

## Research Article

### Representation of Islam and Muslims' Image in Computer Games

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**Abstract:** At the digital era, mass media have sensibly altered the social spheres through broadcasting and promoting various thoughts and different life styles. The computer games industry also acts as an influential medium in changing user behavior so as to form our cognition and perception of the world by constructing, transferring and recurring a variety of representations. In reviewing media texts, the ideological elements existing beyond them and the way they affect the audience's insight must be seriously addressed. In recent years, we have been witnessing a critical focus on Moslems' image in Western Media and computer games, in specific. This article has an attempt to investigate figurative representation of Arabs and Moslems, narrative structure and games stages in order for studying the methods of imaging of Arabs and Moslems in computer games. So, 7 ideological computer games produced in recent years regarding Moslems and Islam were examined using semiotic analysis qualitative method. Here, an integrative approach is conducted in which Stewart Hall's representation theories are at the center of theoretical debates and then Edward Said's insight into Orientalism is presented as an instance of representation theory application. We conclude that-in a complex integrative movement-Global Imperialism tries to create a sort of Islam-phobia in public opinion across the world and represents its own desirable image of Islam and Islamic civilization in mind of the audience.

**Keywords:** Computer games, cultural representation, Islam, Moslems, orientalism, terrorism

## INTRODUCTION

In commence of the third Millennium, we witness a nadir ear in the history of human being when technological revolution and multiplicity of communication channels have significant influence on human life, thought and awareness. Information era and also information manipulation era dominate us. We soak in the myriad of information, yet we are not able to discern between reality and non-reality. Castles informs us from hegemony of a new technological paradigm established based on information technologies.

Among the most significant imaging media appeared in recent years at the heart of technological evolutions in late decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century paved their way with an increasing rate between children and adolescences using new technologies and their very attractions and increasingly ingrained within users' life are computer games. Children and adolescences are heavily affected by the games and regarding the importance of the games in social life of the age group, computer games have inevitably allocate great space of children and adolescences' social acceptance.

The content of the computer games are overwhelmed by ideological and political views. They transfer their ideas and thought to children by stimulating false excitement and inducing the children to see the world through the lenses of these ideas (Biyabangard, 2007).

Computer games has turned out to very powerful and influential medium tool capable of establishing culture and behavior change in different societies based on its special properties. The tool has provided Western military forces with novel opportunity so as to exploit it to justify their military performance across the world during the last two decades and shift global community's opinion toward rationalizing their own crimes.

In the games, terrorists are not explicitly represented as Moslems and Islamic countries, but it is attempted that signs, symbols, script, language, music and color and are used to introduce terrorists; that is, it is implicitly induced to the world that the elements, indices and indicatives introduce terrorism. In their scenarios, Moslems and in particular Iranians are represented as the Evil One in the world, whereas America and Western forces enter the field as the

world's peacemaker to remove these individuals (Haghverdi, 2007).

**Surprising world of computer games:** The world of computer and video games is a wonderland where man is a loser at the same time of being the winner and in determinism at the same time of being in freedom. The most surprising psychological point of the computer games is placing players in absolute determinism; namely, upon setting the very scene for them at the zenith of freedom so as to feel open in having choices-including playing alone or with a partner, the type of costume, weapons, secondary equipments of the game actors, color, line, voice, language, structures, motion angles, name of people and the like-and to act as they desire, they are stopped in facing fast complicated games or the irrationality of the game process which imposes flaws on them and they are forced to do exactly and mechanically as the game designers want them to do to not to be eliminated from the game, namely, they fall from the climax of freedom to the abysmal of determinism and captivity (Biyabangard, 2007).

**The world of no-penalty line crossings:** The whole art of the game is in that it gives human a chance to experience and touch the reality without facing any danger. In game, you can effortlessly construct and destroy a civilization, fight, or lose, invest and lose in a fall of hat, fly, drive, urge and, in short, take risk without any danger (Salehi, 2002) and computer games as one of the main kinds of these games are no exception.

Any medium has an attempt to create a type of subjectivity in its audience. Given that computer games are a kind of medium, the characteristic of the medium is that it establish a sort of line-crossing in the audience. In fact in these games, audience and user can do things they could not do in the real world or if they do, they have to pay a great deal for them. A player in the games can kill, hurt and gain experiences without paying any damages; experiences with heavy pay-offs in the real world (Biyabangard, 2007).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**Orientalism:** Orientalism is defined as the dominant discourse representing an image of the East fitting most with ideals and expectations of the West based on ambitious terms and in the framework of academic studies in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology and literature. The discourse has produced and will produce its own medium policy (Tavasoli, 2009). Orientalism's explanations of Islam (and the East) are established based on four major pillars: first, there is absolute and organized difference between the East and West; second, representation of the West from the East is based on textual and mental interpretations rather than reality; third, the East is static and monotonous not

being able to determine its identity; forth, the East is dependent and obedient (Fig. 1).

Orientalism employs a realistic account in which the socially and culturally distinct reality of the East is taken for granted; the reality different from its western counterpart. In fact, a sort of diabolization has ever been the recurring theme of the mindset. Karim shows repetition of Orientalistic images of Islam and Moslems in American media and explains that the image of Islam as a threat is turned out to the dominant discourse in the United States (Mehdizadeh, 2008).

The considerable point in Orientalism studies is the descriptions representing the Orient as mystic and the Eastern as primitive, wild, susceptible, irrational and tyrant. However, in the discourse, the West is also defined in terms of "Binary Opposition" with the East. Indeed, the two poles establish each other in an oppositional relationship. The disdainful look dominant over the East represents the West as superior and despite East, the West and Western world are demonstrated as logical, liberal, civilized and developed. As Edward Said puts it, the West is the active action yet the East passive reaction; the former plays observer, arbitrator and jury and controls the whole East behaviors (Said, 2003).

Regardless of historical and theoretical roots of Orientalism, in sum, dominant discourse on Orientalism regarding the introduction of we (the West) and representation of the other (the East) can be provided in the following framework (Fig. 2):

Orientalism addresses Western texts creating the East through mental representations (e.g., novel), pseudo-realdescription (news reports and travelogue) and or even ill-founded claims based on comprehensive knowledge of history and culture of the East (historical and ethnic notes). Also, it reviews the process of creating "The Other" and the estate of "Dominant View" formation. According to what is implied through the key concepts of the post-colonial studies, the East is not a static and monotonous reality, rather a phenomenon created by many intellectuals, artists, critics, authors and politicians and above all a wide range of the East's cognition is based on stereotypical presumptions and templates (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998).

**Cultural representation:** In Richard Dyer's opinion, the concept of representation is the construction course that mass media make up of the reality features including people, places, objects, individuals and cultural identities and other single concepts. Demonstration and realization of the representations might be in verbal, written or motion pictures form (Dayer, 2005). So, the concept of representation is the estate of representation, demonstration and visualization of a social reality (Shababiand Aghasi, 2011).

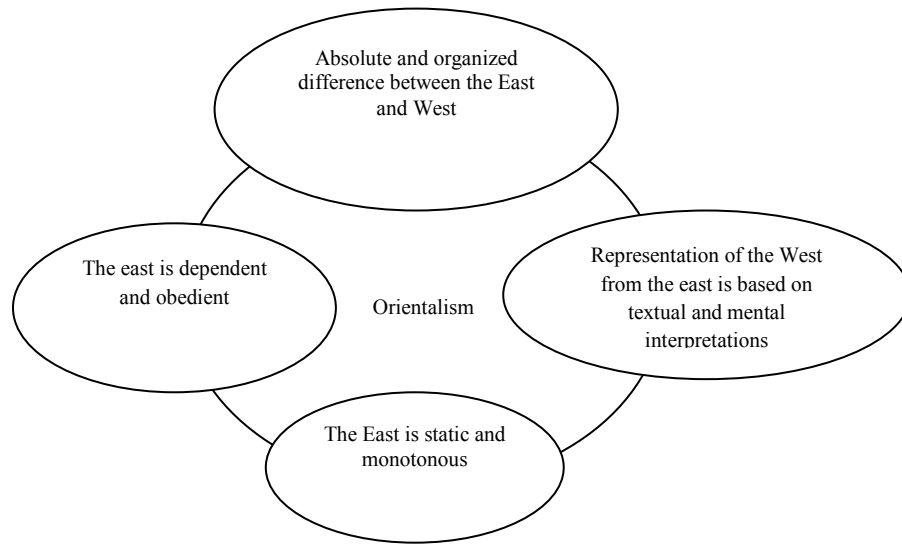


Fig. 1: Graph of Orientalism pillars

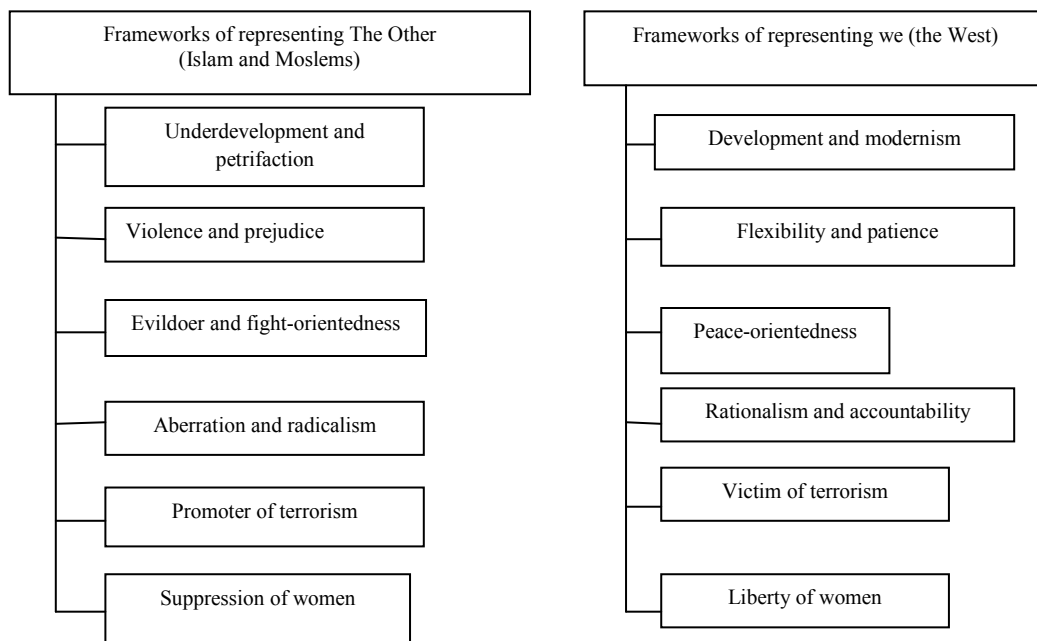


Fig. 2: Dominant discourse on Orientalism regarding the introduction of We (the West) and representation of The Other (the East) Mehdizadeh (2008)

Using story is among representation methods. News stories comply with a particular structure formed in proportionate to perception of each medium agent's interests. Laurel Richardson believes that "story is the major method of organizing a series of events happening around. It is the time significance based on which we organize these events and define our experiences. Story has both discursive and representative means (Richardson, 1990:118). In the view, we can both perceive the world through story window and represent our very perception of it (Givvian and Sarvi, 2009).

Accordingly, a medium transplants separate events by disintegrating, integrating and continuously rearranging the details and formulates them in a story, the story is an example of a collection of stories representing different events for the audiences. The collection forms the world around us. The world is the image of representations made by the mediated world creating mental ideals for contemporary human so that he can face his surrounding environment and feels like knowing it, namely, this is media and their products which determine our semantic realms (Shababi and Aghasi, 2011).

As a corollary, it is evident that-through looking into the events and happenings around the world-each medium shows the audience that there is a proportion of truth between the reality and the represented image established between the two and the story resulted from them depending on the medium's specific ideological objectives which alternatively provokes a "deconstructed reality" into the mind of the audience and leads him to construct an impartial perception of the event (Ibid, 89).

Representation is the medium-made reality playing central role in media studies. To put it better, representation is meaning production through conceptual and linguistic framework. Representation is not reflection of the meaning of phenomena but the production and construction of meaning based on conceptual and discourse frameworks. Since the media are the most comprehensive organ of production and reproduction and distribution of cognition and awareness in the new world, their contents can be considered as a powerful semantic source about the social world. Medium representations are significant in that they form public cognition and belief. Based on the discourse and representation ratio, medium content represents power relationships. Discourse is a cognitive framework and system practiced through language; that is why Stewart Hall employs representation. Representation policy explains the power relationships in the process of implication and representation; that is, implication and meaning making are affected by power relationships yet affect them (Mehdizadeh, 2008).

**Stereotyping:** Stereotyping is among strategies of the representation policy reducing people to a few simple features. Cliché is defined as humans' degeneration to a set of exaggerated and usually negative personality characteristics. As a result, stereotyping personalities includes reducing, substantiating, familiarizing and stabilizing the differences through power function within the pseudo-normal and sordid borders of "we".

Stereotyping is a process based on which the material world and world of ideas are classified to construct meaning so that a concept of the world can be formed coinciding ideological opinions located behind the clichés. Hall considers stereotyping as "Proactive Signifying" and believes that "principally, we need to dig into the stereotyping to understand the estate of representation act" (Hall, 1997). Stereotyping considers a few simple, stable and easily comprehensible features of a person and reduces everything about that person into these characteristics making them simple and exaggerated presuming them as stable and perpetual, accordingly, stereotyping supposes the difference as innate, natural and stable (Hall, 1997).

In Western media, several clichés are provided from Moslems so that citing the name of Islam and Moslems is ingrained within the clichés, at the time and the Western minds think of the clichés at the same time of imagining and remembering Moslems. Clichés such as underdeveloped, primitive and wild, sensual and womanized, aggressive, fighter and.... In fact,

stereotyping is the most critical strategy of representing we and the other; specifically, used for imaging and representing the other in the media (Bicheranlou, 2009).

## METHODOLOGY

**Research technique:** Taking a research method depends on subject, instruments and objectives of the study. There are a wide variety of research methods different classifications of which have been presented in various books. Here, since the study is aimed at media-centered representation of Islam and Moslems in stories and background images of computer games and their implicit meanings, semiotic method was used.

In studies concerning the domain of media, semiotics is the supreme and most conventional methodological pattern for image studies. Semiotics is the science of studying methods of meaning production through signs and symbols. In other words, studying signs and the estate of their use in meaning creation is the main subject of the field. Contemporary semioticians like Roland Barthes incline to show connotations within signs containing ideological values. In the field of communications; each photo, caricature, report, film, news text and in general each message is composed of several signs analyzable via semiotics (Bahrami, 2009). Seme and referent are the most significant semiotic elements. Seme is a medium and absolutely requires a substance and subject and the essence of seme is always material (sounds, objects, images and fantasies) and referent is also beyond seme only through which it is achieved and that is what perceived from the referent.

Image semiotics includes five groups:

- Graphic (images, figures and designs)
- Visual (mirrors and drawing)
- Cognitive (sensory data)
- Mental and spiritual (dreams and memories, memorials and beliefs)
- Oral (metaphor, description)

Tradition of image semiotics stems from distinguishing its attributes based on analogy and comparison. Signs bring about different examples (subject and object, in one hand and subject and respondent, on the other). Referring to a single whole (a unit presenting itself as a predicate sentence) is to make connection using signs based on distinguishing conflicts and determining the identity through differences.

**Sampling procedure and sample volume:** In present study, purposeful or judgmental sampling will be used regarding the essence of the subject. Judgmental sampling is a kind of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected based on researcher's judgment concerning which one of the

units are more advantageous and famous (Bobby, 2011), namely, judgmental sampling requires choosing subjects with the best conditions for providing necessary information (Sekaran, 2009). Regarding the wide range of computer games supplied in domestic markets during the last decade and also the sampling method used in the study, four important and popular games produced in historical genres are selected based on studies in the field including Delta Force, Desert Storm, Counter and Conquer Generals.

**Data analysis:** There is no predetermined rubric for semiotic analysis and each approach suggests its own specific analysis formula. Here, each one of the semiotic analysis approaches dictates the researcher what to do and which categories to consider based on their own theoretical principles.

In employing semiotic analysis for computer games examination, the pattern used by Roland Baret-French semiotician-in analyzing Balzac's novel is applied. In his book "S/Z", Baret has reviewed Sazarin's short stories (i.e., the work of French realist writer-Balzac) and used a structuralistic method. He has reviewed reading units as Lexia. In Baret's analysis, reading unit is the realm of meaning realization; sometimes a sentence and sometimes a word. These interpretive strategies have resulted in flexibility of Baret's reviewing method. Baret aimed at demonstrating predictive essence of Balzac's story (Hawkes, 2003). In Baret's view, meaning is subconsciously formed. Accordingly, Baret indicates the presence of various components in analyzing a text. Five codes involved in story used by Baret in analyzing Balzac's novel are:

- **The hermeneutic code:** Includes code preceding the story and synonymous with question-and-answer as well as a wide range of random events which might pose a question or provide the answer and or put a mystery. The codes indicate question, ambiguity and semantic delay components and finally form regression in story which is indeed answers and linear organization of the answers or the mysteries posed beforehand.
- **The code of signifiers or semes (sem):** Is in fact the same code of implicit meanings composed of delicate semantic implications. For instance, *e* implies feminine in Sazarin's story.
- **The symbolic code (sym):** Is distinguishable grouping or construction regularly recurring in the text and forming dominant construction, in the end. Embedding oppositions in the text is the most significant function of symbolic code. The code contains themes.
- **The proactive code (act):** Stems from the concept of "mental capability of determining the-action" and simultaneously and implicitly indicates the end of event. The code contains actions and events, namely, events chain; for example, murder

sequence in Sazarin's novel implies the performances of the main story including linear sequence of actions which expresses linear causality and consciousness of the text. The sequences do not necessarily issue from the text, but the reader also refers to similar texts previously existing in the same structures and as a result supposes the general structure of the text as a coherent whole. So, the code has discourse qualities.

- **The cultural code or reference code (Ref):** Speaks of accepted wisdom as a moral, collective, anonymous and powerful voice. For Baret, the code demonstrates "the established system of traditions' sovereignty and patriarchic moralities". Cultural code refers to outside and ideological realm and myths trying to present the beliefs expressed in the text as natural and conventional. Components or elements of reference code can be derived from myths, proverbs, clichés or certain technical discourses formed based on preceding social knowledge.
- Mostly, codes 2 and 3 are not distinguishable. Codes 1 and 4 are the agents of forward motion and creation of sequence in the text and codes 2, 3 and 5 provide basic (principle) information for the text (Givyanand Sarvi, 2009). In this study, we do not intend to present narrative analysis and will consider codes 2, 3 and 5 in games analysis. Yet, codes 1 and 4 (i.e. hermeneutic and proactive codes) are presented for completing Baretian pattern.

## GAMES ANALYSIS

**Delta force:** Puma Reality War Games Co. is one of the companies producing games for representing Moslems as terrorist. In the games of the company, all military operations across the world are simulated most which take place in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Vietnam. In different steps of Iraq operation, when you removed terrorists' places, you will see tables designed by the term "Muhammad the Prophet" as well as various Islamic designs inside the rooms. In the game, again terrorists have an Islamic disguise. The company says that it has provided its subscribers with a chance to experience updated missions of the world.

In all games showing Moslems, the arrow is pointed to Iran; or Iran is introduced as terrorist or supporter of the terrorist in the world (Fig. 3 and 4, Table 1).

In "delta force" games series and in particular its new versions, you as the hero move to different parts of the world and are commissioned to fight the terrorists across the world as introduced by the U.S.A. ranging from fighting drug trafficking in Colombia to terrorists in Iran. You are responsible for the whole story.

Table 1: Iran is introduced as terrorist or supporter of the terrorist in the world

	Implicit	Symbolic	Proactive	Referential
Figure 3 and 4	American government arrests terrorists wherever they are in the world. Terrorists are Moslem and Iranian.	Terrorist/American soldier/images of Imam Khomeini/name of Muhammad the Prophet on the tables	We have to keep waiting to see the battle between the terrorists and American forces.	Referring to the relationship between terrorism and Moslems Referring to Islam as promoter and confirmation of terrorism Referring to operational and intelligence power of the U.S. in discovering terrorists

Table 2: Public Basij forces of Iran

	Hermeneutic	Implicit	Symbolic	Proactive	Referential
Figure 5 and 6	Who are these paramilitary people?	The costume and beard of the people implies their religious base and are the symbol of their Islamic thought	Terrorist/ordinary clothing/beard/ weapon	We expect them to commit a dangerous act	Referring to the relationship between terrorism and Moslems Referring to Moslems' aggressiveness



Fig. 3: Iran is introduced as terrorist or supporter of the terrorist in the world



Fig. 4: Iran is introduced as terrorist or supporter of the terrorist in the world



Fig. 5: Public Basij forces of Iran



Fig. 6: Public Basij forces of Iran

In the game, upon passing different stages to fight terrorists, you enter Iran and Khark Island. This section

of the game has three stages: first, you attack Khark Island; second, you attack an oil terminal in Persian Gulf protected by military forces. In one of the stages you must repossess the Iranian trucks carrying chemical materials and having strong escort intact after attacking Iranian forces and safely transfer them to a secure area.

Yes, Iran and in specific Khark Island. The most difficult stage of the game is fighting Iranian terrorists. All the way through the game and when fighting devil elements across the world, you encounter people with ordinary costumes, but in Iran you have to fight organized military forces wearing Khaki military uniforms with Basiji and Islamic faces; here, in addition to killing classical military forces, you encounter other forces with ordinary clothing (indicating public Basij forces of Iran) in Fig. 5, 6 and Table 2.

**Desert storm:** Among other games and perhaps the most attractive and the best of all games designed is "Desert Storm" supplied in 2002. The user can choose to play either as American Special Forces "delta" or British forces "sas". His mission is to save Iraq from yoke of dictatorship. His only enemy here is Iraqi soldier. The game does not induce any opposition with the U.S. and only not recommended for individuals less than 16. Covert objective of the game is to position its user in the stance of defending modern order of the world.

The story of the game goes back to the Gulf War time and Iraq attack to Kuwait. Upon learning military and defense lessons, the user-in his first mission on 3<sup>rd</sup> of August, 1990-must explode a bridge between Iraq and Kuwait after fighting Iraqi forces and upon passing many stages with various missions like destroying military centers, missile sites, military airports, radar centers, antiaircraft sites and ... in the end tries to kill General Aziz Khan (Fig. 7, Table 3).

Surprisingly, in two sequential stages, you must destroy Scud missiles, of course before being fired toward Israel; or you have to enter Southern Baghdad on Feb. 1991, find the way to enter an Iraqi factory and

Table 3: Referring to Islamic countries' use of nuclear weapons

	Hermeneutic	Implicit	Symbolic	Proactive	Referential
Figure 7	Where are these Scad missiles trained?	Iraq and Islamic countries are producing and using nuclear and radioactive weapons	Scad missile/American soldier/missile site	We must expect the consequence of using the nuclear weapons	Referring to Islamic countries' use of nuclear weapons Referring to production of nuclear bombs by Islamic countries

Table 4: Referring to Islam supporting terrorism Referring to Moslems' dangerousness

	Hermeneutic	Implicit	Symbolic	Proactive	Referential
Figure 8	Which area do these buildings and architectural style imply?	Terrorists stand in the places with Arabic-Islamic architecture	buildings with - Arabic-Islamic architecture/Arabic script/palm	-	Referring to Islam supporting terrorism Referring to Moslems' dangerousness



Fig. 7: Referring to Islamic countries' use of nuclear weapons



Fig. 8: Referring to Islam supporting terrorism Referring to Moslems' dangerousness



Fig. 9: Referring to Moslems' aggressiveness Referring to operational



Fig. 10: Referring to Moslems' aggressiveness Referring to operational

after passing several security layers, enter the factory where nuclear and radioactive weapons are produced

and in the end go out with some plutonium produced and also destroy an on-the-process missile whose warhead is removed and a nuclear warhead is to be fitted instead.

**Counter:** Next popular game is "Counter". In the game you must travel different countries to fight terrorism.

Battle places are depicted by Islamic designs and terrorists are represented in Moslems' disguise. Here, the user must go to Islamic countries to fight terrorists. Terrorists with whom he encounters all have headbands with beard. The important point in the game is that the user can take an American, British or even Israeli identity to fight terrorists.

This is one of the most popular games across the world and its computer version is also available. This adventurous game's popularity is so that World Cyber Games (WCG) Organization administering computer games competition around the world has put it at the top of its games. Here again, the event happens in the Middle East and Arabic-Islamic countries and you see signs and symbols indicating terrorists; buildings with mosques, spires and domes and in the end people to fight (Fig. 8, Table 4).

Of the main distinguishing characteristics of counter is the way weapons are used here. Most ammunition used in the game is real (unlike other games using fictitious weapons) and it is different from the real weapons only in some nuances. The differences are seen in naming and caliber of the bullets and ... and not in other main cases providing the player with the opportunity to experience how it feels to use real war crafts.

Even images displayed after they killed remind us the same images we have observed at the moment of the fighters' martyrdom. Above all, you can take action as anti-terror police from the behalf of various countries including Zionist regime (Fig. 9, 10, Table 5).

**Conquer generals:** In game "Conquer Generals", computer player is commissioned to fight terrorists mostly in Iraq and Afghanistan as an American soldier. In Iraq and at the verge of entering Baghdad, Iraqi forces fire a missile and kill many Iraqi women and



Table 5: Referring to Moslems' aggressiveness Referring to operational

	Hermeneutic	Implicit	Symbolic	Proactive	Referential
Figure 9 and 10	Who are these paramilitary people?	Elements (like red headband, beard, uniform) are symbols of terrorism	red headband/ - beard/the estate of falling off	-	Referring to Moslems' aggressiveness Referring to operational and intelligence power of America in finding terrorists

children in city Bazaar. The scene results in that the player becomes further determined to kill Iraqi soldiers.

This strategic game provides the user with the chance to choose from the three involved parties: Arab's World Liberal Army, China and the U.S. Here again, the description of these hostile associations is important: the U.S. possesses expensive and powerful units including vehicles and completely equipped weaponries capable to cure themselves. Their superior intelligence competencies and flexible air force provide the opportunity to feasibly bombard wherever they desire. Choosing enemy just adds to the difficulty of victory and the enemy is again depicted by racist terms.

First, if you go through generals of armies of different countries across the world, you will see all have badges. Just three leaders do not have the badges and not even military uniforms. Their names are not general and they are in pure simplicity and poverty.

For instance, worker force in all other teams is machine whereas this team is a skinny bared feet old man. Nevertheless, the latter teams have an odd and irrational power and officially use microbial weapons as well and even have no mercy to their own people. Well, in sum, the characteristics direct us toward the Middle East where the badges are not important and even a 23-year-old individual can be the leader of the army; where the people do great works with empty hands. Another sign of the names of the leaders is that one is the Prince and the other is doctor and their clothing is very similar to Arabs.

Moslems have dreadful faces in the games, commit immoral deeds and have a dream of achieving chemical and nuclear weapons and they can make it. Their symbol is a gun in feast simply seen on the flag of Lebanon Hezbollah and Basij. Advertising objective of the game is to represent Moslems as corrupted to people of the world.

For example, we see Moslems terrorist operation in New York City aiming at destruction of all residential areas of the city; or in another stage we see rescue operation of the American forces to suburban villages of Almati City, Kazakhstan. Upon withdrawal of the American forces, terrorists Moslems arrive and kill the people of the village, destroy houses and steal people's properties. In the stage, the user is commissioned to collect the aids of American forces from the people and after a few minutes, he is informed that the properties are not enough and ordered to even destruct the houses and take their properties.



Fig. 11: Islamic and religious symbols

Surprisingly, there has been an attempt to bold Islamic and religious symbols either in Iraq or in Afghanistan for game designers and battle fields and sites to be the places with the same symbols (Fig. 11). In the two countries, terrorists are shown by green color; green machines, green helmet, green flags and even the warheads of the missiles are displayed by green color. This choice of color is partially designed just like the old games in which America fought terrorists and the enemies represented by red color (the symbol of USSR).

The objectives of the game become overt when you finish the game with one of the three teams known as GLA. TV reporter called (Omar) reads a letter written by the absent chief of the organization and the most tangible sentence of the text is: (we are ever where). Well, it is the way cabals like Taliban and do; that is, broadcasting the messages after an event through a spokesman and in video medium all around the world.

Interesting points seen in the game are for example at the beginning a film is displayed of an American airplane and helicopter patrolling which suddenly attacked by enemy and fall. Then, you are required to suppress the intruders and it is shown that America never ever shoots the first bullet and just attack in self-defense.

Another interesting point is the existence of nomad families fighting with their children present by primitive weapons against route and armored march and only with one item (AK47 gun or Kalashnikov) in hand, their power is multiplied. The quality of the families is that even if a person stays alive, he will be propagated after a few seconds. Existence of devoted and self-sacrificing forces is yet of other factors on which you can count in route and cavalry forms; men covering their bodies with explosive materials and attack the enemy drawing every one's attention to themselves. It is the unique spirit of Moslems believing in martyrdom and going to heaven (however, in the World War II some Japanese aircrafts hit themselves



against American ships in such operation). Just at the time, this question pops into our minds that why the men attack the enemy's line and at the moment it is ordered, we hear them say: "I am killed for my goal".

## CONCLUSION

Human appears active rather than passive in the modern media mostly highlighted by his advent in computer games and the cyber space. The audience is ingrained with the protagonist by incarnating and presenting in its personality, perceiving the rational and rules of the character and understanding its implicit and explicit content. Like other media, it does not consider the events as neutral elements rather determines them, does not witness being killed rather kills or is killed and increasingly creates all real world components in the virtual world.

The world where you answer your needs by adapting yourself to the norms of the game; you love and hate; those aspirations and dreams of yours impossible to be realized in the real world will come true; view the game through the political perspective of the game designer; live with it and learn the rules and regulations of the world, values and thoughts of the protagonist; review and enact them; it is here then that the images are constructed in the audience's mind and the medium entertains the individual yet informs and teach him transferring him to another world of values.

A general review of underlying logic of selected computer games shows that first person action and shooting games represent the Middle East within a contemporary and obviously war-torn framework and Arabs and Moslems are schematized as enemy. The Middle East is the desirable virtual battle field for the video games. Action genres games including (Persian) Gulf War, Delta Force, Sand Storm Battle, global terror occur in the Middle East or in a superficially unknown place yet clearly in the Middle East (Sisler, 2008). Recent studies address increasing ties between game industry and the United States Army. Video games are employed as public relations' tool to promote U.S. Army and its reinforcement (e.g., U.S. Army game) or as a tool to explain and justify "fight against terrorism" (e.g., Kuma War). In the latter game, downloadable missions are monthly provided covering recent operations against terrorist Arabs or Afghans as the enemy (Tavassoli, 2009).

Generally, the game user controls U.S. forces or alliance forces, whereas the enemy is controlled by the computer. The enemy is depicted by a set of schematized features implying Arabs or Moslems such as Chafia around the head, loose costumes and brown face skin. Most of the times, story of the game ties the semes to international terrorism and or Islamist radicals. Delta Force and Conquer of Generals provide scenarios in which Arabs from various countries have gone

together in a terroristic organization determined to disrupt U.S.A's activities (Sisler, 2008).

On the other hand, it acknowledged that the U.S. has tended to make games with specific purposes in various entertainment and commercial genres and politically exploit the industry as an ideological tool. Two major affirmative and negative policies are pursued in the first person action games; in the former and in terms of legitimizing its actions, scenes and missions in the game are completely in the line of explanatory policies the U.S.A's crimes and there is an attempt to represent the violations of the U.S. as an usual, philanthropic and in the same line with global peace and democracy among the people of the land and also other nations and in particular between the American young people and adolescents. America is the symbol of absolute good and the only lifesaver rescuing human pointed out in all human schools of thoughts and everyone has been waiting for her. And, every single person, government and or group against her or her values is The Evil One in the world.

In the latter (negative function) -delegitimizing the enemy in the games-a schematic image of Moslems and Islam is represented indirectly and using signs, symbols, color, music, script and language ....; a negative image of Islam and Moslems. And there is an attempt to create a sort of Islam-phobia and destruction of beliefs, values and questioning thought principles of Islam world and in particular Iran.

In a complex integrative movement, Global Imperialism tries to create a sort of Islam-phobia in public opinion across the world and represents its own desirable image of Islam and Islamic civilization in mind of the audience using animators, film makers, press and toys ... so that in all of the products the space of Islamic countries is fraught with symbols including desert, irrational violence (terrorism), savage rulers, supernatural secrets (stemming from underdevelopment) and structures ruin and .... The most significant semes in the image represented from Moslems in the games are violence and terrorism envisioned in relation to and in association with Islam and its instructions so that Islam is known as promoter and conformation of terrorism. In this kind of imaging, Moslems are dangerous people committing terroristic crimes in different places of the world murdering innocent non-Moslem humans called infidel by terror. Radicalism, violation, irrationality, aberration and extravagance are among outstanding representation symbols of Moslems in the films reviewed. Exactly opposite the image of the Other (terrorist Moslems), the image of "We" (i.e., Americans and other parts of the West) are at the front line of fighting Moslem terrorism as well as innocent victims of terrorism (Bicheranlou, 2009).

Comparing the animations "Sandbad and Alibaba" to comic strips including "Tan Tan" and games such as

Prince of Persia, Call of Duty, Delta Force, Counter, Assassin Creed (or Hashashin Creed) and ... the image of horrible environment and background is formed in the audience's mind of the Middle East and Islamic civilization and he constructs a grudge against them.

The producers keep on implicitly by providing an impressive story in the game and dividing the characters to friend and enemy and depicting a negative face of Eastern characters, whereas by affirmatively teaching rules and life and behavior style of the West as they result in positive human behavior (unlike rule of Islamic civilization) complete and stabilize the process of creating a negative image in mind and hatred in heart of the audience against Islamic civilization; for example, indirect instruction of twisted history and values and criteria of Western civilization is partially observed all the way through the games.

These packed thoughts and ideas transmitted through the games attack basic beliefs; values and ideals of a society and in long term-through changing critical beliefs of the society-transform thought and thinking templates of their audiences and form new behavioral models. The new models are in a way as to replace challenging behaviors and shift them toward deconstruction rather than promoting supportive behaviors protecting political, social and cultural structure of the society.

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