



**COVERING THE MUSLIM WORLD: “FAIR AND
BALANCED” OR ISLAMOPHOBIC? AN
EXAMINATION OF FOX NEWS CHANNEL (FNC)
AND INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP (ICG)**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to examine if there are signs of Islamophobia in the works of two large entities – the media called Fox News Channel (FNC) and the think-tank called International Crisis Group (ICG). Both started to operate around the same time, 1996 and 1995, respectively and accumulated vast experience in what they do. Islamophobia is an exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility towards Islam and Muslims that is perpetuated by negative stereotypes resulting in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from social, political, and civic life. This was officially declared a problem by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in 2011, while the League of Arab States has identified Islamophobia as an important area of concern. In this research, it was contraposed to the neutral scholarly, professional approach according to the tradition of professional scholarship applied by Western scholars to studies of the Muslim world. The data analyzed were selected primarily from FNC website (articles and TV programmes), ICG (reports, articles) and other related websites, and chronologically framed for 2011–2013. In 2011, the Syrian problems started to escalate into protests and later on into the civil war, while ethnic tensions in Myanmar received new development with a series of massacres in different locations and rising wave of anti-Muslim violence. In 2013, both conflicts reached a ‘hot phase’, but the approach of the two agencies in question to the issues of Syria and Myanmar was different since different geopolitical interests were at stake for each of them. The research found that although there are vivid signs of Islamophobia in the work of FNC when it concerns a wide range of issues, from Tahrir square events in Egypt until domestic matters in the USA, in the case of Syria, both FNC and ICG demonstrates rather Orientalist approach in its negative sense based on the continuously promoted need for the Western governments to intervene or make any decision with regards to the events happening in the two Asian countries. Thus, sometimes distortion or selective choice of facts served to the Orientalist purpose as set by Edward Said – to control and manage the Orient. ICG reports may serve as a useful source of information if read with a certain extent of criticism. As for FNC, since it has turned to be an absolute antipode of its motto ‘Fair & Balanced’ and to put forward opinions instead of facts, it is not recommended to be watched unless for a purpose of media study. The results do not fully confirm the hypothesis, but to modify it as the methods of covering the events were thoroughly investigated in the process. Their target audience and style of broadcasting ideas and findings are different, but the urge to create condition where the Orient can be better managed by the Occident is similar for both of them, while expressed in a differing manner.

خلاصة البحث

سعت هذه الدراسة لتحديد ما إذا كانت هناك دلائل على نهج الإسلاموفوبيا في عمل كيانين كبيرين - في مجال وسائل الإعلام دعت قناة فوكس نيوز (FNC) (المجلس الوطني الاتحادي) ومنظمة أخرى تسمى المجموعة الدولية لمعالجة الأزمات (ICG). وكلاهما بدا العمل في الوقت نفس تقريبا - 1995 و1996 على التوالي، وتراكت لديها خبرة واسعة في ما يفعلونه. الإسلاموفوبيا بوصفه الخوف المبالغ فيه، والكراهية، والعداء تجاه الإسلام والمسلمين التي ترتكبها الصور النمطية السلبية الناتجة من التحيز والتمييز والتهميش والإقصاء من المسلمين من الحياة الاجتماعية والسياسية والمدنية، وكانت هذه المشكلة أعلنت رسميا من قبل الأمم المتحدة في تحالف الحضارات في عام 2011؛ حددت جامعة الدول العربية الإسلاموفوبيا بوصفه مجالا مهما للقلق. في هذا البحث تمت مقارنة ذلك عند علماء محايدين، بنهج مهني وفقا للتقاليد العلمية المهنية المطبقة من قبل الباحثين الغربيين في دراسات العالم الإسلامي. بعد اختيار البيانات تم تحليلها في المقام الأول من الموقع FNC (المقالات والبرامج التلفزيونية)، ICG (تقارير، مقالات) وغيرها من المواقع ذات الصلة، ويندرج في الإطار الزمني 2011-2013. في عام 2011 بدأت المشكلات، السورية إلى تصعيد في الاحتجاجات، وفي وقت لاحق تحوّلت إلى حرب أهلية، في حين تلقت التوترات العرقية في ميانمار تطورا جديدا مع سلسلة من المجازر في مواقع مختلفة وارتفاع موجة العنف المعادية للمسلمين. في عام 2013 وصل كلا الصراعين الى "مرحلة ساخنة"، ولكن منهج الوكالتين في مناقشة قضيتي سوريا وميانمار كان مختلفا بما أن هناك مصالح جيوسياسية مختلفة على المحك في كل منهما. وبينت نتائج الدراسة أنه على الرغم من وجود دلائل حية عن الإسلاموفوبيا في عمل (FNC) عندما يتعلق بمجموعة واسعة من القضايا، من أحداث ميدان التحرير في مصر حتى المسائل المحلية في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، وفي حالة سوريا أظهرت كل (FNC) و (ICG) سلك المستشرقون المنهج السلبي القائم على ضرورة التشجيع المستمر للحكومات الغربية بالتدخل أو جعل أي قرار فيما يتعلق بالأحداث التي تحدث في اثنين من البلدان الآسيوية. وهكذا، وأحيانا كان التشويه أو الاختيار الانتقائي للحقائق، يخدم أغراض المستشرقين كما تناولها إدوارد سعيد - لمراقبة وإدارة المشرق. تقارير ICG قد تكون مصدرا مفيدا للمعلومات إذا تم قراءتها مع مستوى معين من النقد. أما بالنسبة FNC، لأنه تحوّل فأصبح نقيضا مطلقا عن شعارها "معرض ومتوازن" ووضع الآراء في الأمام بدلا من الحقائق، فمن غير المستحسن أن يشاهد إلا لغرض الدراسة وسائل الإعلام. يبدو أن النتائج لم تؤكد الفرضية تماما، ولكن لتعديله بما أن طرق وصف الأحداث جرى التحقيق بها بدقة خلال العملية. جمهورهم المستهدف وأسلوب بث الأفكار والنتائج كانت مختلفة، ولكن الرغبة في خلق حالة المشرق بأن يدار من قبل الغرب كما تراها المنظمات.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts (Muslim World Issues).

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Supervisor

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“The real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the workings of institutions that appear to be both neutral and independent, to criticize and attack them in such a manner that the political violence that has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight against them.”

— Michel Foucault, *The Chomsky - Foucault Debate: On Human Nature*
(Chomsky, Foucault, 2006)

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In a 2011 meeting, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, as well as the League of Arab States identified Islamophobia as an important area of concern. In the topic of this thesis Islamophobia is juxtaposed to the ‘fair and balanced’ approach, as Islamophobia as negatively colored, motivated by emotions and ignorance phenomenon needs to be related to a neutral, academic approach to the analysis of the Muslim world affairs. Phrasing ‘fair and balanced’ was chosen for a reason as it also stands for the motto of the Fox News, whose work will be analyzed here. This balanced approach could be, indeed, defined as ‘Orientalism’ in its pre-Saidian scholarly sense, but to avoid ambiguity concerning various academic interpretations of Orientalism we use a more concrete term.

Therefore, to Islamophobia as to an exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims that is perpetuated by negative stereotypes resulting in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from social, political,

and civic life, we contrapose the neutral scholarly, professional approach according to the tradition of professional scholarship applied by Western scholars to studies of the Muslim world.

The purpose of this study is to examine the approach taken by the Western analytical and news agencies in investigating the Muslim world affairs. Various news agencies and analytical centers have different sources of funding, reflect different interests and pursue different goals. That explains why the scope of this research is limited to the case study of only two agencies, namely the Fox News and the International Crisis Group (ICG). Occasionally they seem to promote certain views about the Muslim world. In this format the results cannot be applied to all the Western think-tanks and news agencies, but give a tentative understanding of the intellectual environment that produces certain conclusions, the particular mindset and schemes that affect the investigation process.

The research is undertaken in order to find out whether those agencies adhere to the policy of objective, non-partisan coverage of the events in the Muslim world or there are signs of the ideology-driven approach in their observations. Based on preliminary observations there are reasons to believe that their approach is influenced by a number of factors that make the assessments biased and ideologically motivated.

If for the Fox News the biases, if there are any, must be traceable through the content of the broadcasts, for ICG it must be extracted from the nature of their reports and more invisible part of their activity, which is advocacy for certain decisions based on the findings they present. As ICG itself claims in its Mission and Method statement, their target is to provide the accomplished analysis with a strong advocacy at the governmental and intergovernmental level. Thus, the target is explicitly stated as to exert the ICG's influence on the decision-making. For example, the statement reads:

“Beijing office ensures Crisis Group’s influence in China”. It speaks about the necessity to influence the formation of political will and implicitly, to mobilize it at the particular direction: “All too often the missing ingredient is the “political will” to take the necessary action. Crisis Group’s task is not to lament its absence but to work out how to mobilise it”¹. Thus the question is if it is possible to stay objective while advocating for certain interests? As far as ICG itself states advocacy as its target and apparently gathered enough influence to do that through the back door channels, there is an issue to investigate – what are the substance and end goals of this advocacy.

1.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The alleged kind of approach is destructive for several reasons: it harms the Western scope of knowledge and expertise in analyzing the Muslim world; it confuses the Muslim scholarship by bringing in the conclusions based on false premises; it kindles the flame of Islamophobia in the West; it distorts perceptions of Muslims about themselves provoking anti-Islamic attitudes in Muslim societies; it artificially strengthens theory of the clash of civilizations and enhances reproduction of the same outlook fraught with serious conflicts between East and West in future. Besides, the dominative approach of the Western scholars to the Eastern and Muslim affairs in particular hampers the international academic and political engagement, deprives humanitarian studies of fluent exchange of opinions, consuming the time of academia and politicians for diplomacy and breaking stereotypes instead of positive engagement to solve the problems of universal significance or tackle threats to international security.

¹ E.g. see ICG Annual Report (2014). *ICG*, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Annual%20Reports/2014.ashx> (accessed 1 Nov. 2015)

The described view proved to be contagious not only on the West but in the Muslim world itself causing corrosion of its axiological approach to analyzing events and offering solutions to political problems. At the end, discourse forms consciousness that is why it is a regulative body.

Therefore, it was found necessary to dissect the way two large agencies produce the coverage for affairs related to the Muslim world and expose their inclinations towards Islamophobia instead of holding to less or more objective assessment of situations.

It must be remarked that there were different investigative reports about various Western think tanks, especially published in the web. They mostly appealed to the connections between members of the executive boards of certain organizations, businesses, and political actors in order to expose the dominating interests in their agenda. However, it must be stressed that a complete research combining the investigation on background of the particular organization as well as the qualitative textual analysis is necessary. It would not be enough to only discuss the background and financing, because the work of an organization can be strictly professional, without traces of Islamophobic thinking or attempts to serve cater political or financial interests, disregarding the implications about the sources of finance. Thorough textual analysis must be conducted in order to estimate if the agency has an inclination towards an Islamophobic paradigm. Hence, it was decided to approach the issue from both sides: origin of the organization, including the means of financing, and its real performance reflected in publications.

It is presumed that this kind of research, although based on cases of two particular organizations, will make an input into contemporary studies of the Orient and

some approaches, which have not been overcome by contemporary Western humanities and journalism or instead were even revived recently.

It is supposed to be an input for the Muslim Ummah cause in particular. The criticism of some Western practices is not meant to strengthen the well-established clash of civilizations mindset. The research is undertaken for Muslim academicians as well as lay Muslims to once again contemplate about the importance of moderation, this time by appealing to practice instead of religious tenets (which meanwhile constitute the theoretical basis). Muslims should be aware of the perils coming from anywhere (including Muslim societies and people's own *nafs*) that target unity and the Islamic spirit of compassion and acceptance of "the other".

If it is an established fact that certain agencies directly or implicitly preach an Islamophobic approach in analyzing the Muslim world affairs, it should not be a direct recommendation to Ummah to express hostility towards everything related to the source. Instead, it should teach Muslims to strengthen their knowledge and strategies of interaction in order to mitigate the possible conflicts and promote their own agenda. That is why when it is exposed that certain institutes work whether against the image of Islam and Muslims or more subtly – to promote the old colonial mindset, nowadays in the form of cultural and economic domination, the Ummah and its members should be aware and prepared to rebuff it, first of all intellectually.

Against the background of the recent discussion about the "aggressive nature of Islam and Muslims" that took place mostly in America following the Islamic State (IS) group insurgency in Iraq and Syria since summer 2014, was strengthened by the controversial attack on Paris based caricature journal "Charlie Hebdo" in January 2015, and some other incidents of a negative character that involved Muslims, the task of

intellectual counteraction to the attempts of distorting the image of Islam and Muslims acquires a huge contemporary significance.

1.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research sets the following points as its objectives:

- To investigate the origin of Fox News Channel (FNC) (as a part of the larger Fox Entertainment Group) and International Crisis Group (ICG), the links between its staff, executive board members and funding by politicians and businesses with particular interest in promoting their agendas through these entities;
- To conduct qualitative contextual analysis of the work of Fox News and ICG;
- To conclude if Fox News and ICG adhere to the Islamophobic approach in their policies;
- To give recommendations to Muslim community on how to provide a wise intellectual response to the Islamophobic approach of aforementioned organisations and alike if there are any of them detected.

1.4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Once the discussion concerns the objectivity of the approach to the Muslim world in the modern context, one inevitably refers to the landmark work by Edward Said called “Orientalism” (1978), which first systematized a framework for critique of the West-centered approach to the Eastern affairs. Said attributed the ‘Orientalist’ approach to the needs of colonialism (although he traced the roots of phenomenon back to the ancient times). However, after collapse of the colonial system the ‘Orientalist’ approach

in the way defined by Said was not eliminated from the Western academic studies and political narrative. Some studies and reports continued to follow the approach of construing the image of “the other” and some of them serve to the interests of establishing post-colonial domination. Many events of contemporary history still uncover their real meaning if to look at them considering the lens of ‘Orientalism’ as re-interpreted by Said.

Said’s book is unlikely to serve as a framework though because of many criticisms of its consistency, however it was the most powerful one to offer a significant critique of the Western approach to the study of the Orient. For example, there is no clear answer if there is “a real Orient” that Said was protecting from the constructed realities? As somewhere he denied an existence of such a thing, but then implied it when criticizing Orientalists for distorting it.

The application of the Said’s work to this study does not mean the simplistic call upon unmasking the “enemies of Islam” but suggests a balanced unemotional approach to dissecting the strategies of reporting and analysis by two particular agencies. In fact, Said’s concerns will be addressed by dissecting Islamophobic orientation in approaches of the chosen agencies, if there is any, by this way absorbing grievances about the negative aspects of Oriental studies. On the other hand we will have left the refined scholarly, fair and balanced approach to contrapose it to Islamophobic attitudes.

In another work titled “Covering Islam” (1981) Said points out at the necessity of providing a proper training to journalists in order for them to deliver the truthful picture to the reader. However, we argue here, the matter is not only in the training, but in the whole environment giving rise to a particular worldview.

The most professional critic of Said’s work, Orientalist Bernard Lewis, in his article *The Question of Orientalism* (Lewis, 1982) reproaches Said in being incoherent

and selective in his book. In Lewis's opinion Orientalism as a name for a discipline, abandoned now due to mostly ethical reasons, has no such a problem as Said labeled it with and does not reflect the malice nature of the Eastern studies. The interesting point Lewis suggests in there is that the Orientalists themselves indeed have always been the strongest critics of themselves and Orientalism. The appearance of Said's *Orientalism* points out at the existence of the other point of view, more critical to the works of Western Orientalists of the time. However, the strength of Lewis's argument lies in his deep knowledge of Middle Eastern history and the academic coverage of it. The experts from Fox News or ICG that we will refer to in the study might not always have the knowledge comparable to the one Lewis has but the distortion of the logical chains leading to certain conclusions must be challenged based on the strong argument without emotions.

In *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism* (1994) Bryan S. Turner outlines the concurring role of postmodernism and Islam as 'movements' able to provide an alternative to capitalism after the collapse of communism. In our mind, the type of coverage Western agencies provide for the Muslim World are not only power motivated but also a reflection of post-modernist scattered mindset, also stroke by the culture of consumerism.

It would be unfair to bypass the work of the 20th century Iranian intellectual Jalal Al-i Ahmad and his most known work, *Gharbzadegi* (1978) (translated as *Occidentosis: A Plague from the West*, 1984). Such a person as Al-i Ahmad was unlikely to become a harbinger of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran due to his own frivolous lifestyle and yet Ali Shariati and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini drew their

inspiration out of Al-i Ahmad's ferocious critics of Iran's Westernization². The point relevant to this study made by *Gharbzadeghi's* author is the criticism of citing the Western books as infallible authority. "Even when he [the Oriental] wants to learn about the East, he resorts to Western sources. It is for this reason that orientalism (almost certainly a parasite growing on the root of imperialism) dominates thought and opinion in the occidentotic nations" (Al-i Ahmad, 1984: 27). The argument is important up to nowadays because the construction of self-imposed frameworks, assessments, and values still takes place. That is why reference to the Western sources which are not always free of prejudgments and bias about Islam, Muslims and the East, does not always render a good service to Muslims and Easterners in general. While relying on the sources provided by Western researchers based on their own worldview and set of values, Orientals start constructing another reality violating the principle of historical continuity of their own civilization. For this reason Al-i Ahmad lamented that his fellow compatriots had become "the playthings of orientalists" (Al-i Ahmad, 1984: 75). We would not agree with the total conspiracy about Western programmed developments in the Middle East and Asia, but would like to use the reference to Al-i Ahmad to underline again the importance of producing the right picture by critical assessment of media and think tanks materials.

Indeed to estimate the positive input of the Western Orientalist school one must refer to the *British Orientalists* (A.J. Arberry, 1943) where the reader learns about noble and knowledgeable personalities of the British researchers of the Orient of 17-19 centuries. The indigenous character of people brought up by their culture is probably impossible to abandon, no matter how deep their affection with another culture is.

² It is worth to notice here that Gharbzadeghi's main impact on intellectual discussion was observed mostly in Iran. The Arab world also produced its own critics of Orientalism and Westernization.

However, studies might be done with the inquisitive strife for knowledge or, to the opposite, superficially, without a proper mastering of languages and field research. The orientalists, which Arberry refers to, were passionate people, most of the times meticulous to the details and portrayed the example of inquisitive study of a high quality.

In *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and its Discontents* (2006) Robert Irwin provides a thorough observation of Orientalist history and the critics of Orientalism. What is important about this book is that the author also exposes the weaknesses of the works by critics of Orientalism, emphasizing the factual and logical mistakes. This calls the author of this humble study to stay very professional, unbiased and meticulous in details carefully assessing the chosen cases.

Indeed, modern critics of Orientalism in the Saidian sense remark that “in concert, the recurrence of cultural conflicts and the negative perceptions of Muslim majorities tend to be treated in the West as, first, a reflection of the supposed defects of Islam and Muslim peoples, and, second, of the presumed paranoia that ‘infects’ Muslim thought.” [Ismael, Rippin, 2001:7]. “Despite the veneer of secularism in public Northern discourses, the age-old conceptualization of the Christian Self pitted against the Muslim Other appears to colour contemporary thinking.” [Ismael, Rippin, 2001:171]. Orientalists still tend to “naturally associate the large absence of democratic rule in Muslim countries with the specific role of the Islamic religion” [Ismael, Rippin, 2001:20], which is quite pertinent to this research as it is addressing the event of the so-called Arab Spring.

1.5. THEORETIC FRAMEWORK

Islamophobia is an exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility towards Islam and Muslims that is perpetuated by negative stereotypes resulting in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from social, political, and civic life. For the purpose of this study Islamophobia is considered akin to the negative connotation of Orientalism as an institutionalized practice based on the presumption that the Muslim world as a part of the Orient (East) is less developed, less civilized and thus must be culturally and economically dominated and politically controlled. This approach resorts to broad generalizations simplifying the picture of the Orient, which became even more diverse in the era of postmodernism. Fair and balanced approach is applied here in contrast Islamophobia.

The research does not apply Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) as a theory and with all the critique about his conclusions it probably would be better to use the masterpiece as a starting point and broader framework for the study. Said underlined the aforementioned characteristics of Orientalism more than 35 years ago but the prejudiced approach in covering or analyzing Orient has not been debunked. Nowadays, with the rise of *Da'esh*, or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), or later renamed to the Islamic State (IS), the Muslim world has met even a bigger challenge. Again it is being accused of being aggressive, violent, not able to adapt to the requirements of modernity. So the Muslim academia had to become defensive to rebuff accusations based on constructed suppositions. That is why here we address the issue of how those premises are constructed by media and think tanks.

The research contains four chapters, which apart from the introduction and conclusion two main chapters are accordingly devoted to the analysis of Fox News Channel and International Crisis Group coverage policies. Each chapter will address the

same issues in order to make a comparison between their styles as well. There are two issues chosen for the analysis. The major one is the events of the so-called Arab Spring, the chain of uprisings, riots and civil wars in the Arab world (within the timeframe of 2011–2013), where Syrian civil war was chosen in particular. The proposal for this research stated as its goal investigating the reporting style of two organizations/media on the events of the so-called Arab Spring. However, due to the prolific reporting by both of them it was decided to narrow down the focus to the work they have done on Syrian conflict. The minor issue brought up to check on the findings about the general stand of the two institutions is the case of Myanmar, its formally post-military rule and the situation with the Muslim ethnic group Rohingya.

The *hypothesis* of this research is that the FNC taken as a case study for the media coverage and ICG taken as a case study for a think-tank, at times demonstrate signs of the Islamophobic approach (as defined above for the purpose of this study) in covering and analyzing events in the Muslim world. This is only a hypothesis and it is to be tested in the course of this study. On the opposite, this work may equally result in establishing that the agencies approach is neutral, rather than leaning towards a particular ideological stand.

The definition of the Islamophobia was provided, however the main difficulty is in operationalizing it. How to detect the deviation from the objective version of events in the direction of creating the story of Islamophobic character? We will try to follow the historical version of the events maximally refined from the emotions and bias to compare it with the way of coverage by the two chosen agencies. Hence, there are tentative questions to answer in order to establish, whether the particular report or group of reports are bringing an input to the negative image of Islam or indifferent to the cases that require attention:

- Is there a clear understanding by the author(s) of the difference between the tenets of religion and its various expressions?
- Are there indicators pointing directly or indirectly that Muslim civilization is less developed and has a lower potential for development than the Western one? Is there any attempt to portray Islam as monolithic and non-adaptable to new realities?
- Are there attempts to connect the acts of terrorism with the religion of Islam (for example, by arguing that aggression is an immanent feature of those who adhere to the religion) or to compare Islam with another religions (for example, by conceptualizing the creative power of religions other than Islam, and accusing Islam as a source of counter-productivity)?
- Are there attempts to entice hatred against the religion of Islam and Muslims based on a constructed statement?
- Is there any indirect/silent support for the actions targeting Muslims because of their religious affiliation?
- Are there any broad generalizations simplifying the whole picture of the event?

The questions are only tentative and the list can be expanded to satisfy particular needs in the process of this research based on case by case basis.

We should consider the evaluative nature of the research, even if answers to the questions seem to be correct and exhaustive. In some cases the deviant coverage can be caused not by the application of the Islamophobic approach consciously to form a certain public opinion or simply based on a set of values of its authors. Some wrongful commentaries can originate from the lack of knowledge or incorrect information underlying the conclusions. We also do not know if some of the analyzed articles and

reports were produced absolutely independently or with the outside influence (including an order by the top management of an agency to produce a certain material). This does not have a strategic significance, because we are not interested in what exactly provoked the Islamophobic approach to be applied. For academic purpose it is enough to establish the nature of the material and general orientation of the agency. At the same time the factual information about bias that might have taken place would help to estimate particular materials.

1.6. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The undertaken study is qualitative and based on two case studies. It is supposed to make a selection of texts on every indicated topic for each case study in order to examine if they contain the traces of the Islamophobic attitude. It turned to be a time consuming effort to collect and analyze all the data but provided a good observation of where the selected agencies stand in their approach to the affairs related to the Muslim world. The study did not aim to generate a new theory or give any theoretical development to an existing one, but to confirm that the narrative of powerful Western agencies adheres to the Islamophobic approach, or refute it.

Thus, the study was mostly based on the qualitative textual analysis. The method resembles the one derived from Michel Foucault's theories that refers to the establishment of domination and exercise of power by the means of language. Therefore, there was an attempt to track how this end purpose might have been explicated through the texts about a number of issues. Data was gathered from the websites of the respective institutions as well as from the outside sources, such as news platforms, think tanks resources, investigative portals, and private blogs. The author

adheres to Kant's tradition about impossibility of pure cognition and yet, tried her best to accomplish the research as unbiased as possible.

Examples of linguistic instruments that were checked are figurativeness, vocabulary and argumentation types. Thus, in addition to the mentioned general questions the following points were checked:

- The kind and form of argumentation
- Certain argumentation strategies
- The intrinsic logic and the composition of texts/TV programs
- Implications and insinuations that are implicit in some way
- The collective symbolism of 'figurativeness', symbolism, metaphorism, and so on both in language and in graphic contexts (statistics, photographs, pictures, caricatures and so on)
- Idioms, sayings, clichés, vocabulary and style
- Actors (persons, pronominal structure)
- References (for example, to the science(s))
- Particulars on the sources of knowledge, and so on [Wodak, Meyer, 2001:25]³

The critical discourse analysis method qualitatively applied here also suggests the following strategic questions that with an extent of adjustment can be applied to the study:

1. How persons named and referred to linguistically?
2. What are traits, characteristics, qualities and features attributed to them?

³ As suggested by Siegfried Jäger

3. By means of what argumentation schemes do specific persons or social groups try to justify and legitimize the exclusion, discrimination, suppression and exploitation of others?
4. From what perspective or point of view are these labels, attributions and arguments expressed?
5. Are there respective utterances articulated overtly? Are they intensified or are they mitigated? [Wodak, Meyer, 2001:72-73].

1.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the background of the study. It explained what hypothesis is in the basis of this research, research objectives, conceptual and theoretical framework. The introduction presented that for the case study there were two agencies picked up – Fox News Channel and the International Crisis Group. Each of them will be investigated in order to detect signs of Islamophobic/Orientalist approach in their work or to establish the absence of such an approach and, vice versa, the fair and balanced nature of their work.