The British Press Construction of Iran (1979-1989)

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Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

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ABSTRACT

The British Press Construction of Iran (1979-1989)

By

Mohammad H. Mohsen

This thesis examines the British daily and Sunday press construction of news about Iran and Islam in the first decade of the revolution. More interestingly, it attempts an analysis of the press coverage of Iran using a framework of combined approaches for the study of foreign news in the Western media.

This study shows that the press operates under a variety of influences and constraints which become part of the structure of the press construction of foreign news.

Three major components of this structure are emphasised and seen to interact in examination of the coverage of the different aspects of the Islamic revolution. Each offers an interpretive framework for the way the press selected and presented certain specific events.

The first of the three components and bases for analysis highlights the role of the press in communicating political issues relating to the West. Analysis shows a strong interaction between journalists and Western sources of news and other selected pro-West sources of information. A strong Western dimension is observed in the selection and presentation process of most themes. The press stresses the importance of the Western interests in the Middle East which are seen as being threatened by the enemies of the West, e.g. Iran, Islamic fundamentalism, and terrorism.

The second component deals with "cultural resonances". Analysis shows that the British press constructs its news to resonate with the cultural symbols of the West. In this thesis historical and recent perceptions of Iran and Islam are explored as a background reference for the explanations of these cultural resonances, which result in a press alignment with the dominant values of the West perceived as superior.

The third component is made up of the constraints imposed on British journalists and the limited range of news values. These professional obstacles decide the selection and presentation of particular news stories and specific facts and leave other aspects of the same stories unexplored and decontextualised.

The results of the study contribute to increase our knowledge of how and why the press, once the reported country defined as an enemy to the West, use powerful sources of news and the inclusion of statements from those sources at the expense of others, how and why the cultural aspects of the West figure so strongly in the coverage of foreign news, and how and why the ever-important criteria of news values play a definite role in the construction of the socio-political reality of Iran.

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Mohammad H. Mohsen
Leicester
August, 1991

List of Abbreviations

AFP	Agence France Press
AP	Associated Press
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies - (Washington)
DE	Daily Express
DM	Daily Mirror
DT	Daily Telegraph
EEC	European Economic Community - (The Common Market)
FO	Foreign Office (Britain)
FT	Financial Times
G	Guardian
I	Independent
ICO	Islamic Conference Organisation
IISS	The International Institute for Strategic Studies (London)
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRNA	Islamic Republic News Agency
IS	Independent on Sunday
MP	Member of Parliament
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PoW	Prisoners of War
RIIA	The Royal Institute of International Affairs - (London)
SAVAK	Shah's Secret Police
ST	Sunday Times
SV	Satanic Verses
T	The Times
UN	United Nations
UPI	United Press International
WIC	World Islamic Conference

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the official declaration in 1990 that the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Bloc was terminated, the old ideological enemy in the Kremlin is being rapidly converted into a friend. Images of Communism which are embedded in the Western political culture have disappeared (although, not totally) and replaced by images of understanding and cooperation, particularly since signs of new thinking have been introduced by the Soviet Union for the reconstruction of its economy (Perestroika). A call for reconstruction has been paralleled by a policy of openness (Glasnost) which is

> "...the ideological powerhouse of the drive for reform ... and intended to assist the opening of Soviet society to public scrutiny and peeling away the layers of bureaucracy and secrecy which have dogged it since Stalin's time" (McNair, 1988, P.131).

Western images of Communism, under construction since the victory of the Russian Revolution in 1917 have resulted in the identification of Communism as an ideology which functions outside the boundaries of capitalism and the liberal values of the West (Dorman, 1985). This has developed into a process of deligitimation practised against Communist ideology in accounts of the "master patterns" (Baurdieu, 1971) of the Western culture.

Elliott and Schlesinger (1991) argue in their essay on

images of Communism that there are four important features emerging from the master pattern of the culture of the West. These features organise the ideological interpretations of Communism and Communist countries in the Western media. The first feature is "difference". It allows emphasis on coverage which reinforces the concept that the Soviet Union is different from "us" and is always a potential enemy. A limited range of stereotypes are at full play in such coverage. For instance, news about trials of dissenters has been paid continuing attention in the British press. This reinforces the stereotype about the lack of freedom which is perceived as a continuation of earlier periods of trial and terror in the Soviet Union under Stalin.

The second feature emerging from the "master patterns" of the West is "threat" which has two dimensions; internal subversion and external force. The internal threat is crystallised by the potential danger of the Soviet Union's supporters and spies in the West. International Communism scares began immediately after the revolution in 1917. This was detected by the Lippman and Mertz (1920) study of the New York Times' coverage of Russia after the revolution. They found that the newspaper stressed on the "red peril" and it was one of the essential themes in the coverage. The external threat is embodied by the threat of the Soviet Union's military force in Europe and elsewhere e.g. Africa, Middle East. This threat was interpreted as a sign of the aggression of Soviet Foreign Policy.

The third feature is "irrationality" which tries to criticise and discredit people within the Western world who support ideologies which are defined both as alien to the culture and tradition of the West and threatening to the values of freedom and democracy. For instance, in the early seventies the British media focused on the infiltration of Communist ideas in Northern Ireland and its potential dangers (Elliott and Schlesinger, 1991, P.100).

The fourth and final feature is "similarity", it is often used to counter the positive claims of enemy ideology by drawing the similarity of some of their beliefs with some of the beliefs of the West. By doing so it allows the enemy ideology "to be tackled on its own ground and deflated by ridicule" (Ibid, P.101).

These four bases for interpretation have characterised the dominant thinking of the West and its mass media vis a vis Communism and have organised many aspects of political culture in Western societies for over seventy years.

The collapse of the Communist ideology in the Soviet bloc has forced the West to define the Communist countries as reformists involved in democratization of their systems and values. Images of the old enemies have almost disappeared from the political discourse. The "other" is there no more and the willingness of the West to identify another enemy or "other" has been fulfilled by the re-emergence of Islam as a politico-cultural force in regional and international politics.

Islam has been defined as the enemy of the "Occident" (countries of the West) since the time of the Crusaders in the twelfth century, as will be shown in the next chapter. With the triumph of the Islamic revolution in Iran, the fall of the Shah in 1979 and with the retreat of Communist ideology from the international scene, old images of Islam and Muslims have been revived in the politics and culture of the West and translated into the daily output of the Western media.

An analogy can be drawn between the images of Communism outlined above and the images of Islam in news media in the last decade. Concepts of difference, threat, irrationality and similarity can be detected in the way the Western media present Islam and Muslims in the Middle East and in the West. The term "Islamic fundamentalism" becomes an ideological construct, like "Communism", and invites an anti-Islam interpretation, like "anti-Communism". Its creators often define Islam as a threat to the West and to its interests and define the Muslims in the

West, particularly in Britain, as fundamentalists and extremists representing a threat to the values of Western societies. The issue of the Rushdie affair is an excellent case demonstrating this portrayal.

Anti-Islamisim ideology embodies an image of Islam and Muslims upheld by a group or society which has had historical and recent clashes with Islam (see chapter 2). Western countries are involved in relentless preaching of unity under different ideological banners of religion, class, gender, beliefs and interests to oppose the aggressiveness and threat of an enemy with a different system of values and way of life. Sociology explains this state in terms of a pair of opposite attitudes. It distinguishes between the "in-group" and the "out-group". These are two conceptual-behavioural oppositions which complement and condition each other. They acquire all their meaning from that opposition. The in-group can be a nation, a society, a political party, a government or a pressure group which strengthens its coherence by emotional attachment, trust, security and cooperation. The in-group sees the out-group as a group which believes in values opposite to its values and often disapproves of it. Thereby members of the in-group have a vague and fragmentary vision of what is happening in the out-group and they poorly comprehend its conduct. They expect the out-group to act against their interests and seek to do them harm (Bauman, 1990, pp.40-50). This sort of theoretical explanation will be demonstrated in the process of presenting arguments on the coverage of Iran. The West and pro-West groups represent the in-group and Iran and Muslims represent the out-group.

How the West constructs Islam in its mass media is a very interesting subject for examination, particularly at a time of radical change throughout the world. The analysis of the most likely explanations for why Islam is covered the way it is constitutes a more interesting phenomenon because it increases our knowledge and understanding of the role of mass

media in society when confronted with a well defined enemy.

Iran and its representation of "Islamic fundamentalism" within the boundaries of the Iranian territories and in the Middle East, as well as the rest of the world is an ideal case for the study of representation of Islam in the Western press, particularly the British press. The Islamic revolution and its introduction of new political and cultural discourses in Iran and in the Muslim countries and even in the West has generated arguments and created attitudes among Western political leaders, experts, academics and journalists. The new phenomenon was not defined as "legitimate" and a great deal of attention was concentrated on its threat to the well defined national interests of Western countries in the Middle East e.g. the safe supply of oil to the West, stability of the region and trade with the countries of the area (Chapter 2). The first decade of the Islamic revolution is of particular importance because it was under the direct leadership of the late Ayatollah Khomeini and because it was the period of direct (e.g. US hostages in Tehran, the tanker war, Salman Rushdie) and indirect (e.g. Western hostages in Lebanon) collision between the West and Iran.

How the Western press function in such confrontational circumstances and whether their news coverage and news judgement are independent from the existing political and cultural discourses about Iran and Islam in the West is an interesting case for examination. Furthermore, the complex relationship between media and society and media and state play an important role in deciding what news to select and how materials about Iran are going to be presented i.e. in what light the Islamic revolution is seen, what themes the press has stressed and what language has been used to convey them. In putting forward this argument one cannot underestimate the relative autonomy of journalists whose professional ideology allows them to reject total submission to powerful sources and to the codes of culture. But their professionalism, as will be

demonstrated, is always restricted by the limited range of news values and their personal prejudices which infiltrate their writings as the content analysis will show.

This thesis will demonstrate what images of Iran and Islam were presented in the British press during the first decade of the Islamic revolution (1979-1989). More interestingly, it aims to explain, by bringing different types of evidence, that the factors responsible for the way Iran is constructed in the press are mainly confined to three important areas: the source-journalists interaction; the dominant western cultural values; and the journalists' professional and personal ideologies. All these factors are the crystallisation of the subtle and complex relationship between the press on the one hand, and state and society on the other hand. The State is represented by those who propagate and protect its interests i.e. officials, and society is characterised by its cultural symbols with which the news media are aligned. However, this is not to ignore the complex relationship between the state and society where politics and culture interweave in some cases (e.g. The Rushdie affair), to present a politico-cultural attitude to challenge some particular developments.

The source-journalist interaction from the perspective of news organisation shows that those who are defined as authorised knowers and legitimate sources are used regularly by the press and their definitions of events are included in the process of making news and often go Unchallenged. Journalists have shown a great inclination towards particular sources of news and their interaction with these sources is framed within the concept of "symbiotic dependence".

Three major sources were most notable in the coverage of Iran. These sources are: the Western official sources, Western and Iranian experts, and the Iranian opposition. These sources are identified as the main "primary definers" of news about Iran.

The press in its selection of particular sources tends to

function within the framework of a "propaganda model" (Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Chomsky, 1989). In the light of this framework those defined as "legitimate" sources are selected, e.g. Western officials, and those who are considered illegitimate sources are not included and their definitions are ignored e.g. Muslim sources. The culture of the West in general and Britain in particular plays a great role in identifying legitimate sources who themselves adhere to the "symbolic forms" of the West, as the sociologist Thompson (1990) argues. But culture is also responsible for the way the press select and present foreign news. News about Islam and Iran has to resonate with the dominant social values of British society.

Defining the notion of dominant social values is quite a complicated task. It is often associated with the "symbolic forms" of the social and political beliefs of the West in general. It stemmed from two main origins or ideologies: the first origin is religion where Christianity, historically, shaped the values of society and led the West to organise itself around Christian ideology which had clear attitudes towards non-believers and non-Christians. The second origin is secularism where mostly non-religious concepts dominated the West after the withdrawal of Christianity from the political life of Western societies. Secularism which upheld the power of man-made law occupies the centre of recent Western political systems, while not neglecting the values of Christianity in other spheres of the State. So concepts of democracy, liberalism, freedom of expression, moderation, tolerance and so on became political and cultural characteristics believed to be at the basis of Western societies. Within these two essential origins the dominant social values took shape and organised the beliefs of the West which enabled its peoples and institutions to reproduce these features within a well defined boundaries (chapter 8 will deal with further discussions). Concepts outside these features tend to be seen as ideologically opposed

and are set out in terms of negative values not acceptable to the West e.g "state-sponsored terrorism".

It is important to be clear that there is not a single dominant social value for the whole West. Degrees of difference are seen in each social grouping, but the argument shown above is a reading which act as a consensus for the general common values of Western industrialised societies.

Generally, news should resonate to the values and beliefs of the West e.g. values of democracy and moderation, in order to be selected. If news does not conform to these values it is often made illegitimate, challenged and emphasised i.e to convey a picture that the Islamic culture and tradition is different than "Us" and does not meet the positive values of the West.

An ethnocentric form of coverage will be observed in the presentation of news, particularly in the details of linguistic construction used by the press to convey the meaning that the "cultural symbols" of the West are superior to the cultural symbols of Islam which is often defined as a "threat", "medieval" and "authoritarian". A conflict between "Us" or "We" which is the West and "Them" which is Iran and Muslims is presented by much of the evidence in the thesis (Chapters 5, 6, and 7). Fowler (1991) argues that there is an ideology of consensus behind "We". Consensus assumes that the interests of the entire population are undivided and everybody subscribes to a certain set of beliefs. He explains that:

> "The 'We' of consensus narrows and hardens into a population which sees its interests as culturally and economically valid, but threatened by a 'Them' comprising a motley of antagonistic sectional groups: not only Criminals but also trade Unionists, homosexuals, teachers, blacks, foreigners, Northerners, and so on" (Fowler, 1991, p.53)

These external pressures on the process of manufacturing

news on Iran do not mean that journalists are totally passive. Journalists have considerable autonomy where their professional ideology allows them to add some practices to the process. For instance, they might challenge some of the officials' versions or balance their views with other opposing sources. But journalists are restricted by some obstacles which limit the professional norms. These restrictions are access, criteria of news values, organisational constraints, time and space, lack of expertise, ignorance of the Farsi language and so on (Chapter 7). The most important factors which limit the journalists' autonomy as will be argued (Chapter 8) are: the limited range of news values and the journalists personal ideology.

These major factors with other complementary ones will be discussed when drawing a theoretical framework for the thesis (Chapter 3), and empirically when offering different types of evidence (Chapter 5, 6 and 7) to demonstrate press ideologies in covering foreign news. Mainly chapter 5 will be the area of analysis for the three core organising principles of the thesis.

Design of the Thesis

The thesis is organised as a sequence which starts with background information, then moves to discuss the theoretical frameworks and a review of the relevant literature. Before introducing three types of evidence it explains content analysis as a methodology and finally it bridges the gap between the theory and the types of evidence by introducing a comprehensive analysis for the way Iran and Islam are covered in the British press.

Chapter 2 aims to give a picture about the historical images of Islam in the West. It argues that these images have been reinforced by the emergence of Islam as a political power since the triumph of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. It suggests that the ideological contest between the West and

Islam have been translated into well defined symbols in the Western mass media. Some of the discussions in this chapter will be related to cases which will be analysed in the evidence presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical frameworks with emphasis on the source-journalist interaction, the role of culture and the journalists' professional ideologies and their influence on the construction of reality about Iran and foreign news. Relevant literature will be reviewed under each section of these frameworks. At the end of this chapter research questions will be formulated and will be answered in the following chapters.

Chapter 4 presents the rationale behind the selection of papers, the sample period and the description of the coding schedule. It explains content analysis as a methodology used to generate data and it discusses its limitations.

Chapter 5 demonstrates empirically, in the light of the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 3 that news about Iran does not just happen but is constructed. Four press ideologies will be presented and discussed and collected data will support each case. Mainly, the chapter will argue that the construction of news is influenced by the location of the correspondents in the West; the active role of particular sources of news; the way the themes and Macro-themes are presented; and the language used to describe Iran and Muslims which conveys an image of Western cultural superiority.

Chapter 6 takes a step further in demonstrating the important role of Western sources and the dominant cultural values of the West in selecting and framing news about Iran and Islam. An additional case study is embodied in the presentation of the Salman Rushdie affair, and the editorials of two quality papers dealing with this subject will be analysed. The Rushdie affair constitutes an ideal case for understanding the role of the press in communicating political and cultural issues belonging to the "other" and is a major

concern within western societies.

Examining the role of journalists in the process of making news about Iran cannot be ignored and it provides further evidence about the way Iran is constructed in the West. So Chapter 7 deals mainly with the professional values influencing the production process and how this process is constrained by journalists' views about Iran, the criteria of news values and other organisational requirements, as well as how they interpret the use of particular sources and specific language to describe the revolution. Thirteen journalists working for the quality and popular press are interviewed for this chapter.

To get a comprehensive picture about how and why Iran is covered in the press, a synthesis between the theoretical frameworks chapter (chapter 3) and the three types of evidence introduced in chapters 5, 6 and 7 will be attempted in chapter 8. The aim of this chapter is to seek a sociological interpretation for the social context of news by discussing three major ideological factors demonstrating press ideology. These factors are; source-journalist interaction; cultural resonance and journalists professional and individual ideologies. These three factors are the most important factors observed in the British press and are responsible for the way news about Iran and Islam is constructed.

In the final chapter a critical assessment is presented to see what lessons have been learnt from the press coverage of Iran and Islam in relation to the theories of news production discussed in chapter 3.

Having introduced the problems and design of this research, it is relevant at this stage to deal with the historical and recent perceptions of Islam and the Middle East which will be necessary in placing the press coverage in a historical context.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL AND RECENT WESTERN PERCEPTIONS OF ISLAM

This chapter aims to give an analytical description of the relationship between the West and Islam. It deals with historical and recent perceptions of Islam in the West which illustrate the way the Islamic religion has been constructed in political and cultural circles. As no recent development can be isolated from its historical past, a description of the different historical stages which reflect Western prejudice against Islam will be scrutinized and pin-pointed to give an historical framework.

The historical background is relevant to the arguments and points presented in chapters 5, 6 and 8 which offer evidence about the way Islam is presented in the press. Arguments about the Macro-theme "Islamic fundamentalism" (chapter 5) and about the Rushdie affair (chapter 6) and other aspects of Islam are partly understood by making a reference to the historical Western perceptions of Islam which stress the perceived negative values of the Islamic religion.

The first decade of the Islamic revolution will be the period examined as an example of recent conflict which is viewed as a continuation of the historical conflicts between the West and Islam.

Christianity and the Crusaders

For over 600 years Christianity had been well established

in the Middle East where it had originated. Then, suddenly, a new religion, Islam, revealed to a prophet named Mohammed, emerged on the horizon in Arabia and like wild fire spread, not only in the Middle East but far across its borders. Christianity for the first time felt threatened right in the land where it had originated. For Christians, to acknowledge Islam was to undermine their own position. For Christianity to survive, as it was perceived in those times, Islam had to give in. The first stone was therefore cast by the Christians against Islam (Djait, 1985; Hussain, 1990). The consequence of this cannot be underrated, it set the Western world against Islam for a long period of time. Unlike Islam, Christianity did not become the principle religion in the Middle East where it had emerged, but established its centre in the West. It mobilized the West to fight Islam from a religious standpoint. But in so doing, it also put a stop to an open minded understanding of Islam. Many Western thinkers like John of Damascus (675-749), Peter the Venerable (1094-1156) and Martin Luther (1483-1546) had discredited Islam. They believed that the Koran was not revealed but created and that it was a Satanic production aimed at discrediting the Bible. For instance, Luther believed that what the Turks were learning from the Koran was about Satan and not God and that it was Satan who was directing them to destroy "the faith of Christians" (Helmut, 1967, P.181).

The call for crusades by Pope Urban II in 1093 echoed across Europe and Kings, Knights, soldiers as well as ordinary Christian women and children recruited to fight the Muslims in the Middle East. The call resulted in the first crusade campaign in 1096. There were later calls and the last was by Pope Innocent IV who commissioned the French King Louis IX to lead it in 1245. With the fall of Acre in 1291, the last crusader stronghold, the Muslims regained control of the area and then faced another threat from the Mongols.

The wars between Muslims and Christians, known as the

Crusades, plagued the Middle Ages. These major conflicts reinforced hatred and distrust among Muslims and Christians and from an institutional level, churches brought the conflict to the homes of the people in the West. Because the West was the loser in these violent confrontations Western perceptions and perspectives have always portrayed Islam as something negative and fearsome.

Travellers

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a large number of travellers were journeying to the far corners of Muslim lands. They selected what they observed and ignored what did not fit in their preconceived picture (Rodinson, 1974). There were many reasons for such travels by Westerners. Some wanted to escape their own culture or wanted the joy of discovery. Others were interested in making names for themselves, or followed the fashion of the day as travelling gentlemen and gentlewomen of leisure. Whatever the reason, their writings reinforced stereotypes and hostility to both Islam and the Muslim peoples (Said, 1978; Kabbani, 1986).

In the seventeenth century a number of English travellers had begun their journeys into the Middle East. One such early traveller (William Lithgow) considered the Muslims "infidels" and he divided them into the two categories, the tolerable Turks and Moors and the intolerable Arabs. The latter were considered thieves, the Moors cruel and the Turks "ill-best of all the three...yet all sworn enemies of Christ" (Sari, 1979, P.28).

In the eighteenth century, as British involvement with the Muslims increased, so did their interest in them. A new generation of scholars like Simon Oakley emerged. He was a former pupil of the Oxford Arabist Pocock [Pocock, 1604-1691], a missionary who later became Professor of Arabic at Oxford. Oakley later became the Professor of Arabic at Cambridge and

wrote the "History of the Saracens" which was one of the first attempts to understand Arab civilization. The "Arabian Nights" had also been published in English in 1711, from a French version. It was read by many generations and gave a very unrealistic picture of the Muslim people. They were seen as sexually licentious, adventurous and intriguing. The Koran was also translated by George Sale in 1734, and despite all its faults his translation was read by many generations (Hussain, 1990).

One of the earlier and most important travellers of the nineteenth century was John Lewis who died in Cairo in 1817. He travelled under the Muslim name of Sheikh Ibrahim Ibn Abdullah. His book "Bedouins and Wahabys" reinforced further negative images of the Muslim peoples. He considered the Turks more "cruel" than the Arabs but his sweeping generalizations about his hosts were not flattering for he considered that "Arabs may be styled a nation of robbers whose principal occupation is plunder, the constant subject of their thoughts" (Sari, 1979, PP.59-60). Such statements were not disproved but reinforced by other scholars such as Edward William Lane (1801-76) whose book "An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians" became compulsory reading for all Westerners travelling to and studying the Middle East.

The West concentrated on the Turks and the Arabs but they did not ignore the Iranians. Apart from the Russians, the British had wielded enormous influence over Iran's ruling elite. Pen portraits of Iran had already been published by Robert Porter in his book "Travels", in 1820. It projected the same exotic images of Muslim societies in keeping with Western expectations. His book, however, did not have the same impact as that of James Morier's "Hajji Baba of Isfahan". The author of the latter had been in diplomatic service and stationed in Tehran for a few years. His book was published in 1824 and was considered by the author to be the "ripened product of his Persian experiences and reflections" (Searight, 1979, P.258).

The central character of the book "Hajji Baba", was a barber's son whose character was used to strip Iran of its glamour and show his roguish character by cheating his clients. Morier covered almost all aspects of life in nineteenth century Iran and in a satirical fiction projected all the Iranian characters whom he had met and who were active in Anglo-Russian rivalry. The Iranians were, thus, given bad publicity and grouped in the ranks in which the Westerners already held the Arabs and Turks. When the book was published, the Iranian Ambassador to London, Mirza Abdul Hassan, wrote to Morier that "Persian people are very bad people, perhaps but very good to you, sir. What for you abuse them for?" (Searight, 1979, P.259). The book was read by others who were interested in Persia. Curzon said that the characters of "Hajji Baba" "was typical not merely of the life and surroundings, but of the character and instincts and manner of thought of his countryman" (Searight, 1979, P.258).

Apart from political purposes which served the imperial interests of their countries, two trends had emerged from these writings:

> "the first was the insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality, and the second that it was a realm characterised by inherent violence. These themes had their significance in medieval thought ... if it could be suggested that the Eastern people were slothful, preoccupied with sex, violent incapable of self-government, then the imperialist would feel himself justified in stepping in and ruling" (Kabbani, 1986, P.6)

With such rationalisations the colonialists did step in for political domination and economic exploitation.

Colonialism and Orientalism

Western colonialism subjected people from different parts of the globe to its rule. When considering Muslim countries they had one fear and that was Islam. There was considerable debate, therefore, during the colonial era as to how Islam should be contained. Without the containment of Islam, the colonization of Muslim lands would always pose a threat. Snouck Hurgronge realised the danger posed by the Caliphate of the Ottoman Empire. He warned the colonial powers of the danger of "Muslims' political and religious beliefs in the arena of international relations" (Buheiry, 1982, P.7). If the colonial powers accepted Islam in principle then there were negative implications for colonialism because Muslim subjects would accept their present rulers "as an anomaly" (Ibid, P.7).

The doctrine of Pan-Islamism was a danger to colonialism and Hurgronge believed that although the Islamic Caliphate was "over-religious", religious power was still in the hands of the Ulema (Muslim clergies). The problem still remained: how should Islam be contained?

One solution was presented to the French Government by Baron Carra de Vaux, who was a specialist on Ibn Sina and a member of the French Catholic Institute. He suggested

> "We should endeavour to split the Muslim world, to break its moral unity, using to this effect the ethnic and political divisions ... let us therefore accentuate these differences, in order to increase on the one hand national sentiment and to decrease on the other that of religious community among the various Muslim races ... in one word, let us segment Islam" (Ibid, P.5).

The important task was "...to weaken Islam ... to render it forever incapable of great awakenings" (Ibid, P.5). This principle commonly known as "divide and rule" was used by all colonial powers and is in use to this day by the West in Muslim

lands (Enayat, 1980; Dekmejian, 1980). The division of the Ottoman Caliphate and Muslim lands into nation-states divided the Muslim world. But the danger still posed by Islam - that Islam transcends national boundaries - continued to plague the colonial powers. It was this concern which led the colonialists to encourage a serious study of Islam. It was, after all, Islam that had to be reinterpreted. If the Muslims were to accept false reinterpretations, their attitudes would then not reflect the true spirit of Islam and the Islamic force. It was an Algerian, Mohammad Ben Rahal, of Oran Province, who correctly summarised that

> "hostility is the dominant note in Europe's sentiment towards Islam ... if the Muslim defends his home, religion or nation, he is not seen as a patriot but as a savage; if he displays courage or heroism, he is called a fanatic; if in defeat he shows resignation he is called a fatalist... (Islam is) ostracized, systematically denigrated, and ridiculed without ever being known" (Buheiry, 1982, P.14).

The colonialists encouraged the new discipline of the study of Islam and Orientalists took up the challenge of containing Islam. Studies on the Orient in the West had begun as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but they were haphazard and disorganised. By the nineteenth century the haphazard and independent approaches had given way to a more rigorous method which were in keeping with the development of scientific consciousness at the time. A general consensus of how to approach Oriental Studies had developed among scholars of the Orient, Orientalism was beginning to be recognised as a discipline in its own right. It must also be remembered that in the milieu in which the discipline was born there was a growing demand. This demand was generated by the expanding conquests and interests of colonialism. As new colonies were established the colonialists were faced with new cultures, religions and

ideas which were alien to them. In order to control the non-Western peoples, more knowledge about their cultures and religions was urgently needed. This need was fulfilled by secular Orientalism. Orientalist views have since then become "an integral part of Western culture" (Schaar, 1979, P.68). The works of men such as Silvestre de Sacy, Ernest Renan, Edward William Lane "made Orientalism effective and congruent with the interests and political concerns of imperialist rulers" (Ibid, P.69). Edward Said (1980) offers the most appropriate definition of Orientalism by stating that its function was "to understand in some cases to control, manipulate, even incorporate, what is a manifestly different world" (Said, 1980, P.12).

The contributors to Orientalism helped the colonialist to legitimize his conquests. Some Orientalists were directly involved in helping the colonial administrations by providing the latter with interpretations with which to dispute the natives' perceptions of Islam.

French and British colonialists took advantage of Orientalist studies that became a guide for the "pacification of the colonized territories as a means to achieve their colonial objective" (Benaboud, 1982, P.7) and started introducing secularist doctrines which sought to separate religion from politics. This appealed to the new monarchies, which were created by the colonialists. The colonialist secular doctrines reflected norms from their own political culture which had subordinated their churches either to the monarch or to parliament. Such ideas of secularism found many new advocates not only among Arab, Turkish and Iranian intellectuals but also among their Westernized political leaders. New ideas regarding the formulation of a "constitution", the implementation of which functioned through elected representatives in "parliaments" both reformed and radically altered political structures in the Middle East.

Orientalism began to slide from its pedestal purely and

simply because it was no longer needed by the colonial powers. Its influence, however, did not diminish. After World War II, American imperialism emerged as the new force in the Middle East and the writings of the new Orientalists influenced the new breed of specialists on Islamic studies. What is important to note here is that some Orientalists adjusted quickly to new programmes like Area Studies devised by the new specialists and they continued to maintain their influence and control over new generations of such specialists. In spite of claiming to be objective, these studies still project Western centred approaches which distort the context, failing to perceive the point of view of the subjects of the study. The result is that many studies have covered the political and economic realities of the conflict within the framework of Western ideologies. In fact,

> "Modern day Orientalists who write about Islam have shed the overt hostility of the 19th century missionary scholars who viewed Islam as a heathern religion, unworthy of respect. Tolerance and inter-cultural understanding have been actively cultivated in Islamic studies in keeping with the accommodation and evidence of conflict that characterised US actions in its first ventures in the Middle East, but beneath the facade of understanding, most Orientalists basically view Islam as an underdeveloped religion, just as the Middle East is an underdeveloped area (Barbec et al, 1975, P.19).

The ideology of the Orientalists has not changed and still persists and functions in the same manner but under new labels.

Both the colonialists and Orientalists complemented each others' work in Muslim lands during the colonial period. The former changed the structure of the Muslim societies by replacing its political system with the secular models comprising Western ideological notions of democracy,

nationalism and political parties and elections. Also they introduced a legal system replacing the Shari'ah (Islamic Laws) with their own secular laws. Orientalists, some of whom were missionaries, on the other hand, undermined Islam from within by creating doubts about the Koran and encouraging Muslims to convert to Christianity (Bergman, 1982).

Concluding note

From the time of Crusaders until the fading of colonialism, particularly after World War II, an anti-Islamic tradition was established, and a distorted image of Islam and Muslim peoples has been projected in the West. This image, which is strongly entrenched in the culture and the institutions of the West (Said, 1980; Webster, 1990), has painted a fixed picture of Islam in terms of a negative value system which is considered to be antagonistic to the social, cultural and religious values of the Western world. The historic negative image of Islam i.e. that Islam is "a murderous and tyrannical religion, the quintessence of all cruelty" (Webster, 1990, P. 139) has helped to create and reinforce the sense of cultural superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans, particularly the Muslims.

This perception of Islam as a cruel and murderous religion has been reinforced by a number of political developments in the Middle East in recent years, particularly with the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and the rise of "Islamic fundamentalism".

The West and Iran: A continuation of conflict

With the triumph of the Islamic revolution in Iran and the return of Ayatollah Khomeini from exile in 1979 a new phase of tension between the West and Islam has entered the equation of conflict in the Middle East as many academics, experts,

politicians and journalists in the West have shown (Jansen, 1979; Keddie, 1981; 1983; Sick, 1985; Afshar, 1985; Mottahedeh, 1985; Bullock and Morris, 1989; 1990). They argue that this phase has revived an Islamic dimension in the political and military development of an area which in recent history has been viewed as an unsettled but important place. This revival has a tendency to destabilise the political structure of the Middle East and pose a direct threat to the interests of the West and the Soviet Union in the region and elsewhere. It also pose a profound challenge to the pro-West political structures and their legitimate status in the Arab world, particularly the Gulf countries (Ramazani, 1987; Hunter, 1987).

The dimension of "Islamic fundamentalism" in Iran has alerted the Western governments and brought them into a successful alliance (Kupchan, 1987) e.g. the 1987 Western naval presence in the Persian Gulf to protect the Western interests in the region. The Western interests can be summarized: first, to ensure access to the vast oil resources of the Middle East; second "to prevent the Soviet Union from acquiring political or military control over these resources" (Sick, 1989, P.121); third, to preserve the stability and independence of the Gulf States and contain the threat of "Islamic fundamentalism" inside these countries e.g. Saudi Arabia 1979, Bahrain 1981; fourth, to protect the security of Israel; and fifth, to preserve trade with the Middle East (Maull, 1989). These elements of concern for Western governments have constituted a trend in the foreign policy of these governments.

Ideally one can talk about a single foreign policy of the West, but the fact this is not always the case. Different governments stress different elements of concern. Two grand themes for the United States have been more important than for other Western governments. These are oil and Soviet containment which have been the constant elements in US policy (Sick, 1989, P.121). In other words, the United States is more concerned with strategic stability. For Western Europe trade

with the Middle East is one of the main concerns and is considered more important than the support of Israel (Maull, 1989, P.153). Maull has summarized the relative importance of interests of Western alliance in the Middle East in the following table:

	W. Alliance		Soviet Union
	US	W. Europe	
Secure access to oil	+ +	+ +	0
Avoid East-West confrontation	+ +	+ +	+ +
Global strategic stability	+ +	+	+ +
Regional stability	+ +	+ +	?
Support of Israel	+ +	+/0	-/0
Foster trade	+	+ +	0/+

Table 1: the relative importance of Western interests in the Middle East.
++ = high priority /+ = priority /0 = low priority /- = opposed.

Since the collapse of the Shah's regime and the establishment of a theocratic regime in Iran which launched "a wave of Islamic fundamentalism" (Sick, 1989, p.136), Western leaders from the United States and Western Europe have expressed great concern about the instability that cause harm to Western interests (Parsons, 1989). For instance, Denis Healey, a former U.K. Foreign and Defence Secretary was quoted in a seminar about the West and Islam saying that "instability in the Middle East can pose a direct threat to the interests of the Western peoples and powers" (Crossed Wires, 1984).

Instability is a word often used by Western leaders to refer to actions emerging from "Islamic fundamentalism". When Iraq invaded Iran in 1980 the United States and its allies acted on the strategies of "conflict containment" and stayed neutral, but when Iran went on the strategic counter attack (crossing into Iraq in July 1982), Washington and France and the Soviet Union adopted the discourse of instability. Instability might be caused by Iran and these powers dropped their neutrality and threw all their support behind Iraq (Maull, 1989, P.162) by supplying her with arms, technology and

intelligence gathering (El Azhary, 1984; Long, 1984; Anthony, 1984; Darwish and Alexander, 1991). The main concern of instability in the Persian Gulf was the danger of the effect on the flow of oil to US, Western Europe and Japan (Pick, 1989, P.190). This might create economic problems in the West as the Arab oil embargo did in 1973 (Terry and Mendenhall, 1979). As long as Iran was not defined any more by Western leaders as an "island of stability" (President Jimmy Carter perceived Iran under the Shah as an "island of stability" in the region), the danger might increase and can harm the West's interests in the area.

How is Islamic fundamentalism perceived in the West?

"Islamic fundamentalism" has been widely defined in the West as a threat to Western interests in the Middle East (Algar, 1981; Sick, 1985; Simpson, 1989; Maull and Pick, 1989). It is often associated with terrorism, hostage taking, fanaticism, violence and the codes of punishment in Islam (Hiro, 1988; Wright, 1989; Hussain, 1990). Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini seems to be the major case in point for such accusations which are reinforced by the political establishments in the West, the liberal intellectuals and the mass media (Chomsky, 1989; Dorman and Farhang, 1987). Other cases are found in some of the Islamic movements in Lebanon, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia and so on (Dessouki, 1982; Ben Jalloun, 1990) which mainly have good relationships with Iran (Griffith, 1979). Muslim scholars have completely different perspectives and definitions of "Islamic fundamentalism". For a start, this Islamic phenomenon is called "Islamic awakening" and has given several sociological definitions: one of them is "Islamic awakening is the Islamic revolution. It aims to change corrupt situations by Jihad". Also, "it is a renewal movement and social change which benefits from planned and organised steps in order to lead society for a better life". And "it is the continuation of the

prophet's inheritance which seeks solutions to the problems in the light of the principles of religion". Again, "it is an organisation for the masses which tries to function within society" and so on (Filali, 1987, P.330). These sorts of definitions are not dealt with as sociological interpretations or in-depth understanding of other peoples cultures and norms. They deal more with instant manifestations of an action which is carried out by an "enemy" which represents the "other". For instance, the West's first direct experience with the Islamic revolution in Iran was the taking over of US Embassy in Tehran by Iranian students where they held American hostages for 444 days. Images of Islam which were associated with barbarism, medieval theocracy and distasteful exoticism (Said, 1981, P.XV) were quickly at work and remained for over a year. The political establishment and the experts who were in line with the government and the mass media, played a great role in reinforcing a negative image of Islam and the Muslims in Iran. Hence the "Pavlovian linkages" between "Islamic fundamentalism" and hostage taking in the West (Moin, 1989). The same images were repeated in the case of the Western hostages in Beirut when "terrorism" was added to the list of Western labels to describe Islam (Cooley, 1981). Another example is the case of the Salman Rushdie affair where Islam is judged by the West as an "intolerant religion" and "extremist" and Ayatollah Khomeini as a "fanatic leader". Here again images of Islam were at play and cultural clashes between two values; Western values and Islamic values were observed in the popular cultural (Webster, 1991).

The dominant ideology that Islam is a threat is historically held in the culture of the West as it is seen in the first section of this chapter. Recently, particularly with the emergence of Iran as an Islamic state, this image is reinforced by developments in the Middle East. The West was not looking for an understanding of the "Islamic fundamentalism" phenomenon, but was occupied with looking at

the consequences of this Islamic tendency and its effects on the interests of Western powers. To discredit this new force which is challenging the West and which is perceived as an "enemy" (Chomsky, 1989) many ideological descriptions, as will be argued in this thesis (especially chapters 5 and 6), are conveyed in the media and Western societies have persisted in seeing Islam and Muslims in a negative light. By doing so misunderstanding between the West and Islam is enhanced and future collision is likely because no common ground between the two cultures has been established.

Characteristics of "Islamic fundamentalism"

After dealing with the problematic definition of "Islamic fundamentalism in the West, one should clarify the characteristics of this phenomenon to get an insight into its intellectual composition. One of the main characteristics is that it is becoming a factual social phenomenon in the Muslim world and has its roots in the history of Islam (Dekmejian, 1980, P.1). It is embodied in popular movements which have many followers from different social strata.

A second characteristic of "Islamic fundamentalism" is its political discourse in society which is summarised, with the danger of oversimplifying, into two aspects: the first one, its attitude towards corrupt governments and rulers in the Muslim world who are using Islam as a cover to legitimise their rule (Dekmejian, 1980, P.3). The second aspect is that it considers the colonial period responsible for many of the problems of Muslim countries. One of these problems was the imposition of a powerful Westernised elite whose role was to serve Western interests and the elite class in Islamic countries. In this respect the Muslim world does not differ from any third world country which has been subjected to colonization and alienation from its own culture by the West and Westernised elites (Fakhry, 1977).

"Islamic fundamentalism" stresses Islamic cultural

authenticity as opposed to imported ideas and structures (Dessouki, 1982, P.23). One of these imported ideas and structures was the concept of modernisation. This concept was actually a kind of Westernisation programme aimed to transform third world societies to a stage of development similar to the structures and values of the West. It failed because the root motive of it was political, not social or economic development and because it ignored historical and cultural norms in Muslim societies (Halliday, 1979). One example was the Shah's pseudo development programme that he introduced in the form of a white revolution in 1963 and which inflamed Muslims in Iran (Dorman and Farhang, 1987, PP.82-115). Another example was Bourguiba's modernisation plans in Tunisia after independence in 1956. The plans were based on the principles of the French revolution. For Bourguiba the remodelling of Tunisia necessitated the abandonment of many of the institutions and customs of Islam (Boulby, 1988).

A third characteristic of "Isalmic fundamentalism" is the use of political violence. Violence in the Middle East is often linked in the West to terrorism (Chomsky, 1989). The issue of political violence is completely decontextualised and the West often concentrates on the official perspective which focuses on the result of violence and does not see the action of "Islamic fundamentalism" within a contextual background. For instance, the violence used by some of the Islamic movements in Lebanon is often defined as terrorism and is not seen in the context of the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon (since 1978) and Western military involvement in other places in Lebanon (the Western multinational forces 1982-1984) (Sabra, 1987). Other examples can be given from Iran, Tunisia (Boulby, 1988) and Egypt (Ibrahim, 1988).

Those characteristics cannot be understood unless they are properly placed within their social political context and looked at from the angle of social change that is taking place in Arab and Islamic countries.

"Islamic fundamentalism" and the Western media

In modern times the role of the mass media in shaping the perception of other peoples and cultures cannot be ignored. Particularly when the Western media align their coverage to the cultural values of Western societies and have consistent interaction with people in power and experts who influence the perception of journalists and colour their views.

The rise of "Islamic fundamentalism" has attracted the attention of many researchers in the different disciplines of the social sciences. Some of these are media researchers who have exposed the problematic coverage of Islam in the West. Some of these researchers (e.g. Suleiman, 1974; Shaheen, 1977; Belkaoui, 1978; Barton and Greggs, 1978; Ghareeb, 1982; Morris, 1982; Simon, 1983; Randal, 1983; Crossed Wires, 1984; Mohsen, 1987) have concentrated on the image of the Arab and the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflicts. Others (e.g. Tadayon, 1980; Said, 1981; Shoar, 1985; Dorman and Farhang, 1987; Vilanilam, 1989; Mohsen, 1990) have focused on Iran and Islam. Most of these studies have concluded that the Western mass media plays a significant role in reinforcing stereotypes and negative perceptions about the Arab, Islam and the Middle East. They vary in their perspectives from the historical concept and perception of Islam and Arab to the complex and subtle relationship between the media and government where the former serve the latter in maintaining the status quo. Islam has been one of the main themes of most of these studies, though with the fall of the Shah in 1979 the concentration has been more targeted on the way "Islamic fundamentalism" is perceived, particularly in the US media.

Conclusion

In tracing the conflicts between the West and Islam from the Crusaders until recent times i.e. until the Rushdie affair in 1989, one can trace an anti-Islamic tradition which has dominated the ideology of the West for centuries. This Western

ideology appears to be most at work when the degree of collision between the West and Islam is intensified e.g. colonialism, Rushdie affair. Negative images of the "other" become embedded in the culture of the West and shape the perception of Islam for institutions and for the public. How this influences the mass media is not easy to assess, but by examining the content of the media and its messages to society offer some explanations which would help to illustrate the role of the media in society.

Before looking at the press content, a theoretical framework will outline how the media reflects the notions of society and the role of the sources who represent the interests of society. The next chapter will examine the theoretical frameworks which will direct this study.

CHAPTER 3

UNDERSTANDING THEORIES OF NEWS PRODUCTION AND THE RESEARCH APPROACH

This chapter will concentrate on the theoretical framework in the context of the theories of news production, particularly those approaches which are related to the source-communicator interaction, the role of the dominant social values and the professional ideologies governing the production process and leading to a particular construction of reality. After forming the conceptual framework research questions addressing the role of the Western sources of news will be tackled at the end of the chapter.

Theoretical Frameworks

The study of news coverage of Iran in the British press during the first decade of the Islamic revolution poses many questions about the role of the Western media in communicating political and religious news relating to a foreign culture through journalists whose actual knowledge and first-hand information is quite poor (see Chapter 7) and does not allow them to keep track of important political and social developments. Journalists in the coverage of Iran, in most of its affairs, tend to resort to "second-hand or third-hand information" (Morris, The Independent, 1990) from

sources located in the major cities in Western Europe and the United States. These sources themselves lack expertise in many aspects of the revolution because of the absence of regular contact with people in power in Iran and with the different institutions participating in running the country. They are also out of touch with the popular and revolutionary environment dominating the life of the majority of people in Iran.

Journalists, as sources of news, lack first-hand information about the development of the revolution as is witnessed by some journalists involved in the coverage of Iran (see chapter 7). But sources of news such as Western officials possess better facilities than journalists to follow up information and better organized channels of communication between Western governments and Iran despite the fact that these channels are subject to a degree of political and diplomatic tension. For instance, the diplomatic crises between Britain and Iran from the capture of the first British hostages in the early stages of the revolution until the Salman Rushdie affair affected the diplomatic channels of communication and consequently affected the sort of information the officials possessed in the Foreign Office in London. Officials substitute these channels by being dependent on other Western diplomatic channels functioning in Tehran and in Europe (Morris, The Independent; Hushenji, IRNA, 1990). But still the official circles are better equipped than the media in having more channels of information which allow them to be in a position to control information on Iran in the Press.

Sources such as Western experts who are working in government departments e.g. News Department at the Foreign

Office and in research centres in the Western world such as the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) in London, as well as academics in selected Middle East and international relations departments in some British Universities have better organized academic resources. These experts could give some answers to the queries of journalists on certain political, economic and religious issues. To what extent the experts' assessment of information is accurate and their judgement independent from other sources in the West is an important matter which will be tackled in chapters 5 and 7.

Sources like the Iranian exile community particularly the people's Mujahedeen (Mujahedeen Khaleq) and some journalists and ex-politicians have their own channels of information within the country (Teimaurian, The Times, 1990) which allow them to be kept informed of the political trends in Iran. Their importance lies, in the eyes of British journalists, in the fact that they belong to the culture, they speak the Farsi language and they have a "lot of information" to offer to the press at a time of restricted access to Iran. Again, the accuracy of their information is something which needs to be questioned, particularly when British journalists discover over a period of time that much of the information supplied by the Iranian opposition is inaccurate and misleading.

However, the considerable absence of Western journalists from the scene of political development in Iran because of lack of funding and Iranian restrictions, leads to the absence of interaction between the Iranian officials and

religious figures and the Western journalists. This makes the British press interact on a larger scale with other sources like those mentioned earlier and other pro-West Arab sources whom they can contact and with whose attitudes they can identify e.g. their attitudes towards the Iran-Iraq war, and the Iranian threat to the stability of the region. The Western official sources are among these sources, as it will be argued in chapter 5, The press use their statements and definitions because of their authoritative status. This allows them to reflect the political attitudes of the government in relation to foreign affairs concerning Iran and the Middle East.

The interaction between the Western officials and other notable sources in the coverage of Iran such as Western experts, Iranian opposition, Gulf states figures and so on (see Chapter 5) on the one hand and the journalists on the other hand is an area which, once exposed to analysis will offer better understanding of the way Iran is constructed in the British press. Without shedding light on this interaction from the perspectives of news organizations and the journalists as has been done by many researchers (e.g. Altheide, 1976; Chibnall, 1977; Schlesinger, 1978; Tuchman, 1978, Fishman, 1980; Ericson et al, 1987; Dorman and Farhang, 1987), our understanding of the process of constructing Iran in the British press will be limited.

Emphasis on the journalists' lack of access to Iran, in spite of its importance, does not give a complete sociological interpretation for the way news is constructed in the British press, particularly when we know from previous studies that the process of producing news is constrained by the professional and organisational ideologies which lead to

a constructed account of social reality. The elitism value discussed by media researchers, as it will be shown later on, gives better understanding for the way the journalists use sources, especially those political elites with whom they can identify. Within that context one explains why Western official sources are brought regularly into the coverage to give their versions of reality.

Studies have shown (Chibnall, 1977; Ericson et al, 1989) that the legitimation of sources is a process conditioned by the sharing of the same values that exist in the dominant culture. There are not the common cultural values between most journalists covering Iran and Iranian religious figures allowing correspondents and editors to identify with those figures and make their actions and beliefs signified as legitimate news, for instance, the issues of punishment and veil (Hijab) in Islam. Journalists (e.g. Woollacott, The Guardian; Davis, Daily Mirror; Wade, Daily Telegraph, 1990) find it difficult to legitimise these sort of cultural symbols because they are not located within the values of Western culture. They tend to cover these issues in a critical fashion because deep inside they disagree with these sorts of cultural and religious practices. The attitude of journalists towards certain issues reduces their professional usefulness as was argued in the work of Schlesinger (1978). He quoted one correspondent saying that "I'm prejudiced because deep down I agree with comprehensive education rather than selective. I know the idealistic labour-solutions they wouldn't work, but your basic ground-root attitude begins to infect you if you are not careful".

The importance of the role of the source will be highlighted when the content analysis in chapter 5 discloses

what sort of sources are dominant, the versions of reality constructed by the press (e.g. Islam, hostages, oil) and the ideological labels used to define events and personalities in Iran (e.g. "fundamentalism", "threat", "terrorists"). Having said this, I would not undermine the "relative autonomy" (Ericson et al, 1989, p.12) of journalists from their sources in spite of their dependence on them on many occasions (Sigal, 1973, 1976; Ericson et al, 1987; Vilanilam, 1989; McQuail, 1987).

Sources as Legitimate Authority

Journalists in the process of "making" news on Iran look for particular sources of an authoritative nature to put forward their versions of reality. Normally these sources occupy certain positions in society which are recognised socially and have the resources and expertise to deliver their messages professionally to the media. These "authorised knowers" (Ericson et al, 1989) who recognise the importance of the news media, project certain ideological views on some vital issues. Their governments or their organisations are considered an essential players in the local and international political process. For instance, American and British government officials and Western experts are regularly consulted by the news media in the coverage of oil issues and Western hostages in Tehran and Beirut. They are cited because they are authorised sources commenting on issues which are considered important for the national interests of the United States and Britain. Because news is ideological the media will give preference to those sources who represent power and knowledge and they are quoted unchallenged. The result is an ideological version

dominating the news story and minimising or "omitting altogether the ideological messages of organisations that have something to say on the matter" (Ericson et al, 1987, p.9).

Sources occupying an authoritative position in the structure of a society are not always guaranteed legitimation by the media organisation. Sources, as we argued before, have to belong to the dominant values of Western societies and the dominant system of power in order to be legitimised in the process of news production. In terms of the coverage of foreign news, foreign sources like the Iranian officials are considered in the structure of Islamic society as authoritative sources. But are they legitimised by the British press? Are they considered authoritative sources like the Western sources who occupy "the top end of the knowledge structure of society" (Ericson et al, 1989, p.5)?

Islamic Iran in its first decade has become identified as a dissident country functioning outside the mainstream of international relations and regulations. The coverage of Iran is likened to the coverage of other dissident countries and groups e.g. Libya, Syria, North Vietnam, Vietcong, anti-war movements, PLO, and the IRA since all of them have been viewed by the mainstream media as illegitimate sources in spite of the authoritative positions they occupy within the structure of their political arenas and societies. Research evidence from the coverage of Vietnam (Entman and Paletz, 1982; Knightly, 1982; Hallin, 1984, 1986), the Middle East (Morris, 1982; Simon, 1983; Randal, 1983), Northern Ireland (Schlesinger, 1978; Curtiz, 1984, 1986) and Africa (Abdullahi, 1990) tells us that the anti-war movements, the Vietcong, the PLO, the IRA and Libya are viewed in a negative

light and that the Western media tend to delegitimise them and be sceptical of their definitions because they are not considered by the media as "respectable and reformist" (Gitlin, 1980) in the kind of activities they follow. They are defined as "Communists" and "Terrorists".

Another way of understanding the legitimation of some sources and the deligitimation of others is applying the Herman and Chomsky (1988) propaganda model. They have applied this model to the study of foreign news and its relation to foreign policy in the United States. They argue that the media apply a double standard in covering events, persons and countries. They give examples from Latin American countries which are covered favourably or unfavourably according to government attitudes and foreign policy towards these countries. Because of this approach countries like El Salvador in 1982, and Guatemala between 1984 and 1985 were viewed as friendly states by the U.S. administration and were covered favourably. A country like Nicaragua in 1984 which has been viewed as unfriendly was covered unfavourably (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). In spite of the strong argument put forward by Herman and Chomsky (1988) critics like Philip Schlesinger (1989) find their analysis "a highly deterministic version of how the media operates coupled with a straight forwardly functionalist conception of ideology" (Schlesinger, 1989, p.297).

Schlesinger's criticisms derived from the empirical sociology of journalism approach which suggests that the sources of news have particular media strategies and engage in ideological conflict prior to the appearance of definitions in the media (Schlesinger, 1990). This belief is contrary to the research approach emphasised by researchers

like Stuart Hall and his colleagues and Herman and Chomsky who focus on the construction of ideology in a capitalist society where powerful sources have a structured relationship with the media. This thesis supports the view that this structured relationship between powerful sources and the media influences the way the latter construct news, particularly foreign news where the activities and views of opposing sources are not allowed to compete and challenge the commonly held "facts" and views of the reporting countries (Rushdie affair is a case in point). It is true that divisions might occur within the dominant class towards particular issues, but this is more apparent within the arena of "home" politics. In international politics the situation is different because international and regional interests are involved. It will be argued in the empirical study that division is rarely seen among powerful sources belonging to powerful nations (in the ten year coverage just one such division occurs. That was in one aspect of the coverage of Western hostages in Beirut. See chapter 5). The identification of Iran as an enemy state makes the Western sources, who have common interests, engage in an ideological role to discredit that country. Having said that one cannot neglect the ideological role of the media which has its independent professional codes of practices influencing press coverage.

The Source-Journalist Interaction

In the process of producing news journalists need information to complete their stories and give an authority to their accounts, using sources who are defined as "authorised knowers" (Ericson et al, 1989). Most of these

sources, as we will demonstrate in this study, and as many other studies have disclosed, are official sources who have regular contacts with the media through news conferences, press releases, off-the-record briefings, press secretaries, leaks and personal relationships. Through these channels of communication officials try to structure news in line with certain strategies with which the government is concerned. But what lessons can be learned from relevant studies in this area to enhance our understanding of the way news about Iran is produced in the press? We learn that in the process of interaction between officials and journalists, the former who are elites and have preferred access, try to manage the news and influence the way the press shape the coverage, e.g. how the news is defined, what themes it stresses, what discourse has been used in order to control what is said about their policies, attitudes, actions and figures. The result of this strategy is a news content deferential to the political line of the government and its attitudes particularly, on foreign issues.

The issue of control over news by officials and other elite sources can be seen as part of their strategy to win publicity and support for their cause. Ericson et al (1989) discuss this strategy and argue that "sources wish to use news discourse to further their arguments for control over other organisations in their environment, and to defend against the efforts of other organisations to use news communications to justify infringements on their autonomy" (Ericson et al, 1989, pp.25-26).

What sort of relation does exist between officials and the media? The structuralist approach focuses on the strategic advantages for officials and people in power who

have privileged access and are "accredited sources" and become the "primary definers" of news events (Hall et al, 1978, p.59). This approach does not explain the complexities of media relations with other sources (Ericson, et al, 1987, 1989) or cases of "ideological contestation" (Schudson, 1989), the division or competitiveness of official sources vis-a-vis common issues as can be seen in the example of Watergate. Watergate is studied in the work of Epstein (1975) and Lang and Lang (1984) who demonstrate that the competing institutions and parties of different bases of power and interest within the government resulted in the use of the press to win the battle of public opinion. But these researchers were concerned with a domestic issue of great interest to the political life of the United States and to the media. Can we see the same competition among institutions and governments in the West when the matter relates to foreign issues? The answer is yes in one particular case as it will be argued in the content analysis chapter (chapter 5). The criticism in the British press of the French and the US governments' handling of the hostage crisis is an example. Both countries managed to get some of their hostages out of Lebanon and that was contrary to the Western consensus of "no deal with terrorism".

In both approaches of the study of sources of news; the structuralist approach and the empirical sociology of journalism approach, we see the same insights about "the strategic advantages that political and economic power secure for sources". On the whole, the empirical sociology of journalism holds back "from characterising this as primary definition because of its recognition of the active pursuit of definitional advantage required by those seeking access to

the media" (Schlesinger, 1988, p.26).

The empirical sociology of journalism differs from the other approach mainly by stating the divergences within the official camp, and the role of other sources. It does not acknowledge the structured relation between the people in power or elites and the media as discussed in the works of Stuart Hall and his colleagues (1978, 1986).

What have the actual studies on the interaction between the officials and journalists argued? And what light has been shed on the official strategies to control or manage the news?

Leon Sigal (1973) in his analysis of 2,850 stories that have appeared in the New York Times and Washington Post concludes that official press officers and their "routine channels" e.g. press releases, communiques, and press conferences are used more than other channels in the coverage. This shows that the media cannot ignore official sources because they are recognised socially to be in a position to know about different issues concerning the government and the country (Ericson et al, 1989) and consequently the information they offer is valuable when the media cannot be on the spot or investigate because of the lack of resources, and the pressure of time.

The price of media dependence on official sources will be paid through lack of critical handling of the news sources in the stories they cover, as well as indiscriminate printing of whatever the sources tell them (Sigal, 1973, p.54). The reason behind that favourable coverage of the official sources is explained by Sigal (1986). The sources become routine sources and routine sources have the skills in news

management and, over a period of time, the ability to develop relationships between themselves and reporters (Sigal, 1986, p.28).

This interaction between journalists and their sources as shown in the work of Chibnall (1977) and Oscar Gandy (1982) will lead reporters to write for their sources. Gandy (1982) quotes one journalist saying that "rather than writing for the mass audience, journalists who are in regular contact with government officials ..., come to write instead for the friends they see each day" (Gandy, 1982, p.11).

The management of news by the government through its "news promoters" e.g. officials, press secretaries, and other channels aim, in some cases, to camouflage the truth by deception and telling lies. Stephen Hess (1984), mentioned in his study that a group of former presidential press secretaries were asked if they have ever lied to the press. Two of them admitted they had. Ron Nessen confessed that he had once said the President Ford was going to Floridas to "inspect a weather plane", when his trip was to play golf. Jody Powell, President Carter's spokesman, mentioned that he lied "to protect the Iranian rescue mission" (Hess, 1984, p.24). The problem here is that some journalists consider lies, like the ones mentioned above, as justifiable in a democratic society because they are in the interest of "the public good" (Hess, 84, p.111). Ericson et al (1989) considered that deception "is often some combination of the sources's interest and the public interest" (Ericson, et al. 1989, P.20).

In relation to this Cockerell et al (1984) mention a story which shows the falsity of the British government's public attitude towards Nicaragua and the Israeli invasion of

Lebanon in 1982. They noted that the diplomatic correspondent of the Central Office of Information's news services had left an official document on an underground train while hurrying to Heathrow airport. The document made its way to the offices of the London radical weekly magazine City Limits. The published document revealed that the private attitude of the Foreign Office to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and Nicaragua were rather different from the attitude of the government as presented in public (Cockerell et al, 1984, pp.129-130).

Furthermore, what it is learned from studies of news about government-journalist relationships in Vietnam, Northern Ireland, and the Falklands confirm that there is conscious manipulation of news by officials and the military. Researchers (like Hoch, 1974; Epstein, 1975; Elliott, 1978; Schlesinger, 1978; Entman and Paletz, 1981; Philip Knightly, 1982; Harris, 1983; Hallin, 1984; Curtiz, 1984; Mercer et al, 1987) have focused, among other things, on how governments and military are the primary source of information, and how they managed the press through misinformation during the process of the wars, even though the degree of success of news management differed from one case to another. For instance, news management in the case of Vietnam was not as successful as it was in the case of the Falklands, because in Vietnam the war was much longer and the press at some stages was critical of the US policy in Vietnam, in spite of the effort put in by officials such as President Johnson to manage the news in media coverage of Vietnam (Turner, 1986). The purpose of the government is to have the maximum control over the news by accompanying correspondents in the fields of war, and let them see and hear what they want them to see and

hear, as well as censoring the media messages especially if they are written by correspondents who are critical to the government. The recent Gulf war (Desert Storm) is a very good example of the military management of news. This war has demonstrated the desire of the government to control the media.

Officials and journalists need each other. The officials want to convey their messages through the media and the journalists want the information because it is authoritative in nature, easily accessible and essential for finishing the journalists' assignments on time. It is not suggested that the media transmit the officials' information and definitions in a conspiratorial fashion, but that there are some organizational and professional requirements the journalists have to meet. This relationship has a great effect on the news content where the officials, as many studies have shown, become the "primary definers" of the event (Hall et al , 1978, p.59). The consequences of using the officials as sources of news without serious consideration for the information they convey might jeopardise the content of the news and lead to partial coverage as has been shown in the analysis of the coverage in the British press of the shooting down of the Iranian Airbus by an American warship in July 1988 (Mohsen, 1990).

In some critical studies about the American press and Iran, Dorman (1986) and Dorman and Farhang (1987) look on how the press covered the Shah and Iran from 1951 to 1978 in relation to government foreign policy towards that country during that period.

The researchers argued that the American press for twenty-five years ignored the politics of Iran. This

ignorance was rooted in the assumption that the political aspirations of Iranians did not really matter, because they were incapable of self-rule. The view of the press was an assumption shaped and reinforced by the foreign policy establishment and was given approval by highly West-centred preconceptions. The authors considered that as these beliefs were held by the policy makers and accepted uncritically by journalists, the 1978 revolution could only have come as a surprise to official Washington and the general public.

Dorman and Farhang stated the interaction between journalists and officials in terms of foreign affairs issues, and stressed that reporters must have basic understanding of the cultural differences between societies, and their views must not be bound to their own culture when they cover events in third world countries. The writers reached two main findings. These findings are:

1. The American media coverage of Iran was in line with American foreign policy. The press coverage of the political life of Iran did not show independent judgement. This conclusion might be problematic for some researchers because it does not take into account the diversity of opinions within the camp of foreign policy makers and does not show the independent judgement of the media through the relative autonomy of journalists.

2. Journalists during the coverage of events in Iran demonstrated that they were influenced by ethnocentrism which served the policy of the government well.

This idea concuss with Edward Said's (1979, 1981) argument in his article "The media revolution and the resurgence of Islam" and in his book "Covering Islam" where he stresses the Western historical view of Islam and the role of the culture of Western journalists as factors leading to the inaccurate coverage of Iran during the early stages of the Iranian revolution and the American hostage crisis.

From these conclusions, the writers argue that the role of the press as a watchdog in democratic theory, and in popular imagination is not applicable in the case of Iran. They consider the American press is deferential to official foreign policy rather than critical. But is not this state of dependency with respect to sources (e.g. Sigal, 1973; Chibnall, 1977; Hall et al, 1978; Fishman, 1980) confronted by media practices and the bureaucratic construct?

Studies have shown (e.g. Ericson et al 1989; Curran, 1979) that journalists are not passive vis-a-vis the strategy used by sources. Journalists have "relative autonomy" from their sources (Ericson et al, 1987, 1989) and their professional values add some practices to the process of producing news. Curran (1979), stressed, during his term as Director-General of the BBC, the right of dissenting groups to express the themselves on the air because "this is what democracy is about". He opposed demands from officials to ban spokesmen for the provisional IRA, because he argued that "the right of the great majority to know is more important than the risk that the few may be deceived". Curran stated the dilemma of the broadcaster; whether to give air time to

the rebels which would, the government argued, make available to them the instrument of publicity and recognition, or whether presentation of their case would, in itself, reveal the inadequacy of their argument (Curran, 1979, pp. 127-31).

Presenting the case of dissident groups does not mean that their messages are balanced - as is the norm of media practices or professional values - with official messages because the balance norm is rarely defined to include "illegitimate challengers" (Tuchman, 1974). The result is a domination and an acceptance of the official versions. Within this line Gamson and Modigliani (1989) quoted Halberstam (1979, p.414) when he describes how Walter Cronkite's attitude of avoiding controversy in the editorials led to his acceptance of the official definitions: "To him, editorialising was going against the government. He had little awareness, nor did his employers want him to, of the editorialising which he did automatically by unconsciously going along with the government's position" (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989, pp.7-8).

The interaction between the media and the sources of news, particularly the official sources, play a crucial role in defining and shaping media messages. This source-communicator relationship has been viewed in many studies on news production and sources as a "symbiotic dependence" which can be traced in the coverage of many issues such as the coverage of politics and government (Dorman and Farhang, 1987; Dunwoody and Shield, 1986; Brown et al, 1987; Berkowitz, 1987; Malek, 1988; Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Schudson, 1989; Vilanilam, 1989; Koch, 1990), as well as in the coverage of Crime (e.g. Chibnall, 1977; Ericson et al, 1989) and the coverage of science (e.g. Gamson

and Modigliani, 1989; Hansen, 1990).

The "symbiotic dependence" highlighted in the work of these researchers does not contradict the "relative autonomy" of journalists as discussed by other researchers (e.g. Ericson et al, 1989). In fact, in the sociology of journalism both approaches hold an interesting interpretation for the day-to-day production of news. If a researcher argues about the "symbiotic dependence" of an official in media coverage it does not mean he is neglecting the "relative autonomy" of journalists where they have the professional ability to use other sources and depend on versions which might contradict the official versions. This case is particularly true in the case of specialised journalists who know the area they are covering very well and who possess background information which enables them to judge whether the official version is accurate or not. During the interviews it is found that the few journalists who are specialists on the Middle East try to use different sources in spite of their dependence on Western official sources. Their relative autonomy allows them to look for other sources who might give them another angle for the news. So, in the process of production of news it is more difficult to argue about "symbiotic dependence" in spite of its supremacy, than argue the "relative autonomy" of journalists who use other sources than the official sources.

Media Construction of Reality

The nature of news as a form of knowledge makes the journalists and media organisations dependent upon news sources who provide their versions of reality. Yet still, the journalists and their professional and ideological values

have control over how news is framed and how social reality or the activities of officials and other sources are constructed in news texts.

In the field of sociology of journalism many studies, as it will be shown later, have focused on how the media is involved in selecting a specific interpretation of "reality" from a variety of available possibilities and framing it in a particular way to introduce it to the public as a "package" ready for consumption. How the public interpret this package is another matter and beyond the scope of this thesis. In the work of Gamson and Modigliani (1989) on media discourse and public opinion vis a vis nuclear power "media packages" are the manifestation of media discourse which has an internal structure with "a central organising idea or frame" (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989, p.3). This central organising idea which makes sense of the events concerned is called in the work of Gitlin (1980) "media frames". To Gitlin "media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organise discourse, whether verbal or visual" (Gitlin, 1980, p.7). In addition to that definition, Tuchman (1978) based her study on news as a frame and showed, among other things, how news as a frame constructs social reality.

The aim in reviewing literature on how the media construct social reality in the news is to draw some lessons which are helpful to understand the way news about Iran is constructed in the British press and the way the different organisational and professional ideologies determine the content of news on Islam and Iran along with the sources of news.

Studies on "construction of news", "making news", or "manufacturing news" in different areas of production (e.g. Galtung and Ruge, 1973; Epstein, 1973; Chibnall, 1977; Tuchman, 1978; Schlesinger, 1978; Golding and Elliott, 1979; Fishman, 1980; Glasgow University Media Group, 1976, 1980, 1982, Van Dijk, 1988) have focused on how news production is constrained by the values, ideologies and practices of journalism as a profession.

According to Golding and Elliott (1979) news values perform two functions. They determine which events are suitable for inclusion in the final package sold to the public. Secondly, they are guidelines for the presentation of items, suggesting what to emphasise, what to omit and where to give priority in the preparation of the items for presentation. In other words they form a working rule "comprising a Corpus of occupational lore which implicitly and often expressly explains and guides newsroom practice" (Golding and Elliott, 1979, p.114). Because of this, journalists in different news organisation structures tend to have similar professional means of interpreting the world (Chibnall, 1977; Tuchman, 1978). Some of these criteria of news values are:

1.Importance: It is where news is judged as significant to large numbers of people. For instance the British hostages in Lebanon were defined by most journalists interviewed for this study as important news for the British public. The data which emerged from the content analysis shows that this theme is one of the most important news issues selected in the British press and often its importance is discussed in relation to the dominant values of the British society.

2. Simplification: Due to space and time limitation, news items must be short and contain the essential "facts". Often the simplification value engenders decontextualisation of events because it does not bring enough background information to make complex issues clearer to the public. The decontextualisation of events shown in the work of Schlesinger (1978) leaves many people with the idea that "terrorism" in Northern Ireland is the reason of the conflict there rather than one of the symptoms. In the process of simplification, complex issues, particularly of foreign culture and countries, are sometimes brought down to a mundane and basic level in order for the news to be easily understood by the readership. This process leads to oversimplification of issues and sometimes to inaccuracy. For instance the complexities of Iranian politics, as I shall argue later, are brought down into the "Moderates" and the "Hard-liners" who are involved in a "power struggle" inside Iran. This does not take into account that the "Moderates" in some cases, e.g. the Salman Rushdie affair, are "Hard-liners" and the "Hard-liners" in other cases are "Moderates", e.g. the attitudes towards the Soviet Union.

3. Negativity: It is the value where the media focus on negative news or bad news or odd news. Disasters, violence, famine, terrorism and wars all become news values to satisfy the negativity criteria. Galtung and Ruge (1973) argued about negativity in the transition of events to news in the North Western corner of the world. They come to the conclusion that the more negative the event in its result, the more probable that it will become a news item. Hartmann and Husband (1974) support the conclusion of Galtung and Ruge

about the negativity factor in selecting foreign news. They find in their analysis of overseas news in the British press that the overseas materials are more violent and conflict-orientated than the domestic materials. Similarly, Teun Van Dijk (1988) in his analysis of the assassination of the Lebanese President-elect Bachir Gomayl in 1982 in 138 newspapers from 99 countries suggests, among other things, that the assassination itself is in agreement with the negativity criteria for the event to become newsworthy.

It will be argued later that many events which are judged as negative events are focused on by the British press in the process of the coverage of Iranian affairs, e.g. Iran-Iraq War, tension between the West and Iran, hostages in Tehran and Beirut, terrorism, and Islamic fundamentalism.

4. Drama: An event will be viewed newsworthy if it has an element of drama in it, such as conflict, violence, and human suffering (McQuail, 1976). Normally dramatisation leads to the trivialisation of the meaning of events. Halloran et al (1970) in their analysis of the 1968 anti-Vietnam War demonstration in London argued how the media structured its coverage on the drama emerging from the tiny violent minority and neglected the aim and the peaceful nature of the march. In coverage of the Iran-Iraq War, the British press dramatised the events by focusing first on the destruction of oil refineries and reservoirs in both countries and then on the human losses particularly the soldiers who were killed at the war front. This dramatisation of the war made the press neglect the reasons of that war, e.g. who started it and why it was started.

5. Personality: News is about events and personalities. Many news items are seen in the action of recognised individuals who make the news or participate in the making of news. Galtung and Ruge (1965) argue that the more the event is viewed from the angle of the personal behaviour of certain individuals, the more likely to become news. They observe that personification is the result of the need to give an issue a meaning and identification (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, p.69). British journalists argue that readers are presented with individuals in news stories that they can identify with and normally identification includes the similarity of culture. People in Britain can identify with the British hostages in Beirut because they are British and they hold the same values as the British public and Western societies, but they cannot identify with Lebanese prisoners in the Israeli prisons in South Lebanon and Israel as some journalists have pointed out (e.g. Wade, Daily Telegraph; Morris, The Independent, 1990). Reducing the news to the action of the individuals might lead to neglect the social and structural origin of a given issue. The consequence will be an isolation of the context of the issue because it is just seen in terms of personalities. Seeing news on Iran in terms of the personality of Ayatollah Khomeini, representing fundamentalism and extremism (Vilanilam, 1989) in the Western media might lead to the decontextualisation of the issues he is addressing, as it will be argued in chapter 5, because he is seen as an individual representing an "evil" country.

6. Elite: News is about people who occupy political, social, economic positions in society, but it is more about elites who exercise political power because of their involvement in

the day to day affairs of the country and people. That is to say elites who are mostly involved in the activities of the government such as presidents, prime ministers, ministers, military figures, members of parliament and so on. As it is mentioned earlier, these official figures represent an important source of news for the media because they are considered as authorised knowers who are always legitimised and are part of the values of the dominant culture which the journalists share.

Galtung and Ruge (1973) in their well established study of foreign news in the Norwegian press argue, as they argue about other factors of news values, that the more the event is about members of an elite, the more likely it will become news. The former American President, Ronald Reagan, was the most quoted individual in the process of the coverage of Iran in its first decade. He was quoted because he occupied one of the most important political positions nationally and internationally. As previously argued, the media dependence on the political elite might lead to a specific ideological picture of the world (Fishman, 1980). Apart from the political elites one can mention the administrative or bureaucratic elites, the interest elites including the representatives of private organisations, e.g. experts and special-interest groups that are concerned with the political process, social and political figures and the communication elites who act in many cases as sources of news as it will be shown in chapter 5.

7. Culture: Even though this approach is not yet fully developed in any of school of study , the culture of the society as a whole and the different institutions functioning

within that society are seen to play a role in deciding what is news in media organisations. Molotch and Lester (1974) and Tuchman (1978) and others in their studies on news production do not focus on the cultural aspects of a society and its role in the selection process. They do emphasise the "production of culture", which does not help to understand how the dominant culture influences the decision of editor in what to include and what to exclude in a news story, who to cite and who to exclude. This factor of selection is clearly seen in the study of racism in the British press by Hartmann and Husband (1974). They argue that selection of news and the decision of what is newsworthy in any given situation is related to the dominant value system of the society as a whole. They demonstrate this point by bringing evidence that coloured people are somehow undesirable according to the dominant social values, and should be excluded from Britain. They discuss that all these concepts and ideas are reflected in the press coverage of the question of coloured minorities in Britain. They note that "the British cultural tradition contains elements derogatory to foreigners, particularly blacks. The media operate within the culture and are obliged to use "cultural symbols" (Hartmann and Husband, 1974, p.274).

Fitting news closely with the broad cultural environment and concerns has been called in the work of Gamson and Modigliani (1989) "Cultural resonances" and in the work of Hilgartner and Bosk (1988) "Cultural preoccupations". No matter what name is given to this phenomenon it is still a growing concern for researchers in this area. It will be argued in chapters 5 and 6 that the issue of "Cultural resonances" is particularly relevant to the press in the case

of the "Bank Melli of Iran" where the lady employees were asked to cover their heads, and the case of the Satanic Verses where the editorial writers tried to relate the problem to the existing cultural values and concepts of the British public in order to gain acceptance and prominence. These two cases are easily noted because they take place in an environment of Western culture. However, the cultural value has many forms which govern how the news is gathered and framed. One of these frames as discussed by Gans (1979) is ethnocentrism.

Ethnocentrism fosters the belief that one culture has achieved more than another and is therefore superior. Dorman and Farhang (1987) found in their analysis of the coverage of Iran in the American press that journalists covering events demonstrated that they were influenced by ethnocentrism in their perception of Islamic culture. This American enthnocentrism is reflected in the use of the press language to describe people and events in Iran. Dorman and Farhang argue that the use of words like "religious fanatics", "black-robed", "frenzy", "fundamentalist" and so on relate to that ethnocentrism particularly when the same words are not used to describe proxy culture. The American press do not describe priests opposing Polish martial law as "religious fanatics", nor do they refer to priests generally as "black-robed", only in the description of Mullahs in Iran they use such labels.

Cultural values, with other ideological professional values, tend to be reflected in the press language. Chibnall (1977) observes that this language underlies and gives meaning to such well known phrases as "the rule of law", "the national interest", "extremist agitators", and "fair minded

moderates". He argues that cultural values become an ideological framework within which the press in Britain can identify the values which are defined positive and which legitimise the sources who want to put their messages forward. These are distinguished from the values which are defined negative and which do not give legitimacy to sources who dissociate themselves from the dominant values (Chibnall, 1977, pp.12-22). Chibnall explains this point by setting out a table including the dominant values of ideology.

Positive legitimate values Legality	Negative illegitimate values Illegality
Moderation	Extremism
Compromise	Dogmatism
Co-operation	Confrontation
Order	Chaos
Peacefulness	Violence
Tolerance	Intolerance
Constructiveness	Destructiveness
Openness	Secrecy
Honesty	Corruption
Realism	Ideology
Rationality	Irrationality
Impartiality	Bias
Responsibility	Irresponsibility
Freedom of choice	Monopoly/Uniformity

Hansen and Murdock (1985) in their work on the British press coverage of the 1982 July riots in Britain reached a similar result to Chibnall (1977). They argued that the political reaction of the press to the riots was dominated by the popularist discourse which observed oppositions or binary oppositions in the form of us and them, English and Alien, Public and Criminals, Whites and Blacks and so on. These oppositions function as notions for depoliticisation of the events, and at the same time reject their social causes, as well as reconstructing them in a frame of criminal violence. Sociologists like Bauman (1990) explain that these

oppositional attitudes in society result from a conflict between the in-group and the out-group where the sense of belonging to the in-group deny the deeds of the out-group.

In the process of analysing the data on Iran in the next chapters it will be argued that many aspects of Iran and Islam are covered in the British press in the context of binary oppositions, particularly when one views news production as a process influenced by the dominant ideology of the West versus Islam or Islam versus the West. This issue will be clearly noted in the coverage of Salman Rushdie.

It is shown that the source-communicator interaction and the professional ideologies practised in the production process explain how the media construct social reality in a certain form of package. The idea as normally put forward by journalists, that news is "simply a mirror of reality" and that "news is a random action to random events" does not reflect the truth of the complex nature of news production. News is rather the result of some organisational and professional ideologies which decide that this is the "reality". When it is decided that a certain event is newsworthy, it is constructed in a specific framework of interpretations. News in this case is not value free. It embodies journalistic, social and political values which is not a neutral perception of the real world. The work of Tuchman (1978), Schlesinger (1978) Van Dijk (1988) and others shows that all these values lead to the legitimation of the status quo. This conclusion is problematic for the empirical sociology of journalism research because it does not take into consideration the complexity of the changes that might occur within the dominant group. The Vietnam war was a case

in point where American political and military figures voiced objections towards the continuation of the war. The media reflected the break of consensus in the American foreign policy towards Vietnam.

Valid Research Questions

The process of news production concerning Iran in the British press has been influenced by the tense relationship between the West and Iran on the grand or Macro level i.e. the state of affairs between Western governments and Iran in the first decade of the revolution. The economic, political and cultural conflicts witnessed in the coverage of Iran over many issues, e.g. oil, hostages, "Islamic fundamentalism" and the Salman Rushdie affair in the first decade of the revolution, coupled with historical images of Islam which are embedded in Western culture e.g. Islamic punishment and the treatment of women, have formulated an ideological conception in the West which has affected views on Islam and Iran in the political establishment and in institutions dealing with cultural production, such as the media and academic studies (as seen in chapter 2). How this ideological conception filters down in the gathering, selection, editing and presentation process is an extremely difficult to trace. But previous studies have shown that this conception which create certain values in society does not function in deterministic fashion. It shapes the "perceptions and the recognition of how things ought to be done" (Ericson et al, 1989). Yet still, it is possible to operationalise the understanding of the coverage of Iran in the context of a Western ideological view of the Islamic revolution by the identification of interaction between the Western sources of news and other

selected non-Western sources, the influence of the culture and values of the west on the way journalists select and shape news, and by the analysis of journalists' professional ideologies.

Sources of news, as demonstrated earlier in this chapter, play an essential part in the news process. Once defined as "authorised knowers", they have precedence in giving their versions of reality. In the case of the coverage of Iran, Western sources and Iranian sources are used in the news process. But, why is precedence given to sources in the West at the expense of Iranian sources to whom issues are sometimes directly related? Why are Western officials, Western experts and Iranian opposition living in the West the sources who are defined as the "authorised knowers" and regularly cited in the coverage of Iran? Does the reason lie in the standard of professional ideology of news gathering and production? Does it lie in the access problem to Iran and officials there? Or does the reason lie in the illegitimation process of the Iranian official sources who are defined as the "enemies of the West", particularly Ayatollah Khomeini and other religious figures (see chapter 5), and are conducting their "peculiar" (Wade, DT, 90) policy outside the frame of international community? Or the reason lies in the strong orientation of the press to the interest and values of the West vis-a-vis Iran and the Middle East? What role does belonging to the same Western cultural values play in selecting these sources and presenting their arguments? If it does play a role in selecting Western sources, what about the use of the Iranian opposition sources who do not belong to the Western culture? Why are they brought into focus and given the opportunity to control a

great deal of the definitions on the internal situation in Iran? Is it because they speak the Farsi language as is argued by British journalists? Or is it because the West recognised these opposition groups and legitimised them, like the Contras in Nicaragua and the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan? These questions are not asked to give the impression that the role of journalists is passive vis-a-vis the strategy of sources. As it is argued before the role of journalists is active and has "relative autonomy" over the selection of sources and presentation of their versions.

It will be argued that the sort of complex and subtle relationship between Western and other sources and journalists, when approached from the angle of news organisation, is seen to affect, to a considerable extent, the way the press select and present news on Iran. This is especially true when we know that most journalists do not have regular contacts with the development of the political and social process in Iran for different reasons e.g. access. To fill in this gap, interaction with sources in the West becomes greater. Journalists working in London find that because they can identify with the Western sources and are regularly approached by the Iranian opposition groups which supply them with needed information, the interaction with sources in the West not only becomes essential in framing foreign news on Iran, but it becomes the basis for framing the journalists' outlook and views, the way they approach certain events in Iran and the way they understand events, particularly when most of these journalists are not specialists on the Middle East or Iranian affairs.

The press interaction with the Western and pro-Western sources of news, coupled with the journalists' professional

ideologies, particularly the cultural value, are adequate approaches to the way the British press construct news about Islamic Iran in its first decade. The questions asked above are answered by studying the news content of the press and by examining the journalists' practices.

Validity of Different Approaches

Several relevant approaches must be employed, in the light of what has been discussed earlier, to interpret the complex coverage of Iran and Islam during a period of political and military changes in the Middle East and the World.

Foreign news coverage cannot be understood from a single simple approach. Therefore, three main approaches (tripartite approach) are considered relevant frameworks for the interpretation of this thesis. Each approach complements the other to offer coherent macro- and micro-explanations of news reporting on Iran.

The first approach is the "propaganda model" approach elaborated by Herman and Chomsky (1988) and Chomsky (1989). This approach stems from the political economy perspective where the media, when reporting foreign news, serve and support the special interests of the state and those holding political and economic powers in the country. The essential components of the propaganda model are identified as follows:

> "(1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass media firm; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media; (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business and 'experts'

> funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) 'flak' as a means of disciplining the media; and (5) 'anticommunism' as a national religion and control mechanism" (Herman and Chomsky, 1988, p.2).

These constraints, in the eyes of Herman and Chomsky, are powerful and are built into the system of selecting and interpreting news, therefore they limit the objectivity of the journalists who often operate with complete integrity and goodwill.

The Herman and Chomsky model has faced criticisms from media researchers who support the approach of the sociology of news work. The "propaganda model" was accused by these researchers of being "deterministic" and "functionalist" in its nature. It does not take into account the ideological contestations among the powerful sources. Generally the approach has some theoretical weaknesses which cannot answer questions related to the changes that might occur within the dominant group.

In this model two powerful constraints are relevant to the research undertaking for this thesis. The first is the media dependence on government officials and experts for its sources; the second is the notion of anti-Communism as a control mechanism. These two constraints will be applied, with some changes, to the coverage of Iran. It will be argued , concerning the first point, that Western sources and experts are dominant in the coverage of Iran, and their views, in most cases, are homogeneous throughout the coverage. Concerning the second point, the concept of anti-Communism as a constraint in the coverage of cases

related to the countries politically close to the Soviet Union, will be developed and becomes anti-Islamisim (as seen in chapter 1). It will be argued that some of the macro-themes (chapter 5) were influenced by an anti-Islamisim discourse. The press interaction with government officials together with anti-Islamisim ideology will help us to understand the press use of dissident groups like the Iranian opposition which is defined as "worthy victim" and deserving of access. This is similar to Herman and Chomsky notions of "worthy victims" and "unworthy victims" in Central America.

Does the propaganda model explain events which are outside the political and economic influence of the state and corporate organisations? The answer is no, particularly when the media have to deal with events which are culturally alien to the dominant cultural values of the reporting country. Therefore one cannot explain by using the Herman and Chomsky model why the British press in the coverage of cultural matters belonging to a foreign country have to resonate to the major cultural themes which are dominant in the reporting society. If news does not resonate to the major cultural heritage, it is often rejected or covered in a critical fashion which shows the validity of the Western culture over other cultures such as the Islamic one.

The cultural "approach" (still not fully formulated as an approach) is the second employed in this thesis for the explanation of the way news about Iran is covered in the British press. In this perspective journalists select news stories which are aligned to the dominant values of the reporting country. News judgements regarding particular matters might be influenced by the social and cultural structures within which correspondents and editors live and

work. Supporters of this perspective believe that if news does not resonate to the cultural norms of society it will not have a public consumption. Gamson and Modigliani explain this by stating that "Resonances increase the appeal of a package; they make it appear natural and familiar" (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989, p.5).

The cultural approach is valid for a macro-explanation of the relationship between media and society. It fails to interpret how the culture and background of journalists filters down in the selection and presentation process. For instance how do we know that the journalist's atheist and secular backgrounds influence the way he/she covers Islam and Muslims? Here arises the need for a third micro-explanation of news production.

The news values approach implies that journalists learn by practice the professional norms of journalism which enable them to function within certain range of news values when news is selected and presented. So criteria of importance, simplification, drama, elite, negativity and so on are the sort of professional norms which lead to a particular construction of reality. Chapter 5 will empirically demonstrate this conclusion.

These three approaches (tripartite approach) are relevant and necessary to the understanding of the complex coverage of Iran over the period of a decade.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented several theories of news production which have illustrated the role of the different factors influencing the production process, particularly the sources of news and the cultural factors. It has emphasised

that the adequate approach to understand the way Iran is constructed in the British press is to apply three interpretive frameworks which observe the complexity of the coverage of Iran and Islam over a decade period. These three approaches, outlined above, will explain how the reporting country or in a broader level how the reporting West constructs socio-political issues related to a country which is defined as a threat and an enemy to the West.

In chapter 5 it will be demonstrated empirically, in the light of the valid theoretical frameworks mentioned earlier, that the ideological aspects of the press construction of Iran are characterised by several trends:

1. The location of the correspondents.
2. The role of sources of news.
3. The construction of the themes and Macro-themes.
4. The description of Iran through selected labels.

All these will be analysed to offer better understanding of the way Iran is constructed in the British press and why it is covered the way it is. But before starting to analyse the news, it is necessary to explain (next chapter) the rationale behind the methodology used in the thesis.

CHAPTER 4

CONTENT ANALYSIS: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH INSTRUCTIONS

It has been made clear in the previous chapter that the objective of this research is to study the way news about Iran is constructed in the British press in the first decade of the revolution. It was outlined that to understand the way news about Iran is produced, particular emphasis should be given to the sources of news who have regular interaction with journalists based in the West, the way the themes are selected and presented and the language used to record or convey meaning about Iran and Islam. Press content is the most obvious area for an examination of these trends in this research in the light of time and resource restrictions for the study. Content analysis is the most adequate methodology to study media messages as many researchers have demonstrated (e.g. Hartmann and Husband, 1974; Eshghi, 1983; McQuail, 1987; Dorman and Farhang, 1987).

This chapter will be concerned first with the definitions of content analysis and its limitations as a methodology and second with the procedures followed in conducting a content analysis for the study. That is to say it will include the rationale behind the selection of newspapers, the sample period and criteria, the coding schedule which generates data answering the research questions.

Methodology

The main object of this study is to draw inferences about the journalists and their locations, the types of sources of news, the themes involved in the coverage of Iran and the

labels used by the press to describe the different aspects of the Islamic revolution. Quantitative and qualitative content analysis supplemented by semi-structured interviews and discussions with journalists are adequate methods for a study like this. The study will be a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative will be concerned with counting the frequency with which different types of content occur and the qualitative will be an assessment of the materials within which the quantitative data occur e.g. It will be looking at the context of the word "fundamentalism", which is frequently used by the press.

Content Analysis: Definitions and Criticisms

Definitions of content analysis have witnessed some changes since the 1950s though they still share broad agreement on the requirements of "objectivity, system, and generality". Holsti (1969) explains the meanings of these requirements. Objectivity means that analysts should follow explicit "formulated rules and procedures". It requires that categories should be well defined and differentiated from each other. Content units e.g. theme, word should be properly assigned to the particular categories. The reason behind this strict procedure is to increase the objectivity of the researcher and minimise the reflection of his subjective predispositions. "Systematically" means that allocation of content elements e.g. categories should be done according to consistently applied rules. Lastly, "generality", requires that the findings should be linked to particular theoretical frameworks (e.g. Hartmann et al, 1974; Krippendorff, 1980; Hartmann, 1987; Ericson et al, 1987) These three requirements are very essential to content analysis even though they are not unique to it. They can be conditions for any scientific inquiry.

One of the definitions of content analysis came from Berelson (1952) who had defined it as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the

manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1952, P.18). From this definition one understands that it is a research tool which should follow explicit and consistent rules and procedures to study quantitatively the manifest content of media messages.

Two concepts of the definition have caused considerable debate among media researchers. The first one is the quantitative concept and the second is the manifest content. Critics argue that content analysis relies too much on quantification and mere counting of the number or frequency of appearance of defined units under defined categories. They equate quantification with a single system of enumeration which cannot provide proper judgement and might cause theoretical and practical problems. It cannot provide an explanation of underlying structure or social relationships within which the communication content being analysed exists. Focusing on the quantitative description show the type of events that made news. The procedure cannot, however, be used to study the event or its social consequences or effect. For a researcher to understand the consequences of media contents, how they are gathered and produced and how much personal attitudes influence the production process, it would be necessary to carry out production or audience studies.

The second major disagreement is whether content analysis should be restricted to the manifest content (apparent meaning of the media message) or whether it may make use of the latent content (the hidden meaning) which is considered more important than the surface meaning of a text. This new trend has forced many researchers to further develop the definitions of content analysis. One of these researchers is Holsti who has offered a definition which deletes any reference to "manifest content" used in earlier definitions. According to Holsti "Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (Holsti, 1969, P.14). By offering this definition

without any reference to the manifest content of communication he allows "for the possibility that an analyst might wish to attempt to deal with 'latent' or 'implicit' features of communication content under study" (Beadsworth, 1980, P.373).

Critics of the researchers who stress on manifest content claim that in the end it is precisely the latent content rather than the manifest or apparent content that is typically of greatest interest. They argue against the belief of some quantitative analysts, who think that the more frequently items occur in a text the more significant they are. Rather they say, the rarity or absence of specific sorts of item may have more significance. Oliver Burglin explained this by giving the following example:

> "let us imagine a film in which the gangster hero is seen performing a long succession of actions which show his character in an extremely vicious light, but he is also seen performing one single action which reveals to a striking degree that he has finer feelings... We clearly cannot draw any valid inferences from a simple enumeration of his vicious acts (it makes no difference if there are ten or twenty of them) for the Crux of the matter obviously is: what meaning is conferred on the vicious acts by the fact of their juxtaposition with the single good action?" (Burgelin, 1972, P.319).

Criticisms of the limitations and pitfalls of content analysis have triggered a more advanced definition which observes the relationship between the manifest and the latent content. Krippendorff defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (Krippendorff, 1980, P.21). By trying to link inferences from data to their context he was aiming to shift from the mere focus on the manifest content to enquiry into the "symbolic meaning of messages" with the content analysts bearing in mind that messages do not have a single

meaning, because data may be looked at from different angles of interpretation and be all valid at the same time.

It is true that mere frequency is not necessarily the best guide to significance, and latent content may well be the most interesting to researchers of media messages and their relation to the context and structure of society. As Denis McQuail puts it "frequency of occurrence is not the only guide to salience or to meaning and much may depend on aspects of context of a reference, which are hard to capture, or on internal relationships between references in texts which are lost in the process of abstraction" (McQuail, 1987, P.184).

Latent content, however, can only be approached through the manifest content. The more reliably the manifest content can be delineated, the better, and quantitative methods offer a valuable way of collecting and organising these kinds of data. The meaning of the data rests with the inference the analysts make, derived from a specific theoretical framework which decides the validity of the data. Counting the number of times the words "terrorism" or "fundamentalism" occur in a news story in a British newspaper tells us no more than the number of times the words occur. What their relative frequency might mean has to be inferred in the light of some understanding of the relationship between government sources and the press, or between the cultural values of society and their influence on the production of popular culture. So, the conceptual frameworks would lead to particular interpretations of news coverage not the content analysis method itself which is responsible mainly for gathering the data and responsible for giving us indications about the meaning which is inherently present in the text.

Despite well-founded criticism, content analysis has the advantage of providing the means of summarising large quantities of data. It is also objective in the sense that the result produced is empirically verifiable and cannot be dismissed as mere matter of opinion. The systematic nature of

the procedure protects the method from charge of bias which might follow from an "intuitive" and "subjective" reading of the chosen material. Content analysis further allows for more precision than mere intuitive assessment. Holsti argues thus: "Foremost among the arguments is the degree of precision with which one's conclusions may be stated. Descriptions such as '45 percent' or '27 times out of a possible 30' convey information more precisely than statements such as 'less than half' or 'almost always'" (Holsti, 1969, P.9).

Amid the development of communication studies and the partisanship of researchers towards particular methodologies e.g. quantitative content analysis, semiology, it seems that no research method is 100 percent foolproof, and that objectivity is impossible, unless in the case of replicability where two researchers using the same scheme of analysis come up with similar conclusions. To minimise the subjectivity of the researcher a combination of methodologies backed by a well founded conceptual framework would give a better understanding for the role of the media in communicating political and cultural issues.

Selection of Newspapers

Thirteen British daily and Sunday newspapers were selected to reflect the various political orientations that exist in the press in a society like Britain, as well as to reflect format and style variations between quality and popular press. The aim of the inclusion of thirteen papers was to use the broadest range of materials, arriving at conclusions on how and why Iran was covered the way it was in a sample of newspapers which are representative of the British daily and Sunday mainstream press. The selected papers which were obtained and coded in the Newspaper Library of British Museum in Colindale, London were: The Guardian, The Times, Daily Telegraph, Daily Express, Daily Mail, The Sun, Daily Mirror, Sunday Times, Sunday Telegraph, The Observer, Sunday Express,

Sunday Mirror and The Mail On Sunday. All sections of the daily press were included and all the Sunday magazines of the Sunday papers e.g. The Observer Magazine, The Sunday Times Magazine, The Sunday Mirror Magazine. These additions help to give a wider perspective on the importance of Iran and Islam as subject matter in the British press.

Finally under this heading the decision to study the coverage of Iran in the press rather than any other British medium such as television or Radio should be examined. Several reasons are stated here. First, the role the press play in shaping and framing images of other people and cultures. Second, despite the growing importance of television as a major source of information (Greenberg et al, 1991), still readers of newspapers continue to give weight to the print medium (Negrine, 1989) when wishing to know about political development inside their countries and elsewhere. Third, because of the limitations of time and resources, newspapers are more accessible and easier to handle. Finally, it is difficult and expensive to get access to broadcast materials available for research for a whole decade.

The selection of the newspapers will give an idea of how "reality" about Iran is manufactured in both the quality and popular press, and the differences and similarities between them will be examined (Chapter 5, discussions in the Labels section).

Sample Period

When it comes to the selection of the period for analysis the options were either to choose specific periods which related to specific events e.g. the US hostages in Teheran in 1979, the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, the "tanker war" in 1987 which might show the researcher's subjectivity towards particular events, or to choose a specific period (1979-1989) and look at everything that has been covered in the press within that period without restriction to particular events. A decision to

adopt the second option was taken because it was not restricted; it gave a consistent picture of the continuity of the coverage of Iran in a ten year period of time; it coincided with the political life of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran from the time he went back to Tehran from exile in February 1979 until his death in June 1989. The importance of the decade sample would increase when news about Ayatollah Khomeini occupied the centre of attention during the process of making news about Iran and where many themes were directly linked to him personally e.g. Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, export of the revolution, extremism, the Salman Rushdie affair and so on. The decade selected for analysis give an idea about the sort of events that are covered in the British press during the new Islamic phase of Iran in relation to Iran's internal as well as its external politics, particularly the kind of relationship it has with the West and the Arab countries in the area.

After deciding on the decade period for analysis, the amount of the coverage to be found in the British papers was uncertain. Use was made of the FT PROFILE Database (a free text Database system which is designed to store press items under different subject-headings. The system started in early 1980s for several papers) and allow an estimate of the number of items covered in 1986 under the keyword "Iran" in three selected newspapers; The Times, The Guardian and The Sunday Times. A total of 644 items were found for the whole year. The same procedure was used to check the number of items covered in 1988 for the same three papers under the same keyword. A total of 1536 items were identified. That indicated that Iran was covered very intensively in just three papers. This implied a vast amount of coverage for analysis for the thirteen newspapers to be analysed. A sample criteria of every twenty seventh issue for each newspaper was adopted to solve this problem. A reasonable number of items were found by using FT PROFILE Database (19 items were found in 1986, and 38 items were found in 1988 in the same three newspapers mentioned

above). A random starting date was selected at the beginning of January 1979 (Tuesday, 12th January) and then every twenty seventh issue was taken right through the period. This system also allowed a rotation of newspaper issues through the days of the week (see Appendix D). The first issue was on Tuesday the 12th of January, the second on Wednesday the 8th of February, the third on Thursday the 7th of March and so on to the middle of 1989 (Tuesday, 19th of May).

Papers / Year	79	80 *	81	82	83	84 *	85	86	87	88 *	89	Total
Times	+1	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	110
Guardian	12	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	121
Daily Telegraph	12	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	121
Daily Mail	12	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	121
Daily Express	12	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	121
Daily Mirror	12	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	121
Sun	12	11	12	12	12	11	12	11	12	11	5	121
Observer	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	20
Sunday Times	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	20
Sunday Telegraph	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	20
Sunday Express	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	20
Sunday Mirror	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	20
Mail on Sunday	-0	-0	-0	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	14
												950

Table 2 shows the number of issues selected from each year for each of the thirteen newspapers.
* Leap Years
+ The Times suspended its publication from 1st January until 12th of November 1979.
- Mail on Sunday started in 1982.

Because of the criteria of selection (every 27th issue) and because of three leap years (1980, 1984, 1988) and other reasons (e.g. The Times was on strike in 1979) we have for the whole period a total of 950 issues for all the thirteen papers (see table 2). In addition, there were 87 issues of Sunday

magazines (Observer magazine, Sunday Times magazine, Daily Telegraph magazine, Sunday Express magazine, Sunday Mirror magazine, Mail on Sunday magazine) which were included in the examination of the coverage of Iran as supplements of the Sunday newspapers.

The total sample of newspapers and their supplements (1037 issues) included more issues than previous studies which have been done on the British press. For instance, the total sample of the Hartmann and Husband study (1974) was 772 newspapers over a period of seven years (1963-1970) and the total sample of the Sari (1983) study was 432 British newspapers for a period of twelve years (1968-1980).

What type of items will be examined in this sample period? Everything which is printed about Iran or any issue which is related to Iran in news stories, feature articles, editorials, letters, comments, reviews, interviews, photographs and cartoons will be included for analysis. No items will be ignored, even the smallest ones. The inclusion of everything published on Iran will allow to build a wider picture of how Iran is covered in the press. A total of 562 items were observed in the 1037 issues from the decade period selected to cover the revolution.

Coding Schedule

A coding schedule was designed to operationalise the research questions asked in the previous chapters. These are mainly concerned with sources of news and their interaction with the press, the selection and presentation of themes, and the language used to define Iran and Islam. A final version of the coding schedule was established after the completion of a thorough pilot study on 1988 and 1989 papers (all thirteen papers), and after an analysis of the Times coverage for 1981. In fact, the piloting on 1981, 1988 and 1989 papers allowed to develop a more sophisticated coding schedule which observes in its categories and units much of the evidence required, and

observes the complexities of the press in its sections, news classification and pages.

Generally news about Iran and related matters e.g. internal affairs in Iran, the Western hostages in Lebanon, and terrorism were confined to the inside pages in the first section, particularly the overseas or international pages which make news about Iran in some cases as important as any others news about the rest of the world.

All items which are defined as straight forward pieces on Iran and Islam e.g. "power struggle" inside Iran, Iran-Iraq war and Islamic fundamentalism, those concerned with the relationship between the West and Iran e.g. West alliance and policy towards Iran, or those indirectly linked to Iran e.g. British hostages in Beirut, and the Islamic movements in Lebanon were coded.

Description of Coding Schedule

Efforts were made to include all the necessary categories needed for the kind of research being carried out. It was possible to identify 28 relevant categories which had been arrived at after several pilots. The coding schedule (Appendix A) was designed in such a way that any information about any type of item can be recorded.

The coding schedule started with the usual descriptive information about the number of items being coded, paper, year, month, day, date, page number; the position of items in pages and sections; under which page heading the news is classified e.g. home news, overseas news and so on; the type of item e.g. whether it is a lead story, a news story, an editorial, a cartoon and so on; the total item length with headline and visuals in column centimetre (cm^2); the number of visuals e.g. whether it is a photograph or a cartoon with their sizes in cm^2.

The coding observed the recording (writing out on coding sheet) of some features of an item such as headline,

sub-headline, the first sentence of the lead, the editorial title and main points, as well as the photograph caption, the description of photograph, cartoon comment and the description of cartoon. The reason behind the coding of all these features of an item was to get some information about the items on which the press focused, how these items were presented and in what context. So, two separate coding sheets were presented with the number of the recorded items on them to cater for these important features with an addition of the source/author's name (Appendices B and C) which would help when selecting the journalists for interviews.

The coding schedule also contained important categories such as the source/author of news e.g. the correspondent, news agency, expert or staff who wrote or released the item as well as the place where the source/author of news was reporting from e.g. Tehran, London, Washington or Paris. This was done so that the coding will give a picture of the ideological importance of those who covered the items and their location.

The coding schedule also contained one of the most crucial variables which was "the actors quoted or referred to". This was a complicated category because it included many actors who were involved directly or indirectly in the coverage of Iran, and it aimed at giving an indication about the prominent sources of news in the Coverage of Iran. Actors were divided according to the National groups and Organisations they belong to. The Iranian sources were classified under "Iran" but within this category different actors are identified. The Western actors were classified under "the West" and a variety of different Western actors e.g. US actors, British actors, French actors were identified in order to answer important questions; Were they officials or not? Were they experts or diplomats? and so on. Other sources were classified under "Iraq", "International and Regional Organisations", "Arab and Muslim figures", "East" and "Others", a category which contained the less important figures in the coverage of Iran.

In the discussions about sources in the next chapter all the figures who represent particular States and all the figures working for the governments or International organisations, such as UN officials, will be classed as Western officials, Iranian officials and so on. The reason behind this was first to give particular attention to officials as "primary definers" aiming to serve their interest, second to make it easier for interpretations instead of specifying particular figures (where the analysis requires specific detail, this will be given).

Another important and crucial category was the coding of themes. The problem was that hundreds of themes can be recorded in the coverage of Iran in a decade. This problem was overcome by restriction to the major themes which would be representative of many topics. After several pilots 47 themes were identified which would summarise the major events in the first decade of the Islamic revolution with a minimum of overlap or ambiguity. These themes have been measured against each item to see whether they appear in any single item. The reasons behind the inclusion of the themes was to examine the types which were focused on by the press and how they presented these themes. This will give a clearer picture about the way Iran and Islam were presented in the press.

The coding schedule included a category called "Islamic and Farsi codes". This category observed Arabic and Farsi words used in the coverage of Iran. This category was designed mainly to assess the quantity of these words and discuss them with the journalists who were chosen for interview to discover their understanding of the meanings and contexts in the Islamic culture. The category provides supporting evidence for the contention that these words were not properly understood by the journalists who used them.

The coding contained a final crucial category which was the "labels". The importance of the language used by the press to convey meanings and contexts about Iran cannot be underestimated, particularly when they play a great role in

constructing an image of the politics and culture of Iran and Islam. Many of these labels illustrated press and cultural ideology and ethnocentricity e.g. "extremist", "zealot", "terrorist", "evil leadership", "threat", "authoritarian" and so on. These labels were arrived at after several pilots and after making use of the researcher's own paper which was prepared to analyse the press coverage of the shooting down of the Iranian Airbus in the Gulf in 1988 (Mohsen, 1990).

In the next chapter, the data emerging from the coding schedule will be interpreted and related to the theoretical frameworks already discussed in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 5

NEWS ABOUT IRAN AND ISLAM: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter will discuss and interpret the quantitative results of the press content and seek to demonstrate how an image of Iran was constructed in the British press during the first decade of the Islamic revolution and the factors behind that construction.

Four essential dimensions of media construction of reality will be focused on to give a better understanding of the way news about Iran is constructed. These dimensions are derived from the theoretical frameworks discussed in chapter 3 and allow to characterise empirically the interaction of theories of news production which cannot be understood from a simple single approach.

The following is an analysis of four dimensions of press construction. The first dimension is based on the location of the correspondents in the West, most of whom are generalists whose actual knowledge of Iran is modest. The location of the correspondents, as will be argued in this chapter, allows more interaction with elite sources (officials and non officials) who are also based in the West, most of them holding to Western values which form a great deal of their perceptions of Iran and Islam. The location of journalists facilitates the identification of sources who are already defined as

legitimate, e.g. official sources and minimises the cost of investigative journalism.

The second dimension is the sources of news, mostly Western government officials who have guaranteed access to the media because of the status they occupy in society. It will be argued that the Western official sources are not the only sources who are quoted or referred to in the coverage of Iran. Other sources, like the Iranian official sources try to compete with the Western official sources, and the pro-Iraq Arab sources, as well as the Iranian opposition to put forward definitions of the different aspects of the revolution. As will later be demonstrated, competition among sources is an interesting phenomena in the coverage of Iran, in spite of the supremacy of the Western sources.

The third dimension is the presentation of the themes in the coverage. The purpose of the analysis of this aspect of news production is to investigate what themes the press has selected to portray reality about Iran and how these themes, which will be gathered in eleven Macro-themes, are framed. I shall argue that the tense relationship between the West and Iran observed in the first decade of the revolution has emphasised the political and cultural differences between the West and Islam and has lead to the presentation of important stories in the press in a context of oppositional attitudes, i.e. the West versus Islam.

The fourth dimension of press construction of reality is the language used to describe Iran, i.e. the labels employed by the press. If the use of certain labels to describe the revolution is ideological, it is argued that the Western press

perceived Iran within the boundaries of the Western dominant values which do not legitimize the actions of the other culture, but tend to portray them in a negative light. Before proceeding to the analysis of the four aspects of news construction it is relevant to present some descriptive data concerning the numbers of items in each of the thirteen papers; the numbers of items in each year of the ten year sample; the position of items in pages; the numbers of visuals and the type of items. Some of these data will be used in the interpretations of issues involving the four dimensions described above.

Items for papers

There are 562 items appearing in the thirteen papers concerned in this study. As seen in Table 3 most of these items (77%) stemmed from the quality daily and Sunday press, whereas the popular daily and Sunday press published less than a quarter (23%) of the total number of items.

The reason for highlighting the differences in the percentages of items in the quality and popular press is to demonstrate the importance of the role of the quality press in communicating political issues of foreign interest. The quality press places more emphasis on the role of journalists, the diversity of sources and on the presentation of news in a less sensational manner than the popular press.

Similarly, the percentages of items in each of the three quality dailies can be interpreted as a standard of professionalism which probably involves focusing on the same events.

Medium	N	%
Guardian	138	25
Times	127	23
Daily Telegraph	122	22
Daily Express	44	8
Daily Mail	35	6
Sun	21	4
Daily Mirror	20	4
Sunday Times	17	3
Sunday Telegraph	15	3
Observer	15	3
Sunday Express	5	1
Sunday Mirror	2	<1
Mail on Sunday	1	<1
Total	562	102

Table 3 shows the number of items and the percentage for each paper. The quality press cover most of the items.

Numbers of items per year

There are considerable differences in the number of items handled each year in the British press. This can be seen in Table 4 which shows the specific number of items and percentages for each year.

Year	N	%
79	69	12
80	126	22
81	54	10
82	27	5
83	17	3
84	50	9
85	20	4
86	44	8
87	75	13
88	50	9
89	30	5
Total	562	100

Table 4 shows the number of items per year. 1980, 1987 and 1979 indicate the heavy selection news items which concern the West.

Table 4 shows three distinctive coverages in terms of the percentages of items each year. The data tells us that 1980

occupied 22% of the coverage of Iran, 1987 occupied 13% of the coverage, and 1979, the first year after the victory of the revolution, occupied 12%. What does all of this tell us? It tells us that the press is obviously inclined to take more interest in major events, but especially those which have strong Western or British angles as the coding of headlines, leads and visuals show (coding schedule-Appendix B). For instance, in 1980 there were two main themes with other related matters which affected the West; the American hostages in Tehran and the Iran-Iraq War. The first issue started on November 1979 and ended in January 1981. After 444 days of captivity the British press focused on a different aspect of this theme, particularly on the aspects of the political and cultural clashes between two values systems, those of the west and Islam.

The second theme was the Iran-Iraq War. Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980. Since that time, as will later be shown, the British press constructed the war in terms of the threat of the free flow of oil to the West and in terms of the destruction and destabilisation of the Middle East. Of the years in the 10 year period, 1987 was the year with the second highest number of reports. During this year there were the themes of the direct confrontation between the Western fleet and Iran in the Gulf, the Iranian attack on the commercial ships, the kidnapping of the Archbishop of Canterbury's envoy to Lebanon, Terry Waite, and the UN talks to end the Iran-Iraq War. These themes formed the major events for the British press in 1987. 1979 was the year of the victory of the revolution, the executions of the Shah's secret police commanders, the establishment of the Islamic republic, the Shah in exile, and the storming of the US Embassy by Iranian students.

These three examples of intensified coverage in three important years suggest that the British press is aligned to the interests of the West, and that these events are selected to satisfy the criteria of news values which contain elements of importance, drama, personality and negativity.

Positions of items in pages

Most of the Items covered in the British Press, as seen in Table 5, were printed in the inside pages (80%), particularly in the foreign news pages.

So Iran, like any other foreign country, as is argued by British journalists, does not constitute a special case in the coverage of its affairs. But the crucial question of which items are published on the front pages and which on the inside can be answered by looking at the coding of headlines and leads which have been recorded on separate sheets (Coding Schedule-Appendix B).

We know from other studies that the front pages are mostly reserved for news stories which are professionally judged by the media to be important news. The selection of these stories involves alignment with the dominant values and interests of British society and the Western world as is demonstrated in the data gathered for this thesis. Journalists also argue that this is the case. News stories which are judged to be of important news value are covered in the front pages; the downfall of the Shah; Ayatollah Khomeini; oil; American hostages in Tehran; Iran-Iraq War; Western hostages in Beirut; relationship between the West and Iran; and terrorism.

Position	N	%
Front page Back page Inside Page	93 20 449	17 4 80
Total	562	101

Table 5 shows the position of items in pages. Most items occupy the inside pages.

Visuals

Obviously, most of the visuals published in the British press are photographs which accompany the news stories (87%).

Visual	N	%
Photographs Cartoons Others (Map & drawings)	178 11 18	87 5 8
Total	207	100

Table 6 shows the number of visuals. The majority of visuals are photographs.

The content of selected photographs and cartoons will be analysed in the classifications of themes in a later section.

Type of items

As some studies have shown, (e.g. Sigal, 1973; Hartmann et al, 1974; Dorman and Farhang, 1987), most of the items covered in the American and British press are news stories. The data in Table 7 is in line with these findings. It can be seen that 80% of the items are news stories covering different aspects of the revolution.

Type	N	%
Lead Story	27	5
News Story	447	80
Editorial	23	4
Feature/Analysis	26	5
Viewpoint	1	<1
Review	3	1
Letter	10	2
Separate photo or Cartoon	14	3
Interview	7	1
Speech	3	1
Parliamentary discussion (Whole text)	1	<1
Total	562	102

Table 7 shows the type of items with their frequency rating. Most of the Items are news stories.

The other types of items are mainly about the lead stories (5%) which are mostly concerned with news about oil, hostages, West-Iran relationship, war, power struggle inside Iran and also there are Features and Analysis (5%), editorials (4%) and so on. These types of news will be looked at qualitatively in the process of the analysis of themes.

Location of the Correspondents or Source/Author

A part of the basis for press construction of reality is the location of journalists when covering news events. Media organisations tend to locate their correspondents in major cities in the world, e.g. Washington, Paris, London for historical reasons and for easy access to technology and information. In troubled areas of the world the Western media station correspondents in particular places with which they can

identify. For instance, most of the correspondents covering the Middle East are based either in Jerusalem or Beirut, because these two cities interact with the politics of the area and offer facilities needed by journalists e.g. people speaking foreign languages, telecommunications, and relative freedom.

Obviously the interaction between the journalists and the sources in the country they are covering tend to colour the views of the journalists about the politics of the country, the actions, the people. The Western correspondents' experience in Beirut and Tel Aviv and their interaction with the PLO before 1982 have influenced the way they perceive the action and activities of the Palestinian groups and the Israelis (Fisk, 1990; Friedmann, 1990).

The importance of the locations of the Source/Author of news lies in the fact of the interaction of the correspondents with available governmental and non-government sources who try, as "authorised knowers", to put forward certain definitions which serve their strategies and their activities (Ericson et al, 1989).

Most of the Source/Author of news, as shown in Table 8, are correspondents (generalists and specialists) who represent 58% of the overall Source/Author of news.

Source/Author of News	N	%
Middle East Correspondent	3	1
Diplomatic Correspondent	21	4
Political/Parliament Correspondent	4	1
Defence/Military Correspondent	9	2
Correspondent/Reporter	255	45
Middle East Editor	1	<1
Editor	3	1
Foreign Staff/Staff	18	3
Reuter	54	10
UPI	5	1
AFP	4	1
AP	14	3
IRNA/Radio Tehran	3	1
Joint Correspondents	27	5
Joint Correspondents & Agencies	3	1
Expert (Western & Iranian Exiles)	16	3
Reader	7	1
Cartoonist	11	2
Joint Agencies	5	1
Political Staff	1	<1
Business Correspondent	2	<1
Diplomatic Staff	9	2
Not Known	85	15
Others	2	<1
Total	562	100

Table 8 shows the Source/Author of news. Most items are covered by correspondents who are generalists.

Location of Source/Author	N	%
Tehran	82	15
Washington/New York	59	11
London	163	29
Paris	25	4
Nicosia	5	1
Baghdad	9	2
Beirut	19	3
Dubai	6	1
Bahrain	12	2
Damascus	1	<1
Cairo	3	1
Other Arab countries	8	1
Istanbul/Ankara	4	1
Other European countries	20	4
Other Asian countries	3	1
Not Known	133	24
Two or more different countries	6	1
Others	4	1
Total	562	102

Table 9 shows the location of the Source/Author of news. The majority of correspondents and agencies are located in the West.

These correspondents, with other Source/Author of news such as International News Agencies, Staff, Experts and so on are mostly located (48%) in the major Western capitals in Europe and the United States (see Table 9). Iran represents 15% of the location of the Source/Author of news and the Arab countries represent 10% of locations. Almost a quarter of the locations of the Source/Author of news 24% is not known. This is due to the fact that most of the popular press and some of the quality press may not mention the location of the Source/Author on the top of their reports.

But why does the British press have more correspondents located in London, Washington, Paris and other major Western cities than in the areas directly concerned with the events which they report? Several reasons can be given here. Firstly, London (29%) is the place where the British press are based. It is easier and less costly for the journalists to cover news about Iran from that location. Journalists have easy access to most of the actors involved in defining news about Iran, not only in Britain but Europe and the United States. They also have easy access to British listening posts picking up Iranian Radio, such as the BBC monitoring service in Caversham (England) which formed an essential source of information about Iran in the first decade of the revolution.

Second, British journalists could identify with the political structure of Western societies and with the dominant social values. Consequently journalists can relate easily to British and Western sources and politics with whom they share these values and the same symbols of culture and language which they do not share with the Iranian Islamic sources.

Third, these major Western cities are historically important in terms of international politics. The three countries, US, Britain and France are permanent members in the

Security Council of the United Nations and have strategic and economic interests in the Middle East and many parts of the world. So news is always emerging from these countries and needs to be covered permanently.

Fourth, stationing permanent correspondents in Iran is very costly for the British press. They prefer to have one correspondent, or two for the whole Middle East, one of them should be located in an Arab country, the other in Jerusalem because of the historical conflict between the Arabs and Israel. Also Iran has not allowed Western journalists on its soil unless upon invitation by the Iranian Government to cover specific incidents.

The location of the correspondents in the West leads to more direct interaction with the Western official sources and other sources based in the West, such as the Iranian opposition and the experts (as it will be shown in the discussion of the second dimension of press construction of Iran, the use of sources). Having said that, it does not underestimate the interaction between the British press and the Iranian officials. The interaction in this case is more indirect, via intermediary channels such as the Iranian media, the International News Agencies, and the Arab sources in the Gulf and in Beirut. Whether there is direct or indirect interaction between the British press and the different Actors involved, competition among sources is observed in the press coverage, but because of media role in reproducing Western politics, sources belonging to the Western values system will have supremacy because they have privileged access and don't have to compete for legitimacy. More argument on this point will be presented in the next section dealing with the Actors involved in defining events related to Iran.

To sum up, the second dimension operating in the press

construction of reality is the source of news. Analysis of this dimension will be approached from the concept of competition and cooperation of sources, and the supremacy of Western actors.

Competition and cooperation of sources and the supremacy of Western Actors

Many themes can be observed in the British press coverage of the first decade of the Islamic revolution as will be demonstrated in the next section. These themes characterise the construction of an image of Iran and point to the different actors involved in defining Iran and its related issues. Actors associated with different sets of values are observed as part of the process of news production and constitute an important source of news for the press. These sources which are formed of Western, Iranian, Iraqi, Arab, International and Eastern sources (see Tables 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16), are mostly official actors who are widely recognised and have the resources and expertise to deliver their messages to the press.

As it has been argued in the theoretical frameworks chapter (chapter 3) the sources, who are defined as the "authorised knowers" try to project certain ideological views to vital issues in which their countries and their organisations are involved in order to discredit the other side and win publicity. For instance, during the Iran-Iraq War most Iraqi and Arab sources were trying to put forward to the British press certain ideological definitions which aimed to discredit the "enemy", Iran and its "threat" to the Arab peoples (Mortimer, FT, 1990). Often the sources' statements, actions and comments contradict each other, particularly when a source works in line with a specific strategy to meet certain goals which happen to be different than those of other sources.

But there are cases when the strategies and goals of the different sources have a lot in common, particularly when these sources perceive a common enemy who threatens their interests.

A case in point here is the "cooperation" (Schlesinger, 1988) of the Western political actors and the Gulf actors to quell the Iranian threats to oil supply to the West (in 1987 the Kuwaitis asked the United States to reflag its tankers in the Persian Gulf) and against the internal security of some Gulf countries, e.g. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

There was "cooperation" between the Iraqi actors, the Gulf States' actors (who are the most quoted actors 38% among the Arab and Muslim figures - see Table 13) and the Arab League (most members) (see Table 14) who viewed Iran as a common enemy during the Iran-Iraq War and who considered "Islamic fundamentalism" as a threat to their stability.

On the other hand, there was the "cooperation" between the Iranian actors and the Syrian actors and some Islamic movements (see Table 13) who have common interests which differ from the Western interests and the Gulf States' interests.

The interaction between the different sources in the coverage of Iran is so complex that it cannot be explained by data compiled for this research because this study is concerned with sources from the media and journalists' perspectives. The data is not compiled from the sources' angles. Consequently the strategies followed by the different actors involved in defining events related to Iran cannot be scrutinized.

Actors quoted or referred to - The West	N	% of items
US President	56	19
US vice President	3	1
US Secretary of State	19	6
US Defence Secretary	18	6
US Congressmen, Senators & Advisors	31	10
US Military figures	27	9
US White House, State Departments & Agencies	59	20
British Prime Minister	35	12
British Government Ministers & Officials	43	14
British Opposition figures	7	2
British MPs	23	8
British Foreign Office	21	7
Church of England	5	2
French State figures & Officials	28	9
German State figures & Officials	13	4
Other Western State figures	21	7
Western Diplomats	45	15
Western Experts	59	20
Western Public	29	10
Western Media & Journalists	27	9
EEC	8	3
Western Organisations & Companies	30	10
Western Hostages & Prisoners	13	4
Others	26	9
Total	646	216

Table 10 shows the Actors quoted or referred to - The West. The Western sources appear in 299 valid items out of 562. The total of frequency (646) appears in 299 items. The calculation of the total percentage of items becomes 216.

Actors quoted or referred to- Iran	N	% of items
Ayatollah Khomeini	78	25
Iranian President	19	6
Speaker Rafsanjani	29	9
Ayatollah Montazari	4	1
Ayatollah Khalkhali	6	2
Ayatollah Khomeini's son Ahmed	3	1
Other senior religious figures	25	8
Prime Minister	15	5
Foreign Minister	20	6
Other political figures and MPs	60	19
Diplomats	26	8
Military figures	24	8
Assembly of Experts and Guardian Council	5	2
Experts (outside Iran)	11	4
Public/Students	44	14
Mass Media	100	32
Iranian opposition	65	21
Revolutionary Guards	15	5
Others	7	2
Total	556	178

Table 11 shows the Actors quoted or referred to - Iran. Iranian sources appear in 314 items out of 562. The total of frequency(556) appears in 314 items. The calculation of the total percentage of items becomes 178.

Actors quoted or referred to- Iraq	N	% of items
Iraqi President	21	21
Iraqi political figures	21	21
Iraqi diplomats	6	6
Iraqi military figures	52	52
Iraqi mass media	25	25
Iraqi opposition	4	4
Others	0	0
Total	129	129

Table 12 shows the actors quoted or referred to - Iraq. The Iraqi sources appear in 100 items out of 562. The total frequency(129) appears in 100 items. The calculation of the total percentage of items becomes 129.

Actors quoted or referred to- Arab & Muslim figures	N	% of items
President of Syria	2	2
Syrian political & military figures	8	9
Gulf State figures	33	38
Other Arab State figures & Officials	14	16
PLO & Lebanese parties	10	11
Islamic Movements	33	25
Non Arab Muslim State figures & Officials	8	9
Arab Experts	9	10
Others	22	14
Total	118	134

Table 13 shows the actors quoted - Arab & Muslim figures. The Arab sources appear in 88 items out of 562. The total of frequency (118) appears in 88 items. the calculation of the total percentage of items becomes 134.

Actors quoted or referred to- International & Regional Organisations	N	% of items
United Nations	36	68
International Red Cross & Amnesty International	6	11
Arab League	4	8
Islamic Conference Organisation	6	11
Others	4	8
Total	56	106

Table 14 shows the actors quoted or referred to - International and Regional Organisations. The organisational sources appear in 53 items out of 562.

Actors quoted or referred to - Others	N	% of items
Israeli figures & Organisations	10	40
South American figures & Organisations	12	48
African figures & Organisations	2	8
Others	3	12
Total	27	108

Table 15 shows the actors quoted or referred to - Others. The others sources appear in 25 valid items out of 562. The total of frequency (27) appears in 25 valid items. The calculation of the total percentage becomes 108.

Actors quoted or referred to- East	N	% of items
USSR figures	16	80
Chinese State figures	1	5
Eastern Experts	2	10
Others	2	10
Total	21	105

Table 16 shows the actors quoted or referred to - East. The Eastern sources appear in 20 items out of 562. The total of frequency (21) appears in 20 valid items. The calculation of the total percentage of items becomes 105.

The data emerging from the quotations of the different actors of groups involved (see Tables 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) suggest that the British press interact mostly with officials belonging to different values and systems in the Western world, the Islamic world and others, i.e. the American officials, the British officials, the European officials (see Table 10), the Iranian officials (see Table 11), the Iraqi officials, the Soviet officials and so on. As is mentioned earlier, these official sources or political elites try to manage news and put forward certain definitions which serve the interests of their countries and their organisations. Even though these different elites compete with each other (Schlesinger, 1988, 1990) and display "ideological contestation" (Schudson, 1989) in many fields, with their differences manifesting themselves in press

coverage, still these elites in the arena of international news coverage have preferred access and become in many instances the "primary definers" of news and events (Hall et al, 1978). Here both the empirical sociology of journalism and the structuralist approaches give insights into the way the press use sources from the different political elites in the arena of foreign news.

The actors' data (particularly Tables 10 and 11) show that the interaction between the official sources and journalists tends to be viewed in terms of "symbiotic dependence" where the journalists depend on the information supplied by the official sources who occupy the top political positions in society. For instance, journalists who are mostly located in the West (see Table 9) depend a great deal on the American, British, (see Table 10) and other Western sources. The non-official Western sources are very few.

The "symbiotic dependence" notion of the source-communicator relationship held strongly in the coverage of Iran in the British press. The role of this notion in interpreting the data here does not differ from its role in the coverage of politics and government, crime, and science, as is argued in chapter 3. But does it mean that the journalists are passive vis a vis the strategies used by the sources? Research studies tell us (e.g. Ericson et al 1989, Curran, 1979) that journalists have "relative autonomy" from their sources. Journalists add some professional practices to the process of producing news. If an official tells journalists, particularly those few who are specialists, a piece of information, they will cross check with other sources. Data emerging from the interviews with journalists show that some of the Western officials' versions are checked with Iranian journalists based

in London (journalists working for IRNA). Sometimes these versions, if the journalists judge them not to be accurate, will be ignored (see chapter 7).

The British press in the coverage of Iran have used sources other than official sources, and these sources are often consulted by British journalists. Sources like the Western experts, who are prominent in the coverage (20% - table 10) are regularly asked for their opinions and views, Iranian experts 4%, Iranian public 14% and the Iranian opposition 21% (Table 11) as well as United Nations sources 68% who were often used, particularly during the Iran-Iraq War (Table 14).

In the coverage of Iran during the decade, one interestingly finds that in the source-journalist relationship "symbiotic dependence" is supreme with the journalists' "relative autonomy" allowing them to add some professional practices in the process of constructing news about Iran.

Supremacy of Western actors

When considering the strategies of the different sources involved in defining Iran and their access to the British press, how can one explain the supremacy of the Western actors in terms of quotations and reference over the other actors, particularly the Iranian (see Table 17). Why are Western actors along with some other actors who are opposing Iran, e.g. Iranian opposition, and Arab actors, defined as legitimate sources who are granted access without any serious challenge to their definitions?

Actors quoted or referred to- Groups	N	% of responses
West	646	42
Iran	556	36
Iraq	129	8
Arab & Muslim countries	118	8
International Organisations	56	4
Others	27	2
East	21	1
Total	1553	101

Table 17 shows all the actors quoted or referred to - Groups. This Table observes the numbers of quotes (totals of frequencies) from each group involved in the coverage of Iran. It does not observe the numbers of valid items each group appears in as with the previous actors tables i.e. it will not include the percentage of items in relation to the valid items. So the percentages in this table are according to the sum of quotes of all actors (1553 quotes). This is to show more clearly the level of concentration of quotes for each group in the coverage.

Theories of news (chapter 3) have shown that the sources who occupy an authoritative position in society have to be of the elite and have to belong to the dominant values system of Western society in order to be defined as legitimate sources. Legitimate sources are hardly challenged in the media and it is always the responsibility of the "illegitimate sources" (Tuchman, 1978) who are not defined as "respectable and reformist" (Gillin, 1980) to bring evidence forming a basis for the process of challenging the versions of the sources who are considered legitimate.

The Western sources covered by the British press satisfy the two criteria which enable them to be legitimised. For instance, the Western experts are quoted 20%, the highest percentage of quotes among the other Western sources (Table 10). They belong to both political and intellectual elites occupying certain positions in some research centres and institutes, e.g. CSIS an RIIA which are recognised internationally and at the same time most of them adhere to the

social values of Western society. Studies have demonstrated (e.g. Herman and Chomsky, 1988, Said, 1980) that these sort of experts are highly respected by the media and the establishment. The latter try to employ them directly to put forward the views of the government. Herman and Chomsky (1988) consider that this situation helps in creating a structured bias where "the supply of experts may be skewed in the direction desired by the government and the market" (Herman and Chomsky, 1988, P.23). These two criteria elitism and the belonging to the dominant culture act as one essential explanation for the supremacy of Western sources who are mostly officials and experts in line with the "commonly held opinions" as Herman and Chomsky (1988) explain.

Table 11 shows that Iranian opposition sources are the third most quoted actors (21%) among the Iranian actors. They come after the Iranian media (32%) and Ayatollah Khomeini (25%). Why are these Iranian opposition sources and some Arab sources legitimised in spite of the fact that they don't belong to the dominant Western Values? The argument is that these sources offer better access for the Western journalists and are active in press relations and most of them are based in the major Western cities, e.g. London, Paris and Washington. They know how to deal with the Western press (as confirmed by most British journalists). Because of the practicality of covering Iran the British press tend to use them as sources, particularly when access to Iran is difficult or almost nonexistent. However, this cannot be regarded as a full explanation for the way the media use sources such as the Iranian opposition and Iranian experts (see Table 11). There is easy access to Iranian opposition in the West, but the press are not prevented from contacting pro-Iran sources who are also based in the West, such as the Iranian diplomats or the Iraqi opposition in London and Paris. The latter is the least quoted source 4% among the Iraqi actors, (Table 12). A better way to

understand this phenomenon is to apply the Herman and Chomsky, (1988) "propaganda model". In their model they show the dichotomous attention based on the same criterion. For instance, tortured political prisoners and persecuted Turkish Trade Unions will be defined by the American media as unworthy victims because the Turkish Government is an ally to the United States. So, the Turkish opposition find it difficult to get legitimacy in the media. In marked contrast the political prisoners and Trade Unions in Poland will be defined worthy victims by the media because Poland, during the Reagan administration, was defined as an enemy state in the context of the anti-communist ideology that has dominated the West since the Second World War. So Polish dissidents will be considered legitimate sources and will be covered favourably by the US media (Herman and Chomsky, 1988, PP.1-35).

Chomsky (1989) in his more advanced work in the same line of "propaganda model", mentions a similar example of the media's double standard. He uses the example of Kurds in Turkey and Iran. In Turkey, a US ally, the Kurdish opposition has no value or utility in the media, whereas the Kurdish groups in Iran, which occasionally arise as an issue in the context of U.S. strategic interest, are seen as subject to extreme repression so that their fate in enemy Iran should evoke indignation and humanitarian concern. Chomsky mentioned that the New York Times columnist, William Sofine, was advocating the arming of Kurds against the regime in Iran, (Chomsky, 1988, Appendix V). Iran has been defined in the first decade of the revolution (1979-1989) as a State which is an "enemy" to the West (see chapter 2). The opposition to that "enemy" state which allies itself to anti-Iran ideology or anti-Islamic ideology, whether a dissident group (Iranian opposition) or opposing countries (pro-West Arab regimes) is defined as worthy victims deserving attention and is consequently considered a legitimate, credible source.

The Herman and Chomsky model (1988, 1989) can give a better explanation for the question of the prominence of the Iranian opposition (Mujahedeen Khalq, Kurds, Monarchists and experts) in the coverage of Iran (opposition and experts 25%, see Table 11) along with the Iraqi and Arab sources (Table 12 and 13).

However, a second reason for the supremacy of the Western actors is the activity pursued by the Western sources. It can be learned from the theoretical framework (chapter 3), that the actors realise the importance of the news media and take the advantage because of their authoritative standing in society (Ericson et al, 1987, 1989) to promote their attitudes, policies, ideas and so on. Often the promotion of these values is conveyed through "routine channels" (Sigal, 1973) such as interviews, press releases, press conferences and direct speeches.

As has been discussed earlier, most Source/Author of news who have covered Iran are correspondents 58% (see Table 8) and are mostly located (48%,see Table 9) in the West, e.g. London, New York and Paris and other European capitals. The location of the correspondent in the West, one of the dimensions of media ideology, facilitates the interaction between the Western official sources who intend to communicate to the media and the journalists. This situation is welcomed by journalists because it offers them the information they need to include in their coverage (Sigal, 1973, 1986; Hall et al, 1978; Ericson et al, 1989) and it reduces the cost of looking for alternative information which might not be credible and would require careful checking (Herman and Chomsky, 1988)

The established relationship between Western officials, e.g. US President, US White House and State Departments, British Governments and Ministers, Western Diplomats and so on

(see Table 10) and Western journalists will lead the latter to write for their Western sources (Chibnall, 1977; Gandy, 1982) which means, among other things, many quotations from these sources which hold supremacy in the content of news.

A third basis for the supremacy of the Western actors is the difficult access to Iran and the Middle East which minimises the interaction between the Iranian officials and the Western journalists and enhances the level of interaction with other sources, like the Western sources, the Iranian opposition sources and the Arab sources. British journalists argue that visas to Iran are granted only on rare occasions, so journalists tend to monitor the Iranian media particularly Radio Tehran for substitution of direct information emanating from Iranian officials. Data on the Iranian sources (see Table 11) support the contention of journalists. It is found that most actors quoted among the Iranian actors are the mass media, 32%. Interestingly, in the analysis of interviews with British journalists, they tend to check information coming out of Iran not only with Iranian official sources based in the West, but also with Western officials, Western experts and Iranian opposition and experts. Obviously this helps in adding to the overall number of quotations from Western actors.

The elitism, the belonging to the dominant social values, the activities pursued by the Western officials and the access problem which leads to more checking with Western sources are all factors which add to the dominance of the Western actors.

The British press interact mostly with official sources from all groups involved in the arena of foreign news. The "symbiotic dependence" discussed above proves to be overriding but without neglecting the "relative autonomy" of British journalists who add some media practices to the coverage.

The data have demonstrated that these sources (mostly

official) compete and cooperate with one another to project certain definitions of Iran and its related affairs and that Western sources are dominant over other sources due to ideological and professional considerations based on the desire of the press to legitimise sources who belong to the West or who identify with the values system of the West. Often these sources have certain strategies which aimed to serve their political and economic interests. This process leaves the press content loaded with "information" and "propaganda" (Elliott and Schlesinger, 1991) which might lead to a particular construction of reality and that what it will interpreted next.

Construction of themes

As has been argued in the theoretical framework chapter and demonstrated in the sources' section, the nature of news as a form of knowledge makes the journalists and media organisations depend on news sources who are mostly official sources providing the media with their versions of reality. These versions of reality are mostly a combination of the "sources' interest" which are those of their governments and organisations, and the "public interest" (Ericson et al, 1989). They project an ideological perception of what is happening and the people involved in events. Yet still, as argued before, journalists are not passive, they have a "relative autonomy" which allows them to have a great deal of control over how news is framed and how the sources' versions of reality are interpreted and presented. The journalists' professional ideologies determine how the content of news is going to be constructed.

The British press in the first decade of the revolution have covered many aspects of Iran because it has represented

revolutionary ideas, "Islamic fundamentalism", religious leadership, strategic location, oil, war and "state sponsored terrorism". Events which are considered important by the British press are often selected. And the importance value is often related to other journalistic values, particularly the cultural value where selected news items have to resonate to the dominant value system of British and Western societies. Researchers who have done work on the Western press coverage and Iran (Said, 1980, Dorman and Farhang, 1987; Robins, 1988; and Vilanilam, 1989) find that a strong Western dimension governs the presentation of many aspects of the revolution. In his analysis of four British quality papers; The Guardian, The Times, The Independent and The Financial Times coverage of the Gulf Conflict in 1987, Robins (1988) concluded that news stories were firstly selected for their strong British dimension. Next would come news from a Western dimension, i.e. United States and then Europe. This news would be given priority because these States are important to Britain and because the various papers had a staff correspondent in these places and none of them had a permanent staff correspondent based in any of the States bordering the Gulf (Robins, 1988).

When considering the strong Western dimensions in covering Iran and the Gulf demonstrated in other studies (e.g. Dorman and Farhang, 1987, Vilanilam, 1989) one needs to ask about what sort of themes in the first decade of the Iranian Revolution have been covered by the British press? How are these themes presented and how are they framed? To answer the first question all the 47 themes found in the coverage (Table 18) will be stated. Then a regrouping of these themes into 11 Macro-themes (Table 19) will be necessary in order to make the discussions on how the themes are framed more concise and understandable.

All sorts of themes were found in the British press

coverage of Iran in a decade and all of them satisfy the criteria of news values in the Western media. For instance the Iran-Iraq War has all the elements of negativity, drama and importance. The issue of the US hostages in Tehran and the Western hostages in Beirut have the elements of personal and culture values where the Western public could identify with these personalities they belong to the same social values system. Also there were the elements of drama when the conditions of imprisonment and their sufferings were stressed. But are all the themes covered in the same degree or in the same level of importance? Obviously the answer is no, as Table 18 states. Some themes gain more prominence than others. And one cannot isolate the role of external influences such as ideology, Western foreign policy and sources in the same way that bureaucratic practices cannot be denied as valid interpretations for the heavy stress on some themes which are important and also another less deserving of attention.

The most prominent theme is the "West and in Iran" which represents 54% (Table 18) of the items, and encompasses all interaction between the West and Iran.

Themes	N	% of items
The West and Iran	306	54
Iran-Iraq war	208	37
Ayatollah Khomeini	183	33
Internal Affairs	143	25
Islam	131	23
West alliance & policy toward Iran	123	22
Oil, commercial ships & the tanker war	119	21
Iranian Opposition groups	113	20
The Revolution	112	20
US hostages in Tehran and UN/US hostages	104	19
Iran & the threat to western interests	103	18
Gulf & Arab states & Iran	98	17
The Shah & his Monarchy	89	16
The Revolution & Violence	86	15
Islamic fundamentalism	76	14
British-US-French-German/Iranian Diplomatic relation	69	12
Islamic punishment	63	11
The Revolutionary Guards	59	11
Iran & the Sponsorship of Terrorism	53	9
Iran & Islamic movements & the Export of the Revolution	50	9
UN & Iran-Iraq war	45	8
Iran the Gulf & their Strategic importance	44	8
The West policy towards the M.E.	42	8
Western Fleet in the Gulf	41	7
Mediations, Negotiations & Ceasefire	36	6
Women in Islam & Iran	36	6
Islam & Shiism	34	6
Western Hostages in Beirut	34	6
British Hostages in Beirut	31	6
Irangate	31	6
Iran & the USSR	31	6
Power Struggle between Moderates & Hard-liners	30	5
Iran & the Purchasing of Arms from the West	28	5
British Prisoners in Tehran	28	5
Iran-Syria Relationship	27	5
The West & the Iranian Assets	24	4
Tension between Western Fleet & Iran	23	4
French Hostages in Beirut	23	4
The Revolution & the Violation of Human Rights	22	4
Iran & the Iraqi Opposition	21	4
The West & Salman Rushdie Affair	21	4
US Hostages in Beirut	14	3
Iraq & the use of chemical weapons & poison	13	2
Iran & the Violation of International law	12	2
Iran & the Production of Chemical Weapons & Missiles	10	2
German Hostages in Beirut	4	1
Iranian Children in the War	4	1
Total	2997	537

Table 18 shows the themes in order of prominence in the press. The percentages of items represent the number of valid items on each theme out of 562 items.

The theme of "the West and Iran" is particularly important to the press because it involves the West directly and its actors can be approached to define news and comment on events. The Iran-Iraq War is another prominent theme covered by the press. It occupies 37% of the number of items. As will be argued later on, this theme was handled by the press from the angle of Western interests in the Middle East, particularly oil and the stability of the area which was under the threat of "Islamic fundamentalism" and the "Mullahs" in Tehran. Next, came the Ayatollah Khomeini theme. This theme which was about a personality defined as a "threat" to the West occupied 33% of the items (total 562 items). News about Ayatollah Khomeini and his leadership was seen from the angle of his personality which was projected in the press in forms of "hatred", "fundamentalism" and "fanaticism" and which threatened the West by exporting his brand of "fundamentalism" and "terrorism".

The internal affairs theme came fourth in order in terms of prominence in the coverage. It occupied 25% of the items. In this theme the revolution and its ideas were presented and the harassment of the opposition was emphasised. When Islam became the new phenomenon in the politics of the Middle East at the victory of the revolution, the press was attracted to this religion but in a critical fashion (Islam occupied 23% of the items). In this theme the press presented Islam as a religion which imposed the veil on women and cut off the hands of thieves and transformed people into fanatics. The opposition between two forms of culture, the Western culture and the Islamic culture was presented in the form of binary oppositions as will later be argued. Other themes were stressed by the press, such as the Western alliance and policy towards Iran (22%), oil, commercial ships and tanker war (21%). Opposition groups (20%) were legitimised by the press and had the opportunity to put forward their definitions. US hostages in Tehran was another theme (19%) (see Table 18).

The themes awarded least attention from the press were

the Iranian children in the war (1%) who died in thousands from the Iraqi bombardment and use of chemical weapons. The Iraqi use of chemical weapons and poison gas (2%) was also considered unimportant by the British press even though the UN confirmed in 1988 the use of this forbidden weapon by Iraq. The press instead focused on the Iranian production of chemical weapons (2%), which was not confirmed by the UN to be of the same magnitude as the Iraqi use of this deadly weapon.

After it is shown what sort of items the press have covered, it is necessary at this stage to regroup the themes into Macro-themes which would allow more systematic analysis of the coverage of the different themes. Matching the themes through similarities of form, meaning and orientation allows to define eleven Macro-themes, and under each Macro-theme, which carries a specific title arrived at by the meaning of the themes and their representations in news coverage, a group of similar themes are classified. The Macro-themes and the themes they carry are listed in order of prominence (according to the counting of positive ticks of each theme). The following lists of Macro-themes and their themes will give a clear picture for the regrouping:

1. The West and Iran, Interests, Tensions, Threats and Links

- The West and Iran
- West alliance and policy towards Iran
- Oil, commercial ships and tanker war
- Iran and the threat to Western interests
- British-US-French-German/Iranian diplomatic relationship
- Iran the Gulf and their strategic importance to the West
- The West policy towards the Middle East
- Western Fleet in the Gulf
- Iran and the purchasing of arms from the West
- Tension between Western fleet and Iran

- The West and the Rushdie affair

2. The Islamic Revolution and Internal Situation

- Internal affairs
- The revolution
- The revolution and violence
- The Revolutionary Guards
- The revolution and violation of human rights
- Power struggle between moderates and hard-liners

3. Islamic Fundamentalism

- Islam
- Islamic fundamentalism
- Islamic punishments
- Women in Islam and Iran
- Islam and Shiism

4. Iran-Iraq War and Related Affairs

- Iran-Iraq war
- UN and Iran-Iraq war
- Mediations, negotiations and ceasefire
- Iraq and the use of Chemical weapons and poison gas
- Iran and the production of Chemical weapons and missiles
- Iranian children in the war

5. Western Hostages in Tehran and Beirut

- US hostages in Tehran and UN and US hostages
- Western hostages in Beirut
- British hostages in Beirut
- Irangate
- British prisoners in Tehran
- The West and the Iranian assets
- French hostages in Beirut
- US hostages in Beirut

- Iran and the violation of international law
- German hostages in Beirut

6. Ayatollah Khomeini

7. Opposition and the Iranian Islamic System

- Iranian opposition groups
- Iran and the Iraqi opposition

8. Iran and the Arab Countries

- Gulf and Arab states and Iran
- Iran-Syria relationship

9. Terrorism and the Export of the Revolution

- Iran and the sponsorship of terrorism
- Iran and Islamic movements and the export of the revolution

10. The Shah and his Monarchy

11. Iran and the Soviet Union

To guide the analysis of the Macro-themes, i.e. how they are framed and why they are constructed as they are in the press, one needs to refer to the arrangement of the Macro-themes in order of their prominence in a separate table (Table 19). The most prominent Macro-theme was "the West and Iran, interest, tensions, threats and links" which occupied 31% of the responses. The least prominent Macro-theme was "Iran and the Soviet Union" which was almost insignificant in the coverage of Iran. Each of these Macro-themes will be analysed separately and in order of prominence to see how Iran is constructed in the British press.

The interpretations of the Macro-themes will be based on the coded headlines, sub-headlines, leads, editorials,

photographs, cartoons and some collected feature articles from the different papers involved in the coverage of Iran.

Macro-themes	Sum of N	% of Responses
The West & Iran, interests, tensions, threats & links.	919	31
The Islamic revolution & internal situation	452	15
Islamic fundamentalism	340	11
Iran-Iraq war & related affairs	316	11
Western Hostages in Tehran & Beirut	305	10
Ayatollah Khomeini	183	6
Opposition & the Iranian Islamic system	134	4
Iran & the Arab Countries	125	4
Terrorism & the export of the revolution	103	3
The Shah & his Monarchy	89	3
Iran & the Soviet Union	31	1
Total	2997	99

Table 19 shows the relative prominence of the Macro-themes. The press aligned itself to news which concern the West (e.g. the first macro-theme) and ignored news which belong to the old ideological enemy the USSR (the last macro-theme).

1. <u>The West and Iran, interests, tensions, threats and links</u>

This Macro-theme represents 31% of the responses (Table 19) which makes it the most prominent Macro-theme in the coverage of Iran.

The importance of this Macro-theme lies in the fact that it involved the West directly in relation to Iran. Issues of Western politics, diplomatic relationship, oil, interest in the Gulf, and tensions were all included in the reportage which gave a direct opportunity for Western actors to come forward and define the situation which concerned their governments and their public, e.g. oil.

As it is argued at the beginning of this section a strong Western dimension governs the production of news on the relationship between the West and Iran and this is a particularly a good example of this dimension because it deals with themes defined as important and vital for the West, directly involving

Western Europe, particularly Britain and the United States because of their roles in the Middle East.

How has the press constructed the Macro-theme of the West and Iran during the decade? It is very difficult to mention everything that has been reported under this heading. Analysis must be limited to the most common trends in the political coverage of the West and Iran. Several main issues were the centre of attention for the British press and had significance for the construction of an image of Iran. These issues are oil, the fear of the inclination of Iran towards the Soviet Union, the diplomatic relationship between the West and Iran, and the Rushdie affair.

The issue of oil, shared with other Macro-themes, such as the "Iran-Iraq War and its related affairs", is considered one of the most vital issues for the West since political life changed in Iran and since the Iran-Iraq War flared up and threatened the West by cutting off the oil supply from the Straits of Hermuz. At the start of the Iran-Iraq War the press focused attention not on the political aspect of the war but on the economic aspect, i.e. oil. The West was very concerned about the flow of oil to the Western countries and memories of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war were vivid in the political discourse of Western politicians and experts (Terry and Mendenhall, 1979; Terry, 1982). Headlines on the issue of oil were observed in the press and most demonstrate the West's fear of the cutting of oil supply. Some of these headlines are: "Will the West's Oil Tap Be Turned Off?" (The Guardian, 24/9/1980), "Fears growing Over Vital Oil Link" (Daily Express, 24/9/1980), "Why The Oil States Caught Fire" (Daily Mirror, 24/9/1980), "Suddenly the Second Most Important Oil Exporter Is At War" (Daily Mail, 24/9/1980), "The Distant War That Threatens Us All" (Daily Mail, 24/9/1980), "Gulf War Holds Key To Oil Price Scramble" (Sunday Times, 14/12/1980), "Ayatollah Threatens the West's Oil" (Daily Mirror, 18/2/1984) and "Iran Repeats Threat To Block Gulf" (The Times, 2/11/1983).

The importance of the oil issue as seen in the press has not been confined to headlines but also appears in leads,

photographs, cartoons and editorials. More than 30 photographs (out of 178 - see Table 6) have been related to oil refineries and fields in Iran and Iraq. They show tankers carrying oil, oil barrels, oil platforms and reservoirs, the Strait of Hermuz where the oil leaves the Gulf for the Western world and the Iranian personalities related to oil. Almost all these pictures were published in 1980 and 1987 at times of perceived oil crises.

Three cartoons (out of 11 - see Table 6) relating to oil have been found, the first published in the Daily Telegraph in 1980. The cartoon signified war, superpowers, Arab leaders backing Saddam Hussein and oil. The significance of the cartoon was that the two superpower leaders President Carter and President Breznev were just worried about the oil (Daily Telegraph 24/9/80). The diplomatic editor of the Daily Telegraph then, John Bulloch, reproduced the worries of the West concerning oil by reporting that the West's eyes "... are focused on two strategic localities, the Shat el-Arab Waterway and the Strait of Hermuz" (Daily Telegraph, 24/9/80, p.4).

The second cartoon was published in The Times on the first page. It showed the significance of the oil to the West through the eyes of the Western public who were indirectly affected by the Iran-Iraq War. The cartoon showed as signifier a man in his car in the streets of London, very angry because he had to queue for petrol. The man was shouting, "Why does oil have to come from such unstable parts of the world?" (The Times 24/9/80).

The third cartoon was published in 1987 when the West decided, upon the request of the Kuwaiti Government, to escort and reflag its tankers in the Persian Gulf. The cartoon which was published in the Daily Mail signified the importance of escorting the tankers for the sake of the West's oil.

Editorials also express the importance of oil to the West. In 1980 the Daily Express wrote under the title "The danger of escalation" that "the Persian Gulf is the most strategically important stretch of water in the whole world. Iran has now declared it a war zone, so threatening two-third's of the West's

oil that emerge from the Strait of Hermuz..." (Daily Express, 24/9/80, p.8).

In 1987 when the West decided to escort shipping and began minesweeping in the Gulf under the supervision of the United States, there were differences in the attitudes of the Left and Right wing press. The Daily Mail and the Daily Express were supportive of this Western Gulf Policy. The Daily Mail commented in one of its editorials that "...the man who should be isolated is Ayatollah Khomeini not President Reagan. And it is to that end that Prime Minister is now fashioning British Foreign Policy" (Daily Mail, 10/8/87). On the other hand, The Guardian was not in favour of the Americans escorting the tankers, but it was in favour of pressure by the Security Council against Iran. The Guardian considered that if the Council failed then the other option would be "an arms embargo" (The Guardian, 10/8/87, p.13).

The second issue occupying the press coverage under the "West and Iran..." Macro-theme was the Western policy of preventing Iranian inclination towards the Soviet Union. The press echoed the fear of the Western officials who linked the issue to that of the American hostages. The Western fear of Iranian alignment with the Soviet Union was noted in the press when Mrs. Thatcher admitted in a television interview that the Western action over the American hostages might push Iran "into the hands of the Russians". The Daily Telegraph reflected this view and wrote a news story on the front page showing "Thatcher's fear on Iran Curbs" (The Daily Telegraph, 15/4/80). The context of the cold war between the West and East was observed in the press coverage of the action that the West might take to rescue the American hostages in Tehran. The press argued that the Soviet Union might benefit from this step and might take over Iran which then "...would have the West by its economic throat", (Daily Express, 28/8/80). The Daily Telegraph warned the Western governments "...to avoid communist take over in Iran" which was "...a real possibility", (Daily Telegraph, 28/8/1980). This cold war ideology was seen in the press again in 1987 when the Soviet Union was asked by Kuwait along with the West

to escort their ships in the Gulf. In this situation the news coverage was not concerned with the taking over of Iran by the Soviet Union as in 1980, but it was concerned with the possibility of the Soviets gaining influence in the area.

The third issue focused on by the press under the Macro-theme the West and Iran was the issue of the diplomatic relationship with the West, particularly between Britain and Iran. A number of issues had been linked to the diplomatic relationship such as the US hostages in Tehran, the Iranian assets in the West, the Western hostages in Lebanon, and the Rushdie affair. Diplomatic relations between Britain and Tehran received particular attention from the press for a long period and the coverage of this issue had been strongly viewed from a British angle, particularly when associated with the issue of Western hostages in Lebanon. The press published many stories between 1988 and 1989 which supported the strong link of British hostages to the diplomatic issue. "Waite will be freed if Tehran and London heal rift", (The Guardian, 22/8/1988), "Diplomatic pact with Iran raises hope for hostages", (Daily Telegraph, 11/11/1988), "Hostages hopes grow as envoy war end" (Daily Mail, 11/11/1988) and "Iran deal raises Waite hopes" (The Sun, 11/11/1988) they were all headlines giving evidence for the British hostages angle on the diplomatic relationship.

The fourth issue which was notable under the Macro-theme "the West and Iran, interests, tensions, threats and links" was the tension between the West and Iran over the Salman Rushdie affair. This particular issue, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, has demonstrated the cultural and political clashes between two different value systems; Western and the Islamic, as well as increasing the level of political tension between the West and Iran in which diplomatic relationships have been severed. The British press have constructed the issue in terms of the West, which is defending the values of "democracy" and "freedom of speech", versus Iran which symbolises "threat", "Islamic fundamentalism" and "terrorism". The press have taken the attitude

of the West and have attacked the "fatwa" and defended "freedom of expression", called for the book not to be banned and suggested that the Muslims in Britain should respect the law of the country or they "...should all go home" (The Sun, 27/2/89). Other strong British dimensions were linked to that issue such as the safety of the British hostages in Lebanon, and the British prisoner in Tehran, Roger Cooper. The reason for this linkage was that British officials were making these issues essential in the dialogue between Britain and Iran. The values of "Islamic fanaticism", "death sentence", and "terrorism" seen in the construction of news stories and editorials, were also seen in a selected photograph of a young girl wearing "chaddor" (veil) during a protest rally in Lebanon, and carrying a banner stating "we are all ready to kill Rushdie", and in the background of the photograph a large poster of Ayatollah Khomeini. This photograph was published in four daily papers; The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Express and the Sun (27/2/1989) which showed the common criteria of importance and ideological selection used by these papers. The photograph signified "Islamic fundamentalism" under the influence of Ayatollah Khomeini which was threatening the values of the West.

The Macro-theme "the West and Iran, interests, tension, threats and links" was constructed by the press on the basis of the four dimensions of location, source, presentation of themes and language. Iran has been constructed, in the light of these dimensions from the view point of official attitudes and journalists' professional ideologies.

2. The Islamic revolution and internal situation

This Macro-theme is the second most prominent 15%, (see Table 19) among the other Macro-themes observed in the coverage of Iran.

Any revolution all over the world provides for the media a great deal of dramatic news material which is associated with violence, negativity, conflict and personalities. These are

usually essential components for the criteria of news values in the Western mass media. The Islamic revolution in Iran, which is the second biggest revolution in this century (the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 was the first), satisfies such criteria of news values when it allows news about the development of the revolution to be framed in the context of misgivings about the Islamic regime. News about chaos and disintegration of Iranian society were presented in the press along with items about execution of opposition group members and the power struggle which took different forms among the "factions" involved in the political life of Iran. All these themes will be scrutinised to see how the revolution and the internal situations have been constructed.

The Islamic revolution and the internal situation in Iran have been characterised by many events which were linked to violence and which did not allow an understanding of the revolution. For instance, in the early stages of the new Islamic Iran, the causes of the revolution were not stressed by the press. Instead, they focused on the violent incidents. This parallels Schlesinger's (1978) study of Northern Ireland where stressing on negativity leads to the decontextualisation of events. He argues that media coverage of Northern Ireland might lead many people to think that "terrorism" was the reason of the conflict rather than one of the symptoms.

The causes of the Iranian revolution, such as the alienation of the masses from their own religion, foreign domination, exploitation by the West of the oil industry, poverty and oppression by the Shah's secret police (SAVAK) were rarely stressed by the press. Just one news story written by James Allan in the Telegraph, correspondent in Tehran, in 1979 mentioned the poverty of the people. The story which was under the headline "the Shah's legacy of despair in Tin Can City", focused on the poverty of the poor people in South Tehran where people lived in tin houses with no essential services (Daily Telegraph, 20/7/79). In addition there was no reference by the press to the failure of "modernisation" programs that the Shah planned for the welfare of

the people and there was no mention of the criticisms of the religious leaders and other figures who considered these plans to be alienating the people from their culture and making the poor poorer and the rich richer.

What about the coverage of the Shah? The press did mention in its coverage the authoritarian nature of the Shah's regime which used its secret police to harass the opposition and headlines such as "Notorious reign of SAVAK ends" (Daily Telegraph, 12/11/1979), and "Shah's hated police axed" (Daily Mirror, 12/11/1979) were critical to the Shah particularly at the very beginning of the revolution. But at later stages the press started to compare the Islamic regime with the Shah's regime. The Sunday Times in an editorial under the title "Mercy and pity" was sympathetic to the Shah for two reasons. The first because he was ill and it stressed that he should not be deported from the United States upon the request of Iran. Secondly, it considered that the recent Islamic regime was no better than the Shah's and "...has conducted a merciless drive for vengeance with executions following very rough justice of religious tribunals". In the same editorial The Sunday Times attacked the religious leaders in Iran and called them "the Robespierres of Tehran" (Sunday Times, 2/12/1979, p.16).

In the process of the coverage of the revolution and internal affairs a frame of chaos and disintegration of the Iranian society was presented in the press. This chaos and disintegration was presented as having been caused by the Iranians who followed the line of Ayatollah Khomeini and who were in favour of an Islamic regime. These people were labelled as "mobs" which would infer apolitical identity for the people who had participated in the revolution and led it to victory. The headlines read "Khomeini followers break up protest rally" (The Guardian, 23/6/1979), "Iranian Mob Wrecks Meeting" (Daily Telegraph, 23/6/1979), "Mob Storms US Embassy" (Daily Telegraph, 4/11/1979), "Iran Mob Knock down Shah's family tomb" (Daily Express, 12/5/1980). These "mobs" became in one of the photographs a crowd expressing their "hatred of the Shah and the US" not their suffering of poverty and

political and economic deprivation under the Shah's regime. The caption of that photograph read "faces in a mob: Iranians shout their hatred of the Shah and US" (The Observer, 2/12/1979).

The chaos which was created after the revolution was explained clearly in the Guardian. It stated in an editorial that the chaos was linked to the Gulf War and the division between the two major sects in Islam; Shia Islam and Sunna Islam, (The Guardian, 24/9/1980, P.13). Disintegration was seen in the early years of the revolution through binary oppositions of Religion and Secularism, Islam and Democracy, Authoritarianism and Nationalism and Kurds and Iranians. The disintegration in some papers was seen not as a result of the existence of some groups who had been excluded from political power, but because of the revolution itself which offered nothing new to the country and people, and because of the inexperienced "Mullahs" who were running it. The Daily Telegraph in its editorial illustrates this point when it says: "the revolution is utterly bankrupt of any kind of new ideas. It can only offer the prospect of increasing disintegration under the dispensation of ignorant and in some cases vicious Mullahs who form the nucleus of the Islamic Republican Party (IRP)" (Daily Telegraph, 28/8/1980, p.14).

The disintegration was seen on the one hand through the clashes between the Islamic government which was "authoritarian" and its leaders "ignorant" and the Kurds who were attacked by the regime and forced to leave their villages "Mass deportation of Kurds in Iran" (The Guardian, 27/8/1982). On the other hand between the Islamic government and the "Mujahedeen" who were portrayed as people believing in democracy "Democratic front will oppose the power of the Mosque" (The Guardian, 7/3/1979) and as "Nationalists". "Authoritarian rule in Iran faces its first organised challenge from the heirs of nationalist Mossadeq" (The Guardian, 7/3/1979). These sort of oppositions to the Islamic regime were seen in a context of harassment and executions by the revolution "swift justice in new Iran" (Daily Mirror, 7/3/1979), "Iranian plotters executed" (The Guardian, 1/8/1980), "Thirteen

executed" (The Times, 1/8/1980), "11 leftists executed in Iran" (Daily Telegraph, 14/8/1981), "Iran hangs 16" (Daily Telegraph, 20/6/1983), "7,746 'executed' in Iran" (Daily Telegraph, 9/9/1983), "Iranians executed" (The Guardian, 29/3/1985) and "Khomeini critics held" (The Times, 2/6/1988) and so on. The press were critical to the attitude of the Iranian Government and covered these executions from a human rights perspective. Actually most of the information supplied about the executions was from the Iranian opposition who were based in the West and many of their press releases about this issue proved to be exaggerated (Morris, The Independent; Woollacott, The Guardian; 1990).

The tension between the government and opposition had created in the press another context which was the "power struggle" between those who were in favour of an Islamic Government and who were called "Hard-liners" and those who were in favour of a kind of democratic system and who were called "Moderates". The usages of these terms were misleading because they were used in later stages of the revolution in a different context, i.e. in the context of power struggle within the Islamic system. British journalists explained the use of this term as necessary for two reasons, lack of space, and to make it easy for the readers to understand the situation. Actually it did not help because it created more confusion and misunderstanding of the revolution because of its ambiguity (Mortimer; Wade, 1990).

The term "power struggle" appeared first in our sample in the Sunday Times in 1986 after a series of bomb explosions inside Iran during rumours about the bad health of Ayatollah Khomeini. The news story which was written by an unknown correspondent in Tehran mentioned under the headline "Bomb Campaign Points to Power Struggle in Iran", that the "...bombing could reflect an internal power struggle among those who want to take over the country..." (Sunday Times, 24/8/86). The same term in later years particularly in 1988 and 1989 took on another meaning and the power struggle between government and opposition became a power struggle among religious leaders themselves. News stories about the revolution

were framed in a context of violence, clashes, executions and power struggle which had projected the image of the revolution as chaotic and disintegrating and run by a regime which was "potentially unreliable" in the eyes of the West (Guardian, 11/11/88, p.19).

3. Islamic fundamentalism

Islam is the third Macro-theme covered in the British press (11%, see Table 19) and this Macro-theme includes themes on Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic punishments, women in Islam and Shiism.

After the fall of the Shah, the emergence of Islam in the social and political affairs of Iran within the country and its influence upon the Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere (Hunter, 1988) has created a new dimension in the politics of the Middle East and has made the West alert to any development which might threaten its interests in the area. "Islamic fundamentalism" is the ideological concept that has been associated with Islam and the Islamic revolution in the process of tensions and clashes between the West and Iran (as seen in the discussions of the first Macro-theme) and in the process of clashes during the Iran-Iraq war as well as in the portrayal of Ayatollah Khomeini. "Islamic fundamentalism" as a newly established concept in the literature of the West has attracted the Western media, and Western journalists have used the concept as a way of understanding the revolution and as a criterion for the selection of news about Iran. This has been confirmed by British journalists (e.g. Mortimer, Woollacott, Morris, Wade, 1990).

How have the British press constructed a particular ideological image of Islam?

The British press in their coverage of Islam have operated within the culture of the West which has acted as a criterion for the selection of news on Islam and, as discussed in the chapter on the theoretical frameworks, news has to resonate with the dominant social values in order to be selected. In that

sense images of Islam that are associated with codes of punishments, treatment of women as "chattels" and forcing them to wear veils, revenge, and anti-West feeling are all embedded in the Western cultural tradition (Sharabi, 1979; Said, 1979, 1980; Shaheen, 1979, 1984) and act as frameworks for the selection of the presentation of news on Islam. Here I tend to agree very much with the Hartmann et al (1974) study on racism in the British media, particularly on the role of the dominant social values in the selection of news on coloured minorities in Britain.

Linked to the dominant cultural value criteria of selection of news on Islam is ethnocentrism which fosters the belief that the Western culture has achieved more than the Islamic culture and is therefore superior. Studies on the coverage of Iran (Said, 1980; Dorman and Farhang, 1987; Vilanilam, 1989) have found that journalists during the coverage of Iran have been influenced by ethnocentrism in their view of Islamic culture. The way the press present Islam cannot escape the parameters of the Western cultural values which are reflected in the press language (the language used by the press to describe Islam and the revolution will be discussed in the final section - the labels).

Islam has been presented in the coverage as a religion of fundamentalism, fanaticism, extremism and terrorism during the different stages of the revolution. At the early stages of the revolution the press focused on the role of "Islamic fundamentalism" in controlling the country by tightening its power "Mosque tightens its grip on Iran" (The Guardian, 14/8/1981) and in the use of force "Khomeini defends the sword" (Daily Telegraph, 10/9/1981) against the opposition members to whom the Islamic codes of punishments were applied, "Iran hangs 16" (Daily Telegraph, 20/6/1983) and against other individuals who had violated the Islamic rules "Revenge is swift on the rapists of Iran" (Daily Mail, 7/3/1979) and "thief's hand cut off in Iran" (Daily Telegraph, 28/4/1981).

"Islamic fundamentalism" was also represented in the press by Islamic practices all over Iran such as praying, the veil,

commemorating the death of Imam Hussein (he was one of the Shia twelve Imams or leaders) in the streets of Tehran and martyrdom. Martyrdom was one of the Islamic concepts that was stereotyped in the press. It was described as a "collective psyche" within the majority of the people. The Observer's correspondent Ian Mather presented this issue in a fictional manner when he wrote under the headline "Iran's 36 million martyrs" that: "...martyrdom has an honoured - some would say obsessive - place in the Shia Muslims collective psyche, and most Iranians spend Thursday and Friday contemplating it" (The Observer, 2/12/1979).

Another aspect of "Islamic fundamentalism" highlighted in the British press was the theme of women and the veil. Women were seen as forced to wear the "chaddor" and not having the rights that men could have in an Islamic society. They were shown in photographs in groups wearing "chaddor" which signified the suppression of individuality of women who were used by the men. The theme of women and veil was not approached by the press from religious and cultural perspectives, it was approached from a Western perspective which sees the veil as medieval and incompatible the freedom of women.

The British press coverage of the theme of women and the veil was very much seen in the context of clashes between two sets of values, the Western values and the Islamic values. What happened in 1984 in the Bank Melli of Iran in London was an example of these clashes between the two cultures.

The Bank asked all its female staff to cover their heads and wear long skirts and long sleeves. Most of the female staff who were British refused to do so and the news stories in the press started from there. The coverage of this issue shed some light, as it will be shown in the analysis of the Rushdie affair in the next chapter, on the cultural clashes between two different sets of cultural values. The press which covered that issue were supportive to the women who defied the decision. A "populist discourse" (Hansen and Murdock, 1985) was observed which organised binary oppositions in the form of "us" and "them" the "West" and

"Islam" was observed in the coverage of the popular press. The issue was noted in headlines appearing in both quality and popular press and also was seen in one editorial in the Sun and in two cartoons, one in the Daily Mail, the other in the Daily Mirror. In some of the headlines the press presented the tension between the staff and the people who gave orders for a cover-up in a subtle way: "women at Iranian bank in city defy 'cover-up' order" (Daily Telegraph, 9/5/1984), "Iranians' modesty rule ignored by bank staff" (The Guardian, 9/5/1984). In other headlines in the popular newspapers the press were culturally motivated: "Bank women defy Khomeini" (Daily Mail, 9/5/1984), "No Yashmak please, we're British!" (Daily Mail, 9/5/84), "No cover-up! Bank women defy the Ayatollah" (Daily Mirror, 9/5/1984), "It's knickers to the Ayatollah" and "medieval Cover-up angers bank girls" (The Sun, 9/5/1984).

The Sun in its editorial "Bully, beware", criticised Ayatollah Khomeini for his order and considered the issue as "... no veiled threat" to the culture and tradition of Britain, and warned him that "British women do not Bully easily" (The Sun, 9/5/84, P.8). The cartoons published on the issue constructed ideological images of Islam in their presentation. For instance the one that was published in the Daily Mirror signified two levels. The first one was the imposing of veil on Woman staff (even on the one who tried to rob the bank in the cartoon). The second level was the introduction of Islamic punishment (on the same woman robber by an Arab wearing traditional Arab clothes with his ready sword to cut the robber's hand). The caption of this cartoon stated "... and all the bank robbers will get their hands chopped off" (Daily Mirror 9/5/1984, P.13).

The second cartoon was published in the Daily Mail (The Daily Mail, 9/5/1984, p.15). It signified the issue of veil through the historical stereotypes of Islam and Arabs by bringing the camels into focus which are normally associated in the West with backwardness (Shaheen, 1979).

From this analysis one observes that an ideological image

of Islam was constructed in the coverage of the Macro-theme "Islamic fundamentalism". The selection of the themes was in accordance with the dominant social values of the West and particularly Britain.

4. Iran-Iraq War and Related Affairs

This Macro-theme is the fourth most frequently observed in the coverage of Iran 11% (see table 19). The press followed this Macro-theme from the outbreak of the war in 1980 until Iran accepted UN resolution 598 in 1988.

But how was news about the Iran-Iraq war constructed?

British journalists argue that news has to be important in order to be selected and often importance was based on a variety of criteria, such as the interest of the country, the social, political and cultural identifications with the public. In other words, news is selected when it has a strong British or Western angle (Wade, DT; Woollacott, G; Mortimer, FT; Morris, I; Davis, DM; 1990). The Iran-Iraq war and other Macro-themes under discussion are the kind of news that would be selected by journalists because of their impact on the West. Not everything related to the Iran-Iraq war would be selected because not every development of the war had implications for the West as Marie Colvin, The Sunday Times Middle East correspondent, argued (Colvin, ST, 1990).

Two important aspects of the war were the main focus for the press; the oil supply to the West, where the press reflected the official versions and the "holy war" discourse which was championed by "Islamic fundamentalism" and which might lead to the destabilisation of the Middle East.

At the start of the war the bombardment of the oil refineries in both countries, Iran and Iraq, was dramatised and highlighted along with the consequent shortage of oil supply to the West, particularly with reference to the oil coming from the Iranian Abadan refinery. Officials in Britain took up the issue and started defining the implications of the shortages of oil for

Britain. The press conveyed the officials' versions of this problem because it concerned all sections of British society. Eldon Griffiths, an MP and chairman of the British-Iranian parliamentary group, at the outbreak of the war warned in an article published in the Daily Express that the war may well sabotage "The Thatcher government's efforts to contain inflation ...", and that "... fuel prices would steeply rise. Unemployment could be pushed higher, interest rates would stay sky high, spending cuts could be still further sharpened ...". For Griffiths these factors, among others, meant that the Western countries must come together to stop this war (Daily Express, 24/9/80, p.9).

The Western interest to stop the war for the sake of the free flow of oil to the West was also reflected in the press. The Guardian, The Daily Express and the Daily Mirror in their editorials focused on the importance of oil to the West and the role that is played by the International community through the UN to stop it (The Guardian, The Daily Express, The Daily Mirror, 24/9/80).

The UN did not appear to any great extent in the coverage until 1987 after it issued resolution 598 which led to the negotiations between Iran and Iraq after the Iranian acceptance of the resolution. Before that resolution the press covered a few UN reports on the PoWs in both countries and the Iraqi use of chemical weapons against the Iranians.

The second important aspect of the coverage of the Iran-Iraq war was the concept of the "holy war". The war was framed in a context of "holy war" waged by Ayatollah Khomeini "Ayatollah Khomeini's holy war" and the "mullahs" in Iran. The war might destabilise the Middle East and damage the interests of the West and pro-Western regimes in the area.

In accordance with the context of "holy war", images of fundamentalism and fanaticism were highlighted in the press in two ways. The first was the portrayal of the Iranian leaders as "blood thirsty" and "war loving" leaders who looked for a chance to establish the "Greater Iran". The second was the portrayal of the

Iranian soldiers "Baseij" and "Pasdaran" who acted with "zeal" and blindly offered to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their leaders and their "fundamentalist" symbols. In relation to the Iranian sacrifices the press turned their attention to the question of "martyrdom" and the peculiarity of this concept in Islam.

The Iran-Iraq war and its related affairs was mostly seen in the context of oil and "holy war" because of the criteria of selection followed by the press, whereas the Iranian children who were the victims of the Iraqi bombardment of Iran did not earn great attention from the press.

5. Western Hostages in Tehran and Beirut

This Macro-theme is the fifth most prominent one among the other Macro-themes 11% (see table 19). It deals mostly with the American hostages in Tehran and the Western hostages in Beirut particularly the British ones.

The issue of Western hostages in Tehran and Beirut is one of the most complex themes in the coverage of Iran. This particular Macro-theme tells about the forces at work, especially when coverage deals with the conflict between the West and Iran over the ten year period.

The occupation of the US embassy in Tehran by Iranian students in 1979 and the holding the American hostages for 444 days was the West's first direct confrontation with Iran (Roy, 1989). The US administration used that incident to discredit Iran and the revolution (Morris, The Independent, 1990) by depoliticising the issue and attacking the Iranian leadership and people. Images of "mobs" taking over the embassy inferred an apolitical identity of the people and certain images of "Islamic fundamentalism" were highlighted by the press. The US hostages theme was strong evidence of the press dependence on Western official sources, particularly the American sources who acted as the "primary definers" (Hall et al, 1978) during the development of the incident. Edward Said (1980) reached similar results in his

analysis of the situation of US hostages in Tehran in the American press. He found that the American media depended on the officials' versions which attacked Islam and that the media conveyed those versions uncritically.

The British press highlighted the issue of hostages in two ways; first by reflecting the British official angle which was the "utmost support" of the British government for US stand. That was covered in headlines such as "Britain pledges full support to US over hostages" (The Times, 15/4/1980), "Helping hand from Maggie" (The Sun, 15/4/1980), and "100pc - Maggie's pledge to US" (Daily Mail, 15/4/1980). Second, by reflecting a European official line to apply sanctions against Iran in order to pressurize her to release the hostages, because the use of force to free the hostages "... will endanger thousands of Europeans working in Iran" (Daily Mirror 15/4/1980). The European policy to impose economic sanctions on Iran was dominant in the press coverage. The press took a European line which favoured economic sanctions through the UN rather than an American line which favoured a military action against Iran.

This illustrates that in times of Western political consensus towards Iran the British press follow that consensus in their coverage and when there is a break in that consensus the press favour European consensus, and again when a European consensus is broken the press follow a British dimension. This is the result, as seen in chapter 3, of the "ideological contestation" (Schudson, 1989) or the division of official sources vis-a-vis issues of common interest. The Watergate issue is a case in point where the competing institutions and parties belonging to different bases of power and interest were using the press (Epstein, 1975; Lang and Lang, 1984).

To bring more evidence for this argument one has to bring the example of the coverage of the Western hostages in Beirut. For some time there was consensus in the West regarding all Western hostages of whatever nationality and this was reflected in the British press. But when the United States got some of their

hostages out to freedom because of what was called "Irangate", and when the French did the same for all its nationals held in Lebanon, the press followed a European line first than a British line.

At this stage let us examine the "Irangate" theme. The leak of the information to the Western media that the United States had been sending arms to Iran in return for some of the American hostages since 1985 had created a tide of criticism within the Western British media. The Daily Telegraph in its editorial "In the best interest" defended the right of the public to know about the American secret deal with Iran. The editorial considered the American deal as "contrary to a policy the world has been led to expect" (The Daily Telegraph, 13/11/1986, p.12). Irangate" had created a rift between the United States and its European allies which was reflected in the British press in a fashion critical to the US.

The deal that the French struck to release their remaining hostages in Lebanon resulted in a critical attitude from the British press against another Western country. The press followed a British government line when the policy of "no deals with terrorists" was violated by the French (The Guardian, 6/5/1988), an action which could hamper the release of the British hostages. The Daily Mail took a line similar to the Guardian and considered that the French breakaway from a common Western front against terrorism "... undermines the attempt by Western countries to create a common front with the common message that with terrorists there are no deals". The Daily Mail mentioned that the French attitude was in contrast with the attitude of Mrs. Thatcher and the family of the British hostage Terry Waite (Daily Mail 6/5/1988). The Sun also took a similar line and considered that the French deal was against the Venice summit declaration of "no concessions to terrorists", and emphasised that this deal had "... dashed Britain's hopes of securing the release of Terry Waite and TV journalist John MacCarthy". The Sun praised Mrs. Thatcher by saying "Thank God Britain has in Mrs. Thatcher a leader who will never bow to terrorists" (The Sun, 6/5/1988).

The theme of British hostages in Beirut was judged as significant news by most journalists interviewed for this study. The cultural resonance of this theme was very strong to the extent that many issues which were not directly related to the hostages e.g. diplomatic relationship between Britain and Tehran and factional fighting in Lebanon were highlighted from the angle of British hostages in Beirut. News stories under the headlines; "Waite will be freed if Tehran and London heal rift" (The Guardian, 22/8/1988) and "Shiite peace accord raises hopes for hostages" (The Guardian, 31/1/1989), illustrate this point. Person orientation coverage of the British hostages was notable in the press because people in Britain could relate and identify with Terry Waite and John MacCarthy because they were British persons belonging to the cultural values system of British society.

Along with the coverage of the British hostages and the other Western hostages in Beirut, images of "terrorism" and "fundamentalism" were reinforced by the portrayal of the "captors" who were pro-Iranian "fanatics" acting on behalf of Iran in order to unfreeze her assets in Western banks. Other reasons behind the kidnapping, such as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the Western intervention through the multinational forces, the Lebanese prisoners in Israel were ignored by the British press. Therefore, a decontextualisation of the coverage of the theme of Western hostages was created as the press did not provide enough background information. Journalists argue that because of space and time limitations, news is not expected to cover events in length. They are aware that it might lead to simplification of the issues involved. Obviously, one cannot expect journalists to be academics or historians analysing the different factors involved in an event. The nature of the production of daily news does not allow them to go deeply into a story, but one can question why one particular version of reality is emphasised and another version is ignored. Why are some news stories presented in a certain context which gives the impression that this is "reality"? Here one cannot escape the specific country's national interests in selecting and

presenting news as is argued in the investigation of some of the Macro-themes e.g. The West and Iran and Iran-Iraq war.

To summarise the treatment of this Macro-theme in the British press, the analysis has shown that the "Western hostages in Tehran and Beirut" Macro-theme had been viewed from an official Western angle. But when the Western political consensus was broken the press followed the British angle. The British angle was highlighted in the coverage of the case of the British hostages in Beirut and the press gave way to simplification of the issue.

6. Ayatollah Khomeini

This Macro-theme is the sixth most prominent among the Macro-themes 6% (see table 19). Ayatollah Khomeini was the Iranian personality most frequently reported in the British press in the decade. From the moment he went back to Iran in February 1979 until his death on the fourth of June 1989 he was the centre of attention in most issues relating to Iran that were covered and discussed by the press.

An ideological image of Ayatollah Khomeini was constructed in the British newspapers. His image stemmed from two forms of ideology; the journalistic professional value and the journalists view of Iran and their view of Ayatollah Khomeini. The first form acknowledges the fact that news is about important personalities. Galtung and Ruge (1973) argue that the more the event is viewed in personal behaviour of certain individual, the more likely to become news. This person orientation news gives certain meaning to the issue and helps the readers in social identification. Some British journalists argue that people in Britain could identify with Ayatollah Khomeini more than the President of Yemen because Ayatollah Khomeini was considered a point of recognition of "Islamic fundamentalism" (Mortimer, FT; Wade, DT; Davis, DM; Ellison, DE; 1990).

The second form which is that of the journalists' view of Iran, plays an important role in constructing the image of

Ayatollah Khomeini. Most journalists share the view that Iran is an important country because of its Islamic form of political structure which is based on "Shiite" ideology and guided by the Islamic clergy. This ideology is linked in the press to "Islamic fundamentalism" in Iran and the World which lead to a "new surge of Islam, a period of Islamic expansionism" as it was exaggeratedly expressed by The Telegraph foreign editor (Nigel Wade, 1990). To journalists, "Islamic fundamentalism" was emphasised and reinforced by Ayatollah Khomeini who was harassing the opposition, applying the Islamic codes of punishment, forcing women to wear the headcover, exporting his revolution, threatening the West and involving himself and his followers in "holy war" with Iraq. This sort of ideology along with journalistic professional values influences the way the press select and present news about Ayatollah Khomeini.

Ayatollah Khomeini was associated with blood and violence, threat, war, fundamentalism, fanaticism and terrorism. Khomeini's association with blood and violence was seen in two ways. The first was at the early stages of the revolution when killings were taking place and many efforts were needed by his followers to sustain "the Ayatollah's blood revolution". Papers like the Daily Mail considered "... the triumph of the Ayatollah in Iran can only lead to bloodshed, the breakdown of the economy, impoverishment, and social, religious and racial division". The paper continued its analysis with a clear anti-Khomeini stance that "the Ayatollah Khomeini is a Shi'ite extremist. He believes the spirit of Allah moves through his mobs and so gives divine authority to his actions" (Daily Mail, 8/2/1979). The Guardian in an analysis written by David Hirst in 1980 under the title "the megalomaniac pitted against the zealot" criticized both Iraq and Iran and accused the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini as having a "Stalinist nature" (The Guardian, 24/9/1980, p.13). The second view of the Ayatollah's association with violence arose when "Ayatollah's students" and "Ayatollah's mobs" occupied the US embassy in Tehran and held the Americans inside for 444 days.

In the sequence of events in the Iran-Iraq war the Ayatollah had appeared in a context of threat to the West as well as to the Arab countries which supported Iraq. The Ayatollah was portrayed as "evil", threatening the West's oil and as "mad" and "crazy" (Daily Mail 24/9/1980, and 10/8/1987).

Similar to this finding, Al-Banna (1982) in his analysis of the coverage of the Middle East in the Western media found that Ayatollah Khomeini was associated, like some Arab leaders e.g. Qadafi, Arafat, and Al-Assad, with oil, terrorism and insanity. He was portrayed as a controller of the flow of oil attempting to bring the Western "civilization to its knees" (Al-Banna, 1982, p.172).

Ayatollah Khomeini had also been associated with "Islamic fundamentalism" and "fanaticism". He gave impetus to the codes of Islamic punishment which were viewed as cruel in the West and he forced women to wear the veil and limit their role in society. The Daily Telegraph describes the women issue under Islamic law as the following; "under the Ayatollah's rule [women's role] has been relegated to a subsidiary one in that they have been barred from many jobs. And their main contribution has been to provide children for the revolution" (Daily Telegraph, 31/11/1989, p.10).

The theme of Islamic fundamentalism appeared in the press with the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini when he first gave it substance in Iran and where "suicidal fanatics have brought terror to Lebanon" under the influence of the Ayatollah (Daily Express, 18/8/84). The press have ever since employed the term when they want to describe any act of Islamic behaviour related to Shi'ism and Iran or Muslims supporting Iran.

Ayatollah Khomeini came to be represented in the press as a personality with extreme zeal and an example of persons who go to extremes. In Britain this image was so familiar that Arthur Scargill, the Marxist pit leader, (facing the reality that the miners might not vote for industrial action) was shown in a cartoon dressed in a black robe and black turban. The caption of this cartoon stated "The Ayatollah Scargill may not be able to fight his

holy war against Maggie after all!" (Sunday Express, 2/12/1979, p.1). The image of Scargill and the language of the caption signifies that Ayatollah Khomeini became a symbol of fanaticism in the West.

Other images of Ayatollah Khomeini have been created by words like "extremist", "Shi'ite", "evil leadership", "ruler", "blood thirsty", "leader", "aggressive" and "Dracula" (see Table 20).

As it is shown the image of Ayatollah Khomeini was ideologically constructed in many negative forms.

7. Opposition and the Iranian Islamic System

This Macro-theme is the seventh most frequent among the Macro-themes observed in the coverage of Iran 4% (see table 19). It covers mostly the Iranian opposition to the Islamic government in Iran. News about the Iraqi opposition which was based in Iran after being expelled by the Iraqi regime since the start of the Iran-Iraq war has been noted in the coverage but with no great interest from the press.

Several reasons are stated for why the Iranian opposition received attention by the press and why they were legitimised and defined in a positive context. The first reason is the communication activities pursued by the Iranian opposition in the West. Because they could offer "information", at a time of difficult access to Iran, journalists depended on their versions of events including themselves and about other events taking place in Iran. As it is learned from the literature review (chapter 3), the Iranian opposition sources realise the importance of the news media and try to compete with other sources to project certain ideological views on some issues that involve their organisation "Mujahedeen Khaleq" (people's strugglers). Journalists in London find their sources useful for the coverage of Iran because they are easy to reach, they know the culture of the country, and they know the Farsi language which very few British journalists have managed

to learn. It has been found, from the interviews with journalists, that there was many interactions between the British journalists and the Iranian opposition sources in the ten year period.

The second reason for the legitimisation of the Iranian opposition in the press is the presence of Iranian experts in the West. Those experts are mostly ex-politicians and journalists working for the Western media in Paris and London and most of them are opposed to the Islamic regime (Akhater, 1990). When journalists were asked to name these experts who are often consulted and asked to analyse the situation for the Western media, few names were mentioned. The most important experts among them were the Iranian ex-President Bani Sader, the journalist Amir Taheri who wrote several books on "Islamic fundamentalism" and Iran, and the journalist Hazhir Teimaurian who worked for the Times in London. Those experts are consulted regularly even though journalists know that they try to draw an ideological image of Iran and its leaders.

The third reason for the attention given to the opposition parties, the most important one, is the dichotomy discussed by Herman and Chomsky (1988) in media coverage of dissident groups and which was presented in the discussion of the Iranian actors earlier in this chapter. Herman and Chomsky (1988) gave the example of dissident groups in Turkey and Poland. They demonstrated a sharp contrast between the American media definition of the Turkish opposition as unworthy victim and the Polish opposition to the Polish government as worthy victims who deserve attention. The same argument can have similarities in the portrayal of the Iranian opposition and, in contrast to the Iraqi opposition. The Iranian Opposition was treated by the press as worthy victim. They have been identified since 1979 as "democratic" groups who believed that the revolution was "... in danger of going away" that it might be in the hands of the "mullahs" who form an "authoritarian rule ..." in Iran (The Guardian 7/3/79). The press presented the Iranian opposition and the Islamic authority in Iran in a form of binary oppositions. The

positive value of the opposition was presented and the negative values of Islam were presented. The opposition members were seen to be carrying the values of "democracy", "liberalism", "nationalism" and the West could identify with these values. The Islamic regime represented the values of "Islamic fundamentalism", "Authoritarian rule", and a "conservative ultra-religious path". Another frame in which the opposition was presented was the execution process that was followed by the Islamic government to "eliminate" the opposition. News about the hanging of "leftists" and the killing of "Kurds" were all predominant in the coverage of the opposition.

Generally the Iranian opposition, mainly "Mujahedeen Khalq", were constructed in three political frames:

1. They were seen as excluded from the political future of Iran after the revolution when the "mullahs" took control of the country.
2. They were executed and jailed for their political ideology and not for their military attacks against the Iranian troops.
3. They were labelled in positive political terms such as "liberals", "exile", "dissident" and in their own political names "Mujahedeen" (strugglers) and "Fedayeen" (fighters).

Because of political interest the West identifies with the Iranian opposition who opposed the Iranian Islamic regime which was threatening the West. The press, as has been demonstrated, defined them as worthy victims who should be significant in the coverage of Iran.

In sharp contrast to the Iranian opposition was the treatment of the Iraqi opposition in the press. The Iraqi opposition were expelled from Iraq at the start of the Iran-Iraq war (an estimated of half a million Iraqi refugees in Iran (Hushanji, 1990)). The Iraqi opposition had suffered a great deal of torture, political imprisonment and executions and many of them had been forced out of their homes and exiled. Little political attention to their situation was focused on by the press. They were not portrayed as worthy victims, but were mainly defined as a

refugee problem which ignored any sense of political cause. The human interest angle was the main frame in which the press saw the Iraqi opposition.

The dichotomous treatment of the Iranian opposition and the Iraqi opposition by the press is a helpful approach to understanding the way the press construct opposition groups in Third World countries.

8. Iran and the Arab Countries

This Macro-theme is the eighth most frequent among the Macro-themes observed in the coverage of Iran in a decade, 4%. It includes the coverage of the relationship between Iran and the Arab countries particularly the Gulf countries and Syria. The dominant perception that Iran was threatening the West's oil and trying to destabilise the Middle East by its "brand of Islamic fundamentalism" as seen in some of the discussions of other Macro-themes is valid as a framework in which news items about Iran and the Gulf States are selected and presented. Iran was presented as a "threat" to the Gulf governments particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The "threat" discourse in the press was seen in two ways. The first is the threat to the internal security of those countries where Iran encourages its people and its followers to destabilise them e.g. the Mecca incident in the Summer of 1987 where 400 Iranian pilgrims were killed by Saudi police. The second threat was to the Saudi and Kuwaiti oil e.g. the Iranian speed boats attacks on Kuwait tankers in 1986 and 1987. The Iran-Iraq war reinforced this perception particularly when the Gulf countries and some other Arab countries e.g. Egypt and Jordan sided with Iraq against Iran and supplied Iraq with money and military aid. The press was not critical to the Arab countries that supported Iraq because they were threatened by the Iranian "holy war" (Daily Telegraph, 24/9/85).

The Iranian-Syrian relationship was viewed as a strong

one, in spite of the ideological differences between the two countries. The press was critical to this relationship because the activities of both were defined as "state-sponsored terrorism", like Libya and North Korea, and were harming the interests of the West in the Middle East e.g. oil, and Western hostages in Beirut.

Iran was defined as a threat to the Arab countries and their support to Iraq was seen as an attempt to quell that threat, whereas the press was critical of the relationship between Syria and Iran because they both implied "state-sponsored terrorism".

9. Terrorism and the Export of the Revolution

This Macro-theme is the ninth most frequent among the Macro-themes, 3%. It covers the interrelated themes of terrorism and the export of the Islamic revolution to the Arab countries, particularly to Lebanon where some Islamic movements e.g. "Hezbollah" (party of God) have a strong relationship with Iran.

In line with other images of Iran seen in the discussions of some of the Macro-themes, Iran was defined as a "state-sponsored terrorism" which organised and carried out attacks directly and indirectly against military and civilian targets both Western and Arab. In the coverage of terrorism an official perspective was advanced by the Western leaders e.g. ex-President Ronald Reagan and Mrs. Margaret Thatcher and others. Because of their high positions the media granted their versions a priority and they dominated the definition of this controversial theme which has other definitions from a non-official perspective e.g. "alternative" and "oppositional" (Schlesinger et al, 1983). Schlesinger et al (1983) explained that this official perspective is put forward by the people who speak for a state and is

> "... elaborated by certain kinds of intellectual - notably counter-insurgency theorists, academics and journalists - who are consciously engaged in waging the propaganda 'war against terrorism'. They provide what may be perceived as independent

support in the struggle to win public opinion".

Schlesinger et al argue later on that one of the concepts of the official perspective is the stress on the criminality of terrorism rather than its context in the political arena. In other words the official perspective de-politicises terrorism by placing it in the "violent society syndrome" (Schlesinger et al, 1983, pp.1-6).

The British press, particularly those to the right of centre, conveyed uncritically the official definitions of terrorism and Iran became synonymous with "state-sponsored terrorism" as ex-President Reagan described it in 1984 after the second attack on the US embassy in East Beirut. According to the official view Iran became like Libya, North Korea and Syria in "conceiving, planning, organising and carrying out terrorist attacks" (Daily Telegraph, 21/9/1989, p.18).

After another incident in the same year when two American hostages were killed after the hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner, the press conveyed another aspect of the official perspective which was the right of the state involved to bring "terrorists" to trial (Schlesinger et al, 1983). The Times in its editorial highlighted the involvement of Iran in the hijack and echoed the officials' view that "Terrorists should be punished" (The Times, 11/12/1984, p.17). The Daily Express mentioned as well the suspicions of Iranian involvement and was sympathetic to the ".. US soldiers [who] have suffered from these fanatics ..." and supported the right to bring the hijackers to justice when it mentioned "Reagan administration is right for showing that it will no longer tolerate them" (The Daily Express, 11/12/1984 p.8).

Exporting the revolution is a theme strongly linked to terrorism and fundamentalism. It was seen mostly through the actions (violence, bombings, hijacking) of the Hezbollah (party of God) in Lebanon. As it is learned from the coverage of

Northern Ireland, the British press tend in the coverage of the Islamic movements in Lebanon to "... simplify violent incidents, to avoid historical background, to concentrate on human-interest stories and rely heavily on official versions" (Schlesinger et al, 1983, p.37) The whole coverage shows Hezbollah in Lebanon as a pro-Iranian movement helping the Iranians " ... to build a greater Iran" (Daily Telegraph, 21/9/1984) and bringing " ... terror to Lebanon" by the "suicide fanatics" (Daily Express, 18/2/1984), trying to establish with the help of the Iranians " ... the world's second Islamic republic on the shores of the Mediterranean" which would " ... fan the flames of Moslem fanaticism in Egypt as well as in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states" (Daily Telegraph, 2/6/1988) and holding the Western hostages in Beirut. The role of the United States in Lebanon in supporting pro-West elites, the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon, and the Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails were all ignored by the press and, as in the case of Northern Ireland there was focus on the results of terrorism rather than the reasons for it.

Terrorism in the coverage of Iran was decontextualised and the export of the revolution was seen as merely an extension of "fundamentalist" Iran.

10. The Shah and his Monarchy

This Macro-theme is the tenth most frequently found among the other Macro-themes, 3% (see table 19). It includes news about the Shah or matters related to him up until 1987. Different angles of approach were observed in the coverage of the Shah and his monarchy.

At the early stage of the victory of the revolution the press took a critical view of the Shah's regime, particularly his secret police, SAVAK, which was responsible for many "crimes" against the Iranian people. News stories of the torture of political prisoners emerged and political activists were quoted about their sufferings during the reign of the

Shah.

This sort of critical coverage of the Shah's regime, contrary to the press coverage of his regime before the revolution which was not critical (Dorman and Farhang, 1987), was to change again after the take over of the US embassy by Iranian students, which was seen in the context of the misconduct of the new regime and the "Robespierres of Tehran" who "conducted a merciless drive for vengeance of religious tribunals" and encouraged people to kidnap "innocent Americans" in Tehran (Sunday Times, 2/12/1979). In the same editorial the Sunday Times defended the Shah and considered him "not a personal criminal like Bokassa or Amin".

The human-interest angle was the frame in which the Shah was seen during his illness in 1980 and 1981. He was seen as a sick man who deserved sympathy and a place to settle as he kept moving from one country to another so as not to cause embarrassment to foreign governments, particularly the United States administration because of the extradition demand from the Iranian government.

After the Shah's death in Egypt news was focused on his supporters and his family. The treatment of the Shah's supporters, who were mainly of his own sect, the Baha'i and monarchists and who believed in the restoration of the Shah's monarchy through his eldest son Reza, was similar to the treatment of the other opposition groups such as "Mujahedeen" and the "Kurds". They were seen as harassed and persecuted by the Islamic regime "Baha'i hanged" (The Guardian, 20/6/1983).

The Shah's son Reza was the focus of attention of the Daily Mail in 1986 and also in The Times. He was defined as a legitimate Shah believing in democracy for the future of Iran. The legitimation of the Shah's son cannot be isolated from the legitimation process of the opposition groups who believe in democracy for Iran and which the press use as legitimate

sources as it is argued earlier in this chapter.

11. Iran and the USSR

This Macro-theme is the one 1% (see Table 19) least observed in the coverage of Iran in a decade. This Macro-theme was covered mostly in the context of the cold war ideology that governed the relationship between the West and East after World War II. The Western fear, discussed in the first Macro-theme the "West and Iran", that Iran might incline to the Soviet Union in 1979 represented the first attention given by the press to the Iran-Soviet relationship and the ways in which it might affect the West.

When the Iran-Iraq war broke out, the press echoed the attitude of the West's policy towards the Gulf which was centred on keeping the Soviet Union out of the conflict because it might threaten the oil supplies to Western nations if it gained a foothold in an area which represented a "growing strategic interest" (The Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Express, 24/9/1980). In 1987 when Kuwait asked the Soviet Union to escort some Kuwaiti tankers in the Gulf as protection against the Iranian threat, the press feared that the Eastern bloc could take over the West's role in protecting shipping in the Gulf. The Daily Express in its editorial "The West's Gulf role" argued that it was "important for Kuwait not to let the Soviets escort their ships" (Daily Express, 17/6/87).

In the same way the press focused on the direct relationship between Iran and the Soviet Union. The improvement of the relationship between the two countries after the official visit by the Soviet Foreign Minister Sheverdnadze to Iran was viewed as a political and economic success for the Soviets because they could take over the business contracts for the re-construction of Iran after the war with Iraq.

Western ideology in relation to the Soviet Union can be

seen to underlie much of the press coverage which dealt with the relationship of the USSR and Iran.

The analyses of the macro-themes have highlighted many of the ideological bases for their treatment in the British press and have highlighted the development of a Western image of Iran and its leading personalities. Next section will deal with the examination of the use of language in describing the Iranians and their actions.

Labels

This is the fourth concrete example showing an essential dimension in the press construction of reality in the process of producing news about Iran in the first decade of the revolution. The representation of reality about Iran is often stereo-typed as it is shown in the analysis of most of the Macro-themes. This representation is apparent in the way the press frame news to give it a particular interpretation which goes in line with the already perceived image of the revolution and Islam. It does not mean that the press conspire and willingly distort news about Iran. It is a more complex process, a combination of several factors; the Western view of Iran and Islam (as seen in chapter 2) which acts as a macro-explanation; interaction between the source of news and the journalists; journalists' views about Iran, and the professional ideologies which govern the final process of news production.

The construction of reality about Iran includes the use of particular words expressed by "the systems and forms of classification used to present the central processes and participants" (Trew, 1979, p.145). These are involved in creating an ideological image of Islam and the revolution. The "systems and forms of classification" of words cannot be isolated from the factors contributing, as discussed earlier,

to the general presentation of Iran in a final package in the news.

The interaction between the journalists and the sources of news is one explanation for the press use of certain labels which, for the most part, convey a negative image (see Table 20). Journalists in their contacts with sources tend in some cases to pick up words used by the sources to define some aspects of the revolution. Often these words are embedded in direct and indirect quotations. For instance, the word "Mob" was used by some Western leaders particularly American officials to describe the Iranian students who stormed the American embassy in Tehran in 1979. In the identification and subsequent frequency rating the word "Mob" accounted for 5% of the label appearances in the press coverage of Iran (see table 20). The word appeared in both the quality and popular press in their coverage of the issue (Daily Telegraph, Daily Express, and The Sun, 5/11/1979).

The argument that interaction of journalists and sources is a basis for the emergence of labels can also be applied to strong negative words like "fundamentalist" which was the most prominent word (15%) used by the press in coverage of Iran, "threat" (13%), "Terrorist" (13%), "Hostage taker" (11%), "Fanatic" (11%). These words were observed in different contexts in the coverage of the revolution throughout the decade.

Some of these words, as observed in the coding of headlines and leads, were attributed to different Western leaders and officials on several occasions. For instance President Carter in his speech to the Congress in 1980 mentioned "fundamentalist Iran" which acted as a "threat" to the region (The Times, 25/1/1980). President Reagan told Tennessee reporters in 1987 that Iran was the "villain of the piece" in the Persian Gulf (Daily Telegraph, 21/5/1987). Mrs. Thatcher was quoted pointing out her policy in a press conference in 1988 about the Western hostages in Beirut. She

emphasised the official policy of refusing to "deal with terrorists" (The Guardian, 6/5/1988). Also French officials were quoted objecting any negotiations with pro-Iranian "terrorists" in Lebanon (The Guardian, 6/5/1988).

These sort of officials' versions were conveyed uncritically by the press. Journalists cannot ignore these negative labels about Iran because they were said by important sources whose statements became news. This state of coverage cannot be isolated from the macro-explanations (explained in chapter 3) where the media follow the official line and adopt a deferential coverage.

Interestingly enough, the journalists through their interaction with the sources of news, particularly the Iranian opposition sources and the Iranian and Western experts, tend to portray the Iranian opposition in a positive light by using the actual names used by the opposition to describe themselves. So they are mostly described by the press as "Mujahedeen" (Strugglers) and "Fedayeen" (fighters). Mujahedeen and Fedayeen are the second most prominent labels observed in the coverage of Iran (see Table 20). Also used are the words "Exile" and "Dissident" in accordance with the opposition's political status in the West ("Exile and Dissident" are the seventh most prominent labels 11% used to describe the Iranians).

Labels	N	% of items
Fundamentalist	35	15
Mujahedeen/Fedayeen	31	13
Threat	30	13
Terrorist	28	12
Hostage taker/Kidnapper/Captor	26	11
Regime	26	11
Exile/Dissident	25	11
Fanatic	25	11
Revolutionary	24	10
Troops/Forces	18	8
Shiite	17	7
Militant	17	7
Leader	16	7
Extremist	15	6
Moderate/Pragmatic	14	6
Radical	14	6
Blood thirsty	11	5
Death squad/Firing squad	11	5
Mob/Thug	11	5
Hard-liner	9	4
Zealot	8	3
Guerilla	8	3
Ruler	5	2
Villain	5	2
Medieval	4	2
Mad mullah/Crazy mullah	3	1
Cruel/Merciless	3	1
Commandos	3	1
Notorious	3	1
Authoritarian	2	1
Others (Dracula, Facist)	2	1
Savage/Brutal	2	1
Evil leadership	1	<1
Warlord	1	<1
Nasty	1	<1
War-loving	1	<1
Aggressive	1	<1
Total	456	192

Table 20 shows the labels used by the press to describe Iran and the Muslims. The labels appear in 236 valid items out of 562.

Coverage demonstrating the contention that the press portrayed the Iranian opposition in a positive light can be observed at different stages of the revolution. For instance, at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war the press quoted the Iranian opposition in Paris, calling them dissident "Dissident groups see invasion as first step to overthrow Ayatollah" (The Times, 24/9/1980). The Iranian opposition were also described by the press as "Guerilla" (3%) and "Nationalists" (The Guardian, 7/3//1979). Although in theory the word guerilla

represents a neutral image between terrorist and freedom fighter (Taylor, 1986) it is often used in a positive context particularly when it is linked to the words "Mujahedeen" and "Fedayeen". In one of the press reports about the executions of the Iranian opposition in Iran they were described as "Mujahedeen" and "Guerilla". The lead wrote, "The Mujahedeen the main guerilla movement in Iran released the names of 7,746 of their members and sympathisers executed since June, 1981" (Daily Telegraph, 9/9/1983). Obviously, the positive description of the Iranian opposition is not just because of the interaction between the source of news and the journalists, it is also because of the legitimation they receive from the political elite in the West and from the media as it is argued thoroughly in chapter 3 and the beginning of this chapter.

Many studies have demonstrated (e.g Murcloch, 1973; Cherwitz, 1980; Dorman, 1980; Vilanilam, 1989; Chomsky, 1989; Neumaier, 1990) the influence of sources, particularly the official sources on the way the media present news and use language in their presentation of events. Cherwitz (1980) in his study of the media coverage of president Lyndon Johnson's Tonkin Gulf speech in 1964 found that the New York Times and Chicago Tribune employed similar terms to those used by president Johnson such as "Attack", "Aggression" and "Hostile" (Cherwitz, 1980, p.47). So our findings, in the light of statements made by Western officials and Iranian opposition earlier in the discussion, support, like these studies, the influence of the sources on the language used by the press to describe the Iranians. But was the interaction with sources the only factor behind the press use of labels? Obviously not, the cultural values of the West in general is a much stronger basis for the interpretation of the way the press use certain labels to describe Iran and Islam. The cultural values which shape the meaning of the events and define them in certain ways

is called in the work of Chibnall (1977) "the framework of concepts and value" and in the work of Hartmann et al (1974) "cultural symbols". In more recent descriptions of this phenomena the term "cultural resonances" is used (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) and "cultural preoccupations" (Hilgartner and Bosk, 1988).

It has been established in previous research studies of the Western image of Islam and the Middle East (e.g. Suleiman, 1974; Morris International 1979; Said 1981; Crossed wires, 1984; Djait, 1985; Mousa, 1987; Mohsen, 1987) that this image, is mainly linked to "backwardness" and "barbarism", and often defined as a threat to Christianity and the West historically and that in recent times this image has become rooted in the culture of Western societies (see chapter 2).

As long as the press operate within the culture of the country (Hartmann et al, 1974) they tend to reflect the dominant cultural values of that country (Lippmann, 1981) towards Islam and the Middle East and towards Iran in particular. The linkages between Islam and fundamentalism, terrorism, fanaticism, extremism and radicalism are widely observed in the coverage of Iran and they serve as a mechanism of selection not only because they are undesirable elements according to Western social values, but because they satisfy other criteria of news values such as negativity and person orientation. So Ayatollah Khomeini is sometimes portrayed as a Muslim "fundamentalist" and a "fanatic", "extremist" and "villain" which fits well with press ideology which in some of its codes is closely linked to the values of the society.

In accordance with the dominant values thesis the press tend to function within "systems" (Trew, 1979) of "legitimate values" and "illegitimate values" which provide

"interpretations, symbols of identification, collective values and myths which are able to transcend the cultural boundaries within a society like Britain" (Chibnall, 1977, p.226). The Iranians were mostly considered as symbols of "illegitimate values" which enabled the press to classify them as "fundamentalist", "threat", "terrorist", "militant", "zealot", "mob/thug" "savage and brutal", "aggressive" and so on (see Table 20). This, of course, comes into conflict with the "legitimate values" of the West which are held to be "moderation", "order", "peacefulness", "tolerance", "realism", "freedom of choice" (Chibnall, 1977, pp.12-22), "Western civilisation", "democracy", "international law" and "justice". These differences between the "legitimate values" and the "illegitimate values" are organised in binary opposition where the two oppositional attitudes confront each other. 'Us' on the one had and 'Them' on the other summarize the whole distinction between the Western values of "Us" and the Islamic values of "Them". Sociologists present this distinction as a conflict between the "in-group" and the "out-group" which represent the two poles of an antagonistic relationship. Normally the "out-group" is perceived as an "enemy" in which the aggressiveness is enhanced by the prejudice of the "in-group" that adheres to the codes and symbols of their values (Bauman, 1990, pp.40-50).

The "crudest form of us versus them" (Said, 1981, pp.7-8) in the coverage of Iran cannot be isolated from the value of ethnocentrism which was at work in the process of covering Iran and its religious leaders who are "blood thirsty" and "medieval" and "evil leadership". Dorman and Farhang (1987) argued that if there is not a kind of ethnocentrism how can one explain the use of words such as "wail", "turbaned", "frenzy" and "frightening"? "Would it occur to American reporters covering the Vatican to make mention of priests as black-robed,

as reporters consistently described mullahs throughout the revolution?" (Dorman and Farhang, 1987, p.168).

Ethnocentrism makes the press concentrate on the form of the event which leads to the distortion of the activities of the forces at work (Dorman and Farhang, 1987). Murdock (1973) in his analysis of British media coverage of the anti-Vietnam war demonstration in London found that the coverage focused on the "forms rather than causes" of the demonstration which directed attention away from the aims proposed by the organizers (Murdock, 1973, p.207). In coverage of Iran the press used the label "terrorist" (12%, see Table 20) and focused on the act of "terrorism" committed by the Iranians themselves or sponsored by them, as it is seen in the discussion of some of the Macro-themes. The press highlighted the criminality of terrorism committed by the Iranians against the West and some Arab countries and ignored the context of this sort of political violence.

What is the opinion of journalists' concerning the use of labels to portray Islam and the revolution? Mostly journalists argue that the use of labels is a necessary shorthand to make complex issues easily understood by the reader as well as to save time and space. They acknowledge that the use of some of the labels could be confusing because they don't describe the full situation, such as the use of the words "moderates", "hard-liners" and "fundamentalist". But still they have to use them in order to give the reader an idea about a specific situation.

On the other hand the majority of journalists working for the quality and popular press justify the use of labels because they are considered to portray reality. Words like "fundamentalist", "extremist", "zealot" and "radical" are

considered as an actual representation of how the Iranians behave (Colvin, the Sunday Times; Brock, the Times; Teimourian, the Times; Woollacott, the Guardian; 1990). Other journalists working for the popular press such as the Daily Express and the Daily Mirror consider that such labels as "terrorist", and "mob" are not created by the press but are created by the Iranians themselves (Ellison, the Daily Express; Davis, the Daily Mirror; 1990).

The journalists' attitudes towards the revolution and Islam provide another basis, along with the source influence and the dominant social values, for the way the press ideologically construct Iran in terms of labels. Journalists' attitudes towards Iran lead to a subjective description of the revolution and this subjective evaluation cannot be isolated from the dominant social values in relation to Iran and Islam that exist in the West. Nicholas Davis, the foreign editor of the Daily Mirror, shows strongly his subjective attitude towards Iran and Islam which filters through the selection and presentation of news. He argues in the form of oppositional attitudes of "we" and "they" when he says "we in Western Europe think it is barbaric to cut off someone's head because they committed adultery, we think it is barbaric to cut someone's hand because they have stolen something and because these are such final acts I could never agree they were not barbaric acts and I would hope that Iran would cease to do them. I think if they cease to carry out those acts of punishment they would find far more understanding people from Western Europe and the United states looking at their domestic policies" (Davis, Daily Mirror, 1990).

The journalists' subjectivity is often strongly denied by them but it leads journalists " ... to overlook or misjudge

objective conditions" of the religious character of the revolution (Dorman and Farhang, 1987, p.166). McNair (1988) in his study on the image of the Soviet Union in the British media showed that it is partly a result of the journalists' subjectivity or attitude towards the Soviet Union. He argues that "Many of those who produce news about the Soviet Union concede that this is true. They accept, too, that the nature of Soviet coverage is partly a consequence of the attitudes and ideological assumptions which some journalists bring to their work". He quotes the Financial Times' Moscow correspondent, Patrick Cockburn when he comments on this issue: "It's evident that there's an ideological bias amongst journalists. That's quite obvious ... There are people who think that it's a deeply evil society. When you go back to England or America what is deeply shocking is the demonology about the USSR" (McNair, 1988, pp.50-51). McNair also argues that the journalists attitudes towards the USSR "...is often revealed in the language journalists employ in news about the Soviet Union". He gives an example of the BBC coverage of the 1982 May Day parade in Moscow when the occasion was described as "duly and ritualistically" performed. He comments that this phrase would not be used to describe a British State occasion. He quotes another example on the BBC coverage of the death of Leonid Brezhnev where he was described as "the ruler of Russia ... the man who embraced detente, but made sure democratic stirings in his own empire were crushed" (McNair, 1988, p.52).

In the analysis of labels used to describe Iran in the British press three ideological dimensions are given as a basis for interpretation of the way Iran is portrayed. These are the identity of sources and their influence on the definition of Iran, the Cultural values and their role in the selection process and, related to the latter, the journalists' attitudes about Iran and the revolution. So far the discussion has dealt

with the use of labels in the British press without taking into consideration the ideological differences and similarities of the use of these labels in the quality press and the popular press. The next section will deal with these variations.

Labels in Quality and Popular Press

Studies have shown that there are variations in the use of language to describe particular events in the quality and popular press (Murdock, 1973; Chibnall, 1977; Trew, 1979; Hansen and Murdock, 1985). This is mainly due to the different degrees of focus on the criteria of news values. The popular press tend to focus more on stories with human interest angles which have elements of drama, negativity and personality. Often news covered in the popular press tends to be presented in a simple way because of the kind of audience it is addressing and because of time and space limitations which lead to a decontextualisation of an event. The presentation of news in a cultural form is very strong in the popular press. They adopt a notable "populist discourse" which includes organizing oppositions of "us" and "them", "English" and "Aliens" and so on (Hansen and Murdock, 1985) and this has a wider acceptance among the readership. The far wider circulation of the popular press is one of the essential signs of its acceptance amongst the public.

Labels	Quality (N=434)		Popular (N=128)		Total (N=562)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fundamentalist	28	7	7	6	35	6
Mujahedeen/Fedayeen	31	7	0	0	31	6
Threat	20	5	10	8	30	5
Terrorist	19	4	9	7	28	5
Hostage taker/Kidnapper	18	4	8	6	26	5
Regime	17	4	9	7	26	5
Exile/Dissident	19	4	6	5	25	4
Fanatic	11	3	14	11	25	4
Revolutionary	22	5	2	2	24	4
Troops/Forces	18	4	0	0	18	3
Shiite	14	3	3	2	17	3
Militant	15	4	2	2	17	3
Leader	14	3	2	2	16	3
Extremist	10	2	5	4	15	3
Moderate/Pragmatic	12	3	2	2	14	3
Radical	12	3	2	2	14	3
Blood thirsty	6	1	5	4	11	2
Death squad/Firing squad	9	2	2	2	11	2
Mob/Thug	3	1	8	6	11	2
Hard-liner	7	2	2	2	9	2
Zealot	6	1	2	2	8	1
Guerilla	7	2	1	1	8	1
Ruler	4	1	1	1	5	1
Villain	4	1	1	1	5	1
Medieval	3	1	1	1	4	1
Mad mullah/Crazy mullah	0	0	3	2	3	1
Cruel/Merciless	3	1	0	0	3	1
Commandos	3	1	0	0	3	1
Notorious	3	1	0	0	3	1
Authoritarian	2	1	0	0	2	<1
Others (Dracula, Fascist)	2	1	0	0	2	<1
Savage/Brutal	1	<1	1	1	2	<1
Evil leadership	1	<1	0	0	1	<1
Warlord	0	0	1	1	1	<1
Nasty	1	<1	0	0	1	<1
War-loving	1	<1	0	0	1	<1
Aggressive	1	<1	0	0	1	<1

Table 21 shows the similarities and differences in the use of labels in the quality and the popular press. The quality press are The Times, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, The Sunday Times, The Sunday Telegraph and The Observer. The popular press are The Daily Mail, The Daily Express, The Daily Mirror, The Sun, The Sunday Mirror, The Sunday Express and the Mail on Sunday.

The data emerging from the analysis of labels in both the quality and the popular press (Table 21) show that the popular press have higher percentages of key words like "threat" (8%), "terrorist" (7%), "hostage taker and Kidnapper" (5%), "regime" (7%), "exile and dissident" (5%), "fanatic" (11%), "extremist" (4%), "blood thirsty" (4%), "mob and thug" (6%), "zealot" (2%). Words like "fundamentalist" (6%), "Death squad" (2%)

"Hard-liner" (2%) and others show similar percentages to those in the quality and popular press. Interestingly enough, words with strong negative meaning are covered in the quality press and not at all in the popular press. These words are "cruel and merciless", "notorious", "authoritarian", "Dracula and fascist", "evil leadership", "nasty", "war-loving" and "aggressive". This shows that ethnocentrism is as strong in the quality press as in the popular press and journalists' ethnocentricity is not just confined to those who are working for the popular press. Other reasons for the use of such terms in the quality press is the journalists' greater contact with sources of news who often take advantage of their positions, as argued before, and try to define situations and describe events and people in their own terms. For instance the words "Dracula and fascist" are quoted from Iranian opposition sources who were defining Ayatollah Khomeini in relation to particular circumstances (The Guardian, 10/8/87).

As has been seen in the discussion of labels, there is press interaction with the Iranian opposition who are often legitimised and their names given in the coverage. It is notable that the quality press describe them in terms of their political activities under the description "Mujahedeen and Fedayeen" and none of these descriptions appear in the popular press. The popular press choose to refer to them in terms of their political status in the West "exile and dissident".

Generally the quality press used a greater percentages of labels than the popular press (19 labels out of total of 37 labels have greater percentages) the popular press (which have 13 labels with greater percentages than the quality press) built up an image with the use of words such as "fanatic", "threat" and "mob and thug".

One learns that both quality and popular press have variations in the focus of the use of labels. The ideological aspect of language construction of images of the Iranian revolution is shared almost on equal terms by the quality and

popular press. The interesting result here is that there are greater similarities in the use of labels in the quality and popular press than there are differences. This is contrary to the results of some studies on domestic affairs where researchers (e.g Murdock, 1973; Chibnall, 1977; Trew, 1979; Hansen and Murdock, 1985) have concluded that the popular press tend to use more politically and culturally oriented labels then the quality press. It seems that in the coverage of foreign affairs, particularly the coverage of a foreign and alien culture like the Islamic culture, the degree of similarities in the description of that culture in both papers becomes stronger. Considering the role of the sources of news in defining many aspects about Iran and considering the role of the dominant social values in shaping the "other" or the enemy on both kinds of paper, one can logically understand the similarities in the presence of labels in the content of both the popular and the quality press.

Conclusion

The data and its interpretations in the four sections of press ideology have demonstrated that news about Iran did not just happen but was constructed. The selection and presentation of news was mainly influenced by the location of the correspondents in the Western capitals which allowed them more interaction with Western and Iranian opposition sources who tried to dominate the definition of many events observed in the Macro-themes. Also operative were journalists' professional ideologies which tend to exert a tremendous influence on the way news about Iran is selected and framed. A strong Western dimension and particularly a British dimension observed in the form of national interests e.g. Oil, Western hostages, was at work in the presentation of the majority of the Macro-themes. Associated with the Western dimension was

the cultural aspect of news production where news resonates with the dominant social values of the West. The Western cultural aspect, the sources' influence and the journalists' attitudes towards the revolution were reflected in the way the press use language to portray the Iranian people and Islam.

So the four press dimensions in the construction of reality, argued in this chapter, offer a comprehensive interpretation for how and why news about Iran in the first decade of the revolution is constructed.

Having demonstrated the importance of the Western sources in defining Iran and having seen the importance of the dominant culture in selecting and framing news about Iran, it is necessary to direct attention to a more concentrated analysis to look at these two ideologies at work. In the next chapter, the Salman Rushdie affair will be analysed qualitatively in the editorials of The Times and The Guardian to see how and why the sources and the dominant cultural value combine to present an ideological attitude about Iran and Islam.

CHAPTER 6

EDITORIALS' TREATMENT OF THE RUSHDIE AFFAIR: THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN SOURCES AND CULTURE

It has been demonstrated in the content analysis chapter that news about Iran is constructed through the selection and presentation process which is influenced by external, as well as internal factors. The previous chapter has dealt with the coverage of Iran and Islam in news stories, features, photographs, cartoons, and editorials. The analysis of these items was a combination of quantitative and qualitative content analyses which, for some examples, gave a general assessment of the coverage and elsewhere a more specific assessment to demonstrate the theoretical assumptions set out for this thesis.

In order to be more specific and to lead the research into deeper assessment of a particular example, it is necessary to introduce an additional case study which will examine some of the principal ideological forces at work, particularly the cultural factor and the sources of news.

Many themes have been analysed in the content analysis. These themes which were discussed under eleven Macro-themes offered strong evidence for the dimensions in press construction of reality e.g. sources of news and labels, but one of the themes constitutes a focal point for better understanding for the way the press construct news about Iran

and Islam. This theme is the coverage of the Salman Rushdie affair.

In the content analysis of Iran the Rushdie affair has been analysed in news stories, photographs, and letters to the editor as well as in some editorials in order to examine how this issue has been framed by almost all the British press sampled for this study. A discourse of clashes of cultural and political values; the Western values of democracy and freedom of speech and the Islamic values of religious "fundamentalism" was notable in the coverage of this complex and many-sided issue.

The importance of the Rushdie affair which embodies many issues already observed in the coverage of Iran during the first decade of the revolution, particularly the issue of tension between the West and Iran made it an obvious choice when considering the need for an additional case study which sheds more light on the role of the press in constructing political and religious issues.

This chapter will examine the way the press construct the Rushdie affair in the editorials of two quality papers from the opposite ends of the political spectrum in Britain. The reason for this examination, which will be qualitative, is to introduce further evidence concerning the role of Western liberal cultural values in the presentation of the argument about Iran and Islam and evidence concerning the role of the Western official sources, particularly British officials in defining an essential part of the editorials on Muslims in Britain, multi-culturalism, the Islamic fatwa (verdict) against Rushdie, Islamic fundamentalism, diplomatic relationship with Iran and other issues.

The dominance of the Western official sources in the

editorials gave no room for the representation of opposing Muslim sources in Britain and elsewhere who were considered as "illegitimate challengers" as has been shown in the previous chapter.

How the analysis will be tackled: Methodology

In order to examine how the Rushdie affair is constructed in the light of the press resonance to the cultural dominant values and the press dependence on the official versions, a qualitative assessment of the editorials is necessary to seek evidence to support our contention. The analysis will follow the development of the case since the publication of The Satanic Verses in 1988 until the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989. The reason for this procedural analysis is to monitor the press reactions and attitudes at the different stages of the controversy, particularly the two important stages, which occupied the greatest number of editorials, which were the press reaction to the book burning in Bradford (England) and the press attitude towards the Ayatollah's fatwa.

The qualitative analysis will expose first how the dominant value system of British society organised a great deal of the argument on the book burning, the fatwa, the defence of the values of democracy and freedom of speech and the press references to the consensual image of "We", "Us" or the West. This will be done by locating words, sentences and paragraphs, in the photocopied editorials of both papers, which show Western cultural values. Secondly, the analysis will expose what official bodies and official figures were focused on by the editorials and the kind of discourse they conveyed about Iran, Islam and Muslim minority in Britain.

This will be achieved by noting the names of the officials and other sources of news and highlighting statements attributed to them. The analysis will look at all these issues in the context of the tension between the West and Iran in which the Rushdie affair is interpreted as a continuation of the conflict between two Worlds.

This chapter will first give an introduction about the book, the fatwa, and the context of the Rushdie affair as well as the sample chosen for the case. Then it will be given evidence through the development of the affair to demonstrate how and why the Rushdie affair has been constructed in the light of the approaches already discussed.

The book and the Muslims' reactions

The publication of the book The Satanic Verses (SV) by Viking/Penguin on the 26th of September 1988 inflamed the feelings of Muslims all over the world, and it started a major controversy between the West and Islam in official circles and the press.

The book was written by Salman Rushdie, a well known writer, who wrote Midnight's Children and Shame which won literary prizes. The Satanic Verses was judged by Muslims to contain insults against the prophet of Islam, Mohammad, his companions, his wives, and the holy place, Mecca. Also offensive was the assertion that Satan had put some verses into the mouth of the prophet which he cancelled later on being informed of this by God (Ali Ashraf, 1988) and hence the name of the book The Satanic Verses.

Muslims considered that the name "Mahound" used in the novel was a disrespectful medieval European name of the prophet. Mahound, who was a shady "businessman-turned

prophet" in the fiction was likened to the prophet who founded Islam in the 7th century. The Muslims assumed the fictional City of Jahilia was the holy city of Mecca. Mahound's companions were described as a "trio of scum" (incidentally featuring "some sort of bum from Persia by the outlandish name of Salman"). The book included an extended fantasy about the "curtain", Jahilia's most popular brothel, where the girls, to please a client, took the names of the prophet's 12 wives and were encouraged to whisper salacious details from their supposed earlier lives, to the ears of their men friends (Rushdie, 1988; Walsh, 1989, Enright, 1989).

To the Muslims the book was an insult to Islam in four ways:

1. Insult to the prophet of Islam
2. Insult to divine revelation
3. Insult to historical personalities of Islam
4. Insult to Muslim women from the household of the prophet

(Qureshhi and Khan, 1989; Ashraf, 1988; Webster, 1990; Akhater, 1990; Crescent International, 1990). For issuing these "insults" the book was condemned as blasphemous and its author was condemned as an apostate by Muslims in the Islamic world and in the West.

Muslims angered by the book have voiced their protests in India, Pakistan, Kashmir, Britain, Lebanon and elsewhere against its publication and called for its ban. Muslims in Britain have played a major role in condemning the book and the first organised demonstration was held in Bradford in January 1989, where more than 1000 angry Muslims rallied and called for the banning of the book, then burnt a copy of <u>The</u>

Satanic Verses (Bradford Telegraph and Argus, 14 Jan. 1989). The burning of the book in Bradford was the first action to attract the attention and response of the British press since the publication of the book four months before. After that action was taken by Muslims, the following two months witnessed the increase of the debate in the national media about what was labelled as "the Salman Rushdie affair" or "the Salman Rushdie controversy".

The fatwa (verdict)

Almost a month after the book burning protest in Bradford and other protests in Britain, after the killing of five demonstrators by Pakistan police in Islamabad during a demonstration against Rushdie's novel in front of the US Information Center, and after the killing of one Kashmiri in a similar protest in Kashmir, Ayatollah Khomeini issued on the 14th of February 1989 a fatwa (a religious verdict) against the author Salman Rushdie who was aware of the controversial nature of the content of The Satanic Verses. The fatwa carried a "death sentence" because the SV, according to Ayatollah Khomeini and Islamic law, had been compiled, printed and published in opposition to Islam, the prophet and the Koran (The Observer, 19 February, 1989). It was then that the Rushdie affair turned into an international issue where conflicting values between the West and Islam and political tension between the West and Iran came to be of central interest to the media and other institutions in Western societies.

Issues involved

After the fatwa Salman Rushdie went into hiding and

Western governments were outraged by the threat to "murder" Salman Rushdie. Here issues such as diplomatic relations with Iran, freedom of speech, blasphemy law, Iranian threats, "Islamic fundamentalism", Iranian internal affairs, liberal values and Islamic values, Muslims in Britain, multi-culturalism, Roger Cooper the British prisoner in Tehran, and British hostages in Beirut and others were all debated by the actors involved and covered intensively by the media. Most of these issues were observed in the decade coverage of the revolution.

The Rushdie affair in a context of tension

The concern of this chapter is to find some answers to specific questions related to the original idea of the research, in an issue which is treated as a focal point in the British press coverage of Iran and Islam during the life time of Ayatollah Khomeini and even after his death.

The complexity of the Salman Rushdie affair as an attributable force in the political process has stirred the already existing tension between the West and Islam and has forced each side to adhere to its cultural identity and defend the values of all its ideological beliefs. Islam and the way it judges matters which concern Muslims and others, the West and the way looks at issues from the viewpoint of liberal secular values are two major conflicting stances in the press treatment of the controversy as it will be shown. In this context the analysis of the Salman Rushdie issue can offer better understanding for the way the editorials constructed the whole affair. It should be viewed within a framework of political development in the Middle East after the overthrow of the Shah, and within a framework of Western

attitudes, particularly British official negative attitudes towards the revolution in Iran (Foreign Affairs Committee, 1988) and what has been presented as "fanaticism", "threat" and "terrorism" to the surrounding countries and to the interests of the West (as it is seen in the content analysis chapter). Also, it should be viewed within a framework of Western interests in the Mideast and in the World. Decontextualising the Salman Rushdie controversy from the tension between the two sides over the last eleven years would not lead to a full understanding of the way this issue is covered in the media.

Sample

Presenting a sample of two quality papers, The Guardian and The Times, from the opposite ends of the political spectrum in Britain will show the value of this case for the analysis, particularly when these two papers were more concerned in the Rushdie affair than the other daily quality papers in terms of the number of published editorials. The popular press has not been included in this sample as not enough editorials were published for analysis.

A period of 13 months coverage (September 1988-September 1989) was checked in both papers and 18 editorials were found for this period. The Guardian published 6 editorials and The Times 12. The rationale behind the sampling of this period was to follow the progress of this issue since the publication of the SV in September 1988 until the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in June 1989 and the impact of his death on the fatwa. An additional few months were included (until September 1989) to see how the press commented on the "predicted" sign of changes in Iranian foreign policy,

particularly towards the SV.

Most of the published editorials in both papers (15 out of 18) were direct analytical pieces on the Salman Rushdie affair. The other three editorials indirectly mentioned the Rushdie affair.

The majority of the editorials (14 out of 18) were written after Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa, particularly in the second half of February and March 1989. Of the other 4 editorials, one was written after the book burning in Bradford in January 1989, and the other 3 were written after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in the same year, in June and July. This concentration of editorials in February and March (especially in February) by The Times and The Guardian shows how the press became more involved in framing the issue at a time of cultural and political clashes between two different value systems. The fatwa of Ayatollah Khomeini was more than just news, it was considered by the press, as will be shown later, as a "threat" to the very existence of Western values of "democracy" and "freedom of speech". The same signs of concentration can be established in most of the comments and the feature articles appearing in the same period and this will be examined along with the editorials. With the help of FT PROFILE Database, it was found that more than half of the headlines identified about Salman Rushdie in The Guardian and The Times (from September 1988 until September 89) were concentrated in February and March 1989. The Guardian covered 43 news stories in these two months (the whole coverage with the keyword Rushdie in the headlines was 81 items). The Times covered 104 news stories in February and March out of 179 news stories spread over 13 months. Also The Times covered 15 analyses and comments in these two

months out of a sum of 20 polemic pieces.

The importance of an event for the West, in terms of involvement and implications, decides the degree of press coverage as argued by British journalists (see next chapter) and as studies have shown (e.g. Herman, 1986). The "death threat" was considered important because a British subject was involved. It came from Iran which represented "Islamic fundamentalism" (as seen in chapter 5), and it interfered with the Western tradition of "freedom of expression" for which the press stand at the front line (Dorman and Farhang, 1987).

Editorials treatment: The construction of the Rushdie affair

In the following pages it will be demonstrated how the Rushdie affair was constructed in the Times and the Guardian from the first appearance of the book until after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini. Stages of the affair which represent the different aspects of the controversy will be noted. Under each stage a particular argument will be developed to demonstrate the theoretical premises discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

The publication of the book

Before the publication of The Satanic Verses in September 1988 in Britain, a secularist Muslim politician in India, Syed Shahabuddin, a member of the opposition Janata party, warned that the book contained an offence against Islam and demanded the book be banned in India. After the publication of the book, Syed Shahabuddin accused the author of blasphemy and of insulting Islam and Muslims (Syed

Shahabuddin, The Times of India, 13 Oct. 1988). The Indian Government was the first to ban the book on the 5th October 1988 only two weeks after the book had been published in London. India's lead in banning the book was quickly followed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Somalia, Malaysia, Qatar and Indonesia. Even South Africa joined in and banned the entry of the author as well.

Since the publication of the book in September and until December 1988 about 4 news stories were covered in The Guardian and The Times, and 2 book reviews of the SV appeared in both papers, one in The Guardian on the 23rd of September by Salman Rushdie himself, the other one in the Times on the 1st of October by Victoria Glendinning. Glendinning focused mainly on the struggle between good and evil and on Rushdie's criticisms of the "channel-hopping culture" of British society (Glendinning, The Times, 10 October 1988). The press at this stage ignored the Muslim sources and did not convey any sense of dispute over the book. Researchers like Van Dijk (1988) argue that ignoring one aspect of a story is in itself an evaluation by the press which selects one aspect of reality and ignores other important aspects.

Van Dijk gave the example of the portrayal of President-elect Bachir Gomayel in Lebanon in 1982 by different international newspapers. He noted that the coverage of Gomayel and the political situation in Lebanon were not value free. He considered the absence of a critical assessment of Gomayel's past and his involvement in the civil war was in itself an evaluation from the side of the press. Van Dijk concluded that the assessment showed "the beliefs and opinions of journalists" in which it limited the objectivity of the coverage (Van Dijk, 1988, p.124).

The book burning: Cultural and racial distortion

When the Muslim masses burned the novel in Bradford on January 14, 1989, the British press began to give attention to the issue in a fashion critical to the Muslims who opposed the SV in Britain. The first editorial after the incident appeared in The Times under the title "Islamic intolerance" where it was obvious that The Times was critical to Muslims in Britain. Even though The Times acknowledged that the references made in the novel against the prophet and his family were "derogatory", it condemned the public book burning in Bradford and considered the matter as "an act of violence which is intended to intimidate...". The Times continued demonstrate this view of the issue and began introducing Western liberal values as a criteria of judging the Bradford incident when it said, "...it is unacceptable in a free democracy". In a conceptual-behavioural oppositional frame the Times organised its argument on the idea of free democracy versus Islam. It viewed the book burning as a clash between the values of the in-group and those of the out-group as defined in the work of Bauman (1990).

The book burning was not the first event of its kind in the history of Britain. A book with a religious theme called "The Nemesis of Faith", by J.A. Froude was burned in public in 1849 in Oxford (Colin Haycraft, 1989) and in August 1988 MP's burned a copy of the new Immigration Act in front of the Home Office, and according to one of the Muslim papers in Britain "there were no shouts of Nazism. Neither were there any protests that the book burning was an act of violence or intimidation", (The Muslim News, 7 April, 1989). Ironically the Times editorial reminded the "Muslim minority" that they had to be tolerant and accept "British standards of

democracy".

In line with the dominant value thesis that Britain is a tolerant society (Husband and Chouhan, 1985), the Times called upon the Muslims who were defined as intolerant to accept the legitimate values of British society. Opposing attitudes of tolerance and intolerance were at play in the argument of this editorial. It also told them that they should accept "freedom of speech and writing" where it was essential to the British culture:

> "In the interests of community harmony, the leaders of the Muslim community should accept that Britain is a democracy in which Parliament, elected by the majority, makes law applicable to all. They should accept the freedom of speech and writing, except in exceptional circumstances covered by specific enactment, is essential to that culture" (The Times, 17/1/1989).

The defence of freedom of speech after the book burning mobilised all sections of British society, particularly the political establishment, and made them take an active part in the press to stand up for this value.

As the issue developed government officials were brought into the frame and managed to put forward their definitions on the book burning without any serious challenge from other sources. The Education Secretary, then Kenneth Baker wrote a comment in the Times in which he conveyed the government policy towards the way the Muslims reacted in Bradford. Baker called upon the Muslims in Britain to be tolerant in spite of the "heartfelt offence" the book gave to many Muslims. He insisted that the book should not be banned

because this was against one of the principles Britain holds; freedom of expression:

> "We cannot now allow intolerance to undermine the basic freedoms which so many have found so attractive. The burning of books is wrong, the intimidation of shopkeepers...is wrong..." (Baker, the Times, 30/1/1989).

The issues discussed by Baker did not differ with those discussed in The Times. Baker's views and the Times coverage shared the same insights that the book burning was wrong, threatening shop keepers was wrong, banning the book was not the tradition of basic human freedom and Muslims in this country should be tolerant and law abiding.

The discussion about the Muslims' protest in a narrow legal terms rather misses the point. It does not display values of moral equality, common citizenship, diversity and pluralism of the "supposed" multi-cultural society (Parekh, 1989). The right of minority groups to express its dissatisfaction with British law and the officials' attack on Muslims, projects the belief that harmony between the White majority and coloured minorities is viewed from the viewpoint of the majority. The majority often restricts the action of the minority in forms of legal terms, and decides the rights and duties of ethnic groups. The press reflected this concept, as it will be shown later on, and adapted the official views which stress on the legality of the issue.

At this stage the editorials had opened the argument of the merit of Western cultural values seen from the editorial writers and officials perspectives which defined the issue

from the point of view of the threat represented by Muslims showing "intolerance" and "violence". In the next stage, after the Ayatollah's fatwa, the editorials were to be more culturally and politically oriented and a broader context of tension between the West and Islam was introduced through the involvement of Iran.

The fatwa: Images of "Islamic fundamentalism"

Since the publication of SV Iran had monitored the controversy and had not taken any action but, after the demonstrations in Islamabad and Kashmir when 6 people were killed on the 12th and 13th of February 1989, Iran broke the silence and Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa on the 14th of February stating that the book was an insult to the prophet and the Koran and sentencing its author to death. The fatwa came at a time of mounting pressure from Muslims in Britain to ban the book and change the blasphemy law, making it cover Islam and other religions which the government had no plans to do. Such pressures were organised by different Islamic groups and organisations in Britain such as "U.K. Action Committee on Islamic Affairs", "The Muslim Institute", "The Bradford Council for Mosques", "The Islamic Organisation for Media Monitoring", "The Islamic Defence Council", and "The Islamic Society for Religious Tolerance in the U.K.". These religious and political bodies which compete in some instances with each other were rarely used and not considered a competent challenger to the elite versions which were dominant, as will be shown later on. Also the fatwa came at a time of the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Islamic revolution in Iran.

The Times reminded its readers about the 10th anniversary first by a feature article written by Amir Taheri, a well known Iranian critic of the revolution who worked for the Sunday Times between 1980 and 1984 (Taheri, 1987) and who was a regular writer in the Times. Taheri is considered by the British press an authority on Iran and the Middle East and is regularly consulted (Wade, DT; Woollacott, G; Colvin, ST; Brock, T; Gowers, FT; 1990). Taheri attacked the Iranian mullahs for their "political monopoly" and the way they ran the country, especially their treatment of the Iranian opposition who had been "executed and imprisoned" for the last ten years. He criticised the revolution because it "...reimposed the veil and forced men to grow beards and stop wearing neckties". Taheri reminded the readers of the "feuding factions" who "...failed to agree on any set of reforms" (Taheri, The Times, 1/2/89, p.16). Exiled Iranian experts, like Taheri, are often legitimised by the media because of their representation of the "worthy victims". The media tend to use them as reliable and informed sources without a serious challenge to their definitions which mostly aim to discredit the Islamic regime in Iran.

The Times also reminded its readers about the 10th Anniversary of the revolution by writing an editorial on the "Decade of the Ayatollah" showing that Iran's revolution had "successfully and cruelly returned to the past", where "thousands have been executed for crimes such as 'warring against Allah'", and where "300,000" people were killed in the war with Iraq. Iran, according to the editorial, remained internationally defeated, besieged, associated with terrorism and hostage-taking and in a " state of disorder":

> "The international impact of the revolution has been diminished by defeat in war, by Iran's espousal of terrorism, by hostage-taking and by Arabs' closing of ranks both against the ancient Persian enemy and against the claims of Shi'ism, a minority sect in Islam" (The Times, 11/2/89).

"Islamic fundamentalism" was introduced in the editorial in the context of Iran's responsibility in reinforcing this issue in the Islamic world by stating,

> "Iran did not invent Islamic fundamentalism, but it has given it a force which has altered the political chemistry of the Islamic world, to be reckoned with by secular or moderately Islamic leaders from Azerbaijan to Indonesia".

The Times at the end of the editorial predicted that there would not be a "turning tame" in the revolution as long as Ayatollah Khomeini was alive because "...the city of God does not work by the rules of economic necessity" (The Times, 11/2/89).

Within the context of cultural differences between the West and Islam and the context of the press perception of the revolution at its 10th anniversary, the press handled the fatwa through existing images of Islam and Iran gained from Western contact and experiences with Iran both before and after the overthrow of the Shah. Both The Times and The Guardian commented on the Ayatollah's fatwa and wrote two editorials on the same day. The Times under the title, "Incitement to Murder" criticised the fatwa and treated it as

an, "...international murder contract for British subjects". It warned that Rushdie and the publishers were in great danger from "Shia fanatics" who might carry out the death sentence.

> "Mr. Rushdie, his literary agent and his publishers, Viking and Penguin, are in serious danger. They are now, to thousands of Shia fanatics, mahdur ad-damm: warriors against God whose unclean blood is to be shed as a religious duty. There is also reason to believe that their lives are at risk as a result of a request to the Imam for judgement by Muslims in Britain" (The Times, 15/2/89).

The contention that Iran constitutes "state sponsored terrorism" was conveyed by the Western officials in the first decade of the revolution (as seen in chapter 5) and was against manifesting itself in two ways in the process of argument about the fatwa. First it was held that the fatwa was calculated by religious leaders in Iran "to incite terrorists beyond its frontiers". Second, leaders who did not support the fatwa in the "moderate" Islamic countries might themselves be threatened by "Khomeini's terrorist doctrines".

The Times was more concerned about the echo of the fatwa in Britain and how it could increase the violent condemnations of Muslims than about the fatwa itself. It called upon the Muslim leaders in Britain to defend "the reputation of Islam as a faith" and to disassociate themselves from "the murderous interest of Iran's hard, old man of God".

The Times touched on the issue of the diplomatic

relations with Tehran in more than three paragraphs and in two of them it argued that the maintenance of such relations, as long as Iran did not denounce the fatwa, was difficult to accept. It urged the government, which advised caution for the sake of safety of Roger Cooper in Tehran and the British hostages in Beirut to "break off diplomatic relations" because "...it remains impossible to contemplate the maintenance of diplomatic relations with a state whose leader, more unequivocally even, than Colonel Gadaffi, incites to murder" (The Times, 15/2/89).

The Guardian wrote an editorial different from the one written in The Times. It dealt with the issue from a wider perspective and in a disappointed tone, especially when it described the fatwa as of "...an extreme, ungilded nature" in defiance of those trying to understand the Iranian revolution. While The Guardian dealt with the issue of the Iranian internal politics in terms of "moderates" and "hard-liners" and "power struggle" (as analysis and interviews disclosed - see next chapter), the fatwa was viewed as a "victory for adventurism" for the Minister of the Interior Ali Akbar Mohtashemi and the Prime Minister Moussavi over the speaker of Parliament Hashimi Rafsanjani. The title of the leading article was "The poison of defeat and of hatred". It explained in the process of the argument that the fatwa was placed in the context of the Iranian defeat in the Gulf war. It implied that the fatwa came as an active political procedure to overcome the post-war defeat to save the face of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The editorial discussed the novel and the protest it faced in Britain. Then it moved to Pakistan and how the issue was used by the political opposition to discredit Ms.

Bhutto. At the end the editorial defended Rushdie and asked for the protection he needed. It quoted him from the SV when he said, "A poet's work is .. to name the unnamable, to point at frauds, to take sides, start arguments, shape the world and stop it from going to sleep". The leader endorsed this statement and suggested indirectly that the press and other sections of society should take the same role when it said "Not only poets" (The Guardian, 15/2/89).

The development of the controversy: Ethnocentricity

After the fatwa the two papers took a more critical attitude of the controversy and broadened the issues under discussion to include more argument on the freedom of speech and the defence of this principle, the diplomatic crisis, the Muslims in Britain, the attitudes of Islamic Countries, the relationship between the fatwa and the internal "power struggle" in Iran as well as other issues relating to the conflict between two opposing political and cultural values; the Western values and the Islamic values, where the Western culture is conceived as superior to the Islamic culture.

Feature articles and commentaries in both papers reflected the atmosphere of tension and conflicting values, particularly those commentaries written by a regular commentary writer Robert Kilroy-Silk (a former British MP) in The Times. In these comments Kilroy-Silk condemned "international terrorism and assassinations" championed by Iran, and acknowledged the superiority of the Western culture that embraced "...parliamentary democracy, values of freedom, justice, fairness and toleration ..." and rejected the culture that enjoined "...burning of books, that passes a

death sentence on a man for having unorthodox views...". Kilroy-Silk, in an ethnocentric tone, called upon the British "majority" to regain self-confidence and consider that the "habits, customs, traditions and cultures of others are not only different from, but also less acceptable than, our own" (Kilroy-Silk, The Times, 17/2/89, p.14). In another commentary Kilroy-Silk stressed again on the cultural stiffening between "the majority in this country" and the "minority". He argued that the "minority" should not be given an opportunity to triumph over the majority because if they did they would impose on "us" their tradition that "...women should be treated as second-class citizens and hidden away as chattels" (Kilroy-Silk, The times, 10/3/89, p.16). But this contradicts, as Adnan (1989) argues, The Islamic recognition of the rights of women in holding political positions, running business and having education. Both sexes according to the Islamic law are equal and treated alike (Adnan, 1989, p.69). Even one of The Times' editorials warned that personal belief if it countered prevalent social values might present a problem in British society especially when these personal beliefs were inspired by Islam:

> "Personal belief is inviolate within the domain of private life, so long as ritual and practice do not countermand prevalent social values. Muslim views about the role of women, corporal punishment in schools and the treatment of animals all present problems in this respect" (The Times, 27/2/89).

In the light of previous studies on the media coverage of race issues in Britain, the attitude conveyed in the Times

concerning Muslims should not come as a surprise for researchers especially when studies have demonstrated clearly that Blacks in Britain, including Muslims, are defined as a problem and culturally less acceptable than the white majority (Halloran, 1974; Hartmann and Husband, 1973).

However, the issue of cultural superiority generally was not discussed openly in most comments and editorials in The Times, but was discussed mostly, in both the Times and the Guardian in the form of the defence of freedom of speech which was the main organizing idea.

Freedom of speech was considered an essential principle which The Satanic Verses must enjoy and which should "reign supreme" (The Guardian, 17/2/89), and everyone in a Western democracy should "stand up for their belief in those values" (The Times, 27/2/89). The governments in the Western world focused on this issue and gave it impetus because the essential idea of democracy was based on freedom of expression. The Guardian dealt with this issue in one of its editorials and reflected the EEC attitude which can be summarised by the statement of Mrs. Thatcher and President Mitterand who considered the issue of Salman Rushdie as a "fundamental matter of freedom of speech" (The Guardian, 1/3/89) which was threatened by Ayatollah Khomeini.

The conflicts between two worlds: Opposite attitudes

The consensus of British political attitudes towards the affair and the united Western support for Britain allowed The Guardian and The Times to reflect these issues on their front pages (The Guardian; The Times, 22 Feb. 1989). They were covered from the angle of clashes between the West, which was

defending the freedom of speech, a fundamental part of free societies, and Iran which attacked this value. The Guardian put this tension in a broader perspective and describe the Salman Rushdie affair on its front page as a crystallisation of the broad confrontation "between a fundamentalist Iran and the Western world" (The Guardian, 22 Feb. 1989). The Times in its editorial "Talking to Muslims" emphasised the values of "Islamic fundamentalism" as opposed to the values of Western liberty and tolerance when it said:

> "...For the Salman Rushdie affair demonstrated, if demonstration were needed, that some beliefs of some minorities - in this case, fundamentalist Islam - are diametrically opposed to Western principles of liberty and tolerance" (The Times, 27/2/89).

The concept of unity among the Western nations had been portrayed in a cartoon in The Guardian. The cartoon showed the EEC countries united behind Rushdie and signified that as the world of Islam is united vis a vis The Satanic Verses the Western nations were also united (The Guardian, 22 Feb. 1989).

The opposite attitudes of "us" and "them" were very marked in the editorials treatment of the Rushdie affair. It was viewed, as we mentioned before, in a context of conflict between the "in-group and the out-group" (Bauman, 1990). The press classified the in-group as Britain and the West which were defending Western values, and the out-group as Iran and some sections of the Muslim community in Britain upholding the value of "Islamic fundamentalism". Manifestations of this argument were framed in the form of the West versus

Iran, Britain versus Iran, freedom of expression versus "Islamic fundamentalism", Western values versus Islamic values and so on. But who was responsible for the construction and the reinforcement of this state of oppositional values? Bauman (1990) talks about a body of resourceful activists, or professional spokespersons whose practices are responsible for the imaginary unity of interests and beliefs of a community, class, gender or a nation (in-group) vis a vis another group, class or nation (out-group). This body could be a political party, a trade Union, or governments whose main aim is to try to formulate the discourse on the unity of the in-group which is in their ideology a benevolent unit as well as to try to construct the aggressiveness and evil deeds of the out-groups (Bauman, 1990, pp. 40-52).

The issue of two opposing fronts or two opposite attitudes, the Western front and the Iranian front was not new in the British press coverage of Iran. It was observed in the issue of the American hostages in Tehran in 1979, the issue of Western hostages in Beirut, the threat of "Islamic fundamentalism", the Iran-Iraq War and other issues seen in the content analysis chapter. British journalists also talked about this issue when interviewed and linked it to the state of tension between the West and Iran which had started with the taking over of power by Ayatollah Khomeini (see chapter 7). But journalists like Edward Mortimer of the Financial Times and Harvey Morris of the Independent saw the Salman Rushdie issue as a great factor in emphasising Western prejudice against Islam in the political sphere and in the mass media (Mortimer, Financial Times; Morris, The Independent, 1990).

The diplomatic crisis: Officials' centrism

The diplomatic relationship between the West and Iran, particularly between Britain and Iran was one of the major issues discussed by the editorials. Both the Times and the Guardian dealt with the issue from an angle of hostility and threat committed by Iran against Britain. The Times mentioned that "Iran has committed a hostile act against the British State" (The Times, 18/2/89), and The Guardian commented by saying "Unless the threat is withdrawn - and short of the Ayatollah's own death that seems implausible - it can only be seen as a hostile declaration of intent by one state against another" (The Guardian, 17/2/89). In the light of this "hostility" and the "violation of international law", the "threat" against the life of a British subject who is a "hostage by the Iranian Government on British soil", as well as the defence of freedom of expression, both editorials urged the government to break off relations with Iran because if this was not considered by the government it would be seen as a major mistake; "To refuse now to contemplate, publicly, breaking relations with Iran would be a mistake of principle" (The Guardian, 17/2/89).

The argument about relations with Iran centred on the Foreign Office (FO) attitude. The papers conveyed the thinking of the FO towards related matters such as the hostages in Beirut, Roger Cooper in Tehran, the economic interests (British business), and the encouragement of the "moderate" factions in Iran led by Rafsanjani. In the coverage of Iran, officials in the FO have become routine sources for the press. Routine sources according to Sigal (1987) are more likely to be favorably portrayed in the news for two reasons: First because of their skills in news

management; second because of the close relationship that might develop between journalists and sources (Sigal, 1987, p.28).

The Guardian and The Times differ in their attitudes towards the matter of encouragement of one of the factions in Iran, the moderates. The Guardian believed that they should be "strengthened", and The Times believed that they should not be considered in matters of foreign policy. The Times saw the solution to be the encouragement of change in Iran by "firm adherence to principles" because it was viewed as the right course to save Iran's population from captivity and from the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini: "Firm adherence to principles, not encouragement for particular factions, is the course most likely to bring about the internal changes which would deliver Iran's 52 million people from their internal captivity, and end the criminal acts against those of other states perpetrated by the Ayatollah's warped theocracy" (The Times, 18/2/89). The Times here made its ideological attitude clear by expressing its opposition to the Islamic revolution and the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini.

After the agreement of the EEC countries to withdraw their Ambassadors and heads of missions from Tehran in protest at Iran's attitude concerning the SV, and after the renewal of the "death sentence" by Ayatollah Khomeini on the 19th of February, the British Government decided on the 20th of February to pull out its envoys from Tehran. On the second day The Guardian, under the title "Finally the FO makes a break", and The Times "End to Diplomacy" both welcomed the decision, with minor criticism over the government "slow start" (The Guardian, 21/2/89), and with minor disappointment that the move was "insufficient" (The

Times, 21/2/89).

> "After a slow start, Sir Geoffry Howe has finally responded to the moral imperative posed by the Ayatollah Khomeini's sentence of death upon Mr. Salman Rushdie...But by withdrawing its entire staff from Tehran and subscribing to a strong EEC statement, Britain indicates that it is quite prepared to take the risk" (The Guardian, 21/2/89).

> "The Government's decision to withdraw its officials from Iran is overdue, insufficient, but a welcome symbol none the less. The regime in Tehran has made normal diplomatic relations impossible...Now, in bringing British diplomats home and requesting Iranian diplomats to leave Britain, it is, on a stronger track" (The Times, 21/2/89).

Both papers argued about the usefulness and the strength of the decision at a time of growing concern over the British official approach of trying to distinguish between the government and the Ayatollah Khomeini (The Guardian, 21/2/89), and between the "religious fundamentalists" and the "pragmatists" who were trying to bridge the gap with the West (The Times, 21/2/89). The withdrawal of officials from Iran had made the government's line towards the whole issue clearer to the press, especially to The Guardian which asked for more government "out loud thinking" (The Guardian, 21/2/89).

After the British and European decision to withdraw

their diplomats from Tehran, the United States and other nations like Australia and Sweden voiced full support for this action and President Bush talked about possible economic sanctions against Iran. In Britain the opposition party, the Labour Party, and other MP's gave unqualified support for the Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe's decision to withdraw Britain's four men from Tehran and to ask Iran to pull out its two diplomats. This British consensus of foreign policy towards Iran outlined by Mrs. Thatcher and Sir Geoffry Howe, supported by the United States and EEC countries, had been reflected in these editorials with almost total agreement on the steps taken. This illustrates two points: First, there was agreement among the British official sources as well as the Western official sources and consequently there was not competition among them; second the editorial writers reproduced the Western official attitude vis a vis the break of diplomatic relations with Iran. In this respect I tend to agree with the analysis of Stuart Hall (1978) who focused on the media structured relations with dominant powers in society. This structured relation makes the media play, in the case of the break of diplomatic relations, a "secondary role in reproducing the definitions of those who have privileged access, as of right, to the media as 'accredited sources'" (Hall, 1978, p.59).

The government's attitude and community relations: More Officials' centrism and absence of legitimate challengers

The build up of tension in Britain and in the West against the danger of "Islamic fundamentalism" in the world

and in Britain, accompanied by an Iranian insistence on the fatwa and pressure from British Muslims to ban the book, led the Home Secretary, then Douglas Hurd to realise that threat from the Muslim Community in Britain was escalating, especially when some active Muslim groups had not disassociated themselves from the fatwa. He decided to meet Muslims in Birmingham Central Mosque to convey the thinking of the government towards the whole issue, especially towards Muslims in Britain. Both The Times and The Guardian commented favourably on his speech in two editorials.

The Times found in Hurd's speech in Birmingham a reinforcement of its attitudes towards issues brought up after the fatwa. For instance, the attitude towards the threat of violence against the book and its author, and the expectation of the host country that its minority groups be involved in the "mainstream of British life" i.e. immigrants must "assimilate" in public life and "accept the values of the host culture", as well as the opposition to "Western principles of liberty and tolerance" by some minorities who carried the value of "fundamentalist Islam",

> "The Home Secretary, Mr. Douglas Hurd... said that incitement to violence gave Islam a bad name, that the law of the land applied to all and that the Islamic community, which benefited from the protection of the law, also had a responsibility to obey it. Mr. Hurd also voiced criticism of the tendency of some sections of the Asian community to isolate themselves from the mainstream of British life. He called in particular for the children of Asian parents to be taught fluent English and to have a clear

> understanding of the history and constitution of Britain" (The Times, 27/2/89).

The Times' editorial "Talking to Muslims" did not differ from previous editorials and comments, especially when it focused on the cultural differences between the West and Islam and emphasised that the Muslim immigrants must "obey" the law (The Times, 27 Feb. 1989).

The Guardian under the title "beyond the threat" agreed with the Home Secretary that there should be strong adherence to the values of liberal and democratic societies. It mentioned that

> "The Home Secretary was right to say loud and clear in Birmingham. Any softening would evade the central moral point. It would also be intolerably condescending to the Muslim communities to suggest they should be guided by lower standards" (The Guardian, 25/2/89).

But The Guardian questioned other parts of Hurd's speech, especially issues related to how minorities should integrate in Britain and how they should enter "the mainstream of British life". The Guardian introduced the subject of "racial harassment" suffered in Britain, especially Blacks and Asians, but it made it clear that this "harassment" should not be considered an excuse for the outrage inflicted on Rushdie and on freedom of speech by Ayatollah Khomeini. The editorial was critical of the Home Secretary because his remarks "swept up Blacks, Sikhs, Asians ... into generalisations" and were not confined "to that

handful or even to Muslims alone" (The Guardian, 25 Feb. 1989).

The Home Secretary's speech in Birmingham was the centre of argument in both papers. The attitude of the editorials, particularly the one written in the Times did not offer any serious challenge to the official line, on the contrary the editorials seemed deferential to government policy on the issue and the government points of view on British Muslims' integration or assimilation into British life.

However, community relations and multi-culturalism in Britain were raised by the press whenever there were comments from officials. The Times dealt with these issues again in an editorial after some criteria for community relations were put forward by Mr. John Patten, Minister of State at the Home Office with special responsibility for community relations. The Times acknowledged that race relations in Britain had become more complicated and confused in the wake of the Salman Rushdie affair. It asserted that it was too simplistic not to consider religion as a "primary factor in community relations" especially after the reaction of the "Muslim crowds" since the outbreak of the Rushdie affair. The editorial stressed that problems might erupt again if a high degree of assimilation was not undertaken by Muslims. In order to achieve this goal The Times urged Muslims to learn the English language and English literature to be able to communicate with the majority. It emphasised that British Muslim children "should know their Koran", but also "they should know their Shakespeare". The Times agreed with Mr. Patten that it was essential that Muslims in Britain were "feeling British" or "Being British" :

> "This is consistent, therefore, with Mr. patten's third requirement, that minority communities should not shut themselves off from British history, as if it was not also part of their own. It is essential to 'being British', Mr. Patten remarked" (The Times, 25/7/89).

The idea of assimilation was interpreted by Sociologists as an attempt by the government and the media to make Muslims disassociate themselves from their religion, and "Being British" on the expense of "Being a Muslim first" was considered as a sort of "cultural imperialism" where Muslims were expected to adopt the Western cultural values because it was considered as "more civilised and tolerant" and better than the immigrant culture. Muslim scholars who were not offered a chance in the Guardian and the Times to channel their arguments considered that the opponents of multi-culturalism were the assimilationists who believed that there were categories of "dominant" and "subordinate" traditions. They accused advocates of assimilation such as the government officials and press of practising "a form of racism" (Qureshi and Khan, 1989, p.46; Siddiqui, 1 April, 1989).

However, the concentration of the argument on government officials (Douglas Hurd and John Patten) and their views on issues generated by the Salman Rushdie affair highlights more evidence of the interaction between officials and the press and the likely influence of the former's definitions on the latter with an absence of balancing views from other, challenging sources e.g Muslim leaders in Britain.

The balance norm in media professionalism is rarely

defined to include "illegitimate challengers" as Tuchman (1974) argues. Because the press could not identify with a group which opposed the dominant values of the West not only from outside, but also from within British society as studies of law and order news have demonstrated (e.g. Chibnall, 1977), they could hardly look at the Muslim sources as legitimate ones. Legitimation includes identification of "people like us" who carry the values of democracy, civilisation, freedom of expression, tolerance, moderation and the British way of life, and not the values of fundamentalism, darkness, intolerance and codes of cruelty and rigidity with which the press identify Muslims.

Islam versus the West: A threat discourse

Editorials in February focused on two major issues: first, the fatwa and the Western attitude towards it and towards Ayatollah Khomeini and Iran and the ways in which they represented a threat to the Western values of democracy; second, the Muslims in Britain and Islamic culture as seen from the viewpoint of the Rushdie affair. These issues were presented with great dependency on official views. Editorials written in March and after were less concentrated on specific issues than the editorials in February.

A variety of issues were dealt with in March because several important events took place in Britain, Iran, and the Islamic world. Among these events the Iranian decision to cut off relations with Britain, "threats" against some British officials and media figures by an Islamic organisation, the role of "Islamic fundamentalism" in using the Rushdie affair to discredit Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, the meeting in Saudi Arabia of the Islamic Conference

Organisation (ICO) and its "ambiguous" outcome, the lifting of sanctions on Iran by the European community, the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, and the situation inside Iran and its effects on the Salman Rushdie controversy.

The Iranian Parliament's decision to break off relations with Britain was not considered important enough to be discussed in detail. In fact The Guardian only referred to the issue and The Times ignored it completely. The Guardian mentioned the issue in the context of how Ayatollah Khomeini made his religious edict state policy and the effect of the severance of relations on the hostages in Lebanon and Roger Cooper in Tehran. The Guardian considered that all Iranian conditions to restore future relations with Britain could be met except one. It stated that the government would have no problem in declaring that Britain was not opposed to the world of Islam and Iran, but it argued that Sir Geoffrey Howe would find it difficult to "...say anything about the book". The Guardian agreed with the official attitude that relations with Iran should remain "...at their present icy level unless or until the death threat can be rescinded" (The Guardian, 1 March, 1989).

A reinforcement of the ten-year-old "threat" image of Iranians and their followers had been the focus of The Times' coverage and that of other newspapers since the return of Ayatollah Khomeini to Iran in February 1979 (see chapter 5).

A "threat" news discourse was used by the British press. It can be likened to the negativity criterion of news values with particular reference to the Iranian case. This discourse allows journalists to select a particular news event with a threatening nature to the West and its allies and focus on a special dimension of that event (as emphasised

by journalists themselves, see next chapter). The adoption of the "threat" discourse was noted on many occasions in the coverage of Iran. the selection and presentation of themes like the Western hostages, "Islamic fundamentalism", Ayatollah Khomeini, Iran-Iraq war and "terrorism", in the context of their representation of serious threat to the West and pro-West Arab countries, are the sort of themes which demonstrate the "threat" discourse.

The shooting down of the Iranian Airbus in the Gulf by an American Warship in 1988 was a case in point. Four British daily papers covered the incident in terms of "threat" discourse represented by the Iranians against the Western hostages in Lebanon, and against Western interests all over the world (Mohsen, 1990).

The threat against the life of Salman Rushdie and his publishers was one of the aspects of the Rushdie controversy highlighted in The Guardian and The Times. The Times in the editorial "More hostages" revived the threat discourse after a "terrorist" group "The Guardian of the Islamic revolution" sponsored, according to The Times by the Iranian Foreign Ministry, threatened two British Ministers, Sir Geoffrey Howe and Douglas Hurd and the broadcaster Peter Sissons. The threat against the British officials was considered a "crime against international law" like the fatwa itself and the threat against Peter Sissons' life (Sissons is a current TV news reader at BBC) as an attempt by Iran "...to impose international censorship through murder in the name of Islam".

The Times echoed the reaction of the British Government towards the Iranian threat to break off diplomatic ties unless the British government denounced Salman Rushdie. The

attitude of The Times was that "...Iran should, instead, first renounce its incitement to murder". The leading article was critical of some British Parliamentarians e.g. Max Madden and Peter Temple-Morris whose behaviour towards the Salman Rushdie issue was "embarrassing" in contrast to strong statements of principle by West German officials and by the French President Mitterand who described the death threats as "absolute evil". Amid the Iranian "threat" The Times wanted to see a more united Western front, as represented by Mrs. Thatcher in Paris which would impose sanctions on Iran because the "defence of freedom" is more important than the "commercial considerations" which were advocated by some Western countries e.g. New Zealand (The Times, 3 March, 1989). The Guardian reflected this official stance two days before the Times. It focused on the statement of Mrs. Thatcher when it stated: "As the Prime Minister repeated on Monday, with President Mitterand at her side: it is a fundamental matter of freedom of speech" (The Guardian, 1/3/89).

In another editorial "Playing With Holy Fire" The Times continued to talk about threats coming from "Muslim fundamentalists" but this time from "fundamentalists" opposed to their own liberal governments. The leading article chose to talk about the Islamic opposition to Benazir Bhutto's government and how the opposition used The Satanic Verses to mount attacks and orchestrate demonstrations against its policy in Pakistan. The Times commented on the complexity of being a secular politician in an Islamic country where officials should represent Muslims interests. Even though the editorial defended Bhutto against the criticisms and pressures she faced from her "fundamentalist" Muslim

opponents, it criticised her for calling for a boycott of all Penguin books (The Times, 6 March, 1989). The Times here made an evaluation of the situation from the writer's own values and standards when it said that her statement was not "a good advertisement for her proclaimed belief that Islam is a religion of liberation and tolerance".

Evaluation of an event or a situation from the journalists' own cultural values and standards of right and wrong, as in the coverage of the attitude of Bhutto towards Penguin, is considered unavoidable by journalists like Edward Mortimer who believed that "if one has standards worth the name one must believe that they are valid for everybody". Mortimer in his article "Islam and Western Journalists" and in the interview conducted for this study argued that journalists cannot isolate themselves from their identity and the way they see the world. Sometimes they are "...obliged to judge people and things from their own standards", so they cannot escape implicit moral judgements which could be problematic, especially when these can be interpreted as an unfavourable judgement i.e. in the case of fundamentalism and terrorism (Mortimer, 1982; 1990).

The British dimension on lifting the sanctions

As has been learned from the coverage of the issue of Western hostages in Beirut, after the break of western political consensus towards the issue the press adhered to a British official line (see the Macro-theme, the Western hostages in Tehran and Beirut, chapter 5). Again the press, particularly the Times reacted in the same way in its treatment of the EEC decision to lift sanctions on Iran and return their envoys to Tehran. The EEC decision came after

the Islamic Conference Organisation (ICO) declaration which considered Rushdie an "apostate" (the Times, 18 March, 1989).

This event led the Times to write an editorial under the title "From Europe With Shame" which was critical of the European decision on the return of envoys to Iran. The editorial saw the return of the senior European diplomats to Iran as an encouragement for Iran to violate International law and to step up further aggression not only against the West but against other states such as Turkey. The Times raised the issue of the Turkish government decision to prohibit female students from wearing Islamic Head-dress at University, a decision which Ayatollah Khomeini condemned. In the same way the Times considered the Ayatollah's fatwa against Rushdie as an "incitement for murder", it treated his condemnation against the Turkish government decision as "an incitement to riot" and as a sort of International censorship. The Times viewed the decision to return envoys to Tehran as an appeasement of Ayatollah Khomeini who would further exploit the Rushdie affair to revive the "great global Islamic revolution".

In the development of the editorial the Times expressed its discontent at the European decision and stated that:

> "If the imposition of international censorship backed by incitement to murder was an 'absolute evil' (President Mitterand) in February, it can be no less so in March. The proper outcome...would have been further sanctions to isolate Iran and jeopardise its hopes of economic recovery" (the Times, 24 March, 1989).

It is clearly seen that one of the characteristics of the

British press is that during a break of Western consensus they adhere to a strongly British angle mostly in line with government policy.

What was remarkable in the editorials written in February and March in the Guardian and the Times was the absence of Muslim definitions and points of view on the Rushdie affair. What they covered was a construction of the result of the Islamic attitude towards the SV and the threat of violence by a Muslims minority in Britain, as well as the Western attitude towards Iran and the Salman Rushdie affair as a whole. The reaction of the West and proposed measures to stop attacks on freedom of expression from a cultural and official perspectives were the centre of the affair.

The editorials clearly reflected the versions of the dominant group represented by the British officials and other Western officials. The press did not show any sort of competition among the Western sources themselves or between the Western sources and the Muslim sources. There was a structured relationship between the press and the collective shared values and beliefs of the West which were partly diffused by Western officials.

The death of Ayatollah Khomeini: An ideological treatment of Iran

Between March and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini on the 3rd of June 1989 there were no editorials on the Salman Rushdie affair, either in The Guardian nor in The Times. After the death of the Ayatollah and after his funeral 3 editorials (2 in The Times and one in The Guardian) appeared, but they did not deal exclusively with Rushdie. They discussed the situation in Iran during the reign of Ayatollah

Khomeini, the power struggle, the future of the revolution, and the Rushdie case.

The death of Ayatollah Khomeini was presented in both papers as an occasion long awaited. This was expressed in the Guardian, "At Last He Has Gone". The Guardian reminded its readers of Iranian society dominated by a "clerical elite" with many "ideological differences" among them (The Guardian, 5/6/89). This "new ruling class of mullahs" with the revolutionary guards, said The Times, was characterised by using "ruthless politics of oppression" to consolidate their power. The Times mentioned the disadvantages of the Iranian regime under Ayatollah Khomeini, such as bureaucracy, state controlled economy, state violence and terrorism, the death threat against Rushdie and the fighting for power domination between the "moderates" and "hard-liners" which would be intensified and increased, it was predicted by both papers, after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini (The Times, 5/6/89 and 9/6/89). Here The Guardian, even though it focused on the Iran-Iraq War more than it did on other internal problems, shared with The Times the view that the future would witness a destabilised situation between the factions. It predicted that "a new upheaval in Iran, inconceivable before Khomeini's death, now becomes a possibility and indeed over time, a likelihood" (The Guardian, 5/6/89). Predictions in that context did not proved to be useful in assessing the future of Iranian politics, particularly after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini as has been stated by British journalists working for the quality papers. They considered that press predictions were useless because of the lack of knowledge of political development in Iran and because the Iranian opposition were

supplying British journalists, in the first decade of the revolution, with misinformation, often exaggerated in their assessments of events taking place in Iran (Morris, I; Wade, DT; Colvin, ST; 1990).

The Guardian and The Times referred to the Salman Rushdie affair in the context of arguments previously outlined in both papers, especially when they were analysing the issue in respect to the "hard-liners" and the "moderates". The Guardian saw the Rushdie affair as an instrument for the "radicals" in their "struggle" against the "moderates" (The Guardian 5/6/89). The Times criticised the "moderates" especially Rafsanjani who was looking to improve relations with the West while endorsing the "incitement to murder" Rushdie and taking the decision, being the speaker of the Iranian Parliament, to sever relations with Britain. The Times tried to show the "hypocritical" face of Rafsanjani and the difficulty of dealing with even the "moderates" in Iran. At the end of the editorial The Times reminds us of its previous attitude towards the conditions for the improvement of relations with Iran. Iran "...must publicly repudiate, in specific terms, the death threat it has uttered. And it must unequivocally renounce state violence and terrorism" (The Times, 9/6/89).

The Rushdie affair cannot be isolated from the ideological perspective of Iran built up since the triumph of the revolution. This ideological perspective which is acquired from the dominant ideology in Western society (Neumaier, 1990) has manifested itself in the different forms of interpretation used in this chapter which are summarised in the next section.

The social construction of the Rushdie affair

The qualitative analysis of the Salman Rushdie affair has shown greater emphasis on the role of the dominant values in news selection and presentation and the "symbiotic dependence" on Western official sources in which the editorials serve "... the interest of the established power" as Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue in their book Manufacturing Consent.

It is argued that the press treatment of the Rushdie affair has been dominated by anti-Islamic ideology which has developed in the first decade of the revolution (Said, 1980; Webster, 1990) and which was rooted in the historical perception of Islam in earlier Centuries (see chapter 2) where Islam was portrayed as "...a murderous and tyrannical religion, the quintessence of all cruelty" (Webster, 1990, p.139). The opinions expressed in the editorials reflect a homogeneous Western stance towards Islam and Iran indicating the absence of "ideological contestation" (Schudson, 1989) which researchers in the arena of sociology of journalism identify in their analyses of media contents.

The editorials' attitude towards the Rushdie affair denotes a more overtly value-laden opinion about Iran and Islam than has been observed in news stories. This is mainly because editorials are concerned with opinions and attitudes which reflect a combination of a complex interwoven factors e.g. culture, interaction with sources, professional values, foreign policy and press line which all frame the argument on Rushdie.

Golding and Middleton (1988) in their analysis of "social security" news in editorials have found two dominant themes. On the one hand news refers continually to the

central political institutions of society, and on the other hand it draws the values of individualism and self-sufficiency that strengthen both the professional ideology of journalism and the dominant social values of British culture in more general terms.

The cultural values of the West in general and Britain in particular are very much strengthened in the central organising ideas of this controversial issue. The values of democracy, freedom of expression, tolerance, moderation, British way of life and secularism were all "legitimate values" of the West opposed by the perceived "illegitimate values" of Iran and Islam which are centred on Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic punishment, intolerance, censorship, fanaticism, threat, and religious authoritarianism. The editorials were involved in structuring an image of Islam and Muslims which had its roots in the powerful myth of historically-grounded images of Britain as a country of "liberality", "tolerance", "freedom of expression", "the home of freemen", "the mother of Parliaments" and a "civilised democracy" (Husband and Chouhan, 1985, pp.272-275). These images of Britain are inherited in the thinking of liberal intellectuals, writers and journalists who have framed an "informal alliance" to oppose the "rigidity and religious fundamentalism" of Iran and the Muslims in Britain (Webster, 1990, pp.49-53).

The cultural superiority of the West is a dominant theme in the process of presenting the argument on Iran and Islam. Islam is represented in negative images and the Muslims, particularly those in Britain, are portrayed as fundamentalists who are threatening the values of liberal democracies by objecting to the publication of The Satanic

Verses and particularly by burning a copy of it in a demonstration in Bradford.

Racial distortion was noticeable in the argument of the editorials and some feature articles written by columnists and politicians in the process of dealing with the issue of Muslim minorities and race-relations in Britain. Studies on the coverage of immigration and ethnic minorities in Britain in the British national press (e.g. Butterworth, 1966; Hartmann and Husband, 1971; Hartmann et al, 1974; Husband, 1975; Downing, 1980; Hall, 1981; Troyna, 1981; and Joshua et al, 1983; Gordon and Rosenberg, 1989) have taught us that there is a great deal of racial distortion of coloured people in Britain, including the Muslims. Normally racial distortion is based within colourful invocation of "Englishness" which help journalists to select and present news within that context (Cottle, 1991). Ethnocentricity which led to racial distortion was at play in the coverage of Muslims in Britain, particularly when they burned a copy of The Satanic Verses in Bradford and after the Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa.

The cultural ideology of the West is responsible, among other things, for presenting the Rushdie affair in the form of two opposing ideologies; the Western ideology of liberalism and freedom of expression which is "Us" and the Islamic ideology of fundamentalism which is "Them". Some journalists argue, as will be shown in the next chapter, that the Western cultural values filter down in the coverage of other cultures including the Islamic culture (Morris, The Independent; Mortimer, FT; Bulloch, The Independent On Sunday; 1990). They argue that when journalists are part of the Western culture, they share the failings and the

imperfections of the society they belong to. Journalists like Edward Mortimer, a columnist in the Financial Times, takes a self-critical approach to the coverage of the Rushdie affair and talks about the prejudice against Islam that can be found in the national newspapers. He emphasises that

> "... you find people in this newspaper (Financial Times) have lost patience with the idea of Islam. They don't want to know about the opinions of Muslims. They say forget these people, they are fanatics... somehow there seems to be a sort of conspiracy... no it is not a conspiracy... as if it was a conspiracy that almost every news item that happens somehow reinforces this whether it is Azerbijan, Kashmir or wherever it happens. We are always somehow persuaded to see it as the Muslims being the villains and the bad guys..." (Mortimer, FT, 1990).

Alongside the cultural factor, the interaction between the Western official sources and the press was emphasised. Many studies, reviewed in chapter 3, have demonstrated that the source-journalist relationship has been viewed in term of "symbiotic dependence" (e.g. Dunwoody and Shield, 1986; Brown et al, 1987; Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Chomsky, 1989; Koch, 1990). This cooperative relationship gives way to the definition of the "powerful sources" (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) who are mainly official sources taking precedence over the definitions of other opposing sources when they get the chance to be included in the coverage.

The editorials in the development of the Salman Rushdie affair have centred their argument on the definitions of the

British officials and other Western officials vis a vis the Muslim minority in Britain and the diplomatic relationship with Iran. The officials' definitions have been favoured by the editorial writers and elaborated on uncritically. Sources critical to the official versions have been ignored by the press mainly because the Muslim sources, who supported the Ayatollah's fatwa, were defined as "illegitimate challengers" and a "threat" to the values of democracy and freedom of expression. Herman and Chomsky (1988) and Chomsky (1989) argue that once a group is defined as illegitimate the media tend to minimize their sufferings and label them as "unworthy victims" so that their definitions tend to be ignored. This is very much the case of the Muslims in Britain and elswhere in the coverage of the Rushdie affair. The editorials were not sympathetic to the Muslims and an almost complete ignorance of their point of view on the issue was displayed in the assessments of the controversy.

In almost all aspects of the Rushdie affair the press was uncritical of British officials. They were supportive to the official versions as well as to their line of political thinking and measures.

Conclusion

In the light of the theoretical premises discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the editorials' treatment of the Salman Rushdie affair in the Times and the Guardian offers two main lessons : First, the construction of the whole affair is viewed within the context of Iran's representation in the press in the first decade of the revolution. That is to say that the Rushdie affair represents the focal case in the portrayal of Islam and

Muslims where different images presented together and demonstrated the tension between Islam and the West.

The second important point to come out of the editorials' treatment is that the affair is constructed through two major ideological determinants: The first determinant is the role of the dominant cultural values in organising the commentary into the oppositional attitudes of two conflicting worlds; the Western world and the Islamic world. The editorials framed their argument around the Western values of democracy, freedom of expression, tolerance and the British way of life which were the legitimate values threatened by the Islamic values of fundamentalism, violence, intolerance and censorship. The "symbolic forms" of social and political life in the West in general and in Britain in particular were treated as superior to the cultural symbols of Islam and Muslims.

The press in the treatment of the Rushdie affair mirrored the collectively shared values and beliefs of the West. In some instances the press defended these values and took a firm line to counter the values of Islam which were seen as threatening values.

The second ideological determinant was the press concentration on the attitude of government officials and the government line. The press interaction with officials has offered the latter a chance for domination in the definition of the affair, whereas evidence of press interaction with other sources, such as the Muslim sources was absent simply because their definition was not presented in the argument. This demonstrates the delegitimation process practised by the press against those who are not defined authorised and respectable sources. There was not any real division or

competition among the different Western sources, but there was a structured relationship between the officials and the press. The primary sources or powerful sources are strongly observed in the editorials. This illustrates that the press is drawn into symbiotic relationship with official sources.

To summarise, the findings show that dominant cultural Western values and official centrism present the basis for analysis the way the Rushdie affair is constructed in the Times and the Guardian.

After the content of the press was analysed in chapter 5 and this chapter, learning how journalists had covered Iran and what constraints they faced is an essential matter. The next chapter will deal with the journalists' personal and professional views on the coverage of Iran.

CHAPTER 7

JOURNALISTS' PERCEPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS OF IRAN NEWS COVERAGE

Chapters 5 and 6 have demonstrated the factors influencing the content of news coverage of Iran in the British press. An examination of the role of journalists in the process of making news about Iran and Islam must be pursued. It is necessary to examine further evidence for the way news about Iran is constructed and the reasons for that construction. The examination will use as a basis the journalists' individual and professional ideologies to discover how these ideologies shape the presentation of news on Iran.

This chapter will deal with the journalists' opinions about the press coverage of Iran in the last ten years. These journalists share, more or less, a common approach, especially those who work for the quality press.

The chapter will essentially focus on the role of the journalists' views on Iran and Islam as a factor influencing the process of news production, their criteria of news selection, the constraints they face in the process, their relationship with the sources of news, and their explanation for the way they use labels to describe Iran and Muslims. The chapter will show that combination of these five constraints plays a key role in interpreting the way news about Iran is produced.

Evidence emerging from the opinions of journalists will be in line with evidence discussed in chapters 5 and 6. All of these types of evidence are building a picture of the power of certain legitimate sources and their influence on news production on Iran, as well as the role of dominant Western social values in the making of news about foreign issues and cultures.

Before introducing the role of professional ideologies in the making of news on Iran, it is necessary, as research requires, to give details of the type of interview carried out, the number of the journalists interviewed and their representation of the British papers.

Methodology

The type of interview was the semi-structured interview where specific questions were asked to all journalists followed by in-depth discussion which produced information helpful in the understanding of news coverage of Iran and which might not have otherwise emerged. The questions asked of journalists were confined mainly to six categories. The reason for this limitation was to concentrate on evidence relating to the theoretical frameworks explained in chapter 3. Basically, the questions were formulated to give a clear understanding of the way the British press construct a reality of Iran, particularly in the light of the major findings in the content analysis (chapter 5). The six categories of questions involve issues concerning the different external and internal factors influencing the production process. These categories are: the journalists' views about Iran and "Islamic fundamentalism"; criteria of news selection; constraints in news coverage; sources of news

and their influence; press predictions and the way the press use labels to portray reality. The journalists' responses will be discussed within these specific categories to provide systematic understanding for the way journalists conduct their professional coverage of foreign news.

The interviews lasted between twenty minutes and three hours and the shortest interviews were mostly given by journalists who worked for the popular press. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed.

Sample

Twenty-seven journalists who specialised in foreign news or Middle East news in twenty-one Daily and Sunday newspapers were contacted. Thirteen of these journalists (see Appendix E) responded positively to the idea and the other fourteen either apologised because of the shortage of time and their feeling that they could not be helpful, or referred me to other journalists. In fact, some of the journalists who refused were very important to the coverage of Iran e.g. Martin Huckarby and Adrian Hamilton of the Observer and P. Taylor of the Sunday Telegraph. Most of the journalists who refused to cooperate belonged to the popular and quality Sundays, and the journalists who were interviewed worked mostly for the Daily quality press. So there is no balancing of opinion between the Daily and Sunday papers, or between the popular and quality daily papers. However, these imbalances will not negatively influence the research because the papers which mostly covered Iran were the quality Daily papers (70%), as the data shows in chapter 5 (table 3), and most of the interviews (9 interviews) covered journalists working for the quality Dailies and are therefore valid in

helping to understand the coverage.

Nine of the journalists interviewed visited Iran in the last ten years on at least two occasions. The maximum number of visits was by John Bullock, previously of the Daily Telegraph, who travelled to Iran during the Shah's days and afterwards about twenty-five times. The average number of visits by these journalists was six times in ten years, almost one visit every two years. Just one of the journalists interviewed, Harvey Morris lived in Iran for one year in 1979-80 when he was Reuter's chief of bureau in Tehran. The duration of visits by other journalists varied between a few days and few weeks according to the invitations offered by the Iranian government. Almost all the journalists interviewed have had a long experience in covering foreign news and the Middle East. The number of years of experience varied from three years to thirty years.

Among the thirteen journalists interviewed one third were professionals who specialised in the Middle East as their main task. There were five Middle East specialists, two of them, Andrew Gowers of the Financial Times and Harvey Morris of the Independent were Middle East editors (these two papers were not included in our sample). Marie Colvin of the Sunday Times was the Middle East correspondent and Hajhir Teimourian of the Times, an Iranian exile, was a Middle East specialist regularly consulted on Iranian affairs by the Times and other Western media. John Bullock was the diplomatic editor of the Daily Telegraph and is working now for the newly established Sunday paper, the Independent on Sunday. Bullock considers himself an expert on the Middle East. The remaining two thirds (eight) of the journalists were mostly foreign editors dealing with general foreign

news. So the majority of journalists interviewed were not specialists or experts on the Middle East in spite of the fact they covered many assignments on the area in general.

Generally speaking, the journalists interviewed had dealt intensively with Iran between 1979-1989 and were quite familiar with the intricacies of politics in the Middle East, especially in terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict as the longest standing problem. The questions to ask at this stage are how have journalists looked at the Islamic revolution in Iran through their own professional and ideological values? What professional problems do they face? After discussing the answers to these questions it will be attempted to pinpoint the complexities in the ways stories about Iran are covered in the British Press.

Journalists' views about Iran

Journalists' views about Iran are an important issue which helps to understand how journalists look at the revolution and to what extent their views influence the way they select news on Iran. The Islamic dimension is strongly observed in their views and acts as an essential criterion for selection, particularly when that Islamic dimension has an influence on Western interests and policies in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The journalists' views about Iran focus mainly on its importance for politics and religion in the Middle East, especially as it is the only country with an Islamic government "as a result of an Islamic revolution" (John Bullock, Independent on Sunday, 90). Journalists share the view that what makes Iran important is partly its own form of political structure which is based on Shia ideology and

guided by Islamic clergy who have the final say in running the country. Also linked to this is Iran's representation of "Islamic fundamentalism" in the world which is leading to a "new surge of Islam, a period of Islamic expansionism", (Nigel Wade, Daily Telegraph, 90).

The Islamic dimension of Iran is seen by journalists as an essential way of looking at the revolution especially in the form of "Islamic fundamentalism" associated with Ayatollah Khomeini. Some of the journalists working for quality press and most of the journalists working in the popular press have discussed the issue of "Islamic fundamentalism" in two ways. The first relates to its implications for Iranian domestic politics where a series of changes and re-evaluations have taken place (Woollacott, The Guardian, 90). This also relates to the way in which customs were changing, and women were pressurised by their own society to dress differently than the way they dressed before the revolution (Nigel Wade, Daily Telegraph, 90). Islamic punishments were carried out against adulterers, thieves, political opponents, and internal conflicts among the Iranians themselves were perceived to be signs of internal "instability" and "irrationality" which dominated the thinking of most journalists and people in the West. Most important was the impact of "fundamentalism" on the United States during the occupation of the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979 and the holding of American hostages for 444 days. That was the West's first direct confrontation with Iran and the US administration used that incident to discredit Iran and the revolution (Harvey Morris, The Independent, 90).

The other dimension of "Islamic fundamentalism" discussed is its impact overseas, especially in the Middle

East and the whole structure of the power struggle there. John Ellison argues that Tehran should be seen as involved in the Arab-Israeli war, especially when "fundamentalism" represents a danger to a neighbouring country or Israel (J. Ellison, Daily Express, 90). The impact of "fundamentalism" outside Iran is viewed in terms of international terrorism and exporting the revolution to Islamic countries. The Western hostages issue, the Salman Rushdie affair and the conflict with the West, especially the United States, were the most mentioned implications of "Islamic fundamentalism" outside Iran. These themes were touched on by almost all journalists, particularly when they viewed them in terms of news values for the British Press in the first ten year period in the life of the Iranian revolution.

"Islamic fundamentalism" and its threat inside and outside the border of Iran is not the only way journalists have looked at Iran. Other characteristics have attracted the attention of the journalists. These characteristics are:

a - The strategic importance of Iran where its location and its size play a role in local and international politics (A. Gowers, Financial Times, 90).

b - The importance that Iran has for the superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and the European powers, particularly Britain since good Anglo-Iranian relations had always previously existed between Britain and Iran, notably during the reign of the Shah (Martin Woollacott, The Guardian, 90; Nigel wade, The Daily Telegraph, 90).

c - The economic implications when Iran is one of the

leading countries in the world for the production of oil and constitutes a very big market for the Western products.

d - The rapid population growth (now 55 million) which has the potential for both "constructiveness and destructiveness" according to Hajihr Teimourian of The Times. Teimourian believed that "...the Iranian revolution was primarily the result of population explosion" (Teimourian, The Times, 90).

e - The Iran-Iraq War in its destructive power had an impact on the West's oil. "Islamic fundamentalism" is also perceived by journalists as one of the causes of the continuation of the Iran-Iraq War (N. Davies, Daily Mirror, 90).

These characteristics together with "Islamic fundamentalism" internally and externally constitute the views of the journalists towards Iran in the ten year period and consequently these views are reflected as criteria for selection of news and when deciding the position and length of news stories about Iran.

The Islamic dimension of the revolution, represented by Islamic fundamentalism is, in the eyes of most journalists, one of the strongest angles governing the way journalists look at news coming out of Iran. Since a different culture, the Islamic culture, is covered with its views of the political and social process in the Middle East and elsewhere, British journalists tend to treat it with an ethnocentric tone related to the boundaries of the dominant social values of the West in general and British society in particular e.g. Bank Melli of Iran, hostages, and the Salman

Rushdie affair.

Criteria of news selection

The selection of news about Iran and Islam cannot be isolated from the journalists' professional views about the revolution and it is very closely associated with the normal professional ideologies discussed in most studies on news production and which act as guidelines for selection and presentation (Golding and Elliott, 1979). These criteria of selection, as discussed in the theoretical frameworks chapter and as demonstrated in the content analysis chapter, include importance, negativity, elite, culture, personality and economy.

Importance

Most journalists argue that news should be important to be considered as having news value, especially news which has dramatic elements. For example, a speech by Ayatollah Khomeini cannot be considered important unless it had implications for the West or neighbouring countries. Harvey Morris of The Independent elaborated on this kind of criteria and mentioned that in 1987 when Ayatollah Khomeini made a speech just before the Mecca "massacre" it was a lead story because he said that he would "smash the teeth of America in its mouth" (Morris, The Independent, 90). The same applies to any news which bears a threat to the West. Marie Colvin of The Sunday Times argues that if Iran makes threats against Iraq it will be less newsworthy than Iran making threats against Western Europe or the West in general. Colvin states that news will be selected because of "...the impact it will have on the rest of the world and if you are working in The

Sunday Times the attention will be on the West" (Colvin, Sunday Times, 90).

Journalists working for the popular press have an ideological perception of what is a dramatic story. It would normally be a story related to the West with strong implications for Britain. Nicholas Davis of The Daily Mirror gives the example of oil supply to the West. He argues that although lives have been lost on the battle fields during the Iran-Iraq War, "people of U.K. and Western Europe will also think of the lives that could be lost in their country further down the line with the oil supply breaking down" (Davis, Daily Mirror, 90).

Negativity

Journalists argue that news should be negative in order to be defined as newsworthy. So news about internal divisions, violence, war and terrorism are the sort of news journalists look for in their coverage of Iran. News about economic and social development inside Iran has no value in the press coverage, particularly when readers, as journalists argue, have no interest in such stories and when news has to compete with other stories from other foreign countries. In this case priority is given to stories with dramatic features (Mortimer, FT; Davies, DM; Wade, DT; Ellison, DE; 1990).

Elite

News about members of elites who occupy certain authoritative positions in society is considered newsworthy. This is why many of Western officials have been the focus of the press, as is seen in the content analysis chapter. Journalists consider seriously the opinions of officials in

Britain and in the West. What they say is treated as news because they reflect the power of the authorised knowers who represent the interest of the public. Journalists, as interviews disclosed, tend to interact on a greater scale with Western elite sources than the Muslim sources. The reason behind this greater interaction is their political and cultural identification with the Western sources who belong to the same values system as the journalists.

Journalists in their coverage of Iran focus on other groups of elites who occupy the centre of attention in the process of making news. Elites such as experts, political opposition members, and journalists specialising in Middle Eastern affairs are frequently consulted by journalists covering Iran.

Culture

Most journalists working for the quality and popular press tend not to deny the fact that Western cultural values influence the way journalists select and present news about Iran. For instance, news about Terry Waite is considered far more important than news about the Lebanese prisoners held in Israeli camps and prisons because Terry Waite is British and has a common cultural background with people in Britain (Wade, Daily Telegraph, 1990). John Bullock argues that this is natural because "...we are part of this society and we have all these cultural symbols from the time we went to school" (Bullock, Independent on Sunday, 1990). Mortimer supports this view and argues that journalists and newspapers are not outside the culture of society. He adds that journalists cannot be treated as some sort of "sheet of glass" through which reality passes absolutely undistorted.

Mortimer observes that "...it is never expected to have completely deculturised news" (Mortimer, Financial Times, 1990).

Journalists are more or less aware of the influence of the dominant culture on their perceptions of other nations. But few working for the popular press deny the influence of Western values on the way they select and shape news on Iran. They tend to underestimate this factor, particularly when they use specific language to describe the action of the people involved in the process e.g. describing Ayatollah Khomeini as "Villain", "Fanatic", and "Dracula".

Economy

Another criterion of selecting news about Iran is the economic criterion where the people who are running the paper want to sell it in order to make profit. Some journalists explain that there is not much news about economic or social development in Iran by relating it to the fact that not many people among the readers will be interested (Teimourian, The Times; Wade, Daily Telegraph; Davies, Daily Mirror; Ellison, Daily Express and Mortimer, Financial Times, 90).

Personality

The first criterion mentioned by some journalists is the person orientation criterion where news tends to be selected according to the personality involved. Authoritative personalities often make news because of the power they represent nationally and internationally and the public is normally familiar with their personalities and actions. Mortimer argues that news tends to be about colourful personalities more than ordinary ones. He gives the example

of Colonel Gadafi of Libya who would generally fulfil different criteria of news value i.e. the criteria of person-centred news value and the negativity value. Contrary to the example of Gadafi, Mortimer emphasises the example of the President of Yemen. He argues that his statements and speeches will not make news because he has no power and influence over Middle Eastern politics. Ayatollah Khomeini was another powerful personality discussed by Mortimer. His influence reached Muslims in the Western World and he became a recognised figure for audiences in the West, but mostly people in Britain identify his personality with negative actions (Mortimer, Financial Times, 90).

It should be noted that these criteria of selecting news also apply to visuals and the selection of photographs.

Constraints in news coverage

Journalists in their coverage of foreign news face considerable obstacles which affect the quality of the coverage. These obstacles cannot be ignored in the process of understanding news production on Iran because they constitute major drawbacks where foreign issues, particularly those related to Third World countries, are concerned. These constraints are access, time and space, language barrier, lack of expertise, budgetary considerations, and relationship between Islam and the West.

Access

Access to Iran is the constraint most widely discussed by all journalists. They complain that Iran does not guarantee them visas to visit the country unless they are asked by the Iranian government to come over for the coverage

of particular incidents, e.g. the shooting down of the Iranian Airbus in 1988, The Iraqi use of chemical weapons in Halbja also in 1988, the funeral of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 and so on.

Most journalists argue that there were many interesting issues in the first decade of the revolution which they wanted to cover but the Iranian authorities would not allow entry. Some journalists comment that the Iranian image in the Western media is affected by the access constraint because first, if journalists who have not been in Iran before are prevented from going there, then their "perceptions which is coloured by misconception" will remain unchanged and the idea that Iran is a "chaotic and irrational place" will be reinforced (Morris, The Independent; Mortimer, Financial Times, 1990).

Second the image is affected because the reader is constantly reminded that Iran would not let journalists in and that is "a very negative image in Western eyes" (Woollacott, The Guardian, 90). However, most journalists treat the issue of access as a common feature in the Middle East where most governments do not allow journalists entry unless by specific invitation (Bullock, Independent on Sunday; Ellison, Daily Express, 90). If they are guaranteed access there is some sort of control over their movements. At this level journalists were asked to look at the other side of the argument and try to see why the Iranian Government is not willing to have permanent correspondents in Tehran or allow regular visits.

Third world countries generally supported by UNESCO complain about the Western media coverage of their affairs. They often criticise the Western practice of selecting

certain negative angles of a situation and ignoring the important social, political and economic development in their countries (UNESCO, 1980; Pratt, 1980; Dahlgren and Chakrapani, 1982; Sereberny-Mohammadi, 1984). Journalists have responded differently to these accusations. For example, Edward Mortimer believes that there is distortion in news coverage of Iran but "it is not the distortion that worries them, it is the actual facts that journalists might find out". Mortimer argues that people in power do not like their own people to find out what is going on internally. Mortimer's argument is also shared by Peter Birket of the Daily Mail (Mortimer, Financial Times; Birket, Daily Mail, 90).

George Brock of The Times looks at this matter from a mixture of political and professional perspectives and says that as long as there is hostility among countries, journalists tend to be affected. Iran's view about journalists is that if "a society is hostile to you, the whole society and its representatives should be treated as hostile, and in that respect press representatives are all like government representatives, not identical but similar" (Brock, The Times, 90).

Marie Colvin of the Sunday Times considers that there is a feeling among the Iranians that "as long as the Western journalists are not going to be objective, why talk to them" (Colvin, Sunday Times, 1990). This opinion is shared with David McGrory of the Daily Express, but his explanation is that the Iranians have that sort "of siege mentality and they are constantly on the defensive" when the British press writes about them (McGrory, Daily Express, 1990).

When journalists were asked if they would prefer to have

a permanent correspondent if the Iranian authorities would allow, all of them answered that they would not because they preferred to have one correspondent for the whole Middle East, because of budgetary problems. Most of them would like to have stringers, as some papers already have, and they would like a staff correspondent to visit Iran three or four times a year.

All journalists except one explained when they were asked about the heavy presence of the correspondents in the West as compared with the few in Tehran that the access constraint imposed by the Iranian authorities was responsible. Harvey Morris explained the presence of most correspondents in London, Washington and Paris was the result of these being the traditional centres for coverage.

Time and Space

The time and space constraint was also mentioned by all journalists interviewed. This type of constraint is not new to the profession of journalism, it has always existed. As it is found in our data analysis, most news about Iran (80%, see table 5 in chapter 5) is covered in the inside pages particularly the overseas pages and these pages cover all overseas news. So there is many competitions among news items to meet the criteria of news values discussed earlier. Many details and facts about Iran tend to be left out in order to allow for demands of news from other countries on the same pages. But who decides which news is important and which is not? This is actually the crux of the issue and "news judgement", as discussed earlier, tends to creep into those decisions.

Time constraint is also a feature of daily newspapers.

Journalists do not have time to cover the incident in too much detail i.e. history and background information and they have little time to check information with other sources. To illustrate this point Hajhir Teimourian of The Times gives an example of how journalists are working under pressure of time. When the Salman Rushdie affair broke, his editor put Rushdie's book, The Satanic Verses, in front of him and told him "you have one hour to write 700 words". Teimourian knew he could not read the book in one hour so he started telephoning people who had reviewed the book. He struggled for one hour but at the end he had written a piece about the book. He explained that if he had the whole day he would have searched for better sources and probably would have read some chapters (Teimourian, The Times, 90).

The question to ask at this stage is, does space and time constraint affect the coverage? Most journalists consider that these constraints might lead to "oversimplification" and "stereotyping" of leading players in the drama, especially in the popular press (Davies, DM; Wade, DT; Mortimer, FT; Colvin, ST; Morris, I; Bullock, IS). In addition some argue that space constraint forces the journalists to use labels or "shorthand" to describe events and people. To them, it is quite admissible to use labels even though it is confusing (Woollacott, G; Colvin, ST; 90). The labels issue will be discussed later.

Language

Language barrier is another constraint mentioned by all journalists. Almost none of the journalists, except Harvey Morris of The Independent and Hajhir Teimourian of The Times, speak the Farsi language. Hajhir Teimourian is Iranian and

speaks the language perfectly. Harvey Morris learned the language when he stayed for one year in Tehran 1979-1980 as Reuter chief of bureau. The problem is, as Morris puts it that he cannot communicate well, "not enough to interview anyone", but if he hears the radio he "could identify what subjects are being talked about" (Morris, 1990). Of the other journalists, most of them know a few Farsi and Arabic words such as "Imam", "Majlis", "Wilayat al-faqih", "Baseej", "Fatwa", "Pasdaran", "Hizbollah", "Hujato al-islam", "Faqih", "Sharia" and so on, picked up in Tehran or from Iranians in the West.

The use of such terms and names in the coverage often reinforces certain stereotypes of Iran, particularly when they are not spelled correctly every time they are reported. For instance the word "Fatwa" appeared with and without "h" at the end of it. The word "Wilayat al-faqih" in one of the reports became "Vilayat al-Vaqih" in another. The word "Shia" took two more different spellings "Shiit" and "Shi'ite". This confusion in the coverage of Islamic names and concepts added obscurity to the already perceived frightening image of Islam.

On the other hand readers in the West cannot identify with these terms in their Farsi and Arabic origins because they are not properly explained in news stories due to the pressure of time and the limitation of space and due to the journalists unfamiliarity with some of the meaning of these terms. For instance the word "mahdur ad-damm" in one of the editorials on Salman Rushdie was not properly explained and was used in a frightening context "...mahdur ad-damm: warriors against God whose unclean blood is to be shed as a religious duty..." (The Times, 15/2/1989).

Mortimer, wrote a book about Islam, Faith and Power in which he explained in English most of these Arabic and Farsi words for the sake of journalists who are covering Iran and Islam. He agrees with the argument that misuse of Farsi words may reinforce stereotypes and prefers to find English translations for the technical terms. He argues that if there are too many foreign words in English newspapers, journalists might give the impression that they are talking about "a completely different world which is dominated by a very obscure concept with strange and unpronounceable names and it will make it more difficult for readers to identify with the people" (Mortimer, FT, 90).

Journalists were asked in the interviews how desirable it was to know the language, and if they know it does it affect the quality of the coverage? Most of them replied that in an ideal world they like to know the language but because of certain difficulties they cannot learn it. So, when they go and cover some events in Iran they have an interpreter, and in many occasions they do not need him because most Iranian officials speak either English or French. Some would argue it is a drawback not to know the language because it is not possible to read Iranian newspapers or listen to the radio, or talk directly to people in the street and that tends to affect the quality of the coverage. Mortimer says that not knowing the language "...would certainly affect the competitiveness of the coverage, and a certain level of reality is available to you and then you become dependent on an interpreter with obviously the risk that you will be influenced by his judgement and you would not know".

Most of the journalists agree that resident

correspondents in Iran should learn the language. But for the regional correspondent i.e. Middle East correspondent who covers more then one country, they say it is preferable for him to learn Arabic because it is spoken in large numbers of countries there, and Farsi is just spoken in Iran and in the south of the Soviet Union.

In the coverage of foreign news, it is an advantage for foreign correspondents to know the language of the reported country. It allows them to monitor the development in the coverage of the country's own mass media and it gives them a wider variety of sources (i.e. beyond sources who speak foreign languages).

The issue of knowing or not knowing the language in the coverage of foreign affairs embodies the unresolved problem between specialist correspondents and generalist ones. Specialists believe that correspondents should learn the language of the reported country and be familiar with the intricacies of its socio-political culture. On the other hand generalists believe correspondents are like "Firemen" they move from one place to another for the quest of a "good" news story no matter if they know the language or not. The problem for generalists as emphasised by Flora Lewis, The Time's bureau chief in Paris, is that correspondents under this category might end up knowing nothing about the variety of stories they have to cover in different countries (Lewis, 1980).

Most journalists who had covered Iran were generalists and cover places such as Iran, Egypt, Turkey or Israel without lengthy residence in one place. The same journalists cover places in South Africa or Eastern Europe (e.g. David Hirst, G; John Ellison, DE). One cannot expect them to know

the language of every country they go to. The problem is inherent in the theory of generalism rather than with the journalists themselves. Economic consideration is one of the essential factors behind this theory. Having a resident correspondent in the reported country is very costly. It would be less expensive to send correspondents abroad to cover important stories. The problem is enhanced when coverage of foreign places comes from journalists located in the reporting country e.g. London, Washington, and Paris as in the case of many themes in the coverage of Iran and Iran-related affairs.

Lack of expertise

Another constraint mentioned by some journalists is the lack of expertise and shortage of information on Iran. Martin Woollacott explains that people who have an in-depth knowledge of Iran are relatively rare in the West, and the number of journalists who have any great background on that country is small. Woollacott, supported by George Brock, say that this is due to the shortage of information coming out of Iran and to the access problem. He states that in the first decade of the revolution, experts and journalists were mainly "watching from outside" (Woollacott, The Guardian, 90; Brock, The Times, 90). This state of affairs does not help journalists and experts to be kept informed about the internal development of the revolution.

Budget

The budget consideration is a fairly important constraint discussed by more than half of the journalists. Newspapers often cannot afford to station a staff

correspondent in Tehran. They could afford to keep one correspondent in the whole Middle East and this is what most serious newspapers do. The popular papers do not have this problem because most of them do not have a Middle East correspondent and mostly they depend on international news agencies for news which is much cheaper for them.

The West and Islam

A constraint mentioned by some journalists is the relationship between the West and Islam. This constraint started with the first direct confrontation between Iran and the West when a group of Iranian students occupied the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979 and took the diplomats and the employees hostages for 444 days. Martin Woollacott explains that this is a broader constraint which is the result of Islam and the West looking at things with different eyes. He argues that when you bring into focus revolutionary Islam, as in Iran, the atmosphere of conflict will be increased and the Salman Rushdie affair is a case in point. But Woollacott believes that most "intelligent journalists" are aware of that constraint and try to bear it in mind (Woollacott, Guardian, 90).

Harvey Morris talks about a point related to that issue and considers that prejudice might stem from the bad relationship between the West and Islam and might lead some journalists to say "nasty things" about Iran which is perceived "as less friendly and less stable" (Morris, Independent, 90). Mortimer argues that this constraint tends to affect the coverage generally, especially in the popular press. But he says that one must recognise that "...journalists are part of the culture. They share the

failings and the imperfections of the society to which they belong". He argues that you cannot say that all journalists are good or all bad in that sense "Some of them are very good, some of them are very bad and most of them in between". Mortimer takes an analytical view and mentions the Rushdie affair commenting that he was upset:

> "...by the degree of prejudice I encountered in British society and even highly educated British society. This is the sad thing, it is not confined to the Sun readers, people have very negative views of Islam ... I am afraid the phenomenon is much deeper and much higher up. You find people in this newspaper, people who have lost patience with the idea of Islam, they don't want to know...they say forget, these people are fanatics or whatever. Somehow there seems to be a sort of conspiracy... no it is not a conspiracy... as if it was a conspiracy that almost every news item that happens somehow reinforces this whether it is Azerbijan, Kashmir or wherever it happens. We are always somehow persuaded to see it as the Muslims being the villains and the bad guys ...it is to me absurd, at best an oversimplification sometimes" (Mortimer, FT, 90).

These constraints mentioned by the interviewed journalists are explained as drawbacks in the coverage of Iran and the journalists themselves are aware of them, but it seems they are unavoidable and contribute to the coloured image of Iran as already seen in the content analysis chapter.

After reviewing the views of the journalists towards Iran, the criteria of news selection and the obstacles facing the journalists in the coverage of the first decade of Iran,

it is important at this stage to move closer to the content of news coverage and ask journalists about the sources of news and their strategies and about the labels used to describe Iranians and other Muslims and their ideological perspectives. We start first with the sources of news as one of the essential trends in our thesis, especially when most of these sources are government officials.

Sources of news and their influence

Journalists in the process of covering news about Iran look for authoritative sources who occupy a recognised political and social position in society. Studies have defined them as the "authorised knowers" (e.g. Ericson et al, 1989) whose expertise enables them to deliver particular messages which fulfil their aims. Most of the time they have a vested interest in discrediting their opponents. Journalists tend to identify with legitimate sources who are mostly Western sources e.g. officials, experts and Iranian opposition members who are given access because they are defined as worthy victims who deserve to be covered favourably. At the same time Iranian sources, in spite of their adoption as sources, were not considered as "respectable and reformists" (Gitlin, 1980) and consequently they tended to be treated with suspicion by the British journalists and their definitions are always double-checked with Iranian opposition sources, Western experts and officials.

When journalists were asked about the sources they depended on in their coverage of Iran, almost all of them mentioned officials in the West and to a lesser degree in Iran, experts and academics, and the exiled community of

Iranians who are living in the West. These four categories of sources form the backdrop of news coverage of Iran, and the degree of direct contact with these sources and the degree of quotation differs from one paper to another, especially when it comes to the differentiation between functions of the quality and popular press. The former tends to depend on its correspondents whereas the latter depends mostly on international agencies.

Western Official Sources

Western sources are mostly Western official sources and most of these officials are American and British as chapter 5 has shown (see table 10). Here we come to the importance of these sources in deciding what news discourse about Iran there is in the coverage, particularly in relation to the American official sources whose government has been involved in direct clashes with Iran over the first ten years of the revolution. Some journalists would argue that the state of tension between the United States and Iran has caused both countries to engage in a verbal war which affects the coverage because it cannot be ignored by journalists. Harvey Morris explains that what the Americans say might be quoted occasionally, but it has no particular merit for the Independent newspaper because whatever happens "the state department would automatically put forward a negative interpretation" (Morris, The Independent, 90). Edward Mortimer and John Bullock consider that there is a lot of truth in the accusation that the Americans have been engaged in "disinformation" about Iran and argue that it is not "conscious disinformation" but a view of the world which supports American foreign policy. Both of them consider that

journalists are aware of these outlooks and try to decode these American messages and comment on them (Mortimer, Financial Times; Bullock, Independent on Sunday, 90).

In addition to these journalists, Nigel Wade and Hajhir Teimourian both agree that the American war department's speed in supplying an enormous amount of information has much to do with the domination of the American viewpoint in the coverage of certain incidents related to Iran, e.g. shooting of the Iranian Airbus. The daily newspapers are fighting against time and the quicker the source is, the better it will be represented in the coverage (Nigel Wade, Daily Telegraph; Teimourian, The Times, 90). The question now to be asked is how do the journalists view the interaction of the press with officials vis-a-vis Iran? Generally most journalists do believe that government officials try to manage British news about Iran. They believe that it is even more the case in the United States where government news management promotes the government foreign policy line. They argue that news management in Britain is mainly limited to domestic issues where a conflict of interest between government and opposition over internal matters becomes apparent and allows the government to exploit the situation in its own interests. Journalists believe that the Foreign Office News Department does not constitute a major source of news for the press, mainly because their Middle East experts lack information due to the political and diplomatic crises between Iran and Britain. On the other hand, they argue that the Foreign Office cannot be ignored by journalists and is often consulted on matters like the Western hostages, Salman Rushdie or political relations with Iran. The Foreign Office is also sometimes asked for background information about

certain issues related to Iran.
Most journalists are interested in personal contacts with officials rather than going to briefings or press conferences. This kind of informal interaction is as important as the formal one (Gurvitch et al , 1977) where confidential exchange of views are presented and mutual purposes are realised. Through those informal relations with officials "most of the important stories come out" (George Brock, The Times, 90).

However, most journalists interviewed, especially those who work for the quality press, believe that press contact with official sources tends to influence the coverage of Iran, especially at a time where checking with Iranian official sources is almost impossible mainly because of the access problem. The influence of Western government sources on news coverage is rooted in the view the government has about Iran and the way officials look at the evaluation of the revolution inside Iran and in the world. Journalists argue that the press tend to reflect these views and attitudes of the government which are sometimes "biassed" and other times "objective". Here journalists like John Bullock and Harvey Morris and Mortimer, Gowers and Teimourian consider that the government has a vested interest in promoting its view of Iran. The officials tend to reflect government policy through their statements and information, but journalists who are specialists and who have covered the Middle East for a long time know if these governments views bear some truth, and if journalists doubt any information, they may say so in the coverage. Most journalists insist that what they say must be reported because these are "British issues and British ministers" (Bullock, Independent

on Sunday; Morris, The Independent; Mortimer, The Financial Times; Gowers, The Financial Times; Temourian, The Times, 90).

But does the interaction between the press and officials influence all papers to the same degree? Bullock explains that the government view of a country has an effect on news and the press in general, but

> "...it has less effect on papers like ours, great effect on popular press in particular and papers which support the government, like the Daily Mail and the Daily Telegraph which tend to follow the government line. For instance if the government is talking about the mad Mullahs they [the papers] will tend to use the same sort of words" (Bullock, The Independent on Sunday, 90).

The data emerging from the content analysis has demonstrated that government official sources have greater influence on the popular press particularly when a foreign "enemy" is involved, but there are many cases e.g. Rushdie affair, hostages, and oil where the official influence is equal in both the popular and quality press.

However, the question to ask at this stage is, do journalists check out the officials' versions of reality about Iran? To the popular press the choice is limited. First of all they depend on International News Agencies e.g. Reuter, AP and they suppose that what they write is accurate otherwise "we could never rely on them" (Davies, Daily Mirror, 90). Second, checking with Iran is difficult. Two of the four journalists working for the popular press try to check with the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA). But IRNA

is not treated as a highly respected source of news, especially when journalists try to check some Western officials' versions and "they are never sure who to believe" (Peter Birket, Daily Mail, 90). This opinion about IRNA is shared with some journalists working for the quality press who consider IRNA in London as merely a reflection of the Iranian official line with people working there having an interest in putting forward an Iranian government view. For some journalists quoting and consulting IRNA is like quoting and consulting "government spokesmen" (Nigel Wade, Daily Telegraph, 90).

Journalists working for the quality press have a better variety of sources with whom they could check. These sources include Western embassies in Tehran, diplomats, IRNA, experts, academics, specialist journalists, Iranian opposition members. But again the pressure of time does not allow much checking or cross checking. Also Western sources are treated by Western journalists as a source in which there is no lack of confidence unlike non-Western sources. This is why most Western sources are treated with less suspicion than the Iranians.

Experts

Generally, journalists have difficulties in checking information coming from the West concerning Iran, because most of them say access to Iran is so limited. The people whom journalists check with are mainly Western academics and experts who themselves have "second or third hand information" and lack adequate expertise on Iran as Martin Woollacott explains (Woollacott, Guardian, 90).

Experts, as one of the main sources journalists refer

to, are usually Westerners and less often Iranians. Western experts include Fred Halliday of the London School of economics, Sir Anthony Parsons the former British Ambassador to Iran during the Shah's rule, Staff in the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, The Royal Institute on International Affairs (RIIA) in London, a few Professors in some Middle East departments in the British universities, John Bullock, Harvey Morris and Hajhir Teimourian and other journalists who are considered as Middle East specialists, Amir Taheri in Paris who is a well known Iranian exile and who wrote some books on Islamic fundamentalism and the former president of Iran, Bani Sader (Iranian former president) who lives in exile in Paris. These names and institutions are the academics and experts on Iran most mentioned by journalists working for the quality press and often referred to in the coverage. Are these experts and academics considered trustworthy and credible sources? Generally yes, most journalists learn from their track record whether any particular expert really knows what is going on in Iran. Some journalists like Andrew Gowers would argue that it is possible to get different views from different experts when you consult them about Iran. That is confusing but journalists try to employ these opinions on the basis of what they already know and fit them into some sort of context, but they should be cautious of these different analyses. Gowers considers that some newspapers feel the need to harden what they hear from experts in order to make it sound incontrovertible fact and this is wrong (Gowers, Financial Times, 90).

Other journalists like Edward Mortimer would consider

the opinion of experts or academics as interesting "...but journalists have problems with them because they don't give a direct answer to the questions. And their opinions are based on academic analysis rather than information. Whereas the officials could have the direct answer" (Mortimer, Financial Times, 90).

Iranian official sources

Other sources of news mentioned by journalists are the Iranian officials, which includes the religious figures within the country. Having difficulties in gaining access to Iran, almost all journalists resort to "second hand" coverage of Iran. That is to say they depend on the Iranian mass media particularly Iranian Radio which is monitored by different bodies such as Reuter, AP, AFP, UPI and some international newspapers in Nicosia-Cyprus, as well as the BBC monitoring service in Caversham in England. Almost none of the newspapers have their own monitoring service except the Daily Telegraph which has its own people who monitor from time to time Tehran Radio. The Times uses the services of Hajhir Teimourian who listens regularly to Tehran Radio. Harvey Morris is the only journalist who actually uses the BBC monitoring service regularly. To him it is one of the main materials he uses in the coverage, because it includes just the Iranian officials' acts and comments without any kind of interference from any Western sources.

Most journalists use IRNA statements, but these are often quoted indirectly through the monitoring of Tehran Radio. IRNA in London, after the break of diplomatic ties between Britain and Iran is often categorised by journalists as an Iranian government source and treated with suspicion.

If there is a news story and they need an Iranian version journalists call the head of IRNA office in London, Hamid Hushanji and ask him about the government's attitudes vis-a-vis certain issues e.g. the Western hostages in Beirut. This was confirmed by Hushanji when I informally interviewed him. Almost all journalists blame Iran for not being adequately represented like other sources, particularly Western sources, because they do not allow journalists to visit the country freely or to talk to officials when they need to. Some would argue that if Iran lifted the constraint of access there would be a better coverage of Iran in the press (Colvin, ST; Wade, DT; Mortimer, FT; McGrory, DE, 90).

However, being granted a better coverage in return for Iranian offers of permanent access to journalists is an oversimplification of the issue because many studies of the coverage of Third world countries in the Western press has demonstrated that having access to the country does not mean a better coverage (Masmoudi, 1979; Kandil, 1984). The issue of "angle selection" by correspondents and "parachuting journalists" and even "Taxi journalism" are some examples of why the media fail to understand the intricacies of politics in Third world countries. Even when Iranian officials are quoted they have to fit within the criteria of Western news values which is linked to the interests of the West and the needs of the readership, or which is related to the implications of what they say for the Middle East and the rest of the world, as seen earlier on in this chapter.

Journalists mention that mostly they will cover events of importance, particularly events related to Western hostages, major developments in the Iran-Iraq war, "Islamic fundamentalism", tension between the West and Iran, internal

problems, the Salman Rushdie affair and so on, more than events related to economic development to which only one or two journalists would turn their attention. Leaders and officials mainly will be quoted within the range of these themes, whether the journalists are granted access to Iran or not. The substitute for direct contact with Iranian officials is the Iranian mass media which is the top Iranian source quoted within the range of the available Iranian sources (see chapter 5, table 11). It is monitored hourly by the international news agencies and frequently quotes Iranian government or state figures.

Iranian Opposition Sources

Quoting Iranian sources other than the official and religious sources or the pro-Islamic Iranian sources is another feature of coverage of Iran. The opposition groups such as the Mujahedeen Khaleq, ex-politicians, Monarchists and journalists are often quoted for their "information" and "expertise" on Iran. All these groups and individuals live in places like London, Paris, New York and Washington. Most of them are in exile and they form, as some journalist put it, "the exiled Iranian community". Once they are known as "exile community" it is inferred that these people are opposing the Islamic regime in Iran and what they have their own political outlook for the future of Iran. Also some of them are active militarily and have bases in Iraq like "Mujahedeen Khaleq" (people's fighters).

Data emerging from the interviews disclosed that the Iranian opposition groups, especially "Mujahedeen Khaleq", are very active in relation to the press. They have an

office in London and they tend to phone and fax the press if they have some news. They have published many documents and have good links with some journalists, which have been established through the years. Almost all journalists, when they are asked about the opposition mention that they cover and consult them as a political opposition body which has their own ideas and strategies, and as a source of information and expertise on political trends of society and revolution in Iran.

In spite of the awareness of some journalists that the information supplied by the Mujahedeen about Iran may be unreliable they are still used for several reasons. The first one is that they speak the Farsi language, the second they have their own links and sources inside Iran and other places, the third is that they have been living in the West for some time which enables them to understand Western societies and act as "go-between for the English, French and the Iranians" (Woollacott, Guardian, 90). Journalists like Harvey Morris consider that using the opposition as a source of information is a double edged sword because some of these people have not been to Iran since before the revolution and may not have adequate sources of news inside Iran. Much of the information is gained because they "rely on gossip" which they pick up when phoning their friends and relatives in Iran. Then "they present this gossip as news" (Morris, The Independent, 90).

How satisfactory is it to rely on the opposition? Most journalists say that it has never been satisfactory to rely on them no matter how professional they are. Journalists have discovered through their contacts with the opposition that they tend to "colour your views", often "exaggerate the

weakness of the regime", they "don't tell the truth" and "their analysis of events turns out to be so frequently wrong" (Bullock, Independent on Sunday; Woollacott, Guardian, 90). Here arises the point of the journalists' own background and experience of the area which enables them to decide whether the opposition are credible or not. Even this is difficult because journalists themselves have not been in regular contact with Iran, especially after 1982, so their expertise of the place tends to be fading because they lose track of the development of the revolution. Harvey Morris one of the very few journalists who knows Iran well enough was confused when the Mujahedeen, over the years, claimed that Iran is executing its political opponents. His journalistic instinct told him to treat these claims with scepticism but he was never sure whether it was true or not because he had not been inside the country since 1980. Morris mentions that the opposition claims of government execution of political opponents become an accepted matter of fact in most of the Western press. In early 1990 the United Nations report about these claims said that there was no evidence that this happened at all. The press later discovered, that the people who were executed were drug traffickers and according to Islamic law these people should be executed (Morris, The Independent, 90). This is only one example, other examples are mentioned by journalists where reports about the internal situation in Iran have proved later to be not correct, or to be exaggerated.

Among the individuals, Iranian ex-politicians and journalists living in the West mentioned by journalists who are considered as sources of information are the former president Bani Sader, Amir Taheri, Hajhir Teimourian of the

Times, Safa Haeri of the Sunday Times and some Arabic newspapers based in London, Baqer Moin working for the BBC world service, Scheherzade Domeshkhu working for the Financial Times, and the head of IRNA Hamid Hushanji. Half of these journalists cannot go back to Iran and live permanently in the West. The other half have their own Iranian passport as has been confirmed by some British and Iranian journalists (Mortimer; Morris; Teimourian; and Hushanji; 90).

This completes the presentation of the four categories or sources of information mentioned by journalists; Western sources, experts, Iranian official sources, Iranian opposition, and their different degrees of influence on the coverage. It will be examined how some of these sources have influenced the mostly unsuccessful press predictions on Iran over the past eleven years of the revolution.

Press predictions

Western sources and opposition sources have played a great role in the "uselessness" (Harvey Morris, 90) of press predictions concerning issues in Iran. Almost half of the journalists interviewed argue that most press predictions about certain sequences of development in Iran have been "wrong". Colvin comments that:

> "Many sources predicted that Iran would release Terry Waite 15 times over. They predicted that Khomeini was in trouble...I think it is a very difficult country to predict anything...and I think that the press predictions have very often been wrong" (Colvin, Sunday Times, 90).

Harvey Morris takes a more critical view of press predictions and considers that:

> "British press predictions on Iran have been totally useless. For years and years and years people said once Khomeini died the whole place is going to fall apart... predictions have been very bad. Predictions in general don't have much value in newspapers" (Morris, Independent, 90).

Martin Woollacott examines the role of the Iranian opposition and argues that journalists have learned to take their statements with "...a pinch of salt" because for many years, for instance, they have been saying that "the Iranian revolution is at the point of fragmentation, collapse, destruction in one way or another...and it did not happen". (Woollacott, Guardian,90). As was shown in the last chapter (chapter 6), the Guardian was one of the papers which was involved in the "trap" of press predictions which often convey an unintended false expectation. After the death of Ayatollah Khomeini the Guardian predicted that there will be chaos in Iran and it said: "But a new upheaval in Iran... now becomes a possibility and, indeed, over time, a likelihood" (The Guardian, 5/6/89).

John Bullock argues that since the early days of the revolution people kept saying that after the Ayatollah there would be chaos. With time people have seen that claim fall away and it looks "...very obvious that the regime is ensuring a smooth transition". He mentions that some press fall into the prediction trap, others understand the idea of "smooth transition" and cover that. But still Bullock considers that other predictions on Iran have proven to be

right e.g. the instability when there was fighting between Iranian government forces on the one hand and the Mujahedeen and the Kurds on the other hand in the early days of the revolution (Bullock, The Independent on Sunday, 90). David McGrory agrees that some press predictions on Iran "are wide of the mark", and considers newspapers' predictions of "violence and civil war and even fragmentation have not proved to be right" (David McGrory, The Daily Express, 90).

Journalists' predictions on Iran reflect indirectly the sources' attempt to manage news on Iran. Sources like Western officials and Iranian opposition take advantage of their authorised position and try to manipulate the journalists in order to reach certain political goals e.g. the opposition attempts to exaggerate the harassment of their members in Iran.

In the decade of coverage of Iran, British journalists have interacted with particular selected sources with whom they can identify. These sources, particularly the Western officials and experts, as well as the Iranian opposition have been used regularly to define news about Iran and Islam.

After the discussions on the sources of information and press predictions based on information provided by the source, especially the Mujahedeen, it is necessary to turn to one of the main dimensions of press ideology as seen in the content analysis of the coverage of Iran which is the use of labels.

Labels

As is argued in the content analysis chapter three major professional and ideological dimensions influence the way the press use labels to describe politics, Islam and

personalities in Iran. These are the journalists' interaction with sources, the role of the dominant cultural values and the journalists' attitudes towards Iran and Islam. In this section journalists express a strong subjective attitude towards Iran and Islam which is revealed in their usage of some evaluative words which show ethnocentricity and prejudice. The Journalists' ideological bias in the coverage of Iran is very similar to the British journalists' ideological bias in their coverage of the Soviet Union. McNair (1988) has demonstrated convincingly that journalists' attitudes towards the Soviet Union is often revealed in the strong language they use to describe the Soviet Union's affairs. Interestingly enough, journalists working for the popular and quality press have great similarities in their ideological attitudes towards the use of negative labels employed in the coverage of Iran. The aim of this section is to see how and why journalists use labels to describe Iran.

Almost all journalists consider labels as necessary shorthand and their use is acceptable in news situations where they tend to choose specific words to encompass the complexities of the politics and religion in Iran, mainly for the readers who need a quick reference to what is going on as well as to save some space. For instance, half of the journalists talk about the power struggle within Iran and explain that the use of words like "moderates" and "hard-liners" or "radicals" illustrate the point of the political division in words understandable to the readers. But even these straightforward labels create for some journalists and, consequently some readers, confusion and doubt as to whether their use is accurate and, in some cases, whether they oversimplify a situation.

Nigel Wade argues that the use of such labels is confusing and not just in relation to Iran but also to other countries like the Soviet Union. In the USSR the press is talking about the conservatives and radicals but "actually the conservative are the most extreme communists". Also Wade refers to the example of the Vietnam war when words like "Hawks" and "Doves" were used in the American press. To him this is simplistic because it does not represent the accurate trends of politics of the U.S. Even so, Wade considers their usage as a "necessary way of conveying the broad outline of a situation", but he is aware that "it does not take into account the full colouring of the range of opinions" (Wade, Daily Telegraph, 90).

Harvey Morris considers labels as relative terms and not "definitive descriptions". Their use goes back to the desire to identify "who are the good guys and who are the bad guys". In that context Morris argues that this is the reason why Rafsanjani is called "moderate" and why Muhtashami is called "hard-liner". Morris prefers to call Rafsanjani a "pragmatist" rather than use the "inaccurate" label "moderate" because Rafsanjani acts sometimes in a moderate fashion and other times in a way in which might be perceived as being radical. To Morris the word pragmatist "does not have a negative overtone".

Hajhir Teimourian has the same problem as these journalists. He finds the use of some labels confusing. Teimourian uses the word "radical" to describe Muhtashami, but he says that in the classic Western sense "this is not very right because here (Britain) radical means left wing, someone who wants to change society along left wing lines, but in Iran these people want to take society back fourteen

centuries. So it cannot be right" (Hajhir Temourian, The Times, 90).

Most labels used in the coverage of Iran (chapter 5-table 20) do not demonstrate the neutrality of journalists. They are often words which infer a negative description of events and persons as it was discussed in the presentation of some of the macro-themes and labels (chapter 5). Labels like "fundamentalist", "threat", "terrorist", "fanatic", "extremist", "blood thirsty", "mob and thug", "zealot", "villain", "mad Mullah", and "savage" are the sort of descriptions used by the press. Sometimes they are used because they were attributed directly to certain sources, other times they are emphasised by the press own evaluation of the actions of the Iranians and their followers.

These labels were discussed with the interviewed journalists. Their own views about their usages were a mixture of personal and professional judgement.

Most journalists working for the popular press and few for the quality press believe that most of these words are justified because they are based on what is happening i.e. they are based on "reality". For instance John Ellison defends the use of the label "terrorist" and "mobs" in describing the Iranians and says that "if anybody behaved like that here they would be branded terrorists or mobs" (John Ellison, Daily Express, 90). Woollacott, compares the executions in Iran with medieval Europe where many people were hanged and killed without proper trials. He labels these acts, particularly in the early stages of Islamic Iran, as "medieval" and "merciless" (Woollacott, Guardian, 90).

A strong ideological perspective is traced in the opinion of most journalists working for the popular press

where Western values are a platform for judgement of what is going on in Iran. Nicholas Davis speaks of "us" and "them" and says that:

> "We in Western Europe think it is barbaric to cut someone's head off... because they committed adultery, we think it is barbaric to cut someone's hand off because they have stolen something, and because these are such final acts I could never agree they were not barbaric acts and I would hope that Iran would cease to do them. I think if they cease to do them, carry out those punishments, they would find far more understanding people from Western Europe and the United States looking at their domestic policies" (Nicholas Davis, Daily Mirror, 90).

Ellison considers, on the same point, that when "Khomeini took over he introduced more harsh measures in terms of repression". He mentions that people collectively working in the Daily Express and probably the readership believe that Iran itself is responsible for a lot of negative labels, "they create their own image" (John Ellison, Daily Express, 90).

The discussion with most of the journalists working for the quality press is more analytical and more a re-assessment of what words have been used to describe Iran. Most of them, like Marie Colvin, George Brock, Hajhir Temourian (who work for newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch), and Martin Woollacott (The Guardian) generally have the same attitude about the use of labels, especially in their representation of reality, such as labels like "fundamentalist", "zealot", "extremist", and "radical" (Colvin, The Sunday Times; Brock

and Teimourian, The Times; Woollacott, The Guardian, 90).

Edward Mortimer argues that there is not an absolute objectivity in the use of labels. Mostly, he says, journalism is about explaining what is happening and how and why it is happening and journalists have to present particular peculiarities of each culture, the history of each people, geography and all the specialist factors which explain the way people react and act. Mortimer argues that the trouble is that sometimes journalists use words which tend to carry "an implicit strong moral judgement" and journalists have to be aware of them. To illustrate his point Mortimer mentions the labels "fundamentalism" and "terrorism". He argues that "fundamentalism" is a word he does not like to use because it has different meaning in English if it is the result of direct translation of the Arabic word "usuli". He mentions that the French press (Le Monde) prefers to use the word "integralist" but "it does not work in English, it has no meaning". Mortimer prefers the word "Islamisim" which some French scholars use, and he argues that the essence of the idea behind this word is that Islam has to be an "ism" which is struggling in the market place of the world of "ism" as is in "Capitalism", "Liberalism" and "Marxism".

Harvey Morris agrees with the analysis of Edward Mortimer and considers that the word "fundamentalist is totally inaccurate in relation to Islam" as it describes the social beliefs of particular groups of people but it does not describe the theology. Morris explains that by the nature of Islamic religion, which is not like "Christian fundamentalism" they have an entirely different attitude to life. "Fundamentalism" is the acceptance of what the Koran

says, therefore everybody's fundamental if he is a Muslim. Therefore "this is the wrong word to use" and it does have a negative meaning in society. But Morris argues that you cannot escape it because this word and other words "come to take on a particular meaning which readers understand" (Morris, The Independent, 90).

John Bullock and Andrew Gowers, like Harvey Morris consider that "fundamentalist" and other labels are not "satisfactory" and sometimes are not "right" but they give the readers an idea about what is going on in Iran (Bullock, The Independent on Sunday; Gowers, Financial Times, 90).

The label "terrorism" is another example discussed by Edward Mortimer who views it from the angle of its linkage with people and countries. He mentions that Robert Fisk (recently The Independent correspondent in Beirut) in his book Pity the Nation discusses the use of this word when he worked for the Times. Mortimer remembered that Fisk made a great fuss to stop journalists in The Times using the word "terrorist" except in inverted commas because "the Israelis used it as a description for the Palestinians or anybody to do with the PLO". Mortimer explains here about the danger of being influenced by the place journalists are reporting from and quotes Robert Fisk's complaints when he considers that "reporting from Israel tends to influence the way journalist pick up labels when they are on assignments there". Mortimer warns that "journalists do have responsibility not to go along with that... one has to be careful". He agrees that this situation might be the case for Iran where most of the journalists covering Iran are located in the West and where they tend to pick up words e.g. "terrorist" put forward by Western governments to describe the Iranian regime and its

leadership (Mortimer, Financial Times, 90).

Other journalists like Martin Woollacott and Harvey Morris talk about the linkages between the labels, such as the linkages between "shiite", "terrorist", Ayatollah Khomeini, "fanatic", "extremist", and "zealot" as well as the linkages of the opposition "Mujahedeen" with the labels "exile", and "guerrilla". They consider that these are "unavoidable linkages inspite of the fact they do some people some injustice" (Woollacott, The Guardian; Morris, The Independent, 90).

The ideological dimension of the use of labels in the coverage of Iran is strongly noted as it is seen through the discussions with the journalists, where a mixture of professional constraint, needs of the readership and the cultural values of British society combined with the journalists' attitudes help to construct this ideological use of labels.

Conclusion

The Journalists' coverage of Iran and Islam in the first decade of the Islamic revolution has been a mixture of the journalists' professional ideologies and their own attitudes towards Iran which is reflected in the process of interaction with particular selected sources of news e.g., Western officials and Iranian opposition and in the language they use to describe Islam and Muslims in Iran. Journalists do not escape the influence of the dominant cultural values in Western society in the selection of sources and the way they frame news which is mostly in line with Western interests and public interests in general, as well as the national interests in particular e.g., Western hostages, oil, threat

of Islamic fundamentalism and so on.

However, the journalists' experience in the coverage of a foreign culture which is different to that of the West tends to support media researchers' criticisms that journalists' professional values and their ideological bias lead them to portray a certain version of reality and frame it in a specific way to make it look as if it is the whole reality. The types of evidence presented in this chapter show that British journalists in their coverage of Iranian and Islamic affairs have continued this trend.

After the introduction of three types of evidence in the last three chapters, an over all sociological interpretation for the way news about Iran is constructed will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF NEWS ABOUT IRAN AND ISLAM

This chapter attempts a synthesis of Chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7 to establish sociological interpretations of how news about Iran is covered and why it is covered in the way that it is. Obviously, there is no single or simple explanation for the way news about Iran is presented in the press, as it is seen in the last three chapters. But for the sake of clarity a handful of explanatory factors, which suggest in a broader sense, the way foreign news is constructed in the Western media, must be singled out and explained to illustrate the process by which the news about Iran and Islam is constructed. This chapter will examine these factors and their role in presenting an ideological image of Iran and Islam in the first decade of its revolution.

Three major factors which demonstrate press ideology influence the way news about Iran is constructed. These are; the source-journalists interaction; cultural resonance and journalists' professional and individual ideologies. Because of the complexity of the coverage of Iran over a long period of time all three factors are equally important. Some greater significance is seen in the sources' activities

because of their vital role in defining "reality" on Iran and the Middle East. Other complementary factors will be mentioned in the process of explaining the main factors.

Source-journalist interaction

The political and religious development inside Iran and the Middle East as well as the West's political, economic and military interests, or the national interests of the United States and Britain in particular decide the sort of sources of news the press use and select to define news about Iran and its revolution. Of course, a great deal of truth is in the explanation discussed by media researchers (e.g. Elliott and Golding, 1971; Croll, 1972; Gans, 1980; Ericson et al, 1987 and others) that the cultural identification and the cultural proximity play a major role in the selection of news sources. British journalists argue that Western sources are authorized sources and journalists could culturally identify with them because they more or less have in common the symbols of the British culture in particular and the Western culture in general. However, data emerging from the three types of evidence discussed in the last chapters suggest that there is a frame of "symbiotic dependence" between British journalists and the three types of Western and Iranian sources with whom the press could identify and which could be defined as legitimate sources.

The legitimation of certain types of sources is clearly visible in two ways: first in the value they represent i.e. what sort of principles do they carry and are these principles in line with the values of democracy and liberalism? Second in the activities they follow. What is

the aim of these activities? Against whom are these activities carried out? Are these activities in line with the interests of the West particularly the economic interests e.g. oil? Once these sources are legitimised they are guaranteed better access to the press and offered a great deal of possibility for the inclusion of their versions of reality. Most of the time their versions and perceptions are not cross-checked for two reasons: first they are considered authoritative, reliable and suitable; second the pressure of time factor in daily news production. As it is seen before, sources who are defined as illegitimate, as in the case of the Muslim source in the Salman Rushdie Affair have not been offered access to the press and if their versions have the chance to be included they are not taken at face-value but are always dealt with as propaganda and not a factual account.

Three kinds of sources, therefore, are viewed as the most legitimate sources in the coverage of Iran. these sources are:

1- The Western officials
2- The Western experts
3- The Iranian opposition.

Content analysis and the journalists have stressed the importance of these three categories of source and on behalf of other important sources such as the Iranian official sources and the Arab sources. Journalists try to escape the argument that they are inclined to these particular sources and often argue from a professional angle that the type of event imposes on the journalists the sort of sources they

must use. This is a valid point but one questions it by mentioning cases such as that of "the Islamic revolution and internal situation" in Iran where news about this macro-theme is always defined by experts and Iranian opposition groups rather than the Iranian officials. Also, why is news coming out of Iran always checked with Western officials and experts? Is not there a pressure of time (as with Western sources) which limits the journalists professional norms? Or is checking sources just applicable whenever Iranian officials are involved? Still a better explanation for the use of sources is the sociological interpretation of the legitimation of some sources and the deligitimation of others when political and social conformity becomes the main issue (Chomsky, 1989). It is necessary, with the danger of repeating some of what have already been discussed in the three previous chapters, to pin point the role of each of these three categories of sources in influencing news perception on Iran and Islam.

The Western officials

News about Iran has given preferred access to the ideological messages of people who occupy key political positions in Western government. These people are often defined as the "authorised knowers" who give a view of what is happening which is in line with their government foreign policy vis-a-vis the Middle East. Researchers like Stuart Hall and his colleagues (1978) consider that those people who are in power have privileged access, are "accredited sources" and become "primary definers" of news events.

Journalists in their coverage of Iran attribute and directly quote Western political figures and other Western

officials (see chapter 5) and consult on a regular basis with officials in the Foreign Office in London and some State Departments in the United States. Our study disclosed that any statement concerning Iran by President Reagan, Prime Minister Thatcher, American Vice-President Bush would be news. What they say is rarely treated with scepticism because of the positions they occupy. So, news about the Western interests in the Middle East, "Islamic fundamentalism", Western hostages, Iran-Iraq War, "terrorism" and the Rushdie affair defined by the Western leaders would be conveyed automatically in the coverage and granted an important amount of space. Most importantly it would not be treated critically by journalists unless there is a sort of break of Western political consensus which in our analysis happened in the treatment of "Irangate" where the Americans swapped some US hostages for money and spare parts to Iran and one aspect of the treatment of the Rushdie affair.

It is interesting to observe in the case of Iran that the Western official sources share a common ideological view towards Islam and Iran, except in two cases, and this view is clearly seen in the definitions of these officials towards major issues, such as the Islamic revolution, Iran-Iraq War and oil.

The "ideological contestation" notion to which some researchers adhere (e.g. Schudson, 1989) seems irrelevant when discussing Western sources in the coverage of foreign issues such as the affairs of Iran. It is more relevant in the coverage of domestic issues where party politics and pressure groups exert tremendous effort to campaign for certain political and social goals which are viewed as serving the interests of the public. The concept is

applicable in the arena of foreign news when we simplify the situation to Western sources and pro-Western on the one hand and pro-Iranian Islamic sources on the other. In this case one has to argue about the "ideological contestation" between two sets of different sources who are competing in the international political scene and who are actively trying to win access to the media, which would not be easy for the side who is defined as illegitimate contester. In this case this side would be Iran and its supporters e.g. Syria, Iraqi opposition, "party of God" in Lebanon for reasons argued in Chapter 5.

Journalists in their coverage of Iran tend to explain their greater interaction with Western official sources as a result of the restrictions imposed on Western journalists by Iran in not allowing regular visits to Iran and not permitting a staff correspondent to be stationed there. This is a valid accusation, but it does not illustrate the complexity of the coverage and the economic considerations where stationing a permanent correspondent abroad and paying regular visits to the reported country becomes a very costly matter for the media. This is why these days the media tend to assign a correspondent for a whole region e.g. Middle East correspondent, or depend on stringers. Most often they tend to cover the whole world from the centres of publication or broadcasting using foreign staff. Analysis disclosed that most correspondents who have covered Iran (58% of the Source/Author, Table 8, Chapter 5) are located in the West (48%, Table 9, Chapter 5) e.g. London, New York, and Paris. Their location in these major Western capitals allows the journalists greater interaction with Western officials and other sources like the experts and Iranian opposition. This

situation is welcomed by journalists firstly because they can culturally and politically identify with these sources, secondly it offers them the information they need (Sigal, 1973, 1986; Hall et al, 1978; Ericson et al, 1989), and thirdly it reduces the cost for searching for alternative sources who might not be defined as credible and legitimate (Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

As it is learned from the literature review, this state of close interaction between the journalists who are based in the West and the Western officials and other sources will lead the former to write for their sources (Chibnall, 1977; Gandy, 1982; Sigal, 1986). Therefore much of the content of news, where officials are concerned, is going to be ideologically biased towards the definitions of the people in power who try to project a view of what is happening in order to serve their interest.

Experts

Because of the nature of news production journalists tend to establish relationships with sources whose expertise could shed some light and give some background information to events observed in the life of the Islamic revolution. The Western experts and some Iranian experts, who are mostly anti-Islamic Iran (Akhater, 1990) constitute an important source of news for the press and their expertise is used regularly in the coverage of Iran, as most journalists working for the quality press agree.

A limited number of Western experts and Iranian experts are selected by the press for their individual expertise and for their representations of some important private organizations and institutions e.g. CSIS, IISS, RIIA as well

as for their representations of some governmental departments such as News Department of the Foreign Office in London. These limited numbers of experts exploit in many cases the definitions of many aspects of the politics of Iran, internally and externally. For instance, Sir Anthony Parsons, the former British Ambassador to Iran during the Shah's rule, was always consulted by journalists about the prospects of "Islamic fundamentalism" and the West's relationship with Iran. The Iranian exile expert Amir Taheri who has written several books on "Islamic fundamentalism" was always contacted by journalists to comment on Iranian and Islamic issues. He is always given access to write polemic pieces on Iranian anniversaries e.g. the anniversary of the Islamic revolution and Shia Islam for newspapers such as The Times and The Sunday Times. Most of the conclusions of his writings is that the Islamic revolution is bad, as in the article written in The Times on the tenth anniversary of the revolution (The Times, 1/2/89). Experts like Taheri and the former President of Iran, Bani Sader and others have a vested interest to convey specific images of Iran to win the battle of public opinion in achieving some sort of sympathy for their cause.

Experts generally have an independent opinion about Iranian affairs but, in many instances they tend to echo the interests of the West, which are sometimes formulated by themselves, and the dominant perceptions of Islam and the Middle East which are historically embedded in the era of the Crusaders and more recently Colonialism (see chapter 2). For instance "Islamic fundamentalism" is widely defined by the political establishment and other institutions in most Western societies as a threat to the stability of the Middle

East and consequently to the interests of the West. This view is reproduced by many experts on Iran when they talk about the Western hostages, terrorism and the export of the revolution.

Noam Chomsky (1989) argues that prominent experts in Western societies quoted by the media are in line with what the government think and say. He considers that some of them could act as a "think tank" for the government and some others could receive funds for certain researches they carry on. Herman and O'sullivan (1989) in their analysis on the industry of manufacturing information in the private sectors, such as research centres and academic institutions consider that the bulk of their activities take place in the service of the state. In their analysis, the private sector function as an integral part of a broadly rightist ideological conception of both domestic and international politics (Herman and O'Sullivan, 1989). Unfortunately, the limitation of our research does not allow to differentiate between experts who are funded by governments and those who are not because this thesis has not studied the sources as independent cases but through the press content.

Iranian opposition

It is argued in the previous chapters, the best way to understand the use of opposition sources by the press is to apply Herman and Chomsky (1988) and Chomsky (1989) "propaganda model". It is learned from this approach that countries which are viewed as unfriendly tend to be covered unfavourably e.g. Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Libya and political movements or parties which oppose them are seen in a positive light by the Western establishments and Western media, e.g.

The Contras in Nicaragua and the Mujahedeene in Afghanistan. In spite of the criticisms put forward against this approach (see chapter 3), still it is an adequate approach for the interpretation of the dissident groups whose countries are defined as unfriendly or an enemy to the West and are legitimised and offered access to the media e.g. Soviet dissidents (McNair, 1988).

Iran has been defined in the first decade of the revolution as a state which is an "enemy" to the West and its interests in the Middle East. Naturally according to the Chomsky model (1989), as has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, Iran is going to be defined in negative light in the media. The Iranian opposition, allied to anti-Iran and anti-Islamic fundamentalism ideology would be defined as worthy victims and would be treated as "respectable and reformist" sources. This situation meant that the Iranian opposition found the press willing to include their versions on events happening inside Iran and to directly involve their organisations such as "Mujahedeene Khaleq". This organisation has a political strategy and knows the importance of the press in publicising its activities. So its members tend to be very active in press relations, particularly when they are successfully opposed inside Iran resulting in human interest stories e.g. executions of their members by the Revolutionary Guards. The opposition story in the media is similar to the Biafra cause in Nigeria. The Biafran leaders devoted considerable attention to news management by releasing human interest materials from their offices in the West. The result was widespread humanitarian concern for the suffering of the common people, a concern which tended to be expressed in

acceptance and support for Biafra (Elliott and Golding, 1971).

Some journalists tend to be sceptical of Iranian opposition versions but most of the time they are included without cross-checking because of the pressure of time. Journalists argue that they cannot ignore these sources for several reasons. First, they speak the Farsi language and know the culture of the country; second, they have their own links and sources inside Iran; third, they have been living in the West for some time and understand the mechanisms of Western societies within which they conform and act as a channel between the West and Iran. The journalists' awareness that their versions might include propaganda has not minimised their willingness to use them as respectable sources of news for the reasons mentioned above. Therefore, the Iranian opposition in the decade of coverage of Iran is defined as one essential body of the "primary definers" team used in the process of producing news on Iran and Islam. Many of them were quoted on the definitions of "Islamic fundamentalism", power struggle within the Iranian leadership, internal affairs and about their own activities and political aspirations which are identified with the liberal values of the West.

These three types of sources, all located in the West, have been granted access to the press because they are defined as legitimate sources and often convey an ideological image of Iran and Islam which serves in general the interests of the West. Other sources, like the Iranian official sources were regularly used by the press, but in an indirect form, mostly through the monitoring of the Iranian media in Britain and Cyprus. The concept of interaction between

Iranian official sources and Western journalists is invalid here, simply because the process is observed through mediating channels. This offer British journalists an opportunity to select news away from the direct influence of Iranian officials. Their statements were handled with scepticism and often cross-checked with sources in the West. They are quoted or referred to where events related to the West are concerned, e.g. hostages, oil, diplomatic relationships and when they appear to threaten Western interests by terrorism or to threaten pro-West countries in the Gulf, e.g. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Sources like Syrian sources, pro-Iranian movements' sources and Muslims in Britain during the height of the Salman Rushdie affair were made illegitimate and defined as non-respectable sources.

Cultural resonance

In the case of Iran and Islam legitimation is not confined to particular types of sources of news to whom the press is subordinate due to their authoritative power, but also legitimation extends to include the legitimate social beliefs and values of the West in general and Britain in particular and where the press is the product of the conditions of these beliefs and values (Sparks, 1989). News which does not conform to the dominant social values of the West will not be selected and if selected will be critically presented and framed in a context of disapproval of the activities and behaviour of the other side.

The British press in the coverage of events about Iran and Islam has committed itself to the symbolic characters of social life in the West and to the patterns of meaning embodied in the "symbolic forms" which are at work in the

process of social interaction. In fact the press has become a major medium for "the cultural transmission of symbolic forms" as Thompson (1990) argues in his book about ideology and culture. To him "The technical medium allows for a certain degree of fixation of meaningful content, as well as for a certain degree of reproduction of symbolic forms. The degree of fixation and reproduction depends on the nature of the medium" (Thompson, 1990, P.13).

The "symbolic forms" which the media reproduce are merely the expressions of various kinds of subjects which are embodied in structured social contexts, and often the "symbolic forms" may bear the traces of the values of society and the values of the people, in our case media professionals, who are active in the process of reproducing the features of the "symbolic forms" and often share the concepts and beliefs of the people with whom they are communicating. For instance, the "symbolic forms" of the values of democracy is an important aspect of the dominant value system of British society and is always stressed by the press when news about non-democratic countries is brought into focus. As it is seen in the previous three chapters, news about Islam, "Islamic fundamentalism", the Rushdie affair, the Islamic revolution and internal affairs in Iran and so on have been presented critically and are treated in a frame showing that these events are contrary to the dominant values of the West. Therefore they are not considered legitimate values and are not acceptable in respect of the values of democracy.

Generally, in the arena of news production, news has to resonate to the dominant social values of the West when the press deal with foreign issues like Iran and Islam. By the

dominant social values it is meant, as has often been discussed by media researchers and others (e.g., Hartmann and Husband,, 1971; Husband, 1975; Chibnall, 1977; Husband and Chouhan, 1985; Webster, 1990), the Western values of democracy, moderation, order, tolerance, freedom of choice, peacefulness, realism, colour prejudice, Christianity, secularism, capitalism, anti-foreigners ideology and anti-Islamic ideology which is historically rooted in the culture of Western societies because of the threat it had represented to the Christian West (Suleiman, 1974; Said, 1981; Djait, 1985; Webster, 1990 (see chapter 2)). Most of these values were observed in the treatment of domestic news, but they are seen in a more straight forward, value-laden form in the treatment of foreign news. Gans (1978) has found that "foreign news is generally treated with less detachment, and explicit value judgements that would not be considered justifiable in domestic news appear in stories about the rest of the world, particularly from communist countries" (Gans, 1978, P.31).

This study has established in the analysis of some aspects of the revolution, particularly those related to Islam e.g. "Islamic fundamentalism", Islamic punishment, Women in Islam, and the Salman Rushdie affair that they are explicitly judged and framed from a very highly Western value-laden perspective. So the issue of the veil in Islam (Hijab) becomes unacceptable and "medieval" and the issue of Islamic punishment becomes "intolerant" and "barbaric" according to the content analysis and the views of British journalists expressed in interviews.

The Salman Rushdie case which is presented in Chapter 6 highlights the ways in which the values of the West are

geared to explicitly frame and construct the values and symbols of the Islamic culture. This issue involved confrontation between the "legitimate values" of the West and the "illegitimate values" of Islam. The presentation of the news in binary opposition where two oppositional attitudes confront each other is very much observed in the case of Iran. Studies have shown that the press function within "Systems" (Trew, 1979) of "legitimate values" which provides "interpretations, symbols of identification collective values and myths which are able to transcend the cultural boundaries within a society like Britain" (Chibnall, 1977, P.226). Iran was mostly considered a symbol of illegitimate values which was represented by the values of Shiite fundamentalism, extremism, fanaticism, terrorism, authoritarianism, brutalism and barbarism. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 show that issues like Bank Melli of Iran, Islamic fundamentalism, Salman Rushdie affair have been presented in the form of binary opposition of "us" which is the West and "them" which is Iran and the Muslims.

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is an important aspect of the dominant social values of the West which is observed in the press treatment of news about Iran and Islam. It fosters the belief that one culture has achieved more than another and is therefore superior. The superiority of the Western culture over other cultures like the Islamic culture is clearly at work in the selection and framing of news events about Iran. So always the values of democracy, secularism, tolerance, order, British way of life, moderation, freedom of expression, openness are shown as superior to the values of

Islamic fundamentalism, authoritarianism, religious rule, intolerance, Islamic way of life, fanaticism, extremism, militarism, terrorism, aggression and so on.

Many value-laden words which show the press ethnocentricity have been selected to label the Islamic revolution and its leaders as the content analysis has shown. So the revolution has become a "threat", "medieval", "notorious" and "nasty" and the people have become "fanatic" "terrorist", "hostage taker and kidnapper", "mob and thug", "aggressive" and "cruel and merciless" and the leaders of the revolution, particularly Ayatollah Khomeini, have become "extremist", "ruler", "zealot", "mad mullah" and "crazy mullah", "authoritarian", "villain", "evil leadership" and "warlord" (see Table 20 - Chapter 5).

Media researchers in the area of the coverage of foreign news have found that ethnocentrism is strongly at work in the selection and shaping process (e.g. Croll, 1972; Hartmann and husband, 1974; Gans, 1979; Dorman, 1980; Dorman and Farhang 1987; McNair, 1988; Vilanilam, 1989; Chomsky, 1989). They argue that news about a foreign culture is presented in an ethnocentric form whereas news about a proxy culture is seen in a positive light because this culture is socially and geographically close to the media and journalists. Chomsky (1989) argues that Iran has been defined as a "terrorist state" in the US media, but the United States government and its proxy war against Nicaragua and its commitment to fight "terrorism" in the Middle East by supporting Israel and some Arab Gulf countries and some Christian groups in Lebanon and by directly involving CIA cover up operations were not defined as acts of "terrorism". They were seen acts to protect democracy from the threat of terrorist organizations

and countries (Chomsky, 1989, Appendix V). Dorman and Farhang (1987) question the dichotomy present in the US press and argue that if there is not a kind of ethnocentrism how can one explain the use of words such as "wail", "turbaned", "frenzy" and "frightening" in describing Iran in the early stages of the revolution. They argue that when it comes to proxy culture the press will not use the same standard. So the press would not describe the priests in the Vatican as "black-robed" as correspondents described the religious leader of Iran (Dorman and Farhang, 1987, P.168). The findings of the content analysis have demonstrated this press dichotomy, or double standard on several occasions. One example is the treatment of Iran as a revolution and the Iranian opposition which opposes the Islamic regime. The West and journalists can identify with many of the values the opposition groups carry in their political outlook. These values are in line with the values of democracy, secularism, and liberalism. The West cannot identify with the values of Islam and religious revolutionaries. The opposition were described in their political status and names. So they were "exile", "dissident", "mujahedeen", "fedayeen" and "guerilla" and religious revolutionaries were defined as "mob", "thug", "zealot", "terrorist and "fundamentalist". Another example is from the Iran-Iraq war. Iran is defined as a "threat" to Iraq, the Gulf countries and the West, Ayatollah Khomeini is "villain" aiming to export his brand of "Islamic fundamentalism" and Iraq is an Arab country and Saddam Hussein is an Arab leader fighting the Iranian aggression.

The culture of the West whose ethnocentrism forms part of its perspective was very much at work in the selection and presentation of news about Iran in the decade of coverage.

Journalists' Professional and Personal Ideologies

News in the coverage of Iran has shown a strong orientation to the interests of particular Western and Iranian sources of news and to the dominant values of the West and British society where they are given form and authority. Yet these are not a full explanatory picture for the way news about Iran is constructed in the press. Journalists have considerable autonomy in the process of making news about Iran. They may add certain norms and practices derived from the ideology of the profession that allow them to challenge some of the official sources' statements and assumptions or to balance two opposing views. But was this situation observed in the coverage of Iran and Islam? There is some evidence in particular cases e.g. the Iran-Iraq war, Western and Iranian diplomatic relations, the Iranian opposition where journalists try to introduce competing views: the Iranians and Iraqis, Arabs and Iranians, the "Mujahedeen" opposition group and Iranian officials, and British and Iranians. Evidence from the interviews with journalists (Chapter 7) shows that journalists in London try to check some of the information about the opposition groups with the head of the Iranian news agency (IRNA) in London.

No matter how much autonomy journalists have in handling news about Iran, still they are restricted by access, criteria of news values, organisational constraints, ignorance of the Farsi language, time and space, lack of expertise on Iran, the tension between the West and Islam and their personal prejudice. Among these constraints, which I have explained in Chapter 7, two obstacles are viewed as important factors which limit the journalists autonomy.

These are; 1. The limited range of news values; and 2. The journalists personal prejudice.

The Limited Range of News Values

It is becoming common in the findings of research studies into journalism (e.g. Galtung and Ruge, 1973; Chibnall, 1977; Tuchman, 1978; Golding and Elliott, 1979; Fishman, 1980; Van Dijk, 1988) that news production about domestic and foreign events is constrained by a limited range of news values. According to Golding and Elliott (1979), as it is argued in Chapter 3, news values perform two functions; firstly, they determine which events are suitable for inclusion in the final package sold to the public. Secondly, they are guidelines for the presentation of items, suggesting what to emphasise, what to omit and to give priority in the preparation of the items for presentation. In other words they form a working rule "comprising a corpus of occupational lore which implicitly and often, expressly explains and guides newsroom practice" (Golding and Elliott, 1979, P.114). Because of this, journalists in different news organisation structures tend to have similar professional criteria of interpretation. News items about Iran and Islam are selected according to a limited number of news values which can be summarised by negativity, drama, person orientation, importance, simplification, culture and elitism. News about "Islamic fundamentalism" is selected because it has all the elements of negativity which have bad implications for the stability of the Middle East and for the interests of the West particularly oil and security in the area as defined by the Western leaders. News about the Western hostages particularly the British hostages, has all the elements of

importance, and drama where the British audience culturally identify with the personalities of the captives and where their captivity and the conditions under which they are kept are often dramatised. News about Iranian internal politics is often simplified by expressing the complexity of the politics of the revolution in terms of a "power struggle" between two factions, the "hard-liners" who are often portrayed in negative light and the "moderates" who are opposing Iran hard-liners' politics and enjoy some sort of identification with the West as some journalists have stated (Morris; Bullock; Woollacott; 1990). As it is argued in Chapter 5 these terms are misleading because they were used in different contexts by journalists in the life of the first decade of the revolution.

The limited range of news values plays an important role in directing attention towards particular events, people and themes about Iran and presents them in definite perspectives and stereotypes. Such perspectives offer a specific imagery version of reality about Iran and are most likely to serve the interests of the Western policy makers and top political leaders who are mostly concerned with the national interest. For instance, news about "Islamic fundamentalism" is often selected when it is associated with themes which might have direct or indirect impact on the West or its allies. So themes about "terrorism"," "the export of the revolution", "shiism", "Western hostages", "the Rushdie affair", and "the Iran-Iraq war" are often seen from the perspective of "Islamic fundamentalism" and no attempt is made to understand them from any other perspective which might try to stress their legitimacy, often denied by the West's top political leaders because of the threat to their country's interests

e.g. the West's stance about "fighting terrorism" which was embodied in the statement of President Reagan and the British Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher when dealing with hostage situations.

Journalists' Prejudice

From the different types of evidence offered in this research, it seems that journalists cannot escape their own personal prejudices in the process of covering news about Iran. This angle of looking at news production is considered problematic by some critics of journalism (e.g. Golding and Middleton, 1988; McQuail, 1987) because it does not give a full sociological explanation for the way news is produced, but one cannot totally ignore this trend in research because it is apparent in content analysis and in the values and beliefs to which journalists commit themselves.

It seems that the journalists' prejudice becomes a strong trend in the coverage of foreign news particularly in a case like Iran where journalists are reporting on a country which has many political and cultural symbols and values which are different from the symbols and values the journalists believe in as individuals belonging to a rather different system and culture. It is quite natural that the journalists carry the values of the West and its "systems of beliefs" (Thompson, 1990) which are responsible for shaping their individual and social personalities by the process of social interaction. The collectively shared values and beliefs between the individuals (journalists) and society constitute in the work of political economist Althusser "the elements of ideology which by being diffused throughout society, secures the adherence of individuals to the social

order" (quoted in Thompson, 1990, P.86). Journalists as human beings and as individuals in a society which has "systems of beliefs" cannot be expected to be detached or indifferent to their work or be seen as "political eunuchs" and it would be a mistake "...to expect their work to be untainted by the prejudices, convictions and sympathies that are as much part of their social make-up as of anybody else's" (Golding and Middleton, 1988, P.137).

Evidence from chapter 5, 6 and 7 confirm the personal prejudice of some journalists against some themes, particularly those which are associated with Islam, Western hostages, Ayatollah Khomeini, terrorism and the Iranian opposition. Though many of the journalists interviewed would make claims of neutrality and objectivity, and would not admit, except a very few who undertake more critical analysis for the way they cover Iran e.g. Edward Mortimer, that their personal values and attitudes are brought into their work. More than that some of them feel offended by the criticisms e.g. John Ellison of the Daily Express and George Brock of the Times.

The strongest evidence about the journalists' prejudice in covering news about Iran is clearly observed in the coverage of themes related to Islam as seen in the case of Bank Melli of Iran in London which was associated with the codes of Islamic punishment and women in Islam (Chapter 5), and in the case of the Salman Rushdie affair (Chapter 6). In both cases, and others, the journalists, who had covered these incidents, have not shown neutrality at all and committed themselves to the liberal and cultural values of the West and the principles of democracy in their treatment of these issues. The interesting matter is that there was no

difference between the attitudes of some journalists working for the popular press and some others working for the quality press concerning some aspects of these issues. They tend to strongly believe that the codes of Islamic punishment are "unacceptable" e.g. Woollacott of the Guardian and "barbaric" e.g. Nicholas Davis of the Daily Mirror and "Islamic fundamentalism" in the case of the Rushdie affair is viewed as a form of "intolerance", "fanaticism", "threat" and "religious authoritarianism" e.g. George Brock of The Times, Edward Mortimer of the Financial Times and John Bullock of the Independent on Sunday.

The journalists' prejudice, which is hardly a sufficient explanation for the way news is produced, is often inescapable and tends to bring a Western or British perspective to news stories and editorials which helps in creating an ideological picture of the world and in our case Iran.

Journalists do have considerable autonomy, or as some researchers may call it, "relative autonomy" but it is restricted and constrained by the limited range of news values which stress negativity and drama and the journalists' personal prejudice which is the result of social conditioning.

The Social Construction of News: Conclusion

This chapter has examined how and why news about Iran is constructed the way it is in the British press by making use of the types of evidence provided in the last three chapters. Three general ideological explanations emerge from the argument presented in this chapter. First, news about Iran and Islam is highly dependent on particular selected sources

of news amongst whom are divided the majority of definitions of events related to Iran. These sources are the Western officials, the Western and Iranian experts and the Iranian opposition and have been dominant in the coverage of Iran as is found in the content analysis and stressed by journalists. They have been partly managing to portray an image of Iran which is associated with fundamentalism, threat, extremism, terrorism and so on, and which serves the interests of the West and its allies. The press has shown a great inclination towards these sources and their versions of reality, mainly because of the political and social identification with the values of the West.

The second explanation is that the selection and the presentation of news about Iran has culturally resonated with the legitimate beliefs and values of the West. News about Iran and Islam is often confronted with the dominant social values of the West which stresses the principles of democracy, moderation, tolerance, freedom of expression and secularism. A frame of two antagonistic oppositional attitudes is shaping a great deal of news about Iran particularly those which are related to Islam e.g. the Rushdie affair. Ethnocentrism, as one version of ideology, was very much at work in the presentation of news where the use of particular selected labels to describe the revolution, its religious leaders and the Iranian people illustrates the ethnocentricity of British journalists.

Studies on the coverage of third world countries in general and the Middle East in particular (e.g. Croll, 1972; Said, 1982; Dorman and Farhang, 1987) have shown, among other things, that journalists' ethnocentricity play a major role in the selection and shaping of news about these countries.

This study supports the findings of these studies concerning this point. It can be argued that ethnocentricity becomes a structural feature of news production in Western Europe and North America. The evidence for this argument comes mostly from the way British journalists (in other studies American journalists) use strong adjectives, value statements, opinion, metaphor, analogy as argued in the analysis of the Macro-themes (chapter 5). The evidence comes as well from the interviews with journalists who adhered to the values of the West when Islamic issues were discussed e.g. the Salman Rushdie affair. This often minimises the journalistic objectivity of balance and fairness.

Obviously, British journalists are not all equally ethnocentric in their coverage of Iran. There are some differences among them in how they professionally approach controversial events. These differences have not stemmed from the fact that some of them work for the quality and others work for the popular press. Evidence in chapter 5 (table 21) supports this contention because there were not a great deal of differences between the labels used in the quality and the popular press to describe the different aspects of the Islamic revolution. The differences stem mostly from the ideological division between the press which is towards the right of the centre and the press which is towards the left. The discussion with journalists showed that those who were working for the conservative papers (e.g. Brock, the Times; Ellison, Daily Express; Wade, Daily Telegraph) were more ethnocentric in their approach to foreign news. Those who worked for the liberal or leftist papers were less ethnocentric (e.g. Woollacott, the Guardian; Morris, the Independent; Bullock, Independent on Sunday).

The involvement of journalists' ethnocentricity in shaping news stories and editorials have assisted in drawing an ideological picture of Iran and Islam for British society. This is not to conclude that ethnocentricity was the sole reason behind an ideological image of Iran, other important factors (governments and Western vested interests) enter the process of constructing news.

The third general ideological explanation emerging from arguments in this chapter suggests that journalists have considerable autonomy in the process of covering news about Iran but this autonomy is restricted by the limited conventional range of news values which shapes news about Iran and Islam in accordance with negativity, drama, importance, personality, simplification, elitism, criteria and which gives a particular perspective of news. Autonomy is also restricted by the journalists personal prejudice. This statement has limitations in bringing a sufficient sociological explanation, but the prejudice filters down in the presentation of news items about Iran. This personal prejudice is a serious challenge to the journalists' claims of neutrality and objectivity.

These three explanations source-journalist interaction, cultural resonance and journalists' professional and individual ideologies show how and why news about Iran is constructed and illustrate a complex relation of influences which lead to an understanding of the way foreign news is covered in the Western press rather than the simple notion of conspiracy theory. The next chapter will contain the concluding notes on the construction of Iran in the British press in the first decade of the Islamic revolution.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This thesis has demonstrated that foreign news coverage in the British press is constructed in accordance with the international politics of Western Europe and the United States towards Iran and in relation to the cultural symbols of the West which have been given positive treatment and prominence in the press. These two findings have acted as macro-explanations for the way news about Iran and Islam is constructed.

But were these macro-explanations sufficient interpretations for the way Iran was covered?

In general they were not, particularly as journalists' professional ideologies were strongly at play in the selection and shaping of news throughout a period of ten years. The importance of this lies in the fact that Western policies might change towards a particular country (if that country conforms to the political values of the West) over a period of time, but news values remain the same in directing news coverage towards a specific portrayal of reality. The nature of the journalists' professional values has acted as a micro-explanation for the production of news on Iran.

What are the theoretical natures of these external and internal factors, and what lessons have been learned from each factor?

The first macro-explanation mainly emphasises the role of the press in communicating political issues which concern the West and its interests in the Middle East. It was shown that Western governments had a common interest in the Middle East, particularly on the levels of oil, stability, and trade.

Western countries viewed Iran as a threatening force aiming at destabilising the Gulf states and blocking the flow of oil at the Strait of Hermuz and bringing the West to its Knees. A consensus was reached among Western governments to co-ordinate their policy towards Iran and the development in the Gulf e.g., The Western policy towards the Western hostages in Tehran and Beirut, the Western naval presence in the Persian Gulf in 1987, and the Salman Rushdie affair. Much of the West's collective policy had been characterised in its identification of Iran as an enemy of the West. An anti-Iran policy had been advocated by Western leaders and governments since Iran was defined by policy makers as a "state-sponsored terrorism" and an expansionist country working to export its revolution by terror and holy war.

The British press aligned itself within this international political framework and consequently reflected, and in turn shaped, the prevailing Western interests and Western political image of Iran and Islam stressing the negativity of the socio-political values of Islam.

What types of evidence were presented in the thesis to support this contention?

Two main types of evidence were argued:

The first was the interaction of journalists with Western official sources and pro-West sources. Content analysis has shown that most of the quoted actors were Western actors (42% - see table 17, chapter 5) and most of these actors were American and British officials and Western experts (see table 10 - chapter 5). Iranian actors were used but prominence was given to the Iranian opposition (21% of items - see table 11) among other Iranian actors. This study has shown that this was an emphasis by the press on the role of the opposition which identified with many of the values of the West.

Actors from Iraq and the Gulf who supported Iraq in its war against Iran and who were identified with Western policy in the area were given prominence in the coverage, whereas actors belonging to revolutionary movements and opposition groups in the Middle East were not given prominence because they were not defined as legitimate and respectable.

The press interaction with Western officials has given them the opportunity, due to the power they represent, to convey Western policy and attitudes which were apparent in the content of items through headlines and themes.

Evidence from content analysis, the Rushdie case and the interviews with British journalists has shown that the press have established a "symbiotic dependence" on specific selected sources of news, particularly the Western officials and experts and the Iranian opposition. This evidence has strengthened the argument about the ideological role of the press which allies itself to the well defined interests of Western countries which were threatened by the emergence of

"Islamic fundamentalism".

The second type of evidence presented to demonstrate the press reflection of the Western policy and interests was the selection and presentation of the macro-themes.

Most of the macro-themes selected in the coverage consisted of themes which concern the West directly and indirectly. This was to show the strong orientation of the press to the interests and fear of the United States and Western Europe. Interests in preserving and protecting the supply of oil to the West and fear of the growing power of "Islamic fundamentalism" and "terrorism" in Iran and the Middle East. For instance it was found that the most prominent macro-theme in the coverage of Iran was "the West and Iran, interests, tensions, threats and links" (31% of total responses - see table 19, chapter 5). This macro-theme which was recorded for ten consecutive years, highlighted themes which interest the West and which were linked to the representatives of political and academic power in the West. Political and academic elites were used as regular sources to define themes such as the relationship between the West and Iran, Western alliance, oil, Western naval presence in the Gulf and the Rushdie affair.

Other prominent macro-themes demonstrating the orientation of the press towards the interests of the West were selected to trace the development of the internal situation in Iran and the course the revolution was taking inside the country.

What lessons have been learned from the relationship between the press and Western international politics in

relation to Iran?

One can learn that the coverage of foreign news in the British press is in alignment with the Western collective policy towards countries in the Third World by the fact the press has shown "symbiotic dependence" on the statements of Western world leaders and other Western officials. Consensual policy was observed, and division within the Official camp hardly occurred. The identification by policy makers, national leaders and experts of Iran as an "enemy" state which sponsored "terrorism" has been followed by the press through its dependence on official sources and other selected sources e.g. Iranian opposition, and through its inspiration of anti-Iran ideology. Hence the importance of the Herman and Chomsky "propaganda model" which has occupied a central framework for the thesis. This model has helped to formulate an understanding of the political coverage of Iran more than any other approach in the arena of foreign news production, particularly when consensus of Western foreign policy has been observed throughout most of the coverage and when an environment of anti-Islam ideology has been prominent. Recently, the Gulf war (Desert Storm) was a good example for the application of the Herman and Chomsky model. Iraq became the "villain" of the piece, Saddam Hussein was portrayed as "the butcher of Baghdad" (The Guardian, 29/1/91) and the Iraqi opposition (particularly the Kurds) became the "worthy victims" because of the Western collective policy which was against Iraq and sympathetic to the opposition.

This was similar to the identification of Iran as "the villain of the piece" and the Iranian opposition as the "worthy victims". When the West had a positive policy and attitude towards Iraq (as demonstrated in this research,

particularly during the Iran-Iraq war) Iraq was defined in the press as an Arab country opposing the aggression of Iran. The Iraqi opposition did not get much attention (see the macro-theme "opposition and the Iranian Islamic system", chapter 5) and was not defined as worthy political opposition. The Herman and Chomsky model gives an interesting perspective, and even though it is largely ignored in the domain of communication research, it is valid for cases like ours in future research.

The press orientation towards the interests of the West is not a sufficient explanation for the British press construction of Iran. It must be coupled with the macro-explanation of news resonance to the Western dominant cultural values to give a full picture for the way Iran is constructed in the British press.

It was argued in chapter 1 and 2 that historically an anti-Islamisim tradition was established, and a distorted image of Islam and Muslim peoples had been projected in the West. This image which was identified with barbarism, violence and cruelty was strongly entrenched in the culture. Institutions in the West considered Islam a threat to the principles and values of Western societies.

It was argued, as well, that a continuation of this image was observed in the emergence of Iran as an Islamic State after the fall of the Shah in 1979. Evidence from the content analysis (particularly the macro-themes which were related to Islam, the revolution and Ayatollah Khomeini) and from the qualitative analysis of the Rushdie affair suggests strongly that news resonates with the widely shared cultural preoccupations of the West in general and Britain in particular. One of the main reasons for these "cultural

resonances" was the journalists' perceptions of what kind of stories their audiences wanted. Otherwise newspapers will not sell and gain profit.

It was shown that news stories must reflect the Western value structure and must conform to the established Western stereotypes of Islam and Muslims. Accordingly news stories about "Islamic fundamentalism", "Islamic punishment", "Women in Islam", "Islam and Shiism" and "Ayatollah Khomeini" were all prominent themes selected by the press because they reinforced Western stereotypes of Islam and because audiences in the West could identify and relate to these historical and recent images.

The representation of "Islamic fundamentalism" as a threat to Western values and interests, the codes of punishment in Islam particularly the case of the Rushdie affair, the treatment of women as "chattels" who were treated by men as second class citizens and forced to wear "chaddor", the extremist and the fundamentalist nature of the "Shia" sect, and the "evil" and "crazy" nature of Ayatollah Khomeini were all images which became embedded in the Western ideology. The press must align itself with these images in its selection and presentation of news as has been discussed in the previous chapters.

Generally, the cultural features of the West have been reproduced by the press. Journalists in their coverage of Iran and Islam were giving meaning to the positive values of the West which were centred around democracy, freedom of expression, tolerance, moderation, order, and the British way of life. These values were constantly evaluated and given prominence when placed against the "negative" values of Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, international censorship,

fanaticism, extremism, and authoritarianism.

The press aligned itself to the legitimate values of the West which were not only treated as different than the values of Islam but also better and superior.

Ethnocentrism was a prominent feature in the press reportage of the alien symbols of a culture belonging to the "other". Those who were associated with the values of Islam were often marginalised and treated as undesirable elements and were not considered "legitimate" contesters as in the example British Muslims during the Rushdie affair.

It is interesting that this thesis has shown that the press resonances with the symbolic forms of Western culture were similar in both the quality and popular press (on the level of labels used). This was contrary to previous studies on domestic news (e.g. Murdock, 1973; Chibnall, 1977) where the popular press labels resonate more than the quality press to Western cultural symbols.

What lessons have been learned from "cultural resonances"?

In the coverage of foreign news the press recalls the embedded historical image of the reported country (particularly when clashes occur) and identifies events with the prevailing values of the reporting country in a particular historical and cultural context. British journalists moved beyond their national cultural boundaries and reflected broader Western cultural values in their selection and presentation of news about Islam. The British social meanings of events became in general a Western social meaning where priority, in most cases, was given to the consensual Western political interests and cultural values.

Introducing macro-explanations for the way news was produced about Iran was not sufficient for a full interpretation. The process needs a micro-explanation which emphasises the daily function of the press i.e. criteria of news values.

Journalists in their coverage of Iran were not passive vis a vis the influence of external factors. Their professional norms and practices allowed them to select and shape news in accordance with specific criteria of news values. Journalists had relative autonomy in the way they used sources of news and in the way they selected and presented news. From evidence based on the content analysis and on the interviews it can be seen that journalists are not totally under the influence of Western and other pro-West sources of news. Some Western officials' versions of themes such as the Western hostages, the Islamic revolution, Islamic fundamentalism and the West and Iran are balanced by competing statements emanating from IRNA in London and from Iranian officials and other pro-Iran sources as emphasised by British journalists particularly those who are working for the quality press and who are sepcialists on the Middle East.

It was unintentional on the side of journalists to be biased towards particular sources of news or to portray the revolution in negative terms by selecting "bad" stories or by employing strong labels or even by not introducing enough background material or putting events into context. Journalists were frequently operating with complete integrity and goodwill towards the coverage of Iran (except in a few cases where journalists had shown political and cultural attitudes towards the revolution). But the constraints

imposed on journalists e.g. access, and time and space and the criteria of news values shaped the journalists' professional ideologies in the way they selected and presented a particular aspect of reality and ignored other important aspects which were essentials to the understanding of the revolution.

Constraints like the journalists' views about the relationship between Islam and the West, access, time and space, language barrier, lack of expertise on Iran, and budget were unavoidable obstacles limiting the journalists' professionalism and contributing to the constructed image of Iran.

In addition to these, it was also demonstrated that journalists were constrained by a limited range of news values. News items about Iran and Islam were selected and presented in accordance with the newsworthiness criteria of negativity, personality, drama, importance, culture, simplification and elitism. For instance, news about the Iran-Iraq war was often dramatised and stressed the human and economic losses more than the regional and international politics behind the war, or the direct role of the West in supporting Saddam Hussein and supplying his army with arms, technology and information of intelligence nature about the military capability and positions of Iran. Also news about the issue of Western hostages in Iran and Lebanon was personality oriented, simplified and focused on the negative actions of the "enemy" Iran who used terrorism against the West and pro-West Arab countries and threatened the supply of oil to the Western world. Reasons behind the continuation of hostage holding were left unexplored by the press, particularly reasons relating to the Arab prisoners in

Israeli camps in South Lebanon and In Israel.

What lessons have been learned from identification of the role of organisational constraints and the criteria of news values in the coverage of Iran?

Three lessons have been learned here:

1- Journalists, particularly specialists, have relative autonomy which assists them to initiate stories to some extent free from source dependency and cultural pressures and which guides them to use sources with views that compete with the Western official versions.

2- In the arena of foreign news, organizational constraints are stronger than in the coverage of "home" news. Constraints like access (the reported country imposes restrictions on Western journalists), time and space (time is limited in the production of daily news, and many overseas news stories compete for a little space), language barrier (most journalists are generalists and do not speak the Farsi or the Arabic languages), lack of expertise (few journalists and experts are specialists on Iran), Budget (where newspapers cannot afford to station a staff correspondent in Tehran) and the wider constraint of the tension between the West and Islam all become common features of the coverage of foreign news.

3- News items are selected and shaped according to a limited range of news values. For almost thirty years, the selection criteria discussed by the well established study of Galtung

and Ruge on the treatment of foreign news, has offered an effective interpretation for the way the Western press report events related to foreign cultures. This thesis supports their framework of news values criteria identified as active in the selection and presentation processes.

The tripartite approach resulting from a combination of three interpretive frameworks gave a unique explanation for the way Iran was constructed in the British press. It provided an understanding of how the press approve and use powerful sources in the West and give preference to their statements. It explained the legitimation of Iranian dissidents and their definition in the press as "worthy victims". It argued how the political and cultural values of the West were given prominence over the "illegitimate" values of Islam and Muslims after the emergence of the Islamic revolution in Iran and it emphasised the constraints that were restricting journalists.

The tripartite approach showed that the British press coverage of Iran over a decade period had aligned itself, particularly in times of conflict between the West and Islam, to the interests and the dominant values of the West which were considered threatened by a different ideology and "irrational" enemy.

The treatment of Iran and Islam had many parallels with the ideological construction of the Soviet Union and Communism, defined in the cold war period as the enemy of the West.

The tripartite approach utilised in this thesis increases awareness of the constraints and influences operating on the British press and their consequent

construction of a given "other" who may be defined as an enemy of the West. The approach has important implications for the study of press handling of future foreign events particularly in third world countries.

Appendix A

Coding Schedule of the coverage of Iran in a decade (1979-1989)

1-Item No

[ ]1

[ ]2

[ ]3

[ ]4

2-Paper (code one)

1-Guardian [ ]5

2-Times [ ]6

3-Daily Telegraph

4-Daily Mail

5-Daily Express

6-Daily Mirror

7-Sun

8-Observer

9-Sunday Times

10-Sunday Telegraph

11-Mail on Sunday

12-Sunday Express

13-Sunday Mirror

3-Year

-79	-83	-87	[ ]7
-80	-84	-88	[ ]8
-81	-85	-89	
-82	-86		

4-**Month** (code one)

1-January	7-July	[ ]9
2-February	8-August	[ ]10
3-March	9-September	
4-April	10-October	
5-May	11-November	
6-June	12-December	

5-**Day** (code one)

1-Monday	5-Friday	[ ]11
2-Tuesday	6-Saturday	
3-Wednesday	7-Sunday	
4-Thursday		

6-**Date** [ ]12

[ ]13

7-**Page** [ ]14

[ ]15

8-**Positions** (code one)

a-Position in pages [ ]16

1-Front page

2-Back page

3-Inside page

b-Position in sections

1-Section one-A- [ ]17

2-Section two-B-

3-Section three-C-

4-Section four-D-

5-Weekend

6-Supplement (Sunday magazine)

7-Others

9-**News classification** (code one)

1-Home news [ ]18

2-The day in politics [ ]19

3-Parliament/Parliament and politics

4-Foreign/Overseas/International news

5-Analysis/Feature

6-Comment

7-Editorial (or comment and opinion)

8-Letters to the editor

9-News in focus

10-World news

11-Review (news review)

12-Book

13-Art

14-Finance and Business

15-Home/International news (Front page)

16-Home/International news (Back page)

17-Others

10-**Type of item** (code one)

1-Lead story [ ]20

2-News story [ ]21

3-Editorial

4-Feature article/Analysis

5-Viewpoint

6-Comment

7-Review

8-Letter

9-Separate photograph or Cartoon

10-Interview

11-Advertisement

12-Speech

13-Parliamentary discussion/Government discussion

14-Others

11-**Total item length cm2** (including headline + visuals)

[ ]22

[ ]23

[ ]24

[ ]25

12-**Numbers of Visuals** (code number of each type)

1-Photograph [ ]26

2-Cartoon [ ]27

3-Others (map, diagram, drawing, advert, etc.) [ ]28

13-**Photograph size cm2**

[ ]29

[ ]30

[ ]31

14-Cartoon size cm2

[ ]32

[ ]33

[ ]34

15-Photograph caption (specify) .....

.....

16-Description of photograph (specify) .....

.....

17-Cartoon comment (specify) .....

.....

18-Description of cartoon (specify) .....

.....

19-Headline .....

.....

20-Subheadline .....

.....

21-Lead (first sentence) .....

.....

22-Editorial title and main points .....

.....

23-**Source/Author of news** (code one) [ ]35

1-Middle East correspondent [ ]36

2-Diplomatic correspondent

3-Political/Parliamentary correspondent

4-Defence correspondent

5-Corespondent/Reporter

6-Middle East editor/Foreign editor

7-Editor

8-Foreign Staff/Staff

9-Reuter

10-UPI

11-AFP

12-AP

13-Tass

14-IRNA/Radio Tehran

15-Iraqi News Agency

16-Other Middle East News Agency (SANA, WAFA, etc.)

17-Joint correspondents

18-Joint correspondent and Agency

19-Expert (Academic/Strategist/Politician/Analyst/Diplomat)

20-Reader (newspapers' readers)

21-Cartoonist

22-Joint Agencies

23-Political staff

24-Business correspondent

25-Diplomatic staff

88-Not known

99-Others (News Services, Crime reporter..)

24-Location of the source/author (code one)

1-Tehran [ ]37

2-Washington/New York [ ]38

3-London

4-Paris

5-Nicosia

6-Baghdad

7-Beirut

8-Dubai

9-Bahrain

10-Damascus

11-Cairo

12-Other Arab countries

13-Persian Gulf

14-Istanbul/Ankara

15-Other European countries

16-Other Asian countries

17-Not known

18-Two or more different countries

19-Others

25-Actors quoted or referred to (code: Yes 1, No 0) [ ]39

a-Iran

1-Ayatollah Khomeini [ ]40

2-Iranian President (Sader, Rajhae, Khamenei) [ ]41

3-Speaker Rafsanjani [ ]42

4-Ayatollah Montazari [ ]43

5-Ayatollah Khalkhali [ ]44

6-Ayatollah Khomeini's son Ahmad [ ]45

7-Other senior religious figures [ ]46

8-Prime Minister [ ]47

9-Foreign Minister [ ]48

10-Other senior political figures and MP's [ ]49

11-Diplomates [ ]50

12-Military figures [ ]51

13-Assembly of experts and Guardian Council [ ]52

14-Experts (Academic, Writer, Analyst in exile) [ ]53

15-Public/Student [ ]54

16-Mass media [ ]55

17-Iranian opposition [ ]56

18-Revolutionary Guards [ ]57

19-Others [ ]58

b-The West

1-US President (Carter, Reagan) [ ]59

2-US Vice President [ ]60

3-US Secretary of State [ ]61

4-US Defence Secretary [ ]62

5-US Congressmen/Senators and Advisors [ ]63

6-US military figures (Army, Navy, Air-Force) [ ]64

7-US White House/State Departments and Agencies (Pentagon, CIA..) [ ]65

8-British Prime Minister (Mrs. Thatcher) [ ]66

9-British Government Ministers and Officials [ ]67

10-British opposition figures [ ]68

11-British MP's [ ]69

12-British Foreign Office [ ]70

13-Church of England [ ]71

14-French State figures and Officials [ ]72

15-German State figures and Officials [ ]73

16-Other Western State figures and Officials [ ]74

17-Western Diplomats [ ]75

18-Western experts (Academic, Writer, Analyst, Observer, Strategist, Politician & Scientist) [ ]76

19-Western public (e.g. relatives of hostages) [ ]77

20-Western media and journalists [ ]78

21-EEC [ ]79

22-Western organisations and companies [ ]80

23-Western hostages and prisoners [ ]1

24-Others (Intelligence bodies, police, arms dealers)[ ]2

c-Iraq

1-Iraqi President (Saddam Hussein) [ ]3

2-Iraqi political figures [ ]4

3-Iraqi diplomats [ ]5

4-Iraqi military figures [ ]6

5-Iraqi mass media [ ]7

6-Iraqi opposition (Kurds, Islamic Shia groups) [ ]8

7-Others [ ]9

d-International and regional organisations [ ]10

1-UN [ ]11

2-International Red Cross/Amnesty International [ ]12

3-Arab League [ ]13

4-Islamic Conference Organisations (ICO) [ ]14

5-Others (OPEC, WIC) [ ]15

e-Arab and Muslim figures

1-President of Syria (Hafez al-Assad) [ ]16

2-Syrian political and military figures [ ]17

3-Gulf State figures (Kings, Princes, Presidents, Ministers, etc.) and Officials [ ]18

4-Other Arab State figures and Officials [ ]19

5-PLO and Lebanese Party figures [ ]20

6-Islamic movements (Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, etc) [ ]21

7-Non-Arab Muslim State figures and Officials [ ]22

8-Arab experts [ ]23

9-Others [ ]24

f-East

1-USSR figures and Officials [ ]25

2-Chinese State figures [ ]26

3-Communist and Socialist State figures [ ]27

4-Eastern experts (Academic, Writer, etc) [ ]28

5-Others [ ]29

g-Others [ ]30

1-Israeli figures and organisations [ ]31

2-South American figures and organisations [ ]32

3-African figures and organisations [ ]33

4-Others [ ]34

26-**THEMES** (code: Yes 1, No 0) [ ]35

1-The Shah and his monarchy [ ]36

2-The Revolution [ ]37

3-Ayatollah Khomeini [ ]38

4-Iran-Iraq War [ ]39
5-UN and Iran-Iraq War [ ]40
6-Mediation, negotiations and ceasefire (Gulf War) [ ]41
7-The Revolution and violence [ ]42
8-Iran and the sponsorship of terrorism [ ]43
9-Iran and the threat to Western interests [ ]44
10-Islam [ ]45
11-Islamic fundamentalism [ ]46
12-Islam and Shiism [ ]47
13-Islamic punishments [ ]48
14-Women in Islam and Iran [ ]49
15-Internal affairs [ ]50
16-The Revolution and violation of human rights [ ]51
17-The Revolutionary Guards [ ]52
18-Power struggle between "moderates" and "Hardliners"[ ]53
19-Iranian opposition groups [ ]54
20-Iran and the production of Chemical Weapons and Missiles [ ]55
21-Iran and the purchasing of arms from the West [ ]56
22-Iran and Islamic movements and the export of the Revolution [ ]57
23-Iran and the Iraqi opposition [ ]58
24-The West policy towards the Middle East [ ]59
25-The Iran-Syria relationship [ ]60
26-The West and Iran [ ]61
27-The West and the Iranian assets [ ]62
28-West alliance and policy towards Iran [ ]63
29-Western fleet in the Gulf [ ]64
30-Tension between Western fleet and Iran [ ]65

31-Gulf and Arab States and Iran [ ]66

32-Oil, commercial ships and the "tanker war" [ ]67

33-US hostages in Tehran/UN and US hostages [ ]68

34-British prisoners in Tehran [ ]69

35-Western hostages in Beirut [ ]70

36-US hostages in Beirut [ ]71

37-French hostages in Beirut [ ]72

38-British hostages in Beirut [ ]73

39-German hostages in Beirut [ ]74

40-Irangate (arms for hostages deal) [ ]75

41-Iran the Gulf and their strategic importance to the West [ ]76

42-The West and the Salman Rushdie affair [ ]77

43-British-US-French-German/Iranian diplomatic links [ ]78

44-Iran and The USSR [ ]79

45-Iran and the violation of international law [ ]80

46-Iranian children in the war [ ]1

47-Iraq and the use of chemical weapons and poison gas [ ]2

27-**Islamic and Farsi codes** (code: Yes 1, No 0)

1-Ayatollah (senior religious title in Islam) [ ]3

2-Hujato al-islam (lesser title than Ayatollah) [ ]4

3-Shia (a sect in Islam) [ ]5

4-Sunna (another sect in Islam) [ ]6

5-Imam (religious and political leader) [ ]7

6-Mullah (clergy) [ ]8

7-Ulama (clergies) [ ]9

8-Majlis (Iranian Parliament) [ ]10

9-Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards) [ ]11

10-Committeh (Revolutionary Committee) [ ]12

11-Baseej (volunteers) [ ]13

12-Sharia (Islamic divine law) [ ]14

13-Jihad (struggle) [ ]15

14-Sayyed (a person related to the Prophet) [ ]16

15-Shaikh (religious and non religious title) [ ]17

16-Chador/Hejab (Islamic veil) [ ]18

17-Wilayat al-faqih (the Guardianship of the Jurist) [ ]19

18-Faqih (Jurist) [ ]20

19-Mujtahid (a faqih who interprets Islam) [ ]21

20-Fatwa (Islamic verdict) [ ]22

21-Qom (a city for religious learning) [ ]23

22-Behsht-e-Zahra (cemetery for martyrs) [ ]24

23-Imam Hussein/Ashura (one of Shia twelve Imams) [ ]25

24-Imam Ali/Nahj albalaghah (one of the Shia twelve Imams/ a book of the sayings of Imam Ali) [ ]26

25-Others (Bazaar, Jamaran, Evin, Hojjati) [ ]27

28-**Labels** (code: Yes 1, No 0)

1-Fundamentalist [ ]28

2-Extremist [ ]29

3-Zealot [ ]30

4-Hardliner [ ]31

5-Moderate/Pragmatist [ ]32

6-Radical [ ]33

7-Fanatic [ ]34

8-Shiite [ ]35

9-Terrorist [ ]36

10-Mad Mullah/Crazy Mullah [ ]37

11-Hawk [ ]38

12-Evil leadership [ ]39

13-Ruler [ ]40

14-Warlord [ ]41

15-Exile/Dissident [ ]42

16-Blood thirsty [ ]43

17-Hostage taker/Kidnapper/Captor [ ]44

18-Cruel/Merciless [ ]45

19-Savage/Brutal [ ]46

20-Barbaric [ ]47

21-Murderer [ ]48

22-Militant [ ]49

23-Nasty [ ]50

24-Uncivilised [ ]51

25-Maniac [ ]52

26-War-loving [ ]53

27-Authoritarian [ ]54

28-Medieval [ ]55

29-Mujahedeen/Fedayeen [ ]56

30-Regime [ ]57

31-Leader [ ]58

32-Troops/Forces [ ]59

33-Commandos [ ]60

34-Revolutionary [ ]61

35-Aggressive [ ]62

36-Guerilla (for Mujahedeen) [ ]63

37-Mob/Thug [ ]64

38-Villain [ ]65

39-Threat [ ]66

40-Death squad/Firing squad [ ]67

41-Notorious [ ]68

42-Others [ ]69

Appendix B

Coding of headline, subheadline, lead source/author's name and visuals

-Item No [____]

-Headline

-Subheadline

-Lead (first sentence)

-Source/author's name

-Visuals (photo, cartoon..)

Appendix C

Coding of Editorial

-Item No [____]

-Editorial title

-Editorial main points (with quotations)

Appendix D. Dates for the Selection of Newspapers for the Whole Period (12th January 1979 until 19th May 1989) (an issue was selected every 27 days)

Year	JAN. (31)	FEB. (28)	MARCH (31)	APRIL (30)	MAY (31)	JUNE (30)	JULY (31)	AUGUST (31)	SEPT. (30)	OCT. (31)	NOV. (30)	DEC. (31)
1979	T 12	8	7	3/30	S 27	23	20	16	12	9	5	S2/29
1980*	25	F 21	19	15	12	S 8	5	1/28	24	21	17	S 14
1981	10	6	5	1/28	25	S 21	18	14	10	7	3/30	S 27
1982	23	19	18	14	11	7	S4/31	27	23	20	16	13
1983	S 9	5	4/31	27	24	20	S 17	13	9	6	2/29	26
1984*	S 22	F 18	16	12	9	5	2/S29	25	21	18	14	11
1985	7	S 3	2/29	25	22	18	15	S 11	7	4/31	27	24
1986	20	S 16	15	11	8	4	1/28	S 24	20	17	13	10
1987	6	2	S1/28	24	21	17	14	10	S 6	3/30	26	23
1988*	19	F 15	S 13	9	6	2/29	26	22	S18	15	11	8
1989	4/31	27	S 26	22	T 19							

* Leap Years
F: February 29th
T: Tuesday
S: Sunday

Appendix E

List of Journalists Interviewed
(between February and April 1990)

-Bircket, John, Foreign Editor, The Daily Mail.

-Brock, George, Foreign Editor, The Times.

-Bullock, John, Diplomatic Editor, The Independent On Sunday.

-Colvin, Marie, Middle East Correspondent, The Sunday Times.

-Davies, Nicholas, Foreign Editor, The Daily Mirror.

-Ellison, John, Foreign Editor, The Daily Express.

-Gowers, Andrew, Middle East Correspondent, The Financial Times.

-Hushanji, Hamid, Head of IRNA Bureau in London.

-McGrory, Daniel, Chief Foreign Correspondent, The Daily Express.

-Mortimer, Edward, Assistant Foreign Editor and Columnist, The Financial Times.

-Morris, Harvey, Middle East Editor, The Independent.

-Teimourian, Hajhir, Middle East Specialist, The Times.

-Wade, Nigel, Foreign Editor, The Daily Telegraph.

-Woollacott, Martin, Middle East Correspondent, The Guardian.

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