

Hate Speech against Muslim Women: The Example of French and Belgian Francophone Media

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Abstract

This article aims to reveal the hate speech used by French and Belgian francophone media against Muslim women. Muslim women are made the unwanted «other» due to its visibility. The rise of hostility against Islam and violence and discrimination against Muslim women in France and Belgium, as in all European countries, emerges particularly as a result of the media's transferring and disseminating prejudice and stereotypes to the community by using of intolerance and impatience language.

Keywords: France, Belgium, the media, Muslim women, hate speech

‘Language can be considered as a productive system in the community: it produces meaning through its composition completely comprised of meaning and the code conditioning the layout. (Benviste: 100)

Introduction

The image of Muslims in the West grew as a consequence of the perceptions imbedded in the society’s subconscious and stereotypes. Here, Muslim women become the first target due to their clothing. The hate speech used by most parts of the society based on the stereotypes and prejudices turned into act: ‘acts’ that might range from abuse of right to physical assault. Therefore, there is a close relationship between hate speech and hate crime.

Among those making hate speeches, a ‘habit’ comes to media the first. Hate speech ‘otherises’ everything different regardless of religion, language or ethnicity and is built on intolerance and impatience. Hate speech has become the media’s language. Though it may seem like a crime committed against individuals, hate speech mainly targets at the group the individuals belong to. In other words, in hate speech, an otherised individual regardless of their traits is regarded as the sole representative of all negative aspects of their group. Central cases of hate speech are political in the sense specified by Carl Schmitt. They have the effect of carving the world up into “friends” and “foes” (Schmitt, [1927], 1996).

In most Western media, hate speech is especially focused on Islam and Muslims. Having the power of agenda setting, most Western media has been long using the language of exclusion, otherizations and discrimination against Islam and Muslims as its believers. As in some Western media under the influence of the orientalist thought, French and Belgian francophone media address Muslim women in the East-West axis: Oriental, veiled, covered, reactionist, slave to men, irrational... The mainstream perspective towards Muslim women in French and Belgian francophone media lead to appearing legitimate of discrimination against such women and reduces the society’s sensitivity at this point. Exposure of Muslim women to discrimination also implies restricting of their freedom and establishing domination over their lives.

Hate Speech

Hate is a versatile “feeling”. Still, it is of crucial importance to distinguish hate as a feeling from hate speech as an act. While hate is regarded normal as a human emotion directed to any object or phenomenon, hate as a part of an ideology causes people to position themselves and others based on ideology. Once hate turns a part of an identity, that identity cannot identify itself independent on the group subject to hate.

Thus, hate, mainly a human emotion, bears dangerous consequences if it becomes an element of ideology and discourse (Aygül, 2013: 20). Hate speech provides the ideological ground for fascist and racist organizations. It is a vital ingredient in any political movement determined to harm out groups (Kretzmer, 1987: 445).

There are various types of hate speech such as direct or indirect, implicit or explicit, one-time or recurring, based or not based on authority and power. Such classification helps measure the impact of hate speech on its victims. The aim of preventing the hate speech is to ensure not usurping of other's rights and not harming others. Harm occurs in a variety of ways from physical violence to psychological violence, scaring to excluding (Mc Gonagle, 2001: 22-23). Hate speech is an interpretation of the impatience and intolerance towards ethnic, religious and cultural identities (Post, 2009).

On the one hand, there is uncertainty about what hate speech exactly refers and covers; on the other hand, Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' Recommendation 97 on "hate speech" defined it as follows: "the term "hate speech" shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin."

The concept of "hate speech" encompasses a multiplicity of situations:

- incitement of racial hatred or in other words, hatred directed against persons or groups of persons on the grounds of belonging to a race;
- incitement to hatred on religious grounds, to which may be equated incitement to hatred on the basis of a distinction between believers and non-believers;
- incitement to other forms of hatred based on intolerance "expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism ;
- Homophobic speech also falls into what can be considered as a category of "hate speech" (Volkova et al.).

Undoubtedly, hate speech rhetoric reaches to its peak in environments where extreme rightist and nationalist feelings are intensified. The rise of extreme right parties in the 2014 European Parliament elections is an indication of the extent at which racist speech, hatred, impatience and intolerance speech is accepted and nationalist discourse gain legitimacy in the European community. In addition, hate speech" is a moment in the process of forming national identities and its intensity varies depending on historical, social and political circumstances which may provide the conditions for establishing a more or less inflated national "self" as against the "others".(Volkova et al.). Hate speech has many dimensions. One of them is the political dimension, which "is a discourse in pursuit of the aim of reviving all the reactionary ideas and theories defeated by the democratic struggle and thus aiming at undermining the achievements of democratic struggle". Hence, it can be said that hate speech is corruptive and hurtful to the democratic system (Boyle, 2001: 493).

As the best example of the negative aspect of hate speech, we can cite the *Handyside v. the United Kingdom* case: the Court affirmed that freedom of expression "is applicable not only to 'information' or 'ideas' that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter of indifference, but also to those that offend, shock or disturb the State or any sector of the population. Such are the demands of that pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness without which there would be no democratic society" (*Handyside v. the United Kingdom*, Series A, No. 24, para. 49). The *Handyside* judgment recognises that in a democratic society, space has to be created and sustained for public discussion and debate. Democratic society does not exist without its rough edges and pluralistic public debate necessarily involves disagreement and confrontation between opposing viewpoints. Thus, "Hate speech is a negative discourse spread on a wide spectrum. This is a flexible discourse capable of encouraging hatred starting from hate, consisting of words and adjectives based on abuse, humiliation, insults, slurs and vilification at the same time not being independent on extreme prejudices" (Mc Gonagle, 2001 :23).

In short, the hate speech not only explains, defends, promotes or produces the hatred heard for a number of prominent and distinctive features of individuals or a group. It also contains 'disrespect for others, dislike, lowering, hostility, denial, desire to harm, silence and passivize the target group beyond disapproval and a declaration of war against them (Peltonen, 2010:52). Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that identifying the statements that could be classified as "hate speech" seems to be even more difficult due to the fact that such speaking is not necessarily shot to the outside through expressions or feeling of "hate".

“Hate speech” can be stored in expressions that might seem logical or regular at first glance. However, it is possible to distil certain parameters which will allow to distinguish the expressions under the full protection of the right to freedom of expression, having a defamatory nature albeit, from the statements that do not benefit from such protection from the texts in force on the subject and the principles found in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights or other bodies of law (Weber, 2009: 5).

Hate Crime-Discrimination

Hate speech is the starting point of the path to hate crime; in other words, it paves the way for hate crime and expresses impatience and intolerance. Targeted groups are given the message that “they have no place in the society” and the process of pacification and silencing of the group members comes to the fore. Then, inevitably, the most fundamental right of ‘human’s life and the right to participation’ is violated and the democratic order is undermined as a result. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) defines hate crime as follows: “All kinds of crimes in which the victim, property or a crime target is selected because of its real or perceived bond, loyalty, belonging, support of affiliation with a group having similar characteristics based on actual or perceived race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or other similar factors including all types of crimes committed against individuals or property” (OSCE-ODIHR, 2005 :12).

Hate crime laws target giving the message of symbolic support to disadvantaged groups ultimately to maintain and consolidate their confidence in the country’s legal system and legislation. In this context, new hate crime laws are extended to the identity politics and crime and punishment area and indeed these crimes redefine the crime problem related to the conflicts between races, sexes and national groups. Legally, the terms “hate crime” and “bias crime” has been firstly introduced in the early 1990’s. *The Guide to Legal Periodicals* (Law Periodicals Guide) listed nine scientific papers under the newly created title of “bias crime” in 1991; subsequently, the number of scientific papers about hate crimes rose to 86 between the years 1993 and 1995 (Jacobs et al. 1998). The first element of hate crimes is negative discrimination with the potential of social acceptance which is motivated by prejudice and bias. Social acceptance probability of hate crimes separates them from ordinary crimes. The offenders give message through the crime to the group carrying the same features as the victim because of any of race, language, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, age, physical disability or any one of the common factors of a similar nature.

The offender deliberately selects as ‘target’ the one who bears the ‘conserved feature’ (Gürler, 2010: 263).

Hate crimes are fed by discrimination, but hate crime is considered to be clearer acts in comparison to discrimination. Hate crimes, which can be summarized as the whole crimes committed based on bias, are acts realized at the end of fear, prejudice and brought about hate speech which actually points out a process. Indeed, whereas the laws on prevention of discrimination usually bans to the exploitation of work, goods and services or the use of another right; hate crimes include actual actions defined in criminal law such as murder, mutilation, destruction of property, insults and as invasion of privacy. To put it briefly, hate crime covers bullying, physical or verbal attacks, racist and hateful rhetoric and discrimination on the streets and in the workplace.

Hate crimes are a kind of violence already seeking legitimacy in the society. The concept of symbolic violence offered by Bourdieu refers to the subordinating effects on people of hidden structures that reproduce and maintain social domination in covert ways. This involves the numerous mechanisms through which overall social domination is achieved from institutions to ideologies. Symbolic control may involve the moral imposition of irrational beliefs on others that work against their own capacity for freedom of thought, as in the ideologies of a group, a religion or a cult as extreme examples, but certainly includes the normal dissemination of ideologies (Colaguori, 2010: 389). Therefore, each stage of hate crimes such as the investigation of hate crimes, investigation of the crime, prosecution, trial and so on requires enormous attention. Regarding hate crimes, it is unlikely to obtain accurate data and statistical information. The most important reason is that many victims are reluctant to report such attacks, the difficulties in proving hate crimes and insensitivity of public officials on the subject. This reluctance is often the shock caused by being a victim as well as the fear of retaliation and negative experiences victims previously faced after the complaint. The source of hate crimes, in other words, is social, the perpetrator is unknown. It is a meaningless delinquency, but the roots are too deep which man cannot create alone, even most of them have no ground (Gürler, 2010: 262-263).

Media's Excluding, Otherising and Alienating Hate Speech

In recent legal scholarship, writers have proposed three approaches to hate speech, each with its own internal complexities and variations. The first approach allows hate speech in order to maximize opportunities for individual expression and cultural regeneration. The second, highly controversial approach represses hate speech through sanctions that range from official and private reprimands to criminal prosecutions in order to promote equality and the non-subordination of potential hate speech targets. Aggressive versions of this approach urge that hate speech should be punishable only when directed at members of a historically subordinated group, not dominant group members. The third, emerging approach attempts to accommodate the "worthy passions" of the first two approaches. The accommodationists endorse tightly worded, cautiously progressive measures that tend to proscribe only targeted vilification of a person on the basis of race, gender, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics (Massaro, 1991: 213).

Undoubtedly, discourse of politics and political people can be samples of hate and intolerance. In general, owners of power produce the discourse. According to Foucault (1981), there is no discourse without power, and discourse always overlaps with power. According to Van Dijk, discourse should be controlled as an instrument for controlling power in the society and discourse not only keeps under control people's behaviours but also influences and conquers their minds. Controlling information, ideology and tendencies is a guaranteed way of controlling people's minds rather than their behaviours (Van Dijk, 2008).

As an organ transferring any information to the society, media has an important role in creating discourse. As an important element of discourse, media is generally under the influence of the dominant power, which is usual for most of the countries including democratic regimes. At this point, it is inevitable that media and politics often have a discourse in the same direction. As political institutions, media has also the ability to affect the society at a large extent, so if it is not prevented from using hate speech, it will be responsible for the damage to be caused in the community and it will lead to formation of the impression that hate speech is legitimized. The extent at which the discourse attempted by politicians take its place in the media or the extent at which it is carried out through the media is related with how much powerful bodies keep the media under domination. To put it differently, media is the discourse generation tool of political institutions depending on how much the authoritarian politics, seen as the most active structure in politics, are in power. (Ozulu, 2014: 22).

The relationships of journalists who are the spokesmen of social power and the elite, with news sources, the style of news, presentation of the news, the quotes and the headlines are the elements that make up the meaning of the news and the ideology. Ideologies are determined by language. Words, phrases, speaking style and narration chosen by the narrative and even the ability to make sentences are all important factors in development of discourse. News as a product of existing dominant discourse incites prejudices and hate crimes against the "other" in the society by providing the groups otherised using negative, sarcastic expressions, swearing, insults, humiliation as 'bogeymen implying potential risk and threat' against public security through the dominant ideology's 'we' definition, taking the rhetoric and ideology duo beside it (Inceoğlu & Sözeri). It is worth emphasizing that discourse analyst Van Dijk underlines the need to check or produce the discourse in order to ensure intellectual control in the society. According to him, it is also important that discourse shows presence within the subjective and psychological 'context' (who said, what intention he had while saying, in what case and to whom he said, etc.). Stressing that the first prerequisite of checking the discourse is to control the context of the discourse, Dijk underlined that the meaning of the news and the discourse are comprised of elements such as the relationships of journalists as spokesmen of the social power and the elite with news sources, the style of news, presentation of the news, the quotes and the headlines (Van Dijk, 2008).

Hate speech, which we face as a social problem, has become today's media's 'infectious disease'. Manifest in various contents and forms in French and Belgian francophone media, hate speech is powered by social structure, culture and politics. Individuals are exposed to stigmatization, excluding and otherising due to their language, religion, race or sexual orientation. Along with developed communication technologies, hate speech of written and visual media is spreading quickly and effectively in the society. On the other hand, hate speech used for a certain portion of the society leads to polarization posing a threat to social peace and tranquillity. One of the biggest problems for the polarized party exposed to hate speech is 'otherising' of that group. Otherising implies exclusion and the efforts to impose onto the victim group itself and the rest of the society that they are cut from the society.

As a result of seeing the part exposed to hate speech 'bad', the victim group is sometimes seen and dictated as 'external outbreak' which is not belonging to the society. This approach carries the danger of constituting an obstacle to democratic participation of the victims of hate speech (Ozulu, 2014: 22). As another case, the group hate speech is directed at faces silencing. Certain words articulated through hate speech are stereotyped by constant repetition; ultimately leading to increased pressure on the victim group. In this way, the groups targeted by hate speech are intimidated, passivized and demotivated to participate equally in the system as required by democracy. The community becomes impotent to participate in democratic negotiations and provide any contribution to the society in this sense. (Association for Social Change, 2010: 11).

Mass media establishes the mental bond which individuals need to establish with the audience. Individuals are affected from guidance of the media as they can interpret social realities of the society in which they live and what happened by taking advantage of the images in the media. Media can drive individuals to "common sense" or allows formation of mental maps by means of its language and discourse; hence, it is the indispensable tool of generating "consent" for governments (Aygül, 2013: 72). Hate speech in written and visual press can be directed towards many people, sections or groups; particularly, French and Belgian francophone media can incite individuals through hate speech. As it is shown in following chapters of this study, Muslim women are carefully selected as a solicitation material. In French and Belgian francophone media, hate speech against Muslim women continues at full speed despite measures taken in Europe. We can say that the hate speech used by media against Muslim women spreads across the whole French and Belgian society and thus they become the victim of hate crime.

We see that measures are taken against hate speech used by the media at EU level. In order to prevent hate speech, many policies were developed such as action planning and programming by European states, data collection, recording and reporting regarding hate speech, training law enforcement officers, judicial officers and other public officials for resolving conflict with mediator as well as certain policies developed in relation with the media. In Norway, The Press Association creates ethical practices rules for the press. In Hungary, ethical codes of professional organizations and capital organizations contain restrictions on hate speech. In Finland, the booklet produced for internet etiquette contains prohibitions for hate speech. In Switzerland, the press is prevented from referring unless compulsory to such characteristics as ethnic origin, religion, religion and sex which might come to the meaning of discrimination. In other European countries such as Greece, Latvia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, there are many regulations about discrimination and hate speech, in particular racism (Weber, 2009 :90). In France and Belgium, though strides have been taken for struggle against hate speech and hate crimes, they have been insufficient to prevent these crimes. As in the other European countries, France and Belgium have to take more effective precautions to prevent fuelling of hatred.

Historical Foundations of Otherising and Discriminatory Attitudes of French and Belgian Francophone Media against Muslim Women

Attempts to identify oneself over the other and establish an identity by indicating the internal and external enemies or threats as a result of "otherising" date back to very early times. From the early period of human history, communities and examples are available which try to identify themselves over those differing from themselves. Europeans' showing the other communities that are culturally different from them as "other" with a motive of security can be regarded as an attempt to create internal unity and strength (Yilmaz, 2008: 86). It can be said that what lies in the basis of the East view of the West is the "identity dialectic", which is the dialectic between identity and others. Also frequently mentioned today, West-East contrast has been formed as a cultural identity problem polarized in the context of modernity–tradition or modern–traditional separation. It is possible to conceptualize the phenomenon of cultural identity in a close relationship with the "other" and as a condition that occurs against it. Accordingly, the West represents modernity, but "tradition" becomes the East's share (Hentsch, 2008:301-303).

In his book "*Orientalism*", Edward Said analyzes the role of the non-Western other in the formation process of the Western modern identity and how modern identity is established by otherising what is different from self. According to Said, in post-Enlightenment period, European culture has established its own power and identity by positioning in relation with the identity it describes as "East". In this context, Orientalism can be defined as the process in which "West establishes its hegemony over the world and thus marginalizes what is different by establishing the East at discursive level and producing it as an anti-Western traditional identity (Keyman, 2002:21).

In the works of European writers, the orientalist views showing Islam and East as an enemy of the Western civilization consistently carry historical problems and conflicts experiences between these civilizations to the present by holding them alive and such contradictions today have been among the pillars of Islamophobia and Islamic hostility. By explaining Islam and Muslims as the biggest opponents of the Christian community, elders of the Christian community who aim to collect the whole community around one single identity kept the Islamic opposition at a dose which can be easily evoked as needed (Aktaş, 2014: 44).

The works such as Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* and Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History* contribute to the thesis on conflicts and inconsistencies between the Christian and Islamic worlds and provide some legitimacy and respect for these theses.

It can be said today that existing intolerance, exclusion and humiliation towards the other including Islamic hostility has become particularly apparent and known through media, also becoming spread and intensified because of media. In other words, the fear, anxiety, suspicion and discomfort brought by September 11 attacks caused reflection and becoming widespread through media of already existing intolerance, discrimination and racist tendencies. As a consequence, the negative mindset conceived and built by the West about Islam and Arabs for centuries has been reproduced and transferred by mass media aftermaths September 11 (Yüksel, 2014: 191).

In the post-September 11 world, Islam is perceived as a religion alien to Europe in both politics and media. As a result, the phrases such as "Muslims are different, and not of us" have been clearly told. Aftermaths of September 11, a link has been created between Islam and Threat in most of European media and the cliché "every Muslim is a terrorist" has been ingrained in minds (Akdemir, 2009: 12-15).

On the other hand, we can say that the media perception and the perception of citizens overlap largely. A European citizen can reproduce the realist presented by media and detects and assesses Islam as a "threat" through the eyes of media. Although the threat perception is a condition updated by media, such perception has not been formed independent on the stereotype and bias lying in the depths of the minds. In this respect, the fiction already exists that Islam in the collective memory of the peoples of Europe is a different religion that represents or is an icon of danger. Media revitalizes such representations existing in minds. Europeans know Islam and Muslims as much as allowed by the information given them by media about Islam and Muslims (Gökçe, 2012: 104).

If they want to create the perception that Islam is an anti-Western, intolerant, uncivilized and irrational religion, then the Islamic view of women is often is called on. This is mainly because modernity or backwardness in Western world is handled through the problematic of women (Gökçe et al.).

According to a study:

- 78 % of Europeans hold the belief that Islam does not see women equal, so Muslims oppress women and exclude them from social life.
- 76% of Germans are of the opinion that "Islamic thought for women are incompatible with Western culture".
- 72 % of Portuguese and Polish people support the notion that Islam does not accept women as equal; this rate is around 75 % in other countries (Zick et al.).

As for the hate speech in French and Belgian francophone against Muslim women, even more sense is installed as it both relates with women and members of Islam. French and Belgian francophone media's taking Muslim women on the public agenda depends on the perception of Islam and Muslim in the country's public opinion. In French and Belgian public opinions, Islam is a 'violent religion' and its patriarchal structure which establishes "dominance over women" is emphasized (Saji, 2008: 44-45). Majority of the French and Belgian public opinion hold the belief that Muslims put pressure on women and marginalize them (Ali, 2012).

The issue of women bears critical importance for European media as well as in French and Belgian media because modern thought has placed women in the centre. In this respect, it is determined through the problem of woman whether or not any religion along with its members is modern. Spreading of the stereotype that value is not given to women in Islam is used for justifying the perception that Islam is not a modern and rational religion, rather a primitive religion and Islam and Muslims are intolerant.

Method

Starting from Van Dijk, in this study, qualitative analysis of headlines of the news, words and definitions, analogies, etc and news content has been made. Such a selection was made because hate speech reveals itself in stunning headlines and images which turned out almost slogans.

A title, a word, typography, a picture or a cartoon used in order to attract attention of audience or readers and highlight some dramatic elements is worth a summary of the content. In other words, titles and images sometimes mirror the nature of the content while they are unrelated to the content but for sensational purposes only in some other cases. There are numerous newspapers, magazines and channels in France and Belgium. As it is not possible to scan them all of them one by one, we gave the priority to written and visual media that carry to the headlines the debate of visibility and headscarf of Muslim women as a topic never falling off European agenda.

The scanning was performed across both French and Belgian francophone written and visual media by using key words determined especially taking into consideration the period not only after but also before September 11, 2001. The framework of the scan was found to be exaggeration and distortion, insults, hostility and conflict and symbolization which caused emergence of hate speech. The key words were: headscarf (foulard-voile), veil (burqa-niqab), visibility (visibilité), discrimination (discrimination), Islamism (islamiste), insult, hate, exclusion, the other... The framework of our study consisted of following questions:

- Which events and actions have Muslim women come up? In which subjects has Muslim women's profile been used?
- What headline was used talking about Muslim women and what kind of a photo or video has been used in addition?
- What stereotypes do french and Belgian media applies to when Muslim women are concerned? What kind of an image are Muslim women presented with?
- Are there any differences while the media brings up Muslim women and while it presents them?

Hate Categories Used by Media in Otherising Muslim Women

A. Exaggeration, Distortion



1. Should Islamic Headscarf be banned in Universities? The question finds its answer with direction embedded in it. The news is introduced with the statement 'it is not know even what headscarf is'. The image of two veiled women is used (*Le Grand Soir*, 10.08.2013).

2. Minister responsible for women's rights is against headscarf in universities: French minister responsible for women's rights, Pascale Boistard explicitly stated that he is against wearing headscarf in university in an interview with *Le Figaro* (*Le Figaro TV*, 02.03.2015).

3. Headscarf on ID card: When A.Beyhan applied to Vise Municipality to renew her ID card, she was rejected because of her headscarf. The news was introduced with the headline 'Headscarf on ID card' (*Dhnet*, 10.07.2002).



4. "Islam: new demands in the workplace": Requests of Muslims in businesses are announced as unacceptable. Again an image of a veiled woman is used in the news (*Le Figaro*, 15.12.2009).

5. "Is it discriminatory to dismiss due to headscarf?" The news is presented with the question "Should an employee at Hema store be dismissed or not due to her headscarf?" (*References*, 09.03.2011).



6. "Islamic headscarf: Troubles caused by wearing headscarf at work are explained under the headline "discomfort in companies" and the necessity is indicated to protect the social groups sensitive to headscarf (*Le Figaro*, 07.02.2011).

7. “Brussels: Headscarf Ban Almost in All of the Schools”: The news explains that only two of the 98 schools in Brussels tolerate wearing of headscarf in school (*Le Vif*, 31.05.2012).



8. “Fear of Islam”: It is described that Islam is giving rise to many fears in France. In the news, fear of Islam is raised through disguise of a Muslim woman. Some veiled women are seen in the same frame as security forces in the image (*L’Express*, 27.09.2012).

9. “Islam in France still too male-dominated”: *Mariannes of Pluralism*, which criticizes not inclusion of women in the Islamic Council (CFCM), which has renewed its Board of Directors, criticizes the organization with the claim that Islam is under heavy dominance of male in France (*Le Figaro*, 20.06.2011).



10. *Le Nouvel Observateur* cover page “New Islamist Challenge. Under the example of Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, a woman in headscarf is used in the cover image (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, 02.11.2011).

11. ‘Baby-Loup case: debate around secularism with undetected borders’: The news raised the issue whether headscarf case is reconcilable with secularism (*Le Huffington Post*, 27.11.2013).
12. ‘Baby-Loup : Secularism in danger’: As stated in the title of the article, debate on headscarf is still made in relation with secularism. (*Le Figaro*, 16.10.2013).

It can be argued that the sample titles discussed in the context of exaggeration/distortions target fear against Islam and Muslims rather than being informative. As the most striking example, the headline news « fear of Islam» can be given. This headline news is creating a distorted perception that Islam gives rise to fears in France. When Muslim women become in question, headscarf takes the first place. In the Baby-Loup case, exaggeration is made by giving the impression that headscarf contradicts with secularism and thus secularism is in danger. Also male domination in France Islam was raised through headscarf. Pictures of Muslim women wearing a veil-headscarf are sometimes are used in a distorted way without content relevance. Pictures of veiled Muslim women accompany Islamophobia and security officials in France.

B. Hate Speech Creating Hostility and Conflict Environment

1. Two newspaper headlines dating back to the outbreak of the headscarf debate in France: *Le Figaro*: Once headscarf turns into weapon (*Le Figaro*, 18.10.1994) and *Politis*: Can France-Islam war take place? (*Politis*, 26.10.1994).
2. “These icons are bearers of ideological conflicts” (*La Croix*, 07.10 1994).
3. “Islamic civilization is coming. After settling in France, it is now rooting in schools with “tchador” in a symbolic way” (*Le Quotidien*, 18.10 1994).
4. “Battle of the kerchiefed” (*Le Canard Enchaîné*, 25.10.1994).
5. “Islamic headscarf event: Teachers, do not tilt head” (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, 02.11.1994).
6. “Tchador event. Teachers’ crusades against Islamic headscarf” (*Le Figaro*, 08.11 1994)
7. “Le Pen urged resistance [...] It called the President to duty for the defense of the whole country” (*Le Figaro*, 13.11.1994).
8. On Belgian television *La Une*, in a debate called *Mise au Point* on 26 October 2009, distinction was not drawn between «Islamism», «radicalism» and «headscarf» and the exact meaning of those concepts were not specified, also the debate was directed with questions such as «Is the headscarf scaring you? », «headscarf: Is Islam getting radical?» (*La Une*, 26.10.2009).
9. On the television programme called *Questions a La Une* on the channel *La Une* on 20 January 2012, the questions such as “Should headscarf be banned in schools? To liberate at any cost? Were used to discuss whether Islamic customs and traditions accord with male-female equality of the West and the principle of the state’s neutrality. By drawing attention to the increased number of veiled women in schools as much as in streets, it is expressed that there are in fact traditions behind headscarf (*La Une*, 20.01.2012).



10. In the issue titled “How does Islam threaten school-How does Islam necrotise school ?” (*Le Vif*, 29.08-04.09.2008), *Le Vif L'Express* received several reactions. Then, MRAX took action by saying that *Le Vif* magazine had the intention of threatening coexistence and turning it into gangrene.



11. “Islamism, no!: Le Pen youth” (*Le Monde*, 02.03.2010).

12. “School is not the place of faith” (*La Libre*, 14.07.2010).

13. *Le Figaro Magazine* cover: “Poll on radical Islam in France”. The cover of the magazine connects radicalization to veiled women (*Le Figaro Magazine*, 06.11.2009).

14. ‘Why Need to Forbid Headscarf In University?’ : The news states that Nicolas Sarkozy is against headscarf in universities (*Le Figaro*, 12.02.2015).

Headscarf is often used as a material in the section related with hostility and conflict environment. The perception is created that Islam declared war on France over the headscarf. Making the generalization that the number of women wearing a headscarf is increasing it is emphasized that headscarf is a representative of Islamism and radicalism as frightening things and schools are threatened by it. The news given by the newspaper *Le Monde* is already accompanied by the picture «Le Pen's campaign against Islamism; minarets standing as missiles on France map and veiled Muslim woman». Moreover, opposing/fighting the headscarf is compared to the crusades. As dealt in the headlines "Le Pen calls for resistance," each of the titles examined refers to Islam as a threat to France and Belgium and reminds the need to combat the «enemy». In addition, *Le Figaro* newspaper shared a survey with the title of Survey on Radical Islam in France with a picture of a veiled Muslim woman made the symbol of radicalization. We can say that publishing of such surveys by French and Belgian francophone media aims to shape the radicalization perception of the public opinion in Belgium and France.

C. Converting ethnic, religious and cultural affiliation into hate speech; symbolizing

1. ‘Islamic Headscarf: A Religious Obligation?’: The news emphasizes that headscarf is a symbol of Islamization rather than a religious duty (*AgoraVox*, 05.03.2008).
2. ‘Fighting Headscarves’: It is stated that headscarf symbolizes male dominance and enslaving of women (*Le Huffington Post*, 28.09.2014).
3. ‘To accept the Arab-Eastern part of France?’ The news criticizes the proposal of liberation of headscarf in schools in a report prepared by experts and submitted to Prime Minister of France (*L'Atlentico*, 13.13.2013).
4. ‘Old Discussion : 1989, secular republic against Islamic headscarf’ : The news shows the headscarf debate taking place in France as two poles which cannot compromise with each other as in the title (*Le Monde*, 02.08.2007).
5. ‘Islamic headscarf is a cover that covers the life’ In the news, headscarf is a request of a minority group which wants to cut Muslim women from the societies they live in (*Courrier International*, 30.10.20013).
6. “84 % of French people against headscarf in France” This news underlines that majority of the French people do not want the headscarf. Here, actually public guidance is made (*Media Presse 75*, 23.03.2013). Women in headscarf are used in the image.



7. “8 out of 10 French people do not want the headscarf in public outdoor private space”: In a survey conducted by IFOP, only 12 % is neutral and 4 % go with the headscarf (*FranceTvInfo*, 23.03.2013).



8. “Alain Finkielkraut: France is resisting the headscarf” the news states that headscarf is contrary to the principle of secularism (*Causeur*, 22.11.2011).



9. Headline of the Libération: “France or Burka?” The news is accompanied by an image of eyes of a veiled woman (*Libération*, 12.07.2008).

10. ‘Submission, Houellebecq brings to power the Muslim party in 2022 France’ : The novel Submission by Michel Houellebecq tells that France will be led by a Muslim Prime Minister in 2022 and radical Islam, which is enslaved by women, will be in power. The headline of the news is given in a striking manner (*L’Express*, 16.12.2014).
11. To Xavier Bertrand, all women in burka are stranger”¹ The news has clearly put out the UMP party minister’s attitude towards Muslim women wearing the veil (*Le Huffington Post*, 17.01.2010).
12. ‘Headscarf: If God enters the company...’ : The discussion is carried out whether headscarf will be free in public places, companies and work places (*Le Vif*, 30.03.2010).
13. ‘A photo with headscarf: No certificate : The news refers to the ‘Islam Document’ requested by municipalities for photos with headscarf on ID cards (*Le Soir*, 04.10.2012).
14. ‘School Started without Islamic Headscarf’ : The news reports that headscarf was banned in municipal schools of Charleroi and it was reported that the first day of school was without headscarf, but families insisted on sending their daughters in headscarf (*Le Soir*, 02.09.2010).
15. ‘Headscarf : The Great Fear of the Left Francophone’ (*La Libre*, 21.09.2013).
16. ‘Will Headscarf Be Banned in the Parliament?’ (*La Libre*, 10.03.2011).

The French and Belgian francophone Medias have used dramatic titles and pictures to convert the ethnic, religious and cultural belonging to hate speech. The surveys on the headscarf of Muslim women in France and Belgium are given as headlines. Also such news headlines as «France, or Muslim women's costume?», «Secular republic against Islamic headscarf» brings the Arab-Muslim block representing Islam against France including the Western values. As specified above, Samuel Huntington’s thesis of «clash of civilizations» never falls from the agenda of the French and Belgian francophone media. The otherising and alienating headlines by French and Belgian francophone media on the basis of differences in religion, language, ethnicity and culture legitimizes the idea that Islam is incompatible with democratic and secular values of Belgium and France, therefore Muslims are/should be treated as foreigners in France and Belgium.

Conclusion

We see that there is no difference between the attitude and discourse of French and Belgian francophone written and visual media towards Islam and Muslim women before and after September 11. Presentation of the Muslim woman emerges as a continuation of the Orientalist mindset: the effort to put forth the image of subjugated, domineered women in veil at every opportunity. Thus, the media depicts the Muslim woman as an object controlled by men in the society, therefore the perception is created that Muslim women lacks the ability to reason and act, that is dependent, and thus they cannot question patriarchal traditions sufficiently.

Another point found in our scanning is that there is almost no difference in expressions containing stereotyped hatred of all the French and Belgian francophone written and visual media. The French and Belgian francophone media's transferring their ideology with language and the language helps express the rhetoric and ideology together show that they use discourses which humiliate, vilify or condemn the addressed group due to its affiliation. In other words, Muslim women were seated in the centre of the discourse of intolerance and impatience up to insults due to their members of Islam.

News headlines and accompanying images and photos in the French and Belgian francophone media do not appear 'naive or innocent' at all: people are directed, they are told what is important and why it is important and it is also specified what people should think about these events. The presentations of the French and Belgian francophone media shape fears, prejudices and perceptions regarding Muslim women. To put it differently, French and Belgian francophone media imposes its own values and realities about Muslim women.

Holding the power in their hand to access to more people, the media mediates reaching more people, spreading and recurrence of hate speech. Consequently, the French and Belgian francophone media spreads stereotypes, bias and perceptions regarding Muslim women across the society, thus throws the social peace in danger by means its discourse with Orientalist associations.

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