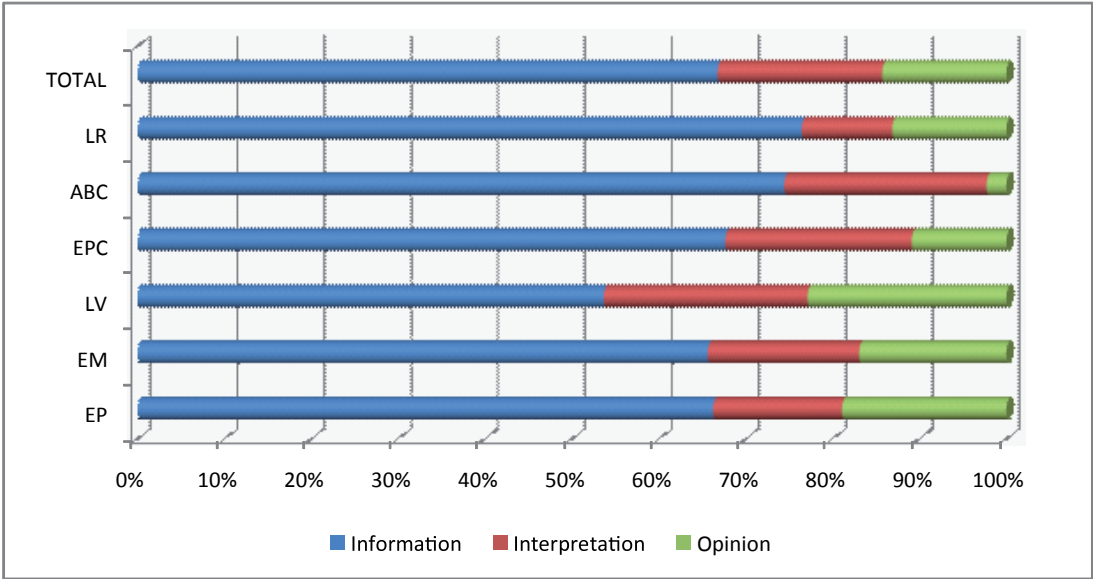
Source: Personal compilation

La Vanguardia, only includes one front page between January and April 2008. The main topic makes reference to the arrest of a terrorist cell in the centre of Barcelona. On the contrary, El Periódico de Catalunya is the one opening more often with news related to the Arab World, although news are monopolized by Al Qaeda’s failed attack in Barcelona, except for one where United States ex president opinion on Iraq is discussed. In ABC, the announce of PP of regulating the public use of the headscarf explains the five columns included on the front page, as well as an exclusive news informing about the presence of Islamist terrorists in Spain after having been released from prison. A balance of the Iraq war and its comparison with Kosovo in the midst of controversy about the troop’s withdrawal completes the ABC front pages. To conclude, La Razón offers two more front page headings, coinciding with the rest of conservative newspapers pointing out Mariano Rajoy’s proposal of regulating the use of the headscarf at schools.

Journalism Genres

The distinction among informative, interpretative and opinion genres is generally used as an analytic starting point, allowing to establish a relatively common base from which we will be able to complete a more detailed approach about the style of the coverage published.

Graphic 9. Distribution of journalistic genres



Source: Personal compilation

Chart 4. Distribution of journalistic sub genres

	EP	EM	LV	EPC	ABC	LR	TOTAL
Piece of news	307	309	171	257	304	153	1501
Complementary info	7	7	1	0	4	4	23
Brief news	74	71	155	106	19	55	480
Photo. reportage	6	4	5	10	27	6	58
Computer news	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Report	54	59	61	56	99	16	345
Feature article	9	17	3	16	9	32	86
Counter article	8	9	0	0	0	1	18
interview	29	32	19	18	26	12	136
Poll	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Article	73	55	99	44	50	29	350
Editorial	29	21	10	14	18	8	100
Cartoons	1	0	2	8	6	2	19
Letters	12	13	7	10	1	3	46
Review	3	4	0	0	0	3	10
Obituaries	1	1	0	0	0	3	5
Lost				1	26		27
TOTAL	613	602	533	542	593	327	3210

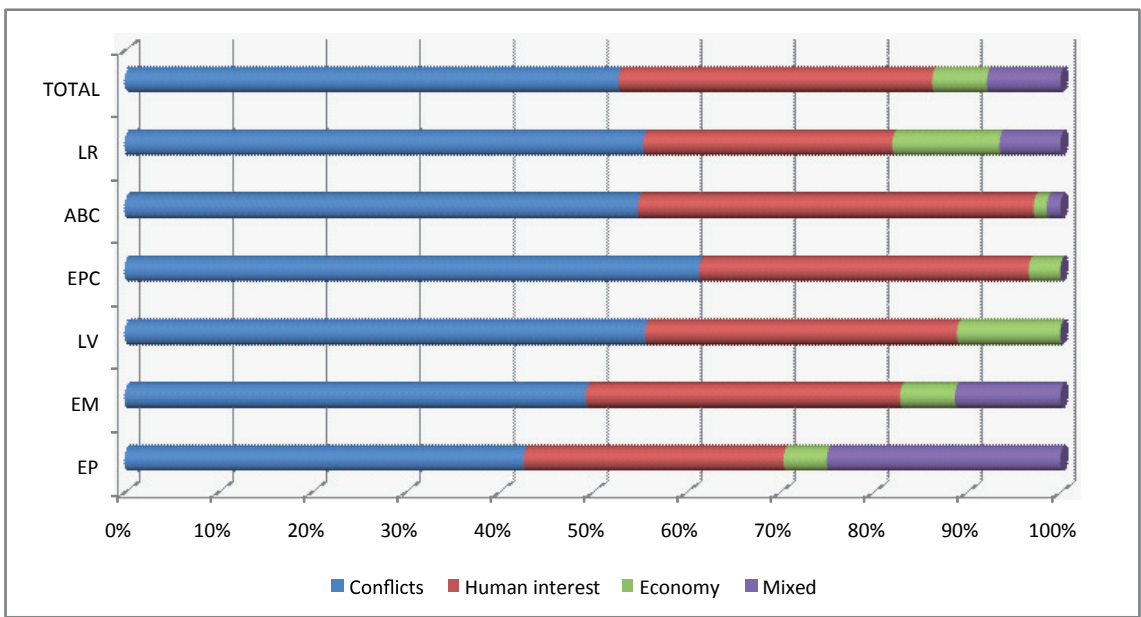
Source: Personal compilation

We can notice that information prevails over opinion and interpretation. This information must be completed with data regarding sub genres, a level that involves a greater theoretical abstraction.

Predominant News Frames

The notion Maghribian country ‘news frame’ is currently one of the most used when studying the journalistic production. The general topic framing each information clearly defines which the newspapers main interest on news is.

Graphic 10. Predominant News Frames Modalities in the Selected Pieces



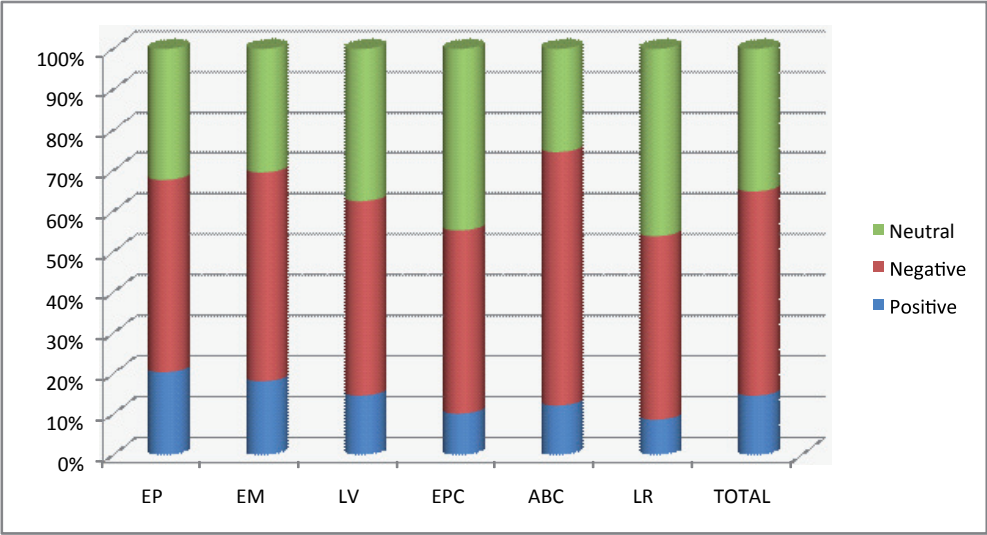
Source: Personal compilation

We can see in the graphic summarizing the data compiled in the sample composed by 3210 pieces of news that the conflict frame is the dominant form of presenting the events related to the Arab and Muslim World. This is something which will be related to tone of the information.

The Informative Tone

Once more, the influence of the main informative reference points connected to war and conflicts in the Arab and Muslim World somehow divides the sample and results in a journalistic reality marked by negativity in all the newspapers. In this case, we can see how ABC is generally the newspaper with more negative pieces of news about the Arab and Muslim World, whereas El País is the one that offers the most positive vision. In El Periódico de Catalunya, La Vanguardia and La Razón, the neutral topics and coverage section is larger than other newspapers, although La Razón is the publication offering less positive images.

Graphic 11. Dominant tone in the selected pieces

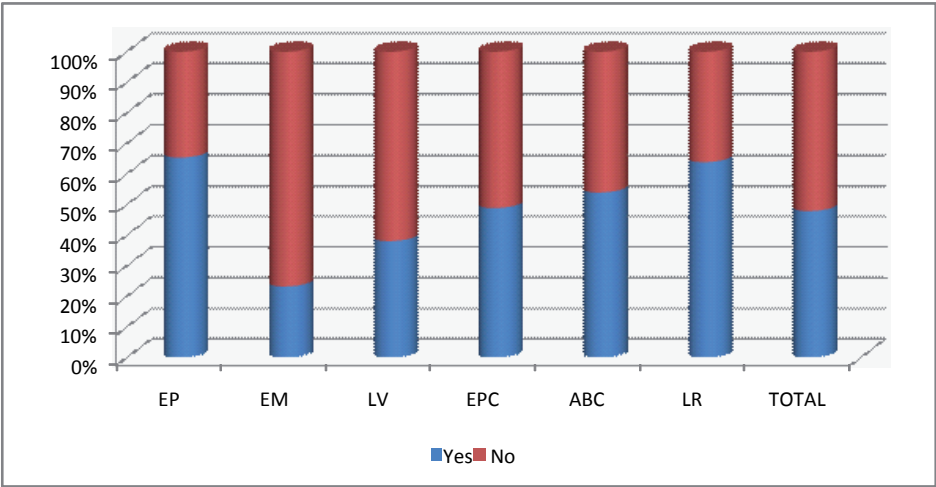


Source: Personal compilation

Authorship and Territorial Origin of the information

The presence of the media in the area where the newsworthy event takes place produces different data depending on the medium selected.

Graphic 12. Media presence in the area where the event is produced

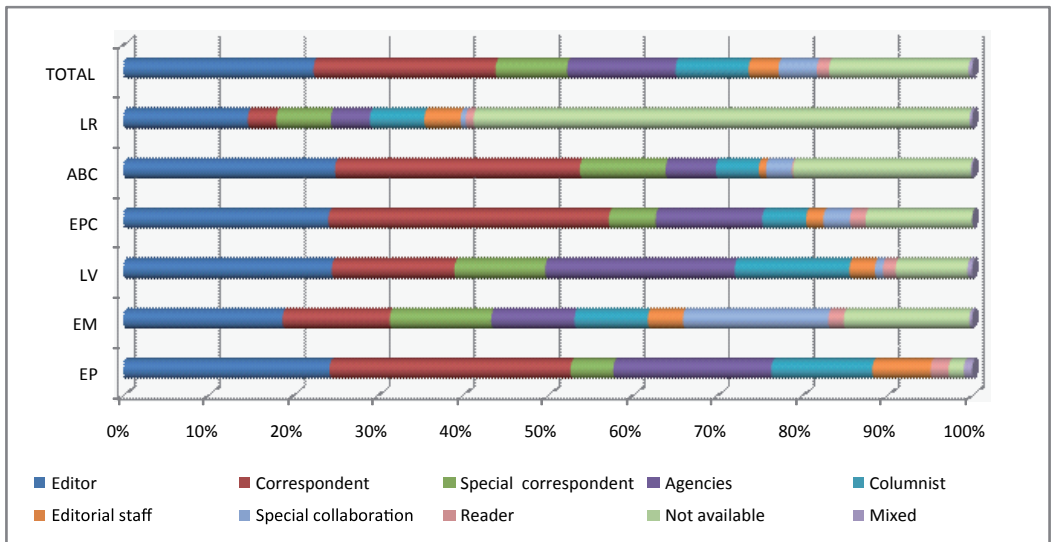


Source: Personal compilation

The fact of the information being elaborated at the same place where the events take place involves a higher and deeper approach to the topic, as well as a more precise contextualization of the issue discussed. In the previous graphic, we can verify that more than half of the analyzed data is signed outside of territory of the events. El País and La Razón are the only media used to write their pieces of news from the events place.

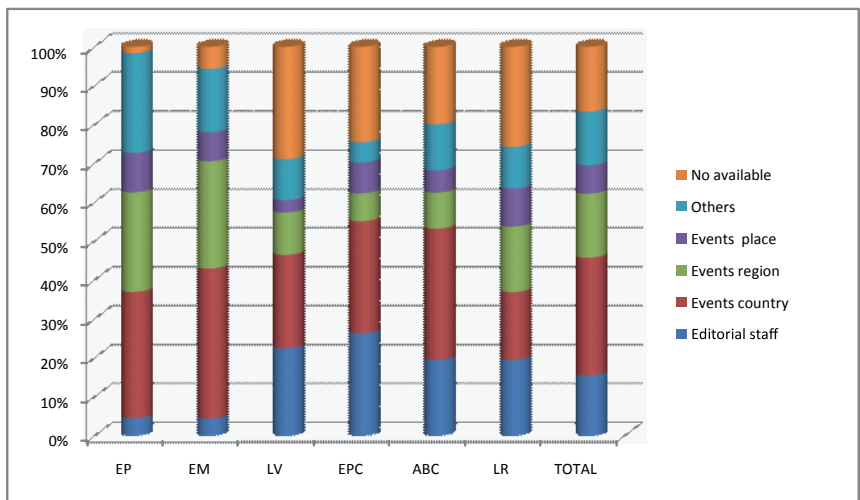
The role adopted by the person responsible for the information will reveal to us the media presence in the area through a correspondent or special correspondent, which generally means a higher level of analysis and of proximity to the topic. Moreover, editorial staff and agencies still write the majority of the information. In the case of agencies, although they may be at the place of the events, they offer a much more aseptic and simple view that, besides, is common to all those newspapers that hire them.

Graphic 13. Role adopted by the author of the information



Source: Personal compilation

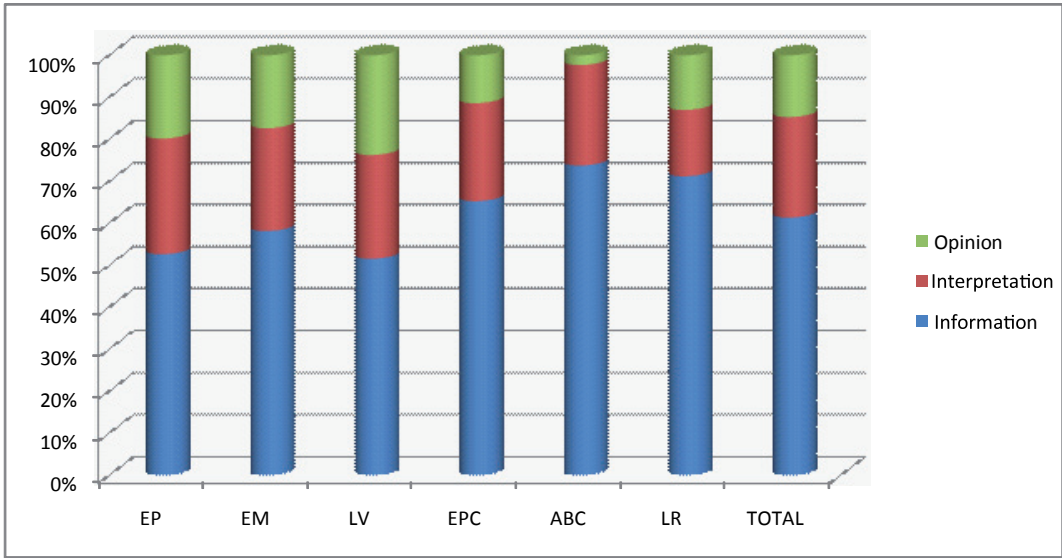
Graphic 14. Place where information is signed



Source: Personal compilation

Apart from analyzing the place where the information is signed, another aspect worth to mention is the degree of involvement of the people who write news and commentaries. In Graphic 15, we can see how journalists mostly prefer to inform with their works, although at very different levels. ABC and La Razón follow a line of involvement much more informative, and thus, more neutral than La Vanguardia or El País, whose levels of interpretation and opinion are higher. This is also due to the type of piece presented. The involvement level in an editorial or a report is very different from the one of an informative piece of news. Newspapers presenting events in an informative tone will logically show less involvement than those including more interpretative and opinion pieces.

Graphic 15. Author involvement in the piece

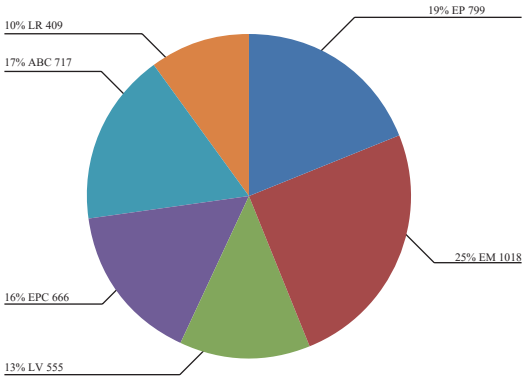


Source: Personal compilation

Sources of Information

Writing information would not be possible without the contribution of sources. A detailed revision of the points consulted by journalists in order to obtain data will provide us with a useful picture in order to better understand the content of each newspaper.

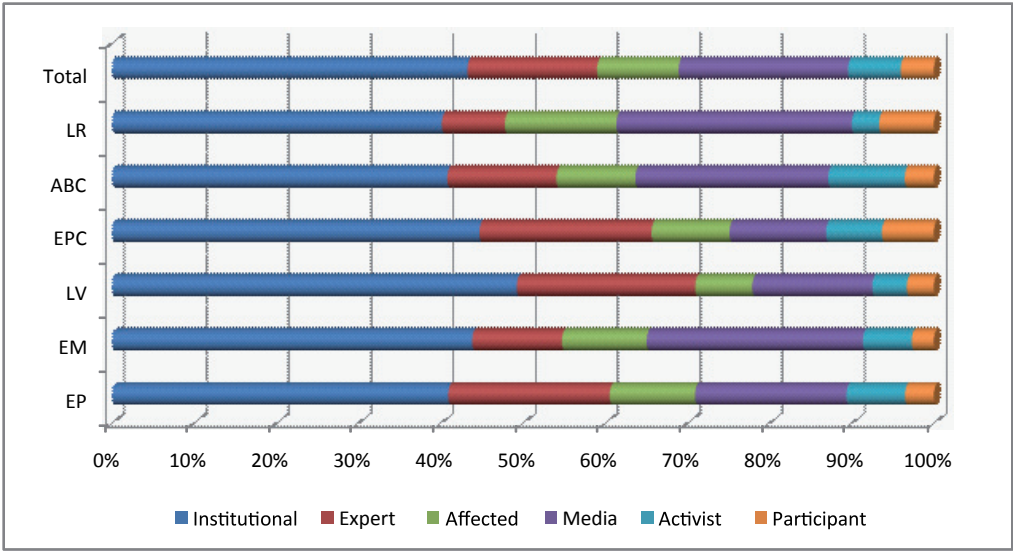
Graphic 16. Total distribution of the sources of information located



Source: Personal compilation

As Graphic 17 confirms, there is a clear prevalence of institutional sources regarding the role assumed by the source on the whole piece of news.

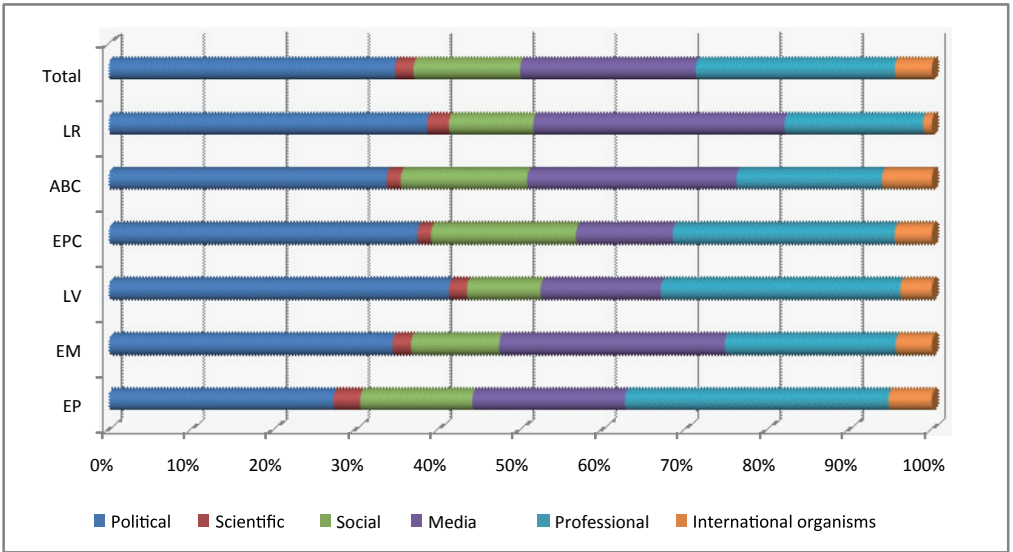
Graphic 17. Role assumed by the sources



Source: Personal compilation

A similar distribution, but with some complementary nuances is used in the distribution of the sources nature, that is to say, the thematic field where they can be included and that justifies their selection as providers of information.

Graphic 18. Thematic nature of the sources

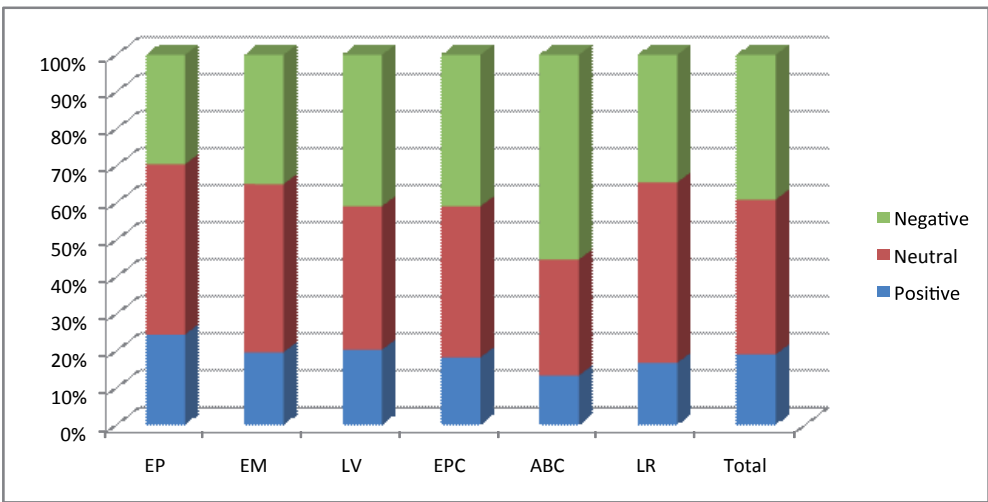


Source: Personal compilation

It is worth mentioning that the political field sources monopolize information about the Arab and Muslim World. On the contrary, scientific sources are practically inexistent, mainly due to the absence of scientific news regarding this topic.

Finally, in some cases, sources try to transmit –or journalists do transmit it- a certain way of presenting data. This may be perceived as a potential influence with regards to the understanding of the message by the public. This vision transmitted by sources is summarized in Graphic 19.

Graphic 19. Vision transmitted by the source



Source: Personal compilation

The negative vision of the events is dominant in all the newspapers when compared to the positive vision. This is also influenced by the controversial or conflictive nature of almost all the informations collected by newspapers about the Arab and Muslim World, leaving behind the positive aspects of a society and culture that is usually introduced in Western media agenda through violence and conflict.

To conclude, the nationality of the person or institution providing data for the journalistic piece is also crucial. Chart 4 organizes by country the origin of the 4164 sources of information mentioned in the 3210 pieces analyzed between January and April.

Spanish sources of information are logically the most used by Spanish newspapers, due to its accessibility. Nevertheless, surprisingly The United States has more presence than the rest of the European countries. Of course, this is due to the big influence of this country in this area and the power of its media and experts communities. United Kingdom and France, as powers, also show their influence in generating public opinion about the Arab and Muslim World.

When it comes to Arab countries or countries with Muslim population, it is important to mention: Iraq and Iran, for constantly being at the spotlight because of the war or the nuclear conflict, Morocco for its geographical proximity and Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt, for their strategic importance and finally, the prevalence of Israeli sources over Palestinian and the fact that Israel is the third country in sources after Spain and the United States. Including Israel, Western sources widely exceed Arab or Muslim ones.

Chart 5. Nationality of the sources of information

Continent	Area	Country	Frequency	%
Europe (1175; 28,22%)	UE (1158; 27,81%)	Germany	41	0.98
		Austria	4	0.10
		Belgium	20	0.48
		Denmark	32	0.77
		Slovenia	2	0.05
		Spain	715	17.17
		France	121	2.91
		Greece	1	0.02
		Holland	27	0.65
		Hungary	3	0.07
		Ireland	1	0.02
		Italy	27	0.65
		Norway	1	0.02
		Poland	1	0.02
		Portugal	11	0.26
		U. Kingdom	147	3.53
		Romania	1	0.02
		Switzerland	3	0.07
	No UE (17; 0,41%)	Armenia	1	0.02
		Russia	5	0.12
		Vatican	2	0.05
		European	9	0.22
Africa (317; 7,16%)	Maghreb (234; 5,62%)	Algeria	61	1.46
		Libya	2	0.05
		Morocco	143	3.43
		Mauritania	16	0.38
		Sahara	5	0.12
		Tunisia	4	0.10
		Maghreb	3	0.07
	Others (83; 1,99%)	Egypt	73	1.75
		Senegal	3	0.07
		Somalia	3	0.07
		Sudan	3	0.07
		African	1	0.02

Continent	Area	Country	Frequency	%
Asia (1524; 36,6%)	Near East (1198;28,85%)	Arabia	28	0,67
		U. Arab Emirates	7	0,17
		Irak	235	5,64
		Iran	151	3,63
		Israel	335	8,05
		Jordan	6	0,14
		Kuwait	4	0,10
		Lebanon	76	1,83
		Palestine	287	6,89
		Qatar	21	0,50
		Syria	23	0,55
		Yemen	17	0,41
	Middle East (170;4,08)	Afghanistan	48	1,15
		India	7	0,17
		Pakistan	115	2,76
	Far East (10;0,24%)	China	3	0,07
		Hong Kong	1	0,02
		Indonesia	1	0,02
		Japan	2	0,05
		Malaysia	2	0,05
		Thailand	1	0,02
	Others(154;3,7%)	Kurdistan	15	0,36
		Turkey	139	3,34
America (433;10,4%)	North (10,28%)	United States	428	10,28
	South (5; 0,12%)	Brazil	3	0,07
		Ecuador	1	0,02
		Peru	1	0,02
Others (715;17,17%)	Arab	7	0,17	
	International	84	2,02	
	OPEC	1	0,02	
	Not specified	623	14,96	
TOTAL			4164	100,0

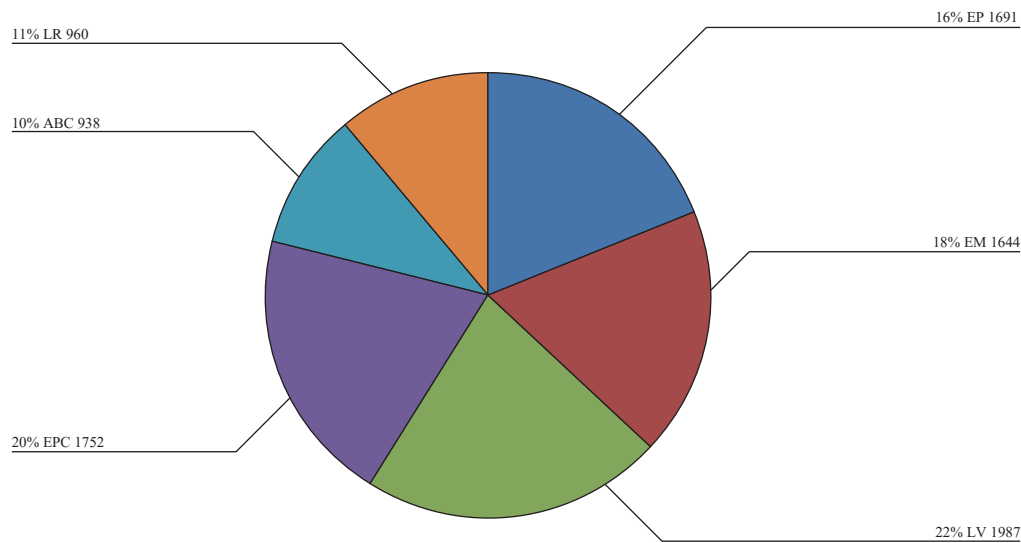
Source: Personal compilation

The prevalence of Western sources over Arab or Muslim ones deserves an explanation. The economic power of countries such as United States or United Kingdom explains the majoritarian presence of their sources of information. However, this element does not help in the search for honesty in news that, as we have seen before, has its origin in Muslim states where main figures are mostly Islamic or Arab, although the objectivity is not questioned. Besides, of 29% of sources coming from the Near East, more than 8% belong to Israel. Last but not least, it is worth mentioning how Iraq sources only represent 5,6%, opposed to the high amount of information about this country included in the analyzed newspapers.

The Main Figures of Information

The following graphic includes the distribution of the more than 8.000 main figures identified in our four months sample. We can see that two newspapers from Catalonia, La Vanguardia and El Periódico de Catalunya, have the biggest number of main figures in information about the Arab and Muslim World. Next, El País and El Mundo really close, whereas La Razón and ABC remain further.

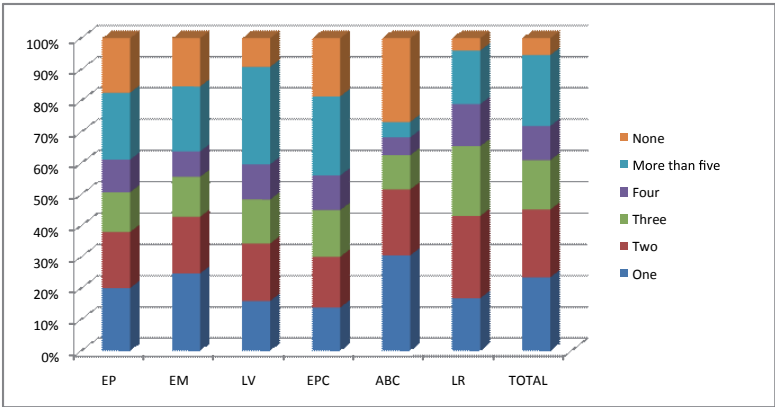
Graphic 20. Total distribution of main figures in the pieces



Source: Personal compilation

Thus, we can see how the most conservative newspapers include less main figures in their stories, also resulting in a lesser plurality of the news.

Graphic 21. Amount of main figures per piece

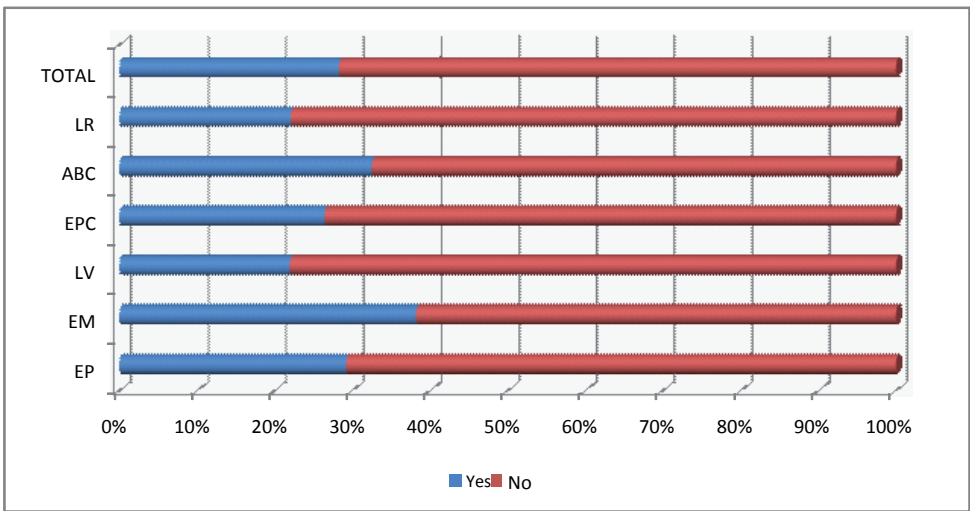


Source: Personal compilation

The inclusion of declarations is an essential element in order to transmit a specific message and a vision of the facts according to the main figure personal perception.

The downward trend when including these main figures voices in all the newspapers indicates an absence of depth that does not help investing the information with precision and clarity.

Graphic 22. Main figures declarations



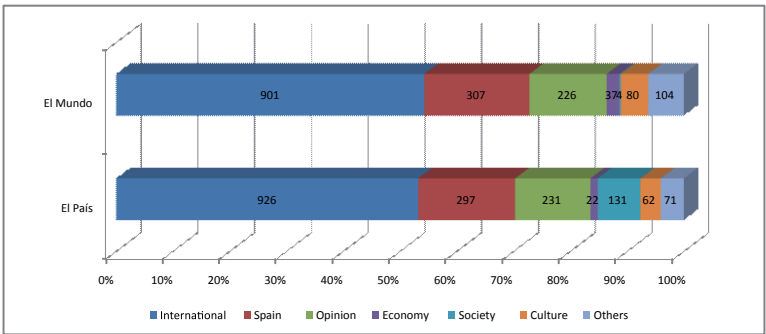
Source: Personal compilation

Once completed the quantitative analysis of the first four months of the year in the six newspapers selected, next chapter will extend the temporal frame to the whole of 2008 and will restrict the sample to the pieces published by El País and El Mundo, according to the methodological justification included at the beginning of this chapter.

Comparison Between El País and El Mundo: 12 months

The analysis included in this chapter is based on a sample of 3399 pieces located between January and December of 2008. The majority of the pieces selected appear as the first information on their page, indicating their preponderance over other issues. The data produced by the statistic show a similar balance. This tendency will be repeated along this whole epigraph.

Graphic 23. Thematic distribution of pieces in País and El Mundo during 2008



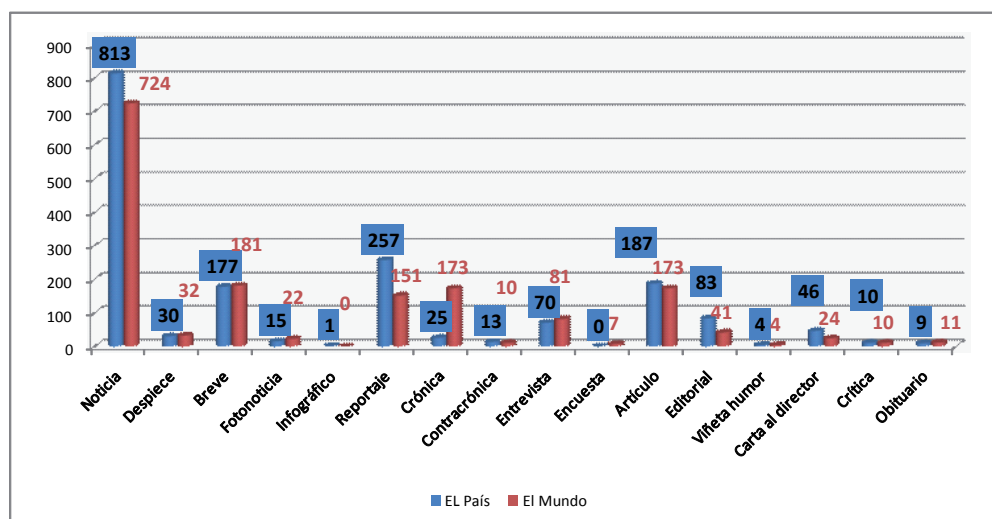
Source: Personal compilation

The two main national newspapers grant great importance to the informations about the Arab and Muslim World, although they also recognize that it is caused, basically, by its conflictive nature or its relation with issues of interest for the Spanish political agenda, especially in 2008, a year of general election. The thematic distribution of news is almost identical in both newspapers, accounting for 50% contained in International section. The following two sections with wider presence of the Arab and Muslim World are Spain or National and Opinion.

Journalism Genres

The predominance of the informative genre is still evident, counting on around 60% on both newspapers. This figure is relevant, since it indicates how both of them opt for an informative discourse, more aseptic, inside the partiality inherent to media, in contrast to the regular interpretation of national news.

Graphic 24. Sub genres distribution in El País and El Mundo during 2008*



Source: Personal compilation

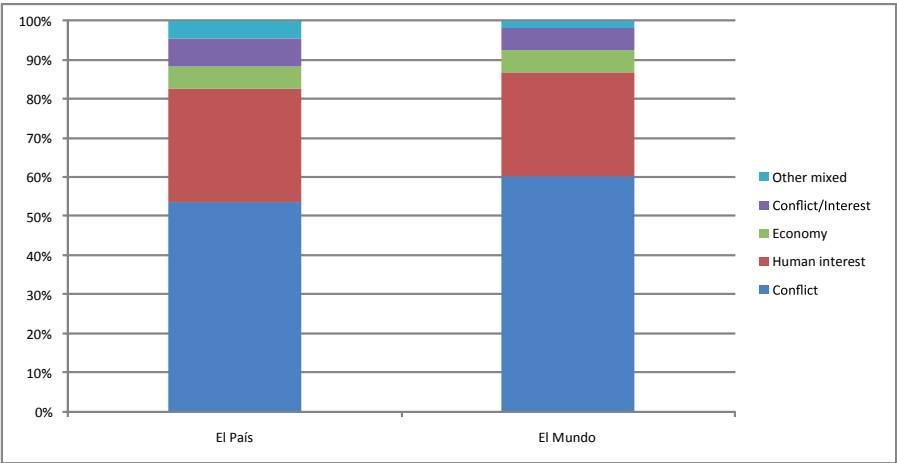
** The translation of the words in the graphic is (from left to right): Piece of news, complementary information, brief news, photographic reportage, computer graphics, report, feature article, counterarticle, interview, poll, editorial article, cartoon, Letter, Critique and Obituaries.

However, the fact that opinion and interpretation coincide on importance indicates the relevance that El Mundo and El País grant to informations dealing with this topic. Regarding subgenres, the levels are similar.

Predominant News Frame

In terms of news frames, El Mundo reflects a more conflictive image than El País, who prevails on human interest. Anyway, the news frames are very similar and once more, we can prove how conflict prevails over any other field of interest. As we have already highlighted, most newspapers agendas, as well as these two, are focused on war and controversies more than other issues which probably should have more media attention. This fact, present in all Western publications, can be explained by the human impact caused by the war conflicts. However, more than half of the news analyzed during a whole year refers to these types of information, a figure not encouraging to the impact of the image of the Arab and Muslim World on Spanish citizens.

Graphic 25. News frames modalities used by El País and El Mundo during 2008

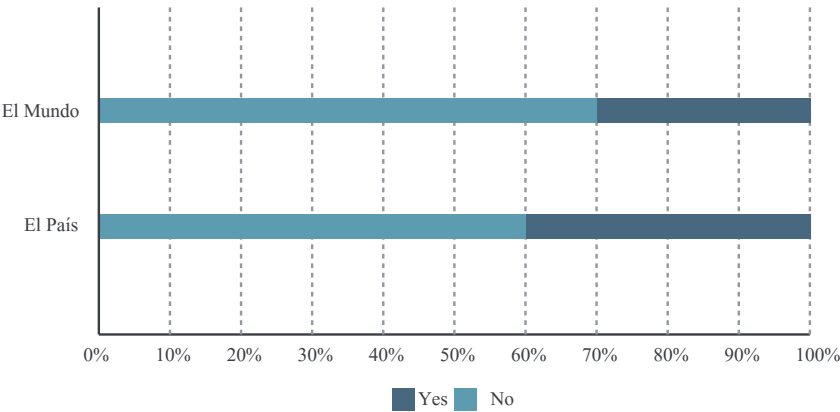


Source: Personal compilation

Authorship and Origin of the Information

With regards to the method used to cover the information, El Mundo holds more declared presence in the place of the events than El País. However, the high percentages of both newspapers indicate a considerable effort to come as close as possible to the context where news comes from.

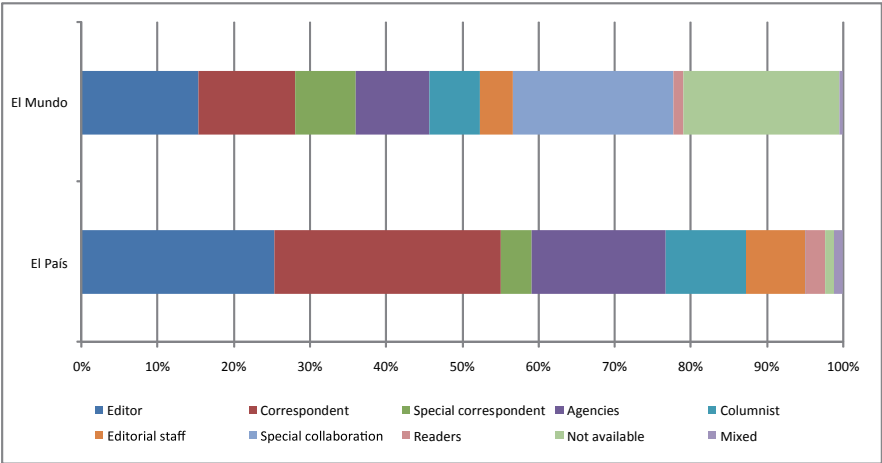
Graphic 26. Presence of El País and El Mundo in the place of the events during 2008



Source: Personal compilation

Regarding the signs of pieces, in both cases, there are a high number of correspondents, as well as special correspondents in areas where important newsworthy events occur.

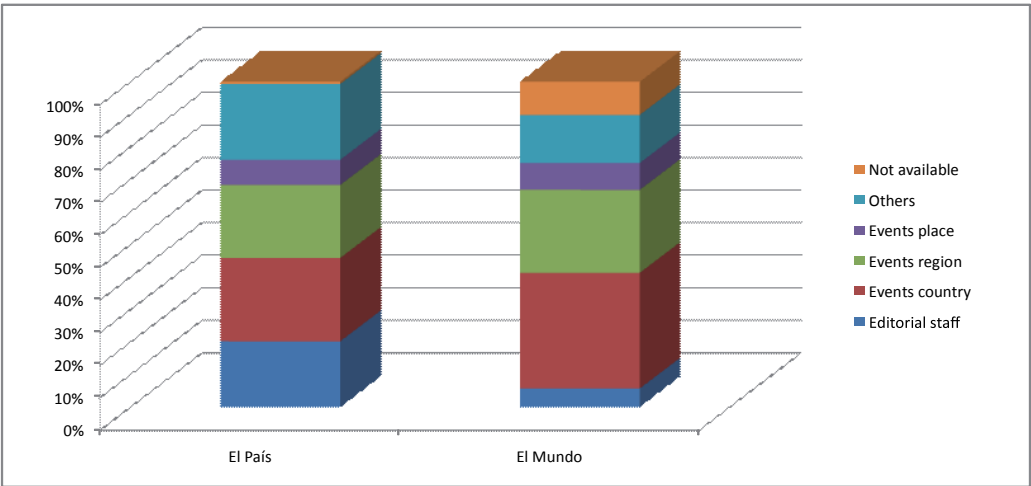
Graphic 27. Authorship distribution. El País and El Mundo, 2008



Source: Personal compilation

The position of the person who signs the piece of information gives us data about his or her proximity with regards to the event.

Graphic 28. Geographical location of the author. El País and El Mundo, 2008

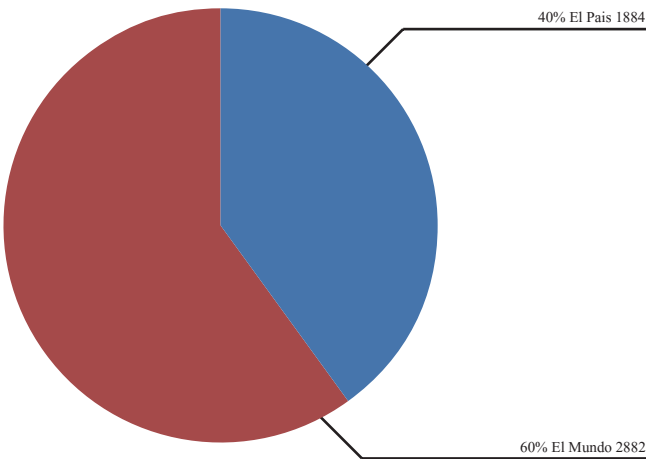


Source: Personal compilation

Sources of Information

As Graphic 29 indicates, during the twelve months of 2008, 7466 sources of information were found in the selected pieces, distributed between the two newspapers. As you can see, here El Mundo confirms its leadership in number of sources. This reflects the plurality of the discourse about the Arab and Muslim World news.

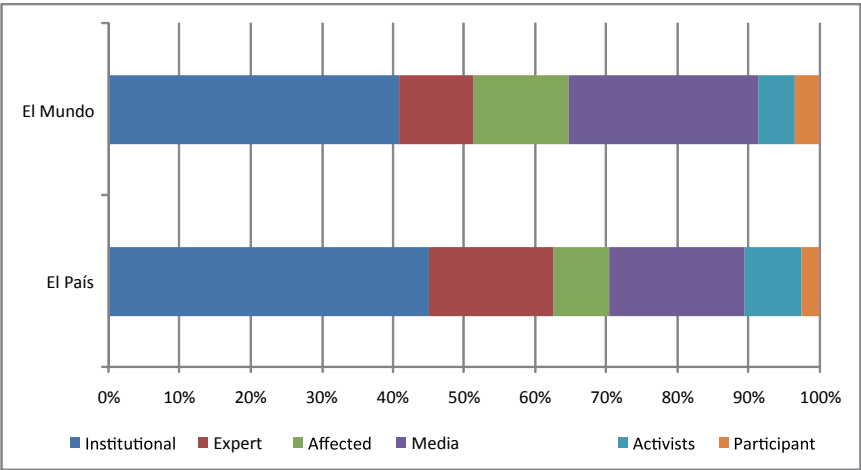
Graphic 29. Distribution of sources of information. El País and El Mundo, 2008



Source: Personal compilation

Regarding the role attributed to sources, Institutional sources prevail in both newspapers, although in El País it is more evident.

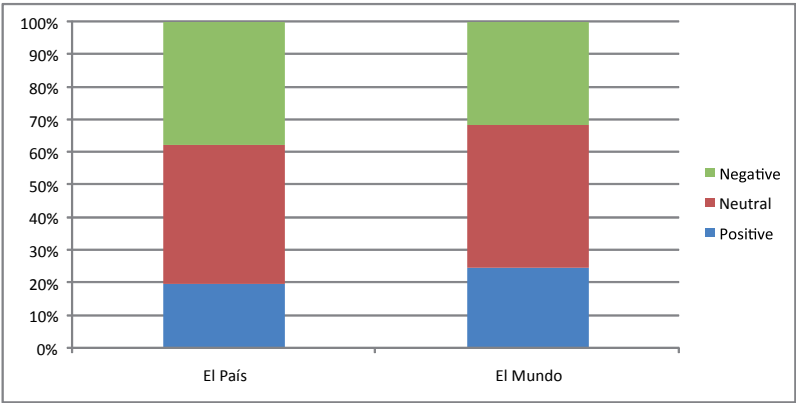
Graphic 30. Role attributed to the source in the piece. El País and El Mundo, 2008



Source: Personal compilation

When it comes to nature, that is, the field of the person who transmits its vision of the events, we can see that most of the contributions come from the political field. Apart from that, El Mundo prefers other media, whereas El País focuses more on professionals. With regards to the vision transmitted by these sources, the results show a similar distribution, although unlike the general tone of news, which was more negative in El Mundo, here, El Mundo sources present a more positive vision than El País sources. In any case, negative or neutral sources still prevail.

Graphic 31. Vision transmitted by sources. El País and El Mundo, 2008



Source: Personal compilation

As a last commentary on the sources, their nationality presents some details that may be illustrative of a different approach in these newspapers. In table 5, the countries exceeding 2,5% limit of the total of sources used appear in bold.

Chart 6. Nationality of the sources. El País and El Mundo, 2008

Continent	Area	Country	EL PAÍS		El Mundo	
			Total	%	Total	%
Europe (1175; 28,22%)	UE (1158;27,81%)	Germany	13	0,7	30	1,0
		Austria	1	0,1	4	0,1
		Belgium	10	0,5	4	0,1
		Bulgary	0	0,0	2	0,1
		Denmark	4	0,2	6	0,2
		Slovenia	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Spain	356	18,9	429	14,9
		France	74	3,9	90	3,1
		Greece	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Holland	20	1,1	6	0,2
		Ireland	0	0,0	2	0,1
		Iceland	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Italy	10	0,5	22	0,8
		Norway	1	0,1	0	0,0
		Poland	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Portugal	5	0,3	5	0,2
		U. Kingdom	63	3,3	75	2,6
		Romania	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Sweden	0	0,0	1	0,0
	No UE (17;0,41%)	Armenia	1	0,1	0	0,2
		Bosnia	0	0,0	5	0,1
		Russia	7	0,4	2	0,0
		Serbia	0	0,0	2	0,8
		Switzerland	5	0,3	2	0,0
		Vatican	2	0,1	6	0,0
		European	7	0,4	3	0,2

Continent	Area	Country	EL PAÍS		El Mundo	
			Total	%	Total	%
Africa (404; 8,48%)	Maghreb (271; 5,69%)	Algeria	57	3,0	19	0,7
		Libya	3	0,2	2	0,1
		Morocco	108	5,7	56	1,9
		Mauritania	5	0,3	9	0,3
		Sahara	4	0,2	4	0,1
		Tunisia	2	0,1	1	0,0
		Maghreb	1	0,1	0	0,0
	Others (133;2,79%)	Egypt	35	1,9	53	1,8
		Gambia	2	0,1	0	0,0
		Kenya	3	0,2	6	0,2
		Mali	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Nigeria	4	0,2	1	0,0
		Senegal	2	0,1	0	0,0
		Somalia	9	0,5	12	0,4
		South africa	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Sudan	2	0,1	1	0,0
		Tanzania	1	0,1	0	0,0
Asia (1524; 36,6%)	Near East (1198;28,85%)	Saudi Arabia	21	1,1	26	0,9
		U. Arab Emirates	5	0,3	14	0,5
		Irak	99	5,3	117	4,1
		Iran	86	4,6	76	2,6
		Israel	133	7,1	251	8,7
		Jordan	6	0,3	6	0,2
		Kuwait	3	0,2	10	0,3
		Lebanon	37	2,0	146	5,1
		Palestine	83	4,4	152	5,3
		Qatar	13	0,7	9	0,3
		Syria	15	0,8	31	1,1
		Yemen	10	0,5	5	0,2
	Middle East (170;4,08)	Afghanistan	5	0,3	48	1,7
		Bangladesh	0	0,0	1	0,0
		India	11	0,6	39	1,4
		Pakistan	12	0,6	95	3,3
	Far East (10;0,24%)	China	0	0,0	17	0,6
		South Korea	2	0,1	0	0,0
		Hong Kong	1	0,1	0	0,0
		Indonesia	1	0,1	1	0,0
		Malaysia	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Thailand	0	0,0	1	0,0
	Others (154;3,7%)	Kurdistan	5	0,3	7	0,2
		Turkey	71	3,8	42	1,5

Continent	Area	Country	EL PAIS		El Mundo	
			Total	%	Total	%
America (433;10,4%)	North (10,28%)	Canada	1	0,1	0	0,0
		Mexico	2	0,1	0	0,0
		United States	202	10,7	223	7,7
	South (5; 0,12%)	Ecuador	0	0,0	1	0,0
		Peru	1	0,1	0	0,0
		Venezuela	0	0,0	1	0,0
Others (715;17,17%)		Australia	0	0,0	2	0,1
		Arab	4	0,2	0	0,0
		International	46	2,4	19	0,7
		Not specified	192	10,2	674	23,4
Subtotal			1884	100,0	2882	100,0
TOTAL			4766			

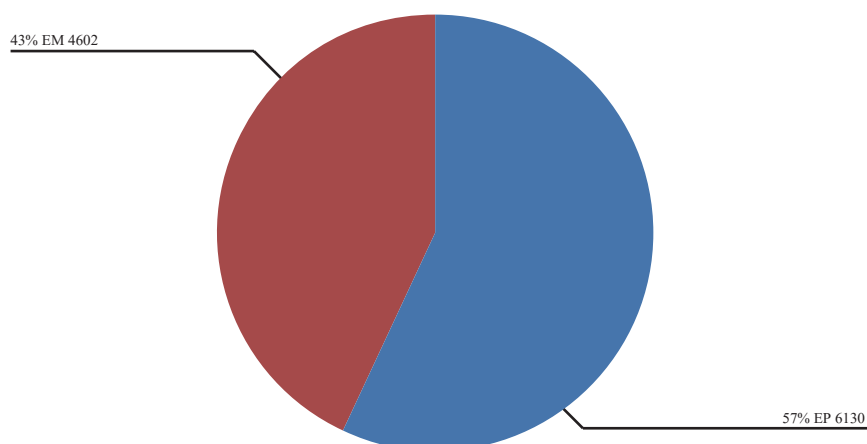
Source: Personal compilation

These countries are: Spain, France, United Kingdom, Algeria, Morocco (only in El País), Iraq, Iran, Israel, Lebanon (only in El Mundo), Palestine, Pakistan (only in El Mundo), Turkey (only in El País) and United States (in this case, El País uses many more sources than El Mundo). Again, we can see how Western sources have more presence in the two media compared with Arab or Muslim countries. And again we confirm that a group of countries controls the information sources when it comes to transmit their vision about the different conflicts.

Main Figures in the Information

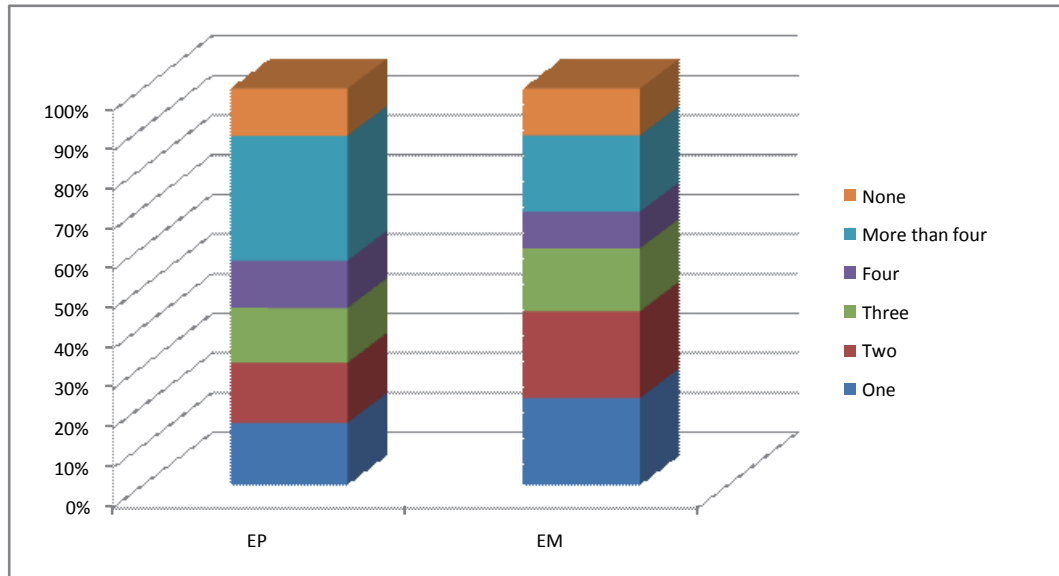
The 10786 main figures located in the 3399 selected pieces during the twelve months of 2008 offer a totally different distribution to that of the sources of information, standing El País clearly ahead.

Graphic 32. Main figures distribution. El País and El Mundo, 2008



Source: Personal compilation

Graphic 33. Main figures per piece. El País and El Mundo, 2008



Source: Personal compilation

In general, as the next graphic verifies, we observe a higher number of main figures than sources of information in the news published by both newspapers. We can see here that in this case, El País exceeds El Mundo in the volume of main figures per piece, insisting on pluralism, even if the advantage is narrow.

Conclusions of the Quantitative Analysis

In general, we can say that the Arab and Muslim World has a wide and permanent influence on the six newspapers of wider distribution in Spain. It is no surprise to find at least one piece of news every day related to the topic. The International section assembles more than half of the news about the Arab and Muslim World. The National or Spain and Opinion section also capture many pieces on this topic, which shows that the coverage of the Arab and Muslim World constitutes a matter of importance for the Spanish public opinion.

As the attention is focused on countries and regions in conflict or war such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel and Palestine, and in tensions with Occident as Iran, the majority of the news that appear in the Spanish press have a marked negative tone and a conflict framework. This circumstance pejoratively affects the image presented of this world.

The most used genre in coverage is the informative one, although some newspapers such as El País and La Vanguardia present higher levels of interpretation and opinion due to the sub genres included. The contextual and causal complexity is usually reduced, although in this epigraph, the level of complexity, especially in El País is significant. There is a big quantity of news about the Arab and Muslim World published without mentioning a single source of information. In this epigraph, El Mundo is the newspaper with more sources included in its coverage, usually coming from the political and institutional world in most newspapers, with some presence of expert voices. Generally, sources come from Spain, United States, Europe or Israel. Western sources obtain more space than the Arab or Muslim ones.

As we can see on the data analyzed in the full version of this report, not many technical resources are included in order to facilitate the understanding of the Arab and Muslim reality. Although the publication of photographic material is abundant, we cannot say

the same with computer graphics, an element which usually contributes to contextualize the informative events. With regards to the visual element, the abundance previously mentioned hides, in many cases, a prevalence of the impact of information. Thus, the photographs included to illustrate news about our object of study appeal too frequently to a dramatic and spectacular character that contributes little or not at all to shape a balanced image of the Arab and Muslim world.

■ 5. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The latent tension present for decades in the occupied Palestinian territories, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is a recurring topic in the Spanish press, and Spanish newspapers devote many pages to it each week. Therefore, this chapter aims to present a qualitative analysis on the Spanish media coverage of the information related to the historical Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 2008. There is so much information regarding this topic, that we will only deal with and go in depth on some specific and important examples. This chapter will focus on a general view of the conflict, comparing the most important news taking place for four months in the area. The second part of the chapter will be aimed entirely at analyzing the coverage of the war that took place in Gaza between the Israeli army and Hamas militia at the end of December 2008 continuing until the end of January 2009. The subject of this research covers the year 2008 and thus, the analysis here showed is focused on the first four days of the clashes, from December 28th to December 31st 2008.

The six newspapers used for our sample cover the events in the Palestinian and Israeli territories with considerable attention, given the media interest and worldwide geostrategic importance. All of them have permanent correspondents in Jerusalem, but with some nuances. Generally speaking, all newspapers condemn the indiscriminate use of violence, either from Palestinian factions or the state of Israel, and all of them have been very critical in 2008 of Bush, for not adopting a specific strategy to put an end to the conflict or for clearly taking the Israeli side. Either way, even if they agree on these general issues, the editorial lines of these six newspapers are very different in many aspects, from the most pro-Palestinian position of *El Periódico* to the most Israeli-supporting of *La Razón*, through the most neutral of *El Mundo* and *La Vanguardia*. The taking of Hamas into account as a relevant part of the conflict is what usually clearly marks the newspaper's position.

Bush's Visit to Israel and Palestine

After seven years as president, George W. Bush visited the Middle East region for the first time from January 9th to January 12th 2008. This visit was very much anticipated but people in the region were also skeptical because the United States lacked a specific strategy to resolve the conflict and because of the pro-Israeli attitude that Bush maintained during his term of office. In spite of everything, the Annapolis conference that had taken place some months before in the U.S. had concluded with a compromise to end hostilities and begin negotiations to establish two independent states. This was signed by the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert, and the President of Palestine, Mahmud Abbas, and it offered a small light of hope that nobody wanted to extinguish at that moment.

The press followed intently the speech given by Bush in Ramallah (the West Bank). The headlines on January 11th were the same in most of the newspapers. 'Bush calls for a halt to the Israeli's occupation started in 1967' ('Bush exige a Israel el fin de la ocupación iniciada en 1967', *El Periódico*); 'Bush asks Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories' ('Bush pide a Israel que se retire de los territorios ocupados', *El País*); 'Bush: Occupation must end' ('Bush: «La ocupación debe acabar», *La Vanguardia*); or 'Bush demands from Israel that they withdraw from the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967' ('Bush exige a Israel que se retire de los territorios palestinos que ocupó en 1967', *El Mundo*). ABC strays a bit from the others with some specific nuances, but deep down, the message continued to be optimistic ('Bush predicts a Palestinian State at the end of this year, but without refugees' (Bush predice un Estado palestino para antes de fin de año, pero sin refugiados)).

La Razón is the only newspaper who doesn't even cover Bush's visit to Ramallah. They merely publish an opinion piece about the topic written by Gabriel Albiac where they, broadly speaking, support the initiative taken in Annapolis because 'for half a century, Israel has been Islamism's retaining wall in front of European coasts' (*La Razón*, January 11th), in a clearly orientalist speech made of 'us' and 'them'.

In spite of the general agreement, the editorial lines of the rest of newspapers mark their differences. *El Periódico* emphasizes that Bush 'hardens his speech towards Israel' but also criticizes his concessions to his ally and the rudeness towards the Palestinian population. Even the picture chosen for this piece of news has a certain slant. Instead of showing Bush in the Mukataa (the presi-

dential palace in Ramallah) like El País, for instance, El Periódico shows him totally out of context among orthodox clerics at the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, somehow contradicting the headline.

Picture 1. El Periódico, January 11th 2008



'Bush calls for a halt to the Israeli's occupation started in 1967'

The ABC correspondent in Jerusalem, Laura L. Caro, also wrote a piece of news truly critical of the speech given by Bush. The journalist commented that Bush's declarations were aimed at pleasing the 'moderate Arabs', but always 'placing at the top those previous compromises acquired with Ariel Sharon, later repeated even in writing to the current Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, warning that we must not expect the total withdrawal from the territories occupied during the Six-Day war' (ABC, January 11th).

As in El Periódico, the photograph that accompanies the piece of news does not show Bush in Ramallah with Abbas, but lighting a candle in the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. However while the correspondent of El Periódico criticizes Bush's refusal to visit Arafat's tomb, Caro ends her writing with paternalistic terms, saying that 'The U.S. president's appearance happened after being received by Mahmud Abbas in the Palestinian presidential Mukataa, that was repainted for the occasion, asking for protection' (ABC, January 11th).

From the beginning, El País doubts the intentions of Bush's visit. When Bush arrived at the region, the headlines already claimed 'What does Bush want?'. Later, the subheading states 'President Bush visits the Middle East, the region he has turned upside down. This will be of little help.' (El País, January 9th). As for the news on January 11th, their correspondent, Juan Miguel Muñoz, offers an openly critical article about Bush, pointing out that 'full of an optimism that no one else shares, Bush challenged all those skeptics who do not believe an agreement on the creation of a Palestinian State is possible' (El País, January 11th). Grupo PRISA (media conglomerate and biggest publisher in Spain that owns, among others, the daily newspaper El País) considers Hamas as a key factor in the conflict resolution, and following this editorial line, Muñoz highlights that it will be impossible to achieve a peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinian authorities if Hamas, 'the target of the American dignity's attacks', does not give up their power over Gaza.

Most of the general features of the newspaper La Vanguardia appear in their coverage of Bush's visit. Their speech is conspicuous and neutral, dealing with the topic as seriously as possible. This is proved in their leading article on January 8th named 'Bush's challenges in the Middle East' ('Retos de Bush en Oriente Medio'), where they explain in great detail all difficulties awaiting the American dignitary if he wants to achieve the Annapolis agenda. Their correspondent, Henrique Cymerman, tries to avoid any evaluation in the news, contributing with greatly analyzed and deep data and interpretations. However, criticism towards Bush is not left behind. Samuel Hadas, senior diplomat, wonders in the headline of his article 'What are you here for,

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Mr. President?’ (‘¿A qué viene, señor presidente?’), La Vanguardia, January 10th) and he ends it saying ‘The Middle East is a minifield which requires perseverance, determination and ability to deactivate. All these qualities are lacking in the current Washington administration’

Xavier Batalla in turn published an article titled ‘From pyromaniac to fireman’ and, as the headline foreshadows, there are no kind words for Bush. The highlights are enough to summarize: ‘Bush has changed the area: Iraq is in chaos, Iran has grown stronger and independent paramilitary forces (meaning Hezbollah and Hamas) have been reaffirmed’ (La Vanguardia, January 12th).

El Mundo follows the same line as the previous four newspapers. Their correspondent, Javier Espinosa, is also very skeptical on Bush’s task, explaining that ‘he didn’t offer any solution to the fight over Jerusalem that led precisely to the last one’s failure’ (El Mundo, January 11th). This correspondent also reflects ‘Bush’s bad taste joke’ when he talked about Israeli checkpoints and the chosen photograph is one showing how Palestinian demonstrators extend their middle finger towards Bush’s convoy as it drives through Bethlehem. It helps discrediting the American dignitary’s image.

El Mundo’s openly critical attitude towards Bush is very different from the one offered by ABC. This newspaper also shows its skepticism, but offering a very different speech. In their leading article on January 11th, the headline was ‘Bush’s excess of optimism in Israel’ (‘Exceso de optimismo de Bush en Israel’) and the text said that ‘his conviction that a peace treaty could be reached in the region at the end of 2008 is still an utopic wish’, even if the unconditional support of Bush for Israel for all his seven years in office is never questioned.

The attacks are mostly aimed at ‘Hamas terrorists, who still stand their ground against any commitment to Israel’ (ABC, January 11th).

The Blockade over Gaza Strengthens

While Bush’s visit was in every daily newspaper in mid-January, at the end of this same month and in February, the news were focused mainly on the intensity of the conflict. It worsened due to Israel’s blockade over the Gaza Strip in response to the Qassam rockets sent by Palestinian militia. Here we can see again how the approaches taken by El Periódico and La Razón are completely opposites. While the Catalan newspaper (El Periódico) always includes news about Israeli attacks in reply to Qassam rockets sendings, the one from Madrid (La Razón) always leaves out Israeli aggressions and the worsening of the situation in Gaza until January 23rd, when Hamas carried out a spectacular violent action tearing down the wall between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. ‘Hamas blows up the border between Gaza and Egypt’, says La Razón. In this case, La Razón publishes a large photograph the next day showing the demolished wall and the headline says ‘Hamas blows up the border between Gaza and Egypt’. On February 4th, for instance, four pictures (see full version) are shown where Hamas militiamen take some Egyptians out of their territory at gunpoint (La Razón, February 4th). Hamas is again presented as a radical and violent group, who only deserve to be called ‘terrorist group’, a word omitted by the rest of newspapers.

In the same weeks, and in contrast to La Razón, El Periódico, and to a lesser extent El País, systematically denounce the Israeli blockade. On January 19th 2008, these two newspapers cover the former Gaza Ministry of Interior’s destruction by the Israeli army, showing a photograph of the building in ruins. Both newspapers condemn the Israeli blockade over the Gaza Strip. El Periódico says ‘Israel closes borders and deprives Gaza of the UN aid’. El Periódico’s editorial line is based on defending the Palestinian people against Israeli occupation and denouncing the international community’s passiveness or bias, especially that of the US and EU, in resolving the conflict. The most graphic representation of this editorial line is shown through the comic strips that appeared during those weeks. All of them have been included in the complete report. The following picture speaks for itself.

Picture 2. El Periódico de Catalunya, January 22nd 2008



(From left to right) – Do you want a mediator for this peace process?
 - We already have one and we're doing very well with him.
 - Don't worry, this is full steam ahead.

This approach strongly contrasts with the one offered by ABC, whose editorial line during the same days is much more pro-Israel and anti-Hamas. On January 24th, when the information about the wall being torn down was released (but still not stated that Hamas was behind it), ABC released a leading article titled 'Desperation in Gaza' ('La desesperación en Gaza') and there is not even one line condemning Israeli blockade. According to El Periódico and El País, and to a certain extent also La Vanguardia and El Mundo, that was the main reason for the desperation reigning among the Palestinians, who run en masse to stock up with supplies during the days the border was open. ABC turns the speech upside down and expresses that the Palestinian people's desperation is a clear sign of how Hamas has failed in their insistence on controlling Gaza. 'It has been nearly two years since the Hamas extremists' victory in the first Palestinian elections (which was a mistake in the first place, for there had been elections before). Yesterday, the desperate gesture of thousands of Gaza inhabitants fleeing through the border with Egypt represented the end of the process on which the hopes for peace were pinned.' Later on, it is also said that 'Hamas has proved that its place on the list of terrorist organizations is well deserved and that there is no reasonable peace in their agenda...' (ABC, January 24th).

This leading article from ABC contrasts with the one appearing on January 25th on El País dealing with the same topic. ABC claims that Hamas is responsible for the disastrous situation in Gaza, while the headline on El País claims 'Gaza exists' ('Gaza Existe'), adding in the subheading that the 'Palestinian mass assault on Egyptian barrier proves Israel's strategy a failure'. 'The events show that the tactic for ignoring Gaza, followed by Israel and the West since Hamas seized power in the Gaza Strip, does not work' (El País, January 25th).

Moreover, on January 28th, ABC released an extensive article about the Qassam rockets launching by militiamen associated to the Islamic Jihad. The correspondent Laura L. Caro presents a deep and risky leading article, even if the text is full of explicit dislike to the militiamen. A week earlier, on January 21st, El Periódico's correspondent published from the Israeli city of Sderot another article titled 'Under those damned Qassam' ('Bajo los malditos Qasam'), where he informs of the Israeli population's daily suffering. However, again following the newspaper's editorial line, next to this there is another piece of news titled 'Half a million people's electricity cut off in Gaza' ('Medio millón de personas se quedan sin luz en Gaza'). The message is clear: Israeli people suffer because of rockets, but Palestinians suffer more because of the blockade.

Jabalia and Jerusalem Slaughters

On February 2008, violence escalated in the area and the rockets launching on the Palestinian side and Israeli retaliations intensified. The tension reached one of the highest points of the year in the beginning of March, when the Israeli army conducted an important military operation in Jabalia refugee camp, to the north of the Gaza Strip. This attack was preceded by some polemical or controversial statements (collected by all six newspapers the day before) made by the Defense Deputy Minister of Israel who said that in sending rockets, Palestinians were provoking their own Shoah ('Holocaust' in Hebrew). Two days after these statements and

one day after the attack, El País published the headline 'Israel kills women and children in the worst attack on Gaza since 2002' ('Israel mata a mujeres y niños en la mayor ofensiva contra Gaza desde 2002'), subtitled 'More than 60 Palestinians dead in one day, half of them unconnected to the confrontation'.

Here we should highlight two specific elements: the explicit mention of women and children in the headline and the fact that half the victims were civilians. There is no doubt that in this headline the Israeli army does not come off well. Just by reading the headline, we get the idea that their target was precisely those women and children. The photograph accompanying the article shows a baby being rescued from the fire by a Palestinian doctor. Here we can see another critical slant towards Israel from El País, which contrasts with other headlines of that same date. El Mundo, for instance, is not very far from El País, and writes 'Almost 63 Palestinians, seven children among them, dead in a large Israeli attack on Gaza' ('Al menos 63 palestinos, entre ellos siete niños, mueren en la gran ofensiva israelí contra Gaza'). Their message is more restrained. El Mundo denounces the children's death, but does not specify in the headline (it does in the text) that half of the victims were civilians.

La Vanguardia is faithful to its guarded language (even if this time they take the information from agencies) and only presents the facts, not including other evaluation elements. The chosen headline is 'Israel shows Gaza no mercy' ('Israel se ensaña con la franja de Gaza'). More on the Israeli side, ABC also echoes the high number of deaths, but like La Vanguardia, the number of civilians is not shown in the headline, which says 'More than 60 dead in Gaza on the bloodiest day since the Six-Day War' ('Más de 60 muertos en el día más sangriento desde la Guerra de los Seis Días'). Unlike El Mundo and La Vanguardia, who mention the numerous civilian victims on the first paragraph, ABC only does the same around the middle of the article.

As other times before, the correspondent Laura L. Caro prefers to devote the first part of her article to the use of sensationalist language, full of macabre and out of place expressions. The first paragraph of the article says 'Gaza was a slaughterhouse. To get even the faintest idea of the magnitude of the atrocious slaughter that took place yesterday in the Gaza Strip, it was necessary to see the health workers in the Al-Shifa Hospital cleaning without a break, hour after hour, using foul mops, the blood streams pouring out of the wounded's stretchers until it flooded the emergency entrance' (ABC, March 2nd). All this bloody account is also accompanied by the dramatic photograph (large and five-columns wide) of the baby saved from the fire, also shown in El País.

Picture 3. El Periódico de Catalunya, March 2nd de 2008



While ABC seems to enjoy depicting the extreme violence devastating the region at the expense of the explanation and analysis (although they do offer information gathered from eyewitnesses), La Razón goes even further. In a startling way, comparing it to all other newspapers, they write in one headline 'Palestinians freeze the peace process' ('Los palestinos congelan la paz'), referring to the fact that, after the Israeli attacks, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and their leader, Mahmud Abbas, had no choice but to temporarily stop the peace negotiations started in Annapolis. They also choose to ignore the Israeli offensive until the third paragraph. A photo is also offered (the same appearing in La Vanguardia) depicting a Palestinian boy laying on a stretcher, but there is another one showing wounded Israeli soldiers and also emphasizing the constant launching of rockets against cities.

Days after the attacks on Jabalia, there was another slaughter in the region. This time it was in Jerusalem, where eight students were killed by a Palestinian bearing an Israeli passport who camouflaged himself in a Jewish seminary. The correspondents from all six newspapers covered this attack in a similar way, but with some slants. The headline in El País on March 7th said 'Palestinian shoots eight Israeli dead' ('Un palestino mata a tiros a ocho israelíes') and offers a computer graphic placing the seminary on a Jerusalem map and a photograph depicting one of the wounded hebrew students laying on a stretcher. However, El País does not devote the whole page to it and places next to this gloomy piece of news a rather sensual and out of place advertisement.

Picture 4. El País, March 7th 2008



The funerals got more coverage, but there was another message added under the headline 'The Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank celebrate the terrorist attack' ('Los palestinos de Gaza y Cisjordania celebran el ataque terrorista'). It is surprising that, during those days, El País would not echo a report published by some British NGOs where it is said that the Gaza Strip is suffering the worst humanitarian crisis since the beginning of the occupation. El Periódico, La Vanguardia and El Mundo do, next to the news of the attack on the Jewish school, although there are slight differences. ABC again resorts to sensationalism. On March 7th they write 'At least 8 dead in an attack on a Talmudic school in Jerusalem' ('Al menos 8 muertos en el ataque a una escuela talmúdica en Jerusalén'), suggesting with the words 'At least' that there could be more mortal victims, something that no other newspaper implies. The article says 'a terrorist fired more than 500 Kalashnikov bullets at 80 students'. This shows, together with the photograph, all the usual harshness of this newspaper.

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Picture 5. ABC, March 8th 2008



The ABC correspondent also collects the Palestinian celebrations of the attack and depicts the Israeli people as the victims in the conflict while Palestinians appear as people who are above pain and even feel proud or happy when seeing the Jewish misfortunes. La Razón correspondent, Lourdes Baeza, follows the exact same line but with much less coverage, since there is no news about the attack on January 7th. This event is only covered on the 8th and the headline and text also try to make an impact while saying 'Israel's enemy sleeps at their own home' ('El enemigo de Israel duerme en casa'). The journalist does not connect the attack to the death of 120 Palestinians only five days before at the hands of the Israeli army (as El Periódico did) or to the NGOs' report about the terrible situation that the people at the Gaza Strip were in (as La Vanguardia and El Mundo).

Different Interpretations of the Same Reality

When making an exhaustive comparative and analytic research of the media coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict offered by the six analyzed newspapers, there are obviously many informative contradictions. Conflicting messages, slants, intentional omission of news...For instance, on February 6th most of the newspapers wrote about an attack launched by the Israeli army in reply to a suicide attack in Dimona. The headlines are more or less the same in all the newspapers but numbers also vary in nearly all of them. This is only a small example but there are more important and striking issues like the headlines on La Vanguardia and El Periódico on March 8th, both of them talking about the attack on the Jewish seminary in Jerusalem by the Israeli Arab citizen that happened two days before. El Periódico says ' Hamas leaders claim responsibility for the attack on the Jewish school' ('Dirigentes de Hamas se atribuyen el atentado contra la escuela judía') while, on the contrary, La Vanguardia says ' Hamas denies any responsibility for the attack in Jerusalem' (' Hamas desmiente su autoría en el atentado de Jerusalén'). The reason lies in the later denial by Hamas, which appears in both texts.

But La Vanguardia and El Periódico, in comparison to all other newspapers, agree on a piece of information that appeared in the American magazine Vanity Fair, according to which, the US tried to secretly destabilize in 2006 the newly elected Hamas government. This news appeared on the Spanish press for the first time on March 6th 2008 on an article in El Periódico called ('US secret conspiracy to overthrow Hamas' ('EEUU conspiró en secreto para derrocar a Hamas'). These accusations are very important, as they would pull apart the 'coup d'état by Hamas theory supported by Palestinian president Abbas and many Western chancelleries'. According to Vanity Fair, the victory obtained by Hamas on the elections was the reason for the secret operation. 'These people must be crushed', was the answer given by the State Department to the elections results. From there on, the US, in agreement with Israel and with the consent of the West, imposed an economic blockade over the new government. Seeing as the isolation did not work, they decided to give weapons and financial aid to Fatah through their Arab allies with the purpose of overthrowing the Islamists by causing bloodshed...but this backfired and Hamas swept away its enemy on the 2007 battle in Gaza (El Periódico, March 6th).

La Vanguardia, always offering a sober speech about this topic and in tune with the information already given by El Periódico, covers the news on March 8th saying that 'The US tried to stir up war between Hamas and Fatah' ('EEUU intentó provocar la guerra entre Hamas y Al Fatah'). 'This version has always been defended and argued by Hamas, and is public knowledge among Palestinians' (La Vanguardia, March 8th). It is startling to see how the other newspapers do not mention this piece of news, seemingly so important in order to understand the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It is even more so in the case of El País and El Mundo and this, in some way, undermines their informative rigor.

Gaza War

After a fragile six-month official Hamas-Israel ceasefire from June 19th until December 19th 2008, the clashes intensified again in the second half on December after Hamas announced an end to the truce, therefore beginning an open war between both parts at the end of the year. During the first days of the battle, all media except for La Razón, expressly condemned the use of such out of proportion force by Israel. There seems to be general consensus on this issue, with the aforementioned exception of La Razón. Information mostly differs on the level of criticism thrown at one side or the other and on the consideration of Hamas as just another player (as El Periódico, El País and La Vanguardia do) or as the executioner (as it generally appears on El Mundo, ABC and La Razón). Following their editorial lines, El Periódico and El País (this one to a lesser extent) clearly defend Palestinian people ignoring the Hebrew point of view most of the time, while ABC and La Razón mostly include Israeli views and arguments. El Mundo focuses on presenting the human grief and views of witnesses from both sides, and La Vanguardia stays faithful to its moderate speech.

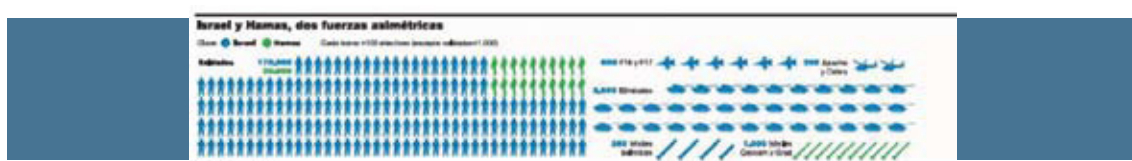
Four Days of Conflict (December 28th-December 31st 2008)

The complete report analyzes in detail and thoroughly how each newspaper deals with the last days of the 2008 great conflict between the Israeli army and Palestinian militias. Here we will summarize the most important details. Already on December 28th, El Periódico appears very critical of the Israeli attack, both in its headline 'The biggest Israeli offensive scatters death over Gaza' ('La mayor ofensiva de Israel siembra la muerte en Gaza') and in the leading article, which brands the actions 'the worst version of any state's right to defend itself'. ABC also writes the Israeli response was excessive, but its criticism focus on Hamas, especially among its features writers, and again chooses sensationalist photographs and texts. In turn, El País insists on showing a merciless Israel ('Israel crushes the city of Gaza') and gives Hamas a key position in both the leading article and the news.

As almost always, El Mundo tries to be neutral and in the leading article it tries to put the blame equally on everyone, although it stands out that they do not refer to Hamas as a 'terrorist' group, as does ABC most of the time and La Razón continuously. The newspaper edited by Pedro J. Ramírez, through Rosa Meneses (El Mundo, December 28th), accused Israel of 'thinking over this operation since a long time ago', even though it is argued that the bombings were a response to the rockets launched against their territory. La Vanguardia offers another balanced coverage and, in principle, non-biased. There are, however, some slants that differentiate its line from El Mundo, as it places itself closer to El Periódico or El País, as proved by the headline 'Israel martyrs Gaza' ('Israel martiriza Gaza').

On December 29th, all newspapers have similar opinions. However, La Razón stands out and, in the leading article, appeals for a ceasefire, although making it clear that 'the sole responsables for the Israeli offensive are Hamas leaders'. Its articles, as the one by J. A. Gundín, reassert its anti-Palestinian line, branding this conflict a battle 'between freedom and dictatorship, between the rule of law and theocracy'. ABC also defends Israel clearly, and its feature writer, Hermann Tertsch, denies their army 'mass attacks' and, using a shrill violent language, charges against Palestinian militias. Regarding La Vanguardia, it tries to stay on neutral ground, offering an exclusive interview with the Israeli Defense Minister showing both points of view about the conflict. The leading article leaves no room for doubt 'Indiscriminately killing (...) is, undoubtedly, a war act'. El País, as usual, reinforces the Hebrew army's excessive violent image showing cruel photographs of the consequences (see full version), although it also offers a balanced coverage with interviews to leaders from both sides. El Mundo also has disapproving words for Israel in its leading article 'Israel's answer, out of proportion and counterproductive' ('Una respuesta desproporcionada y contraproducente de Israel'). The computer graphics comparing Israel's forces with those of Hamas leave no room for doubt.

Picture 6. El Mundo, December 29th 2008



On December 30th, faced with the imminent Israeli overland invasion, the editorial lines are maintained, but denounces against Hebrew aggressions increase, even in ABC, who admits that Israel's attacks 'will trigger a new Intifada' and offers detailed information. La Vanguardia includes for the first time a photograph of the conflict on the frontpage and insists on reproaching Israel for its attitude. El País is again openly critical with the Hebrew position and makes it very clear in articles like the one written by Shlomo Ben-Ami, 'Gaza's agony and Israel's trap' ('La agonía de Gaza y la trampa de Israel'). These criticism towards the Jewish State is shared by El Mundo, but this one directs harsh words to Palestinian militias, as in David Gistau's article ('One must sympathize to a large extent with Hamas to be able to call its activists 'innocent' while the use children as human shields'). El Periódico not only leaves out any denounce against Hamas, but quite the opposite, blames Israel for having a 'great responsibility' in breaking the truce. La Razón does not disassociate itself from its pro-Israeli view and praises their military armament with a graphic.

Picture 7. El País y El Mundo, December 31st 2008



On the fourth day of conflict (December 31st), the topic was pushed into the frontpages' corners. Only El Mundo and El País kept photographs on the first page, where it can be appreciated the destruction left by Israeli bombings and clear headlines 'Israel disregards global clamor to stop harming Gaza' ('Israel ignora el clamor mundial para que cese el castigo de Gaza', El País) and 'Israel warns 'This is just the first stage'' ('Ésta es sólo la primera etapa', advierte Israel', El Mundo). The debate is focused on the truce offered by the EU. There are contradictory views and, while El Periódico stresses that 'Israel is unwilling to cease the fire', La Razón and ABC clarify that Israel 'is considering' a truce. La Razón specifies that the Hebrew government does this to 'check if the terrorists have understood the message and decided to stop their harassment towards the Israeli population'.

That day, the debate was mostly focused on the truce conditions offered the day before by the European Union. ABC, again offering a detailed coverage on the international section, writes on the frontpage 'Israel considers the 'humanitarian truce' for Gaza after EU requests'. El Periódico also writes on the frontpage 'Israel is unwilling to cease the fire'. La Razón says a completely different thing on its first page: 'Israel considers a 48-hour unilateral truce to check if the terrorists have understood the message and decided to stop their harassment towards the Israeli population'. The messages are completely opposites. The headline in La Vanguardia gives no clear signs of the truce, although there seems to be a small inclination towards the view supported by El Periódico and El País. Similar to El Mundo, La Vanguardia starts to deal with the topic of the war saying 'Israel continues striking Gaza'.

The headline in La Vanguardia continues being circumspect, saying that 'The EU suggests an immediate and permanent truce to Israel and Hamas' ('La UE propone a Israel y Hamas una tregua inmediata y permanente'), but the subheading says that 'Israel considers the European plan and warns that everything depends on 'the other part''. The verb 'consider' is used to talk about Israel's position regarding the truce in the same way that is used in the headlines from ABC and La Razón. It seems that El Periódico and La Razón left out part of the truth in saying that Israel rejects any possibility of truce. The newspaper owned by Grupo Zeta (El Periódico) soundly argues that the Hebrew State repeatedly refused a ceasefire, an attitude also admitted in the end by La Razón. This shows how, even not being completely unfaithful to reality, the media can still interpret events according to their editorial lines. There is no doubt that Israel 'considered' the truce suggested by the EU, but all signs and statements spoke of the Jewish State continuing their offensive. By introducing the possibility of a truce on behalf of Israel as a humanitarian gesture, La Razón and ABC insist on showing a compassionate and open to dialogue Israel, some attributes that were not entirely true in those moments of armed conflict.

Conclusions

This chapter proves how, regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict coverage, all six analyzed newspapers offer a wide range of possibilities according to their editorial lines. On the furthest left and totally on the Palestinian side, we find *El Periódico*, always defending their right to form an independent state. It denounces systematically the Israeli army's attacks causing civilian victims and rarely talks about the point of view or the grief suffered by the Hebrew side. Next to *El Periódico* we find *El País*, also defending constantly the Palestinian cause, although sometimes including the Jewish view and presenting a slightly more critical attitude towards Hamas. Still, in this newspaper, Hamas is considered a movement with a great regional influence and worthy of analysis and explanation. In the middle, we find *La Vanguardia* and *El Mundo*. *La Vanguardia* is more inclined towards the left, as it is more explicitly critical of the Israeli army's disproportionate interventions, but also tries to understand and partially justify the power acquired by Hamas in the occupied territories. *El Mundo* criticizes at specific times Israel's excessive use of force against civilians, but it is much more hostile to Hamas.

On the Israeli side, *ABC* appears first. It defends at all costs Israel's right to defend itself and considers this country an example of democracy in the region that must be supported at all times, but also, if it's necessary, it is able to denounce the death of civilians in the occupied territories and admits that, many times, the indiscriminate violence serves only to further anger Hamas fanatics. Finally, *La Razón* is on the furthest right, and unswervingly on the pro-Israeli side, presenting the topic almost only from the Hebrew point of view. There are no half-measures for this newspaper. Its position is clearly pro-Israeli, while harassing and attacking Palestinian interests. The speech is totally black and white, always going between 'we and they'. *La Razón* supports Israel because it represents Western democratic and Christian values, while Palestinians embody the barbarity, fundamentalism and extremism of a society governed by Islamic laws.

So, roughly speaking, with the exception of *La Razón*, Spanish newspapers agree on condemning Israel's out of proportion use of violence against Palestinian civilians, in spite of their differences on little details or the space devoted to information. The Arab and Muslim World's image offered through this topic differs completely from one newspaper to the other. Those who read *El Periódico* and *El País* will see Palestinians as victims and those who read *ABC* and *La Razón* will see them as violent and uncivilized people. Finally, those who read *La Vanguardia* and *El Mundo* will be able to have a less biased view, although there will always be a surreptitious slant.

■ 6. Morocco's Image on the Spanish Press

Morocco and Spain, two countries standing so close and, at the same time, so far from each other; so different and still with so many things in common; main parts on disputes and common interests. Suspicion and ignorance are two attributes that the Spanish public opinion often associates to the Southern neighbor. What is the role played by the media in transmitting and generating a certain image of the North African country? There is little information about Morocco on the main Spanish newspapers, much less than the one published about European big countries.

The space dedicated to Morocco is determined, in most cases, by the political agenda, especially by the bilateral relations between both governments. In 2008, the times when Morocco was the main subject of media coverage came down to three. The first one was in January, when the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miguel Ángel Moratinos, visited his Moroccan counterpart, Taieb Fassi-Fihri, to deliver a letter from the Head of Government, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, addressed to King Mohammed VI, trying to settle the diplomatic tension caused by King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia's visit to Ceuta and Melilla at the end of 2007. The second one happened in July, when President Rodríguez Zapatero attended an interview in Oujda (Morocco) with Prime Minister Abbas El Fassi and the Moroccan king. Lastly, in December, Spain held a 'high level' meeting between delegates from both governments. Apart from those three meetings, the presence of Morocco-related events on the Spanish press seems symbolic. On the other hand, limited topics related to the African country are object of media attention. Two important issues have taken over the informative agenda: the situation regarding the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, and the Western Sahara conflict, immediately followed by the immigration phenomenon. Anyway, there are other issues often featured on the press, such as civilian freedom, Spanish economic and business interests in the North African country or culture-related announcements.

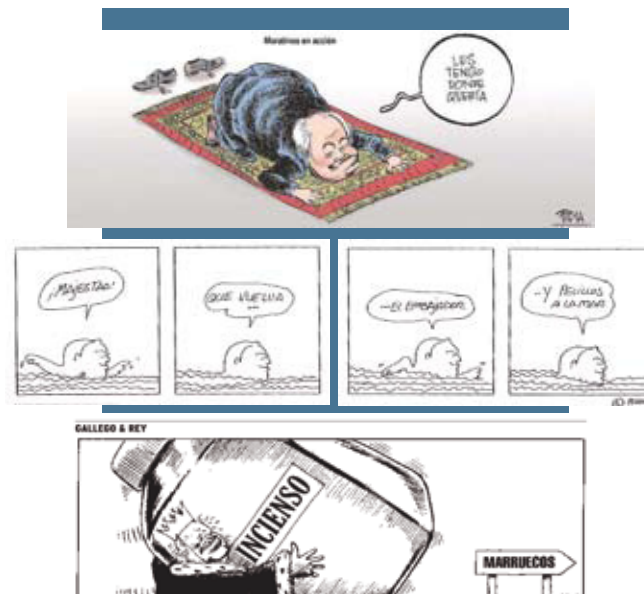
The End of the Diplomatic Tension

On January 3rd 2008, the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miguel Ángel Moratinos, travelled to Morocco to meet with his Moroccan counterpart, Taieb Fassi-Fihri, to whom he delivered a letter from the Spanish President, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, addressed to King Mohammed VI. The aim of this letter was to achieve the reconciliation between both countries, which was damaged after the visit paid by King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia to Ceuta and Melilla in November, and the return of the Moroccan ambassador in Madrid, Omar Azziman. All newspapers, with the exception of La Vanguardia and El Mundo, announce the Spanish minister's visit, keeping an eminently informative tone that holds no significant differences regarding the journalistic approach. The headlines are very similar and the thematic content coincides.

However, only one day after, all newspapers inform about this meeting from very different points of view, including leading articles on El País, El Periódico de Catalunya and La Razón. PRISA's newspaper (El País), apart from publishing the information on the front page, starts the section devoted to Spain with the headline 'Zapatero's letter to Mohammed VI to break deadlock in relations with Morocco' ('Una carta de Zapatero para Mohamed VI desbloquea la crisis con Marruecos') and adds, in the same page, an article signed by its regular correspondent from Madrid, Ignacio Cembrero, criticizing the Spanish Government's policy and its economic consequences in the city of Ceuta. The leading article defends the need to normalize the relations between both countries, and warns that cooperation between Spain and Morocco is essential to deal with many issues. The topic does not make it to the headlines of El Mundo, and there is no leading article about it. Although it is also published full-page in the domestic news section, it is not even the opening section. Furthermore, and contrary to El País, the official visit did not achieve its goal, as 'Zapatero holds out his hand to Mohammed VI, but still does not succeed in bringing the Moroccan ambassador back.'

In a similar line, ABC branded the result of the visit negative, both on the frontpage ('Moratinos takes a letter from Zapatero to Mohammed VI to Rabat and comes back empty-handed') and on the Spain section opening, where it is stressed that 'Mohammed VI will be the one deciding if the ambassador returns, something that everybody knows, because regarding foreign affairs issues and, most of all, about Spain, nothing is done without the Alaouite king's knowledge'. La Razón similarly opens its domestic news section with this topic, offering an opinion piece from Gustavo de Aristegui, PP's Foreign Affairs spokesman ('A travel under suspicion' ('Un viaje bajo sospecha'), where he criticizes the Government's position stating that 'today, a clumsy handling of something that was well done -as undoubtedly was Their Majesties, the King and Queen's visit to Ceuta and Melilla- worsened a crisis that could have been mitigated to a large extent and at this moment overcome with better political abilities'. The leading article from the same day is also critical ('Moratinos begs for Mohammed VI's benevolence in Rabat'), talking about 'humiliation' and 'embarrassing visit', and transmitting an image of submissive attitude in front of Moroccan authorities. The humorous point of view gives interesting hints about the newspaper's position. In general, all strip cartoonists seem to be in tune with each other, as Moratinos is the target of the jokes in all of them.

Picture 8. El País, El Mundo y ABC, January 4th 2008



However, *El Periódico de Catalunya* opens the politics section full-page with the headline 'Zapatero made a gesture in Rabat to smooth the path for the ambassador's return' ('Zapatero hace un gesto ante Rabat para allanar la vuelta del embajador'). This newspaper highlights the positive atmosphere, stressing that on the part of Moroccan authorities, there was 'a very different style to the one used during the crisis, when the Prime Minister Abbas El-Fassi compared Ceuta and Melilla to 'occupied Palestine''. *El Periódico* also publishes a leading article about the topic, 'Good relations with Rabat' ('Distensión con Rabat'), where it talks about a 'crisis without path' and defends the need for understanding and good relations between both countries. Finally, *La Vanguardia* is the one to attach less importance to this issue and only publishes a three-column article on the politics section, 'Spain smoothes the path for Morocco's ambassador to return' ('España allana el retorno del embajador de Marruecos'). It is stressed the 'conciliatory gesture' and the Government's 'white-collar diplomacy', as well as the fact that the crisis 'has not affected the relations between both countries'.

On January 8th the crisis finished with the ambassador's return, an event covered similarly by the main Spanish newspapers, highlighting in most cases the brevity of the communiqué announced by the Government of Morocco. *El País* underlines the 'coldness and sparingness' of this official announcement. *ABC* ('Marruecos anuncia la vuelta inmediata de su embajador a España') insists on the idea that Morocco achieved its goal and points out that 'the Alaoui king has waited for more than two months, more than enough time to prove his discomfort and provoke anxiety in the Spanish Executive, who boasts about having an excellent relation with Rabat'. *El Periódico de Catalunya* only says that 'Rabat orders the ambassador's return to Madrid', while *La Razón* shows a more critical position ('El embajador marroquí vuelve a Madrid sin dar ninguna clase de explicaciones') and stresses that 'Moroccan diplomacy has refrained from giving any coherent and reasoned explanation to their unfriendly gesture'. *El Mundo* echoes this news ('Marruecos ordena el regreso "inmediato" del embajador a Madrid y cierra la crisis') and, giving an example of opinion disguised as information, states that 'Rabat cannot afford a greater crisis with a government that, since their arrival at La Moncloa, has made the good relations with Rabat one of the most important points of their foreign policy. Spain's support for Morocco in issues such as Western Sahara is worth more than any Moroccan claim'. At last, *La Vanguardia*, having given less importance to this topic until then, takes the crisis resolution to the frontpage ('Marruecos zanja la crisis con España sin contrapartidas sobre Ceuta y Melilla') and also to the politics section first page. The importance given to this topic by *La Vanguardia* is also proven by the publication on that same day of a leading article, 'The ambassador's return' ('La vuelta del embajador') written by the newspaper's editor, José Antich, who brands 'exaggerated' Morocco's anger.

In short, Spanish media coverage of Morocco is determined by the political agenda, but always presenting important editorial differences. *La Razón* is very critical of the Spanish Government and ruthless against Moroccan authorities, while *El País* and *El Periódico de Catalunya* seem to agree with the crisis resolution because of multiple common interests. Even so, all newspapers maintain both their reproach towards Moroccan attitude and their claims to the Spanish Executive regarding unsolved problems.

Zapatero Visits Morocco

In July, the Spanish Head of Government travelled to Oujda to resume bilateral relations for good. The visit was vastly covered by the press and its addressing is substantially different among all analyzed newspapers. *El País* publishes full-page 'Spain and Morocco set aside the dispute over Ceuta and Melilla' ('España y Marruecos aparcen el contencioso de Ceuta y Melilla', *El País*, July 12th), a piece focused on the three axis sustaining relations between both countries (Ceuta and Melilla, Sahara and immigration), and which highlights the intention of Moroccan Prime Minister, Abbas El-Fassi, to approach 'respectfully and frankly Morocco's right to get Ceuta and Melilla back'. *El País* illustrates this information with an ironic cartoon about the understanding between Morocco and Spain regarding immigration:

Picture 9. El País, July 12th 2008



- Your Majesty! Let's see how we avoid those frequent tragedies in the Strait.
- That's what I say!
- That's just great...

In its leading article 'Just courtesy' ('Cortesía y punto'), it is stressed that Zapatero's visit was 'just a mere courtesy gesture with no further aim' and it was basically focused on the immigration problem and the Sahara conflict. Regarding the first, it is pointed out that 'the tragic nightmare that are the 'pateras' (small boats used by immigrants to reach the Peninsula) cannot in any way be used as a bargaining chip between both countries'. In connection with Sahara, the article highlights that 'Spanish activism from the former term of office regarding Sahara has turned into thick silence' and warns that 'the Spanish Government coming out of the scene and washing its hands is not the best for the conflict's future'. Regarding Ceuta and Melilla, the correspondent in Morocco writes the article 'Ceuta and Melilla: expiry date 2012' ('Ceuta y Melilla: 2012, fecha de caducidad'), critical of Spanish foreign policy, wondering 'What is the use in maintaining the friendliest relation with our neighbor since their independence in 1956 if, save for illegal immigration, no essential disputes are solved?'.

The topic is also on the frontpage of La Vanguardia ('Ceuta and Melilla, de nuevo'). Although it does not have such importance on the pages inside, the same view is still maintained ('Morocco demands to Zapatero its 'right' over Ceuta and Melilla' ('Marruecos reclama a Zapatero su "derecho" sobre Ceuta y Melilla')). El Periódico de Catalunya shows on the frontpage the words from Moroccan Prime Minister, 'Morocco demands to Zapatero its right over Ceuta and Melilla' ('Marruecos reivindica ante Zapatero su derecho sobre Ceuta y Melilla'), and says the visit was 'tarnished'. Contrary to La Vanguardia, El Periódico de Catalunya's leading article 'Morocco, between the EU and the 'pateras' ('Marruecos, entre la UE y las pateras') is dedicated to the topic, although oddly not focusing the content on Ceuta and Melilla, but on the immigration problem and Morocco's interest in cooperating to control migration in order to obtain a privileged relation with the EU.

El Mundo, for its part, is much more critical of the Moroccan Government. In fact, on the frontpage it stresses that 'Morocco's view toughens and demands negotiation over Ceuta and Melilla with Zapatero', while on the full-page opening of the domestic news section it insists on the topic and the coincidence of the anniversary of the Perejil Island capture (July 11th-20th 2002): 'Morocco takes the opportunity on the anniversary of Perejil to claim Ceuta and Melilla again'. The newspaper again bases its information on declarations made by the Moroccan Prime Minister collected by two Arab media, and not on official statements. Furthermore, in an article, 'Moroccan flags eat up the Spanish one' ('Las banderas marroquíes se comen a la española'), it is stressed that 'the Head of Spanish Government was welcomed at Oujda airport with a tiny, miserable flag'. In fact, this topic brought up a leading article, 'The Alauite king's disdain for Zapatero' ('Los desdenes del rey alauí a Zapatero'), where it is stated that 'it is possible to conclude that the Alauite king's treatment of Zapatero has been nearly humiliating'. The next day, they insist upon this topic publishing a cartoon based on the Moroccan 'demand':

Picture 10. El Mundo, July 14th 2008



- Ceuta and Melilla? I thought neighbors only asked for salt at the most...

On a similar line, La Razón insists on the flag topic ('Morocco greets Zapatero with a 'tiny' Spanish flag' ('Marruecos recibe a Zapatero con una 'banderita' española')) and, in the Spain section opening, the information is focused on Ceuta and Melilla ('Rabat apunta a Ceuta y Melilla'), criticizing, on one hand, the Spanish Government and, on the other, setting itself as defender for the Spanish interests against Morocco's intentions. In its leading article 'Zapatero in Morocco, a duty visit telling the same old story' ('Zapatero en Marruecos, una visita de trámite y con la misma cantinela'), it is stated that 'it looks like Morocco abused the symbolic language for the purpose of asserting their supposedly victimized nationalism. Therefore, it does not seem very polite that the visit coincided with the sixth anniversary of Perejil Island's 'capture'. (...) And it already causes weariness that the Alaouite monarchy waves their aspirations over Ceuta and Melilla around while still denying the Saharan ones'.

Finally, ABC conveys the idea of Morocco claiming their sovereignty over Ceuta and Melilla against the Spanish Government's weakness. So, in the frontpage on July 12th, the five-column opening article, 'Rabat demands Ceuta and Melilla on the sixth anniversary of Perejil's invasion' ('Rabat reclama Ceuta y Melilla en el sexto aniversario de la invasión de Perejil'), includes a subheading questioning the Spanish Executive's position: 'The President did not reveal if they talked about both Spanish cities during the meeting with Mohammed VI'. This newspaper insists on the flag topic ('Flags heavy defeat' ('Goleada de banderas')) and says that 'a little Spanish flag, tiny and turned upside down greeted Zapatero among enormous Moroccan flags.'. It is even harsher the ABC former editor's intervention, Ignacio Camacho, who, in his article 'The towel' ('La toalla'), questions the democracy inside Moroccan Government and accuses them of using immigration as political weapon. He comes to the conclusion that 'getting along does not mean, in short, to accept shrugging our shoulders every single insulting detail that Moroccan include, practising their domestic policy skills, in the symbolism employed in negotiations with Spain'.

Spanish-Moroccan High Level Meeting

In the middle of December, Rodríguez Zapatero and Abbas El-Fassi met again in Madrid along with ten of their ministers on the first High Level Meeting held between both countries in 2008. The Spanish newspapers covered this information from different views, devoting much less space to this topic than to the events previously analyzed, dominated by a conflict atmosphere between both countries.

El País starts echoing the Ceuta and Melilla Governments' claims for the agenda ('Ceuta y Melilla reclaman fluidez y orden en la frontera marroquí'). The next day, this newspaper redirects the attention towards the Sahara conflict, publishing this half-page headline: 'Zapatero supports Rabat's autonomy offer to Sahara' ('Zapatero respalda la oferta de autonomía de Rabat para el Sáhara'). Furthermore, it also echoes the economic agreement, stating that 'the socialist Government keeps pampering Morocco, with whom they signed yesterday the biggest credit agreement: 520 million euro aimed at the building of infrastructures by Spanish companies'. That same day, El País dedicates the main article on the opinion section, 'Morocco and European indulgence' ('Marruecos y la complacencia europea'), a very critical text focused on the relations between Morocco and the EU, where it is highlighted that 'the EU offers an association status to the Maghribian country, whose ruling elite still shuffles along regarding the construction of a full democracy, the decentralization of the State and the fight against inequality'. For its part, ABC focused on the problem regarding Sahara, with the title 'Zapatero asks the Polisario Front for 'flexibility' and the last accuses him of taking peace away from Sahara'. In fact, the article starts pointing out that 'Rodríguez Zapatero stirred up new controversy with the Polisario Front regarding the Western Sahara conflict', when he asked for 'flexibility' and stated that the Spanish regional model is a 'very good experience for Morocco'. This newspaper echoes the answer given by the Polisario Front's delegate in Spain, who pointed that 'Zapatero's stand moves the pacific solution further away and is a clear alignment in favor of the occupation'. To ABC, it is not so important to stress the economic agreement 'increasing from 250 to 520 million euro the Spanish contribution to projects regarding common interests in the neighboring country'.

The rest of newspapers focus on the economic agreement, but there are completely opposite views. So, La Razón considers that 'The Government gives Rabat 520 million' ('El Gobierno entrega a Marruecos 520 millones'), and inside questions the agreement signed in the economic crisis context, 'The crisis does not halt the biggest agreement with Morocco' ('La crisis no frena el mayor acuerdo con Marruecos'). On the contrary, El Mundo focuses on the economic aspect ('Madrid offers Rabat 520 million on financial aids' ('Madrid ofrece a Rabat 520 millones en ayudas financieras')) offering a two-column article in the Spain section, explaining that it is 'the biggest financial aid agreement signed by the Government with any country'. This newspaper points out that 'neither the Sahara conflict, the constant Moroccan claims over Ceuta and Melilla nor the daily chaos at the borders between both cities and Morocco, are enough to darken the view'.

La Vanguardia offers an odd coverage, including a caption, 'Aid to Morocco' ('Ayudas a Marruecos'), in the opening of a politics section focused on autonomous financing. The information is completed with a leading article, 'Perfect understanding' ('Buena sintonía'), that brands 'excellent' the relations between both countries and is focused on the economic bonds referring to specific projects such as 'the ambitious rail connection between both countries through a tunnel under the Strait'. The view based on economic interests is proved by a feature published the same day, 'Tanger-med, the large rival' ('Tánger-Med, el gran rival'), talking about the port under construction in Tangier (Morocco) and the possible competition for Spain. Finally, El Periódico de Catalunya chooses a similar view ('Spain will fund building works in Morocco worth 520 million euro') and dedicates a leading article to the Sahara issue, 'Autonomous Sahara' ('Sáhara autónomo'), where it is pointed that during the meeting between Zapatero and El-Fassi 'the ex-colony future was a point raised as an issue condemned to live forever in a fragile state between peace and war'. Faced with this situation, Grupo Zeta's masthead argues that 'it seems the only possible solution is the direct negotiation between enemies, which means that at some point Morocco will have to accept the Polisario Front as representative and this one, the impossibility of their emancipation dream'.

We can observe how, faced with an issue marked by understanding and not by confrontation, the Spanish newspapers choose to dedicate to them much less space than to the former meetings, still affected by the diplomatic crisis. Furthermore, while some newspapers focus on the Sahara issue (El País, ABC and El Periódico), only the Catalanian newspapers (La Vanguardia and El Periódico) write about a topic with positive connotations.

Ceuta and Melilla's Situation

The two Spanish autonomous cities' situation, claimed by Morocco, is one of the 'key' issues regarding both bilateral relations and Spanish media agenda in connection with Morocco. In general, the newspapers taken as reference support the 'Spanishness' of both cities, subject not only to information related to their sovereignty, but also to the immigration phenomenon and the trade relations between countries. The historical conflict over Ceuta and Melilla's sovereignty has determined relations between Morocco and Spain for centuries. In spite of the intense economic and social interests, and despite the current good relations, Ceuta and Melilla's sovereignty has never got off the political and media agenda.

Leaving aside the two episodes already analyzed, in 2008 Ceuta and Melilla as a topic in connection with Morocco only appears sporadically and superficially on the Spanish media. We can undoubtedly state that the press is quite sensitive about these two cities, which means that any reference to their political situation raises the alarms in every office. However, most of these alarms end up being false and there is no real information to tell, and so, the treatment given to them is only punctual, exploiting their symbolic potential to reinforce some other type of thesis beyond the situation of Ceuta and Melilla. Therefore, during the period analyzed we have located some important examples of how Spanish newspapers use the incursion of news about these territories to display their ideas. In the complete version of this report, we find many examples of this intermittent presence on the Spanish press, which means a clear editorial positioning, coinciding mainly with the treatment expressed in earlier epigraphs.

The Western Sahara Issue

The other great friction point between Spain and Morocco, in geopolitical terms, is Western Sahara. This problem originated in 1976, when Spain withdrew from their former colony and this fell into Morocco's hands and, to a lesser extent, Mauritania's, thus being shattered the decolonization process which according to the UNO is still unresolved. This topic causes so much attention due to Spain's responsibility in the conflict's resolution process and the Spanish public opinion's sensibility on this issue. In the course of 2008, the Sahara issue is the one filling most of the space in the Spanish press regarding Morocco. Generally speaking, as we have already said, the main Spanish newspapers support the Saharan struggle and their view is contrary to Morocco, as well as critical of the policy carried out by Rodríguez Zapatero's Government, who is sometimes accused of 'betraying' the Saharan people. First of all, it needs to be pointed out the significant number of letters to the editor that mainly show their sympathy towards the Saharan 'struggle' and criticize both the Moroccan position and the Spanish Executive's one. In fact, this is common to every newspaper, regardless of their editorial line. Most of the letters show not only solidarity with the Saharan society's situation, but also a demand to the Spanish Government, passing on the idea that Spain must assume their responsibility towards the former colony that was 'abandoned'. Beyond the letters to the editor, the space dedicated to this matter is not so great as could be expected, being El País the newspaper that fills more pages with information about the topic, standing halfway between the criticism to Madrid and Rabat. The leading articles in other media are minimal, and something similar happens with opinion pieces.

From an informative point of view, the main Spanish newspapers echo both the initiatives to put an end to the situation and the former Spanish colony's situation. Thus, for example, nearly all Spanish newspapers show in December a report made by Human Rights Watch denouncing Moroccan tortures in Sahara. ABC publishes the information full-page in the international section ('Report accuses Morocco of violating human rights in Western Sahara' ('Un informe acusa a Marruecos de violar los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental')) and stresses 'the aggressions, tortures and arbitrary detentions', although it is also pointed out that 'the report highlights some steps forward, such as the end of forced disappearances that happened in the time of King Hassan II'. The information also covers, even if a bit into the background, that 'Human Rights Watch criticizes the Polisario Front's practice of preventing freedom of movement in their controlled zone' and that 'some residual slavery practices against the black population have been reported in Tindouf'. The rest of newspapers have also echoed this report, focusing on Morocco. El Periódico de Catalunya, for instance, publishes a small article titled 'Morocco in the eye of the storm for repression in Sahara' ('Marruecos en el ojo del huracán por la represión en el Sáhara'), while El País starts the international section of that day with the full-page article 'International report accuses Morocco of tortures in Sahara' ('Un informe internacional acusa a Marruecos de torturas en el Sáhara'). El Mundo's coverage follows a similar line writing 'Morocco violates human rights in Western Sahara' ('Marruecos viola los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental'), also focusing the information on denounces regarding Morocco and, to a lesser extent, human rights violations in Saharan territory.

In general, Catalan newspapers include less information regarding the conflict in Sahara. However, both deal with this topic in connection with the visit that the president of the Generalitat de Catalunya paid to Morocco in April. El Periódico de Catalunya writes 'Morocco wants Catalonia's support in Sahara' ('Marruecos quiere el apoyo de Catalunya en el Sáhara'), informing that 'the Alaouite kingdom seeks the very symbolic Catalan Government's support on their controversial autonomy plan for Sahara, while the Generalitat searches for business opportunities for Catalan companies in the Maghribian country'. La Vanguardia, for its part, finds in the Catalan Estatut the reason behind Moroccan interest ('Marruecos toma el Estatut como referente para el futuro del Sáhara') and devotes a leading article to the Catalan authorities' visit to the North African country, but not mentioning the Sahara issue even once. So, the leading article, 'Montilla in Morocco' ('Montilla en Marruecos'), focuses on Catalonia's economic and business interests, although also mentioning 'the 200,000 Moroccans living among us, the largest immigrant community, which leads us to a social and cultural relation that grows closer and closer'.

Civil Rights in Morocco

Denounces against lack of freedom of speech, the homosexual population's situation or the police repression and tortures committed in the North African country fill a important space in the media regarding Morocco. In fact, some newspapers denounce the difficulties encountered even by Spanish correspondents when doing their jobs in said country, the most paradigmatic case being Ali Lmrabet, El Mundo's contributor. However, the denounces against lack of freedom of speech affect not only Spanish journalists that collect information about Morocco. There are many reports about the limits set to this freedom in the North African country, from journalists and civilians' imprisonment to television channels and programs' close-down. El País, for example, publishes 'Moroccan society demonstrations achieve 'blogger's release from prison' ('La movilización de la sociedad marroquí logra la excarcelación de un 'bloguero'', September 17th), explaining the case of a Moroccan citizen imprisoned after 'criticizing Mohammed VI for granting donations to those who praised him'. On September 10th, we find in La Razón some similar information ('Condenan a un periodista por críticas a Mohamed VI'), talking about the same case but describing the 'blogger' as a 'young correspondent working for the electronic newspaper 'Hespress.com''. Again, the PRISA Group's newspaper (El País) is the one dedicating the largest space to information regarding freedom of speech in Morocco. Finally, the other big issue related to civilian rights is the homosexual community's situation in Morocco. Thus, there is an intermittent flow of news regarding this topic that from time to time appear on the pages from the six analyzed newspapers.

The Immigration Issue

Morocco is the country where the largest immigrant community in Spain comes from. Thus, it does not seem strange that this would be one of the points marking the Spanish-Moroccan diplomatic relations. However, from the media point of view, seldom is the immigration phenomenon covered regarding their nationality, but as a general problem. If we analyze this in the context of the immigrants groups' integration, the media do often talk about this issue, but focusing on a larger group: the Muslim community.

In any case, when the immigration problem arises in the coverage regarding Morocco, this one is usually mentioned as the starting point for one part of the illegal immigration entering Spain, which usually comes from Subsaharan Africa.

Morocco's cooperation degree on their border's control and, therefore, on the immigrants' outflow towards Spain, explains why this topic appears in the media. La Razón publishes an article, 'Melilla relives the tragedy at the border' ('Melilla revive el drama de la valla'), where it is stressed that 'hundreds of Subsaharians wait behind the border for their opportunity to slip into Spain', questioning Morocco's part in this. The text, which talks about an 'immigration charge', points out that 'Subsaharians pay 50 cents to Moroccans for each swimming lesson'. One day after, the same newspaper states that 'migratory flows have been at the service of the King of Morocco's foreign policy and, as if it were a lock, the traffic towards Spain has been permitted according to the state of the relations between countries'. Otherwise, the immigration issue regarding Morocco is also covered by media in connection with criminal activities.

We could not conclude this chapter without bringing up a positive event, that is, the Institut Ramon Llull prize for Catalan letters awarded to the Catalan writer and Moroccan by birth, Najat El Hachmi. Although there are references in other media, the information is basically covered in detail by the two main Catalan newspapers, insisting at all times on the writer's Moroccan origin and conceding this fact an excessive importance, as if her origin were more important than her literary quality. El Periódico de Catalunya talks about it in the frontpage and La Vanguardia devotes a five-column article to this topic in the cultural section, 'A Llull prize with Moroccan accent' ('Un Llull con acento marroquí'). In both cases it is constantly insisted on the author's Moroccan origin as well as her condition of writer between two worlds with many more things in common than the ones usually put forward. As the prize-winner clarifies, 'a sexist and despotic patriarchal figure can be found both in Morocco and here'.

This short review of the main topics is completed, in the full version of this report, with some references to other issues which also justify Morocco's presence in the media. Again, this information is negatively marked, for they are usually linked to drug trafficking or terrorism. Always aside remain the economical bonds through trade agreements or specific references to cultural events that work as gateway between two societies further apart than the maps show.

Conclusions

Morocco's presence in the Spanish press does not correspond with the intensity of the Spanish-Moroccan economic, political and social relations. When it appears, if it does, its presence is basically reduced to a series of limited topics that contribute to transmit a specific image of the North African country. Thus, Morocco usually appears in the main Spanish newspapers in connection with the claims of sovereignty over Ceuta and Melilla, the Western Sahara conflict, the lack of civilian freedoms, immigration, drug trafficking or terrorism. That is, conflicts and controversy prevail, contributing in linking Morocco to negative qualities. Furthermore, the space dedicated to Morocco in the Spanish press is too much determined by the political agenda.

There are huge differences between the media depending on their editorial line but, generally speaking, we can say that they transmit a negative image of Morocco, branding it a country lacking in democracy and freedom of speech, where homosexuals are punished and torture is practised, and a place where human rights are systematically violated, especially regarding the Sahara conflict. This image is transmitted by most of the main newspapers, although the most critical of Morocco are those following a more conservative line (El Mundo, ABC and La Razón). Even if they all agree on saying that Morocco and Spain are living a 'honeymoon' on their relations, these newspapers show also a critical view of the Spanish policy in connection with the North African country, accusing it of 'betraying the Saharan people' or showing 'weakness' in front of Moroccan authorities.

The Spanish media refer to Morocco as the 'Maghribian country' or the 'Alaouite reign', passing this on to every aspect related to this country. Therefore, we speak of the 'Alaouite regime', 'Alaouite diplomacy' or even a 'Alaouite journalist'. It would be somehow as if we constantly used the term 'Bourbon' every time we mentioned something relating to Spain. Furthermore, the use of the term 'regime' is not just a coincidence. It is a way to transmit the image of a dictatorial or not very democratic political system. We should also point out the incorrect use of the term Maghribian as a synonym for Moroccan, for the Maghreb is a region consisting of five countries plus Western Sahara.

Although the main Spanish newspapers rely on regular correspondents or contributors in Morocco, they use a very limited number of Moroccan sources to write their information. In fact, there is an overwhelming reference to information collected through the news agency MAP or from statements and interviews published or broadcasted by Moroccan mass media. It seems that, for one reason or another, Spanish journalists have limited access to Moroccan relevant sources. We frequently find some institutions or people as recurrent sources for much of the information.

To sum up, the main general Spanish newspapers transmit a rather biased image of Morocco, conditioned both by the limited space dedicated to this country and by the limited number of topics, usually linked to conflicts. We can talk about two main characteristics: ignorance and distrust, which somehow summarize the media coverage tone regarding Morocco. However, it is absolutely appropriate and valuable to similarly investigate Spain's image in the Moroccan press. If stereotypes, a reduced number of topics and a negative view also prevail in them, we can point out, without a doubt, the need for a bilateral policy to rediscover each other.

■ 7. How the News Media Link Terrorism and Islam.

In this section of our report, we will focus on the way that newspapers deal with the terrorist acts of groups connected to Al Qaeda, or groups that use Islam to justify their violence. It is worth mentioning that the differences between the several newspapers object of the study are not so evident regarding the wrongly called 'Islamic violence' as they are in other areas. The variations that can be observed when dealing with religion or customs are not so obvious in these cases. Hence the existence of a set of common trends that we will explain next.

In the first place, we consider highly relevant the massive use of adjectives such as 'Islamic' or 'Islamist' to label the terrorist acts of groups of Muslim origin. This harmful labelling and generalization has been criticized by experts and Islamic communities, who recommend the use of more precise terms.

We will also discuss the different ways in which these attacks are presented on the Spanish press, depending on whether the victims are Western people or citizens of a Muslim-majority country. In addition, we point out the massive use of shocking and extremely violent pictures illustrating the information about terrorism, as well as the way these pictures are used to link religion and violence. This section will also deal with the lack of a deeper analysis of the context of these violent acts in the media, and the lack of expert opinions that would explain their motivation.

Context

When we analyze the news about the Muslim World that appears in Western press, specifically in the Spanish one, it is clear that much of it is related to terrorism. Newspapers constantly discuss the threat that groups like Al Qaeda pose to Western countries, their acts of violence, the arrest of alleged Muslim terrorists, or the analysis of the wrongly called Islamic or Islamist terrorism.

The identification between Islam and terrorism is evident on the main media, as we can see by analyzing a series of features frequent on the press that transmit to the public opinion the idea that the Muslim religion supports or allows violence on the basis of the Qur'an. This idea is completely false. In fact, a great number of Muslim communities try constantly to deny the relation between the Qur'an and violence (Tamayo, 2009).

The identification between religion and terrorist violence is created through the mistaken use —sometimes clearly intentional— of terms such as 'Islamic/Islamist/Arab/Muslim terrorism', the identification of Al Qaeda with the Muslim World, the lack of a deeper analysis of the context when informing about terrorism, the use of extremely crude and shocking pictures in news related to violent acts, the stigmatizing of Muslims, the lack of the viewpoint of Islamic movements —the vast majority disagree with terrorist attacks— or the prevalence of information about attacks in Western countries over those occurred elsewhere.

A quick analysis of the media and the entertainment industry will show that the Islam is hardly mentioned apart from terms such as 'terrorism, extremism, radicalism, etc' (Abdullah, 2003). This is also the case of the Spanish press and the newspapers analyzed

in this report. The use of the terms 'Islamic terrorism' or 'Islamist' referring to the terrorist attacks committed by Al Qaeda or similar groups, is a constant trend in the most widely read newspapers in Spain. This trend emphasizes even more the identification between violence and religion, and is common in newspapers of either political inclination.

The massive use of these terms is so common that not even the recommendations made by representative collectives of the Muslim World in Spain or by prestigious scholars of Islamic religion have taken any effect (Kepel, 2001). Lola Bañón, a journalist and writer specialized in the Near East, is clear about it: 'It would be right to say 'Al Qaeda's terrorism' instead of 'Islamic terrorism', in the same way that we say 'ETA's terrorism' and not 'Basque terrorism'' (Kalam Agency, 2008). Some Muslim associations are also clear about this topic and insist that this mistaken terminology (intentional or not) must be removed from the media (CIE, 2005).

The use of the term 'Islamic' or 'Islamist' in relation to terrorism

When the news media mention terrorist attacks claimed by Muslim groups that justify them with religion, the terms 'Islamic' or 'Islamist' appear so closely related to terrorism that few realize that an alternative is possible. Their presence is constant in all the newspapers analyzed in this research, regardless of their political inclination, although some differences can be observed.

In order to establish the frequency of this mistaken (intentional or not) use of adjectives, it will be useful to analyze the newspapers' headings when the arrest of terrorists, or Al Qaeda's attacks, are discussed. The information about the arrest of alleged terrorists in Barcelona at the beginning of 2008 can be used in order to perform a comparative analysis. For instance, we have the newspaper ABC, whose heading for all the news about arrests of this kind is always 'Islamist Terrorism in Spain' ('El terrorismo islamista en España') ('A Barcelona Based Jihadist Group Was Planning Attacks and Looking for Explosives' / 'Un grupo yihadista planeaba atentados desde Barcelona y buscaba explosivo', ABC, January 20th). The case of El Periódico de Catalunya is similar. This newspaper uses the heading 'The Islamist Threat' ('La amenaza islamista') on the day of the arrest ('Fear of Suspicion' / 'Temor a los recelos', January 20th), but then, just a couple of days later, it chooses 'The Jihadist Threat' ('La amenaza yihadista') as a heading for the same information ('Interpol busca en Alemania y Francia a tres suicidas tras la redada de BCN', January 25th, and 'La redada pone a la secta tabligh en el punto de mira de la policía', January 26th).

While other newspapers use no heading for the news about the arrests in Barcelona, La Vanguardia goes for a concrete and appropriate headline: 'The Threat of the Other Terrorism' ('La amenaza del otro terrorismo') ('Golpe al terror islamista en Barcelona' y 'Hallados metralla y componentes de explosivos en uno de los pisos', La Vanguardia, January 20th). This headline merely links arrests with violence, without using religious, ethnic or territorial adjectives, and makes indirect mention of the two kinds of terrorism that currently threaten Spain: Al Qaeda and similar groups, on the one hand, and ETA, on the other hand; the customary, constant ETA terrorism versus the 'other one', newer and less familiar. However, it is surprising to find out that this very same newspaper won't hesitate later to link violence and Islam in its headlines. As an example, we have the aforementioned 'Blow Against Islamist Terror' ('Golpe al terror islamista en Barcelona', January 20th).

The identification between Islamism and terrorism is constant in all the newspapers, and in some of them it is even more radical. Such is the case of La Razón, who does not hesitate in linking violence and Islamism, and in completely identifying Islamists with terrorists ('Los islamistas iban a atacar el transporte público en Barcelona', January 24th). The text repeats the use of these adjectives and avoids terms such as 'terrorists'. Oddly enough, those terms are used when referring to direct quoting from a court order dealing with the plans to commit 'several suicide terrorist attacks' or 'attacks of a jihadist nature'. Besides, the arrested group is described as a group linked to 'an extremist branch of Islam'. Would it be possible to find information about the arrest of 'nationalists' or 'Basquists' that were part of 'an extremist branch of Basque nationalism'?

Picture 11. La Razón, January 24th, 2008



(‘Islamists Planned on Attacking Public Transportation in Barcelona’)

It is also worth mentioning how evident the identification between religion and violence is in this news. In it we can see the picture of a Muslim man in a mosque together with the picture of components used in the making of explosives. The headline ‘Islam lessons at the Mosque in Hospital Street’ makes this identification clear.

El Periódico de Catalunya deals with these arrests in a similar way, but not exactly the same. It is true that the headings use the words ‘jihadist’ or ‘Islamist’ to talk about the ‘threat’ on the city of Barcelona. However, the headlines and texts of some of the news show that it is possible to elaborate the information without any mention of Islam or Muslim religion. One of the already mentioned (‘The Interpol searches for three suicide Bombers in Germany and France after Raid in Barcelona’ / ‘Interpol busca en Alemania y Francia a tres suicidas tras la redada de BCN’, January 25th), is a good example of this, despite some of its headings.

This text constantly mentions the arrests of ‘alleged extremists’, ‘radicals’, ‘a terrorist cell’, ‘a terrorist group’, ‘kamikazes’ or ‘suicide bombers’ and avoids terms such as ‘Islamic or Islamist terrorism’, that are so common in other occasions. This proves that it is possible o elaborate the information without constantly linking Islam and terrorism, although it is also true that, in most occasions, the temptation to do so is too big.

There are clear if minimal examples showing that it is possible to present the information in a concise, concrete and correct way without linking violence to any nationality or religion. We can find one of the clearest examples in La Vanguardia (‘Competir en territorio de Al Qaeda’, January 20th). In this analysis about the cancellation of Dakar Rally we find a mention of the terrorist groups threatening the area where the race usually takes place, as well as a clear differentiation between the Islamic World and the threat posed by said terrorist groups. There is no single mention of Islam, but the article deals with the attacks committed by the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), currently the Al-Qaeda Organization in the Islamic Maghreb. It is clearly stated that the danger comes from Al Qaeda and related groups that join the global terrorism, and that there is no relation between these groups and Islam or Islamic movements.

As we have already said, the identification between Islam and terrorism is as common in conservative newspapers as it is in the liberal ones. El País uses in several occasions the word ‘Islamists’ in its headlines when talking about terrorist groups that in most cases have their own names. We offer some examples. The first one reads ‘Algerian Islamists Funded through Kidnapping’ (‘Los islamistas argelinos se financian con secuestros’, May 19th) and accuses the Islamist movement of a serious crime. The text, however, gradually explains who is really being charged: ‘the Salafists that became a branch of Al Qaeda, ...’ We find that the same is true for the newspaper ABC, with headlines such as ‘The Government Expels a Hundred Accused Islamists as Illegal Alien’, ‘Most Radical Islamism Expands from Spain to South America’ and ‘A Barcelona Based Jihadist Group Was Planning Attacks and Looking for Explosives’ (‘El Gobierno expulsa a un centenar de islamistas procesados y en situación ilegal’ March 16th o ‘El islamismo más radical se expande hacia Suramérica desde España’ April 28th, ‘Un grupo yihadista planeaba atentados desde Barcelona y buscaba explosivo’ January 20th).

About this last article, and despite the fact that the word jihad is used by most terrorist groups with a Muslim origin to justify their attacks, it should not be accepted as such, at least not without some kind of explanation. Juan José Tamayo (2009) explains that 'the term Jihad has nothing to do with violence; it means struggle in the way of God'. This is how, despite the trend of interpreting this term as a holy war of Muslims against the infidels, the principal trend (also followed by scholars) is to separate the jihad from any warlike connotation, acknowledging the meaning of struggle to surmount the difficulties and justifying violence in Islam just as self-defence.

Nevertheless, most media still link jihad with violent or terrorist actions, have them or not some kind of moral justification. The efforts of many Islamic movements to separate this word from the idea of violence have been unsuccessful. The words jihad and violence seem to be synonyms not only for the press, but also in the political arena. It is also worth mentioning a phenomenon that occurs in a great number of news about international terrorism. While the arrests, threats, or terrorist attacks committed in a Western country are usually attributed to 'Islamism' or 'Islamists', the same events in other areas, particularly those where violence is already a common thing, are always attributed to 'terrorists' or 'suicide bombers'.

There is a variety of examples of this, especially in the news about Iraq, although it seems that there are no adjectives for the terrorism when its targets are Muslim citizens. Many media (as we said before) forget that the victims of Al Qaeda and similar groups are usually believers of the Islamic religion. Gustavo de Aristegui, a politician and expert in the Muslim World, explains it: 'Radical Islamism in general, and jihadist terrorism in particular, hates the Muslim that is not radical, that is not Islamist, and even the Islamist that does not follow literally their brutal postulates, more than it hates the West, the USA or Israel' (de Aristegui, 2008).

We would like to offer some examples of how the Islamists who commit an attack or are arrested in Europe or the The West are described as terrorists when the same things happen in Iraq, Pakistan or India. La Vanguardia says: 'Iraq Becomes a Haven for Foreign Suicide Terrorists' (March 26th); La Razón: 'Al Qaeda Stops Reconstruction in Iraq', 'Fifty Civilians Killed by Suicide Terrorism in Diyala' (April 18th); El País: 'Final Assault on Terrorist Resistance', 'Terrorist Massacre in India' (November 29th); or El Mundo: 'Terrorist Cell that Funded Al Qaeda and Sent 'Mujahideen' to Iraq, Dismantled' (June 11th), 'Terrorists' Aim was to Blow Up the Taj Mahal Hotel and Kill 5,000' (November 30th); and 'At the Terrorists' Lair' (November 3rd).

In these headlines, we do not see the terms 'Islamist' or 'Islamic' referring to the terrorists, but they rather talk about suicide bombers or kamikazes, in any case. Depending on whether the violence happens in a Western country or not, the actions will be given one or other name, thus highlighting the clash of civilizations and cultures defended by some and loathed by many others.

Lack of Contextualization and Expert Voices

About the information referring Muslim-origin terrorism, in all the newspapers analyzed in this report it is remarkable the lack of an analysis of the context surrounding the atmosphere of violence, and the absence of expert and/or Muslim voices that would allow a better understanding of the situation. The aforementioned information about the arrest of a terrorist group in Barcelona on January is a good example of this trend that can be more or less strong depending on the newspaper. Both Catalanian newspapers, obviously because of their geographical proximity, are the most concerned about giving voice to Islamic authorities and analyzing the socioeconomic context of the alleged terrorists.

El Periódico de Catalunya tries to avoid generalization and to analyze the situation of the Pakistani community in Barcelona –the people arrested came from this country. This is one of the biggest immigrant communities in the city. The article shows their opinions and their struggle to remain apart from the stigma of their fellow countrymen after their arrest: 'we hate terrorism and have a deep respect for the country that welcomed us' ('Temor a los recelos', January 20th). A visit to El Raval, the district where most Pakistanis in Barcelona live, help us understand their indignation and fear that the police would go too far in their arrests, but also to realize something that most of times is omitted: the number of arrested people is always a minority. The article about how one of the arrested people became a fanatic in Pakistan ('Los amigos de un terrorista del Raval reviven su fanatización', El Periódico, February 12th) is also a good example of the efforts for analyzing their social context and the great distance between the different branches of Muslim religion.

La Vanguardia also analyzes the situation of the Asian community, although probably not so deeply ('La mayoría de los detenidos son tabligh', January 20th). Both Catalan newspapers try to explain in their articles the principles of the tabligh movement, that claims to be non-violent, but that finds itself in the midst of the controversy.

El Periódico gives also some space to those expert and/or Muslim voices present in the Spanish state, especially in Catalonia. For instance, this newspaper interviews Mohamed Iqbal, General Secretary of the Centro Cultural Islámico Camino de la Paz (Islamic Cultural Centre Camino de la Paz) ('Los familiares creen que todo esto se debe a una venganza', January 26th). That these voices find their place in the press (they are often representatives of immigrant or religious communities) is crucial to make integration possible, and to avoid the stigmatizing of the Muslim religion, that has an ever greater presence in the Spanish society.

Experts recommend including more opinions of this kind more frequently in the press, but most of times they are not listened to. When they are, it is usually an opinion article, and even in those there is a predominance of Western experts and viewpoint. The newspapers ABC and La Razón are good examples. In them, the lack of plurality when analyzing the terrorist violence, with no intention of justifying it in the least, is evident. Other newspapers allow a deeper analysis. In the context of the arrests in Barcelona, La Vanguardia decides to interview Scott Atran, director of scientific research on suicide terrorism in the CNRS, in Paris ('El terrorista se inmoló para ser admirado por su célula', January 30th). 'A good police force is essential, but the best anti-terrorist measure would be greater geopolitical justice' said Dr. Atran, offering a view of the terrorist problem rarely seen in the media.

El Mundo's interview with the Muslim and Egyptian writer Alaa Al Aswany ('El terrorismo surge de dictaduras como la egipcia; si los islamistas pudieran gobernar, se moderarían', April 19th) offers again an alternative view, different from the traditional discourse, and performs a wider socio-political analysis of the causes of violence, its consequences and possible solutions. Al Aswany stresses the 'demand for democratic reforms' in countries such as Egypt, but he criticizes these regimes as well as 'their main support, the USA'. This trend of analyzing the causes of extremist violence has an example in other articles from El Mundo, such as those written by Suketu Mehta or Ahmed Rashid, experts in Muslim-majority countries.

ABC and La Razón show a different attitude. They do not normally display alternative views or a variety of proposals about how to attack the problem of terrorism at its roots, but rather offer the opinion of experts who stress the threat that Al Qaeda's network poses to Spain. Although both options are valid, the media seem to choose alarmism over a deeper analysis and over the search for alternative solutions.

An interview published by ABC is a good example of this trend ('La alianza de Al Qaida con los salafistas afecta particularmente a España', March 11th). The analysis offered by Yahia El Hassan, anti-terrorism prosecutor of Morocco, is very interesting, but the interview is generally focused on the threat that groups connected to Al Qaeda pose to Spain, and there is not a single mention of alternative solutions for the violence, its causes, the socio-political context in which it is born or the political situation in his country. Obviously, the position of El Hassan restricts his answers and, despite being very interesting, they lack a deeper analysis of what he considers to be a basic problem for Spain.

There is an even clearer example. La Razón deals extensively with a video revealed during the July 7th 2005 London bombings trial ('Lo más importante es que te encomiende a Alá y que él cuide de ti', April 26th), probably with the intention of shocking and provoking fear. This four-column article fully covers the recorded farewell message of one of the suicide bombers, highlighting the most shocking sentences and stressing his fanaticism. In the summary of that very same edition we find four shots from the video showing one of the suicide bombers talking to his baby, and his statement is included as headline: 'I love you with all my heart. I do what I do for the sake of the Islam'. This thorough coverage of a terrorist and his controversial statements contrasts with the aforementioned lack of alternative and more analytic views on terrorism and its origin.

The Controversial Use of Pictures

If we have a look at any of the newspapers analyzed in this report, we realize that there is hardly any information about Muslim World in which the pictures are not linked in any way to violence. These pictures that show the remains after a terrorist attack, cars torn apart by bombs, terrorists or armed soldiers, do nothing to separate Islam from violence in the social imaginary that is under the ever growing influence of the mass media, more concerned about entertaining than about providing analysis and reflection.

Not even the written media, who claim to be, for their thoroughness and depth, an alternative to constant generalization, can resist the temptation of choosing the shock over the information. It is interesting to find out that newspapers usually avoid excessively and unnecessarily shocking pictures when the subject is a terrorist attack in Spain. It is not the case, however, when the pictures illustrate massacres in Iraq or other non-Western regions.

We have found a number of examples during our research. One of them is an especially shocking picture published in *El Mundo* ('Dos atentados causan 73 muertos en la peor matanza de los últimos meses en Bagdad', February 2nd). In it, a woman's severed head is clearly visible. The woman had Down syndrome and was used as a suicide bomber in a market of Bagdad. Beside it, some human remains and onlookers' feet, as well as an invitation to 'see the attack's pictures' on the newspaper's website.

Picture 12. *El Mundo*, January 2nd, 2008



('73 Killed in Two Terrorist Attacks: the Worse Slaughter in Bagdad in the Last Months')

This picture is probably one of the most shocking, but there are many others that are not much better (see *El Mundo* pictures included in the digital version of this report): bombs exploding, buildings on fire, wrecked cars, human remains, executions by shooting, blood, etc. This kind of pictures could not been seen, for instance, after the 7 July 2005 London bombings, due to the zeal of the British Government in preventing the publication of those photographs that were too cruel. The case of 2004 Madrid train bombings is similar. It is true that some shocking pictures were published, but they never were as harsh as the ones we can daily find illustrating information about the Near East.

Pictures are used to link Islam and violence, but also to link the practice of religion with terrorism. As we said at the beginning, it is frequent that, in the case of not being available the pictures of the arrested people, those of people praying in a mosque are used to illustrate an article about a police operation against a terrorist group, or about the threat that these groups pose to the country.

There is a variety of examples that are common to almost every newspaper, but it does not mean they cannot be avoided. *La Razón*'s article ('Los islamistas iban a atacar el transporte público de Barcelona', January 24th) is illustrated with a picture of a mosque's entrance and a man, and the same thing happens in several *ABC*'s articles, such as the one about the arrests in Barcelona, illustrated with a picture of the mosque in Hospital street.

The fact that the mosque was searched by the police should not necessarily mean the use of photographs of people praying. *La Vanguardia*, on the contrary, illustrated the news with a panoramic view from Google Earth and pictures of the fronts of the buildings that had been searched. This seems to be more appropriate, especially when the target of the aborted attack, as the articles say, was a mosque 'attended by many Pakistanis'. This is how the combination of the headlines and pictures used by some newspaper can lead to a conclusion contrary to the whole of the information provided in the text.

The stigmatizing of the Muslims is also common in drawings and cartoons. We have, for instance, the use of the star and crescent in a drawing accompanying a long article of *El País* about the identity of a terrorist group planning to commit an attack in Barcelona.

Picture 13. El País, September 18th, 2008



(‘Who Wanted to Commit an Attack in Barcelona?’)

The picture shows a sharp-nosed man with a moustache, a turban, a Palestinian scarf, carrying a rifle and wearing a uniform with the star and crescent on it. A typical Muslim, some might think; others might see him as an Islamic terrorist.

Conclusions

After analyzing thousands of articles about terrorism motivated by Islamic religious reasons, we reached some conclusions. Regarding the way that the analyzed newspapers talk about this topic, as we already said at the beginning, there are differences in the way they deal with the news about the Muslim World, but these differences are not so evident when dealing with news about the violence. There are some characteristics common to all the newspapers, but there are also small differences depending on the newspaper political stance.

We would like to begin highlighting the massive (and, in most of cases, mistaken) use of the terms Islamic and/or Islamist referring to Al Qaeda and related groups. Despite the recommendations of many experts in the Muslim World, specialized journalists and even of Islamic communities in Europe and Spain, the main Spanish newspapers keep using the adjectives Islamic or Islamist for a terrorism that should only be linked with the organizations that are responsible for it. The term Islamic refers just to the Islam, and the term Islamist defines a religious movement. Neither of them should be used to identify these actions, just as ETA terrorism is not defined as ‘nationalist’, ‘Basque’ or ‘Basquist’, and IRA’s is not attributed to ‘Catholic radicals’ or ‘nationalists.’

The reaction of the Spanish society regarding the 2004 Madrid train bombings or the constant arrests of terrorist groups has been exemplary. However, Muslim communities in Spain and a number of experts warn that the risk of identification between Islam and terrorism in the social imaginary is still present. The use of the word Islamic/Islamist together with the word terrorism does nothing to promote the integration of the Muslim community in Spain, already labelled as politically extremist. Not many media seem to realize that the victims of Al Qaeda and related groups are mainly Muslims and citizens of Islamic-majority countries. The fact that headlines are normally short and simplified, the will of shocking the reader and the generalization of terms are in part the cause of this massive mistaken language, especially when the attacks happen in Western countries and the victims are not Muslim.

It is interesting to realize how Al Qaeda members are described as ‘terrorists’, ‘suicide bombers’ or ‘kamikazes’ when they commit their attacks in Iraq, Afghanistan or other Muslim countries, but are called ‘Islamists’, ‘Islamic terrorists’ or ‘fundamentalists’ if their targets are Western. The vast majority of Muslims reject this terrorist violence, but their opinion has little relevance in the Spanish press.

In this chapter, we will highlight the absence of the point of view of the Muslim communities in Spain in many of the articles, as well as the lack of a deeper analysis of their context. The presence of experts’ analysis on terrorism, the motivations behind it, its consequences and even the different alternatives, beside the police, to defeat it, is also minimal. Interviews or articles with a different or deeper viewpoint are not common. In most occasions, the information is presented from an ethnocentric Western point of view.

The search for the impact and the shock often overcome any possible deeper analysis. We would also like to insist on the use of violent, shocking pictures accompanying news about the acts of violence of terrorist groups in Muslim-majority countries. It is also

worth mentioning the fact that, while European and Spanish newspapers try to avoid excessively shocking pictures of any attack committed on the West (for instance, 7 July 2005 London bombings or 2004 Madrid train bombings), they have no qualms about using extremely shocking photographs to illustrate the attacks in Iraq, Afghanistan, or any other Muslim country.

It is also easy to find pictures of mosques or of praying Muslims illustrating news that has nothing to do with praying or religious centres. The use of these pictures accompanying information about the arrests of terrorist or violent groups does not help preventing the stigmatizing of the Muslim community, especially those immigrants who live in Spain. Cartoons and drawings are also part of this massive trend of identifying Islam and terrorism. This trend, as we prove in this research, could be corrected just by using more precise terms or avoiding a sensationalistic use of photographs that, oftentimes, contribute hardly or nothing at all to the information they are accompanying. This is proved by the positive examples quoted in this chapter.

■ 8. The Representation of the Difference or the Cultural Clash

While analyzing the view of the Islam and the Arab and Muslim World offered by the media, we need to give special attention to the way they deal with cultural differences. When we say cultural differences we mean all the things (customs, traditions, values...) that, because of being alien or not so familiar to the Spanish society, might be the cause of some kind of conflict. We will explain how the press offers a stereotyped view of the Muslim World. The Media constantly link the Muslim World to controversy and conflict, thus creating a negative image of it. The use of certain commonplaces promotes the idea of the Muslim World being a homogeneous entity, as we will next see. Despite their different political stances being clearly visible, all the newspapers make constant mention of the Islam- West dichotomy and their incompatibility, from a 'them'/'us' perspective, following the lead of Samuel P. Huntington's Clash of Civilizations.

Islam versus the West

Not all the Spanish newspapers follow the same editorial line about this topic. Journals such as La Razón, ABC, and not so evidently, El Mundo, are the ones with a strongest tendency towards confrontation. El País, however, offers a greater plurality of points of view, while the Catalanian newspapers La Vanguardia y El Periódico chose information over opinion.

La Razón is fundamentally critical with Islam, in accordance with the Christian values that this journal defends. Its columnist Daniel Pipes, an American political analyst, usually sets the tendency of this paper. The complete report contains many examples. Federico Jiménez Losantos is even harder in this article published by El Mundo ('Apaciguamientos', March 31st). This article is a paradigm of the idea that the Islam is a threat to 'us', Western people.

Picture 14. La Razón, August 17th de 2008



('Islamists Infiltrated in the West')

This same idea of 'appeasing' can be found in ABC. An article reads: 'The self-censorship for fear to the other's reaction is called, in this case, appeasing. In the long run, this attitude has historically brought only suffering'. Daniel Pipes had several articles pu-

published in La Razón throughout the year, insisting on the threat that 'Islamism' poses to Europe and urging the European societies to 'resist Islamization' (April 7th). The American commentator is the journal's spearhead in its attack against Islam, thus avoiding doing it directly from its editorial. Besides, as we warn in our report, its use of photographs of Muslim people in general creates a dangerous association between Islam and violence.

Throughout 2008 we can mention at least two interesting events in relation to the confrontation between Islam and the West: the conversion to Christianity of Magdi Allam, an Italian-Egyptian journalist, and a video, created by a Member of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands that radically attacks the Islam and compares the Qur'an to 'Mein Kampf'.

Magdi Allam's baptism had an impact on the media that was increased by the Pope's harsh criticism towards Muslim religion. In this case, La Razón is clearly against Islam and in favour of Christianity. The headline 'Magdi Allam, the journalist who abandoned Islam and embraced Christianity' ('Magdi Allam, el periodista que abandonó el islam para abrazar el cristianismo', March 24th) clearly indicates which is the 'true' religion through the use of the word 'embrace', besides linking this news with one about the murder of a Catholic convert. El Mundo's coverage of this news is very thorough. It allows the protagonist to publish a harsh article against the Islam, as well as interviewing him.

El País takes the opportunity to analyze the inter-religious dialogue and the relations between Islam and Christianity, focusing on the situation of Christian minorities in some Muslim-majority countries ('El Papa bautiza en el Vaticano a un converso crítico con el Islam'). This journal praises in an editorial this convert's bravery, but criticizes him for going too far in his declaration that 'the roots of evil are inherent in a physiologically violent Islam'. Oddly enough, ABC makes little mention of this event, but when it does it praises Magdi Allam's attitude and, through its articles, criticizes El País because of this journal's attitude about this topic. La Vanguardia criticizes those who see this act as a provocation, while El Periódico attacks the Pope for wanting to be the protagonist and for the possibility of a provocation against the Muslim religion.

The Media has also focused their attention on the video made by Geert Wilders, member of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands, which attacks Islam. El Mundo is the journal who offers the greatest coverage about it, even two months before other media got interested in it, praising the author's bravery and boldness ('Equipara al Corán con Hitler. ¿Es que quiere morir?', January 27th). ABC highlights the film's anti-Islamic nature, justified by linking Muslim religion and violence. El País, however, offers no opinion ('Un diputado holandés cuelga en la Red un filme contra el Corán', March 28th), while La Vanguardia laments that 'some insult a religion and its followers with a liberty that they would not dare using with other faiths'. Finally, El Periódico waits until January to inform about this topic, including the opinions of Geert Wilders.

The Alliance of Civilizations, a Spanish initiative, was also very present in the media. El Mundo and ABC do not hesitate in criticizing harshly, and even mocking, the Government because of it. The latter uses the headline 'among Maoris and boy-scouts' to describe the participants in the first forum and makes fun of it. The cartoons included in the complete report, as well as the one you can see next, reinforce this idea.

Picture 15. ABC, January 23rd, 2008



[On the paper]: 'Alliance of Civilizations'

('My country's civilization does not allow political offices to be held by women since, as we practice the logical and natural stoning of adulteresses, it would be very awkward if, for instance, we had to execute the chairwoman of the Agricultural Resources Committee')

The Image of the Arab and Muslim World on the Spanish Media

La Razón's position regarding the Alliance of Civilizations is similar to that of ABC, and even more critical. The editorial on January 16 clearly shows this opinion by declaring that the initiative suffers from a 'stale rhetoric' with a 'low number of participants' and describing it as a 'summer camp fanfare'. The journal covers the news thoroughly, but always as a way of criticizing and discrediting this attempt of a dialog.

We also want to point out the importance of Iran in the media when the Muslim World is discussed, since this Persian country has become 'enemy' of the West. This trend that already existed in 2008 is even greater in the year 2009 due to the elections and the resulting protests in this country. Iran is made protagonist in the Muslim community and there are attempts to convey a certain image. For instance, a single photograph of a hanging (conducted in 2007, according to El Mundo and in 2005, according to La Vanguardia) illustrates three different events related to Iran and its abuses of Human Rights. Other examples are included in the complete report.

Picture 16. El Mundo, July 28th, 2008



('Ahmadinejad Regime Hangs 29 in a Prison in Teheran')

However, we want to finish this section making one thing clear: this report does not question the liberty of the media to denounce certain practices and abuses of Human Rights that might occur in some Arab or Muslim-majority countries, and even find it necessary. The problem comes when the media transmits the homogenization, the stereotype, the lack of plurality in the information and the idea of the Clash of Civilizations, and the fact that most news about Muslims and about Islamic-majority countries are negative. In this respect, the journal El País is the one who dedicates more space and plurality of opinions to topics related to the Arab and Muslim World, including positive information that is not present in other media.

The 'Islamic Veil'

When the Arab and Muslim World is discussed in the West, and specifically Spanish, media, the use of the hijab, better known in the media as 'Islamic veil' or 'headscarf', is often at the spotlight. We will see that wearing the hijab is frequently understood as a symbol of discrimination and domination over women in the Islam, although some media also mention the freedom of women to decide whether to wear it or not. In general, the use of the 'Islamic veil' is often linked to cases of abuse or oppression of women in the Muslim World. Besides, it is frequent the confusion of the hijab with other garments common in some Muslim countries, such as burqa or niqab, with completely different connotations. This usually sends the message that the use of the 'Islamic scarf' is a chauvinist imposition typical in the Islam.

Although the debate around the 'Islamic veil' appears occasionally in the media, in the year 2008 it was the protagonist of two events: the proposal of the Popular Party, in the middle of the election campaign, to ban the veil from school, and the decision of the Turkish government to allow this garment in Turkish universities.

Regarding the Popular Party's proposal, let us analyze how the main Spanish newspapers dealt with the news on February 8th, a day after being announced. All except the two Catalan journals (La Vanguardia and El Periódico) uses this information to open the front page and the section of information about Spain. El País uses the following headline for a four-column story: 'The Popular

Party Will Restrict the Use of the Veil in its ‘Contract’ for Immigrants’ and adds, in a subheading, the Government’s reaction: ‘The Proposal is Shameful and Unconstitutional’, president Zapatero says. Another subheading explains the Popular Party’s election strategy: ‘Rajoy Tries to Get Voters from Neighbourhoods with a High Number of Immigrants’. El Mundo also uses this story in its front page, although it does not focus only on the veil, but in the whole set of proposals of the Popular Party regarding Muslim women: ‘The Popular Party Will Restrict the Islamic Customs Harmful for ‘Women’s Equality’’. ABC follows the same line in its front page with five-column story and the headline ‘The Popular Party Will Regulate the Use of the Veil in Public to avoid Women’s Discrimination’.

La Razón also uses this story on the front page (‘El PP cambiará la ley de Igualdad para regular el velo en las escuelas’). La Vanguardia, however, makes no mention of it on the front page, or even at the beginning of the Politic section, although it does include a five-column article in its inner pages: ‘The Popular Party will Regulate the Use of the Veil and will Accept no Exceptions at School’. Finally, El Periódico presents the information from a different point of view, focusing on the reaction of the Government and of the immigrant community: ‘Zapatero Apologizes to Immigrants for Popular Party’s ‘Insults’.

The detailed analysis of the different positions of the newspapers that we present in our complete report offers several conclusions. For example, El Mundo is not inflexible about the proposal regarding the veil, and recommends exceptions in Ceuta and Melilla. However, it is in favour of other measures proposed by the Popular Party, such as ‘the need for Muslim women to allow a male doctor to examine them and mandatory schooling for children’. This is clearly shown in an editorial article that stands out for its use of stereotypes, such as the following example: ‘it is contradictory to penalize female genital mutilation and not to force little girls to go to school. Both things originate in the same philosophy ‘.

El País merely informs about the Popular Party’s proposal, as well as about the reaction of the Government and other political groups. It does not offer any explicit opinion, although it tries to explain the use of the veil and the possible mistakes about it. On February 10th, it publishes an extensive double-page article about the debate created by the proposal (‘La polémica en un pañuelo’). The article includes mostly the statements of Muslim women in Spain all of whom, regardless of whether or not they wear the scarf, criticize the Popular Party’s proposal, defend that women are free to decide and deny it to be an imposition.

It is worth mentioning two opinion articles from La Razón published on February 9th at the same page of the Opinion section of this journal. In the first one (‘El velo segregador’), José María Carrascal argues in favour of banning the veil from school, defining it as a ‘wall of shame’. In the other article, José Antonio Vera describes it as a ‘symbol of discrimination for millions of girls’. ABC supports the Popular Party’s initiative. Ignacio Camacho describes the proposal as a ‘great idea’, although he laments, as El Mundo does, that it talks about ‘customs’ instead of ‘values’ (‘Cuestión de valores’, February 9th). ABC also makes clear its view through its cartoons.

Picture 17. ABC, February 9th, 2008



(‘If you want to keep wearing the veil, I’ll let you be Juanito’s second girlfriend so you can train to be a good Muslim woman’)

El Periódico and La Vanguardia, as we have already seen, do not pay much attention to the topic. The latter seems to be more interested in it and even publishes an opinion article ('El bombazo y la fecundidad', February 9th) that discusses the 'Islamic disaster' and defends the proposals made by the Popular Party: 'and if Rajoy learnt it from Merkel and Sarkozy, God bless him (...), we are in one of those moments in history when human landslides form and deform countries'.

Around the same days the Popular Party's proposal was announced, other news regarding the Islamic veil came up and would be heavily discussed throughout 2008: the Turkish parliament approved the possibility of wearing the Islamic scarf in Universities. Most Spanish newspapers focus on the controversy created in Turkey, where part of the population opposes the measure and, although some Spanish media support it, many of them indicate that an 'Islamization of Turkey' might be possible. La Razón is openly against this measure, and it is made clear on February 8. This journal devotes an extensive coverage to the news during several days, including articles that mention an 'Islamic Steamroller'. El País insists on this controversy, although it also criticizes the decision with the argument that Turkey 'attacks one of the principles of the secular state' (February 10th). However, this journal points out the wide support to this measure from the Turkish society.

El País mentions the information days before the measure is approved. It insists on the controversy ('Los laicos turcos se alzan contra el fin de la prohibición del velo', February 2nd) and, like La Razón, keeps describing the Turkish government as 'moderate Islamist', or just 'Islamist'. Once the Parliament's decision has been made, El País informs that 'Turkey Ends the Ban of the Veil in College' ('Turquía acaba con la prohibición del velo en las universidades' February 10th) and shows its opinion through a subtitle: 'The Islamist government attacks one of the principles of the secular state', that somehow questions the measure. In this same issue, however, the newspaper explains that two out of every three Turkish women wear the Islamic scarf and that the population supports the Government. The photograph used to illustrate the article is nevertheless rather confusing: it is true that the picture shows a demonstration in Turkey against this measure, but what we can see is a niqab instead of a hijab, that is what this measure is really about.

Picture 18. El País, February 10th, 2008



('Turkey Ends the Ban of the Veil in College')

While talking about this topic, El Mundo was also ahead of the Parliament's decision. Its headline 'Wear the Veil in College' seems to describe an imposition rather than the end of a ban. As we can see in the full version of the report, this journal, directed by Pedro J. Ramírez highlights the widespread use of the scarf, but insists on giving importance to statements against this measure, that does not agree with the general feeling of the Turkish society.

ABC also offers a great coverage of the case, giving special importance to the criticisms against the Turkish government and the journal's own stance contrary to the measure. On February 8th we can read 'Turkish supporters of a secular state accuse Erdogan of heading towards 'Arabistan''. Only ABC and the Turkish publication quoted might know what this mean, but the intention of the statement is to send the message of the Turkish government being radical. La Vanguardia, however, does not concede much space for the news and give almost no relevance to it. Finally, El Periódico gives this topic a great coverage. A double-page story informs of the decision on February 10th: 'Turkish Parliament Allows Wearing a Veil in College'. It also explains that 'more than 60% of Turkish women usually wear some kind of veil'.

El País is probably the newspaper that offered a greater coverage of this news, through opinion articles and others. As can be seen in the complete report, however, La Vanguardia, El Mundo and ABC include interviews, analysis and articles, thus covering the controversy originated around the veil.

The Situation of Islamic Women

While studying the cultural clash in the Spanish media, it is also interesting to analyze their view on women in Muslim countries and in Arab or Muslim-origin communities living in a Western country. Newspapers devote a lot of space to this, focusing on their discrimination, the polygamy or their strict rules of dressing.

Iran, seen in the media as the great enemy of the West, becomes the perfect target to denounce women's situation. We offer here some examples that are discussed with more detail in the complete report. La Razón publishes an article about the rebellion of women in the face of the election ('La revolución del bistori toma Irán', March 13th). The article discusses the longing of Iranian women for westernization and it criticizes their lack of equality. This journal makes clear its opinion regarding the situation of Iranian women through these pictures published on March 15th:

Pictures 19-20. La Razón, March 15th, 2008



El País also focuses on this aspect, and as early as January 2nd it highlights the 'Iranian colour revolution' and states that 'female clothing has always been a minefield in Iran'. In an article, El Periódico also highlights the clothing as key in this fight ('Los jóvenes iraníes desafían las normas islámicas de vestimenta', March 11th). In it, the journal insists on the idea that those things that tend towards the West are modern and a sign of liberalization. Following the same idea, El País points out that the Iranian state 'intensifies its fight against Western look' ('¿Qué clase de peinado es ese?', June 30th).

The media also mention the lack of civil liberties for Iranian women. Many of the articles from Ángeles Espinosa, El País correspondent in Iran, focus on this topic. As an example, we have an article on March 30 ('Las iraníes desafían a los ayatolás') that sends the message that 'all' Iranian women are critical with the Government, although it also shows the bright side pointing out that women, despite their situation, are the driving force behind social change.

While discussing Iran, all Spanish media focus on women's situation and civil liberties, with no difference between them. El Mundo, for instance, is often critical with Ahmadineyad's government, and supports and informs about 'agreeing opinions'. As an example, we have an interview to Shahla Sherkat ('El Gobierno iraní quiere que la mujer se quede en casa', January 19th). ABC deals also with this topic and on January 15th it publishes an interview to Shirin Ebadi ('En Irán las elecciones no son libres; yo no voy a votar en marzo'), besides an extensive article also in January.

The Spanish media also focus on the situation of women when discussing Saudi Arabia. El País, for instance, denounces through its correspondent in Teheran the lack of liberties of Saudi women ('Pido al príncipe que nos dé permiso para conducir', March 14th)

and, specifically, that Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world where women are forbidden to drive. El Mundo follows the same idea ('Encarcelada en Arabia Saudí por sentarse con hombres en un café', February 8th). Ángeles Espinosa also publishes in El País an article about Iranian and Saudi women ('El 'pecado' de ser mujer y deportista'). Written shortly before the Beijing Olympic Games, the article claims that 'several Muslim countries still make it difficult or forbid women athletes to compete'.

Another widely discussed topic regarding women is forced marriage, especially when girls are underage. In this case, all the journals denounce it without exception, as can be seen in the complete report. El Mundo is the newspaper that dedicates more pages to this topic. Polygamy is also at the spotlight. El Mundo y El País denounce the fact that Spain grants a pension to second and third wives when the marriages were performed in Tunisia or Morocco (February 17th). ABC also focuses on this topic on May 12th. This journal makes an ironic contrast between the indignation of Vice President María Teresa Fernández de la Vega towards polygamy in Niger ('Clash of Civilizations in Niger'), and the fact of her being 'second-in-command of the 'Alliance of Civilizations' Government'.

Picture 21. El Mundo, July 13th, 2008



('Walled-in Women')

There are some articles worth mentioning about the situation of women in the Muslim World. In an interview on January 5th, El Mundo tries to link Islam and sexism ('Las mujeres siguen oprimidas en todo el mundo y por cualquier religión, pero es más visible en el Islam'), although we can find the following statement: 'oppression is more evident in Muslim countries, although it is due to political and economic reasons, not the Islam'. Stereotypes are common in the questions. El Mundo insists on these stereotypes in a brief illustrated article entitled 'covered women' ('Mujeres tapadas', July 13th). In it, the author uses a fashion show in Dubai to make a comparison with the West, using terms such as 'sheik' and 'petrodollar'. He criticizes the show where 'the most fashionable niqabs' could be seen, and declares that he does not know 'who hides behind them, ... but knows who imposes them'.

Civil and Religious Liberties in the Muslim World.

The Spanish media also focus on the suppression of civil and religious liberties in some Muslim-majority countries, especially in Iran. In relation to the situation of homosexuals, it is worth mentioning an article published by El Mundo ('Amar a Alá, amar a otro hombre y no volverse loco', February 12th) based on a documentary about practicing Muslims that are also gay. In it, we can find Mahmud Ahmadineyad's statement: 'there are no homosexuals in Iran'. La Vanguardia uses this very statement to accompany the article about an Iranian young man who seeks asylum in Europe for fear of being condemned to death in his own country. Following this idea, El País gives a great coverage to a young man asking for help to the homosexual community in Iran ('Seyed Mehdi no quiere que le ahorquen', March 10th).

Religious liberty is usually discussed from the point of view of Christian minorities in Muslim-majority countries and of conversions from one religion to the other. It is worth mentioning that Algeria, otherwise rarely mentioned in the Spanish journals, is more relevant while discussing the situation of the Christian minority in this country. El País explains the pressure that this minority suffers from the Government to abandon the country ('Argelia acosa a los cristianos', February 27th) or talks about the conversion of

Muslims to Christianity in the last years. It also includes some analytic opinion articles. On May 28th El Mundo, ABC and El País denounce the repression suffered by Christians in Algeria. These journals comment on the process initiated by an attorney against seven converts to Christianity, although the headline blames the country itself. It is worth mentioning that the expression ‘religious (people)’ is applied to Christians, while the terrorist are ‘Islamists’.

Freedom of Speech is also at the spotlight and the news about its repression are frequent. La Razón discusses the banning in Lebanon of a film critical with some aspects of Islamism (‘Libano prohíbe ‘Persépolis’ para no ofender a los radicales’, March 13th). Some days later, on March 18th, it informs about a proposal made by the Arab League to regulate satellite TV. That very same month, El País informs about the closing of nine magazines specialized in cinema and entertainment for ‘fear of the example of Western ‘corrupt stars’’ (‘Irán prohíbe el cotilleo’, March 25th). This country is often at the spotlight because of its executed death sentences. After one of this articles (‘Ojo por ojo en Irán’, December 7th), the Iranian ambassador in Spain complained about the ‘the use of inappropriate adjectives to describe the Republic’ and asked the ‘wish of the people’ to be respected.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the news about the lack of freedom of speech in Saudi Arabia. El País discusses the proliferation of fatwas and tries to link them to brutality and extravagance, two common stereotypes (‘Las 1.001 fetuas’, April 20th).

Muslim Communities in Spain and Europe

This research also gives great importance to the representation of Muslim communities in Spain and Europe and their integration in the European societies. The general trend is to point out situations and customs in conflict with European ones, despite the fact that normal coexistence and avoiding stigmatization are at stake.

It is also worth mentioning the controversy created in the UK around February 8 by the proposal of the Archbishop of Canterbury of incorporating some aspects of the Islamic law into the British legal system. All the journals inform about the news and La Razón do not hesitate on using a tendentious headline: ‘Islamic Law in the UK is Unavoidable’ (‘La práctica de la ley islámica en Reino Unido es inevitable’). The article does not explain that the proposal is only about some specific issues.

El País, with ‘Head of Anglican Church Proposes Islamic Law in the UK’ (‘El jefe de la Iglesia anglicana propone aplicar la ley islámica en Reino Unido’), El Mundo, with ‘The Archbishop of Canterbury thinks that the ‘Shariah’ is ‘Unavoidable’’ (‘El arzobispo de Canterbury ve ‘inevitable’ el uso de la ‘sharia’”), El Periódico with ‘The Anglican Archbishop thinks that the ‘Shariah’ in the UK is Unavoidable’ (‘El primado anglicano ve inevitable la ‘sharia’ en el Reino Unido’) y La Vanguardia with, ‘The Archbishop of Canterbury Suggests that UK Should Accept the Sharia’ (‘El arzobispo de Canterbury sugiere que el Reino Unido acepte la charia’), all of them ignore this nuance. Only ABC includes it: ‘The Anglican Archbishop Asks for Part of the Islamic Law to Be Used’ (‘El primado anglicano pide que se pueda aplicar parte de la ley islámica’).

The following days, the journals still inform about the controversy. ABC, La Razón and El Mundo point out the ‘storm’ and ‘rejection’ in the UK. La Vanguardia, El País y El Periódico, on the contrary, stress the proposal being inappropriate and highlight the Archbishop’s subsequent rectification. La Razón illustrates its article with a photograph where a sign can be read ‘Islam is superior and nothing will supersede it’. The picture has nothing to do with the news discussed, so the only reason for including it may be to convey a radical image of the Islam:

Picture 22. La Razón, February 9th, 2008



The Image of the Arab and Muslim World on the Spanish Media

(‘UK Rejects Islamic Law’)

El Mundo and El País give their opinion about this controversy through two editorials articles and are both critical with the Archbishop’s proposal. La Vanguardia criticizes the biased interpretation given to the Archbishop’s words through several articles with a different mood.

Whether the Muslim minorities in Spain are integrated or not was an important topic for the media in January, after the arrest in Barcelona of an Islamist cell. The media sent to the society a message of distrust and suspicion by linking the Muslim community to the attacks. La Vanguardia makes a generalization from the headline itself, using the derogatory term ‘pakis’. In the article, Alfredo Abián, the journals vice director, insists on the idea of distrust using words such as ‘Ravalkistan’, an allusion to the neighbourhood of El Raval, in Barcelona. The newspaper stresses again the ‘suspicions’ of the neighbourhood and Jordi Barbeta links clearly, in a harsh article, the Muslim community with terrorism, thus resorting to stereotypes and an ethnocentric viewpoint.

El Periódico, however, focuses on the terrorist threat, although also informs about the fear of the Pakistani community to be labelled. This fear finds ground in articles such as one by ABC (‘Del cricket al temporizador’, January 25th). In it, we find statements such as ‘El Raval is the Islamist’s environment’ and the article is illustrated by the picture of a child reading the Qur’an in a Mosque of Barcelona, thus clearly linking Islam and violence and hinting that the Muslim community is a source of potential terrorists.

Picture 23. ABC, January, 25th 2008



(‘From Cricket to the Time-Bomb’)

The same message of distrust is sent by an article in El Mundo (‘¿Qué mensaje se transmite a los musulmanes en la mezquita?’, January 20th). In it, the case of Barcelona is used to extend the doubt to the whole community.

We must remember that the integration of the Muslim community in the Spanish society was also at the spotlight after the proposal of the Popular Party, made during the election campaign, of an integration contract for immigrants. El Mundo praises some of its proposals, although it is interesting to see its mentions to a secular state while criticizing the ‘contradictory ideas of the left wing’ and the fact that it mentions practices that are illegal in Spain and, for that reason, out of question. La Vanguardia and El País devote some articles to the Popular Party’s proposal, but it is also worth mentioning that, although the headlines talk about immigration in general, the texts only mention the Muslim community. ABC, for instance, stresses the integration issues by informing about the protests of young Muslims against the closing of a Mosque in Sweden.

In this section, we would like to point out two articles regarding the traditional animal slaughtering in the Muslim community, guaranteed by the halal certification. In the midst of the election campaign and the veil controversy, La Razón publishes an article that questions whether it is ‘a religious practice or mere barbarity’ (‘Animales degollados en nombre de Alá’, February 10th) and explains that ‘this rite is performed in 27 halal slaughter-houses in Spain where the Shariah (Islamic law) about the slaughter of animals is followed to the letter’. El Mundo follows the same line in an article that insists on the idea of ‘extreme brutality’ and hints that it is actually a business. The ethnocentric viewpoint of these two journals will prevent them from using the same terms to discuss the bull-fighting, denouncing the conditions of most animals intended for food or including such an explicit photograph:

Picture 24. El Mundo, February 3rd, 2008



To conclude this section, we will point out two meaningful articles in relation to the situation of the Muslim minority in Spain. El Periódico stresses on January 7th the refusal of the city of Barcelona to build a Great Mosque on public ground while El Mundo, also in January, criticizes in an article the whole of the Muslim community due the statements of a member of Al Qaeda ('nosotros no matamos a mujeres'). El País, on the contrary, stresses the fact that the European Muslims are clearly against the attacks, and mentions the lack of Islamic religion teachers in Spain ('41 profesores de islam para 119.000 niños', May 3rd). Nevertheless, this newspaper gives the following title to an interview with Amparo Sánchez, president of the Islamic Cultural Centre in Valencia: 'My Children Are not Islamic. They Want to Enjoy Life!' (Mis hijos no son islámicos, ¡quieren vivir la vida!' February 9th). This sends the message that Islam is not compatible with enjoying life, what probably was not Ms. Sánchez intention.

Conclusions

First of all, we want to highlight that those topics related to cultural clash, which emphasize difference and create controversy, are frequent in the Spanish press. The media create a stereotyped image of Muslim communities and some countries are only mentioned in relation to these conflicts. It is true that, despite some common elements, several differences can be spotted depending on the political stance and editorial line of the different newspapers. A proof to this is the news about the Alliance of Civilizations, promoted by the leftist Government. It has been criticized and mocked by conservative media and praised by the liberal ones, or those media ideologically close to the Government.

There are, however, a number of common features regarding their approach to the Muslim World, such as similarities in the information and the scarce number of correspondents in Arab or Muslim-majority countries. A common trend is to differentiate between The West and Islam in a 'them'/'us' dichotomy, presenting the information from a Western point of view without hardly any source or opinion outside the basic idea they want to transmit. There is constant mention to the lack of social liberties, the incompatibility between Islam and democracy, the violence or the controversy about their customs.

Besides, the Spanish media consider Islam and the Muslims as a homogeneous entity, uniform in their behaviour and way of thinking, and interpret the actions of a specific group or individual as a collective phenomenon. 'Muslim' or 'Islamic' become permanent attributes to describe people, attitudes or objects ('Muslim wrath', 'dressed in an Islamic way', 'Muslim violence', 'Muslim fanatics', 'Muslim mess', 'Islamic smiting', 'Islamist attacks' 'Islamic wrath', 'Muslim extremists'...)

In short, Islam and its characteristics are related to polygamy, female genital mutilation, stoning, discrimination of women and terrorism. Muslim communities in Europe are depicted as unable to integrate and there is a message of distrust and suspicion. Islam represents all that is old, dark and traditional while the West represents modernity. The use of words like fatwa or Islamism in relation (almost as synonyms) to death penalty, violence or terrorism, does not help, either. All this helps in creating an image of death, threat and distrust.

■ 9. Building Bridges Between Cultures

This chapter deals with those articles that try to present a positive image of the Arab and Muslim World. After a brief introduction offering a definition of intercultural communication that will set the basis for the rest of the chapter, we will discuss some examples of respectful and constructive journalistic approach. The Arab and Muslim World is seldom mentioned in the analysed media, and when it is, unfortunately, the information usually has a negative character. However, it would be unfair not to acknowledge the existence of respectful approaches, of balanced arguments and of detours from the excess of stereotypes seen on the previous pages.

Building Bridges

The media has a special importance in the construction of the image of the 'other', of those things that are not familiar or we do not have a direct experience of. It is in this task where the media also find much of the criticism directed towards them. Intercultural communication is a process of exchanging symbolic resources in the midst of current post-modernity: one of the pillars of the conflict between civilizations that threatens the peaceful coexistence between people, nations and religions. This process of negotiation rests on our everyday relations, as well as on the representation conveyed by the media. The following definition of the word culture, by Miquel Rodrigo, is even more valid in this context:

'Culture is an open and complex, sometimes contradictory, set of patterns of thought, emotion and behaviour that certain social actors, with the power to do so, intend to concretize and attribute to a group with the aim of characterize it and provide it with an ideal, essentialist identity, impossible to be fulfilled individually. This set of patterns, internalized by the individual in different proportion and in a personal manner, will allow them during socialization to give meaning and value to the social action of people socialized with similar patterns, or even of other people, through an ethnocentric application of their cognitive, emotional and behaviour patterns.' (Rodrigo, 2003).

In this process of internalizing the cultural resources that leads to the creation of an individual identity coexisting with the different features common to most people around us, the media act as catalyst that provides a certain cohesion in worldview. Almost a century ago, Walter Lippmann began to collect evidence on the media's ability to create a pseudo-environment where stereotypes have a real effect on people's lives (Lippmann, 1922). Despite this prevailing trend, however, we can find in our analysis several cases of a different style of information, much more constructive and neutral.

The Alliance of Civilizations

The Alliance of Civilizations is an attempt to establish solid links between nations, cultures and religions traditionally considered conflicting (Huntington, 1996). This proposal, launched on September 2004, was taken on by the UN and, since then, the consolidation of this international debate framework has been moving forward. In fact, the first official forum of this initiative was held in Madrid on January.

The national media gave a comparatively small coverage of it considering it was a highly relevant event and that was held on Spanish soil. The journals only discussed the forum on January 16th and 17th, giving it little presence on the front pages, but granting it more space in the opinion section.

It is surprising that a newspaper like El País would not include this topic on its front page on the day the meeting began. The situation is even more paradoxical due to the fact that this positive news was published following an article about a terrorist attack in Kabul occurred on January 14th and an interview with the President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf. This is an illustrative example of how the negative news about the Muslim World prevails over initiatives that pursue a constructive and dialog-based approach to current issues.

Regarding the approach of El País to this news, it is worth mentioning that both the report and the opinion article by Andrés Ortega convey an image of confusion. However, the information on page 5 on January 16th devoted to UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, Jorge Sampaio, prioritizes again the high expectations on the structural deficiency dominating the forum's beginnings.

The editorial article published the next day offers an even more convincing example. It states that 'Zapatero's main foreign initiative starts lacking definition and political framework' (El País, January 17th), a critical opinion that proves that the journal is not as close to the Government as many want to think. More predictably, the article shifts to discuss the critical and distant attitude of the Popular Party and its leader, Mariano Rajoy, towards this initiative, which is always described in positive terms.

El Mundo includes a small reference to the forum on its front page on January 16th, but its content is comparatively incidental and symptomatic of the priority approach for the heading. Instead of pointing out the role of Zapatero or the Alliance itself, the journal focuses on the financial contribution of the political leader from Qatar.

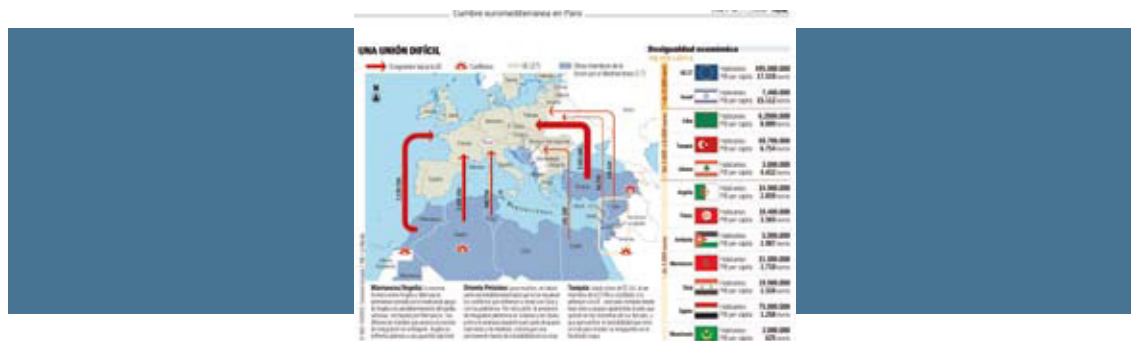
El Mundo claims in an editorial article that the Alliance of Civilizations is 'the consequence of a personal determination of the President Zapatero to make the Spanish diplomacy the meeting point between the Western and Islamic Worlds' (January 16th). In this text, El Mundo makes its stance clear, it agrees with El País on the lack of concrete decisions, underrates the forum's relevance and points out the paradox of Zapatero being one of the main supports for the incorporation of Turkey into the European Union, an idea previously supported by George W. Bush and José María Aznar. That is, without openly criticizing the Alliance's goals, it claims that 'it is evident that the utopian grandiloquence of this initiative –from the title itself– contrasts heavily with the reality of the world we live in, where the threat of the Islamist terrorism keeps growing' (El Mundo, January 16th). There is, however, a difference between the opinion articles and the informative ones, where the general mood is mainly positive. Thus, a principle of journalism is being respected: facts are sacred, comments are free. The Catalanian journals offer an even smaller coverage of the forum. La Vanguardia, in an editorial on January 16th, agrees with El País and El Mundo, and points out an excess of good will and lack of concrete measures. Due to the lack of interest in the topic, there is not a single informative article about the event in Madrid. Next day, the only reference to it was a letter to the editor criticizing Mariano Rajoy's attitude, and an article in the local news section where the Mayor of Barcelona offered the Montjuïc Castle as headquarters of the Alliance. El Periódico follows a similar line, with slightly greater coverage and similar ideas. ABC and La Razón are openly critical. That is why most of these conclusions have already been mentioned in the previous section about building the cultural difference between the West and the Islam. The coverage of the first Alliance of Civilizations Summit has been 'contaminated' by the fact of its main moving force being the President of Spain. Unfortunately, it has become an occasion for contrary stances to drift further apart, instead of finding a common ground. This international-scale event has been understood in the main Spanish newspapers basically through national arguments: this point of view is, for the dialog between cultures, deplorably out of focus.

The Union for the Mediterranean

On July 14th 2008 the Spanish newspapers informed about the agreement to establish the Union for the Mediterranean, an initiative that intended to revitalize the Barcelona Process started on 1995 with the goal of improving the relations between all the countries surrounding the Mediterranean. The Union was promoted by the French Government, presided by Nicholas Sarkozy, and achieved to gather all the countries involved, being Lybia the only exception. El Mundo's editorial article admires openly the steps taken under Sarkozy's leadership, and considers that he has skilfully taken advantage of the Spanish Foreign Affairs Ministry's inability to relaunch the Barcelona pact. Praises to the French leader combine with an evident criticism of the Spanish diplomacy. It is surprising that this initiative is described as a 'resounding success' (El Mundo, July 14th) while the Alliance of Civilizations was much more criticized. El Mundo changes partially its position clearly on favour of the initiative, and mostly in favour of its political support, through an opinion column by Pedro Martínez Montávez, professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid ('¿Qué piensan los árabes sobre el Mediterráneo?', July 28th). In this balanced text, the Arabist stresses the marked Western influence of Sarkozy's proposal and points out that behind this Union seems to hide the risk of a new colonization. His is a vision that defends the Arab interests, criticizes the role of the European nations in the past and explains the need of a change of attitude to achieve success: The Mediterranean, as part of Western Europe, has been its reflection and expression, and the reflection of the dichotomic, ambivalent, split, contradictory West. Through the Mediterranean, to a large extent, the Arabs have received both the civilized and the barbarian West, the West of solidarity and the West of pillage, the West bearing the Gospel and the cannon, the West that defended the great moral principles with tooth and nail, and violated them systematically, the West of immigration and expatriation. (...) To achieve dialog and collaboration in the Mediterranean it is most urgent and necessary to learn what do the Arabs think about it, what have they been thinking for centuries, ad not only as a political goal. Here, I have tried to explain a little bit of that. (El Mundo, July 28th). It is a balanced text that justifies historically the relations between Western and Arab cultures in the last centuries, with the Mediterranean as a common element. El País offers an alternative approach, with a style similar to the one used

with the opening summit of the Alliance of Civilizations. However, the acknowledgement of the positive nature of the initiative was combined, with comments on the deficiencies and contradictions of both meetings: The demands of the Arab countries, and not the reticence of the European countries, were ultimately almost responsible for the failure of the joint declaration. The Arab League was finally presented as a ‘permanent guest’ for all the summits, what gives considerably more space to the southern nations. (El País, July 14th) La Vanguardia shows its usual caution on the editorial article and on the article from its correspondent in Paris. The text offers a restrained style and language, and gathers data and statements, giving little space to opinion or judgements. In general, there is appositive vision that gives hopes for the future. This journal, as El Periódico de Catalunya does, points out the fact that the President of Spain has made official the candidacy of Barcelona to become the official headquarters of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Picture 25. ABC, July 14th, 2008



the collaboration of some employers and public administrations to make it easier for the worker, as a way of strengthening the good relations between cultures. Apart from this, there are two other articles that offer a complete view of the situation: on the one hand, an article dealing with the situation of people converted from Catholicism to Islam and, on the other hand, an opinion column by Sociology professor Jordi Moreras that gives some context about this religious and social practice, in relation with the requirements imposed by the utilization of the public space. El Mundo also informed about the Ramadan, although its coverage was related to one of this journal's editorial pillars, the recognition of Spanish nationality. It stresses the Spanish nature of a celebration in Ceuta, making a questionable use of several flags that had not been placed by the ceremony participants.

On June 9th, El País describes in a two-page article the growing popularity of Islamic art in Western countries. On the one hand, being unable to go over the dichotomy between stereotype and neutral information, the text begins with the stereotype of petrodollars and the extravagant wealth of the main Arab economies. Culture is presented as subsequent to financial ascension and we are reminded that 'after increasing their economic weight on the international arena, these new millionaires, with renewed confidence, want to increase their cultural presence on the world.' (El País, June 9th 2008). Arab countries, or rather, countries that know how to profit from their oil wells, cannot escape from the Arab sheik stereotype, but at least their actions are discussed with more respect than in other occasions. The article itself, in fact, includes a passage relevant to this report, which describes the media coverage:

'For us, Islam is not only a religion, is also a civilization. It is something beautiful, different from the image offered in the media', says in Doha a man in charge of the Museum. (El País, June 9th).

We also find a number of positive references on the spheres of art and culture, but they lack the continuity to justify the development of a solid and differentiated space for the building of bridges between cultures.

There are a lot of articles that discuss the creation of new roads of communication between two conflicting parts, either with open conflicts, such as Palestine-Israel, or with veil and latent ones, such as the dialog between Western and Islamic culture. The approach, however, is usually closer to the anecdote than to journalistic depth. The information is justified by shocking or striking facts.

El Mundo informs on January 16th about the popularity among the Hebrew audience of a TV show created by Israeli Arabs. This is a concrete example where the anecdote suggests ways toward mutual understanding and a possible peaceful coexistence between communities in conflict. These curious cases are not regarded in the same way by all the media, and consequently only appear in some of them.

In a way, they are 'substitute' news and their publication can be delayed by the sudden apparition of any other current topic. Their interest lies on the contrast and the shock for most readers. But, despite the selection criteria that allow these texts to be published, they do convey a positive image and relative hope of getting over the conflict.

We would like to focus on the different approaches of the newspapers. El Mundo usually includes more or less veiled references to the conflict between cultures in its coverage. For example, the performance of a chamber quartet in front of men and women is described as a challenge to Saudi fundamentalism (El Mundo, May 6th). The article stresses the confrontation between a traditional view of Saudi Arabia and an open one, offering rather untimely arguments, such as:

It suffices to remember the high esteem of orthodox groups towards the author Abu Bilal Mustafa al Kanadi who, in 1986, wrote a treaty (The Islamic Ruling on Music and Singing) published in Jeddah, where he argued that the Islam forbids any musical instrument except the drum, that mixing voices and melodies is a sin, or that female singers are only allowed to perform in front of a female audience, for 'the woman's voice seeks the sexual arousal of the man that listens' (El Mundo, May 6th).

This approach is excessively frequent on the Spanish press, which seldom misses the chance to make explicit the contradictions hidden in the news about cultural liberalization, thus partially clouding their positive content.

In the analyzed media we have also found a number of figures that assume the role of icons of understanding and inter-cultural dialog. For example, the musician Daniel Barenboim (ABC, August 8th), the singer Noa or the writer Amos OZ (El País, September 9th) appear intermittently, but comparatively often on the analyzed newspapers.

An event that made evident the connections between the West and the Islam was the Ramon Llull award, given to the Moroccan writer Najat El Hachmi for her work *L'últim patriarca*. This event helped spreading the idea of brotherhood between two cultures that, because of the immigration, have coexisted in the same territory for decades. The way the media dealt with this news has already been analyzed in an earlier chapter.

Economy

The economic strength at an international level of some nations of the Arab World, such as the United Arab Emirates or Saudi Arabia, is the cause of preferential treatment to these countries and a steadier presence on the media. The press shows a carefully professional approach, focusing on economic transactions with no mention to the traditional stereotypes that are so frequent in other spheres. It is also interesting to notice that there is hardly a mention to the religious beliefs of the people taking part on the negotiations. Actually, this aseptic approach, focused on the facts and not on stereotypes, should be an example to many other newspaper sections.

For instance, during the period of analysis, the firm Colonial ended a negotiation process with representatives of Dubai's financial funds to decide about its incorporation. The deal, which finally did not come into being, was closely monitored by all the newspapers –especially *La Vanguardia*, *El Periódico* and *La Razón*– on the Economy section, but the approach to this firm and this operation was nothing similar to the one normally granted to politics or religion. The image conveyed was that of normality that the rules of the game are the same for everyone and that it is possible to make or break deals attending to interests other than ideology or religion.

In an opinion column published by *El País* on March 2nd, Moisés Naim skilfully summarizes the economic prosperity of some countries in the Arab and Muslim sphere, as well as contextualizing it in the background of the social, political and cultural issues of the region:

The Arab World is going through three booms: a demographic one, one of terrorism and an economic one. In North Africa the population, especially the number of young people, is growing rapidly; religious and political radicalism, which leads to terrorism, is also growing. These are nothing new. The economic boom in the Arab World, however, now reaches countries with no oil, and that is new. We are used to see oil exporter countries having a boom every time the price of the barrel rises. What we had not seen since decades ago is non-exporters countries such as Egypt, Jordan and others undergoing a substantial and prolonged economical expansion. (*El País*, March 3rd).

The author presents an alternative view on the Arab World, much more positive and balanced since, instead of hiding the problems, he confronts and contrasts them with the indisputable advances of these countries in economic, and sometimes social, matters.

Other texts discussing several economic operations can be found in *El País* ('Mango abrirá en Irak e Irán', July 9th; 'Abu Dhabi negocia comprar el 36,6% de Cepsa a Fenosa y Santander', September 6th), *El Mundo* ('Iberdrola sella un acuerdo estratégico con Abu Dhabi', May 26th; 'SOS Cuétara levanta almazaras de aceite en el norte de África', September 7th), *La Vanguardia* ('Las cajas españolas quieren seducir a los grandes inversores árabes', January 21st; 'El Sabadell abrirá oficinas en Dubai y Casablanca', April 18th), *El Periódico de Catalunya* ('Riva y García abre en Marruecos y Argelia', May 17th), *ABC* ('Los países emergentes compensarán la caída de la inversión en Occidente', December 27th) or *La Razón* ('Castilla y León aumentará su negocio con 18 países árabes', April 26th).

There are roughly two kinds of articles: on the one hand, those where important Spanish firms are mentioned. On the other hand, those discussing investments made by Arabs in the weakened Western markets. The problems we spotted on the political, social and cultural spheres do not seem to have an equivalent on the economic and financial one.

It is rather frequent, however, the stereotype of the affluent Arab sheik, eager to invest in Western capital. The approach to some of the wealthiest countries on the world is still based on the extravagance. The image conveyed is that of disproportionate luxury and great eccentricity, thus reinforcing the clichés launched on the media in the last decades.

Conclusions

The predominance of negative news is not a phenomenon exclusive to the news about the Arab and Muslim World, but rather is a prevailing trend in the media. This trend seems to be even more evident when the object is somehow linked to a cultural space where shadows are more frequent than lights.

None of the six analyzed journals defends an opinion openly against the cultural dialog, but their approach is distant and the vision of the Arab or the Muslim as a threat to Western values is only mentioned in newspaper with a centre-right political stance. Any possible bridge is a target for all those who do not want these two cultures to establish a dialog with each other. That is why any chance for the dialog broadcasted by the media is also a risk. A number of positive gestures are presented as striking, spectacular or comical.

There is still little information focused on the civilian population of the Arab and Muslim World. It is difficult to change the approach from informing about the Arab and Muslim World to one of informing from it. The resources necessary for this are expensive and, let us not forget it, also require the collaboration of these countries. The opinions of Arab and Muslim citizens are not heard in Western countries, despite the latter being used to the role that opinion polls play in their politics. For this reason, a way of presenting a more accurate portrait of these societies should be based on collecting the citizens' opinions.

Making the information personal can be a useful resource and, on occasions, it is justified, but the abuse of it must be denounced. The search for singularity, common to the majority of current journalism, can be the cause of a simplification of reality, especially if we think that the information about the Arab and Muslim community is scarce. If Western articles focus on individuals and, among them, choose the most extravagant ones, they will convey a distorted image of the Arab and Muslim World. That is why it is necessary to accompany the anecdotic information with data that put the global situation in a context and that allow the reader to get an idea as close as possible to the social reality.

The singularities of each of the analyzed journals produce a multifaceted image about the positive approaches to the Arab and Muslim World. *El País* usually deals coldly with the facts and avoids the most sensationalistic and personal approaches. This newspaper does not include picturesque articles that focus on personal circumstances usually framed in an unstructured general context of the Islam. Its network of resources out of Spain allows this journal to offer a wider range of viewpoints on international current affairs, although the presence of national politics can be felt in most of its articles.

The conservative newspapers edited in Madrid are more critical about inter-cultural relations. The ideological proximity between *ABC* and *La Razón* about the Catholic religion is evident and has an influence on their editorial stance on this matter. While the other four analyzed journals discuss the debate between civilizations or between cultures, in these two the discussion often shifts toward the relations between Catholicism and Islam, always combined with the idea of national identity and the unabridged preservation of the Spanish territories on African soil (Ceuta and Melilla). This forceful union of cultural and political matters leads to suspicion on the Arab and Muslim World, made evident in countless occasions during the analysis.

The inter-religious dialog is hardly found on the media as an independent and distinctive topic. The approach is usually subtler and the matter is often kept aside and seldom mentioned.

■ 10. General Conclusions

The quantitative and qualitative analysis including more than 2,100 newspapers and nearly 10,000 articles published on 2008 in the six Spanish newspapers of reference (*El País*, *El Periódico de Catalunya*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Mundo*, *ABC* and *La Razón*), turn this research into an important contribution to the field studying the media representation of the Arab and Muslim World in Western press. The use of an exhaustive and quantitative analysis protocol and a deep and thorough speech analysis focused on issues of the utmost importance for the formation of the Spanish public opinion on this topic, such as the relations with Morocco, the Palestinian conflict, the terrorism or the Clash of civilizations, make this research unique in the national sphere and at the same level with the best international investigations on the same topic. The triangulation of the different data here compiled, ensures that the conclusions here shown are supported by a solid enough investigation.

First of all, it is not possible to generally and categorically conclude that we come across an islamophobic representation of this reality in the Spanish press. It is true that a negative and quite stereotyped image of the Arab and Muslim World is transmitted, but the differences on the information, and mostly editorial, treatment among newspapers are so obvious that it is hard to achieve a common conclusion. While in some newspapers we do find information aimed at the demonization and stigma, in others we simply come across a very limited selection of topics relating to this world, negative topics that contribute alone in generating a specific image. And this is precisely one of the features shared by all Spanish reference newspapers, a very limited information agenda regarding the Arab and Muslim World. We will now discuss how there are other common elements in the treatment given to the information by the main Spanish newspapers.

The Arab and Muslim World's view present in the Spanish press is derogatory, mainly because, as we have previously mentioned, most of the news published in connection with this topic possess a negative tone linked to wars like the ones in Iraq or Afghanistan, conflicts such as the one tormenting Israelis and Palestinians since decades, terrorist attacks linked to Al-Qaeda as the one aborted in Barcelona at the beginning of 2008, the Iranian 'threat', and general human rights violations, specially against women, homosexuals and political dissidents. The current press' information agenda, marked by the conflict's impact and exaltation and the controversy, puts the Arabs and Muslims living in Spain in a bad place, for time after time, they read in the Spanish newspapers how their culture and religion is linked to crime and pain. As we can observe in the chapter devoted to Morocco, even the topics relating to the neighbor country are limited to difficult situations, such as the claims over Ceuta and Melilla, the Western Sahara conflict and other mainly negative issues, such as the lack of civilian rights (specially freedom of speech), the immigration, the women and homosexuals' situation or the drug trafficking.

Women's situation in the Arab and Muslim World is one of the most discussed topics in the Spanish press. Next to the denounces of lack of certain freedoms, specially linked to specific countries such as Iran or Saudi Arabia, we also find a general connection between Islam and practices such as polygamy, stoning or female genital mutilation, transmitting the idea that there is a 'set' of behaviors shared by and extended through all the Arab and Muslim World, in any context and country. Furthermore, in this 'set' it is also included the hijab (Islamic veil), which the Spanish media generally take as a symbol of the sexism typical of Muslims and women submission, usually ruling out their own ability to make decisions. In any case, it is incomprehensible that practices only present in some Muslim countries and even banned by the Spanish law, appear linked to the use of a specific women's garment. Islam and Muslim countries are usually depicted as being backwards, compared to Western modernity. Western lifestyle and political system are viewed as a model to which Arab and Muslim countries should aspire. Civil liberties versus oppression, modernity versus medieval practices, obscurantism versus erudition. In fact, Arabs and Muslims are more respected the closer they get to Western's most widespread customs and behaviors, that is, when the 'other' tries to be like 'me'.

This negative representation gets even worse when Islam is specifically linked to most of the terrorist attacks, as it is proved in the chapter devoted to this topic. Using words such as 'Islamic', 'Islamist' and 'jihadist' terrorists referring to Al-Qaeda members is a common practice among all newspapers and it is one of the best examples of how, be it on purpose or not, the Spanish press shows Islam as an homogeneous body generally associated to violence and lack of freedom. In the chapter dedicated to the Clash of civilizations, there are even more examples that clearly prove a generally ethnocentric and orientalist media coverage, focused on highlighting the 'us-them' dichotomy, a line followed mainly by the most conservative newspapers such as ABC and La Razón. According to the Spanish press, Islam and Muslims are a homogeneous body, with identical behaviors and one sole thinking. In fact, it is the subject of a lot of information, as if the millions of Muslims around the world acted and thought the same way. We can speak about a behaviors 'culturalization', that is, a cultural or group actions' interpretation many times corresponding to specific individuals or groups. Everything Muslim or Islamic becomes also a permanent adjective to describe people, specific attitudes and even objects. Somehow, there is certain determinism, turning the Arab or Muslim condition into the main feature of a person or country and whose condition causes also a specific behavior.

As we have already said, the different editorial lines are the ones causing the main differences in coverage. Relatively progressive newspapers such as El País, try to give a less dreary image of the Arab and Muslim World, while the most conservative ones, such as La Razón, see Islam as a constant threat. We can observe a clearly visible editorial slant in the chapter dedicated to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict's coverage. While El País and El Periódico de Catalunya defend the Palestinian's right to create their own state and denounce the disproportionated Israeli attacks, ABC and La Razón support Israel's right to defend themselves and openly condemn Hamas' 'Islamic fundamentalism' using black-and-white narrative and vocabulary. These ideological divisions are

naturally even more marked when speaking about topics related to domestic policy, such as the veil usage in Spanish schools or the Alliance of Civilizations proposed by President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (both analyzed in this report).

We can also draw some other general conclusions from this research having more to do specifically with the media coverage. The sources' usage and contrast is poor, and the Arab and Muslim sources' even more. From all six newspapers analyzed, *El Mundo* is the one collecting more sources, although it as well prefers to draw information from Western and institutions' ones, which are easy to obtain, and from big international news agencies. *La Vanguardia* is the one that gives the most points of view, even if the affected people are pushed aside in all of them. This is due mainly to a certain lack of Spanish correspondents in Arab and Muslim countries. In many cases, there is a lack of resources, and a sole correspondent must cover the information in various countries with very different idiosyncrasies. In this point, however, *ABC* stands out for having the largest number of correspondent and reporters. The use of photographs is significant in all newspapers, although the same cannot be said for the computer graphics, a very useful tool for better understanding the ethnic, religious, geographic, political and economic complexity of a country which is not being used as it should. The newspapers prefer photographs because they are more effective when it comes to clash, conflict and terror topics. Sensationalism and morbid interest are constantly appearing on the Arab and Muslim World's coverage, especially on *La Razón* and *ABC*, the last one even publishing some macabre articles unworthy of this publication. It is pleasant to find positive news that could help in showing a gentler side of Islam or refer to the creation of bonds between both cultures, although, as we can see in the last chapter of this research, they are few and are sometimes distorted and prone to a negative attitude. Integration and understanding usually lose ground against drama and terror in the eyes of Spanish press editors.

■ 11. Recommendations

Any research must finish with a determined proposal to try and overcome the problems diagnosed after the use of the scientific method. Our analysis about the Arab and Muslim World's image transmitted by the Spanish press also wish to launch some proposals that may be useful for a better journalistic treatment and, with it, partially, the people's perception about our subject. Bearing in mind the influence the written press has over citizens' opinion on the Arab and Muslim World, it would be positive if the editors tried harder to balance the great amount of negative news (that seems difficult to reduce) by including more positive news. There are thousands of events, exhibitions, personal stories, economic and political agreements, travelling recounts and examples of coexistence between Spanish and Arab and Muslims, which do not make it to the pages of any newspaper. This is because, in the current media agenda, the clash, the conflicts and the violence are more important than mutual understanding, integration and praise for the achievements made by 'another'. In Spain, the Muslim community is constantly growing and the press could serve as a way to stimulate the mutual learning and establish a peaceful coexistence. This potential is yet to be exploited. It would be a good starting point if, in order to improve the Arab and Muslim World's distorted image, we stopped using the adjectives 'Islamic', 'Islamist' or 'jihadist' next to the noun terrorism. No editorial office uses or has used the adjective 'Catholic' or 'Basquist' in connection with IRA or ETA terrorism. So, why is such a general (and sensitive, regarding its religious connotation) adjective applied to a kind of terrorism normally linked to specific organizations such as Al-Qaeda? Islamic culture-related terms, such as jihad or fatwa, are incorrectly used and help in providing a stigmatized image of the Arab and Muslim community. Many of these concepts are used because of ignorance and mimicry. From this text, we would like to ask the Spanish newspapers' editorial offices for the highest lexical rigor.

Moving on to more technical issues, after what has been observed in this research, the Spanish press should strongly bet on computer graphics as a way to synthesize events and provide a better context for people, countries and cultures. Regarding photographs, the editors should make a special effort in the selection of the ones they will include in the newspapers, for these are a window for the audience and determine the information's first reception process. In this case, *La Vanguardia* stands out for its restrained and moderated use of violent images, being their Gaza war's coverage a good example.

In general, the press should seek a higher balance regarding their sources of information, trying to avoid Western 'unilateralism' which is, occasionally, transmitted by international news agencies. Obviously, the perfect solution would be to count on a correspondent network and other staff directly linked to the company, but if it is not possible to rely on such economic resources, the offices

should make an effort to locate and transmit all points of view supported in the Arab and Muslim World. In this sense, languages can be problem, but in the end this can also mean an advantage against the competition. Islamic or Arab associations in Spain are seldom present in the Spanish press, though they could be another good resource.

Finally, we would like to point out the possibilities opened up by this research. Any work of this kind should serve as springboard to future explorations in the same field or any related subject. First of all, it would be good to compare the results here achieved, with the ones from other national newspapers in countries like France, United Kingdom or Germany, among others, and try to find out if there are important similarities or differences. Another unanswered question is if this negative coverage is applied to every minority group in Spain and Europe, or if the treatment changes regarding the Jewish, Slavic, Sub-saharan, Latin Americans or Chinese communities, just to name a few.

Lastly, it would be very relevant to investigate Spain's image on the press from certain Arab or Muslim-majority countries, and see if there is also a stereotyped or negative image, which topics get the most coverage, which resources are used, who are the main subjects...In this sense, bearing in mind its closeness and the strong social, political, economic and cultural relations shared with Spain, it would be highly advisable to conduct a research first regarding the Moroccan press. There, we will surely find that Spain-related affairs enjoy an important coverage and possibly, there will also be important differences among newspapers or, for example, between French-speaking publications and the Arabic-speaking ones.

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