

Superpower Syndrome: The Enduring Debate on Pro-Americanism and Anti-Americanism in Foreign Media

Ayesha Ashfaq^{1,2} & Adnan Bin Hussein¹

¹ School of Communication, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

² Institute of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab Lahore, Pakistan

Correspondence: Ayesha Ashfaq, School of Communication, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang 11800, Malaysia.
Tel: 60-16-400-3404. E-mail: shfqysh@gmail.com

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Abstract

The media inclination towards pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism is not a new phenomenon because being a superpower, the United States is one of those nations who has been facing acute image problem since World War II. It is the media which plays an influential role in constructing and depicting the foreign images. So, this paper aims at analyzing the images of the United States that is largely constructed and represented by foreign media. It was observed that the image of the United States has been changed from positive to negative and vice versa with changing its foreign relations, political policies and audience preferences. This paper further discussed the image of the United States as 'unilateralist', 'imperialist' and 'ethnocentric' superpower in European media with reference to scenarios of post World War II and Cold War based on the ideological, cultural and political differences and clash of civilization with Europe. It further analyzed the role of the United States as 'hegemonic', 'aggressive', 'barbaric', 'peace destructor', 'biased', 'deceitful' and 'hypocrite' after 9/11 not only in Middle East and Asian countries but also in the most of the countries of the world.

Keywords: foreign media images, political communication, international communication, foreign relations

1. Introduction

The images of the most influential nations and their political players in the world have been one of the major interests of the scholars since World War II. World War II was the combination of the series of events that changed the global distribution of power. There were six world's great powers before World War II i.e. Great Britain, France, Germany, the Soviet Union, Japan and the United States but after World War II, the status of the great powers almost changed. Finally, the United States and the Soviet Union arose as major powers (see Table 1).

The United States entered the post war era with a great and unique position because its rivals got defeated and its allies got exhausted. Approximately 410,000 US citizens were killed during World War II but the farms, factories, mines and transportation networks of the US escaped unharmed (Painter, 1999). During the war time, the US economy got doubled and covered almost the half world's manufactures and productions including food surpluses and technology for modern warfare. The United States was in the position to possess the extensive domestic energy supplies and vast oil reserves from Latin America and Middle East in 1947. It was also recognized as the country of possessing "mightiest military machine". It was the time when the US was known as the prestigious superpower because

The US Navy controlled the sea, US airpower dominated the skies, and the United States alone possessed atomic weapons and the means to deliver them. In addition, the US role in the defeat of fascism and the US espousal of such principles as the four freedoms (freedom of speech and worship, freedom from want and fear) had earned tremendous international prestige for the United States. (Painter, 1999, p. 5)

In the result of World War II, the bipolar world system emerged and divided the world in two major powers yet the Soviet Union got almost devastated. Around 20-27 million Soviet citizens were dead. The Soviets did not have any long range air defense system. Its military capacity was also lagged behind the United States. These two major powers were not only different from each other on the basis of the military and defense capacities but also on ideologies.

Table 1. A summary of the events that changed the distribution of world's power

Global Wars	1. The World War I 2. The World War II
Two revolutions	1. The Chinese 2. The Russian (both were of extreme scope and intensity)
The collapse of five empires	1. The Ottoman Empire 2. The Austro-Hungarian Empire 3. The German Empire 4. The Italian Empire 5. The Japanese Empire
The severe decline of two imperial systems	1. The British Imperial System 2. The French Imperial System
Rise of two major powers	1. The United States 2. The Soviet Union

Source: (Painter, 1999)

The United States introduced the vision of large amount of modern technology, material goods, individual freedom, consumer society and system of capitalism. On the other hand, the Soviet Union emphasized on a society with common and shared goals, and a system of collectivism and communism. The bipolar system of world (1945-1989) ended with cold war. Though, it was comparatively peaceful period where there was no war between major powers rather superpowers supported different countries in different conflicts. Especially Asia and Africa were the grounds of major rivalries (Babones, 2013). This period was recognized as an ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. But when the Soviet Union entered Afghanistan in order to expand Communism in Middle East, the US with the help of Pakistan and the support of Saudi Arab defeated Soviets.

Now this was the moment when bipolar world politics was shifted to unipolar world politics that made the US as the only superpower of the world but it divided the people in two schools of thought. One of them was of the view that this was 'the end of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of government'. Fukuyama (1989) added that the United States has emerged as a world 'leader' and 'indispensable nation power of new order (as cited in Jiang & Baig, 2013). It was further argued that the end of the Cold War led the world to the age of globalization and capitalism and it was feared that the world would be dominated by American capital interests and culture. So this was the period where the anti-Americanism was more associated with anti-globalization (O'Connor, 2004). In addition, anti-Americanism was seen for its influence on World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) etc.

On the other hand, Wohlforth (1999) viewed the unipolar world system as a stable time for more peace, harmony and prosperity across the world because there will be no major power conflicts and rivalries in unipolar system of the United States. Moreover, it was argued that this system will be more durable if the United States plays its right card. He further added that "one needs to admit the effective contribution of the United States in transforming the world system on equal basis focusing more on democratic norms advocates societal equity and freedom of rights" (Wohlforth, 1999, p. 5).

After Cold War, the US as the only super power has been criticized openly for its ideologies, culture and policies. O'Connor (2004) added that

Amongst many in the anti-globalization movement, 'America' has become a code word for all the various ills of the world, reminiscent of its use in the mid-nineteenth century, when 'America was already a synonym in certain French circles for whatever was disturbing or unfamiliar about the present. (p. 85)

With the history of widespread anti-Americanism after Cold War, the attacks of September 11, 2001 on World Trade Center in New York added more skepticism about America from the rest of the world. It was very surprising not only for the world but also for the Americans to see that how the world and its media viewed the United States. It was so astonishing for the US government and its public that they have been asking again and

again that 'why do they hate' with reference to the negative image of the United States in war against terrorism after 9/11 attacks. The answer of this question was 'the biased and wrong policies of the US'. In the beginning of the war against terrorism initiated by George W. Bush (former President of the US), some states stood with the US policies like the United Kingdom while some countries in the world adopted the policy of being neutral and non-aligned states. But majority of the states were anti-Americans. Pettersson (2011) argued that "paralleling the turbulent changes in the political environment and public opinion regarding the United States, its image and role as a global leader has varied considerably throughout the last decade" (p. 36). Though since World War II, the debate on image of the US in the world has been one of the important issues yet after 9/11, it has become the key chapter of the discussion at every political platform across the world. All the countries and their media have obsessed with the image construction of the US and have been suffering from 'superpower syndrome'. The global mass media including television, radio, newspapers, blogs, internet social networking and websites are busy in playing a considerable role in constructing and shaping the image of the US.

2. The Image of the US in World's Media & the Debate on Pro-Americanism & Anti-Americanism

Literature showed that the intensity and the level of anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism in the world's media differ from one country to another country due to different reasons. For instance, Zunes and Stephen (2008) argued that in North Africa and Middle East, the rise of anti-Americanism was due to imbalanced and biased policies and double standards of the US towards the world. Similarly, Bhatta (2008) argued that in Arab Middle East, the anti-Americanism is the severe in nature especially in Syria, Iran and Sudan but Saudi Arab and Jordan are pro-Americans. Whereas, Park (2007) found while examining the US image in Korean media that "the change in Korean attitude towards the US was an heir wave of anti-Americanism which was basically a protest against hegemonic influence of the US" (as cited in Khan & Safdar, 2010, p. 327).

So the phenomena of anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism have been an interesting dimension for the researchers to investigate and discuss. Some of the researches regarding the image of the United States in the world's media are the following:

2.1 The US Image in European Media Discourse

The US image in the European media has been constantly unfavorable since World War II. The major reason behind this was the clash of ideologies As Kagan (2002) argued that

American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Kant's 'perpetual peace.'" The United States, meanwhile, remains mired in history, exercising power in the anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable and where true security and the defense and promotion of liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might. That is why on major strategic and international questions today, Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus: They agree on little and understand one another less and less.

The image of the US more crumbled during the invasion of Iraq in 2002-2003. The images of the anti-Americanism in European media were almost the anti-Bushism because the European media did not support the policies of President George W. Bush especially regarding the invasion of Iraq (Risse, 2008).

As Kores (1996) argued that

Much of the European imagery of the US is really a matter of comparison between the two-high versus low, depth versus flatness, old versus new, organic cohesion versus dissociation- and is related to the anticipation or dread felt by Europeans as they see their own future related to what is happening in America. (pp. 14-15)

Moreover, Riegiert and Pettersson (2011) examined the image of the US on the basis of the US presidents, policies and the historical foreign relationships in the media of four European states including Finland, Sweden, France and Russia. The elite media of all countries were critical regarding the 'hegemonic unilateralism' (p. 5) of the US with the rest of the world. Till 2009, the images of anti-Americanism or anti-Bushism were dominated in the elite media but in 2009, in all five countries' media gave positive representation of the US "signals of multilateralism and dialogue while announcing varying degree of skepticism or admiration regarding President Obama 'star power' or mastery of the media" (p. 9). It was further added that European countries were not against the US in general rather it was the Bush administration which made them to portray negative,

Furthermore, there has also been an ongoing debate on the image of the US in the German Media since 1950s but especially after the end of Cold War, reunification of Germany and its decision not to support the US in war

against Iraq during post 9/11 have encouraged the researchers and commentators to study the image of the US (Pettersson, 2011; Forsberg, 2005; Karp, 2005; Maull, 2005; Szabo, 2004). Though it is also true that Germany is considered as one of the most Americanized countries in Europe (Fluck, 2004; Nolan, 2005) yet this negative image was provoked due to the negative response of the German public towards specific American policies and culture (Nolan, 2005).

Scholars argued that media discourse regarding the US image in the Germany changed totally inverse in 2002 and 2003 after 9/11. According to Szabo (2004), “the German view of America will never be what it was before the Bush Presidency” (p. 43). Similarly, Berman (2004) argued that “September 2001 and its aftermath proved to be turning point in European Anti-Americanism, which has become increasingly open and acceptable attitude” (p. xii). In the similar way, Lehmann (2005) also added that “the media did not critically distance themselves from growing anti-Americanism during war in Iraq” (p. 85). Most of the times, television news reports portrayed the US image during the Bush administration very negatively. But on the contrary, Woods (2005) conducted a study on press coverage of the US image from nine countries including Germany. He concluded that German and Lithuanian press covered most positive images of the US regarding the aftermaths of 9/11.

Similarly, Pettersson (2011) also investigated the US image in two German newspapers *FAZ* (Right wing German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*) and *SZ* (left wing German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*) during four presidencies of the US. He observed that during Reagan’s Presidency, the image of the US was portrayed positively as one of the superpower and Reagan himself was depicted as a very confident, tough and strong President. In the next regime of Bill Clinton, the image of the US was depicted as the only superpower of the world and Clinton was portrayed as “domestic President” (p. 40) and “Foreign-Trade President” (Kaps, 1994) but on the other side, in some articles of the *FAZ*, Clinton was also represented as “passive, cautious and almost cowardly when it comes to foreign affairs” (p. 41).

He further added that while representing the Bush administration, he was described as the president of war, “relentless, fierce, aggressive, confrontational, even an imperialist, an occupier and a crusader” (Pettersson, 2011, p. 41). He was represented as a man who divided the world in good and bad on the basis of the biased religious beliefs and values. In the final period, Barack Obama was portrayed as the ‘superstar’ (p. 42) of the world. He, finally, concluded that the US, except in the period of Reagan’s presidency was mostly depicted as a negative and hegemonic superpower in German press.

2.2 The US Image in French Media

The French-US relationships have always been consistently tensed and opposite. Different scholars describe the French opposition to the US in different ways. As Moisei (1998) argued that the reason of the French-US unfavorable relations is that “France is unsure of its place and status in the world” (p. 95). Hoffmann (2000) added that French multilateralism and the US universalism are not compatible with each other. In the US ideology, the right of individual comes first while in the ideology of France, law is above the individualism. In this way, the law becomes “an expression of general will” (McMillan, 1997, p. 70). So, France and the US relationships could never get better (Hoffmann, 2000).

In addition, Moisi (1998) argued that

The French always seems to be opposing the United States on some issues or other, whether it is in the realm of international diplomacy, where between the lines of France’s carefully worded diplomatic statements one can discern a distant distaste for America’s oft-proclaimed sole-superpower status, or on matters of culture, where France is always the first to denounce the American ‘cultural imperialism’. (p. 94)

So, the French media portrayed the US mainly as ‘negative other’, a ‘war machine’ with administrative policies that are always opposite to the rest of the world. Kagan (2002) argued that the major reason of negative portrayal of the US is the political culture because France is a multilateralist which believes in cooperation with its allies to resolves the political conflicts. He added that the sophisticated solution is the mediations and peaceful plans for France but the US disagrees. He further argued that the human rights, rule of law and individual freedom are the basics of the French political policy that should be upheld but the US believes in particularism that is why the US has been presented in French press as ‘other’.

Similarly, Hellman (2011) analyzed the images of the US in French press discourse during four selected time periods of 1984, 1994, 2004 and 2009 under the umbrella of the concepts of ‘we-ness’ and ‘otherness’ and added that almost in all four regimes, the US was treated as a “powerful political actor with multiple roles, occasionally a socio cultural and rarely as an economic power” (p. 58). He further added that

The US role in the world centers on the USA as the sole politico-military superpower whose foreign policy

changes between administrations. It is a hegemon that talks of multilateralism but can turn unilateral if that suits its interests better – and therefore cannot be trusted. The USA is a giant with muscle and a capacity to punish evil by its sheer size but, according to the French elite press, it does not understand the finer points of peace management, diplomacy and mediation – typical features of French foreign policy. (p. 66)

It was found that during Cold war discourse in 1984, the US was presented as at the outstanding power position in relation with the Soviet Union. The French newspapers mainly criticized the inferiority complexes of the Soviet Union on military and economic bases while emphasized on the superiority of the US since it left its interest in defending its policies of liberalism and capitalism in Third World countries (Hellem, 2011). But on cultural grounds, the US was criticized and labeled as ‘cultural hegemon’ with reference to Coca Cola, jeans, modern dance, Hollywood productions and so on. But after Cold War in 1994 and after collapsing the Soviet Union, the US was depicted as indecisive in French press because of the reluctant attitude of the US to intervene in Bosnia war for Balkans conflict to which the French were deeply committed. The role of the US as indecisive Superpower became another reason for the tensed US-French relationships (Trean, 1994, p. 3).

While talking about the Post 9/11, the anti-Americanism was the prominent element in all French newspapers. This period was seen by French media on the relationships of the European diplomats and the US, a country at war. The French media criticized President Bush and the US policies for not only intervention in Iraq but also their lack of interest respect and careless attitude towards European allies and their unilateralism. But interestingly, when the Bush administration was ended, anti-Americanism was also toned down by the French media. Since 2009, Barack Obama had been portrayed as a bridge-building mediator and a man of reconciliation while the US had been represented disappointedly in a way that look how in the previous regimes, it ignored European allies and their interests. Though Barack Obama was mainly depicted as modernist yet he was criticized on his speech made in Cairo commenting on French law prohibiting Muslim women from wearing the veil inside the French state institutions. The French commentators wrote in newspapers’ commentary that Barack Obama also became dogmatic American who viewed Muslim veil as a sign of liberty but he did not notice the French laws. This was again the clash of ideologies (Hellman, 2011). So, it was concluded that the major trend of French press was to depict the US as ‘other’ because it has been against the French identity politically and culturally.

2.3 The US Image in Philippines’ Media

The US image in the media of Philippines depends upon the Pilipino-American circumstances and relationships that date back to 1900 when the US took over Philippine after the 300 years’ rule of Spain. During this period, Philippines adopted the democratic form of government with constitution, educational system, laissez faire economic system, public assistance, English language and the press system from America. Even after the liberation of Philippines from Japanese in 1944 with the help of the US, the Philippines had good image and relationship with the US (Encanto, 1982; Powers, 1971; Macaraeg, 2009).

During that period, the US image was portrayed as “the champion and the leaders of the free world”, and “one of the two major powers of the world”. America was the only foreign country that was dominated in the international news of Philippines Press (Encanto, 1982, p. 88). But from the period of 1940s to 1970s, the press had started to create the sense of re-examination the structure and functioning of the states’ institutions that were adopted from the US. After 1972 declaration of Martial law by President Marcos, the image of the Liberal, powerful and leader of the free world began to decline and was replaced with the negative images.

Due to the involvement of the US in Vietnam War, the Watergate Scandal and attacks on the US embassies abroad crumbled the image of the US in the Philippines press from positive to extreme negative. In the newspapers of the Philippines, the US began to portray as the most alienated, racial and prejudice society, a country where people do not support the government policies because in these policies, the values of institutions and people are not important (Saleem, 1998). Though these images were a bit fabricated yet repeated again and again in the newspapers and reinforced the hatred feelings of Philippines towards the US (Encanto, 1982).

2.4 The US Image in Russian Media

The US image in Russian media discourse was studied by different researchers on the basis of the “self-other representation”. In 1917, the Soviet leaders were positive towards the US (Harle, 2000) but in 1930s, the period of anti-Americanism began (Shlapentokh & Woods, 2004). After World War II, the US was represented as the prime enemy and opponent of Russia. As Harle (2000) stated that “the US was attributed all the negative characteristics pertaining to the West in Russia parlance: cultural inferiority, responsible morals and shallow ideas” (p. 120).

As Petersson and Persson, (2011), who investigated the image of the US in the Russian press commentaries and news in four different US presidential periods (1984, 1994, 2004 and 2009) (Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama), argued that the Russian press portrayed the image of the US in the way that “the US was the evil genius inspiring everything bad that was happening in the world; everywhere there were conspiracies masterminded by an aggressive, imperialist, devious, power hungry and morally decrepit US” (p. 76). He noted that during the presidency of Ronald Reagan, the Russian press portrayed the US by using the strategy of “us versus them” as the rotten country and the Soviet Union as righteous, peace loving, gracious and friendly state. On the other side, Ronald Reagan was depicted as a hypocritical, villain, double faced and evil man for the Soviet Union. On the contrary, in the beginning, Bill Clinton was portrayed as an experienced athlete, well thought man, highly esteemed president and a personality who would enjoy public’s support and popularity (Petersson & Persson, 2011). It was further added that during the presidency of Bill Clinton in 1994, there was a mixed mode of representation of the US image as the other and Russia as the self. On one side, the US-Russian bilateral cooperation projects were perceived as the positive initiatives in the news and commentaries of the Russian newspapers but on the other side, due to the US interference in the Russian politics and the war in Bosnia, the negative image of the US was also highlighted.

It was noted that during 2004, the Russian press was very neutral for the presidency of George W. Bush and even neutral towards the policies of George W. Bush to invade Iraq. The Russian newspapers also depicted George W. Bush better than John Kerry for Russia. They further argued that the Russian press also appreciated George W. Bush when he expressed his sympathies to Russian President, Vladimir Putin on the incident of Chechen hostage-taking at the school in Beslan (Kabannikov & Chizhikov, 2004) but the newspapers also criticized mildly about the US interference in the Russian internal politics.

In 2009, Barack Obama was portrayed in the Russian Press as the man who made promises with the whole world especially with the Muslim world. As Sturua(2009) stated that “he promised, promised, promised and promised”. Similarly, Petersson and Persson (2011) added that “there is a risk of discrepancy between words and deeds, and some observe that, despite the elegant wrapping of oratory, the messages do not contain a lot of substance” (p. 83).

Likewise, Becker (1996) examined the image of the US in the political cartoons of the Soviet Union’s Press including Pravda, Izvestiya and Krokodil from April 1985 to August 1990. He noted that political cartoons followed the government foreign policies and relationships with the US and gave the image to the US according to the favorable or unfavorable relations of the Soviet Union with the US. He argued that in the end of the 1990s, the image of the US got changed from negative to positive.

2.5 The US Image in the Chinese Media

The US image in the Chinese media discourse also fluctuated from positive to negative and negative to positive with changing the scenarios of the Sino-Soviet, the Soviet-US and the Sino-US relations. From 1950s to the mid 1960s, the image of the US was very negative. The US was hated as an imperialist and enemy of the world (Lee, 1982). In mid 1960s, the US imperialism and Soviet revisionism were depicted as the major threats to the world peace. Both superpowers were depicted as competing and plotting with each other to re divide the world (Atwood et al., 1982, p. 61).

While discussing the US image, Lee (1982) argued that

Every moment we think America is a kind of paradise; it is the most advance nation with no beggars; they are all rich; everybody in America is gentleman; everything is wonderful in America. Oh, no, never happens.... It is discovered that the whole story I had heard about America is false. It is said that in America there is no waste paper left on the street and that in case someone forgot to receive his change after buying something in a store, the shop clerk must walk several miles to return it and that something left on a bench in the park will remain until the following day. I do wish to tell you that America is not such a heavenly place at all. (p. 87)

But finally in 1979, China and the US became the “allies on the global strategy front collectively boycotting Soviet hegemonism” (Saleem, 1998, p. 70).

2.6 The US Image in Arab Media

The Arab world has been one of the great interests to American presidents from Alexander to Napoleon and from George H. W. Bush to Barack Obama due to its strategic importance but most of the Arab countries dislike and resent the US for its imperial system, unilateral policies, biased and hegemonic position specially in the Middle East and generally in the whole world since World War II. On the other hand, the US also portrayed the

stereotypical images of Arabs as aliens, violent and extremist strangers that shows the biasness of the US reporters and image makers for them (Galal, Galander & Auter, 2008).

It was observed that the image of the US has been more unfavorable than ever before across the globe since post 9/11. It was quite shocking to analyze the media reports and public polls in Middle East to see that how much did the US become unpopular among Arabs? The results showed that the image of the US has been continuously plummeted in Middle East since the attacks of September 11 and the US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. The news reports described that those Arabs who possessed the negative opinion regarding the image of the US were very much rigid and intense in their views. (Kohut & Strokes, 2006; Graber 2009; Pew Research Center for People and Press, 2003, 2005). Table 2 shows the decline of the US image in different countries of Middle East during immediate years after 9/11 attacks.

Table 2. Middle easterners with an overall favorable views of the United States immediately after 9/11 attacks (in percentage)

Country	2002	2003	2004
Egypt	17	14	2
Jorden	36	11	15
Lebanon	35	27	20
Moroco	38	9	11
Saudi Arabia	12	3	4
United Arab Emirates	11	11	14

Source: Graber, 2009.

It was further argued that the media in Middle East resent the US because of its unjustified support of the unpopular governments in different countries of Middle East. For instance, the US supported the regime of Shah in Iran during 1970s (Graber, 2009). Similarly, the US was intensively criticized for its support of Israel against Palestinians. Figure 1 shows the major reasons that were told by Middle Easterners during Gallup survey in June 2008.

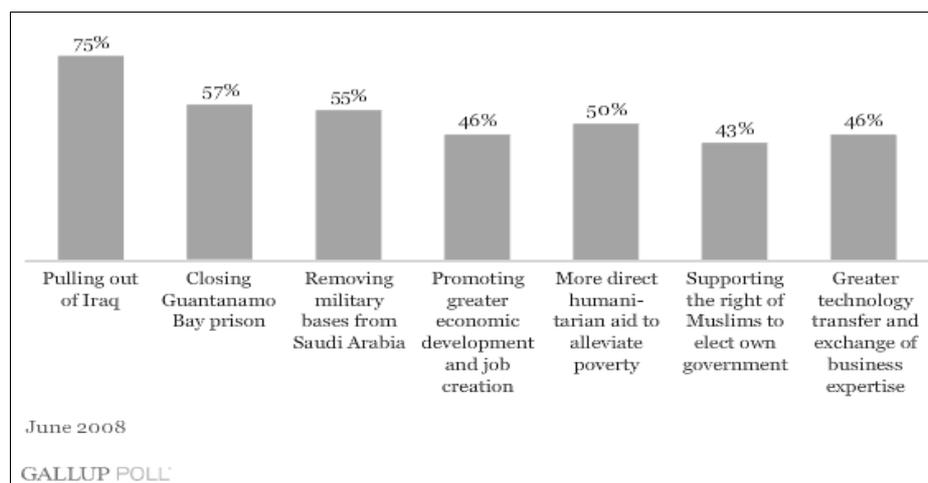


Figure 1. Major reasons of resenting the US in Middle East countries

Source: Gallup Survey 2008.

Moreover, Kyaly (2007) argued that one of the major reasons of anti-Americanism portrayed in Arab media was unlimited support of America to Israel. Though the US also supported to the United Nation Security Council Resolution 242 that no country would be allowed to occupy any other's territory forcefully yet it supported Israeli occupation on Palestinian lands of West Bank and Gaza Strips in self-defense. This unlimited support of the US to Israel determined the image of the US as a state with double standards.

The President of American University in Beirut, John Waterbusy (2003) also added that

The US is seen as applying two standards of equity and two standards of measuring violence, each in favor of Israel. That resulting frustration and anger leads to expressions of sympathy for those who resort to violence against the United States. Those who so vehemently deny any linkage between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the broader crisis must pull their heads out of the sand.

The situation got worst when George W. Bush declared his boycott to the Palestinian government because it is against the peace process from the beginning of its administration and did not play any decisive role in Palestinian and Israel conflict. In addition, the US also used its veto power in the Security Council for more than 80 times to oppose the resolutions against Israel (Kyaly, 2007). It was also added that between 1948 and 2007, the U.S. funded Israel amounted to \$98 billion. Almost 60% of this aid was meant for military purposes while only 40% was for economic assistance.

In addition, Mohamed (2007) examined the image of the US in 9 Egyptian newspapers during July 2003 to July 2004. This period was significant because of invasion of Iraq, its repercussion, the US initiatives in reforming Middle East, the Palestinians-Israel conflicts, decline in relationships with Syria and Iran and the US motives of war against terrorism across the globe. It was added that while portraying the US image in Egypt that is one of countries in Arab with largest population of 75 millions, the most highlighted theme in newspapers was 'American foreign policy' regarding Iraq war and Arab-Israel conflict. The US was depicted as a country that is above all the laws. Its main objective was portrayed to seek hegemony over Arabs in order to achieve its supremacy as superpower. It was further portrayed as 'invading' and 'hostile state' that has no credibility. Egyptian press openly rejected all the justifications of Iraq war that was given by the US administration during the period of its invasion. The US policy of Iraq invasion was portrayed in the Egyptian newspapers as an aggressive act that based on lies and deceptions. Egyptian newspapers also criticized the slogans of the US regarding freedom and liberty and wrote that "the Statue of Liberty is no longer the symbol of America, but rather that which the world recognizes of American freedom is the image of the Iraqi prisoner" (Mohamed, 2007, p.38). While discussing the Israel-Palestinian issues, the US was depicted as a 'biased state' towards Israel. It was further added that "it is America who offers Israel arms and ammunition ... who gives it billions of dollars and protects its possessing all the weapons of mass destruction" (p. 39).

Moreover, among satellite channels, two Arab television channels *Al-Jazeera TV* and *Al-Arabiya TV* are considered as the most important television channels for being concerned with international issues in general and the portrayal of the US in particular. While depicting the attacks of September 11, Afghanistan invasion, Iraq war, and Israel-Palestinians conflict, they portrayed the US in their news programs very negatively. Some pieces of their news programs were: "the Arab world is targeted by the U.S. and the West", "Arab leaders and states are being lured into an American trap", "there is a party benefiting from what is happening to the Arab countries [meaning the U.S. and the West] and it is responsible for what's happening", "the U.S. is carefully penetrating the Arab world", "the announced American slogans and goals cannot be trusted, for there's a hidden agenda behind them", "America ... wants coverage for its hostile stance toward the Arabs, represented in the Iraqi and Palestinian issues, and the reform project is an admirable goal sought for the wrong reasons" and so on (Mohamed, 2007, p. 41).

The US was not only a hot topic of discussion in Egyptian press but also a significant issue to be featured in Egyptian cinema. El-sargany (2007) argued that negative depiction of the US image was pre-dominant in the anti-modernist Egyptian cinema. The portrayal of the US in Egyptian silver screen is not a new phenomena, The US was portrayed when there was no political tension between Egypt and the US. In 1954, the US was depicted in *An American from Tanta*, produced by Studio Misr, directed by Ahmad Kamil Mursy with the script written by Mohammed Ali Nasef where the dream to be in America was depicted as delusion. To be in America was also portrayed as to be in Egypt. The crux of the film was "the solution, whether for those still in Egypt or those who made it to the United States, is not in the outside world, but rather, in Egypt (p. 50)" This was a very positive depiction of the United States. But Later on with the passage of time, the Arab world and the US have been in constant conflicts that made Egypt cinema negative while constructing the images of the United States a. In result, a number of movies were produced against the United States including *Alexandria Why? (Ikandariya ley?)*; *Amrika Shika Bika*; *Land of Dreams (Ard al-Ahlam)*; *The Other(Al-Aakhir)*; *Malesh, Ihna Benetbahdel*; *The Night Baghdad Fell (Laylat Suqoot Baghdad)*; and *Alexandria-New York (Iskandariya-New York)*. The purpose of these movies was to highlight the concept that "the mutual understanding between the Arab world and the west...is impossible due to unavoidable factors" (p. 52). It was further found that these movies tried to convince the people that "happiness can be achieved without traveling to America, the presumed land of dreams" (p. 54).

Moreover, the concept of political blogging became popular in Arab during the US invasion of Iraq in 2002. Farahat (2007) examined the Arab blogs during the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and added that Iraqi bloggers seemed more concerned in portraying the US image than Egyptian and Morocco bloggers because of being direct victims of the US invasion. It was added that "Arab bloggers are divided between those who call for all plausible forms of resistance regardless of the human and material cost, while the other embraces a realist viewpoint that demands more calculated and pragmatic behavior" (p. 63). It was observed that the basic themes of these chat room and blogs were the US hegemony, sexual harassment and abusive treatment with Iraqi prisoners by the US officers and the wrong policies of the US in Iraq. Almost all chat rooms raised the question that "whether Saddam's regime terrorized Iraqis?" (p. 67)

It was further stated that the United States has been funding few media organizations in Middle East in order to reduce the harshness in news media against the US. The US focused on radio and television programs. For instance, the Voice of America has been increased its frequency of broadcasting in Middle East since the attacks of 9/11. The US also funded to establish a new radio station 'the Middle East Radio Network' or 'Radio Sawa' in 2002. Its broadcast was aired in 6 Arab countries with music in order to appeal the audience with less anti-American programs (El-Nawawy & Iskander, 2003; Galal, Galander & Auter, 2008).

On victory of Barack Obama in 2009, the Arab world was expecting the good relationships with the US that is why the image of the US was getting improved in the Arab media. A survey of Arab Public Opinion was conducted from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in 2009 that showed that almost 11 percent people expressed a "very positive" (11%) and 34% told "somewhat positive" views of Obama as compared to George W. Bush and previous presidents (Telhami, 2009). But when in 2013, Barack Obama decided to intervene in Syrian civil, the US image was declined to zero again because as Momani (2013) argued that "the case for intervention cannot be made in a way that will get Mr. Obama the votes he needs without further alienating the Arab world". He further added that

Rhetoric within the United States is full of binary references – you are either 'for or against the military strike against Syria' and 'pro or anti-Assad'. These simplistic semantics are doomed to estrange the vast majority of Arabs and Muslims who do not support either side. The Western media is making out the Arab governments only quietly supporting military intervention as weak, criticizing them for failing to stand up against Mr. Assad and rally their publics behind the United States. This blunt coverage epitomizes how little appreciation there is for the complex dynamics at play in and around Syria. (Momani, 2013)

2.7 *The US Image in Irish, Swedish & Greek Media*

Phelan (2004) investigated the portrayal of the US image with reference to war on terrorism in Irish media by conducting the critical discourse analysis of the editorials. He observed that Irish media supported the stance of the government while representing the US image. The Irish government was very positive towards the military actions of the US in Afghanistan for killing Osama Bin Laden. He argued that "the US led military campaign should be targeted, proportionate, and inextricably linked to parallel diplomatic and humanitarian objective (p. 186).

Similarly, Gherseti (2004) examined the coverage of 9/11 in the Swedish radio. It was observed that the Swedish radio supported the US military action for the eradication of terrorism. It was also found that "partiality of the media depended not only upon journalistic intent but also some other factors" (as cited in Saleem, 2004, p. 109) including government's policies and people's intentions. But unlike the Irish and Swedish media, the Greek media was very critical while representing the US image with special reference to war on terrorism. The Greek media represented that the US is itself responsible for terrorism. (Kaitatzi-Whitlock & Kehagia, 2004). It was added that

A broad range of reference are made to the US's role (sic) in setting up, training and nurturing terrorists and parliamentary forces around the world such as the 'death squads' in El Salvador, the 'Contras' in Nicaragua, the 'Taliban' and 'Al-Qaida' in Afghanistan and Pakistan and 'Kia' in ex-Yugoslavia. (Kaitatzi-Whitlock & Kehagia, 2004, p. 143)

Similarly, Hoijer, Nohrstedt & Ottosen(2004) argued that the image of the US with reference to war on terrorism was represented differently all over the world. Some of the countries represented war on terrorism as "legality theme and favored the US policies while others took it as an action against humanitarian theme and criticized the US policies and actions" (Saleem, 2004, p. 107).

2.8 *The US Image in Pakistani Media*

Since the birth of Pakistan, there have been continuous ups and downs in the US-Pak relations. Therefore, the

image of Pakistan in the US media and the image of the US in Pakistani media are inconsistent phenomena. Cheema (2008) argued that America is facing the image problem throughout the world especially in the Muslims countries. As far as the US image in Pakistan is concerned, he further added that Pakistan is one of the countries whose people are very much annoyed and aggressive against the US policies and relations.

Due to these ups and downs in Pakistan-US relations and image problems, researchers and scholars take interest to study the media discourse regarding the image representation of the US and Pakistan. As Saleem (1998) investigated the US image representation in two English newspaper *the Pakistani Times* and *Dawn* with special reference to the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan (1979-1988). It was found that “being a superpower, when the US safeguarded the interests of any subject country, the latter’s press framed the positive image of the former. Thus the media image of the US in subject country is ‘interest specific’” (p. 150). It was noted that in 1981, due to the restoration of the military and economic aid to Pakistan, *Dawn* and *the Pakistan Times* portrayed the US in a positive and favorable manner in their editorials. It was further added that “the US negative image in the subject country is dependent upon the divergence of interests between them” (p. 151). According to Saleem (1998), *the Pakistan Times* and *Dawn* portrayed negative image of the US due to the conflict of interests between the US and Pakistan. For instance, the US influenced France not to provide nuclear reprocessing plant to Pakistan, military and economic aid was also stopped under Symington Amendment and Pakistan security concerns etc.

It was also observed that even after declaring Pakistan as frontline state, the Pakistani press was not in favor to provide military basis on its territory against the Soviet Union because it would not only dangerous for the sovereignty of Pakistan but also damage the image of Pakistan in the eyes of Iran, Libya and other Muslim countries.

Saleem (2004) further added in her another study that the Pakistani English newspapers were not supportive to the Pakistani government policies and the US even after Cold War era (1991-2004). It was observed that the national interests determined the dimensions of the coverage of the US image in Pakistani media. It was further argued that Pakistani media as an independent force continuously criticized the US policies especially regarding war on terrorism portrayed the public sentiments and showed very high concerns regarding the presence of the US military in Pakistani Northern areas.

Similarly, Islam (2001) examined the image of the US in the editorials of Pakistani mainstream newspapers (*Dawn*, *The News* and *the Nation*) regarding the issues of the US missile attacks on Afghanistan during August-September 1998, Washington Declaration with reference to the Kargil war in Kashmir perspective during July-August 1999 and Bill Clinton’s visit to South Asia during March-April 2000. He argued that the image of the US in the mainstream newspapers was not consistent. All the newspapers portrayed the US in extremely negative manner. He further added that in the case of Kargil issue and the US missile attacks on Afghanistan, Pakistani newspapers condemned the attitude of the US towards Pakistan.

The editorial titled ‘End of an Illusion’ of *the Nation* on August 5, 1999 quoted that “the US stance has been quite obvious from the marked pro-India tilt which Washington had shown while paying its role in defusing the tension as a consequence of Kargil.”

Moreover, Khan and Safdar (2010) also examined the portrayal of the US image in the editorials of the two major Pakistani newspapers *Dawn* and *Nawa-i-Waqt* after 9/11 from September 11, 2001 to September 10, 2004 by rejecting media conformity theory and arguing that “the mass media does not always conform to the foreign policy of the governments” (p. 325). They observed that Pakistani elite press showed highly unfavorable image of the US regarding war on terror, Iraq invasion and attacks, nuclear issues and the US involvement in Pakistani internal matters. *Nawa-i-waqt*, which is an ideology based right wing newspaper, was not very critical as compared to *Dawn*. *Dawn*, as an independent, liberal and left wing newspaper, openly labeled the US as enemy of Pakistan. They also argued that Pakistani government was ally of the US in war on terror and the other US policies but Pakistani press was not ready to trust and support the foreign policies of Pakistani government which also created a conflict between Pakistani press and Pakistani government.

On the contrary, Hanan (2005) argued that Pakistani press gives the positive coverage of the US when there is a harmony in the US and Pakistani government. So, according to the favorable relationships, press also changes the tone of the image from negative to positive in Pakistan.

He further added that

When the issue/conflict or policy shift, is of paramount importance in nature and is significant to the US interest, the US press tends to align with administration’s policy lines. In addition, the harmony of interests

between the US and Pakistan also convince Pakistani press to support the US policy towards Pakistan and frame its image as positive. Therefore, in the press and foreign policy relationships, the press plays a role of a cheerleader for the government policy line. (p. 1).

3. Conclusion

While summing up the whole discussion, It is argued that studying the image of the US in foreign media has been one of the significant dimension of scholars from different disciplines including communication, political science, international relations and economics etc because of its position as a dominant superpower but the debate between pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism is still there because it is not the US itself rather its policies, relations, strategies and implications that are the determining factors to determine the nature and dimension of its image. Being a superpower, the entire world has a connection with the US whether it is closely geographically situated and politically related or not. But those nations and their media have been more involved in creating, constructing and presenting the images of the US which have been directly influenced by the US favorable or unfavorable policies since World War II. It is concluded that after World War II, those state that were allied with the other major super power the Soviet Union, portrayed the US with the stance of anti-Americanism and those who were allied with the US, most of the times, portrayed the US with pro-American stance during the Cold War. After Cold War, concept of being pro US and anti US was limited to the one to one foreign relations of every country with the US, the only superpower but after 9/11, the world immediately divided into two divisions again i.e. those who were with the US and those who were not with the US in war against terrorism but literature showed that the majority was at the side of anti-Americanism because of the baseless war against terrorism and continuous killings of millions of civilians.

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