

# ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL



Volume 1 / Issue 1

Fall 2012

## About the *ISJ*

The *Islamophobia Studies Journal* is a bi-annual publication that focuses on the critical analysis of Islamophobia and its multiple manifestations in our contemporary moment.

*ISJ* is an interdisciplinary and multi-lingual academic journal that encourages submissions that theorizes the historical, political, economic, and cultural phenomenon of Islamophobia in relation to the construction, representation, and articulation of "Otherness." The *ISJ* is an open scholarly exchange, exploring new approaches, methodologies, and contemporary issues.

The *ISJ* encourages submissions that closely interrogate the ideological, discursive, and epistemological frameworks employed in processes of "Otherness" – the complex social, political, economic, gender, sexual, and religious forces that are intimately linked in the historical production of the modern world from the dominance of the colonial / imperial north to the post-colonial south. At the heart of *ISJ* is an intellectual and collaborative project between scholars, researchers, and community agencies to recast the production of knowledge about Islamophobia away from a dehumanizing and subordinating framework to an emancipatory and liberatory one for all peoples in this far-reaching and unfolding domestic and global process.

The *Islamophobia Studies Journal* is a collaborative venture between the following centers and institutions:

- Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project for the Center for Race and Gender at the University of California, Berkeley;
- Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Initiative for the School of Ethnic Studies at the San Francisco State University;
- Center for Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union;
- International Centre for Muslim and Non-Muslim Understanding at the University of South Australia;
- and Zaytuna College.

**Advisory Board Members**

Hishaam Aidi

*Columbia University*

Zahra Billoo

*CAIR-San Francisco Bay Area Chapter (CAIR-SFBA)*

Sohail Daulatzai

*University of California, Irvine*

Nadia Fadil

*Catholic University of Leuven*

Sr. Marianne Farina

*Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology*

Jess Ghannam

*University of California, San Francisco*

Sandew Hiro

*International Institute of Scientific Studies*

Suad Joseph

*University of California, Davis*

Monami Maulik

*DRUM-Desis Rising Up and Moving*

Mahan Mirza

*Zaytuna College*

Tariq Ramadan

*Oxford University*

Junaid Rana

*University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*

Salman Sayyid

*University of South Australia*

Imam Zaid Shakir

*Zaytuna College*

**Editorial Board Members**

Hatem Bazian  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Maxwell Leung  
*California College of the Arts*

Munir Jiwa  
*Graduate Theological Union*

Rabab Abdulhadi  
*San Francisco State University*

Ramon Grosfoguel  
*University of California, Berkeley*

**Student Interns**

Taqwa Elhindi  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Ashwak Hauter  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Hira Khanzada  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Paula Thompson  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Rasheeda Plenty  
*Zaytuna College*

**Administrative Support**

Alisa Bierria, Assistant Director, Center for Race and Gender  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Gazi Saief Mahmud, IT Support  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

## Table of Contents

ABOUT THE <i>ISJ</i>	2
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS	3
EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS	4
SUPPORT STAFF AND INTERNS	4
DISCLAIMER	5
EDITORIAL STATEMENT	7
<b>RAMON GROSFUGUEL</b> , <i>THE MULTIPLE FACES OF ISLAMOPHOBIA</i>	9
<b>NASAR MEER AND TARIQ MODOOD</b> , <i>FOR “JEWISH” READ “MUSLIM”? ISLAMOPHOBIA AS A FORM OF RACIALISATION OF ETHNO-RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN BRITAIN TODAY</i>	34
<b>MOHAMMAD H. TAMDGIDI</b> , <i>BEYOND ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ISLAMOPHILIA AS WESTERN EPISTEMIC RACISMS: REVISITING RUNNYMEDE TRUST’S DEFINITION IN A WORLD-HISTORY CONTEXT</i>	54
<b>PETER GOTTSCHALK AND GABRIEL GREENBERG</b> , <i>COMMON HERITAGE, UNCOMMON FEAR: ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE UNITED STATES AND BRITISH INDIA, 1687-1947</i>	82
<b>KHALDOUN SAMMAN</b> , <i>ISLAMOPHOBIA AND THE TIME AND SPACE OF THE MUSLIM OTHER</i>	107
<b>SUAD JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN D’HARLINGUE</b> , <i>THE WALL STREET JOURNAL’S MUSLIMS: REPRESENTING ISLAM IN AMERICAN PRINT NEWS MEDIA</i>	131
<b>HATEM BAZIAN</b> , <i>MUSLIMS – ENEMIES OF THE STATE: THE NEW COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM (COINTELPRO)</i>	163

## Editorial Statement

The cover of this inaugural issue of the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* features a photograph taken at the Al-Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain with text that translates into “No One is Truly Victorious Except God!” This inscription is found almost everywhere on the palace complex. It is more than just an aesthetic motif or an archaeological artifact. It is a philosophical, spiritual, and Islamic declaration rooted in the idea of governing oneself with humility and justice. It is both a historical reminder from the period that power is divinely inspired, and a call for self-reflection on the nature of power, our humanity, and the conditions that make domination, subordination, and dehumanization possible. It is about committing to our deepest sense of justice, and it speaks to the eternal demands for our individual and collective perseverance.

We found the inscription appropriate for the cover of this issue as a call to historicize and transform the ways in which constructions of the “Other,” both Muslim and Jewish, and the “West” as a geographical and epistemological space, ushered in the modern world. In 1492, Granada and Spain sat at the crossroads of the “new world,” and its consolidation of social, political, economic, and religious power through new modes of racial formations that constructed the Black, White, African, Muslim, Arab, Jewish, and Orient as the “inferior” global other. We believe that studying Islamophobia in our contemporary moment should not be done at the expense of a deeper and more historical engagement with Otherness in European and American contexts. But studying Islamophobia is also a complex project that requires multidisciplinary, innovative methodologies, and collaborative partnerships in order to deconstruct a vast global network of institutionalized and interconnected power relationships.

This inaugural edition of the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* is an attempt to forge the bonds for strengthening our commitment to justice, to be accountable and responsible for the work that we produce, and more importantly, to focus our passions – the basis of the human condition – as we strive to work in our collective and related projects for justice.

This issue presents our first step in defining not only a field of study, but also a critical engagement in the historical, economic, cultural, social, and political production of Islamophobia in the context of the reproduction of Otherness in history. We endeavor to produce quality works that reflect and puts forward the needs of the community – domestic and international – and to place them at the center of our discourse. We hope to articulate a vision of justice and praxis at a time when the will to speak power to truth is most needed.

On behalf of the Editorial Board and the Advisory Committee, we are

deeply grateful to all the contributors to this inaugural issue. The journal is in its infancy, and we solicit and encourage engagement from scholars, activists, and members from the community on this project as our work continues to improve and evolve. Thank you.

**Hatem Bazian**

*University of California, Berkeley*

**Maxwell Leung**

*California College of the Arts*



# *The Multiple Faces of Islamophobia*

**Ramon Grosfoguel**

*University of California, Berkeley*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 9-33.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

## *The Multiple Faces of Islamophobia*

**Ramon Grosfoguel**

*University of California, Berkeley*

*Reprinted with permission from **Human Architecture** (Volume 1, Issue 1, Fall 2006).*

Any discussion of Islamophobia today has to depart from a discussion about the cartography of power of the “world-system” for the past 518 years. If we understand the “modern world-system” as a system organized solely in terms of an international division of labor and a global inter-state system, Islamophobia would then be an epiphenomenon of the political-economy of the world-system and, in particular, of the ceaseless accumulation of capital at a world-scale. However, if we shift the geopolitics of knowledge and the body-politics of knowledge from a North oriented gaze of the World-System towards a South oriented view, we get a different picture of the global cartography of power. From a Southern perspective, the world-system is organized not only around an international division of labor and a global inter-state system, but include, not as additive elements but as constitutive of the capitalist accumulation at a world-scale, a global racial/ethnic hierarchy (Western vs. non-Western peoples), a global patriarchal hierarchy (global gender system and a global sexual system), a global religious hierarchy, a global linguistic hierarchy, a global epistemic hierarchy, etc (see Grosfoguel 2006). The “package” of entangled power hierarchies of the world-system is broader and more complex than what is frequently theorized in world-system analysis. For the sake of economizing space, when we use the term “world-system” in this essay, we refer to the “modern/colonial Westernized Christian-centric capitalist/patriarchal world-system” (Ibid). At the risk of sounding ridiculous, we prefer a long phrase like this to characterize the present heterarchical structure (multiple power hierarchies entangled to each other in complex historical ways) of the world-system, than the limited characterization of a single hierarchy called “capitalist world-system” with capital accumulation as the single logic of the system (Ibid). The latter leads to an economic reductionist understanding of the world-system, while the former leads to a more complex, non-reductive structural-historical analysis. Islamophobia as a form of racism against Muslim people is not an epiphenomenon but constitutive of the international division of labor.

The first part of the essay will discuss Islamophobia as a form of racism in a world-historical perspective. The second part is a discussion of Islamophobia as a form of cultural racism. The third part is on Islamophobia as Orientalism. The fourth part is Islamophobia as epistemic racism, while

the final part is an example of this using the case of European Islamic Philosopher and Theologian, Tariq Ramadan.

*ISLAMOPHOBIA AS A FORM OF RACISM IN WORLD-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE*

The challenge for our topic is to answer how was it possible that a religious difference in the pre-Modern/Colonial world turned into a racial/ethnic difference in the modern/colonial world. In the heterarchical conceptualization of the world-system used here, Islamophobia would be the subalternization and inferiorization of Islam produced by the Christian-centric religious hierarchy of the world-system since the end of the 15 century. The year 1492 is a crucial foundational year for the understanding of the present system. In this year, the Christian Spanish Monarchy reconquered Islamic Spain expelling Jews and Arabs from the Spanish Peninsula while simultaneously “discovered” the Americas and colonized indigenous peoples. The Arab and Jewish population that was left inside the Iberian Peninsula were forced to convert to Christianity. Marranos (converted Jews) and Moriscos (converted Muslims) were the terms used at the time to classify these “Christianized” populations. The whole 16<sup>th</sup> century was a century of persecution inside the Iberian Peninsula against Moriscos until its final expulsion in 1609 (Perceval 1997) and of enslavement of indigenous and African peoples in the Americas (Dussel 1994). These “internal” and “external” conquered territories and peoples not only created an international capitalist division of labor of core and periphery that overlapped with an international ethno/racial division of labor between Western and non-Western but also constituted the internal and external imagined boundaries of Europe. This related to the global racial/ethnic hierarchy of the world-system privileging European origin populations over the rest. Jews and Arabs became the non-European subaltern internal “Others” inside Europe, while indigenous people became the external “Others” of Europe (Mignolo 2000).

The first marker of “otherness” in the “Westernized Christian-Centric Capitalist/Patriarchal Modern/Colonial World-System” was around religious identity. Jews and Arabs were characterized as “people with the wrong religion” while indigenous people were constructed as “people without religion” (Maldonado-Torres 2006). In the global racial/ethnic hierarchy produced by the two major events of 1492, the “people without religion,” that is “people without God” were at the bottom of the hierarchy. While “people with the wrong religion,” that is, “people with the wrong God” occupied a different position in this hierarchy. How did “people with the wrong religion” turned into “people below the human”, that is, racially inferior people?

The struggle of Christian Spain against Islam formed part of a long imperial struggle in the Mediterranean Sea that goes back to the crusades. The Christian vs. Islam struggle articulated what Walter Mignolo (2000)

characterizes as the “imperial difference,” while the post-1492 Spanish vs. Indigenous struggle in the Americas articulated the “colonial difference.” The “imperial difference” after 1492 is the result of the imperial relations between European empires versus Non-European Empires and we will characterize it here as the result of the “imperial relation”. The “colonial difference” is the result of the colonial relations between European and non-European peoples and we will characterize it here as a result of the “colonial relation.” Historically, the expulsion of Arabs and Jews from Christian Spain in the name of “purity of blood” was a proto-racist process (not yet fully racist, although the consequences were not that different). “Purity of blood” was not used as a racial term but as a technology of power to trace the religious ancestry of the population. However, “purity of blood” will not become a full racist perspective until much later and only after the application of the notion of the “purity of blood” to indigenous peoples in the Americas.

Indigenous peoples characterized in the late 15 century and early 16<sup>th</sup> century as “people without God” in the Christian Spanish imaginary became inferior sub-human or non-human beings. It is this inferiorization below the “human,” to the level of animals, which turned indigenous peoples in the Americas into the first racialized subject of the modern/colonial world inaugurated in 1492 (Dussel 1994). This racist imaginary was extended to new “people without God” such as sub-Saharan Africans transferred massively to the Americas as part of the European slave trade after the infamous debate between Sepulveda and Las Casas in the School of Salamanca in the 1550s. Sepulveda defended that indigenous people had no soul, therefore, were not humans and could be enslaved without representing a sin in the eyes of God. While Las Casas argued that they were savages with a soul, that is, culturally inferior, child like and, therefore, are humans to be Christianized rather than enslaved. Both represent the initial formal articulation of the two forms of racism that continued for the next five centuries to come. Sepulveda represented a biological racist discourse while Las Casas a cultural racist discourse.

Las Casas argued that “Indians” should be incorporated in the *encomienda* (a form of semi-feudal coerced labor) and called to bring Africans to replace them as slaves in the plantations. After all, Africans were characterized by Las Casas not only as “people without religion” but also as “people without soul.” The argument here is that the racist imaginary that was built against the Indigenous people of the new world was then extended to all non-European peoples starting with the African slave trade in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century.

The important issue for our topic is how this racist imaginary was extended even to people that were characterized as “people with the wrong God” in the late 15 century. As the European Empires relations with the Islamic Empires turned from an “imperial relation” into a “colonial relation” (the Spanish destruction of Al-Andalus in the late 15 century and the

subsequent domination of Moriscos in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Dutch colonization of Indonesia in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, British colonization of India in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, French and British colonization of the Middle East in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the demise and subsequent division of the Ottoman Empire among several European Empires at the end of the First World War), the notion of “people with the wrong God” in the Theological Christian imaginary of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century were inferiorized as animals in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century (Perceval 1992, 1997) and later this theological racial foundation secularized into a “scientific evolutionary hierarchical civilizational” imaginary that turned the late 15<sup>th</sup> century “people with the wrong religion” (imperial difference) into the inferior “savages and primitives” of “people without civilization” (colonial difference) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *This process represented a crucial transformation from the inferiorization of non-Christian religions (such as Islam, Judaism, etc.) to the inferiorization of the human beings practicing those religions (such as Muslims and Jews turned into Semites, that is, a race inferior to Europeans). This discursive mutation was central to the entanglement between the inferiorization of religion and the racism against non-European human beings practicing those religions. The Christian-centric global religious hierarchy and the Eurocentric global racial/ethnic hierarchy were increasingly entangled and the distinction between practicing a non-Christian religion and being racialized as an inferior human being became increasingly erased.*

#### ISLAMOPHOBIA AS A FORM OF CULTURAL RACISM

Moreover, in the last 60 years there has been a historical transformation in racist discourses. While biological racist discourses declined, cultural racism became the hegemonic form of racism in the late world-system (Grosfoguel 2003). The defeat of Nazi Germany, the anti-colonial struggles and the civil rights movements of colonial minorities inside the Western Empires created the historical and political conditions for the transition from biological racism to cultural racism. The White elites of the world-system did not give up on their racism. They shifted the meanings and discourses of “race” as a respond to the challenges from the struggles of colonized people. Cultural racism is a form of racism where the word “race” is not even mentioned. It is focused on the cultural inferiority of a group of people. Usually it is framed in terms of the inferior habits, beliefs, behavior, or values of a group of people. It is close to biological racism in the sense that cultural racism naturalizes/essentializes the culture of the racialized/inferiorized people. The latter are represented as fixed in a timeless space.

In the new cultural racist discourses, religion has a dominant role. The contemporary tropes about “uncivilized,” “barbarian,” “savage,” “primitive,” “underdeveloped,” “authoritarian,” and “terrorist” inferior people are today concentrated in the “other’s” religious practices and believes. By focusing on the “other’s” religion, the Europeans, Euro-

Americans and Euro-Israelis manage to escape being accused of racism. However, when we examine carefully the hegemonic rhetoric in place, the tropes are a repetition of old biological racist discourses and the people who are the target of Islamophobic discourses are the traditional colonial subjects of the Western Empires, that is, the “usual suspects”.

Only within the outlined long *durée* historical continuities together with the recent hegemony of cultural racism, can we understand the relationship between Islamophobia and racism today. It is absolutely impossible to delink the hate or fear against Muslims from racism against non-European people. Islamophobia and cultural racism are entangled and overlapping discourses. The association of Muslims with the colonial subjects of Western empires in the minds of white populations is simply a given in the core of the “modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system.” This links Islamophobia to an old colonial racism that is still alive in the world today, especially in the metropolitan centers.

In Great Britain, Muslims are associated to Egyptians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (colonial subjects from old British colonies). Islamophobia in Britain is associated with anti-Black, anti-Arab and anti-South Asian racism. In France, Muslims are mostly North Africans (from old colonies such as Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, etc.). In The Netherlands, Muslims are mostly from guest workers and colonial migrants coming from Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia and Suriname. Islamophobia in The Netherlands is associated to racism against guest worker migrants and old colonial subjects. So Islamophobia as a fear or hate of Muslims is associated with anti-Arab, anti-Asian and anti-Black racisms. In Germany, Islam is associated with anti-Turk racism, while in Spain with anti-Moor racism. Similarly, in the United States, Islam is associated with African-Americans and Arabs of all ethnicities. Puerto Ricans as colonial subjects of the US empire are also suspicious subjects in the Islamophobic hysteria.<sup>1</sup> Latinos are the largest growing populations of converts to Islam in the USA. This makes them also a target of the neo-fascist policies of the US state. Moreover, after 9/11 the Bush Administration associated illegal immigrants with terrorism and national security leading to the increased militarization of the US-Mexico border.

It does not matter if the Western domestic political system is the British multicultural model or the French Republican model the fact is that none is working. Without overcoming the problem of racial discrimination, racism becomes a corrosive process that ends up destroying the abstract

---

<sup>1</sup> See the case of Jose Padilla, a Puerto Rican from Chicago, who has spent more than three years in an isolated military prison without any charges. Even though Puerto Ricans are US citizens, the neo-fascist law of the US Patriot Act, allows the unlimited incarceration of U.S. citizen without legal charges and procedures in a civil court. The initial public accusation against Padilla made by US authorities at the time of his arrest was that he supposedly had a document to build a domestic atomic bomb in his apartment in Chicago. The accusation is so ridiculous that they kept him incarcerated without a due procedure in the courts for several years.



ideals of the each model. In the case of the Anglo-American world, multiculturalism and diversity operates to conceal White Supremacy. The racial minorities are allowed to celebrate their history, carnival and identity as long as they leave intact the white supremacy racial/ethnic hierarchy of the status quo. The dominant system in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States is an institutionalized and concealed “White affirmative action” that benefits Whites on a daily bases and at all levels of social existence. It is so powerful that it has become normalized to the point of not being stated as such.

In the French republican model, the formal system of equality operates with an institutionalized and normalized “comunitarisme masculin blanc.” If racial/gender/sexual minorities protest against discrimination, they are accused by the “communistaristes masculin blanc” in power to be acting as “comunitaristes.” As if the elites in power were racial and gender blind/neutral, behaving towards everybody with a “universal principle of equality.” White supremacy in France operates with the myth of a “racially blind society.” “Racially-blind racism” is institutionalized and normalized in France to the point that makes invisible the discriminatory “communistarisme masculin blanc” in power.

Islamophobia is a case in point. The so-called neutrality of the West is contradicted when Muslims affirm their practices and identities in the public sphere and when they make claims against discrimination in education or the labor market as citizens with equal rights within Western states. The Veil Law in France against Muslim women use of the veil in public institutions or the incarceration without due procedure and torture of thousands of Muslims in the United States are just recent instances in a long list of grievances.

At a world level, Islamophobia has been the dominant discourse used in the post-civil rights and post-independence era of dominant cultural racist discourses against Arabs. The events of 911 escalated anti-Arab racism through an Islamophobic hysteria all over the world, specifically among the dominant elites of the United States and Israel. The latter is not surprising given US and Israeli representation of Palestinians, Arabs and Islamic people in general as terrorist decades before 911 (Said 1979; 1981). The responsibility of US foreign policy is never linked to the tragic events of 911. US Cold War against the Evil Empire in Afghanistan during the 1980s financed, supported and created a global network of Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups called at the time “Freedom Fighters” that came back to hunt them on 911 (Johnson 2006). The USA was complicit in Osama Bin-Laden and Al-Queda operations as part of CIA global/imperial designs and operations against the Soviet Union back in the 1980s. However, it is easier to blame Arab people and use racist Islamophobic arguments rather than to critically examine US foreign policy for the past 50 years. The same applies to Saddam Hussein, who was a loyal US ally and fought a CIA sponsored dirty war against Iran following US imperial/global designs during the 1980s

and was later declared a U.S. enemy and falsely accused by the U.S. elites to have links to Al Qaeda in order to justify a long-planned war against Iraq (Risen 2006).

It is symptomatic that in most Western countries, Arabs are still perceived as if they were “the majority of Muslims in the world” even though they are only 1/5 of the Muslims’ total world population. This is related to the West global/imperial designs for domination and exploitation of Oil in the Middle East and Arabs resistance against it. The long term exaggerated image of Arabs as terrorist and violent in Western Media (newspapers, movies, radio, television, etc.) has been fundamental in the new wave of anti-Arab racism linked to an Islamophobic discourse through cultural racism before and after 911 (Said 1981). It is not accidental that Anti-Arab racism accounts for most Islamophobia in the West. Even Muslims from South Asia and African origin living in the West get part of the heat of the anti-Arab racism, especially in the United States (Salaita 2006).

#### *ISLAMOPHOBIA AS ORIENTALISM*

One of the cultural racist arguments used against Islamic people today is their “patriarchal and sexist abuses of women.” As part of the construction of Islamic people as inferior in relation to the West, an important argument to sustain their “uncivilized” and “violent” values/behavior is the oppression of women at the hands of men. It is ironic to hear Western patriarchal and Christian conservative fundamentalist figures talk as if they were defenders of feminism when they talk about Islam. George W. Bush main argument to invade Afghanistan was the need to liberate brown women from the atrocities of brown men. The hypocrisy of the argument is clear when the Bush Administration was actively defending Christian patriarchal fundamentalism, opposing abortion and women’s civil/social rights during the eight years of its Administration in the United States, while using a women’s rights argument against the Taliban’s to invade Afghanistan. The rhetoric of “White men as saviors of Women of color from color men’s patriarchal abuses” goes back to colonial times. It has served historically to conceal the real reasons behind the White men colonization of the non-West. We now know that the real reasons behind Bush Administration invasion of Afghanistan and Obama Administration continuity is due to its geopolitical strategic location and importance in terms of its closeness to oil and gas in South Asia. Immediately after the invasion, occupied Afghanistan provided legal permission to gas and oil transnational companies to built pipelines over its territory (Rashid 2001). Islamophobic representations of Muslim people as savages in need of Western civilizing missions is the main argument used to cover-up global/imperial military and economic designs.

Moreover, the colonization of Islam by patriarchy is not unique to Islam. We can see the same abuses against women held among Christians (Catholic and Protestants) or Jewish men. You can find as many patriarchal



and sexist arguments in Christian texts as Jewish or Muslim texts. However, the sexist and patriarchal characterization of Islam is what is represented in the press while there is almost silence about the patriarchal oppression of women sustained and practiced by Judaism and Christianity in the West. It is important to say that Islam was the first religion in the world to acknowledge women the right to divorce more than one thousand years ago. The Christian world acknowledged women the right to divorce only very recently in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Catholic Church and many countries still does not recognize it. We are saying this not to justify patriarchal abuses over women done by some Muslim men but to question the stereotypical racial representation that makes of only Muslim men the source of abuses against women around the world. This Islamophobic argument is incoherent, inconsistent and false. It only serves Western global/imperial designs.

Thus, what we have in the world today is not a clash of civilizations but a clash of fundamentalisms (Ali 2002) and a clash of patriarchies. Bush administration defended Christian fundamentalist arguments to characterize the “Islamic enemy” as a part of the old crusade wars, while Islamic fundamentalists use a similar language (Ibid). The former defends a Western form of patriarchy with the Christian monogamist family at its center in the name of civilization and progress, while the latter defends a non-Western forms of patriarchy with polygamy for men (not for women) authorized as central to the family structure. However, as Islamic feminist have sustained, patriarchal versions of Islam are not inherently Islamic but represents the colonization of Islam by patriarchy (Mernisi 1987). The interpretation of the original sacred scriptures were hijacked by men throughout the history of Islam.

The same thing could be said of the Jewish and Christian sacred texts. Interpretations were controlled by patriarchal interpretations of the scriptures as the dominant perspective in these world religions. Therefore, there is no “Patriarchy” as a single system in the world-system today, but “patriarchies” in the sense of several systems of gender domination of males over women. However, what is fundamental to emphasize is that the patriarchal system that was globalized in the present world-system is the Western Christian form of patriarchy. Non-Western forms of patriarchy have co-existed with the West in peripheral regions of the world-system and in many epochs of colonial history the West was complicit with them in their colonial/imperial projects. To talk as if patriarchy, as a system of gender domination, is external to the West and located in Islam is a historical Orientalist distortion that goes back to Western racist representations of Islam in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. European colonial expansion has exported not only capitalism and militarism but also Christian patriarchy around the world.

It is important to keep in mind that Orientalist views are characterized by racist exotic and inferior essentialist representations of

Islam as frozen in time (Said 1979). These Orientalist representations of Islam after the 18<sup>th</sup> century were preceded by three hundred years of Occidentalism (the superiority of the West over the Rest) from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century until the emergence of Orientalism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Mignolo 2000). The historical and political condition of possibility for Orientalism to emerge is Occidentalism.

#### *ISLAMOPHOBIA AS EPISTEMIC RACISM*

Occidentalism created the epistemic privilege and the hegemonic identity politics of the West from which to judge and produce knowledge about the "Others." The ego-politics of knowledge of Rene Descartes in the 17<sup>th</sup> century where Western Men replaces God as the foundation of knowledge is the foundational bases of Modern Western Philosophy. However, as Enrique Dussel (1994), Latin American philosopher of liberation, remind us, Descartes' *ego-cogito* ("I think, therefore I am") was preceded by 150 years of the *ego-conquiro* ("I conquer, therefore I am"). The God-eye view defended by Descartes transferred the attributes of the Christian God to Western men (the gender here is not accidental). But this was only possible from an Imperial Being, that is, from the subjectivity of someone who is at the center of the world because he has conquered it.

The myth about the Western males capacity to produce a knowledge that is Universal beyond time and space was fundamental to imperial/global designs. The Cartesian ego-politics of knowledge inaugurated what Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gomez called the "point zero" perspective. The "point zero" perspective is the Western myth of a point of view that assumes itself to be beyond a point of view. This myth allowed Western men to claim its knowledge to be universal, neutral, and objective. Contemporary authors like Samuel Huntington (1997) reproduces a combination of old Occidentalism with Orientalism. The superiority of the West is taken for granted and the epistemic privilege of Western identity politics from which to produce judgments of the "Other" and global/imperial designs around the world is an unquestioned presupposition.

What is the relevance of this epistemic discussion to Islamophobia? It is from a Western hegemonic identity politics and epistemic privilege that the rest of the epistemologies and cosmologies in the world are subalternized as myth, religion, folklore or culture downgrading non-Western knowledge below the status of philosophy and science. It is also from this hegemonic epistemic location that Western thinkers produce Orientalism about Islam. The former leads to epistemic racism, that is, the inferiorization and subalternization of non-Western knowledge while the latter leads to Orientalism. The subalternization and inferiorization of Islam was not merely a downgrading of Islam as spirituality but also as an epistemology.

Islamic critical thinkers are considered inferior to the Western/Christian thinkers. The superiority of Western epistemology allows

the West to construct with authority the Islamic “Other” as inferior people frozen in time. Epistemic racism leads to the Orientalization of Islam. This is crucial because Islamophobia as a form of racism is not exclusively a social phenomenon but is also an epistemic question. Epistemic racism allows the West to not have to listen to the critical thinking produced by Islamic thinkers on Western global/imperial designs. The thinking coming from non-Western locations is not considered worthy of attention except to represent it as “uncivilized,” “primitive”, “barbarian,” and “backward.” Epistemic racism allows the West to unilaterally decide what is best for Muslim people today and obstruct any possibility for a serious inter-cultural dialogue. Islamophobia as a form of racism against Muslim people is not only manifested in the labor market, education, public sphere, global war against terrorism or the global economy, but also in the epistemological battleground about the definition of the priorities of the world today.

Recent events such as the September 11 attack in US territory (911), the riots in Parisian “banlieues”, anti-immigrant xenophobia, the demonstrations against Danish cartoons of the Prophet, the bombing of London Metro Stations, the triumph of Hamas in the Palestinian elections, the resistance of Hezbollah to Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the bombing of Spanish suburban trains (311), and the nuclear energy conflict with Iran have been all encoded in Islamophobic language in the Western public sphere. Western politicians (with the exception of Rodriguez Zapatero in Spain) and mainstream media have been complicit if not active participants of Islamophobic reactions to the outlined events. Epistemic racism as the most invisible form of racism, contributes to legitimate an artillery of experts, advisers, specialists, officials, academics and theologians that keep talking with authority about Islam and Muslim people despite their absolute ignorance of the topic and their Islamophobic prejudices. This artillery of intellectuals producing Orientalist knowledge about the inferiority of Islam and its people has been going on since the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Spain (Perceval 1992) and since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in France and England (Said 1979). They contribute to the Western arrogant dismissal of Islamic thinkers.

Epistemic racism and epistemic sexism are the most hidden forms of racism and sexism in the global system we all inhabit, the “Westernized/Christianized modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system” (see Grosfoguel 2008). Social, political, and economic racisms and sexism are much more visible and recognized today than epistemological racism/sexism. However, epistemic racism is the foundational form and an old version of racism in that the inferiority of “non-Western” people as below the line of the human human (non-humans or sub-humans) is defined on their closeness to animality and the latter is defined on the basis of their inferior intelligence and, thus, lack of rationality. Epistemic racism operates through the privileging of an essentialist (“identity”) politics of “Western” male elites, that is, the hegemonic tradition of thought of Western philosophy and social theory that almost never includes “Western” Women

and never includes “non-Western” philosophers/philosophies and social scientists (males and females). In this tradition, the “West” is considered to be the only legitimate tradition of thought able to produce knowledge and the only one with access to “universality,” “rationality” and “truth.” Epistemic racism considers “non-Western” knowledge to be inferior to “Western” knowledge. Since epistemic racism is entangled with epistemic sexism, Western-centric social science is a form of epistemic racism/sexism that privilege “Western” male’s knowledge as the superior knowledge in the world today.

If we take the canon of thinkers privileged within Western academic disciplines, we can observe that without exception they privilege “Western” male thinkers and theories, above all those of European and Euro-North-American males. This hegemonic essentialist “identity politics” is so powerful and so normalized - through the discourse of “objectivity” and “neutrality” of the Cartesian “ego-politics of knowledge” in the social sciences - that it hides who speaks and from which power location they speak from, such that when we think of “identity politics” we immediately assume, as if by “common sense,” that we are talking about racialized minorities. In fact, without denying the existence of essentialist “identity politics” among racialized minorities, the hegemonic “identity politics”—that of Eurocentric male discourse—uses this identitarian, racist, sexist discourse to discard all critical interventions rooted in epistemologies and cosmologies coming from oppressed groups and “non-Western” traditions of thought (Maldonado-Torres 2008). The underlying myth of the Westernized academy is still the scientificist discourse of “objectivity” and “neutrality” which hides the “locus of enunciation” of the speaker, that is, who speaks and from what epistemic body-politics of knowledge and geopolitics of knowledge they speak from in the existing power relations at a world-scale. Through the myth of the “ego-politics of knowledge” (which in reality always speaks through a “Western” male body and a Eurocentric geopolitics of knowledge) critical voices coming from individuals and groups inferiorized and subalternized by this hegemonic epistemic racism and epistemic sexism are denied and discarded as particularistic. If epistemology has color—as African philosopher Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (1997) points out so well—and has gender/color—as African-American Sociologist Patricia Hills Collins (1991) has argued—then the Eurocentric epistemology that dominates the social sciences has both color and gender. The construction of the epistemology of “Western” males as superior and the rest of the world as inferior forms an inherent part of the epistemological racism/sexism which has prevailed in the world-system for more than 500 years.

The epistemic privilege of the “West” was consecrated and normalized through the Spanish Catholic monarchy’s destruction of Al-Andalus and the European colonial expansion since the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. From renaming the world with Christian cosmology (Europe, Africa, Asia,

and later, America) and characterizing all non-Christian knowledge as a product of pagan and devil forces, to assuming in their own Eurocentric provincialism that it is only within the Greco-Roman tradition, passing through the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and Western sciences that “truth” and “universality” is achieved, the epistemic privilege of Western, Eurocentric, male “identity politics” was normalized to the point of invisibility as a hegemonic “identity politics.” It became the universal normalized knowledge. In this way, all “other” traditions of thought were deemed inferior (characterized in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as “barbarians,” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as “primitives,” in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as “underdeveloped,” and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as “anti-democratic”). Hence, since the formation of Western Liberal Social Sciences in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both epistemic racism and epistemic sexism have been constitutive of its disciplines and knowledge production. Western social sciences assume the inferiority, partiality, and the lack of objectivity in its knowledge-production of “non-Western” knowledge and the superiority of the “West.” As a result, Western social theory is based on the experience of 5 countries (France, England, Germany, Italy and the United States) that makes only less than 12 percent of the world population. The provincialism of Western Social Science social theory with false claims to universality, pretends to account for the social experience of the other 88 percent of the world population. In sum, Eurocentrism with its epistemic racism/sexism is a form of provincialism that is reproduced inside the social sciences today.

Against this hegemonic “identity politics” that always privileged Christian and Western beauty, knowledge, traditions, spiritualities, and cosmologies while deeming as inferior and subaltern the non-Christian and non-Western beauty, knowledge, traditions, spiritualities, and cosmologies, those subjects rendered inferior and subaltern by these hegemonic discourses developed their own “identity politics” as a reaction to the racism of the former. This process is necessary as part of a process of self-valorization in a racist world that renders them inferior and disqualifies their humanity. However, this process of identitarian affirmation has its limits if it leads to fundamentalist proposals that invert the binary terms of the hegemonic “Western” Males Eurocentric racist and sexist philosophical tradition of thought. For example, if it is assumed that subaltern non-Western ethnic/racial groups are superior and that the dominant Western racial/ethnic groups are inferior, they are merely inverting the terms of hegemonic Western racism without overcoming its fundamental problem, that is, the racism that renders some human beings inferior and the elevation of others to the category of superior on cultural or biological grounds (Grosfoguel 2003). Another example is that of accepting—as do some Islamic and Afrocentric fundamentalists—the hegemonic fundamentalist Eurocentric discourses that the European tradition is the only one that is naturally and inherently democratic, whereas the non-European “others” are presumed to be naturally and inherently authoritarian, denying democratic



discourses and forms of institutional democracy to the non-Western world (which are, of course, distinct from Western liberal democracy), and as a result, supporting political authoritarianism. This is what all Third World fundamentalists do when they accept the Eurocentric fundamentalist false premise that the only democratic tradition is the Western one, and, therefore, assume that democracy does not apply to their “culture” and their “societies,” defending monarchical, authoritarian and/or dictatorial forms of political authority. This merely reproduces an inverted form of Eurocentric essentialism. The idea that “democracy” is inherently “Western” and that “non-democratic” forms are inherently “non-Western” is shared both by Eurocentric fundamentalist discourses and its varieties such as “Third Worldist” fundamentalisms.

The “divisions” that results from these identity politics ends up reproducing in an inverted form the same essentialism and fundamentalism of the hegemonic Eurocentric discourse. If we define fundamentalism as those perspectives that assumes their own cosmology and epistemology to be superior and as the only source of truth, inferiorizing and denying equality to other epistemologies and cosmologies, then Eurocentrism is not merely a form of fundamentalism but the hegemonic fundamentalism in the world today. Those Third Worldist fundamentalisms (Afrocentric, Islamist, Indigenist, etc.) that emerge in response to the hegemonic Eurocentric fundamentalism and that the “Western” press put in the front pages of newspapers everyday are subordinated forms of Eurocentric fundamentalism insofar as they reproduced and leave intact the binary, essentialist, racial hierarchies of Eurocentric fundamentalism (Grosfoguel 2009).

In sum, a political consequence of this epistemological discussion is that a foundational basis on contemporary discussions on political Islam, on democracy and on the so-called “War on Terrorism” is “epistemic racism.” “Western” epistemic racism by inferiorizing “non-Western” epistemologies and cosmologies and by privileging “Western” epistemology as the superior form of knowledge and as the only source to define human rights, democracy, citizenship, etc. ends up disqualifying the “non-West” as unable to produce democracy, justice, human rights, scientific knowledge, etc. This is grounded in the essentialist idea that reason and philosophy lies in the “West” while non-rational thinking lies in the “rest.”

#### *ISLAMOPHOBIA AS INTELLECTUAL IRRESPONSIBILITY: THE WESTERN CASE AGAINST TARIQ RAMADAN*

It is interesting to analyze the Western reaction to a critical European Islamic thinker such as Tariq Ramadan. Ramadan, who identifies himself as a European Muslim, has been the victim of a Western campaign to distort his image and his thought in the eyes of Western audiences. In France, he is not allowed to speak in Universities<sup>2</sup> and in the United States he has been

---

<sup>2</sup> During the years when Sarkozy was Minister of the Interior in France, Tariq Ramadan was banned from speaking in public Universities.

banned by Homeland Security to enter the country<sup>3</sup>. The Western media campaign against his thought characterizes him as some kind of “Islamic fundamentalist extremist” despite the fact that he is an Islamic reformer. Even Western Universities such as Notre Dame University (where he was offered the Henry R. Luce Professor of Religion, Conflict and Peace Building before being banned from the country by Homeland Security) and Oxford University in England (where he is a visiting scholar today) acknowledge the contributions of Tariq Ramadan to Islamic reform. The question is why is a reformist European Islamic thinker (critical of Islamic fundamentalism, suicide bombers, lapidation against women, terrorism, etc.) attacked and misrepresented as some kind of Islamic extremist? Hani Ramadan, the brother of Tariq, is a declared Islamic fundamentalist and despite his many books and influence, has never been the target of a huge Western negative campaign such as against Tariq.

In my view, for the West it is more difficult to swallow a moderate Islamic reformer thinker critical of both Eurocentric fundamentalism and Islamic fundamentalism than a declared Islamic fundamentalist thinker. The latter confirms all of the Orientalist Islamophobic prejudices that the West constructs against Islam, while the former challenges those representations. This why both the New York Times and Le Monde have dedicated front pages of their daily newspaper to the “Tariq Ramadan’s affair.”<sup>4</sup> The former due to the Homeland Security policy, while the latter way before his ban from the USA.

In France as well as all over Western Europe, Tariq Ramadan is very popular among Muslim European youth. His message to Muslim youth is that you can be European and Muslim at the same time. This challenges one of the most sacred myths of European identity politics, which is that in order to be European you have to be Christian or secular (identified with Western thought and Christian cosmology/values even if you are not a believer). Moreover, he calls Muslim youth to exercise their citizenship rights as Muslim Europeans and intervene in the public sphere making claims for equality and contributions to the society. This has been too subversive both

---

<sup>3</sup> It is important to say that recently, in January 2010, the Obama Administration eliminated Homeland Security’s prohibition for Tariq Ramadan to enter the United States.

<sup>4</sup> Among the many articles published by Le Monde on Tariq Ramadan see the front page title “Tariq Ramadan, sa famille, ses réseaux, son idéologie” (23 Décembre 2003) and the recent article “Tariq Ramadan consultant de Tony Blair” (25 Février 2006). When a newspaper becomes so obsess as to dedicate the main title of the front page of one of their issues to investigate Tariq Ramadan’s suspicious “doble discourse,” you know there is something out of proportion and exaggerated going on. The New York Times has a less active propaganda (maybe because Ramadan is less known and influential among USA’s Muslim youth) and more balanced accounts compared to Le Monde, but still with lots of insinuations and suspicious comments. Among many articles from the New York Times see the front page article “Mystery of the Islamic Scholar Who Was Barred by the U.S.” (October 6, 2004) and “World Briefing: Europe: Switzerland: Barred Islamic Scholar Gives Up U.S. Teaching Post” (December 15, 2004).

to Islamic fundamentalists and for mainstream Eurocentric Europeans to accept. Thus, the Islamophobic campaign against his thinking.

The French newspaper *Le Monde* has been actively attacking Ramadan as an Islamic fundamentalist that uses a “double discourse” since the times when he was banned from France in the mid-1990s. Later, when France’s ban was lifted, *Le Monde*’s campaign against Ramadan’s “double language” has continued until these days. What is interesting is the double standard and epistemic racism behind this accusation. They apply different rules of judgment when dealing with a European intellectual thinking from Western tradition, than a European intellectual thinking from the Islamic tradition. An intellectual that is attacked as promoter of a “double discourse”, that is, accused of “what he/she says and writes is not really what he/she believes,” have no way to defend himself/herself.

The rule of judgment about the work of any intellectual is based on what he/she says and writes. But if the accusation is that what she/he says and writes is false because he/she has a “double discourse”, then there is no self-defense against this accusation. Whatever the accused intellectual argues, it becomes tautologically an argument against him/herself. No matter how many times Tariq Ramadan has publicly denounced women oppression and lapidating, terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, his brother’s fundamentalist views on Islam, Saudi Arabia and Taliban fundamentalist views on Islam, suicide bombers and so on, *Le Monde* and other French intellectuals keep attacking him as a believer in these things without any evidence nor serious reading of his work and public speeches to sustain these arguments because the claim is that he has a “double discourse.” These standards of judgment are never applied to Western intellectuals. The double standard shows that Islamophobia forms part of Western epistemic racism. In sum, Islamophobia as a form of racism against Muslim people is not only manifested in the labor market, education, public sphere, global war against terrorism or the global economy, but also in the epistemological battleground about the definition of the priorities in the world today. Epistemic islamophobia is a fundamental aspect of racism against Muslims.

#### *ISLAMOPHOBIA AS EUROCENTRIC SOCIAL SCIENCES*

As I have tried to argue along this article, epistemic racism in the form of epistemic Islamophobia is a foundational and constitutive logic of the modern/colonial world and of its legitimate forms of knowledge production. European humanists and scholars since the 16<sup>th</sup> century have argued that Islamic knowledge is inferior to the West. The debate about Moriscos in 16<sup>th</sup> century Spain were full of epistemic Islamophobic conceptions (Perceval 1992; 1997). After the expulsion of Moriscos in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the inferiorization of “Moros” continued under an epistemic Islamophobic discourse. Influential European thinkers in the 19<sup>th</sup>



century such as, for example, Ernst Renan "... argued that Islam was incompatible with science and philosophy" (Ernst 2003: 20-21).

Similarly, in social sciences we have concrete manifestations of epistemic Islamophobia in the work of classical social theories of Western-centric patriarchal social science such as Karl Marx and Max Weber. As Sukidi states:

*Islam, according to Weber, was the polar opposite of Calvinism. There was no double edge to predestination in Islam. Instead, as Weber stated in Protestant Ethic (ch. 4, n. 36), Islam contains a belief in predetermination, not in predestination, which concerned the fate of Muslims in this world, not the next (ibid., p. 185). The doctrine of predestination maintained by the Calvinists, which led them to work hard as a duty (vocation, calling), is not evident among Muslims. In fact, as Weber argued, 'the most important thing, the proof of the believer in predestination, played no part in Islam' (ibid.). Without the concept of predestination, Islam could not provide believers with a positive attitude to this-worldly activity. As a consequence, Muslims are condemned to fatalism. (p. 197)*

*The rationalizations of doctrine and conduct of life were alien to Islam. Weber used the belief in predestination as the key concept to explain the rationalization of doctrine and the conduct of life. In Calvinism, the belief in predestination could certainly generate an ethical rigor, legalism, and rational conduct in this-worldly activity. None of these things was present in Islam (p. 199). Accordingly, the Islamic belief in predestination did not lead toward rationalization of doctrine and the conduct of life. In fact, it turned Muslims into irrational fatalists. 'Islam,' in Weber's view, 'was diverted completely from any really rational conduct of life by the advent of the cult of saints, and finally by magic' (Sukidi 2006: 200).*

If we follow the logic of Weber to its final consequences, that is, that Muslims are irrational and fatalistic people, then no serious knowledge can come from them. What are the geopolitics of knowledge involved in Weber's epistemic racism about Muslim people? The geopolitics of knowledge is the German and French orientalist's epistemic Islamophobia that is repeated in Weber's verdict about Islam. For Weber, it is only the Christian tradition that gives rise to economic rationalism and, thus, to Western modern capitalism. Islam cannot compare to the "superiority" of Western values in that it lacks individuality, rationality and science. Rational science and, its derivative, rational technology are, according to Weber, unknown to oriental civilizations. These statements are quite problematic.

Scholars such as Saliba (2007) and Graham (2006) have demonstrated the influence of scientific developments in the Islamic World on the West, modern science and modern philosophy. Rationality was a central tenet of the Islamic civilization. While Europe was in obscurantist feudal superstition during what is known as the Middle Ages, the school of Baghdad was the world center of intellectual and scientific production and creativity. Weber's and Weberians' Orientalist views of Islam reproduce an epistemic Islamophobia where Muslims are incapable of producing science and of having rationality, despite the historical evidence.

But the same problem of epistemic Islamophobia we find in Marx and Engels. Although Marx spent two months in Algiers in 1882 recovering from a sickness, he wrote almost nothing on Islam. However, Marx had an orientalist epistemic racist view of non-Western peoples in general of which he did write extensively (Moore 1977). Moreover, his close collaborator, Frederick Engels, did write about Muslim people and repeated the same racist stereotypes that Marx used against "Oriental" people. Talking about French colonization of Algeria, Engels said:

*Upon the whole it is, in our opinion, very fortunate that the Arabian chief has been taken. The struggle of the Bedouins was a hopeless one, and though the manner in which brutal soldiers, like Bugeaud, have carried on the war is highly blamable, the conquest of Algeria is an important and fortunate fact for the progress of civilization. The piracies of the Barbareque states, never interfered with by the English government as long as they did not disturb their ships, could not be put down but by the conquest of one of these states. And the conquest of Algeria has already forced the Beys of Tunis and Tripoli, and even the Emperor of Morocco, to enter upon the road of civilization. They were obliged to find other employment for their people than piracy... And if we may regret that the liberty of the Bedouins of the desert has been destroyed, we must not forget that these same Bedouins were a nation of robbers, — whose principal means of living consisted of making excursions either upon each other, or upon the settled villagers, taking what they found, slaughtering all those who resisted, and selling the remaining prisoners as slaves. All these nations of free barbarians look very proud, noble and glorious at a distance, but only come near them and you will find that they, as well as the more civilized nations, are ruled by the lust of gain, and only employ ruder and more cruel means. And after all, the modern bourgeois, with civilization, industry, order, and at least relative enlightenment following him, is preferable to the feudal marauding robber, with the barbarian state of society to which they belong. (Engels, French Rule in Algiers, *The Northern Star*, January 22,*

1848, in: MECW, Vol.6, pp.469-472; quoted in S. Avineri (1968). *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization* (Doubleday: New York, p. 43)

Engels's option is quite clear: to support colonial expansion and bring Western Civilization even if it is bourgeois and brutal in order to overcome a "barbarian" state of affairs. The superiority of the "West over the rest" and, in particular, over Muslims is quite clear in this statement. Talking about India, the irrational fanaticism of Muslims is expressed in the following quote of Engels:

*The insurgent warfare now begins to take the character of the Bedouins of Algeria against the French; with the difference that the Hindoos are far from being so fanatical, and that they are not a nation of horsemen. (Engels: New York Daily Tribune, July 21, 1858, MECW, Vol.15, p. 583)*

If there is any doubt about Marx's shared views with Engels's on the inferiority of Muslims and "non-Western" people relative to the West, the following quote is a confirmation:

*... The question ... is not whether the English had a right to conquer India, but whether we are to prefer India conquered by the Turk, by the Persian, by the Russian, to India conquered by the Briton. England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating - the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia. Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, who had successively overrun India, soon became Hinduized, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilization of their subjects. The British were the first conquerors superior, and, therefore, inaccessible to Hindu civilization... The day is not far distant when by a combination of railways and steam vessel, the distance between England and India, measured by time, will be shortened to eight days, and when that once fabulous country will thus be actually annexed to the Western World .... (Marx, "The Future Results of the British Rule in India" written on July 22, 1853, in *Marx and Engels On Colonialism*, page 81-83...)*

Marx did not have much hope in the proletarian spirit of the Muslim masses when he stated in relation to the Ottoman Empire's expansion to Eastern European territories the following:

*The principal power of the Turkish population in Europe, independently of the reserve always ready to be drawn from Asia, lies in the mob of Constantinople [Istanbul] and a few other large towns. It is essentially Turkish, and although it finds its principal livelihood by doing jobs for Christian capitalists, it maintains with great jealousy the imaginary superiority and real impunity for excesses which the privileges of Islam confer it as compared with Christians. It is well known that this mob in every important coup d'état has to be won over by bribes and flattery. It is this mob alone, with the exception of a few colonized districts, which offers a compact and imposing mass of Turkish population in Europe. Certainly there will be, sooner or later, an absolute necessity for freeing one of the finest parts of this continent from the rule of a mob, compared with which the mob of Imperial Rome was an assemblage of sages and heroes. ("Turkey," New York Daily Tribune, April 7, 1853, written by Engels at Marx's request, quoted in S. Avineri (1968), *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization* (Doubleday: New York, p. 54)*

For Marx, similar to Weber, Muslim people from Turkish origin are a mob of ignorant people that made the mobs of the Roman Empire look like sages. He called for a struggle of liberation against the Muslim mobs. Accordingly, for Marx, Western civilization is superior and, thus, called to civilized the non-Western Muslims. In his perspective, better is the Western colonial expansion rather than leaving intact in a timeless stage a barbarian inferior people.

Marx distrusted Muslim people and was convinced of the inherently xenophobic traits in Islam and, thus, wrote apologetically about Western colonialism. Marx said:

*As the Koran treats all foreigners as foes, nobody will dare to present himself in a Mussulman country without having taken his precautions. The first European merchants, therefore, who risked the chances of commerce with such a people, contrived to secure themselves an exceptional treatment and privileges originally personal, but afterwards extended to their whole nation. Hence the origin of capitulations. ("The Outbreak of the Crimean War—Moslems, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire," New York Daily Tribune, April 15, 1854, quoted in S. Avineri (1968), *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization* (Doubleday: New York, p. 146)*

Marx said, repeating the typical epistemic racism of the orientalist vision of his time, that:

*The Koran and the Mussulman legislation emanating from it reduce the geography and ethnography of the various peoples to the simple convenient distinction of two nations and of two countries; those of the Faithful and of the Infidels. The Infidel is "harby," i.e. the enemy. Islamism proscribes the nation to the Infidels, constituting a state of permanent hostility between the Mussulman and the unbeliever. ("The Outbreak of the Crimean War—Moslems, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire," New York Daily Tribune, April 15, 1854, quoted in S. Avineri (1968), Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization (Doubleday: New York, p. 144)*

These simplified, essentialist and reductionist views of Islam from a Judeo/Christian-centric, Western-centric perspective was part of the Orientalists' epistemic racism and condescending paternalism towards Islamic thought of which Marx was no exception.

Marx believed that secularism was fundamental for revolution to have a chance in Muslim lands. He said:

*...if you abolish their subjection under the Koran, by a civil emancipation, you cancel at the same time their subjection to the clergy, and provoke a revolution in their social, political and religious relations.... If you supplant the Koran by a code civil, you must Occidentalize the entire structure of Byzantine society. ("The Outbreak of the Crimean War—Moslems, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire," New York Daily Tribune, April 15, 1854, quoted in S. Avineri (1968), Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization (Doubleday: New York, p. 146)*

This secularist view of Marx was a typical colonial strategy promoted by the Western Empires in order to destroy the ways of thinking and living of the colonial subjects and, thus, impede any trace of resistance. By arguing that Muslim people are subjected to the rule of a "religion," Marx projected in Islam the cosmology of the secularized Western-centric, Christian-centric view. Islam does not consider itself a "religion" in the Westernized, Christianized sense of a sphere separated from politics, economics, etc. Islam is more a cosmology that follows the notion of "Tawhid" which is a doctrine of unity, a holistic world view, that the Eurocentric Cartesian modern/colonial world view destroyed in the West and with its colonial expansion attempted to destroy in the rest of the world as well. The practice of colonial Christianization in the early modern/colonial period and secularism after the later 18<sup>th</sup> century colonial expansion was part of the "epistemicide" and "religiouscide," that is, the extermination of non-

Western spirituality and ways of knowledge implemented by Western colonial expansion. Epistemicide and “religiouscide” made possible the colonization of the minds/bodies of colonial subjects.

If Marx and Weber are social sciences’ classical theorists, Western social sciences are informed by epistemic Eurocentric and Islamophobic prejudices. To decolonize the Western social sciences, it would entail many important processes that we cannot spell out here in detail. But one of them would be to expand the canon of social theory to incorporate as a central component the contributions of decolonial European and non-European social theorists such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Salman Sayyid, Ali Shariati, Anibal Quijano, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, W.E.B. Dubois, Silvia Wynter and other social theorist thinking from the underside of modernity. To incorporate these thinkers is not a question of multiculturalism but of creating a more rigorous and pluriversal (as opposed to universal) decolonial social science. Ali Shariati in particular is an Islamic social scientist that produced important critiques of Western social theorist such as Marx and is ignored in contemporary social sciences.

Right now what we call social science is a particular, provincial (Western male tradition of thought) defining for the rest what is social science and what is valid, universal knowledge. To decolonize Westernized provincial social sciences we need to move into a global inter-epistemic horizontal dialogue among social scientists from different epistemic traditions of thought to re-found new decolonial social sciences in a pluriversal mode rather than the current universalistic mode. This is not an easy task and we cannot go into the detail of what this implies in this article. However, the transformation from universalism towards pluriversalism in the social sciences is fundamental for moving from the framework in which one defines for the rest (colonial social sciences) to a new paradigm where the production of concepts and knowledge is the result of a truly inter-epistemic horizontal universal dialogue (decolonial social sciences). This is not a call for relativism but to think of universality as pluriversality, that is, as the result of the inter-epistemic interaction in horizontal mode rather than the current universalistic social sciences of mono-epistemic imperial/colonial interaction with the rest of the world.

#### *(IN)CONCLUSION: ISLAMOPHOBIC DEBATES TODAY*

The importance of this discussion about Islamophobia is that the multiple faces it takes and its consequences in contemporary debates and public policy. The islamophobic racism as a form of epistemic racism and its derivative Eurocentric fundamentalism in social theory are manifested in discussions about human rights and democracy today. “Non-Western” epistemologies that define human rights and human dignity in different terms than the West are considered inferior to “Western” hegemonic definitions and, thus, excluded from the global conversation about these questions. If Islamic philosophy and thought are portrayed as inferior to the



West by Eurocentric thinkers and classical social theory, then the logical consequence is that they have nothing to contribute to the question of democracy and human rights and should be not only excluded from the global conversation, but repressed. The underlying Western-centric view is that Muslims can be part of the discussion as long as they stop thinking as Muslims and take the hegemonic Eurocentric liberal definition of democracy and human rights. Any Muslim that attempts to think these questions from within the Islamic tradition is immediately suspicious of fundamentalism. Islam and democracy or Islam and Human Rights are considered in the hegemonic Eurocentric “common sense” an oxymoron.

The incompatibility between Islam and democracy has as its foundation the epistemic inferiorization of the Muslim world views. Today an artillery of epistemic racist “experts” in the West talks with authority about Islam, with no serious knowledge of the Islamic tradition. The stereotypes and lies repeated over and over again in Western press and magazines ends up, like in Goebbels nazi theory of propaganda, being believed as truth. As Edward Said said not too long time ago:

*A corps of experts on the Islamic world has grown to prominence, and during a crisis they are brought out to pontificate on formulaic ideas about Islam on news programs or talk shows. There also seems to have been a strange revival of canonical, though previously discredited, Orientalist ideas about Muslim, generally non-white, people – ideas which have achieved a startling prominence at a time when racial or religious misrepresentations of every other cultural group are no longer circulated with such impunity. Malicious generalizations about Islam have become the last acceptable form of denigration of foreign culture in the West; what is said about Muslim mind, or character, or religion, or culture as a whole cannot now be said in mainstream discussion about Africans, Jews, other Orientals, or Asians.... My contention... is that most of this is unacceptable generalization of the most irresponsible sort, and could never be used for any other religious, cultural, or demographic group on earth. What we expect from the serious study of Western societies, with its complex theories, enormously variegated analyses of social structures, histories, cultural formations, and sophisticated languages of investigation, we should also expect from the study and discussion of Islamic societies in the West. (Said 1998: xi-xvi)*

The circulation of these stereotypes contributes to the portrayal of Muslims as racially inferior, violent creatures. Thus, its easy association with “terrorism” and representation as “terrorist.”

## REFERENCES

- Ali, Tariq (2002) *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*. London: Verso.
- Dussel, Enrique (1994) 1492: El Encubrimiento del Otro. Hacia el origen del "mito de la modernidad". La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Ernst, Carl W. 2003. *Following Mohammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World*. The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill and London.
- Graham, Mark. (2006). *How Islam Created the Modern World*. Amana Publications: Beltsville, Maryland.
- Grosfoguel, Ramon (2003) *Colonial Subject*. Berkeley: California University Press.
- Grosfoguel, Ramon (2006) "World-Systems Analysis in the Context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality." *REVIEW* Vol. XIX, No. 2: 167-187.
- Grosfoguel, Ramon. (2008). "Para descolonizar os estudos de economia política e os estudos pós-coloniais: Transmodernidade, pensamento de fronteira e colonialidade global" *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, numero 80 (março): 115-147. English version: <http://www.eurozine.com/pdf/2008-07-04-grosfoguel-en.pdf>
- Grosfoguel, Ramon (2009). "Human Rights and Anti-Semitism After Gaza," *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, Vol. VII, issue No. 2 (Spring): 89-101.
- Hills Collins, Patricia. (1991). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empire*. Routledge: London.
- Huntington, Samuel (1997) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Touchstone.
- Johnson, Chalmers (2006) *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson (2006) "Reconciliation as a Contested Future: Decolonization as Project or Beyond the Paradigm of War." In *Reconciliation: Nations and Churches in Latin America*, edited by Iain S. Maclean. London: Ashgate.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. (2008a). *Against War*. Duke University Press, Durham.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. (2008b) "Religion, Conquête et Race dans la Fondation du monde Moderne/Colonial" in *Islamophobie dans le Monde Moderne*, Edited by Mohamed Mestiri, Ramon Grosfoguel y El Yamine Soum. IIT, Paris; 205-238.
- Mernissi, Fatima (1987) *Le Harem Politique. Le Prophete et le Femme*. Paris: Albin Michel.



- Mignolo, Walter (2000) *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Border Thinking and Subaltern Knowledge*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Moore, Carlos (1977, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Where Marx and Engels White Racists?: The Prolet-aryan Outlook of Marx and Engels* (Institute of Positive Education: Chicago, Illinois)  
[http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/411649\\_915549761\\_745946075.pdf](http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/411649_915549761_745946075.pdf)
- Perceval, Jose María (1992) "Animalitos del señor: Aproximación a una teoría de las animalizaciones propias y del otro, sea enemigo o siervo, en la España imperial (1550-1650)" in *Areas: Revista de Ciencias Sociales* (Universidad de Murcia), No. 14: 173-184.
- Perceval, José María (1997). *Todos son uno. Arquetipos, xenofobia y racismo. La imagen del morisco en la monarquía española durante los siglos XVI y XVII*. Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses.
- Rashid, Ahmed (2001) *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Risen, James (2006) *State of War: The Secret History of the CIA and the Bush Administration*. New York: Free Press.
- Said, Edward (1979) *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Said, Edward (1981) *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Salaita, Steven (2006) *Anti-Arab Racism in the United States: Where it Comes from and What it Means for Politics Today*. London: Pluto Press.
- Saliba, George. (1997). *Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance*.
- Sukidi (2006). "Max Weber's remarks on Islam: The Protestant Ethic among Muslim puritans." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 17: 2, 195-205. MIT Press: Boston).

# ***For “Jewish” Read “Muslim”? Islamophobia as a Form of Racialisation of Ethno-Religious Groups in Britain Today***

**Nasar Meer**

*Northumbria University*

**Tariq Modood**

*University of Bristol*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 34-53.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

# ***For “Jewish” Read “Muslim”? Islamophobia as a Form of Racialisation of Ethno-Religious Groups in Britain Today<sup>1</sup>***

**Nasar Meer**

*Northumbria University*

**Tariq Modood**

*University of Bristol*

I believe we can learn a lot from the history of the Jews of Europe. In many ways they are the first, the oldest Europeans. We, the new Europeans, are just starting to learn the complex art of living with multiple allegiances... The Jews have been forced to master this art since antiquity. They were both Jewish and Italian, or Jewish and French, Jewish and Spanish, Jewish and Polish, Jewish and German. Proud of their ties with Jewish communities throughout the continent, and equally proud of their bonds with their own country.

— Romano Prodi

## **INTRODUCTION**

The de-stigmatisation of Jewish people is now a taken-for-granted fact in the United States, where a population of less than 2 per cent is firmly represented in the elites of a country, which, since about President Reagan’s time, has started referring to itself as the leader of a Judeo-Christian civilisation. The transformation in Europe – a continent that, for many centuries, has been a nightmare for Jewish people – while not as remarkable and uneven across its various countries – is also a fact that receives little attention from scholars of contemporary (in)equality. While Jewish people are a significant presence amongst those working as students and practitioners on issues of ‘difference’ and inequality, Jews as minority population groups are not a primary focus of equality policy and legislation. In a marked contrast to the once seemingly intractable ‘Jewish question’ that haunted the continent throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries and which periodically facilitated episodes of persecution and genocide, there is evidence to suggest that the contemporary representation of Jewish minorities within European public discourses has undergone a process of ‘normalisation’ (Bunzl, 2007). The affirmations of Romano Prodi,

---

<sup>1</sup> This chapter draws on ‘Refutations of Racism in the Muslim Question’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 43(3/4), 332-351. We are grateful to the editors of that journal and Routledge for the permission to use sections from the earlier piece.

former President of the European Commission, made during his tenure and elaborated above perhaps exemplify “the ways in which leaders today champion the preservation...of Europe’s Jewish communities” (Bunzl, 2005: 502). And it comes as some relief to learn that “no European party of any significance and this includes the various extreme right-wing movements on the continent, currently champions a specifically anti-Semitic agenda” (ibid.).<sup>2</sup> An optimistic interpretation of this state of affairs would be to emphasise the existence of something like a mainstream consensus on the current unacceptability of public articulations of anti-Semitism (Benbassa, 2007).

Of course, this should not be read as a suggestion that European societies are free from all the guises that anti-Semitism can assume (Chanes, 2004). Even in Britain, where extreme right-wing and anti-semitic political parties have never flourished in the sorts of ways familiar on the continent partly due to an electoral system that squeezes out smaller parties, survey evidence compiled by Field (2006) reports that hostility to British Jews continues to exist and often stems from the view that “the loyalty of British Jews to Israel transcends their allegiance to Britain” (Field, 2007: 465). Such findings may be added to others in support of the view that Britain is experiencing a resurgence of anti-Semitism.<sup>3</sup> This is a concern that has resulted in a high-profile All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism (2006), which has also been taken up in public and media discussion in a way that has incorporated the concerns of leading Jewish spokespeople and intellectuals.<sup>4</sup> What appears to have gone unnoticed, however, is that a number of surveys<sup>5</sup> have consistently found that:

---

<sup>2</sup> The same cannot be said of these European parties’ attitudes to Muslims in Europe. See, for example, statements made by the Austrian Freedom party on the prospect of Turkey’s accession to the EU; the Flemish Interest/Flemish Block’s statement that “Islam is now the no. 1 enemy not only of Europe but of the world”; as well as the La Front Nationale literature on the “Islamization of France” (Bunzle, 2007, pp: 1-47). Parallels can be found in the leading, but much less mainstream, far-right British National Party (BNP) which frequently campaign on what it describes as ‘the Muslim problem’ (see Meer, 2007). For examples of less flagrant, more coded, but equally alarming comments made by British politicians and intellectuals see Meer (2006, 2008) and Meer and Noorani (2008).

<sup>3</sup> For example, the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 547 anti-Semitic incidents during 2007 - the second-highest annual total since it began recording anti-Semitic incidents in 1984. These incidents include cases of extreme violence, assault, damage and desecration of property, threats, and abusive behaviour. See CST anti-Semitic incidents reports (2007) available at: <http://www.thecst.org.uk/docs/Incidents%5FReport%5F07.pdf> accessed 1 March, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> See ‘The War on Britain’s Jews’, Channel Four, 9 July 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Compiled by Field (2007 – see appendix I pp: 472-5) and include:

(i) G-1990c: 1 June–20 September, Gallup, n=1,474; Timms, 1992, p. 17; Ashford & Timms, 1992, pp. 14–15; Inglehart et al., 1998, p. v.76; Hastings & Hastings, 1999, p. 547, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>;  
 (ii) G-1990d: 18–24 July, Gallup, n=1,015; Gallup Political Index, 360, August 1990, p. 15;  
 (iii) G-1996a: October–November, NOP, n=933 whites, 282 Asians, 252 Afro-Caribbeans, 252 Jews; Institute for Public Policy Research, 1997;

*Islamophobic views in Britain would appear easily to outstrip anti-Semitic sentiments in terms of frequency (more than double the size of the hard core), intensity and overtness... somewhere between one in five and one in four Britons now exhibits a strong dislike of, and prejudice against, Islam and Muslims....* (Field, 2007: 465)

While quantitative surveys do not always provide the best accounts of prejudice and discrimination, they can be useful in discerning trends, alerting us in this case to the widespread prevalence of an anti-Muslim feeling.<sup>6</sup> What makes this alarming, however, is that such findings are frequently met with derision by otherwise self-avowedly anti-racist intellectuals or legislators who either remain sceptical over the scale of the problem (Malik, 2005; Hansen, 2006; Joppke, 2007) and/or, indeed, of its racialised character (cf Toynbee, 1997, 2005; Abbot, 2005; Davis, 2005; Marshall-Andrews, 2005;). This means that, while Muslims are increasingly the subject of hostility and discrimination, as well as governmental racial profiling, surveillance and targeting by intelligence agencies<sup>7</sup>, their status as

---

(iv) G-1999a: 18 October–8 November, Quality Fieldwork and Research Services, n=1,000; Halman, 2001, pp. 37–43; Inglehart et al., 2004, table A128; Borooah & Mangan, 2007; <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>;

(v) G-2004a: 23–29 February, NOP, n=500; <http://www.people-press.org>; (vi) G-2005c: 25 April–7 May, NOP, n=750; <http://www.pewglobal.org>; (vii) G-2006e: 4–26 April, NOP, n=490; <http://www.pewglobal.org>.

<sup>6</sup> For example, in the first two weeks after the London Bombings, according to one charity that is comparable to the CST, the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) registered over 200 Islamophobic incidents. These included sixty five incidents of violent physical attacks and criminal damage, and one fatal stabbing where the victim was accosted by attackers shouting ‘Taliban’ (IHRC press release, 25 July, 2005). More recent large-scale comparative studies conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Survey have confirmed this trend by putting forward the alarming finding that one in four in Britons expresses attitudinal hostility to Muslims (see <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=262> accessed 10 December, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, calls from the outgoing head of MI5, Dame Eliza Mannigham-Buller, for the police to develop a network of Muslim spies who could provide intelligence on their co-religionists (Evans and Ford, 2007). This suggestion proceeds the disclosure that a number of British intelligence agencies have monitored over 100,000 British-Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca (Leppard, 2007), alongside an unpopular attempt by the DfES to encourage universities to report ‘Asian-looking’ students suspected of involvement in ‘Islamic political radicalism’ (see Dodd, 2006). These findings are compounded by the astonishing figure that between 2001 and 2002, instances of the ‘stop and search’ of ‘Asians’ (categorisations via religion are not kept for instances of ‘stop and search’) increased in London by forty one per cent (Metropolitan Police Authority, 2004 p. 21), whilst figures for the national picture point to a twenty five percent increase for the ‘stop and search’ of people self-defining as ‘other’ (Home Office, 2006a: p. 24). The latter can include Muslims of Turkish, Arabic and North-African ethnic origin, amongst others, for, while sixty eight per cent of the British Muslim population have a South-Asian background, the remaining minority are comprised of several ‘other’ categorisations. These examples would support Rana’s (2007: 149) conclusion that “current practices of racial profiling in

victims of racism is frequently challenged or denied. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that, instead of highlighting and alleviating anti-Muslim discrimination, the complaint of anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia has conversely but, frequently, invited criticism upon Muslims themselves (Meer, 2008; 2007; 2006). In this article we explore some of the reasons why there may be less sympathy for the notion that Muslim minorities could be subject to racism by virtue of their real or perceived 'Muslimness' (in the way that it is rightly accepted that Jewish minorities in Europe can be the object of racism by virtue of their real or perceived 'Jewishness'). After setting out our argument and drawing upon primary interviews, we conclude that, taken together, our data is instructive in illustrating how an anxiety over the 'Muslim question' informs a hesitancy to name anti-Muslim sentiment as racism.

#### RELIGION AND RACIALISATION

The interactions between racial and religious antipathy can be helpfully drawn out through Modood's (2005: 9–10) description of anti-Semitism as "a form of [ethno-]religious persecution [which] became, over a long, complicated, evolving but contingent history, not just a form of cultural racism but one with highly systematic biological formulations." He continues:

*[C]enturies before those modern ideas we have come to call 'racism'...the move from religious antipathy to racism may perhaps be witnessed in post-Reconquista Spain when Jews and Muslims were forced to convert to Christianity or be expelled. At this stage, the oppression can perhaps be characterised as religious. Soon afterward, converted Jews and Muslims and their offspring began to be suspected of not being true Christian believers, a doctrine developed amongst some Spaniards that this was because their old religion was in their blood. In short, because of their biology, conversion was impossible. Centuries later, these views about race became quite detached from religion and in Nazi and related doctrines were given a thoroughly scientific-biologic cast and constitute a paradigmatic and extreme version of modern racism. (ibid.)*

Now this should not be read as an endorsement of the view that all racism can be reduced to biological inferences. Biological determinism may be the classical form that racism took in Europe in the nineteenth century and later, but it should not be equated with racism per se. Indeed, in the example

---

the War on Terror perpetuate a logic that demands the ability to define what a Muslim looks like from appearance and visual cues. This is not based purely on superficial cultural markers such as religious practice, clothing, language, and identification. A notion of race is at work in the profiling of Muslims."

above, modern biological racism has some roots in pre-modern religious antipathy – an argument that is also made by Rana (2007). Moreover, while racism in modern Europe took a biologicistic form, what is critical to the racialisation of a group is not the invocation of a biology but a radical ‘otherness’ and the perception and treatment of individuals in terms of physical appearance and descent. The implication is that non-Christian religious minorities in Europe can undergo processes of racialisation, where the ‘otherness’ or ‘groupness’ that is appealed to is connected to a cultural and racial otherness, which relates to European peoples’ historical and contemporary perceptions of those people that they perceive to be non-European (Goldberg, 2006). This means that how Muslims in Europe are perceived today is not un-connected to how they have been perceived and treated by European empires and their racial hierarchies, as well as by Christian Islamophobia and the Crusades in earlier centuries (Gottschalk and Greenberg, 2008). This is because their perception and treatment clearly has a religious and cultural dimension but, equally clearly, bares a phenotypical component. For while it is true that ‘Muslim’ is not a (putative) biological category in the way that ‘black’ or ‘south Asian’, aka ‘Paki’, or Chinese is, neither was ‘Jew.’ It took a long, non-linear history of racialisation to turn an ethno-religious group into a race (Modood, 2006). More precisely, the latter did not so much as replace the former but superimposed itself because, even though no one denied that Jews were a religious community with a distinctive language(s), culture(s) and religion, Jews still came to be seen as a race and with horrific consequences (see also Rattansi, 2007; Meer and Noorani, 2008). Similarly, Bosnian Muslims were ‘ethnically cleansed’ because they came to be identified as a ‘racial’ group by people who were phenotypically, linguistically and culturally the same as themselves. The ethnic cleanser, unlike an Inquisitor, wasted no time in finding out what people believed, if and how often they went to a mosque and so on: their victims were racially identified as Muslims.

#### *BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL RACISM*

So race is not just about biology or even ‘colour,’ for, while racialisation has to pick on some features of a people related to physical appearance and ancestry (otherwise racism cannot be distinguished from other forms of groupism), it need only be a marker and not necessarily denote a form of determinism. This is illustrated in the conceptualisation of cultural racism as a two step process (Modood, 1997). While biological racism is the antipathy, exclusion and unequal treatment of people on the basis of their physical appearance or other imputed physical differences, saliently in Britain their non ‘whiteness,’ cultural racism builds on biological racism a further discourse, which evokes cultural differences from an alleged British, ‘civilised’ norm to vilify, marginalise or demand cultural assimilation from groups who also suffer from biological racism. Post-war racism in Britain has been simultaneously culturalist and biological, and,



while the latter is essential to the racism in question, it is, in fact, the less explanatory aspect of a complex phenomenon. Biological interpretations have not governed what white British people, including racists, have thought or done or how they have stereotyped, treated and related to non-whites, and biological ideas have had increasingly less force both in the context of personal relationships and in the conceptualisation of groups. As white people's interactions with non-white individuals increased, they did not become necessarily less conscious of group differences, but they were far more likely to ascribe group differences to upbringing, customs, forms of socialisation and self-identity than to biological heredity.

The interesting question arises as to whether it could be a one-step racism: could colour racism decline and fade away and yet cultural racism remain and perhaps even grow? One can certainly imagine a future in which a group could continue to have their culture vilified while colour racism simultaneously declined, and the distinction between what might be called racism proper and 'culturalism' is commonly held and continues to be argued for (Fredrickson, 2002; Blum, 2002). Yet, while it appears that to discriminate only against those perceived to be culturally different might be borderline racial discrimination, where cultural essentialism and inferiorization may be involved, it would certainly share some of the qualities of what we know of racist stereotyping and practise today. Even then, however, it may still be regarded as a cultural prejudice or cultural exclusionism rather than racism *per se*, so that, if persons are targeted only on the basis of their behaviour and not on the basis of their ancestry, then might we not have something we should call culturalism rather than racism?

While this is an interesting question, it appears to go against what we should expect from communities and social dynamics since cultures and cultural practices are usually internally diverse, containing and omitting various "authentic" elements and adaptations and mixes. It follows then that the culturalised targeting could very easily be expansive rather than purist and so, in one way or another, catch most, if not all, cultural minorities in that group. For example, a non-religious Muslim might still be targeted as a cultural Muslim or Muslim by community, which means Muslim by background, which means birth and ancestry. This means that it is not clear that culturalism, where it is associated with distinct communities, can really be distinguished from racism in practice, even if it can be in theory. Some have argued that culturalism is a form of racism because it treats culture as a form of quasi-biological determinism and/or because culture is being made to stand in for a prior 'racism' (Barker 1981; Gilroy 1987; Solomos 1991). But this seems a misreading of cultural racism and is too committed to approximating cultural racism to biological racism. If we accept that racism does not necessarily involve attributing qualities that inhere in a deterministic law-like way in all members of a group, then we do not have to rule out cultural racism as an example of racism. This means that cultural racism is not merely a proxy for racism but a form of



racism in its own right, and that, while racism involves some reference to physical appearance or ancestry, it does not require any form of biological determinism, only a physical identification on a group basis, attributable to descent. As such we should guard against the characterisation of racism as a form of 'inherentism' or 'biological determinism,' which leaves little space to conceive the ways in which cultural racism draws upon physical appearance as one marker amongst others. We thus maintain that formulations of racialisation should not be solely premised upon conceptions of biology in a way that ignores religion, culture and so forth (cf. Miles, 1989).

While these theoretical linkages illustrate how Islamophobia as anti-Muslim sentiment can constitute a form of racism, the discussion thus far has not considered whether and how it may be deemed less problematic than other forms of racism. Contrasting perceptions of anti-Muslim sentiment with anti-Semitism may, once more, provide a fruitful line of inquiry for the reasons a British Member of the European Parliament posits:

*The media and Islamophobia are two of the most potent combinations of recent times.... You see anti-Semitism is loaded with a very heightened awareness...that creates a situation which is very emotive and rightly so. With Islam the difference is that there isn't that historical baggage. The media are not identifying a group of people and saying that this is what they suffered. [...] There's also a sense of confusion about Islam versus cult like behaviour because there hasn't been a very good analysis in the media and popular culture generally. (Interview with Meer on 3 January, 2008)*

To explore these issues, the article turns its attention to some journalists who make these allegedly formative contributions to our understanding of anti-Muslim sentiment (for a fuller discussion of the role of journalists see Meer, 2006). To this end we detail in-depth British interview data<sup>8</sup> with one senior home affairs broadcast journalist and three senior newspaper commissioning editors, two broadsheet and one tabloid, to consider what this can reveal about the topic at hand.

#### FRAMING RACISM DISCRETELY

Our data suggests that one of the explanations for the degree of ambivalence attributed to anti-Muslim sentiment reflects a commonly held narrow definition of racism, which assumes that the discrimination directed at conventionally, involuntarily, conceived racial minorities cannot by

---

<sup>8</sup> This research was funded the by the European Commission and forms part of A European Approach to Multicultural Citizenship: Legal Political and Educational Challenges (EMILIE) Contract no. CIT5-CT-2005-02820. While some respondent were open to possibility of being named, to avoid any ambiguity all respondents remain anonymous.

definition resemble that directed at Muslim minorities. This reckoning is premised upon the assumption that Muslim identities are religious identities that are voluntarily chosen (see Modood's (2006) rejoinder in his discussion of the Danish Cartoon affair and the case study of Incitement to Religious Hatred legislation in Meer (2008)). So it is frequently stated that, while gender, racial and sexuality based identities are ascribed or involuntary categories of birth, being a Muslim is about chosen beliefs and that Muslims, therefore, need or ought to have less legal protection than these other kinds of identities.<sup>9</sup> What this ignores, however, is that people do not choose to be or not to be born into a Muslim family. This is not to impose an identity or a way of being on people who may choose to passively deny or actively reject their Muslim identity because, consistent with the right of self-dissociation, the rejection of Muslim identification or adoption of a different self-definition should be recognized where a claim upon it is made. The point is that no one chooses to be born into a society where to look like a Muslim or to be a Muslim creates suspicion, hostility, or failure to get the job you applied for.<sup>10</sup> One frequent reaction to this complaint, however, is the charge that Muslim minorities are quick to adopt a 'victim mentality.' These two separate but interlinked issues are illustrated in the following comments of a very senior journalist with editorial and commissioning responsibilities at the national centre-right broadsheet:

*It [Islamophobia] doesn't mean anything to me. No, it's a device or a construct that's been used to cover an awful lot of people and censor debate... The racism thing is a bit difficult to sustain because we are talking about a religion here, not race and you have plenty of people who are not Muslim, if you are trying to equate Muslims with South Asians, obviously that's not necessarily the case at all (Interview with Meer on 22 January, 2008).*

This extract conveys the view that the term Islamophobia is used politically to silence potential criticism of Islam and Muslims and is particularly invalid

---

<sup>9</sup> For example, Polly Toynbee, writing in *The Guardian*, has stated that she reserves the 'right' to affront religious minorities on matters of faith because "race is something people cannot choose and it defines nothing about them as people. But beliefs are what people choose to identify with...The two cannot be blurred into one which is why the word Islamophobia is a nonsense" (see Polly Toynbee, 'My right to offend a fool', *The Guardian*, 10 June 2005). Elsewhere she has proclaimed: "I am an Islamophobe and proud of it!" (see Polly Toynbee, 'In defence of Islamophobia', *The Independent*, 23 October 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Of course how Muslims respond to these circumstances will vary. Some will organise resistance, while others will try to stop looking like Muslims (the equivalent of 'passing' for white); some will build an ideology out of their subordination; others will not, just as a woman can choose to be a feminist or not. Again, some Muslims may define their Islam in terms of piety rather than politics, just as some women may see no politics in their gender, while for others their gender will be at the centre of their politics.

because racism is only plausible where ethnic groups – not ethnically heterogeneous religious groups - are concerned.<sup>11</sup> The journalist continues:

*I think I probably went to the first press conference where the phrase came up, I think it was about five or six years ago... Since we were the ones that were being accused of it, it just seemed rather difficult for me to get my head around, because if Islamophobia means a fear of, literally, that was not what we were talking about. We were talking about fear of terrorists who act in the name of Islam; it's a different thing altogether (interview).*

The first sentence of this extract reveals this journalist's first interaction with the term and their sense of grievance in "being accused of it," while the second sentence invokes a criticism also made by Reisigl and Wodak (2001) who insist that it is analytically problematic to cast perceptions of prejudice or discrimination in the language of 'phobias.' The last sentence in this extract, which focuses upon terrorism, is particularly instructive and so will be addressed separately below. In the meantime the characterisation of Islamophobia may be contrasted with another that emerges in the less definitive account of a senior broadcast news editor with responsibilities across broadcast, internet and radio journalism. This journalist expresses a similar anxiety to that of our centre-right national broadsheet respondent in reconciling what he considers to be a 'full and frank' account with the potential charge of anti-Muslim bias in their reporting:

*[T]here are certainly quite vocal groups of Muslims who are very quick to stress the problems that Muslims can face in this country and work very hard to encourage journalists like me and others to reflect a particular view which might be described as a victim mentality... I am personally not persuaded that it [Islamophobia] is a huge issue in Britain. It is, racism in all its forms is a problem... I think for the most part it's really a very tolerant country so I'm kind of conscious that we mustn't allow ourselves for the sake of a good story to start painting a picture of a slice of British society which does suffer more than it really does.... (Interview with Meer on 3 January, 2008)*

---

<sup>11</sup> Also writing for the *Daily Telegraph*, Michael Burleigh has stated: "Those claiming to speak for the Muslim community have played to the traditional Left-wing imagination by conjuring up the myth of 'far-Right extremism'. In reality, evidence for 'Islamophobia' as distinct from a justified fear of radical Islamist terrorism or a desire to protect our freedoms, institutions and values from those who hold them in contempt is anecdotal and slight" (see Michael Burleigh, 'Religious hatred bill is being used to buy Muslim votes', *Daily Telegraph*, 9 December 2004).

While the latter half of this passage reveals a critical perspective on the prevalence of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment, it is interesting to note how, in a marked contrast to the centre-right national broadsheet journalist, the broadcast news respondent comfortably places the issue of Islamophobia alongside issues of racism, which “in all its forms is a problem.” This may in part be due to the insistence of “vocal groups of Muslims” that this respondent refers to, for the broadcaster does have a significant policy of diversity awareness training, but the proactive inclusion of Muslim voices is a moot point and is returned to below, as is the characterisation of Muslim complaints forming part of an alleged ‘victim mentality.’ Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most Muslim-friendly attitude is to be found in the words of a senior figure at a centre-left national broadsheet who describes how treating anti-Muslim sentiment with “less seriousness” can bias the framing of news-items:

*I think it is easy to slip into... I saw it the other day, and it was three headlines together on one page of the Daily Telegraph, and the headline said something like ‘Foreigners live in 1.3 million houses’... Then there was a headline where the word Muslim was being used in a pejorative sense and I thought these things to my mind are quite dangerous... I think that’s where some papers make a really big mistake time after time after time. (Interview with Meer on 29 January, 2008)*

One development that might alleviate this tendency is the greater presence of Muslim journalists working across news items on different newspapers. This is a point that is also raised by a senior correspondent with a national tabloid newspaper who contrasts the public service requirement of the BBC with the commercial imperatives of newspaper – and particularly tabloid – journalism, which pursues an aggressive drive for sales:

*Because the way newspapers in particular work, I don’t know that that’s their job to reflect Muslims per se - do you know what I mean? [...] In my time at the X I remember the Sun hired a Muslim commentator not long after 9/11 and she did a lot of discussion about whether she was going to wear her veil in the picture - Anila Baig. That was all a bit self-conscious. The X had a few first person pieces and features and so on... if there was a story that involved Muslim groups being invited to No. 10 then you would call the Muslim group to see how it’d gone but I wouldn’t say it would go any deeper than that. [...] I just report as I do every story. I’m not self-consciously having to check myself or judge myself. (Interview with Meer on 18 January, 2008)*

This extract illustrates the dynamics involved in nurturing ‘Muslim voices’ within newspapers in a way that can draw attention to how issues of importance to some Muslims, such as the wearing of the veil, may be reported in an educative manner. So, even though it may be perceived as “a bit self conscious,” it appears much more substantive than seeking ‘Muslim comment’ that – by this journalist’s own admission – would not penetrate the framing of a story in much depth. This is then related to the final issue that emerges from this paragraph and which concerns the absence of reflexivity in this respondent’s conception of journalism, something that is evidently in a stark contrast to our centre-left national broadsheet respondent.

#### *PLACING THE ROLE OF RELIGION*

What the last extract also touches upon is a related issue concerning the ways in which religion per se is met with anxiety. One particular implication is that, while curbs on defamation of conventionally conceived ethnic and racial minorities may be seen as progressive, the mocking of Muslims is seen to constitute healthy intellectual debate (for a discussion of these sentiments in Danish cartoon affair see Modood, 2006 and Levey and Modood, 2009). This tendency is perhaps heightened when the religion in question takes a conservative line on topics of gender equality, sexual orientation, and progressive politics generally, leading some commentators who may otherwise sympathise with Muslim minorities to argue that it is difficult to view Muslims as victims when they may themselves be potential oppressors. As Parekh (2006: 180) describes, this can be traced to a perception that Muslims are “collectivist, intolerant, authoritarian, illiberal and theocratic” and that Muslims use their faith as “a self-conscious public statement, not quietly held personal faith but a matter of identity which they must jealously guard and loudly and repeatedly proclaim...not only to remind them of who they are but also to announce to others what they stand for” (bid. 181).<sup>12</sup> It is thus unsurprising to learn that some attitude surveys report that 77% of people in Britain are convinced that “Islam has a lot of fanatical followers”, 68% consider it “to have more to do with the middle ages than the modern world”, and 64% believe that Islam “treats women badly” (see Field, 2007: 453). These assumptions are present in our BBC journalist’s insistence that “the nature of the debate is such that some Muslims most certainly will be offended (interview).”

<sup>12</sup> This is also supported in survey evidence which reports anxiety over the intensity of Muslim religiosity. Field (2007: 457) notes that “in G-2004h, 70% acknowledged that they seemed to take their faith more seriously than Christians, while in G-2005b, 28% had a concern about the presence of those with strong Muslim beliefs. In G-2005c, 80% felt that British Muslims had a keen sense of Islamic identity which was still growing (63%) and which had to be reckoned as a ‘bad thing’ (56%), with the potential to lead to violence and loss of personal freedoms and to act as a barrier to integration”.

The recent furor that accompanied the Archbishop of Canterbury's lecture on civil and religious laws in England and which touched upon the availability of recourse to aspects of Shari'a for Muslims who seek it in civil courts in Britain (see Modood, 2008) provides a good illustration of the implication of this journalist's position. Indeed, at the height of the storm, one of the authors received an email from a Daily Mail journalist which stated: "I was wondering if you might talk to us about sharia [sic] law in the UK, and the effects it might have on our society. [...] What we do need is someone saying that Sharia [sic] law would not necessarily be a good thing, so if this is not for you, then don't worry!" (email received 8 February, 2008). This sort of approach is anticipated by our respondent from the tabloid newspaper who describes how it is widely accepted that concerns of accuracy and validity come second to getting a story on Muslims into circulation:

*If you were being accurate you would be going to communities...and speaking to people. What we tend to do is report what is happening... someone from the Beeb might be if they are doing a story on whether or not Muslim women should be allowed to wear a veil when they go to see their MP. I would have talked to Jack Straw and someone from the organisation (interview).*

The optimism informing the view that it should be left to the BBC to play the role of an honest broker in reporting emotive stories concerning Muslims with impartiality is not something borne out by our interview data. Indeed our senior broadcast news respondent considers the portrayal of difficult stories concerning religious affairs generally and particularly stories focusing upon Muslims as constituting a necessary part of a public conversation, which, in the example below, proceeds by questioning for example the legitimacy of the wearing of a face-veil (niqab). As the extract highlights, this is informed by this journalist's view that visible markers of difference and diversity are intrinsically tied to broader, in this view, legitimate, public anxieties over immigration that should not be silenced in the interests of maintaining what the respondent describes as an artificially harmonious conception of multiculturalism:<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> In another part of the interview they state: "I think the X has been through an interesting phase which echoes that slight change that I've been talking about in the last few years which is I think there was a belief that we had to promote multiculturalism; that it was our job to try and do lots of stories about how lovely it was to have lots of people from different cultures in Britain and not report too much what tensions there were, certainly not allow the voices of those people who had concerns about the changing nature of their high street or whatever it was. I think that has changed over the last couple of years. I think there has been, quite rightly, a change of view that we do need in the corporation to ensure that we reflect whatever tensions and anxieties and indeed prejudices that may exist within British society and a recognition that for people to question, for instance the level of immigration



*It needs to be something that we do discuss and think about and have a national conversation about because from it flows all the other discussion about our expectations of those who come from other countries to live and work here. [...] I've talked about the veil endlessly over the last year because I do think it's been a really interesting one... suddenly people began to say, well hold on, is it right that somebody can teach a class full of kids wearing a full veil? And I think it's a perfectly reasonable question and one that we need to discuss (interview).*

In a significant contrast to the public questioning – as an editorial line – of the visibility and indeed legitimacy of religion, our Guardian respondent describes how their newspaper seeks to incorporate religious coverage in an educative manner. One example may be found in its 'Comment is Free' section, which is currently 'blogging' the Qu'ran through serialisations penned by the writer and intellectual Ziauddin Sardar. Another example includes that of the appointment of a young Muslim woman as its religious affairs correspondent, which "probably raised eyebrows in one or two places." The journalist continues:

*[S]he went on the hajj and did some video for the website, and what I thought was terrific as well, she was able to report pilgrim voices, and these were young British people, they were from the North of England, from London, and so on and so forth, and what the hajj meant to them, what their Muslim identification meant i.e. voices you don't normally get in a national newspaper.*

While these examples perhaps take us away from a direct discussion of racism and Islamophobia in the way that was elaborated earlier, it is still worth noting how much importance the paper attributes to the value of embedding plural constituencies within its journalism - perhaps as a prophylactic against unwitting anti-Muslim sentiment. This centre-left national broadsheet is, then, unique in its approach, for not only does it seek to afford space in which to cultivate the representation of religion in public discourse but it does so through a consciously Muslim interlocutor.

#### *THE IMPACT OF ANXIETIES OVER TERRORISM*

With a significantly different interest in the meaning and implication of Islam to its British adherents, other respondents place little importance upon garnering an empathetic understanding of the spiritual role of religion.

---

into this country is not of itself, beyond the pale. That is a legitimate position for someone to hold and indeed, has become a pretty central political discussion right now."

The focus instead appears orientated toward an assumed relationship between religion and issues of terrorism, issues that are deemed to be specifically pertinent in their respective coverage of Islam and Muslims. As our tabloid newspaper respondent reiterated: “there’s a global jihad going on that we’re all involved in... everything changed after 9/11 and again after 7/7” (interview). This sentiment is repeated in the words of our centre-right national broadsheet journalist who summarises how 7/7 “was a surprise because what we were looking at in the late 90’s and up to 2004 was the belief that it was going to be imported terrorist attacks... the big surprise was that they were going to attack their own country which was a bit of a turning point I think. It was a bit of an eye opener” (interview). There is evidence to suppose that this is a widely held view with Field (2007: 459) concluding that post-7/7 there has been an increased “tendency to criticize the inactivity of the Muslim population as a whole, and not just its leaders,” a sentiment arising from the belief that “the Muslim community had not done enough to prevent support for terrorism in its midst.” Indeed, he makes the finding that this belief has given rise to a wide-spread view that it is legitimate to proactively target Muslims for reasons of national security:

*[T]hree-fifths argued that Britain’s security services should now focus their intelligence-gathering and terrorism-prevention efforts on Muslims living in Britain or seeking to enter it, on the grounds that, although most Muslims were not terrorists, most terrorists threatening the country were Muslims... (ibid).*

These perceptions are perhaps embodied in terminologies that collapse different issues together; a good example of which may be found in attitudes towards the term ‘Islamist Terrorism.’ Our centre-right national broadsheet journalist, for example, remains convinced that terrorism by some Muslims is primarily an outgrowth of Islamism:

*I think we still edge around certain issues... For instance the Government is reluctant to talk about Islamist terrorism even though somebody like Ed Hussein whose book *The Islamist* makes the point that there is a fundamental difference between Islam and Islamism. Unless you understand the ideological basis of it you don’t understand anything.*

It is worth noting how, despite the contested and relational nature of terms such as ‘terrorism’ and ‘Islamism,’ which invite qualification and contextualisation, it is increasingly common to find the portrayal of a seamless association between the two. This is a good example of what Jackson (2006) has called a culturally embedded ‘hard’ discourse since so many other assumptions compound and reinforce it. One example of what is meant by this can be found in how Melanie Phillips has stated that “after the Rushdie affair, Islam in Britain became fused with an agenda of

murder.”<sup>14</sup> This characterisation comes close to conceiving the violence that is committed by Muslims as “something inherent in the religion, rendering any Muslim a potential terrorist” (Poole, 2002: 4). While some scholars and journalists have gone to great lengths to argue that most Muslims consider violence and terrorism to be an egregious violation of their religion (see Haliday, 2003: 107), attempts to de-couple the two are sometimes dismissed as oversensitive (cf Phillips, 2006; Gove, 2006; Cohen, 2007 and Anthony, 2007). It is worth remembering that in Field’s (2007: 457) analysis 56% of a survey believed that a strongly held Muslim identity could lead to violence. The terms ‘Islam’ and ‘Islamism’ are therefore variably used and contested, but, in at least one dominant discourse, emotive conflation rather than careful distinctions are the order of the day and generative of dangerous stereotypes. While media discourses can be seen as contributing to this racialisation, practitioners in some part of the media are also under pressure to question their role in it. The senior broadcast news respondent of its internal debates over the issue of terminology:

*In the end we’ve used a number of terms and you have to appreciate this is always tricky because in journalism you have to find more than one way of saying everything otherwise it becomes boring. So we talk a lot about Al Qaeda inspired terrorism; the word Islamist has become reasonably accepted as a way of describing a certain type of person who takes a view...but all these terms are tricky because there are people who might well describe themselves as an Islamist but who would never dream of wanting to blow people up. [...] I’ve certainly been in meetings with...Muslims who have challenged the X... I suppose that’s what I mean by we’ve come a long way, we have been forced quite rightly to think about all these issues and I think we still wrestle with it but I think we are better.*

This is an instructive account because it suggests that this broadcaster in particular can be lobbied to take account of minority sensitivities and the risks of stigmatisation, not only that but that they have also undergone an internal process of learning, which leads them to continue to ‘wrestle’ with these issues. The respondent balances their statement, however, with another in which they reiterate that the “real dangers for us and for all journalists in shying away from some of the real challenges that Al Qaeda inspired philosophy presents for British society as a whole and indeed for all Muslims within British society.” On this issue even the centre-left national

---

<sup>14</sup> See Melanie Phillips (2006) ‘After the Rushdie affair, Islam in Britain became fused with an agenda of murder’, *The Observer*, 28 May, 2006, p28.

broadsheet respondent shares a similar concern elaborated in the following extract:

*I went to see Musharaf [the President of Pakistan on a visit to London] earlier this week and he got quite belligerent about this and he was saying 'don't you point the finger at Pakistan, most of your home grown people [terrorist suspects] are home grown, that means they were born, they were bred, they were educated here...' Of course, he's got a point; he's got a very good point!*

It is arguable that these perceptions give rise to the minority in question being perceived as a threat rather than in terms of measures designed to eliminate discrimination. This may of course stem from the ways in which it is difficult to sympathise with a minority that is perceived to be disloyal or associated with terrorism. There is also a political imperative to deny the victimisation of such a minority, to argue that racialisation is not taking, that evidence for discrimination is negligible, that there are no reasons for acting against Islamophobia – for the sake of prioritising security, even at the expense of equality.

### CONCLUSIONS

This article has explored why there may be little sympathy for the notion that Muslim minorities are subject to racism by virtue of their real or perceived 'Muslimness' (in the way it is rightly accepted that Jewish minorities are sometimes the object of racism by virtue of the real or perceived 'Jewishness'). It finds that the reasons are four-fold and include, firstly, a conceptualisation of racism, which assumes that the protections afforded to conventionally, involuntarily, conceived racial minorities should not be extended to Muslims because theirs is a religious identity that is voluntarily chosen. One salient, discursive, trope germane to this view laments Muslim minorities for the adoption of a 'victim mentality.' Secondly, the way in which religion per se is frowned upon amongst contemporary British intelligentsia invites the ridiculing of Muslims as healthy for intellectual debate and not, therefore, an issue of discrimination. Thirdly, while ethnic identities are welcomed in the public space, there is much more unease about religion. This means that some commentators who may otherwise sympathise with Muslim minorities argue that it is difficult to view Muslims as victims when they may themselves be potential oppressors. Finally, some find it difficult to sympathise with a minority that is perceived to be disloyal or associated with terrorism, a view that leads to a perception of Muslims as a threat rather than as a disadvantaged minority subject to increasingly pernicious discourses of racialisation. Each of these findings invites further study and underscores the need for a greater exploration of anti-Muslim discourse.

## REFERENCES

- Abbott, D. (2005) Hansard (HC), col. 681, 21 June 2005.
- Afshar, H., Aitken, R., and Myfanwy, F. (2005) 'Feminisms, Islamophobia and Identities', *Political Studies*, 53 (2) pp: 262-280
- Alibhai-Brown, Y. (1998) "The Media and Race Relations", in T. Blackstone, B. Parekh and P. Sanders (1998) (eds) *Race Relations in Britain: A Developing Agenda*. London: Routledge.
- Anthony, A. (2007) *The Fallout: How a Guilty Liberal Lost His Innocence*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Barker, M. (1981) *The New Racism: Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe*, London: Junction Books.
- Benbassa, E. (2007) "Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism, and Racism: Europe's Recurring Evils?", in: Matti Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe*, Chicago, Prickly Paradigm Press.
- Bunzl, M. (2005) 'Between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Some thoughts on the new Europe', *American Ethnologist*, 32 (4), November 2005, pp. 499-508.
- Bunzl, M. (2007) *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
- Chanes, J. A. (2004) *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO.
- Cohen, N. (2007) *What's Left? How Liberals Lost Their Way*. London: HarperPerennial.
- Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (1997) *Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*, London: Trentham Books
- Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (2004) *Islamophobia: issues challenges and action*. London: Trentham Books.
- Davis, D. (2005) Hansard (HC), col. 686, 21 June 2005.
- Dodd, V. (2006) 'Universities urged to spy on Muslims', *The Guardian*, 16 October, 2006.
- Evans, M. and Ford, R. (2007) 'Recruit Muslim spies in war on terror, urges new security chief', *The Times*, 9 July, 2007.
- Field, C. D. (2007) 'Islamophobia in Contemporary Britain: The Evidence of the Opinion Polls, 1988–2006', *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 18 (4) pp: 447–477.
- Fredrickson, G.M. (2002) *Racism: A Short History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gilroy, P. (1987) *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*, London: Heinemann.
- Goldberg, D.T., (2006), 'Racial Europeanization', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29 (2): 331–364.

- Gottschalk, P. and Greenberg, G. (2008) *Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
- Gove, M. (2006) *Celsius 7/7*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Hartman, N. and Husbands, C. (1974) *Racism and the Mass Media*. London: Davis-Poytner.
- Halliday, F. (2003:) *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East*. New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Hansen, R (2006) 'The Danish cartoon controversy: a defence of literal freedom', *International Migration*, 44 (5), pp: 7-16.
- Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) 'Enormous upsurge in anti-Muslim backlash', Islamic Human Rights Commission press release, 22 July 2005.
- Joppke, C. (2007) 'Limits of integration policy: Britain and her Muslims', paper presented at the conference 'Muslims and the state in the post-9/11 West', Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT, 20-21 April 2007;
- Leppard, D. (2007) 'UK Spying On Muslims Who Visit Mecca', *The Times*, 21 January, 2007.
- Levey, G. B. and Modood, T. (2009) (eds) *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Malik, K. (2005) 'Are Muslims hated?', 30 Minutes, broadcast on Channel 4, 8 January 2005, transcript available online at [www.kenanmalik.com/tv/c4\\_islamophobia.html](http://www.kenanmalik.com/tv/c4_islamophobia.html) (viewed 13 September 2007).
- Marshall-Andrews, B. (2005) Hansard (HC), col. 676, 21 June 2005
- Meer, N. (2006). "'Get off your knees!' Print media public intellectuals and Muslims in Britain", *Journalism Studies*, 7, pp: 35-59.
- Meer, N. (2007) "Less equal than others", *Index on Censorship*, 36 (2) pp: 112-116
- Meer, N. (2008) 'The politics of voluntary and involuntary identities: are Muslims in Britain an ethnic, racial or religious minority? *Patterns of Prejudice*, 42 (1), pp: 61-81.
- Meer, N., and Noorani, T. (2008) 'A sociological comparison of anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim sentiment in Britain', *The Sociological Review*, 56 (2), pp: 195-219.
- Metropolitan Police Authority (2004) *Report of the MPA Scrutiny on MPS Stop and Search Practice*. London: MPA
- Miles, R. (1989) *Racism*, London and New York: Routledge
- Modood, T. (1997) 'Difference', Cultural-Racism and Anti-Racism' in Werbner, P and Modood, T.,(eds),*Debating Cultural Hybridities: Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, London : Zed Books.
- Modood, T. (2005). *Multicultural politics: Racism, ethnicity and Muslims in Britain*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.



- Modood, T., (2006), 'Obstacles to Multicultural Integration', *International Migration*, 44 (5): 51–62.
- Modood, T. (2008) 'Multicultural Citizenship and the anti-sharia storm', *Open Democracy.net*, 14 February 2008.
- Ozanne, W. I. (2006) 'Review of Confronting Islamophobia in educational practice' Barry van Driel (Ed.), 2004 in *Comparative Education*, 42,(2), May 2006, p. 283.
- Parekh, B. (2006) "Europe, liberalism and the 'Muslim question'" in T. Modood., A. Triandafyllidou and R. Zapata-Barrero. (eds) (2006). *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*. London: Routledge.
- Phillips, M. (2006) *Londonistan: How Britain created a terror state within*. London: Gibson Square Books
- Rana, J. (2007) 'The Story of Islamophobia', *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society*, 9 (2), pp: 148-162.
- Rattansi, A., (2007), *Racism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press.
- Report of the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism (2006), London: HMSO
- Reisigl, M., and Wodak, R. (2001) *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Anti-Semitism*. London: Routledge.
- Richardson, J.E., (2006) *On delineating 'reasonable' and 'unreasonable' criticisms of Muslims*. Fifth Estate Online, August 2006. <http://www.fifth-estateonline.co.uk/criticism/ondelineatingreasonableandunreasonable.html>.
- Solomos, J. (1991) 'Political Language and Racial Discourse', *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 2 (1): 21-34.
- Toynbee, P. (1997) 'In defence of Islamophobia', *Independent*, 23 October, 1997.
- Toynbee, P. (2005) 'My right to offend a fool', *Guardian*, 10 June, 2005.

# ***Beyond Islamophobia and Islamophilia as Western Epistemic Racisms: Revisiting Runnymede Trust's Definition in a World-History Context***

**Mohammad H. Tamdgidi**

*University of Massachusetts, Boston*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 54-81.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

# ***Beyond Islamophobia and Islamophilia as Western Epistemic Racisms: Revisiting Runnymede Trust's Definition in a World-History Context***

**Mohammad H. Tamdgidi**

*University of Massachusetts, Boston*

The media have become obsessed with something called "Islam," which in their voguish lexicon has acquired only two meanings, both of them unacceptable and impoverishing. On the one hand, "Islam" represents the threat of a resurgent atavism, which suggests not only the menace of a return to the Middle Ages but the destruction of what Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan calls the democratic order in the Western world. On the other hand, "Islam" is made to stand for a defensive counterresponse to this first image of Islam as threat, especially when, for geopolitical reasons, "good" Moslems like the Saudi Arabians or the Afghan Moslem "freedom fighters" against the Soviet Union are in question. ... But rejection alone does not take one very far, since if we are to claim, as we must, that as a religion and as a civilization Islam *does* have a meaning very much beyond either of the two currently given it, we must first be able to provide something in the way of a space in which to speak of Islam. Those who wish either to rebut the standard anti-Islamic and anti-Arab rhetoric that dominates the media and liberal intellectual discourse, or to avoid the idealization of Islam (to say nothing of its sentimentalization), find themselves with scarcely a place to stand on, much less a place in which to move freely. (Said, 1980:488)

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is now almost three decades since Edward Said penned the above pertinent words in his essay "Islam Through Western Eyes" published in *The Nation* soon after the publication of his *Orientalism* (1979). Apart from the not so insignificant political changes since that time—such as how the Afghan Moslem "freedom fighters" fighting the Soviet Union turned from Western powers' regional allies into their global sworn enemies in the new clothing of Al-Qaeda—the simplistic dichotomy of the two images of Islam in Western eyes as noted by Said has not drastically changed, perhaps has only been further amplified. What the decades in between clearly illustrate, in fact, is how Western Islamophobia and Islamophilia are two sides of the same coin and how readily they can become one another in the ebb and flow of imperial global geopolitics.

Is it possible that what the West regards as its ultimate foes and friends in Islam today, manifesting its Islamophobic and Islamophilic tendencies, are both, at least partly, contradictory byproducts of its own centuries-old and contemporary global imperial expeditions? Is it possible to regard both Islamophobia and Islamophilia as found today as by-products of two sides of the same phenomenon brought on by Western imperial policies pursued around the globe especially during the post WWII era? What

remains an urgent project yet to be accomplished nearly three decades after Said penned his words is the carving out of what he called a “place to stand on, ... a place in which to move freely”—here, free of readily hurled Islamophobic and Islamophilic charges—in order to peruse, among and in critical dialogue with other intellectual and spiritual world traditions, Islam’s own genuine contributions to the task at hand of maneuvering away from and beyond the treacherous or caricatured landscapes of Islamophobia and Islamophilia.

Revisiting the definitional framework offered by The Runnymede Trust in 1997 for Islamophobia, in this paper I draw on and seek to critically contribute to a conceptual framework advanced by Grosfoguel and Mielants (2006)—as informed by the works of Grosfoguel (2002, 2006, 2007), Maldonado-Torres (2004, 2006), Dussel (1994, 2004), Mignolo (2000, 2006, 2007), and Tlostanova (2006), among others—to understand and help transcend Islamophobia in a world-history context. I will argue that both Islamophobia *and* Islamophilia should be regarded as forms of Western religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racism that similarly other, oversimplify, essentialize, and distort our views of the ‘really existing Islam’ as a plural *weltanschauung*—one that, like any other, has historically produced contradictory interpretative, cultural, and socio-political trends involving liberatory and imperial/oppressive aspirations.

The essential thesis advanced here is that Islamophobia and Islamophilia, far from being Western reactions to an independently developing Islamic tradition, are direct byproducts of how Western imperial (more recently, oil-based) geopolitics have helped overdevelop the static, oppressive and ultraconservative interpretations of Islam—which have often been in fact the breeding grounds of Islamic fundamentalisms and terrorisms—at the expense of marginalizing and misrepresenting its dynamic, liberatory and egalitarian interpretations as exemplified, for instance, by Sufism. I will argue that aspects of the Runnymede definition of Islamophobia represent Islamophilic tendencies that need rethinking and de/reconstruction. An alternative definitional framework for Islamophobia/Islamophilia will thereby be proposed.

In what follows I will first overview the definitional framework offered by Runnymede Trust for Islamophobia. I will then summarize the conceptual framework advanced by Grosfoguel and Mielants, et al., regarding the nature of Islamophobia as a form of religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racism that is not merely additive but constitutive of the “modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system.” Then I will turn to a reexamination of the above conceptual framework followed by a critical reexamination of the Runnymede Trust’s definition of Islamophobia. An alternative definition of Islamophobia/Islamophilia is proposed in the process.

### RUNNYMEDE TRUST'S DEFINITION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

"Islamophobia" is a term that originated in the 1980s and gained wider use in response to the then contemporary events, such as the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the advent of the Iran-Iraq war during the 1980-1988 period, the defeat of the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan by a fundamentalist religious movement aided by the U.S., the West, and their regional allies (such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia), and, later, the fall of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc nations and the subsequent posing of Islam in global imperial politics as an alternative nemesis to the West.

The term came to be formally coined and defined in a report titled *Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*,<sup>1</sup> published in the United Kingdom in 1997 by the Runnymede Trust, which was founded in 1968 "with the stated aim of challenging racial discrimination, influencing legislation and promoting multi-ethnicity in the UK."<sup>2</sup> The report was researched and written by the then newly established (in 1996) multi-ethnic and multi-religious Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia chaired by Professor Gordon Conway and composed of eighteen members.<sup>3</sup> Since the events of September 11, 2001 and the significant rise in biased and discriminatory policies and behaviors toward Islam and Moslems, the term has achieved much wider circulation.

The Runnymede report defined Islamophobia and "closed views of Islam" as follows:

1. Islam [is] seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities.
2. Islam [is] seen as separate and other—(a) not having any aims or values in common with other cultures (b) not affected by them (c) not influencing them.
3. Islam [is] seen as inferior to the West—barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist.
4. Islam [is] seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in 'a clash of civilisations'.
5. Islam [is] seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage.
6. Criticisms made by Islam of 'the West' [are] rejected out of hand.

<sup>1</sup>"Islamophobia: A Challenge to Us All (Summary)." London, UK: Runnymede Trust, p. 2. 1997. The summary and full report may be obtained from The Runnymede Trust, Suite 106, London Fruit & Wool Exchange, Brush field St, London E1 6EP, United Kingdom. The summary can be downloaded from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runnymede\\_Trust](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runnymede_Trust).

<sup>2</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runnymede\\_Trust](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runnymede_Trust)

<sup>3</sup>Mastoid Ahmed, Akbar Ahmed, Zaki Badawi, The Rt Revd Richard Chartres, Ian Hargreaves, Phillip Lewis, Zahida Manzoor, Rabbi Julia Neuberger, Trevor Phillips, Sebastian Poulter, Usha Prashar, Hamid Qureshi, Nasreen Rehman, Saba Risaluddin, Imam Abduljalil Sajid, Richard Stone, and The Revd John (see the Runnymede report summary, p. 3).

7. Hostility towards Islam [is] used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
8. Anti-Muslim hostility [is] accepted as natural and 'normal'.<sup>4</sup>

Non-Islamophobic and "open views of Islam," in contrast, are described by the report as follows:

1. Islam [is] seen as diverse and progressive, with internal differences, debates and development.
2. Islam [is] seen as interdependent with other faiths and cultures— (a) having certain shared values and aims (b) affected by them (c) enriching them.
3. Islam [is] seen as distinctively different, but not deficient, and as equally worthy of respect.
4. Islam [is] seen as an actual or potential partner in joint cooperative enterprises and in the solution of shared problems.
5. Islam [is] seen as a genuine religious faith, practised sincerely by its adherents.
6. Criticisms [by Islam] of 'the West' and other cultures are considered and debated.
7. Debates and disagreements with Islam do not diminish efforts to combat discrimination and exclusion.
8. Critical views of Islam are themselves subjected to critique, lest they be inaccurate and unfair.<sup>5</sup>

In an editorial note to the collection of conference papers guest co-edited by Grosfoguel and Mielants (2006), I noted that, while the definitional framework for Islamophobia as proposed by the Runnymede Trust does not imply its misuse as a vehicle for dismissing criticisms made of one or another Islamic belief or of Islam as a whole, opponents of the term have suggested that the term lends itself to silencing "legitimate" criticisms that one may raise against Islam or one or another of its varieties.<sup>6</sup> As a result, I noted, some have responded by accusing those who have warned against Islamophobia for being themselves tinted by various degrees of Islamophilia,<sup>7</sup> i.e., of lending uncritical support and wholesale admiration to

---

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>In a letter published in 2006 in the French weekly newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, warning against Islamic "totalitarianism" and signed by Salman Rushdie and several others, for instance, Islamophobia has been referred to as a "wretched concept that confuses criticism of Islam as a religion and stigmatization of those who believe in it" (for a full text of the letter see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4764730.stm>). Ironically, the letter was published following the widespread global protests in the Islamic world to the publication of mocking and derogatory cartoons of the founder of Islam in Western media, purportedly as a mechanism to "test" the openness of Islam to criticism.

<sup>7</sup>"Islamophilia is a controversial term (believed to have been first used by critic of Islam Daniel Pipes) employed by some journalists, media commentators and politicians to



Islam and blindly accepting its associated ideas and practices. I concluded then that such criticisms of the term Islamophobia and its use, however, often fail to make a distinction between the definitional coordinates of the term itself as coined in the Runnymede Trust report and the misuse that the term (like any other term) may suffer in ideological and political debates. Clearly, I argued, the definition provided by the Runnymede Trust for Islamophobia does not exempt Islam or any of its variants from being subjected to criticism nor does it limit the option, within a constructive dialogical framework, for those believing in and practicing Islam to present their responses to the criticisms launched against their views.

In light of the fact that the term “Islamophilia” has been used by those critical of the term “Islamophobia” in general and of the definitional framework offered by the Runnymede Report’s in particular to express their dissatisfaction with the term, for the purpose of further clarification and exploration, I will return at the end of this paper to the controversy over the definitions of the term(s). For this purpose, let me first review the conceptual framework advanced by Grosfoguel and Mielants before proceeding further in a critical reexamination of the latter followed by a critical reconsideration of the Runnymede definition.

#### *ISLAMOPHOBIA AS WESTERN RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, ORIENTALIST, AND EPISTEMIC RACISM*

In their article titled “The Long-Durée Entanglement Between Islamophobia and Racism in the Modern/Colonial Capitalist/Patriarchal World-System”—an introduction to a collection of proceedings of an international conference on Islamophobia they co-organized in 2006 in Paris, France<sup>8</sup>—Ramón Grosfoguel and Eric Mielants proposed that Islamophobia is not a new, conjuncturally coincidental, or structurally epiphenomenal feature of the capitalist world-economy but one that has been a centrally constitutive element of the modern world for centuries, having taken a variety of forms entangled with religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racism and modes of racial othering. They argued, in other words, that, while the term “Islamophobia” may be new in the recent historical context, its content and what it represents as racism and a practice of racial othering is not anything new when considered in the world-historical context of the emergence, development, and decline of the modern world-system. The novelty of the argument advanced was thereby

---

describe unwavering and uncritical admiration of Islam and used to counteract what many believe to be spurious accusations of Islamophobia. British journalist Julie Burchill also complained of a kind of “mindless Islamophilia” that was “considerably more dangerous” than Islamophobia owing to what she claimed was a white washing of Islamic History and its use as a way of stifling debate” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamophilia\\_\(neologism\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamophilia_(neologism))).

<sup>8</sup> See “Othering Islam: Proceedings of the International Conference on “The Post-September 11 New Ethnic/Racial Configurations in Europe and the United States: The Case of Islamophobia” (Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, Paris, France, June 2-3, 2006).” *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* V(1), 2006.

in regard to both the exposition of the *systemically constitutive* role of Islamophobia in the making of the modern world and to its *world-historically evolving forms*.

In order to better appreciate and further build upon the conceptual framework as advanced by Grosfoguel and Mielants, a more detailed consideration of their perspective is necessary here.

Grosfoguel and Mielants' view on Islamophobia in a world-history context is one that follows a broader conceptual framework as advanced in Grosfoguel's earlier writings (Grosfoguel and Cervantes-Rodriguez 2002, Grosfoguel 2006, 2007). Central to this framework is the recognition that the modern world-system is not a unillogical world reducible to a singular economic motive (Wallerstein 1979; Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982) but a complex system of multiple, crisscrossing and overlapping, economic, political, and cultural hierarchical structures in which the latter two are not simply additive but also constitutive of the economic and the overall social structure. Culture and politics, in other words, contrary to the classical Marxist perspective still informing the world-systems analysis, are not merely superstructural but also organically constitutive of the economic processes and vice versa, such that no a priori primacy of one factor over others could be established.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover and similarly, the authors also insist that imperialism and coloniality are not a past and transient, but a continuing and structurally necessary feature of the modern world, necessitating ever newer forms of what Hatem Bazian (2007) calls "organizing principles" of imperial rule, for which various modes of cultural, religious, gender, and racial subordination and stratification are continually reinvented and employed to maintain the systemic status quo.

"Post-"coloniality, amid such a world-system constituted of overlapping and interconstitutive hierarchical structures, is thereby an illusion, one that merely helps to ideologically hide its essentially continuing imperial/colonial nature. In this regard, the close affinity of the authors' views with and its indebtedness to what Anibal Quijano has called the "coloniality of power" is evident (cf. Quijano 2000). Colonialism is not a matter of the past; coloniality is a continuing, ever renewing process essential to the workings and survival of the modern world-system.

For the above reasons, from this perspective it is not fruitful to characterize the modern world as simply "capitalist" but, at the cost of sounding awkwardly long, as a "modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system." Racial, gender, religious, and imperial/colonial hierarchies, in other words, are not to be seen as merely additive but, instead, as structurally constitutive building blocks of the capitalist system, necessary

---

<sup>9</sup> For a similar critique of Marxist perspective and world-systems analysis see Tamdgidi's *Advancing Utopistics: The Three Component Parts and Errors of Marxism* (Paradigm Publishers, 2007).

components that the system must continually produce and reproduce in order to maintain itself.

Using such a conceptual framework, it becomes possible for the authors to consider Islamophobia itself not simply as an epiphenomenal but as a constitutive element and “organizing principle” of the modern world, an element which has taken a variety of forms over the centuries and whose historical making can be traced to the origins of the world-system in the long sixteenth century, particularly marked historically by the events of the year 1492. In Mignolo’s words, as quoted by the authors:

*In this year, the Christian Spanish monarchy re-conquered Islamic Spain expelling Jews and Arabs from the Spanish peninsula while simultaneously ‘discovering’ the Americas and colonizing indigenous peoples. These ‘internal’ and ‘external’ conquests of territories and people not only created an international division of labor of core and periphery, but also constituted the internal and external imagined boundaries of Europe related to the global racial/ethnic hierarchy of the world-system, privileging populations of European origin over the rest. Jews and Arabs became the subaltern internal ‘Others’ within Europe, while indigenous people became the external ‘Others’ of Europe (Mignolo 2000).” (cited in Grosfoguel and Mielants, 2006:2)*

The authors then trace the “long-durée entanglement between Islamophobia and racism,” noting how an originally religious difference between Christianity, Islam, and New World Indian indigenous culture became rearticulated into a racial difference and hierarchy whereby Moslems as a “people with the wrong God” and “New World” Indians as a “people without a God” (Maldonado-Torres, 2006) were separated from the Christian Europeans as “others” and inferiorized into the strata of respectively lower or non-human beings (Dussel 1994). It is this racial othering of Islam in religious form that then metamorphoses into cultural (following the secularizations of Western culture) and more specifically orientalist forms across the following centuries, in terms of confronting a people without civilization, barbaric, exotic, sexist and irrational, merging in subtler and covert forms with new cultural practices of racism in contemporary times when the more overt biological rationalizations of racial stratification and domination could not hold legitimacy in the face of the onslaught of contemporary anti-colonial and civil rights movements. Islamophobia is simply a new word that expresses the latest “organizing

principle” of a longstanding religious, cultural, and orientalist racism toward Islam as an alternative civilizational project.<sup>10</sup>

If we regard capitalist patriarchal coloniality, religious and cultural racism, and orientalism, not as additive but as overlapping and progressively narrowing concentric circles, it becomes clear why the further identification of Islamophobia as epistemic racism takes such a central role in Grosfoguel and Mielants’ analysis of the significance of Islamophobia in maintaining the modern world. Islamophobia, in other words, is most fundamentally and generatively present in the foundations of Western epistemic architecture. A capitalist world-system without a drive to continually produce and reproduce Islamophobia in its epistemic foundations in one or another form would be inconceivable. The emphasis on epistemic racism in the authors’ non-reductive sociological analytical framework allows them to highlight how such underlying epistemic constituents help maintain and reproduce orientalist, cultural, religious, and social/institutional forms of racism:

*Epistemic racism leads to the Orientalization of Islam. This is crucial because Islamophobia as a form of racism is not exclusively a social phenomenon but also an epistemic question. Epistemic racism allows the West to not have to listen to the critical thinking produced by Islamic thinkers on Western global/imperial designs. The thinking coming from non-Western locations is not considered worthy of attention except to represent it as “uncivilized,” “primitive,” “barbarian,” and “backward.” Epistemic racism allows the West to unilaterally decide what is best for Muslim people today and obstruct any possibility for a serious inter-cultural dialogue. Islamophobia as a form of racism against Muslim people is not only manifested in the labor market, education, public sphere, global war against terrorism, or the global economy, but also in the epistemological battleground about the definition of the priorities of the world today. (Grosfoguel and Mielants, 2006:9)*

The significance of the above realization is best captured in the authors’ reference to what Enrique Dussel has characterized as the epistemic racism embedded in Descartes’ “I think, therefore I am.” In Dussel’s words, it is the “I conquer, therefore I am” that implicitly contextualizes the Western mode of knowing based on “objective” rationality whereby the correctness and truthfulness of the Western epistemology is merely presumed as a universal fact, unlocated in and floating above the particular imperial/colonial historicities of time and geographies of space:

---

<sup>10</sup> For a similar view of the significance of orientalism, in particular in regard to Islam, in the rise and maintenance of the modern capitalist world-system see *Islam and the Orientalist World-System* (Samman and Al-Zo’by, 2008).

...[A]s Enrique Dussel (1994), Latin American philosopher of liberation, reminds us, Descartes' ego-cogito ("I think, therefore I am") was preceded by 150 years of the ego-conquiro ("I conquer, therefore I am"). The God-eye view defended by Descartes transferred the attributes of the Christian God to Western men (the gender here is not accidental). But this was only possible from an Imperial Being, that is, from the panoptic gaze of someone who is at the center of the world because he has conquered it....

What is the relevance of this epistemic discussion to Islamophobia? It is from Western hegemonic identity politics and epistemic privilege that the 'rest' of the epistemologies and cosmologies in the world are subalternized as myth, religion and folklore, and that the downgrading of any form of non-Western knowledge occurs. The former leads to epistemic racism, that is, the inferiorization and subalternization of non-Western knowledge, while the latter leads to Orientalism. It is also from this hegemonic epistemic location that Western thinkers produce Orientalism about Islam. The subalternization and inferiorization of Islam were not merely a downgrading of Islam as spirituality, but also as an epistemology. (Grosfoguel and Mielants, 2006:8)

The above theme was more or less further amplified in other contributions<sup>11</sup> in the volume for which the essay by Grosfoguel and Mielants served as an introduction. The latter closed their article by drawing attention to this important insight—as underlined by inspirations drawn from Tlostanova's contribution to the volume—that to counter Islamophobia it is not sufficient to oppose and expose it but to pose alternative, non-Islamophobic, and non-racist epistemic frameworks where alternative inclusive visions of a better world can be cross-culturally and cross-paradigmatically cultivated and practiced. They wrote:

... [I]n "Life in Samarkand" Madina Tlostanova provides us with insight into a potential way out of present dilemmas. Her

---

<sup>11</sup> "Islamophobia/Hispanophobia: The (Re)Configuration of the Racial Imperial/Colonial Matrix" (Mignolo 2006); "No Race to the Swift: Negotiating Racial Identity in Past and Present Eastern Europe" (Boatcă 2006); "How Washington's 'War on Terror' Became Everyone's: Islamophobia and the Impact of September 11 on the Political Terrain of South and Southeast Asia" (Noor 2006); "Militarization, Globalization, and Islamist Social Movements: How Today's Ideology of Islamophobia Fuels Militant Islam" (Reifer 2006); "Muslim Responses to Integration Demands in the Netherlands since 9/11" (Tayob); and "Life in Samarkand: Caucasus and Central Asia vis-à-vis Russia, the West, and Islam" (Tlostanova 2006).

*study of cultural and ethnic hybrids in both Central Asia and the Caucasus, and the concurrent significance of Sufism in the region, in opposition to the binary logics imposed by both the Russian/Soviet Empire on the one hand and the capitalist world-system on the other hand, could very well be an alternative epistemology ignored for too long. (p. 11)*

To sum up, in Grosfoguel and Mielant's view, Islamophobia as a fear of the Islamic other is not new but is a structurally necessary and historically evolving phenomenon in the modern world-system that has taken various forms in entanglement with religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racism. Its function has been to enable imperial rule over the Islamic other by justifications involving purported confrontations with a "people with the wrong god" or "people without a civilization," barbaric, inferior, violent, exotic, sexist, and irrational, whose knowledge is not worthy of serious intellectual consideration.

#### *ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ISLAMOPHILIA: THE JANUS FACES OF THE ORIENTALIST WORLD-SYSTEM*

The conceptual framework as advanced by Grosfoguel and Mielants and briefly summarized above is fruitful in understanding the structural causes and evolving historical forms of Islamophobia in modern times. However, it is important to note three aspects of the perspective that need further reconsideration, clarification and development.

First, it is important to note that just because a civilizational project has subjected another to imperial/colonial subjugation and racial inferiorization does not mean that the subjugated civilizational project itself was devoid of similar tendencies in the first place. The authors themselves write, for instance, "The 'imperial difference' after 1492 is the result of imperial relations between European empires versus Non-European Empires and we will characterize it here as the result of the 'imperial relation'" (p. 3). Or, elsewhere they recognize that "the European Empires' relations with the Islamic Empires turned from an 'imperial relation' into a 'colonial relation' ..." (p. 3). In other words, it is always important not to forget that historical Islam itself was not exempt from having in it tendencies toward imperial and colonial conquest of others. And what do empires do?

Two, the authors themselves recognize historically regressive and oppressive tendencies that associate themselves with Islam. For instance, when considering the case of Tariq Ramadan as a European Muslim subjected to undue harassment and censorship by Western governments, the authors find it necessary to dissociate him as a "moderate reformist European Islamic thinker" who is "critical of Islamic fundamentalism, suicide bombers, lapidation against women, terrorism, etc." (p. 9). In other words, here we have a recognition, again, that, just because a civilizational project is subjected to imperial/colonial subjugation and oppression, this



does not mean that the subjugated civilizational project is uniformly moderate or reactionary but that it contains contradictory and conflicting interpretations and practices of its seemingly singular and unifying ideological identity, as Islam is often taken to be.

Third, and in light of the above two points, it may be fruitful to consider the inter-imperial and inter-civilizational relation not as a simplified and zero-sum master-slave binary in which one side simply rules and subjugates the other but in terms of how the imperial and oppressive tendencies (and, in the same token, subaltern and resistance movements) across the civilizational projects historically engage in complex modes not only of politico-military and economic but also of religious, cultural, aesthetic, and intellectual articulation over time in order to preserve (or promote or transform) their hierarchical class, status, and power positions not only across but also within their own respective civilizational projects. Once we adopt this more complicated lens in exploring the inter-civilizational relations, it becomes evident that the perpetuation of imperial and colonial rule and subjugation has often historically necessitated not a one-sided but a double-sided “stick and carrot” policy on the part of commonly interested dominant socio-political forces and tendencies across civilizational projects.

More specifically, a closer examination of historical record will clearly indicate that the metamorphosis, across the centuries, of an originally religious difference into successive forms of imperial/colonial, religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racism, which has most recently been manifested in the terminological clothing of Islamophobia, in the Western eyes cannot be easily separated from a parallel and also centrally constitutive process that may best be called Islamophilia. Islamophobia and Islamophilia in many ways represent the stick and carrot aspects of a singular imperial/colonial policy in the Western attitude toward the historical Islam and its challenges to the West as both a complementary and alternative, though not necessarily antagonistic, civilizational project.

#### *A. Broadening Our World-Historical Horizons*

Before elaborating further on such a Janus-faced history of Western imperial attitudes toward Islam, it is important to step back and further expand the horizons of the world-historical framework used for understanding (and hopefully transcending) Islamophobia. For this purpose, I think it will help to draw upon a conceptual framework for understanding imperialism in a world-historical (and not just Western/modern) context that I recently advanced in *Review*, the journal of the Fernand Braudel Center (Tamdgidi 2006b).

Therein, I tried to tentatively illustrate, by way of advancing a nonreductive dialectical conception of the history of imperialism in contrast to materialist approaches, both the relative historical validity and the transitory (heuristic) nature of the primacy of economies and their analyses

in world-historical social science. The dialecticity of the conception as proposed allows for politics, culture, and economy to have similarly played primary parts in the rise of distinct forms of imperialism in world history corresponding to ancient, medieval, and modern historical eras across multiple, but increasingly synchronous and convergent, regional trajectories. The nonreductive dialectical mode of analysis reverses and relativizes the taken-for-granted universalistic modes of analysis of imperialism in terms of class, allowing for considerations of political domination, cultural conversion, and economic exploitation as historical forms of deepening imperial practice that violate self-determining modes of human organization and development. Power-, status-, and class-based relations and stratifications are thereby reinterpreted as distinct forms of imperial practice that now assumes a substantively generative position vis-à-vis those structural forms.

I argued that, given the non-synchronous tempo of emergence and development of various ancient civilizations, imperial expansions across civilizations also took place non-synchronously across the globe, adding significant complexity to the trajectory of development of each community in light of the more or less advanced states of development of populations in other regions with which they came in contact through imperial expansion. I further argued that three major forms of imperialism may be distinguished from one another during the long imperial era up to the present: political, cultural, and economic. To be sure, all empires and imperial expansions involve all these three dimensions. I have argued elsewhere for treatment of culture, polity, and economy in terms of part/whole dialectics (Tamdgidi 2007b). The political and the cultural processes must not be conceptualized as being “non-economic” but as integral to it. Indeed, it was the political and cultural preconditions set by precapitalist empires that made possible the modern predominantly economic form of imperialism. What distinguishes the three forms of imperialism from one another is the primary means by which the incorporation of new groups, communities, and regions into the empire is carried out and maintained. In political imperialism, the primary motives are militaristic invasion, control, and domination of other communities and civilizations. In cultural imperialism, the violence of ideological conversion of other communities to one’s own cultural and religious beliefs becomes the key motivating factor. In economic imperialism, the primary motive is the exploitative integration of the natural and human resources and wealth of other communities. The key processes distinguishing the three forms of imperialism are thereby political domination, cultural conversion, and economic exploitation.

We need not uniformly impose a materialist or idealistic logic across the three imperial periods to uncover a universalistic and trans-historical “economic basis” for political or cultural imperialism or a cultural basis for political and economic imperialism or a political basis for cultural and economic imperialism. These distinct forms could exist as developmental

phases of imperialism or even exist contemporaneously within or across clashing empires. The move from outright dominative political modes of imperialism to more subtle cultural and economic modes involves a deepening of the imperial relations of ruling. All aspects may be present, but, in each period, one or another mode of imperialism becomes a predominant mode, casting its hue on other motives. The relative lack of economic development under political and cultural imperialism itself can be explained by the extra-economic determinations of social development during these periods, not vice versa. In contrast, it is the establishment of economic foundations of cultural hegemony and political domination in the modern period that has made possible the deceptive, seemingly autonomous and “sovereign,” cultural and political forms of neocolonialism present in the contemporary period.

In broad world-historical outlines, although political imperialism may be considered to have originated back in 2300 B.C. with the rise of the Akkadian empire, it was in the aftermath of the Indo-Europeans invasions of the south and the rise of the Assyrian empire circa 800 B.C. that the classical period took shape, later reaching its height in the Persian, Hellenic, and Roman empires in west Asia and Europe, Maurya and Han empires in south and east Asia, and the old and new Maya empires in the pre-Columbian Americas—non-synchronously across space. Classical periods entered their structural crises during A.D. 300-500 and were gradually followed by cultural imperialisms of Zoroastrian (Sassanid), Christian (Byzantine), Islamic (Arabic), Hindu (Gupta), Buddhist (Tang and Sung), and pre-Columbian religious empires (Inca, Aztec, and Taltec), which presided over various increasingly synchronous “medieval” periods. The fall of Constantinople in A.D. 1450 ushered a rapid, globally synchronous phase of transition to the modern period characterized by the rise of economic empires originating in Western Europe. The older model of imperialism characterized by the monopolistic drive of a single power increasingly proving to be a failure, through the sheer violence of trial and error, the modern economic empires invented collective imperialism, which became finally and formally established in the mid-twentieth century, after two world wars, with the formal institutionalization of the “United Nations.” This innovation in imperialism, long in the making since the fifteenth century, in effect created the most successful and enduring world-empire in history characterized by a singular economy but of multiple cultures and polities organized in a system of hierarchical core, with peripheral and semi-peripheral “nation-states” (Wallerstein 1979, 1996). By mid-twentieth century, the whole face of the globe became finally integrated into the economic world-system of collective imperialism.

The relevance of the above framework for the subject under consideration is significant. Islam was not itself a homogeneous and monolithic civilizational reality confronting the rising Western civilizational project in the long sixteenth century but one that itself historically contained

contradictory and conflicting tendencies since its very beginnings, including imperial and subaltern tendencies as well as diverse class-, gender-, and ethno-cultural interpretations of the Koran and Prophet's sayings and traditions. Previously (2006), I have noted how it is important to make a distinction between the original religious doctrines and teachings on one hand and the imperial use to which they were put by the emerging empires of the medieval periods on the other. Religion in itself is not a culprit for imperialism, as much as philosophy and law were not so for political imperialism during the classical periods nor science for economic imperialism in the modern period. That these fragmented forms of human knowledge became increasingly split from one another and acquired an ideological character and were thereby substantively and organizationally manipulated and revised to become primary or secondary means of imperial expansion were altogether different processes. As such, they must be distinguished from the reasons for which these world-outlooks were originally invented in ancient civilizations as by-products of the essentially curious, creative, and artful human endeavor.

The point here is to emphasize that, in considering the process through which Islam in the eyes and policies of the West became entangled with colonial, religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racisms in the long durée rise of the "modern/colonial patriarchal/capitalist world-system," we need not ignore the internal complexity, heterogeneity, and hierarchical cartography of Islam as not simply a civilizational but also an imperial project, albeit in its cultural (in contrast to Western economic) imperial form bent on forceful (though not necessarily always violent) cultural-religious conversion of others. And in doing so, we need not attribute all that was ushered by Islam since its inception with an imperial motive since the complexity of Islam, like any other civilizational project, can hardly be contained in a singular, all positive or all negative, logical model. The relevance of this more complex understanding of Islam becomes more significant if we alternatively ask the question what the contacts with the emerging and then rising Western imperial project and the latter's colonialist designs and expeditions did to the development or rather under- and/or over-development of one or another tendency in the complex cartography of the really existing historical Islam during the long durée of successive Western incorporative efforts and imperial/colonial aggressions.

### *B. Also Considering Islamophilia*

Islamophobia and Islamophilia are two sides of the West's orientalist attitude toward Islam. Both signify and serve, based on false and manipulative (intentioned or not) premises, to erect misrepresentative views of the reality of Islam so as to legitimate its cooptation by coercion or consent. They are two Janus faced policies that serve to misrepresent and misshape the historical Islam in favor of the West's short-term or long-term economic, geo-political, cultural and even aesthetic interests.

What would have been the really existing Islam like if the West did not have, as recently as in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a deepening strategic interest in the oil and energy resources of the region precipitating modes of economic, politico-military, and cultural policies that seek to secure a strategic and long-lasting base among an ultraconservative Saudi leadership in the geo-spiritual heart of Islam who wields the sword of an outdated and static view of Islam and of “Islamic” behavior in domestic and global affairs? Who would have financially and politically aided the Moslem “freedom fighters” in Afghanistan against the Soviet aggression—as did the Saudi government and the repressive Pakistani regime under Zia-ul-Haq (which presided over the “radical” Islamization of Pakistan)—and how would the spiritual heart of Islam been represented differently had it not been possible to strengthen, through long-term politico-military treaties, the ultra-orthodox face of Islam? What would the heart, and the face, of Islam be like, if the West had not conducted significant, covert and overt, direct or indirect, interference in the lives of Muslims in the Middle East and beyond? What would the heart and face of Islam be like if it did not have to cope and deal, amid unrelenting violence and multiple wars, with the occupation of Palestinian lands and subjugation of a whole people via the agency of the last remaining settler-colonial state that is Israel? What would have been the extent of economic prosperity, cultural vitality, formal education and political visions and sensibilities of Moslems as a whole (and not limited to a select few) if the Moslem population had not been subjected to decades, if not centuries, of direct or indirect colonial rule and imperial designs aided by local regimes perpetuating outdated monarchic (Jordan, Saudi Arabia) or de facto dictatorial (Egypt) administrative forms of government and political rule?

Islamophilia is the other side of the Western orientalist attitude toward Islam, seeking to one-sidedly amplify, strengthen, and reinforce those elements and agencies in Islam that best suit the economic interests, political security, and cultural, moral, philosophical, scientific, and aesthetic interests of the West and its orientalist looking glass self. Bush’s Islamophilia toward Saudi rulers who also pursue “Middle Age” policies domestically with respect to, for instance, women may appear to sharply contrast with his and his wife’s “dedication” to the liberation of women in Afghanistan. But the two policies are two sides of the same attitude on the part of the West that helps preserve, strengthen, and reinforce the same misguided and misrepresentative trends in, for instance, the realm of gender relations in Islam. With one hand, the West plants the seeds of cultural ultraconservatism that it claims to be seeking to eradicate and liberate with the other hand. This Janus faced carrot and stick policy that helps deform Islam underlies and, in fact, justifies in the imperial mind the continuation and perpetuation of the status quo in the West’s foreign policy toward Islam and helps fuel and engender both Islamophobic and Islamophilic attitudes in Western media and wider Western public opinion.



It is the lack of historical perspective and critical sociological imagination on the part of the lay Western population, fueled by short-term memory and amnesia perpetuated by the Western media, that mischaracterizes the problems of Islam as if they separately and independently evolved alongside a West that pretends it has had nothing to do with the rise of “backwardness” and “ignorance” among Moslems. At the very same time that Western media self-righteously boast at ridiculing Islamic religious beliefs for the higher cause and in the higher interest of defending freedoms of speech, they ignore the extent to which their governments for decades sought to install or desperately secure the lives and regimes of one or another regional ally (read dictatorship) in Shah’s Iran, Saddam’s Iraq, etc., regimes that did their utmost to violate human rights and freedoms of speech amid their Moslem subjects.

In the realm of art and literature, it is difficult to deny the extent to which the works of Islamic thinkers have been subjected, albeit with good intentions, to the mistranslation and misrepresentations at the hand of Western writers. A case in point may be that of how the quatrains of Omar Khayyam were received by the West. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her famous article ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ (1988) noted how “writers like Edward FitzGerald, the ‘translator’ of the Rubayyat of Omar Khayyam ... helped to construct a certain picture of the Oriental woman through the supposed ‘objectivity’ of translation” (1994 [1988]: 102). The key point regarding the relevance of Khayyam to the argument advanced here is that it helps to illustrate well the juxtaposition of an oriental vs. an authentic representation of his thought. Just because a FitzGerald mistranslated Khayyam and helped to construct an orientalist view of his poetry, his philosophy, and in fact of his spirituality and of the “East,” does not mean that an authentic representation of Khayyam’s thought is not warranted or possible. The most telling, if not degrading by-product of the introduction of Omar Khayyam to the world through FitzGerald, has been the notion that Khayyam’s culture is incapable of representing itself through producing verse translations of its own to convey the beauty and subtlety of his quatrains, that his culture needs a FitzGerald to give the West a taste of Khayyam in English because his culture cannot, that his culture cannot represent itself, that it must be represented.<sup>12</sup>

A similar example most recently has been the way in which Rumi’s mystical poetry has been received and “translated” by Western authors. Coleman Barks does not even pretend to have known Persian when translating Rumi and has based much of his translations on secondary translations of yet other Westerners. And yet, he and the mass of the audience that has nevertheless found some glimmer of Rumi’s message amid Barks’s “abbreviated” translations takes his translations as the most genuine

---

<sup>12</sup> For an elaboration on this theme see my “Orientalist and Liberating Discourses of East-West Difference: Revisiting Edward Said and the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam” (2005).



representative of Rumi's thoughts and intentions. In his words, for instance, Rumi's love of God turns into:

*Barks:*

*"If you don't have a woman that lives with you,  
why aren't you looking? If you have one, why aren't  
you satisfied?"*

*Arberry's original translation (which Barks used):*

*"If you have no beloved,  
why do you not seek one. And if you have attained the  
Beloved, why do you not rejoice?"<sup>13</sup>*

The extent to which what the West hates and loves about Islam is a fabrication of its own imagination rather than based on a sound, direct, and in-depth understanding of Islamic culture and values cannot be so easily measured as in the translation rendered above. Even when the mistranslation and misrepresentation is acknowledged, even with all good intentions, by a FitzGerald himself and those who have studied and compared his translations with the quatrains in the original, the Islamophobia or Islamophilia internal to the subjectivities of Moslems themselves, especially those educated and socialized amid Western culture also shape the outcome of the ensued civilizational dialogue. The realities that generate Islamophobia and Islamophilia, while being strongly generated, shaped, or rather misshaped, by decades if not centuries of Western imperial policy and colonization, have also penetrated the really existing Islam and been reified to the extent that distortions that were originally strongly precipitated due to imperial Western imaginations and policies now appear as if they are essential attributes of Islam—hence generating Islamophobic and/or Islamophilic reactions in Western eyes. Said put this misfortune quite aptly in 1980:

*For the first time in history (for the first time, that is, on such a scale) the Islamic world may be said to be learning about itself in part by means of images, histories and information manufactured in the West. If one adds to this the fact that students and scholars in the Islamic world are still dependent upon U.S. and European libraries and institutions of learning for what now passes as Middle Eastern studies (consider, for example, that there isn't a single first-rate, usable library of*

---

<sup>13</sup> Quoted from the message of "Ron" as found in <http://rumi.tribe.net/thread/320bcd73-b473-47cc-a45f-d14d9c285132>. Visit the site for a heated discussion of this subject among Rumi enthusiasts.

*Arabic material in the entire Islamic world), plus the fact that English is a world language in a way that Arabic isn't, plus the fact that for its elite the Islamic world is now producing a managerial class of basically subordinate natives who are indebted for their economies, their defense establishments and for their political ideas to the worldwide consumer-market system controlled by the West—one gets an accurate, although extremely depressing, picture of what the media revolution (serving a small segment of the societies that produce it) has done to Islam. (p. 490)*

### *C. Beyond Islamophobia and Islamophilia: Critical Self-Reflexivity as an Essential Insight from Sufism*

*The Prophet of Islam said, "Whosoever knows his self, knows his Lord"; That is, self-knowledge leads to knowledge of the Divine. Sufism takes this saying (hadith) very seriously and also puts it into practice. It provides, within the spiritual universe of the Islamic tradition, the light necessary to illuminate the dark corners of our soul and the keys to open the doors to the hidden recesses of our being so that we can journey within and know ourselves, this knowledge leading ultimately to the knowledge of God, who resides in our heart/center. (Nasr, 2007:5)*

Perhaps one way to seek alternative epistemologies to global knowledge and transformation would be to scrutinize the modality of antisystemic behavior gripping many social movements in the modern historical period and seek innovative "othersystemic"<sup>14</sup> and utopystic<sup>15</sup> ways out of the global crisis that are more concerned with building the alternative worlds in the here and now than posing them as goals to be achieved in the future.

The world to be known and transformed is not just 'out there' but 'in here' as well, in the intricate modes of thinking, feeling, sensing, relating, processing, and acting to which all of us have been more or less habituated as a result of the blind workings of what Grosfoguel and Mielants aptly call the "modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system." The Anzaldúan proposal for the simultaneity of self and global transformation (Anzaldúa

---

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Mohammad H. Tamdgidi, "Open the *Antisystemic Movements: The Book, the Concept, and the Reality.*" *Review* (Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center), XXIV, 2, summer 2001, 299-336.

<sup>15</sup>Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. Forthcoming. "I Change Myself, I Change the World': Anzaldúa's Sociological Imagination in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza.*" *Humanity and Society*. See also my *Advancing Utopistics: The Three Component Parts and Errors of Marxism* (Paradigm Publishers, 2007).

1987; cf. Tamdgidi, forthcoming), her innovative alchemy of self and world transformation as a way out of the global crisis, has intimate affinities with the Sufi and esoteric spiritual ways of changing the world through radical self-knowledge and inner transformation. For sure, Sufi ways of change may also learn from our world social forums to not limit the scope of knowing and transformative behavior to the intrapersonal landscapes—expanding the realm of selfhood to that of the collective global community.

Beyond Islamophobia and Islamophilia, the sociology of self-knowledge as advanced in my work (Tamdgidi 2002, 2002-, 2007a) seeks to draw attention to the voices and traditions of esotericism and mysticism, including those in Islam, that have for millennia also agonized over the human condition and sought ways of bringing the alienated human “reeds” (as Rumi would have it) together as parts of a common humanity. Islamophobes cannot ignore the voices of Rumi, of Hafiz, of Jami, of Sa’di, and of Khayyam, among many others, arising from the landscapes of mystical Islam, voices that for millennia have attracted the love and admiration and inspiration of the world to the poignancy of their logic and epistemology and the poetic nature of their transformative praxes across generations. As Said observed,

*To dispel the myths and stereotypes of Orientalism, the world as a whole has to be given an opportunity to see Moslems and Orientals producing a different form of history, a new kind of sociology, a new cultural awareness: in short, the relatively modest goal of writing a new form of history, investigating the Islamicate world and its many different societies with a genuine seriousness of purpose and a love of truth. (1980:491)*

#### REVISITING THE RUNNYMEDE DEFINITION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN LIGHT OF ISLAMOPHILIA

In light of the above analysis and the fact that the term “Islamophilia” has been used by those critical of the term “Islamophobia” in general and especially of the definitional framework offered by the Runnymede Report’s to express their dissatisfaction with the term, I find it necessary to return to the controversy over the definitions of the term(s).

While I consider the first set of definitions labeled as “closed views of Islam” and specifically aimed at defining “Islamophobia” as warranted with perhaps a few adjustments, the second set of “open views of Islam” may be misunderstood and may leave the term “Islamophobia,” by association, open to criticism and accusations of “Islamophilia”—the latter term requiring its own clarification, of course.

Let me begin with certain adjustments to the list of “closed views of Islam” as advanced by the Runnymede Report. I propose making the following changes to the definitional framework, identified in bold:

1. Islam **as a whole** [is] seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities.
2. Islam **as a whole** [is] seen as separate and other—(a) not having any aims or values in common with other cultures (b) not affected by them (c) not influencing them.
3. Islam **as a whole** [is] seen as inferior to the West—barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist.
4. Islam **as a whole** [is] seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in ‘a clash of civilisations’.
5. Islam **as a whole** [is] seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage.
6. Criticisms made by Islam of ‘the West’ [are] rejected out of hand.
7. Hostility towards Islam [is] used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
8. Anti-Muslim hostility [is] accepted as natural and ‘normal’.

The need for the above adjustment becomes clear when we move on to reconsider the alternative list of “open views of Islam” as offered in the Runnymede Report. To expedite the comparative considerations, I will provide adjustments and commentaries to the second list as follows (alternative formulations are offered in bold in brackets, while further explanations are provided in italics, when needed):

1. Islam [is] seen as diverse and progressive, with internal differences, debates and development. [**Islam is seen as containing diverse, contradictory interpretations and traditions that may offer a spectrum of progressive to conservative socio-political tendencies, some displaying dynamic, self-critical, and self-transformative attitudes while others remaining static, dogmatic, and unresponsive to new realities**]. *The problem with the existing definition is that it falls into the same trap the “closed views of Islam” list warns against; it portrays Islam as a whole as being progressive, as if all its diverse tendencies are equally open to debates and to inner dynamic development, to self-criticism and self-transformation; like any other weltanschauung, Islam contains contradictory tendencies and trends, and as such it is not to be singled out to be any different than others.*
2. Islam [is] seen as interdependent with other faiths and cultures—(a) having certain shared values and aims (b) affected by them (c) enriching them. [**Diverse interpretations, traditions, and sociopolitical tendencies in Islam may display different degrees of openness to interdependence and sharing of values and aims with other faiths and cultures, each trend’s responsiveness (ranging from accommodation to rejection) and strength varying**

depending on changing social-historical (economic, cultural, and political) conditions, interests, and forces both internal and external to the Islamic community].

3. Islam [is] seen as distinctively different, but not deficient, and as equally worthy of respect. [The extent to which Islam is regarded as distinctively different, promising or deficient, or worthy of respect depends on which interpretations, traditions, and sociopolitical tendencies in Islam are under consideration and which social agency outside the Islamic community is making such assessments and judgments; some may be highly civilized, rational, advanced, and egalitarian; others may be fundamentalist, barbaric, irrational, primitive, and sexist, keeping in mind that such a spectrum of tendencies may have been shaped and distorted by forces both internal and external to the Islamic community].
4. Islam [is] seen as an actual or potential partner in joint cooperative enterprises and in the solution of shared problems. [As in any other world cultures, the Islamic community may contain tendencies that are violent, aggressive, threatening, terrorist, and civilizationally clashing and tendencies that are constructively critical-minded, peaceful, confined, friendly, compassionate, and civilizationally contributive and dynamic, the range in the spectrum being itself subject to the extent to which non-Islamic communities display and reciprocate similar tendencies and attitudes].
5. Islam [is] seen as a genuine religious faith, practised sincerely by its adherents. [Islam is a genuine religious faith that, like in any other faiths, may be practiced more or less sincerely by its adherents; diverse tendencies in Islam may display differing degrees of actual or potential partnership on the one hand or politico-ideological or militaristic competitiveness on the other, partly in response to the adoption of similar differing attitudes toward them by non-Islamic trends and tendencies in other communities; some may actively seek or find it reluctantly necessary to seek politico-military solutions to the problems as a matter of self-defense and survival when similar approaches are adopted and imposed on the situation by non-Islamic social forces].
6. Criticisms [by Islam] of 'the West' and other cultures are considered and debated. [Islam's diverse tendencies may display differing degrees of criticism or accommodation of the West or other traditions or of self-criticism in intracommunal, regional, or global affairs, and open views of Islam would be those that are open to consideration and debate of such self/criticisms].

7. Debates and disagreements with Islam do not diminish efforts to combat discrimination and exclusion. **[Moslems may not only be subjected to discrimination and exclusion, which are unwarranted simply because of debates and disagreements with one or another trends in Islam, but some Moslems associated with particular trends in Islam may also practice discrimination and exclusion because of intracommunal debates and disagreements or as a result of debates initiated or disagreements expressed by those outside the Islamic community; at the same time, there may be other Islamic tendencies that self-critically eschew such discriminations and exclusions practiced by other Moslems and, thereby, condemn and seek to end them].**
8. Critical views of Islam are themselves subjected to critique, lest they be inaccurate and unfair. **[Both the critical views of Islam by others and Islamic views of others by Moslems are open to debate and reciprocal scrutiny, and the extent of inaccuracy and unfairness of such criticism are matters to be determined and revealed in the course of debate and mutually constructive dialogue].**

Short of the above clarifications, I think one may regard the Runnymede Report's existing definition of Islamophobia as an inadvertent definitional framework for Islamophilia instead, though in its more sophisticated expressions. Runnymede Trust's "open views of Islam" unfortunately falls in the trap of regarding Islam monolithically, in turn as being characterized by one or another trait, and does not adequately express the complex heterogeneity of a historical phenomenon whose contradictory interpretations, traditions, and sociopolitical trends have been shaped and has in turn been shaped, as in the case of any world tradition, by other world-historical forces. The irony here is that such an effort to remedy the harms caused by Islamophobia seems to have been made in order to avoid negative stereotyping of Islam while acknowledgment of the troubling interpretations, traditions, and sociopolitical trends in Islam, or at least their continued strength and survival, may have had as much to do with the continuation of a Janus-faced global imperial policy that finds it in its short-term, if not long-term, strategic interest to amplify and reinforce those very troubling agencies in Islam, agencies that in the ever-changing ebb and flow of geopolitics metamorphose back and forth between civilized friend and barbarian foe identities. Islamophilia and Islamophobia are strange bedfellows in the Western mind.

The purpose in the above, revised "open views of Islam" is to move away from a monolithic view of Islam that is rightly rejected as a cornerstone of Islamophobia as defined in Runnymede Report's own definition. Here, I have deconstructed "Islamophobia" and revealed a somewhat biased "Islamophilic" view of Islam contained in Runnymede



Report's second, "open views of Islam" list, an attitude that also oversimplifies and distorts the tradition of Islam away from its complex heterogeneity and in favor of a monolithic view that is simplistically portrayed as being all positive. Such simplifications do not serve well the cause of understanding and transcending Islamophobia and lend themselves to unwarranted criticism from conservative quarters and social forces that readily cite the troubling tendencies in Islam as proofs for the monolithic regard and dismissals of Islam as a whole. These conservative, and at times even liberal, critiques often ignore or hide the fact that many such troubling tendencies of Islam may not be due to intra-generated but to externally and imperially imposed conditions amid decades and centuries of Western imperial and colonial designs and policies toward Islam. Critiques of the Runnymede Report often dismiss the imperial world-historical context within which various tendencies in Islam have emerged and, by separating and othering Islam as a closed box, perpetuate the fallacy of attributing all its faults and wrongs to Islam alone, not to mention the fact that often the very racial bias displayed toward Islam often takes the standard procedure of simplistically attributing the troubling nature of one or another event or tendency in Islam to the "nature" of Islam as a whole in an essentialist and ahistorical manner. A terrorist act by or tendency in a self-proclaimed offshoot of Islam, itself perpetuated and strengthened by an imperial policy under earlier circumstances where support for it was geopolitically expedient, is suddenly elevated as a standard-bearer of what Islam as whole is and is about.

The most long-term damage done to Islam by Islamophobia and Islamophilia, however, may be what one may not readily expect and that is the extent to which the common threat faced by Moslems are translated into a lack of self-critical thinking and attitude among Moslems themselves. Here is a pertinent observation by a Moslem scholar, sympathetically quoting another observer:

*The most subtle and, for Muslims, perilous consequence of Islamophobic actions," a Muslim scholar has observed, "is the silencing of self-criticism and the slide into defending the indefensible. Muslims decline to be openly critical of fellow Muslims, their ideas, activities and rhetoric in mixed company, lest this be seen as giving aid and comfort to the extensive forces of condemnation. Brotherhood, fellow feeling, sisterhood are genuine and authentic reflexes of Islam. But Islam is supremely a critical, reasoning and ethical framework... [It] or rather ought not to be manipulated into 'my fellow Muslims right or wrong'." The writer goes on to add that Islamophobia provides "the perfect rationale for modern Muslims to become reactive, addicted to a culture of complaint and blame that serves only to increase the powerlessness, impotence and frustration of being a Muslim.*

(Imam Dr. Abduljalil Sajid, 2005:34-35, quoting from Davies, 2002)

### CONCLUSION

One does not have to acknowledge the danger of Islamophobia for fear of being accused of Islamophilia. Nor should one abandon being critical of Islamophilia in fear of being accused of Islamophobia. Islamophobia and Islamophilia are woven of similar threads in the sense that they both seek to oversimplify and essentialize Islam as a civilizational project for being entirely bad or good. What is to be done away with is the binary logic feeding such argumentations. One can be critical of both Islamophobia and Islamophilia and be also critical of centuries of imperial policies that have helped distort the realities of historical Islam.

What is to be confronted and questioned head on is the common premises displayed in both tendencies that civilizational projects are monolithically good or bad, right or wrong. The West prides itself for being self-critical, and dynamic as a result, but it seeks to silence the views of those who regard other civilizational projects, Islam included, to be characterized by the same complexities and contradictory tendencies from which the West is itself not exempt. It is this presumption of presumed uniformity and monolithic heterogeneity that the West falsely attributes to its colonial others and then blames them for. Islamophobia and Islamophilia, thereby, are aspects of the West's epistemic racism and its own looking glass self projected upon colonized subjects as if it points to their essential attributes.

Recent examples of support for and then the overthrow of Saddam and the original support for and the current war against Afghani "freedom fighters" metamorphosed into Al-Qaeda suggest how the contemporary political realities of Islam that engender Islamophobic and Islamophilic reactions in Western eyes are far from independent processes and phenomena that the West merely reacts to. They are the very byproducts of its imperial policies, for empires and Bin-Ladins (and Saddams) are two faces of the same actual and latent imperial coin. The West regards itself as a beauty, desperately seeking to respectively adorn and cleanse the Janus-faced images of the beauty and the beast on the wall of Islam, not realizing that the wall is a mirror and both reflected images of the beauty and the beast on the wall ever cross-morphing by-products of its own orientalist imperial adventures across modern world-history.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank the organizer Dr. Hatem Bazian, and U.C. Berkeley's Center for Race and Gender and its director Dr. Evelyn Nankoe Glenn, along with the support from Dr. Ramon Grosfoguel for the invitation and opportunity to participate in the conference for which an earlier version of this paper was written.

## REFERENCES

- Anzaldúa, Gloria E. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Bazian, Hatem. 2007. "Deconstructing Islamophobia: Constructing the Other." *Faultlines: News and Notes from the Center for Race and Gender*. Fall. Pages 12, 14.
- Boatcă, Manuela. 2006. "No Race to the Swift: Negotiating Racial Identity in Past and Present Eastern Europe." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):91-104.
- Dussel, Enrique. 1994. *1492: El Encubrimiento del Otro. Hacia el origen del "mito de la modernidad."* La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Dussel, Enrique. 2002. "World-System and "Trans"-Modernity." *Nepantla: Views from South* 3(2):221.
- Dussel, Enrique. 2004. "Deconstruction of the Concept of "Tolerance": From Intolerance to Solidarity." *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory* 11(3):326-333.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón and Ana Margarita Cervantes-Rodríguez, eds. 2002. *The Modern/Colonial Capitalist World-System in the Twentieth Century: Global Processes, Antisystemic Movements, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2006. "World-Systems Analysis in the Context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality." *REVIEW* XXIX(2):167-87.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2007. "The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political Economy Paradigms." *Cultural Studies* 21(2-3/March-May):211-223.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón and Eric Mielants. 2006. "The Long-Durée Entanglement Between Islamophobia and Racism in the Modern/Colonial Capitalist/Patriarchal World-System: An Introduction." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):1-12.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón (guest co-editor), Eric Mielants (guest co-editor), Mohammad H. Tamdgidi (journal editor). 2006. "Othering Islam: Proceedings of the International Conference on "The Post-September 11 New Ethnic/Racial Configurations in Europe and the United States: The Case of Islamophobia" (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris, France, June 2-3, 2006)." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* V(1).
- Hopkins, Terence K., Immanuel Wallerstein, and associates. 1982. *World-Systems Analysis: Theory and Methodology*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2004. "The topology of being and the geopolitics of knowledge." *City* 8(1):29-56.

- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2006. "Reconciliation as a Contested Future: Decolonization as Project or Beyond the Paradigm of War." In *Reconciliation: Nations and Churches in Latin America*. Edited by Iain S. Maclean. London: Ashgate.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2000. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Border Thinking and Subaltern Knowledge*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2006. "Islamophobia/Hispanophobia: The (Re)Configuration of the Racial Imperial/Colonial Matrix." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):13-28.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2007. "From Central Asia to the Caucasus and Anatolia: transcultural subjectivity and de-colonial thinking." *Postcolonial Studies* 10(1):111-120.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. 2007. *The Garden of Truth: The Vision and Promise of Sufism, Islam's Mystical Tradition*. New York: HarperOne (A Division of HarperCollinsPublishers).
- Noor, Farish A. 2006. "How Washington's 'War on Terror' Became Everyone's: Islamophobia and the Impact of September 11 on the Political Terrain of South and Southeast Asia." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):29-50.
- Quijano, Anibal. 2000. "Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America." *International Sociology* 15(2):215-232.
- Reifer, Thomas Ehrlich. 2006. "Militarization, Globalization, and Islamist Social Movements: How Today's Ideology of Islamophobia Fuels Militant Islam." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):51-72.
- Said, Edward W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Said, Edward W. 1980. "Islam Through Western Eyes." *Nation* 230(16):488-492.
- Sajid, Abdujilil. 2005. "Islamophobia: A New Word for an Old Fear." *Palestine - Israel Journal of Politics, Economics & Culture* 12(2):31-40.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1994 [1988]. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Pp. 66-111 in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, edited and introduced by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2001. "Open the Antisystemic Movements: The Book, the Concept, and the Reality." *Review*, XXIV, 2, summer, 299-336.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad-Hosseini. 2002. "Mysticism and Utopia: Towards the Sociology of Self-Knowledge and Human Architecture (A Study in Marx, Gurdjieff, and Mannheim)." Ph.D. Dissertation, State University of New York at Binghamton.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad-Hosseini. 2002-. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* (ISSN 1540-5699).

- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2005. "Orientalist and Liberating Discourses of East-West Difference: Revisiting Edward Said and the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam." *Discourse of Sociological Practice*, Vol. 7, Issues 1&2, Spring/ Fall, 187-201.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2006a. "Editor's Note: Probing Islamophobia." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):VII-XI.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2006b. "Toward a Dialectical Conception of Imperiality: The Transitory (Heuristic) Nature of the Primacy of Analyses of Economies in World-Historical Social Science." *Review (Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center)*, XXIX, 4, 291-328.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2007a. "Abu Ghraib as a Microcosm: The Strange Face of Empire as a Lived Prison." *Sociological Spectrum*, 27: 29-55.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2007b. *Advancing Utopistics: The Three Component Parts and Errors of Marxism*. Boulder, Colorado: Paradigm Publishers.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. 2008. "From Utopistics to Utopistics: Integrative Reflections on Potential Contributions of Mysticism to World-Systems Analyses and Praxes of Historical Alternatives." Pp. 202-219 In *Islam and the Orientalist World-System*, co-edited by Khaldoun Samman and Mazhar Al-Zo'by. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Tamdgidi, Mohammad H. Forthcoming. "'I Change Myself, I Change the World': Anzaldúa's Sociological Imagination in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*." *Humanity and Society*.
- Tayob, Abdulkader. 2006. "Muslim Responses to Integration Demands in the Netherlands since 9/11." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):73-90.
- Tlostanova, Madina. 2006. "Life in Samarkand: Caucasus and Central Asia vis-à-vis Russia, the West, and Islam." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5(1):105-116.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1979. *The Capitalist World-Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

# ***Common Heritage, Uncommon Fear: Islamophobia in the United States and British India, 1687-1947***

**Peter Gottschalk**

*Wesleyan University*

**Gabriel Greenberg**

*University of California, Los Angeles*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 82-106.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.



# *Common Heritage, Uncommon Fear: Islamophobia in the United States and British India, 1687-1947*

**Peter Gottschalk**

*Wesleyan University*

**Gabriel Greenberg**

*University of California, Los Angeles*

When confronted with the commonality of Islamophobic themes of the fanatic Muslim man, the oppressed Muslim woman, and an intolerant Islamic religion, defenders of these views often respond that their prevalence must reflect their truth. After all, they argue, all stereotypes have some seed of truth. The ironclad quality of this tautology – that past repetition of an allegation is justification for its reiteration – recommends a different tack in refutation. An historical evaluation of these claims that demonstrates their persistence, despite historical changes, helps demonstrate how the core of American and British Islamophobia derives from received truisms that have established – and continue to establish – basic expectations about how Muslims behave. These expectations shape how information about Muslims is interpreted so that what fails to fit within this frame of reference (e.g., Muslim tolerance, nonviolent Muslim protest) often is overlooked:

*If a Mohammedan, Turk, Egyptian, Syrian or African commits a crime the newspaper reports do not tell us that it was committed by a Turk, an Egyptian, a Syrian or an African, but by a Mohammedan. If an Irishman, an Italian, a Spaniard or a German commits a crime in the United States we do not say that it was committed by a Catholic, a Methodist or a Baptist, nor even a Christian; we designate the man by his nationality.<sup>1</sup>*

Perhaps the only thing that exceeds the accuracy of Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb's observation is the surprise that this New Yorker made it more than a century ago. Such a comment would not seem out of place in the United States or Great Britain following the attacks of 9/11 and 7/7. Americans and Britons have struggled not only with domestic Islamist violence but also with the question of how to respond, in terms of both national defense and community engagement. Since the 2001 attacks, non-

---

<sup>1</sup> John Wesley Hanson, *The World's Congress of Religions: The Addresses and Papers Delivered Before the Parliament, and an Abstract of the Congresses Held in the Art Institute, Chicago, Aug. 25 to Oct. 15, 1893, Under the Auspices of the World's Columbian Exposition*. Chicago: Monarch Book, 1894. pp. 523-524.

Muslim Americans have crowded classrooms to learn about Islam while churches and synagogues invite Muslim speakers to conversations. Nevertheless, Muslims have suffered heightened suspicion in both countries, drawing worried looks, enduring invasive scrutiny, and being removed from airliners. Efforts to combat anti-Muslim stereotypes are recent and commonly focus only on news and entertainment media representations. Indeed, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term *Islamophobia* does not predate 1975. But the fact that Webb's criticism – too often, even if decreasingly, appropriate in the US and UK of today – dates from so long ago demonstrates that Anglo-American Islamophobia is not new.

An historical exploration of British and American literature between 1690 and 1947 demonstrates the roots and qualities of Islamophobia that Britons and Americans have shared. Meanwhile significant differences between the perspectives found in the two countries demonstrate how these were fashioned by differing concerns about their own societies. In order to emphasize this difference, we choose to compare American views of Muslims with those found among Britons who had lived in India. In the latter context, predominantly white Christian Britons found themselves a minority in a land once ruled by successive Muslim rulers who left impressive vestiges of their once mighty empires. As a ruling elite, Britons had to adapt their Islamophobic inheritance to the exigencies of governing tens of millions of Muslims. In the United States, engagements with Muslims appeared to be a matter of international affairs alone, "Mohammedans" representing an "other" far more distant than the Jews, Catholics, and other religious minorities who lived among the Protestant majority.

Before beginning, we need to outline the parameters of this study. First, by "Islamophobia" we refer to a largely unwarranted social anxiety about Islam and Muslims. Much more could be said about British and American stereotypes about Muslims. Other groups have also suffered negative stereotypes in these societies, but few communities have been perceived as so threatening. Hence, our argument here focuses only on the features of Muslims that have evoked such fear among the majority without exploring many of the other accusations about Muslims – such as their misogyny, their opposition to modernity, their commitment to a sensual religion, and their association with specific races. Other essays in this collection deal with these important issues, as does our previous work.<sup>2</sup>

Second, some might argue that American concerns about certain threats (e.g., the Barbary pirates) did not focus on Islam at all. We agree that, in certain confrontations, American representations may have fixed primarily on the race, ethnicity, and/or nation of an antagonistic group that happened to be Muslim. However, even such depictions almost invariably included Islamophobic inflections that proved Islam to be a damning quality

---

<sup>2</sup> Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg, *Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

of that group. For instance, the Barbary pirates might be “Arabs” but that included – if it was not exacerbated by – the unfortunate quality of being Muslim as well. Meanwhile, missionary literature continually reinforced the supposedly inherent conflict between Islam and Christianity. Third, we note that a focus on British perspectives in India should not suggest that South Asians did not have their own views, that they did not differ from Britons’, or that they simply subsumed their understandings to British ones. Earlier scholarship has demonstrated the significant and changing dynamics of interaction and representation between many of the myriad groups of the subcontinent both preceding and during British rule. However, our endeavor to track the shared heritage and divergent expressions of Anglo-American Islamophobia mandates the exclusion of these voices.

### THE ANGLO-AMERICAN HERITAGE

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, no one influenced British and American attitudes toward Islam more than Humphrey Prideaux. In 1697, this Anglican theologian published his seminal book on the topic, *The True Nature of Imposture Fully Display'd in the Life of Mahomet*. The book’s popularity led to eight editions in twenty-five years with copies finding their way to the American colonies as early as 1746.<sup>3</sup> Although the volume’s central thesis that a self-serving Muhammad intentionally deceived his followers by masquerading as a prophet had long existed in Europe, his work made it commonplace.<sup>4</sup> Originally, Prideaux sought to write a history of Constantinople’s fall, but, overwhelmed by a concern for what he perceived as British indifference to religion, he narrated Muhammad’s biography instead. The author highlighted the so-called prophet’s fraud, tyranny, and fanaticism<sup>5</sup> in order to demonstrate the qualities of a *real* impostor and counter deist claims of Christianity’s imposture.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, a section addressing deist claims took up half the original book’s length. By the end of the eighteenth century, two American publishers released new editions to an audience shaped by revolution and religious schisms both at home and in France. The publisher of the second American edition sought to address the twin hazards of centralized government and oppressing dissent and omitted altogether the section devoted to the deist “apostacy” that so motivated Prideaux. To the editor, John Adams was the real threat, a

<sup>3</sup> Thomas S. Kidd, *American Christians and Islam: Evangelical Culture and Muslims from the Colonial Period to the Age of Terrorism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. pp. 6, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas S. Kidd, “‘Is It Worse to Follow Mahomet than the Devil?’ Early American Uses of Islam” in *Church History*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (December 2003), pp. 773.

<sup>5</sup> Robert J. Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> Humphrey Prideaux, *The True Nature of Imposture Fully Display'd in the Life of Mahomet: With a Discourse Annex'd for the Vindication of Christianity from this Charge: Offered to the Consideration of the Deists of the Present Age*. 8th edition. London: E. Curll, 1723. pp. iii-viii.

modern Muhammad.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the same denigrations of Muhammad were adapted to critique different Anglo-American situations over the course of a century.

Continental views also influenced British and American perspectives. The French *philosophe* Voltaire intended his 1742 play, *Le fanatisme ou Mahomet le Prophete*, as both a warning against religious intolerance and praise of secular humanism. Clergyman James Miller translated Voltaire's work into English in a manner that supported the secular humanism theme while using the image of the lust-filled Mahomet to criticize fanaticism and the abuse of power. In England, it was reprinted annually between 1745 and 1777, while the play premiered in New York and Philadelphia in 1780 and 1796, respectively.<sup>8</sup>

These two early examples demonstrate three significant dimensions of Anglo-American Islamophobia that would be rehearsed repeatedly over succeeding centuries. First, depictions of Muslims and of the final Islamic prophet, in particular, often served as a foil serving social critiques of British and American domestic issues entirely unconnected to Islam. Just in the various editions of the two influential examples noted above, depictions of Muhammad's life aided endeavors to warn Britons and Americans against deism, federalism, political tyranny, religious apathy, and religious zealotry.

Second, the perception of Muslims and Islam as a threat pervaded so broadly that even the most ardent secularists and Christians (these groups were not mutually exclusive) could utilize them as foils serving quite divergent agendas. Prideaux saw Islam as the anti-Christian product of a power hungry imposter. Voltaire viewed Muhammad's excesses as a warning to governments that espoused religion. As we shall see, secularists like Thomas Jefferson often included Muslims as an extreme example marking the lengths to which toleration should be practiced. Simultaneously, Christians often viewed Islam as – if not the greatest threat to Christianity – the largest obstacle to its universal expansion.

The third and final dimension of Anglo-American Islamophobia demonstrated by the example of Prideaux and Voltaire's works is how certain lines of communication facilitated the transcontinental transmission of Islamophobic ideas. Given the popular authority of those with personal experience of Muslims and the British empire's involvement with Muslim communities across the world, information and opinions often flowed westward across the Atlantic. Clearly, Britain and the other European powers with a stake in North America contributed the seeds for the first sad blossoms of Islamophobia there. This current continued through the next century as evidenced in a variety of ways by the American Charles Godfrey Leland. In 1874 he concluded his satirical travelogue by quoting an article from London's *Daily Telegraph*:

---

<sup>7</sup> Kidd 2003, p. 787.

<sup>8</sup> Allison, pp. 43-45.

*We are very glad to announce that the annual pilgrimage to Mecca has gone off this year with remarkable success. "Glad to announce!" we hear good Mrs. Grundy ejaculate; "why should a Christian newspaper rejoice over the happy conduct and termination of the rites and ceremonies of Mahound?" But the estimable lady in question ought to understand that this great custom of the Moslem world is no longer a matter of indifference to ourselves. The East and the West are nowadays so closely knit together by commerce and intercourse that, upon sanitary grounds alone, we have every reason to watch with the utmost interest the accounts from the holy cities of Arabia. Twice has Europe received the plague of cholera from the crowds that throng from all parts of the eastern world to Mecca and Medina.*<sup>9</sup>

Clearly, the journalist anticipated antagonistic Christian responses to his news item. He used a fictional reader's objections to argue his case regarding the increasing relevance of information about Muslims. At a minimum, they represented a pathogenic threat.<sup>10</sup>

Leland's inclusion of the article was more than incidental. Imperialism both quickened the spread of information about Muslims and produced authoritative Western commentators on Islam. British imperial officials often served as sources of information both in their own country and in the US. Although their experience with Muslims might be restricted to one region, others might extrapolate it to reflect on other or all Muslims. For instance, as the twentieth century opened, American James L. Barton prefaced his *Daybreak in Turkey* with a quote from Lord Cromer, the acerbic British agent and consul-general who served in Egypt for twenty-four years following duty in India.<sup>11</sup> Although many imperial officials and even some missionaries had a more nuanced view of Islam tempered by their direct experience of Muslim cultures, few attempted to dispel the popular perception regarding Islam's threat.

British and American experience of Muslims could diverge significantly. Throughout the two centuries of British rule in South Asia, Britons consistently differentiated Indians according to what they presumed to be mutually exclusionary, if not antagonistic, communities. Hence, Britons had constant contact with people they primarily described as Hindus and Muslims (ignoring the other identities individuals often held that defied this division) and their descriptions of India persistently included generalizations about these two groups. On the other hand, few Americans

<sup>9</sup> Charles Godfrey Leland, *The Egyptian Sketch Book*, New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1874. p. 326.

<sup>10</sup> In *The Satanic Verses* (1988), Salman Rushdie would recycle "Mahound" for English literature, noting its objectionable origins as a slur.

<sup>11</sup> James Levi Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey*. Boston: Pilgrim, 1908. p. 10.



other than sailors and missionaries encountered Muslims beyond the slaves who were not recognized as such. Only in episodic moments of crisis – notably the Tripolitan War (1801–05), the Philippine-American War (1899–1902), and the Turkish question preceding and following the First World War – did many Americans have a sense of engagement with people who happened to be Muslims. Even then (and in contrast with the British in India) they often characterized their opponents chiefly by “nation” or “race,” such as “Arab” or “Turk.” Nevertheless, an incipient Muslim quality pervaded these identifications, as evidenced in period representations. Given the lack of contact with Muslims except in moments of crisis and through missionaries, Americans often relied on British views to inform their apprehensions about Islam. Thus, Thomas S. Kidd has observed, “Although one should hesitate to describe early Americans as conversant with Islam, they certainly conversed about Islam regularly.”<sup>12</sup>

### THE THREAT OF ISLAM

For British and American audiences, the menace of Islam existed at a variety of different levels. Politically, socially, religiously, and theologically, Muslims and their religion were seen to threaten in varying degrees and in different ways Britain and America, secularism and Christianity.

The perception of threat to the state obviously differed between the United States and British India because of the disparity in the proximity of Muslims to the state. Very few Muslims lived in North America and those who did – enslaved African Muslims – seldom were recognized by European-Americans as such. Recent scholarship estimates that, among the millions of Africans forced into American servitude, perhaps one out of five were Muslim. Yet severely repressive conditions meant that Islamic practices and identities seldom passed to successive generations. Expressing the view shared by most of his contemporaries, Puritan leader Cotton Mather declared, “We are afar off, in a Land, which never had (that I ever heard of) one Mahometan breathing in it.”<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the currency of the inherited medieval view of Muslims as a twin peril – political and theological<sup>14</sup> – made Muslims an ideal hypothetical threat to be used in various political disputes within the early republic. Robert J. Allison and Denise Spellberg have demonstrated how Muslims figured into the political rhetoric of constitutional debates in various states. Muslims represented an outlier group whose objectionable character – particularly the tyranny associated with the Ottoman court – made them the ultimate test case in many debates.<sup>15</sup> For instance, during the North Carolina debates regarding

<sup>12</sup> Kidd 2003, p. 766.

<sup>13</sup> Kidd 2003, p. 767.

<sup>14</sup> John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> However, Muslims did not serve as the ultimate outlier for all early Americans. In New Hampshire’s ratification convention, one delegate commented that “a Turk, a Jew, a



the requirement of a religious test for political candidates, delegates mentioned Muslims six times. Many references dealt with the issue of a Muslim becoming president.<sup>16</sup> Of course, such a possibility served only as a hypothetical, given that no delegate likely believed that Muslims existed in the new nation.

While controversies around new schemes of representation demonstrated how Muslims served as a worst-case scenario, disputes regarding governance provided opportunities to question whether fictive resident Muslims would be tolerated as Americans. For instance, a petition by citizens of Chesterfield County, Virginia to their state assembly argued in 1785, "It is mens [sic] labour in our Manufactories, their services by sea and land that aggrandize our Country and not their creeds...Let Jews, Mehometans, and Christians of every denomination find their advantage in living under your laws."<sup>17</sup> More famously, Thomas Jefferson rejected an effort to insert "Jesus Christ" into a Virginia bill for religious freedom. He noted, "The insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan, the Hindoo, and Infidel of every denomination."<sup>18</sup> Of course, before Americans adopted Jefferson as a model of toleration, he had taken John Locke as his ideal. Demonstrating again the cross-Atlantic flow of ideas, Locke's *Letter of Toleration* (1689) influenced many Americans besides Jefferson. In it he promoted the inclusion in public life of all Protestants – whatever their sect – before going a step further: "Nay, if we may openly speak the truth, and as becomes one man to another, neither pagan, nor Mahometan, nor Jew, ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth, because of his religion. The Gospel commands no such thing."<sup>19</sup>

Locke and others used *fictive* Muslims to indicate the extremity of their inclusivity, knowing how acutely their audiences would view an *actual* Muslim presence as a threat. Each time statesmen took Muslims as an extreme example, they helped reinscribe the liminality of Muslims in the popular imagination. For instance, Locke declared in his *Letter* that toleration could not extend to those whose religion compels them to be faithful to a foreign prince. His one example was the Muslim who lives under a Christian magistrate "whilst at the same time he acknowledges

---

Rom[an] Catholic and, what is worse than all, a Universal[ist], may be President of the United States." Spellberg, p. 492.

<sup>16</sup> Spellberg, p. 493.

<sup>17</sup> James H. Hutson, "Founding Fathers and Islam: Library Papers Show Early Tolerance for Muslim Faith" in *Library of Congress Information Bulletin*, vol. 61, no. 5 (May 2002) (<http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/0205/tolerance.html>, accessed February 14, 2009).

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Memoirs, Correspondence, and Private Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Late President of the United States*, volume I. Thomas Jefferson Randolph, ed. London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1829. pp. 38-39.

<sup>19</sup> John Locke, *John Locke: A Letter Concerning Toleration, in Focus*. John P. Horton and Susan Mendus, eds. London: Routledge, 1991. p. 35.

himself bound to yield blind obedience to the mufti of Constantinople; who himself is entirely obedient to the Ottoman emperor, and frames the famed oracles of that religion according to his pleasure.”<sup>20</sup> Islam, according to Locke, may incline a Muslim to unthinkingly obey a religion that ultimately sways at a tyrant’s whim. If such a Muslim lives in a non-Muslim country, she introduces this tyrannical, foreign jurisdiction there. Locke’s comments voiced three aspects of contemporary Anglo-American Islamophobia. First, that the Ottomans represented an exemplar of bad government and, second, that Muslims offered a nascent threat (of varying degrees according to the author) to every non-Muslim political order under whose jurisdiction they lived. Third, Locke, like Jefferson and the citizens of Chesterfield County, expressed the possibility that (at least some) Muslims *could* coexist under a non-Muslim government. Although such a threat remained in the abstract for Americans until the large-scale Muslim emigrations of the twentieth century, it haunted British administrators and others in British India following the uprising of 1857-1858. This wide-scale, virulent rebellion not only ushered in an end to the East India Company (EIC) as the British government assumed direct control over its Indian territories it also instilled an overall British distrust toward Muslims.

For perhaps three reasons, British publications – at least when not written by missionaries – demonstrated few Islamophobic tendencies before 1857. First, the Mughals’ precipitous decline meant that no Muslim group credibly challenged British domination. Despite the increasingly disruptive changes that the EIC made to the social and economic order, Muslims seldom questioned British ascendancy and few Islamic revivalists of the period openly contested British rule. Even Saiyad Ahmad Bareilwi, the founder of the militant Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah, sought primarily to purify Islamic practice, although some of his followers subsequently combatted the British.<sup>21</sup>

Second, inspiring Mughal architecture impressed many British observers even as it attested to Muslim decline. The Mughals may have been despotic – as seemed inevitable in the Anglo-American view of “oriental” and “Muslim” states – but the benefits of their governance could be appreciated too, now that they posed no threat. James Mill, whose *History of British India* (1817) represents one of the most influential and tartest British appraisals of South Asians, praised Muslims for their relative sophistication relative to Hindus. India’s “Mahomedan conquerors” manifested “an activity, a manliness, an independence, which rendered it less easy for despotism to sink, among them, to that disgusting state of weak

---

<sup>20</sup> Locke, p. 32.

<sup>21</sup> P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972. p. 51.

and profligate barbarism, which is the natural condition of government among such a passive people as the Hindus."<sup>22</sup>

Mill demonstrates here a trait common among Britons in India: when assessing the two populations into which they divided the subcontinent, the presence of a specific characteristic might be the reason that one Briton *praised* Muslims relative to Hindus and the reason another *condemned* Muslims in favor of Hindus. The manliness that Mill saw curtailing despotism would be viewed as the very engine of Muslim tyranny by others. However, as with Mill, few Britons considered either community superior to their own. In this manner, Britons often positioned themselves as the normative middle ground between two extremes of human behavior and belief. If most Hindu men seemed passively effeminate and Muslim men fanatically violent, then the British man represented the proper poise of action and restraint. If Hinduism promoted a retrograde idolatry similar to Catholicism and Islam represented an apostate's arrogance similar to heresy, then the Church of England provided the truth of the only god.

The third aspect of pre-1857 conditions that mitigated British Islamophobia was the model of tolerance some Britons saw as instrumental to Mughal success. For instance, long after Mughal political power had evaporated, Anglican bishop Reginald Heber reported in his Indian travelogue (1828) that "the fierce Mohammadans" only had begun to question British control because Britons had disrespected the Mughal court.<sup>23</sup> The same year, Walter Hamilton in his gazetteer of India stumped for a respectful Mughal policy, "The most rational course appeared to be, to leave the king's authority exactly in the state in which it was found, and to afford the royal family the means of subsistence...not unsuitable to a fallen but illustrious race."<sup>24</sup> A quarter century later, Edward Thornton noted in his gazetteer, "The feelings of deference for the throne of Delhi extended to provinces very remote from the seat of its former grandeur, and to Hindoos not less than to Mahomedans. It was in fact universal."<sup>25</sup> Undoubtedly, this transcommunal respect must have struck some Britons in India as evidence of toleration's advantages, just as Locke and others promoted at home. Depictions of Aurangzeb's reign – characterized by temple destruction, Sikh oppression, and the *jizya* tax – conformed much more closely with the prevalent picture of the Ottomans, the exemplar of Muslim prejudice and tyranny. For most, though, this last great Mughal provided the exception

<sup>22</sup> James Mill, *The History of British India*. William Thomas, ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975 (1817). p. 309.

<sup>23</sup> Hardy, pp. 33-34.

<sup>24</sup> Walter Hamilton, *East-India Gazetteer; Containing Particular Descriptions of the Empires, Kingdoms, Principalities, Provinces, Cities, Towns, Districts, Fortresses, Harbours, Rivers, Lakes, &c of Hindostan, and the Adjacent Countries, India Beyond the Ganges, and the Eastern Archipelago*. Volume I. Delhi: Low Price, 1993 (1828). p. 497.

<sup>25</sup> Edward Thornton, *A Gazetteer of the Territories under the Government of the East-India Company, and of the Native States on the Continent of India*. Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1993 (1858). pp. 264-265.

that proved the rule, his stereotypical Muslim intolerance for non-Muslims standing in welcome contrast with the remarkable inclusiveness of his predecessors Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan. This pre-1857 generosity towards the erstwhile Mughal empire would be significantly undermined by the mutiny of many of the Company's Indian soldiers, the uprising among parts of the population, and the slaughter of British civilians.

W.W. Hunter most infamously voiced this change in *The Indian Musalmans: Are They Bound by Conscience to Rebel against the Queen?* (1871). His initial chapter titles amply portray the volume's tenor: "The Standing Rebel Camp on Our Frontier" and "The Chronic Conspiracy within Our Territory." Although British authors often qualified their concerns about Muslims by reassuring their audiences of the loyalty of most Indian Muslims,<sup>26</sup> Hunter began his book with the assertion, "While the more fanatical of the Musalmans have thus engaged in overt sedition, the whole Muhammadan community has been openly deliberating on their obligation to rebel."<sup>27</sup> As a long-time officer in the Bengal Civil Service and member of numerous learned societies, Hunter was highly influential with his opinions. He reversed the formula found in other works in which Aurangzeb served as the intolerant outlier among Mughal emperors, demonstrating how even Akbar's tolerance was overshadowed by the pervasive religious chauvinism of his courtiers. Overall, however, Hunter said little about the dynasty, reflecting primarily on the positive sea change accomplished by British administration of India, especially in Bengal. For instance, Hunter characterized government under Muslims as "an engine for enriching the few, not for protecting the many"<sup>28</sup> (a characterization not ill-fitted to describe contemporary English conditions). Although the author dedicated a chapter to describing the wrongs Muslims alleged to have suffered under British domination, he mostly placed the onus for change on them, not the government.

The repetition of his claims by later authors reflects the persistent popularity of Hunter's perspectives. As W.A. Wilson, a Canadian missionary in Indore, made his own case for the distrustfulness of Muslims in 1911, he quoted Hunter, "The Mussulmans of India are and have been a source of chronic danger to the British power in India." Wilson went further, claiming obliquely that, "There are many who doubt the loyalty of the Mohammedan people as a whole." For evidence, Wilson followed Hunter by pointing to the Wahhabi conspiracies, Quranic injunctions to overthrow infidel rule, and Muslim resistance on the northwest frontier. But as with most Islamophobic authors in British India, Wilson viewed one event to hang particularly heavily over Muslim heads: "They remind us of

---

<sup>26</sup> For instance, see W. Nassau Lees, *Indian Musalmans: Being Three Letters Reprinted from the "Times" with an Article on the Late Prince Consort, and Four Articles on Education, Reprinted from the "Calcutta Englishman."* London: Williams and Norgate, 1871.

<sup>27</sup> W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*. 2nd edition. London: Trübner and Company, 1872. p. 10.

<sup>28</sup> Hunter, p. 164.

the part they played in the terrible mutiny, when they pressed to the front and through rivers of blood made a furious dash to seize the standard of empire."<sup>29</sup> As the terrible series of vengeful reprisals reaped immediately following the end of the rebellion demonstrated, Muslims took the brunt of British blame although they were no more seditious than Hindus and many Muslim soldiers and officials had remained loyal. However, at the revolt's height, the Mughal emperor had reluctantly sided with the mutineers who pressed for his support. In the later effort to explain the seemingly sudden reversal of reverence for British rule, many Britons described a resentful monarch leading disenfranchised nobles and sullen soldiers in a vain struggle to re-establish the decrepit former order of Muslim position and prestige. As Wilson's comment demonstrates, a half century later this view and the passion behind it had not dissipated much among Britons and many members of the colonies.

Meanwhile, at least one commentator in the United States drew a larger lesson from the rebellion. D.H. Wheeler, president of the Chautauqua Institution, despaired in 1885 that Britons had ignored "the religious source" of the uprising and continued their twin practices of arming some Muslims and slaughtering others. "[England] is uniting Islam, and teaching Islam how to make war...A Moslem victory is proclaimed in every Arab tent, and in every Indian village." While decrying the European atrocities, Wheeler preferred that Islam "should be locked fast in the iron arms of the British empire" for the sake of Christendom.<sup>30</sup>

Wheeler reflected yet another Islamophobic concern among many Britons and Americans: a global surge of Islamism meant to bring the world under singular Muslim domination. Much of this centered on Istanbul (or Constantinople, the name many commentators preferred), "the capital of Mohammedanism" as an American missionary there put it in 1835. In his overview of religions that went through at least five reprintings in the first half of the nineteenth century, John Haywood explained that Muslims' "spiritual head" lived in Turkey, a man equivalent to the "Roman Pontiff, or the Grecian Patriarch."<sup>31</sup> He was referring to the *khalifa* (caliph), an office of leadership of the entire Muslim community dating back to the successors of Muhammad. The Ottoman sultans had claimed it for themselves since 1517. In 1892, the American Catholic priest Charles C. Starbuck cautioned

<sup>29</sup> W.A. Wilson. "The Situation in India" in *Islam and Missions: Being Papers Read at the Second Missionary Conference on Behalf of the Mohammedan World at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*. Elwood Morris Wherry, Samuel Marinus Zwemer, and C. G. Mylrea, eds. New York, London: Fleming H. Revell, 1911. pp. 144, 146.

<sup>30</sup> D.H. Wheeler, "England and Islam" in *The Chautauquan*. v.5 (October 1884-July 1885). pp. 402, 404.

<sup>31</sup> John Haywood, *The Book of Religions: Comprising the Views, Creeds, Sentiments, Or Opinions, of All the Principal Religious Sects in the World, Particularly of All Christian Denominations in Europe and America, to which are Added Church and Missionary Statistics, Together with Biographical Sketches*. 2nd edition. Boston: I.S. Boyd and E.W. Buswell, 1842. p. 229.



that this Muslim “Pope” might yet unite all Muslims whom he characterized as “simply a vast agglomeration of disconnected atoms, like its own sand-wastes,” conflating Muslims with the people of the desert.<sup>32</sup> Wheeler did not seem to fear the caliph per se but believed that pan-Islamism awaited only for another Muhammad to galvanize the expectant Muslim masses. “When the Prophet is once crowned with the diadem of military success, there is an army of Mohammedans in India wearing the queen’s uniform, there are vast resources at Constantinople ready to fall from the helpless hands of the Sultan...There are two hundred millions of Mohammedans waiting for a leader to restore the glories of Islam.”<sup>33</sup>

In contrast with these American anxieties, Britons in India only became alarmed at the prospect of an Ottoman-oriented pan-Islamism as the nineteenth century concluded. Officials began to fear that Turkish agents were stirring discontent in India. Important intellectuals like Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Abul Kalam Azad promoted an Islamic identity that transcended national borders, a widespread sentiment among the *ulama*.<sup>34</sup> Pro-British Muslims such as Sir Saiyid Ahmad Khan and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad felt compelled to write tracts defending loyalty to the British government as popular support grew for the Turkish sultan.<sup>35</sup> However, no uprising ever pursued any Ottoman-oriented ends.

At the start of the First World War, when the Ottomans allied with Britain’s enemies, British anxiety deepened. Immediately, the Government of India telegraphed all districts describing pan-Islamism to officials, directing them to warn certain Muslim preachers of the consequences of criticizing the government, and requiring all householders to report foreigners.<sup>36</sup> Despite such concerns, after the war some authorities aimed to use pan-Islamic thought to British advantage. In 1919, the Government of India sent to at least one provincial government a copy of a fatwa that called “upon all Muhammadans to oppose Bolshevism” and the central government sought to publicize it by feeding it to Muslim newspapers.<sup>37</sup> Independence leader Mohandas Gandhi saw advantage too in pan-Islamist sentiment and allied his Congress Party with the Khilafat movement that sought to prevent the victorious Allies from removing the caliph and dismembering the Ottoman empire. In 1924 the entire issue vanished when

---

<sup>32</sup> Rev. Charles C. Starbuck, “Missions and Civilization. II.” *The Andover Review: A Religious and Theological Monthly*. vol. 18 (July-December 1892). pp. 69-70.

<sup>33</sup> Wheeler, p. 404.

<sup>34</sup> Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000. pp. 192-194.

<sup>35</sup> Hardy, pp. 177-180.

<sup>36</sup> Telegram from H. LeMesurier, Government of India, Home Department, Simla, August 21, 1914. Public Special. No. 225 of 1914. State Archives of Bihar.

<sup>37</sup> Letter from Government of India, Home Department (Political), to G. Rainy, Chief Secretary, Bihar and Orissa. D.O. No. 1965, Simla, 17 September 1919. Political Department, Special Section. No. 345 of 1919. State Archives of Bihar.



the Turkish National Assembly eliminated the caliphate following the allotment of imperial lands among the European victors.

Although Americans and Britons shared a trepidation regarding a global Islamic movement that never emerged, the British continually fretted about local uprisings. The event that most inculcated this fear and, until 1857, served as the primary justification for it was the “Wahhabi movement.” As Hardy put it, “In thinking about Muslims after 1857, the so-called Wahhabis were for the British the great unthinkable that was always thought.” British belief in Indian-based Wahhabis originated in the 1820s, as Saiyid Ahmad Barelwi and his followers moved to the northwest territories to launch a jihad against the Sikhs who ruled there. Their Tariqah-i Muhammadi may have shared a notion of jihad with Arabia’s Wahhabis, but its efforts at reform drew much more from Sufi traditions. Saiyad Ahmad’s jihad failed, but some of his followers remained on the frontier into at least the 1870s. British concerns loomed more menacingly than the actual threat, the *mujahidin* numbering perhaps six hundred in 1852.<sup>38</sup>

Although this so-called “conspiracy” began twice as long ago as the 1857 rebellion – which had far more immediate effect on Britons – Hunter’s *The Indian Musalmans* includes far more references to the former. Hunter, like many other Britons, collapsed diverse Muslim movements seeking divergent goals in disparate parts of India into the category “Wahhabi.” This phantasmal conspiracy thus ranged across a great swath of territory over a long period of time. Britons erroneously conflated a wide range of Muslim political endeavors with “Wahhibism,” such as Bengal’s Faraizi movement, a coup attempt by the Nizam of Hyderabad’s brother, and the assassinations of a viceroy and chief justice.<sup>39</sup> In fact, no such unity existed among Islamist groups, and a puny proportion of Muslims evinced interest in any of them. In fact, the popular Muslim movements of the nineteenth century primarily focused on Islamic reform and revival.<sup>40</sup> Yet, as late as 1937, the Government of India could not be certain that the Wahhabi threat had entirely dissipated.<sup>41</sup> Sir Saiyid blamed three factors for the recent public scrutiny of Muslim loyalty: trials of supposed Wahhabis, the murder of the chief justice, and Hunter’s book to which he wrote a rejoinder.<sup>42</sup>

Of course, the final act of Muslim anti-imperialism would be the Pakistan movement. Initiated in 1930 with Iqbal’s call for a separate Muslim homeland, it culminated with the partition of the subcontinent’s

<sup>38</sup> Hardy, pp. 53-55, 60.

<sup>39</sup> Hunter, pp. 42, 100. Hardy, p. 79. Rafiuddin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: A Quest for Identity*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996 (1981). pp. 40-41.

<sup>40</sup> Harlan O. Pearson, *Islamic Reform and Revival in Nineteenth-century India: The Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah*. New Delhi: Yoda, 2008. p. 173.

<sup>41</sup> T.C. Hodson, *India. Census Ethnography, 1901-1931*. New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1937. p. 111.

<sup>42</sup> Syed Ahmad Khan Bahadur, *Review on Dr. Hunter's Indian Musalmans: Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queen?* Benares: Medical Hall Press, 1872. p. 5.

British held territories and semi-independent states into an independent India and Pakistan at the very moment when Britain relinquished its control in 1947. For many Pakistan proponents – certainly for its ultimate leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah – separatism represented less an anti-imperial and anti-Hindu agenda than a political threat to obtain minority concessions from the British-led government and Hindu-dominated Congress Party. Indeed, once the endgame had played out and the sought concessions failed to materialize, Jinnah steered the movement into close alliance with the British during the Second World War in order to best obtain his objectives even as Gandhi and the rest of the Congress leadership sat imprisoned for their wartime efforts to undermine British rule.

Although Britons in India differed from Americans because of the active (if exaggerated) threat to their political order, both shared a conviction regarding two alleged qualities of Islam that made it a perennial menace: the proclivity of Muslims to spread their religion and to do so violently. In their reflections on the proselytizing power of Muslims – an issue among Europeans since at least the eighth century when predominantly Christian north Africa and Spain converted almost entirely to Islam – Americans and Britons almost universally explained mass conversion as the result of coercion. In the preface to his book on Muhammad's "imposture," Prideaux emphasized how the eastern churches abdicated Christianity with "the Sword at their Throats."<sup>43</sup> Such sentiments persisted throughout ensuing centuries, not being limited to publications by Christian apologists. In 1872, the British government in Calcutta (Kolkata) published Edward Tuite Dalton's ethnology of Bengal, which argued that Muslim rulers had forced or induced "aborigines" and Hindus to accept Islam.<sup>44</sup> Some warned that coercive conversions did not belong just to the past but may again menace Christians. For instance, in 1835 Eli Smith, an American missionary in Turkey, imagined for his audience in a Boston magazine that the dead ancient Christians of Western Asia warned American Christians today, "Hereafter, upon the fair face of your beloved America, as now upon that glory of all lands which was once our country, a night of apostacy may settle down, and hordes of yet unnamed barbarian invaders fasten deep the blight of some new Mohammedanism" [sic]. Smith shamed his coreligionists by contrasting their lack of ardor with Muslim zealotry: "Is a mere *handful* of missionaries all that enlightened Christian benevolence can send forth, where the superstition of the dark ages sent forth *armies*?"<sup>45</sup>

Smith's reference to the armies of Islam reflected a troubling question: Why had the armies of Christendom been unable to halt the rapid

---

<sup>43</sup> Prideaux, pp. viii-ix.

<sup>44</sup> Edward Tuite Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*. Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1872. p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> Eli Smith, "Present Attitude of Mohammedanism, in Reference to the Spread of the Gospel" in *The American Quarterly Observer*, v. 1 (July-Oct. 1833). p. 114.

Muslim expansion? Why were current missionaries unable to convert Muslims today? After all, many Christians considered the steady global advance of their religion as a testament to its truth. How to explain yesterday's setbacks and today's stalemate? One answer that most Americans and Britons seemingly accepted was that the inherent fanaticism of (male) Muslims produced their violent success. According to the well respected and widely read Briton Claudius Buchanan (1807), Muslims were a "dagger-drawing people" who maintained a "vindictive spirit."<sup>46</sup> Smith, in 1835, opined that religious fanaticism was "the strongest principle of obedience in the Turkish citizen, and of bravery in the Turkish soldier."<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, their concerns for the chaos of revolutionary France and the march of Napoleon's armies gave Americans opportunities to demonstrate how "fanatic" and "Muslim" seemed almost synonymous. In 1814, Thomas Jefferson likened the "military Fanatic" Napoleon to Achilles, Alexander, Caesar, and "Mahomet."<sup>48</sup> Five decades later, a Boston literary journal published an article that reflected on the extreme fanaticism once seen in France: "The only historical phenomenon to which this transformation of France can be compared is that of the rise of such a religion as Mahometanism...The fanatical Frenchman believes in the ideas of '89 very much as the Mahometan believes in the Koran. He hates a noble or a priest as a Mahometan hates a Ginour."<sup>49</sup> Early in the next century, President Theodore Roosevelt compared Muslims with a more domestic model of fanaticism when answering critics of his policies toward a rebellious minority in the Philippines: "To abandon the Moro country as our opponents propose in their platform, would be precisely as if twenty-five years ago we had withdrawn the Army and the civil agents from within and around the Indian reservations in the West, at a time when the Sioux and the Apache were still the terror of our settlers."<sup>50</sup> Popular portrayals of Muslim Arabs, Turks, and Moros demonstrated the near universal association of fanaticism with Muslim men and helped to explain the initial expansion and contemporary entrenchedness of Islam.

When commentators did not attribute coercion as the cause of conversion, they blamed Muslim success on some negative quality of the proselytized. In his review of world religions (1842), Haywood blamed Islam's early gains not only on "the terror of Mahomet's arms" but also Islamic law, which suited "the manners and opinions of the Eastern nations." Islam's few doctrines were simple, its duties easy, and nothing was "incompatible with the empire of appetites and passions" that

<sup>46</sup> Claudius Buchanan, *An Apology for Promoting Christianity in India*. Boston: Nathaniel Willis, 1814. p. 86.

<sup>47</sup> Smith, 106.

<sup>48</sup> James H. Hutson, ed. *The Founders on Religion: A Book of Quotations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. p. 116.

<sup>49</sup> "The Hatred of Priests." *Littell's Living Age*. v.79 (Oct-Dec1863). p. 165.

<sup>50</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *Presidential Addresses and State Papers, Volume III: April 7, 1904, to May 9, 1905*. New York: Review of Reviews, 1910. pp. 88-89.

characterized Arabs and most Easterners.<sup>51</sup> In 1892, a publication of the Church of England's Church Missionary Society (CMS) credited the prophet's success to a combined strategy of carrot and stick, arguing that Muhammad took a decrepit form of Judaism and Christianity and "added to it elements of worldliness and sensuality which rendered it acceptable to the natural mind, and by establishing the principle of enforcing his tenets by the sword, he ensured their zealous propagation."<sup>52</sup> While these Americans and Britons avoided any suggestion that someone, drawn by a positive characteristic of the religion, might willingly accept Islam, others argued that, if there had been a good reason for South Asians to convert, it reflected less the value of Islam than the deficits of Hinduism, specifically caste prejudice and the proscription of widow remarriage. Reverend John Takle – a New Zealander working as a missionary in Bengal – used the most recent "scientific" evidence that tracked intermarriage between Muslim and native races to supposedly prove a long-standing conclusion. In 1911 he stated, "The anthropometric survey made by government proves conclusively that the vast majority of the Mohammedans in India are converts from among the depressed Hindu communities."<sup>53</sup>

The "scientific" dimension of European imperialism not only seemed to affirm existing views about Muslims and Islam it also helped deepen fears by proving how many Muslims existed. Anglo-American literature about Muslims repeatedly stressed their considerable population. Recall that in Smith's essay on Turkey, he warned Americans of "hordes of yet unnamed barbarian invaders" that might sweep the US if enough missionaries did not meet the Islamic threat. In 1842 Hayward indicated a world population of 140 million Muslims.<sup>54</sup> An 1850 letter in the *Missionary Herald* by a "Mr. Hume" began with a reckoning of the relative numbers of Muslims and Hindus in Bombay, drawing on data derived from the recently instituted census there.<sup>55</sup> Although some European states had begun to develop demographic tools to better understand their populations by this time, the British were creating a more thorough and expansive census for its Indian territories than they exercised at home. The first all-India census (1872) and the several city and provincial counts that preceded it each required those polled to give their religion. The resulting numbers alarmed Britons because the population of Muslims exceeded their expectations. But, more than statistics on the *overall* Muslim population, those tracking its *growth* only

---

<sup>51</sup> Haywood, p. 229.

<sup>52</sup> Anonymous. "Islam and Christian Missions" in *The Church Missionary Gleaner*. volume 19 (May 1892). p. 68.

<sup>53</sup> John Takle, "Moslem Advance in India" in *Islam and Missions: Being Papers Read at the Second Missionary Conference on Behalf of the Mohammedan World at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*. Elwood Morris Wherry, Samuel Marinus Zwemer, and C. G. Mylrea, eds. New York, London: Fleming H. Revell, 1911. p. 211.

<sup>54</sup> Hayward, p. 221.

<sup>55</sup> Hume, "Letter from Mr. Hume, June 22, 1850" in *The Missionary Herald*. vol. 46 (1850). p. 349.

worsened Anglo-American fears. Muslims appeared to out-proliferate Hindus and Christians. For instance, two authors detailing the missionary work of the United Free Church of Scotland opened their 1910 book with a quote from the census commissioner followed by their own prognostication:

*“In East Bengal two-thirds of the inhabitants and in North Bengal nearly three-fifths are followers of the Prophet.” As the Mohammedans in those regions increase faster than Hindus, it is quite possible that within a few decades Hinduism may be banished from those parts of Bengal...The influence of Islam is the most powerful engine destroying Hinduism in North and East Bengal at the present day.*<sup>56</sup>

The next year Takle cited U.N. Mukherjee of the Indian Medical Services whose pamphlet “A Dying Race?” made much the same argument. Official demography added to the stream of knowledge about Muslims that imperialism made available to Britons and Americans.<sup>57</sup>

Reflecting on the overall expansion of Islam, the American missionary Samuel M. Zwemer, a recognized authority who published repeatedly on Islam, declared of “the Moslem Peril,” “It is now or never; it is Islam or Christ!”<sup>58</sup> Zwemer’s sentiment signals the last quality of Islamophobia that featured prominently in Anglo-American discourse: Islam as Christianity’s inherent and inexorable nemesis. In his deliberations on the demographic eclipse of Hinduism in India, Takle approvingly quoted another author who claimed, “India, unless all is changed by the intervention of some new force, must become a Mohammedan country...The intervening spiritual force which ought to prevent this is, of course, Christianity.”<sup>59</sup> The most prominent qualities of Muslims that threatened Christians included their universal resistance to conversion, consistent success in proselytization, and their flawed belief in Jesus Christ that denied his divinity. The latter claim often meant that Western Christians considered Muslims as heretics or apostates, a threat to the doctrinal orthodoxy central to many churches.

Christians feared Muslims both as a radically other religious competitor *and* a despoiled fraction of Christians. Deprecating Muslims often served efforts to police the doctrinal boundary circumscribing “true Christianity,” as seen in Roger Williams’ answer to Quaker founder George Fox in *G. Fox Digg’d out of His Burrows* (1676). Although he tolerated

<sup>56</sup> Alexander Tomory and K.S. Macdonald, “Bengal” in *Our Church’s Work in India*. Alexander Tomory, et. al., eds. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Co., 1910. p. 13.

<sup>57</sup> Takle, pp. 212-214.

<sup>58</sup> Samuel Marinus Zwemer, *Islam, a Challenge to Faith: Studies on the Mohammedan Religion and the Needs and Opportunities of the Mohammedan World from the Standpoint of Christian Missions*. 2nd edition. New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1907. pp. 233, 244.

<sup>59</sup> Takle, p. 214.



Quakers in his colony of Rhode Island, Williams distrusted their theology. So, when Fox claimed that the growth of the Quaker community demonstrated its credibility, Williams retorted that Islam and Roman Catholicism had grown equally as quickly. Elsewhere, Williams wrote of his anticipation that the destruction of Islam and Catholicism would coincide, along with the mass conversion of the Jews, with the apocalypse. Contemporaneously, Cotton Mather reflected on the eschatological promise both of Protestant royal power ascending in England over Catholicism and of the perhaps imminent fall of Rome and the Turkish sultan.<sup>60</sup> In 1912, Bruce Kinney wrote *Mormonism: The Islam of America*, the book's title stemming from the perceived similarities between the two religions in terms of topics such as polygamy and ideas on heaven. The resemblance was not intended to be a salutary one, as the book written by a former superintendent of Baptist missions in Utah dealt with "the Mormon problem."<sup>61</sup> Jews, too, featured in this Christian boundary policing, and it is not incidental that some of the authors whose books on Muslims we have considered also published on Jews: Prideaux wrote on the Bible and Jewish history (1725), Buchanan described the Jews of south India (early 1800s), and Starbuck penned "The Jew in Europe: Christianity's Antagonist" (1900).

Many authors portrayed Muslims as more dangerous than just misled Christians: Islam and Christianity had locked into (im)mortal combat. When John Dickinson, delegate to both the Continental Congress and Constitutional Convention, described the advancement of nations, he (mistakenly) noted that the Portuguese arrival in India disrupted the advent of Muslim power. This proved providential since "there [is] the least reason to question, that they would have strenuously employed the increase of wealth and power in their favourite design of reducing all *Christendom* to the same miserable slavery, with which by their oppressive superstition, so many celebrated parts of it, including the Birthplace of its religion, have already been overwhelmed."<sup>62</sup> Muslims had "contempt towards the gospel," as Smith said in 1835, drawing on his experience in Turkey. Starbuck concluded in 1892, "Christendom and Mohammedanism have been misled by no false instinct in their unconquerable and deadly antipathy to each other."<sup>63</sup> "The Gospel in the Mission Field has no more powerful or bitter foe than Islam, or the religion of the false prophet Mohammed," as a CMS article reported the same year. In its competition with Islam in West Asia, Christianity "was driven to the wall and lost nearly everything."<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Kidd 2003, pp. 777-778.

<sup>61</sup> Bruce Kinney, *Mormonism: The Islam of America*. Revised edition. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1912. p. 5, 7.

<sup>62</sup> John Dickinson, *The Political Writings of John Dickinson, Esquire: The Address of Congress to the Inhabitants of Quebec. Dated October 26th, 1774*, Volume 2. Wilmington, Delaware: Bonsal and Niles, 1801. p. 303.

<sup>63</sup> Starbuck, p 66.

<sup>64</sup> Barton, p. 105.



The successful resistance of Muslims to conversion and flourishing Islamic proselytizing seemed twin roadblocks to the cherished goal of Christianizing humanity. Without any apparent sense of irony, Hume wrote, "We are well aware that Mohammedans, wherever found, constitute a difficult, and hitherto a comparatively unfruitful field...They regard themselves as God's peculiar people, and look with feelings of hatred and contempt upon all opposing religions."<sup>65</sup> Although Anglican missionary James Long referred in 1875 to both "the Brahmanical pride and Moslem arrogance" that consigned Bengali children "to the dungeons of ignorance and degradation,"<sup>66</sup> most missionaries equated only Muslims with stubbornness and resistance. Notably, Long did not refer to "Hindu pride" as an obstacle to conversion, indicating that his frustration extended only to Brahmans, not all Hindus. Christian missionaries in India tended to have the most success among the very groups they alleged Muslims to have converted: the lowest ranking castes and most impoverished classes. The view of this inherent, ultimate conflict persisted into the twentieth century (and longer), especially in British India where missionaries from throughout the Anglo-American world labored. The Canadian Presbyterian missionary Wilson believed "There is ground for the opinion that the final struggle for the religious conquest of Eastern nations will be between Christianity and Islam."<sup>67</sup>

Many Americans and Britons drew the ultimate conclusion to this Christian Islamophobia: Islam had to be destroyed. Muslims needed to be converted for the sake of their souls. As Hume had asked, "Shall we be content to leave the followers of the false prophet to perish in their pride and unbelief? No, surely. Mohammedans, as well as the heathen, have been given to Christ for his inheritance; and for their conversion the church of Christ must labor and pray."<sup>68</sup> Many agreed with Wilson that without redemptive power, Islam could only ever thwart salvation.<sup>69</sup> Some imagined the struggle more cosmologically. As we have seen, Williams and Mather expected an eschatological conclusion to the battle. John Prentiss Kewley Henshaw, an American evangelical who later became Episcopal bishop of Rhode Island, used the book of Revelation to anticipate the destruction of anti-Christian powers, including Muslims and the "Papal Apostacy." He expected that before long Islam will "be overthrown, and sunk in the pit whence it emanated."<sup>70</sup> Such convictions connected Muslims with Satan and/or the Antichrist. Comparing the Quran with the Gospels, Leupolt

<sup>65</sup> Hume, p. 350.

<sup>66</sup> J. Long, *How I Taught the Bible to Bengal Peasant-Boys*. London: Gilbert & Rivington, 1875. p. 1.

<sup>67</sup> Wilson, p. 141.

<sup>68</sup> Hume, p. 350.

<sup>69</sup> Wilson, pp. 141-142.

<sup>70</sup> John Prentiss Kewley Henshaw, *An Inquiry Into the Meaning of the Prophecies Relating to the Second Advent of Our Lord Jesus Christ: In a Course of Lectures, Delivered in St. Peter's Church, Baltimore*. Baltimore: Daniel Brunner, 1842. pp. 51, 57.

found "The former is calculated to lead me daily farther away from God, and unite them closer to the prince of darkness."<sup>71</sup> Even the sober Benjamin Franklin made this association among the maxims penned for *Poor Richard's Almanack* in 1741:

*Turn Turk Tim, and renounce thy Faith  
in Words as well as Actions:  
Is it worse to follow Mahomet than the Devil?*<sup>72</sup>

In colonial America, many Protestants associated Islam and Catholicism with the Antichrist.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, Prideaux related the rise of Muhammad and the bishop of Rome's claim to reign over all churches. Hence, the "*Antichrist* seems at this time to have set both his Feet upon *Christendom* together, the one in the *East*, and the other in the *West*."<sup>74</sup> As already seen, many authors viewed Christian division and degradation as the cause of the successful rise of Islam. How better to reconcile the triumphant truth of Christianity with its historical setbacks beginning in the seventh century than to portray the conquered churches as corrupted? Prideaux viewed Muslims as a tool used by god to punish the sinful eastern churches. God raised "the *Saracens* to be the Instruments of his Wrath, to punish them for it."<sup>75</sup> Simultaneously such an explanation chastised contemporary dissenting Christians with the threat of god's possible punishment and explained the loss of Christendom's heartland while denigrating Islam.

Despite the shared conviction among many Britons and Americans that Islam stood in inherent antagonism to Christianity and the sentiment among some that it should be destroyed, Britons in India – especially those serving the government – remained conflicted about how to proceed. Although some of its servants viewed Muslims as antithetical to Company aims, the EIC preferred to minimize Christian missionary activity, concerned that resulting antagonisms might disrupt commerce. Detecting this, Buchanan wrote in 1807 to the governor-general of India and alleged that the Company was "hostile to the progress of Christianity." The Bengal government justified itself to the Court of Directors through allusion to the principles of toleration practiced in England toward minorities, notably Jews and Catholics. The directors initially both supported the government's strictures on missionaries and warned against restrictions on "the British faith, on which [Indians] rely for the free exercise of their religion." Buchanan responded that, because Muslims were violent and vindictive, he expected that peace could be achieved only by educating Muslim children

<sup>71</sup> Leupolt, p. 16.

<sup>72</sup> Benjamin Franklin, *Poor Richard's Almanack*. New York: Barnes & Noble Publishing, 2004. p. 88.

<sup>73</sup> Kidd 2003, p. 774.

<sup>74</sup> Prideaux, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> Prideaux, pp. iii-viii.

in Christian schools, Christianizing them even as their parents resisted.<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile James Owen of the British and Foreign Bible Society contended that government should promote the Bible because “the sooner it **supersedes the Shaster and the Koran**, the sooner will the happiness of India be consummated.”<sup>77</sup> Others objected. Thomas Twining, a senior merchant for the Company in Bengal, argued that either the conversion of India’s people should be left to god or British efforts would be met with unrelenting hostility.<sup>78</sup> In the end, Buchanan’s publications proved particularly consequential (as did the efforts of William Wilberforce), and when Parliament renewed the Company’s charter, they included greater latitude for missionary work.

The rising tide of British evangelicalism ensured the persistence of the issue. William Buyers, a twenty-year veteran of the London Missionary Society in north India, sought greater government attention on “the destruction of Hinduism and Muhammadanism, and on the speedy extension of Christianity.”<sup>79</sup> Nearly a century later, a government publication reflecting on this period celebrated the support government had provided to missionaries in India as part of the effort by which “Christian Europe is spreading the Light of the World from the north to the south pole.”<sup>80</sup> If the successful conversion of Muslims had not shown god’s favor on Christianity, then the success of Christian Europe’s empires did. Samuel M. Zwemer, one of the most famous – and perhaps the most well published – missionaries to Muslims summed up this view: “In India and Malaysia God’s favor has given us an open door to 100,000,000 Mohammedans. Under Queen Wilhelmina, the Christian Queen of Holland and under George V, the Christian Emperor of India, 100,000,000 Mohammedans are enjoying the blessings of Protestant Christian rule.”<sup>81</sup> Robert Stewart, United Presbyterian missionary from the US, put the overall matter succinctly in 1896 when he declared of the British empire that “its motto, like that of the

<sup>76</sup> Buchanan, pp. 49, 86-88, 103, 127-128.

<sup>77</sup> John Owen, “An Address to the Chairman of the East India Company Occasioned by Mr. Twining’s Letter to that Gentleman, on the Danger of Interfering in the Religious Opinions of the Natives of India, and on the Views of the British and Foreign Bible Society, as Directed to India.” London: Black and Parry, 1807. pp. 24-27.

<sup>78</sup> Thomas Twining, *A Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, on the Danger of Interfering in the Religious Opinions of the Natives of India; and on the Views of the British and Foreign Bible Society as Directed to India*. Second edition. London: Hazard and Carthew, 1807. p. 30.

<sup>79</sup> W[illiam] B[uyers], *Travels in India: Comprising Sketches of Madras, Calcutta, Benares, and the Principal Places on the Ganges;--Also of the Church of England, Baptist, London Society, and Other Missionary Stations*. London: James Blackwood, 1852. p. 539.

<sup>80</sup> R. Hand, *Early English Administration of Bihar, 1781-85*. Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1894. p. 83.

<sup>81</sup> Samuel M. Zwemer, “The Fulness of Time in the Moslem World” in *Students and the World-wide Expansion of Christianity: Addresses Delivered Before the Seventh International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, Kansas City, Missouri, December 31, 1913 to January 4, 1914*. Fennell Parrish Turner, ed. New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1914. p. 74.

old Romans, can be nothing else than this, *Carthago delenda est*, 'Carthage must be destroyed.'" <sup>82</sup>

### CONCLUSION

It must be reemphasized that not all Americans or Britons shared extreme Islamophobic sentiments. Some positively valued the religion and the cultures associated with it. Some converted, as apparently had the New Yorker Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb. However, the preponderance of publications from the late eighteenth to the middle of the twentieth century demonstrate recurring themes of fear and threat beyond the sentiments of disapproval and loathing also present. Leupolt found some beautiful Quranic passages and Muslim traditions, even if – as he stressed – these were ones that Muslims never mentioned. <sup>83</sup>

Americans and those Britons serving in India often differed in their perception of Muslims. Few Americans benefited from actual contact with Muslims that many Britons experienced occasionally, if not daily. However, after 1857 Britons in India eyed Muslims more warily as a source for potential rebellion. In both the American and British cases, European imperialism made more known about Islam than ever before although such information was often inflected by administrative anxieties and Christian concerns. Zwemer explained, "We know to-day something of the true horror of Islam. Our women are no longer ignorant of the unspeakable degradation to womanhood in Mohammedanism. We know that this religion is inadequate intellectually, socially, morally." Islam was Christianity's "competitor." <sup>84</sup>

Such convictions presumed a singular Islam that required all adherents to act in prescribed ways. This helped make a pan-Indian conspiracy plausible in many British imaginations. The stereotype of the inherently intolerant, aggressive jihadi which helped convince Britons of a potentially India-wide Wahhabi conspiracy rested on a reified understanding of Islam that pictured the religion as a self-motivating agent. For instance, a government ethnography of Indians (1937) stated, "Islam is a unity in which there is no distinction and this unity is secured by making men believe two simple propositions, viz., the unity of God and the mission of the Prophet," even as it went on to describe Muslim "sects." <sup>85</sup> Missionaries, too, often referred to an essentialized Islam, as Zwemer demonstrated thirty years earlier, "In India Islam has abandoned, as untenable, controversial positions which were once thought impregnable."

<sup>82</sup> Robert Stewart, *Life and Work in India: An Account of the Conditions, Methods, Difficulties, Results, Future Prospects and Reflex Influence of Missionary Labor in India, Especially in the Punjab Mission of the United Presbyterian Church of North America*. Philadelphia: Pearl Publishing, 1896. p. 356.

<sup>83</sup> Leupolt, pp. 16-17.

<sup>84</sup> Zwemer, 1914. p. 73.

<sup>85</sup> Hodson, p. 110. The passage is quoted in this source from the Census of India report for Punjab, 1911. p. 162.

<sup>86</sup> Again, others dissented. For instance, in response to the anti-Muslim sentiment he observed filling a newspaper's columns following the Muslim assassination of a British chief justice, the Orientalist W. Nassau Lees portrayed the multi-vocality of Islamic law, emphasizing how most Islamic jurists had ruled that Muslims could live under a Christian government, although some groups – such as Wahhabis – would not.<sup>87</sup>

Our essay began with a century-old contention about the accuracy of media portrayals of Muslims that appears pertinent today. Many of the Islamophobic allegations described still reverberate, especially in conversations, websites, blogs, and viral emails in the US, UK, and India. On the governmental level, the Bush administration endeavored to foster pan-Islamic anxiety by imagining al-Qaeda's ambition to establish, in the president's words (2005), "a totalitarian Islamic empire that reaches from Indonesia to Spain."<sup>88</sup> Meanwhile popular book titles reflect past themes: *Religion of Peace? Why Christianity Is and Islam Isn't*; *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions about the World's Fastest-Growing Faith*; *Antichrist: Islam's Awaited Messiah*; *While Europe Slept: How Radical Islam is Destroying the West from Within*.

Some volumes more than echo past perspectives: *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross* (1993, 2006), for instance, begins by citing Zwemer. This book's goal of providing Christians with counterarguments to Islamic beliefs – "preparing you with strong apologetic answers"<sup>89</sup> – reflects how the perpetuation of Islamophobia often represents more of an effort to positively define those making the allegations than accurately describe Muslims or Islam. The American Catholic priest Starbuck recognized this when he observed in the nineteenth century, "We know Mohammedanism better and worse than Hinduism or Confucianism or Buddhism. It has been implicated inextricably with Christianity as a tremendously aggressive and intensely hostile force during all the twelve centuries of its existence. This, until our own day, has made objective study of it almost impossible."<sup>90</sup>

The globalization and democratization of the flow of information allow Muslims nearly everywhere to take note of the currency of Islamophobic sentiments. Most recently, in the Pakistani film *Khuda Kay Liye* (2007) a sadistic American official begins his abusive interrogation of a Muslim by declaring, "Not all Muslims are terrorists but all terrorists are Muslims." The film thus connects this truism – regularly repeated in the US

<sup>86</sup> Zwemer, 1907. p. 248.

<sup>87</sup> Lees, pp. 9-11.

<sup>88</sup> Elisabeth Bumiller, "Watchword of the Day: Beware the Caliphate; White House Letter" in *The International Herald Tribune*. December 12, 2005. p. 2.

<sup>89</sup> Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2006 (1993). p. 1, back cover.

<sup>90</sup> Starbuck, p. 58.

and UK – with state-sanctioned violence against Muslims. It is precisely through such a dynamic that Samuel Huntington's thesis regarding a clash of civilizations – perhaps more extreme in its reception than its author intended – becomes perceived, if not actuated, reality.

#### REFERENCES

- Ahmed, Rafiuddin. *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: A Quest for Identity*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996 (1981).
- Allison, Robert J. *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Anonymous. "The Hatred of Priests." *Littell's Living Age*. v.79 (Oct-Dec 1863). pp. 165-166.
- Anonymous. "Islam and Christian Missions" in *The Church Missionary Gleaner*. volume 19 (May 1892). pp. 68-69.
- Barton, James Levi. *Daybreak in Turkey*. Boston: Pilgrim, 1908.
- Buchanan, Claudius. *An Apology for Promoting Christianity in India*. Boston: Nathaniel Willis, 1814.
- B[uyers], W[illiam]. *Travels in India: Comprising Sketches of Madras, Calcutta, Benares, and the Principal Places on the Ganges;--Also of the Church of England, Baptist, London Society, and Other Missionary Stations*. London: James Blackwood, 1852.
- Dalton, Edward Tuite. *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*. Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1872.
- Dickinson, John. *The Political Writings of John Dickinson, Esquire: The Address of Congress to the Inhabitants of Quebec. Dated October 26th, 1774, Volume 2*. Wilmington, Delaware: Bonsal and Niles, 1801.
- Esposito, John L. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Franklin, Benjamin. *Poor Richard's Almanack*. New York: Barnes & Noble Publishing, 2004.
- Geisler, Norman and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2006 (1993).
- Gottschalk, Peter and Gabriel Greenberg, *Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.



# *Islamophobia and the Time and Space of the Muslim Other*

**Khaldoun Samman**

*Macalester College*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 107-130.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

# *Islamophobia and the Time and Space of the Muslim Other*<sup>1</sup>

**Khaldoun Samman**  
*Macalester College*

This paper is an attempt to shed light on how the “Muslim world” became packaged as temporally and spatially distant from the “modern world.” What astounds many world-system scholars is how the “Muslim *umma*,” like other major high civilizations of the global south who were once part of the core of the ancient world system—with the Muslim world at its center—found itself, by the late nineteenth century, at the losing end of a new global system, swallowed up whole and relegated to the margins of a Western-centric world with the “Muslim world” generally, and the Ottoman Empire more specifically, now residing at the losing end of this system, subordinated to European and, later, American power whereas previously it stood far ahead. The lens through which all actors of this new world-order came to understand their world was becoming ever more *racially* tainted, leading to a world where religion, language, ethnicity, and nation were reinterpreted in light of this new hierarchy and producing the belief that one group or another possesses some unique trait that legitimates its superior or unique characteristics above the rest. In the judgment of the new masters of the globe, Muslims fell quickly to the bottom and were designated as racially and culturally inferior to the West.

As a result of this new political and economic reality, the incorporation of the Middle East into the capitalist world-system had major racial implications that informed the ideological lens through which the intellectuals in the West and elsewhere understood and analyzed “Islam.” They produced a worldview that we can characterize as part of an Islamophobic discourse in which the “Islamic world” is understood to be spatially and temporally *distantiated* from the “modern West.” This paper takes us on a journey from Orlando Florida to the writings of European and American intellectuals to locate the central tenants of the colonizer’s discourse towards the Muslim world.

## *I. THE COLONIZER’S ISLAMOPHOBIC TEMPORAL TEMPLATE*

For some two centuries now, many of us have imagined global diversity ranging along a historically hierarchical trajectory, as though it were a sloped, ever-ascending mass movement of humanity where cultures existing side-by-side at the same moment could be located at different points of time. By simply cruising the world, we could see not only

humanity's great cultural diversity but its historical as well. It is as though H.G. Wells had really invented his time machine allowing us, as we travel across the world's different cultural landscapes, to visit places of far-away time. Americans can cross their southern border and visit their "distant neighbor" as one book title advertizes. Or we could visit, as a promotional travel brochure claims, Morocco and encounter, on camel back, "ancient ruins" and an "age-old culture" where "life is much as it was centuries ago." We could, at this very moment, for instance, stand in Manhattan, look towards Iran, and declare, with the slightest hint of irony at such a claim, that because it is ruled by Mullahs it is "still feudal" and "stuck" in the fourteenth-century. We do, of course, realize that Mexico, Morocco, and Iran are all here in our very presence. But because of the dominance of a linear temporal perspective, which categorizes "societies" as containing their own space and time, this time-like travel myth has now continued for several centuries, and we have now become accustomed to see cultures or civilizations as possessing their own launching pads with some unable to even ignite their engines while others are deep into the way yonder. In this sense, our minds have been colonized by a nineteenth-century, if not earlier, dogma that prescribes a linear historical progress through which all "societies," although at radically different speeds and at varying points, have traveled. Some may "still" be at a "traditional" or agricultural/rural phase while others are "nearer" to modernity, living in Middle age or feudal-like societies, but as soon as "they" get their true renaissance or religious and secular reformers—their equivalents of "our" philosophers and Luthers—they too can join the more "advanced" societies.

This temporal lens, with its peculiar epistemological ways of seeing the world of difference, was only slightly revised in the hands of the colonized, with much of it being accommodated by the political and intellectual elites—both secular and Islamists alike. While the colonizers constructed this historical imagination in their desire to dominate the global south so as to make it appear that their rule over the natives was a natural result of history's call for the realization of rationality, the Spirit, democracy, the liberation of women, or human rights, the colonized scrambled to re-narrate this very same discourse so as to place themselves as the vanguards for the emancipation of their societies. By removing the colonizers from their midst and replacing them with "indigenous" leaders who have the best interest of their people in mind, they will be well-positioned, so they claim, to deliver their societies—which they admit are "still" in the grips of a stagnant mentality—to this glorious future. As Ali Mirsepassi recently argued, the colonizer's gaze "defines contemporary conditions in the [colonized] in terms of abstracted conditions of European historical experience" where the colonized is positioned to embody "aspects of Europe's past (feudalism, etc.) . . . [with] the assumption that . . . Europe has experienced this path in advance of the non-Western world."<sup>2</sup> In order to make this cosmology of time work for the anticolonial elites, they had to

remanufacture this evolutionary and stagist schemata so as to make it feasible to claim that, in the hands of an enlightened elite, they can fix their launching equipment and employ a more powerful engine that will propel them through time at a greater speed.

Recently, roaming Epcot Center during a visit to Disney World in central Florida with my family, I was able to see the persistence of this colonizer's narration of cultural difference along this continuum of time. Here I could see how glaringly this triumphalistic vision of an evolutionary and stagist view of the globe has been put on display as an entertainment spectacle, a site not unlike any other major pilgrimage center where folks can come together and experience the rites of passage from traditional to modern society. It may be a coincidence that, in the year 2004, I visited Disney World's Epcot Center in Central Florida shortly after I had read about Chicago's World's Columbian Exhibition of 1893, but the timing could not have been better. Walking through Epcot Center, it seemed that I was in the grip of a plagiarized text that was written over 100 years earlier.

Epcot Center is organized by two central themes. On one side sits *Future World*, which, immediately upon entry, depicts a "highly developed" civilization, comprised of science, technology, and progress. This side of the park contains science exhibits and such rides as *Spaceship Earth* in which passengers travel through time "from the dawn of man to the future." Here, Europe and the U.S. represent the civilizational location in which science, philosophy, and secularism are assumed to have been invented and, over time, diffused off to far-away worlds.

The narrative suggests that only during the *Dark Ages* have other, particularly Islamic, civilizations lent a hand to the enterprise of human development. The narrator on the speaker pauses when the ride approaches the stage of Europe's Dark Ages in which Rome, because of the Gothic attacks, was burning and experiencing a moment of deep illness and immediately inserts the comment: "But not all was lost. The torch of light was secured by the Muslims of the East" which, he continued, held on to the torch *until* Europe was prepared to take it back once it had, with the coming of the Renaissance, recovered its health. Notice here that the manner in which Epcot's thematic structure incorporates the Other within its storyline of progress maintains the prevalent sense that Islamic civilization is marginal to the developmental trajectory, in essence acting only to *safeguard* "our" torch of progress, which appears to be detained in some sort of mid-life crisis during the *Dark Ages*. Once "we" have recuperated from this temporary illness, the Islamic Other simply hands the torch back to its rightful owner, *unchanged*, and the West continues upon its path of enlightenment and progress, developing its science, its printing, its philosophy, and its creative arts. Interesting also to note is that the passengers on this ride sit in a moving vehicle that consistently *climbs upward as they pass through time* until they reach the final point of

destination, where AT&T lights up the entire globe and all of man is united under a single beam of light.

Moreover, upon exiting *Spaceship Earth* and proceeding to the other sectors within this scientific and technological side of the park, one is in constant interaction with hi-tech gadgets and robotic machines. Even the cafes are called “Innoventions,” and the shops, immediately upon exiting futuristic rides, are filled with space creatures and battery and electronic-run toys and other paraphernalia. By contrast, on the other far-side of the park, where the *World’s Showcases* can be reached by crossing a bridge over a body of water, one may visit many “traditional folk cultures,” such as Morocco, Native Americans, and China. Here, the visitor is invited to explore other cultures within suggested representative spaces. Morocco, for example, is showcased in part inside of a Mosque, where one can shop and experience the Orient, meeting such figures as *Aladdin* and observing a sensuous belly dancer perform on stage to Arabic music. In this location, one will have a hard time finding hi-tech gadgets to interact with. Instead, the toys available in these shops are full of camels, fez hats, oriental rugs, belly dancing outfits, pyramids, multiple types of plastic swords, and Mummy games and mugs. Indeed, rather than interacting with computers and robots, when it comes to Morocco, one has the pleasure of interacting with the belly dancer. While it is true that more “advanced” societies like Norway, France, and the United States appear on this side as well, they are usually represented in both their youth and mature stages, such as the simple Norwegian village or in the shops of Paris, where one can find “modern” gadgets to buy, like the Eifel Tower. The Other civilizations are, in contrast, always represented as static, non-evolving entities.

Thus, Disney World, obsessively embodying themes of progress and the future, is an iconic representation of our racialized discourse regarding civilization and progress, providing a typical Eurocentric understanding of modern global history as entertainment. In a sense, it offers a popular version of the colonizer’s model of the world, deploying a clear distinction between the rational, scientific, enlightened, and “developed” nations of Western civilization and the undeveloped, particularistic, religious, sensuous, and emotional civilizations of Islam and all Others. This narrative implies, implicitly, that the global south sits far behind the West not because of a historical system organized on an unequal foundation but simply as a result of the distinctive and political qualities “we” in the West possess. In this sense, Disney-reality fits snugly into a political project that posits the West as superior to any other civilizational model of past and present.

The stark imitation of this Disney spectacle with the World’s Columbian Exhibition of 1893 is stunning. This Orientalist representation of the world is, as Edward Said has argued, not new. For Said, “In the system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone’s work on the

Orient, or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all these."<sup>3</sup> Orientalism is, after all, defined by its constant urge to plagiarize past texts.<sup>4</sup> Long before the arrival of Disney World, the organizers of Chicago's World Fair, much like future Disney *Imagineers*, divided their exhibitions into two categories that look almost identical to Epcot. Here, the civilized white sector of the city's exhibition, with its commerce, advanced manufacturing, iron, and steel, displayed buildings of Manufacture, Art, Administrations, Machinery, and Electricity in contrast with the primitive villages of Samoans, Egyptians, Dahomans, Turks and others.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, as in Epcot, there was a spatial and temporal divide between the civilized and primitive sector of the Exhibition, and in order to go from one to the other, one had to leave the white man's city and enter through another gate in order to reach the colored man's world.

Of particular notice is how, in the Columbian World's Fair as well as in Disney's Epcot Center, the industrial, modern, scientific-rational Self is distanced from the Other, both spatially and temporally. Although non-Western and Western civilizations exist on the planet simultaneously, they are constructed as living in different historical times and spaces. The Muslims, in the case of Epcot, live in the time of old Norwegian and German folk culture before the latter moved into modernity and evolved into a mature civilization. The Muslims, the Native Americans, and all Others are frozen in time while the West takes off into space. The Other thus is distanced from the West although it exists simultaneously with it. The implication is that Western civilization, in past epochs, once lived in a developmental stage similar to that of Other races and cultures, which are indeed seen as live examples of a prior Western Self that was still in its childhood. However, having evolved and matured into a highly developed human species, the West is understood to have progressed forward in time, *crossing the bridge* to the other, more scientific and mature, side.<sup>6</sup> In short, this form of representation "has the explicit purpose of distancing those who are observed from the time of the observer, a denial of coeval time."<sup>7</sup> As one *Chicago Tribune* reporter of the 1893 World's Fair put it in his reflection of the exhibitions: "What an opportunity was here afforded to the scientific mind to descend the spiral of evolution, tracing humanity in its highest phases down almost to its animalistic origins."<sup>8</sup> Others were similarly showing exuberance for the opportunity to witness life as it had "been led by our faraway ancestors or predecessors in the earliest Stone Age."<sup>9</sup> As Raymond Corbey suggests, "World fairs... were part of a... landscape of discourse and practice, providing a cultural technology for situating metropole and colony within a single analytic field, thus creating an imagined ecumene."<sup>10</sup> The colonizer's template made the Other appear to belong to an earlier developmental stage along which it has a great distance to travel before it can reach a level which whites or Americans and Europeans inhabit. "Colonial others were incorporated narratively... They were assigned their roles in the stories told by museum exhibitions, world



fairs, and colonial postcards. They were cast as contemporary ancestors..."<sup>11</sup> This is also why today a writer from the United States visiting the Kalahari desert can describe her journey in the following manner:

*We found people who called themselves Ju/wasi and were living a lifestyle of our ancestors, a lifestyle of the African savannah that began before we were human beings, changing in form but not in essence as time passed . . . To me, the experience of visiting this place and these people was profoundly important, as if I had voyaged into the past through a time-machine. I feel that I saw the Old Way, the way of life that shaped us . . .*<sup>12</sup>

Notice that in Epcot and Columbia's World Fair, stretching a full century apart, both share the notion that "progress" has been made more acutely on one side of the world while those on the Other side remain static and frozen in time. The differences are, of course, important, where in the earlier World's Fair, under the influence of social Darwinism, the divide was literally a racial and biological one in which "organizers divided the World's Fair into two racially specific areas," with "the White City depict[ing] the millennial advancement of white civilization while the Midway Plaisance, in contrast, presented the undeveloped barbarism of uncivilized, dark races."<sup>13</sup> This would change as a result of a "development" model that put in place an alternative version for understanding this evolution, where one's culture and his capacity to use science, tools and technology was now understood as the defining criteria upon which his advancement could be measured.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, while Epcot offers some differences from its 1893 predecessor in details like a bridge that *connects* the World Showcase with the future and scientific oriented other side of the theme park as compared to the exiting gate of the 1893 World's fair that *divided* savage societies from that of civilized people, its temporal template ranking and locating societies on a linear scale of time is evident in both theme parks. That is, in the old version, as illustrated in the example of the 1893 World's Fair, the distance between the civilized White City and all its Others was a racial fact, due to a Darwinian inspired schemata, where the "advanced white races worked toward a perfect civilization,"<sup>15</sup> while in the Epcot example, by contrast, what divided the two—and what needed a bridge rather than an exiting and re-entering gate—was the level of technology a culture was able to display to the world. Indeed, this change was made possible by the struggle of the colonized to rearticulate social Darwinism into a tool that they could use to acquire state power and place them as the new civilizers of their own people.

This is what I call the colonizer's temporal template, a way of seeing time and the Other that has a tremendous impact on the way the colonized, in their attempt to emancipate themselves from the colonizer, understand

social change and progress, leading them to think that the only way they can join modernity is through a massive cultural, political, and technological overhaul of their societies. The colonizer's time of the Other was strategically revised in a number of ways, yet remained loyal to it as well.

In part this essay is a study of the formation and growth of a profoundly influential fiction that many began to accept as true in the period since the flowering of global colonialism and social Darwinism that stretched from the nineteenth-century to our present period. As Johannes Fabian's analysis of modern Anthropology suggests, these two examples of the World Fair of 1893 and of our contemporary Epcot, stretching a full century apart, seemed to play a bigger role than simply an attempt by the colonizer to understand the Other's culture and instead constructed "its Other in terms of topoi implying distance, difference, and opposition," where "its intent was above all . . . to construct ordered Space and Time—a cosmos—for Western society to inhabit."<sup>16</sup>

This temporal distantiation of Western civilization from the Other made it tolerable, even necessary, *to live* and inhabit a world of extreme political and economic inequality. Indeed, the ranking of the globe's diverse populations, especially after the social Darwinist Herbert Spencer published his double treatise of "Primitive Man—Emotional" and "Primitive Man—Intellectual" (1876), became so commonsensical that by the turn of the twentieth-century it seemed second nature to declare the "savage as a creature of retarded development: the savage had 'the mind of a child and the passions of a man'."<sup>17</sup> The colonizer's racialized discourse, in essence, made it possible to juxtapose white men with black men, with the former seen as able to inherit a biological or cultural advantage from their past ancestors and thereby rationalizing why they, the West, hold the torch of light over all Other races and civilizations. This is precisely also why "Black men, in contrast, might struggle as hard as they could to be truly [civilized], without success. They were primitives who could never achieve true civilized manliness because their racial ancestors had never evolved that capacity."<sup>18</sup>

The discursive roots of this colonizer's temporal template can be found in earlier centuries, but, by the nineteenth, it fully blossomed, and intellectuals and statesmen alike began to use it with the slightest of ease, acquiring a commonsensical way of seeing Self and Other. It allowed sophisticated philosophers like Hegel to pronounce that "China and India lie, as it were, still outside the World's history" and that "The Egyptians are vigorous *boys*, eager for self-comprehension, who require nothing but clear understanding of themselves in an ideal form, in order to become *Young Men*."<sup>19</sup> For Hegel, such civilizations were retrograde, where the *Geist* had long deserted and moved West in its historical march to find true consciousness<sup>20</sup>: "Europe is 'plainly' the goal of history ... The Orientals were the childhood of the world, the Greeks and Romans in its youth and

manhood, the Christian people are its maturity'."<sup>21</sup> In the American context, it made possible for president Theodore Roosevelt his definition of Africa and other such "primitive" continents as "waste spaces" in need of a civilized race to set it on the straight path of evolution, spaces that Roosevelt defined as being "void of meaningful human activity" and in need of a people "ready to put them to good use."<sup>22</sup> This temporal template also underlay the literary narrative of the *North American Review*, which "declare[d] with no lack of confidence that the majority of the inhabitants of the British West Indies 'are incapable of independent progress. They can advance only under the pressure of the vigorous influences of northern civilization; without this contract they degenerate and regress.'"<sup>23</sup>

By the nineteenth century, terms like savage, primitive, traditional, underdeveloped, and medieval came to denote the Other "as a fossil of an earlier period"<sup>24</sup> who are understood to possess a "whole range of attributes" such as being superstitious and reactionary while the Europeans "represented themselves as rational, energetic, in control, progressive-minded, disciplined, punctual, and efficient."<sup>25</sup> What is important to note here is that by positing the Other as located in a distant past, this new way of framing history was able to provide an ontology that made it appear that the Other *is* distant from the modern self even though they both exist contemporaneous to each other. The colonizer's temporal template, possessing the power of a gifted magician, actually performs a stunt on the mind so as to distantiate the *contemporary* populations of the global south from their Western counterparts right in front of the viewer's eyes.

By temporalizing the world in this way, the imperial relationship between the colonized and the colonizer was rationalized on the ideological basis that the less evolved Other is not "mature" or "developed" enough for self-rule. As Jacobson sums up the ethos of this generation of American travelers and statesman, they are so drastically "behind" on the evolutionary scale that "we are not beholden to treat them as equals" and that we must instead civilize them "in this long process of helping them along."<sup>26</sup>

This temporal lens was an ingenious new social technology to rationalize the colonial encounter. As Chakrabarty has persuasively argued, "Within this thought, it could always be said with reason that some people were less modern than others, and that the former needed a period of preparation and waiting before they could be recognized as full participants in political modernity."<sup>27</sup> He defines this as "the waiting room version of history," where the colonized appears as lingering in an evolutionary or developmental stage of immaturity that with time, and a whole lot of proper rearing by a benevolent superior, will acquire enough maturity and wisdom to allow them to join other civilized and advanced peoples. Until then, since the colonized are not yet ready to be left on their own, they must "wait" until they prove to their superiors that they have matured enough. Indeed, what made possible this idea of a waiting room is a temporal

scheme of distancing the Other and denying her coevalness with more “advanced” civilizations.<sup>28</sup> That is, once the global south was ruled and administered by Western countries, there emerged alongside this new power reality a discourse that placed the Other as a form of property that, with the philosophical interventions of John Locke and John Stuart Mill, was looked upon as land lying unused awaiting a mature and able soul to make it productive.<sup>29</sup>

The example provided by Chakrabarty is John Stuart Mill who, in his classic texts “On Liberty” and “On Representative Government,” claims that, in order for the Indians and Africans to be permitted the highest ideals of self-rule, “some historical time of development and civilization (colonial rule and education, to be precise) had to elapse before they could be considered prepared for such a task,” thereby assigning all “rude nations” a waiting period as they were far from “arriving” at the level appropriate for such privileges. In this temporal imagination, it was the colonizer alone who had the rights for self rule simply because some “people were to arrive earlier than others” (Mill cited in Chakrabarty 2008:8). Mill rationalized his argument on the grounds that Europeans had already reached the stage in which they “had ‘attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion’” while “he thought that India, China and ‘the whole East’ . . . had been ‘stationary for thousands of years.’”<sup>30</sup> Given the fact that “non-Europeans,” Mill continues, “were moral and political infants, and thus below the age of consent, a ‘parental despotism’ by a ‘superior people’ was perfectly ‘legitimate’ and in their own long-term interest” for it would “facilitate their transition to a ‘higher stage of development’.”<sup>31</sup>

Of course, this notion of a hierarchy of civilizations, marked from low to high depending on the size of the skull, or the amount of technological gadgets, the number of books published, a country’s accumulated GNP, and so forth were all and still—with the exception of skull measurement—used to measure where one stood in this hierarchy. By using such standards for measuring the worth of the globe’s populations,<sup>32</sup> it legitimized not only the increasing massive disparities of wealth between the colonizer and the colonized but also why the latter ought to determine whose political structure is civilized, whose human rights are to become the universal standards for the entire globe, and which civilizations or countries are “mature enough” to possess nuclear weapons. That is, by placing a temporal template that makes us see the world in terms of differentially and hierarchically located cultures, religions, and civilizations, it naturalizes the power relations between the core and periphery, making it appear that the West has more gadgets or a bigger GNP—or the privilege of acquiring weapons of mass destruction and the Others do not—because they are the adults and the Others are their children. Of course, if the child behaves obediently, you may spoil it a bit by giving her a bigger stipend or gadgets to play with, but to the unruly child, strict punishment must be maintained.

Indeed, this form of evolutionary cosmology relaxes the colonizer's mind so as to feel self-assured every time they have to beat the child into submission, if not with the carrot (food and medical boycotts) then through the stick (military occupation and heavy artillery bombardment).

## II. THE DIALOGICAL METHOD AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO ISLAMOPHOBIC METHODOLOGIES

Unfortunately, there is now a resurgence and a return to a nineteenth century way of understanding the time machine by Western intellectuals. While in the mid-twentieth century there emerged in the West, as we have seen, a revision of the old social Darwinist model to allow, at the persistence of the anticolonialist movements, for the possibility of the Other to cross over the bridge of time, there is now emerging, once again, the view that there may be something intrinsically dysfunctional about some civilizations that such crossing, due to the incompatibility of "their" (read Islam) religion to modernity, is not possible at all. Indeed, for many contemporary Western academic writers, such as Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel Huntington (1993), crossing over the bridge into modernity means that Islam itself may have to disappear. According to Bernard Lewis, the prophet of Islam and his religion, while having served Muslims well in the premodern world, through some measure of success, now blocks their development into a better, more civilized world of modernity. Moreover, such pundits interpret the rise of contemporary Islamist movements as the natural and essential expression of a religious and civilizational project that stems from some time-immemorial source. This source is characterized as predating modernity and containing a world-view that makes it literally impossible to join the modern civilized world.<sup>33</sup> According to these writers and others, the fact that prior modernization efforts failed in some Islamic regions proves that Islam cannot accommodate itself to the modern world. Indeed, the present conflict between "the West" and "Islam" is due largely to the fact that these are two antithetical civilizations, they claim. Islam represents a cultural universe that is in essence anti-modern and anti-Western. That is, Muslims, according to this narrative, are culturally indigestible to the modernist project. This is because they have learned from their seventh-century predecessors in Mecca and Medina traits and mentalities that are intrinsically anti-modernist.

The problem with this perspective is that it relies upon a method that posits "Islam" and the "Muslim world" as containing its own spatial and temporal unity. Islamists, like all of their nationalist predecessors in the Middle East, are engaging in a political project that is exclusively the act of a modern script. The religious symbolism that they use, the appropriation of Qur'anic text and the manner by which they select the Prophet Muhammad's *Hadiths* (sayings of the prophet collected over time) is made available to us as it is filtered through the temporal lens that the colonizer made possible over a hundred years ago. Hence, it is that template, in its



modern form, which the Islamists use to interpret key cultural and religious text. Indeed, what is ironic is that Orientalists, when interpreting “Islam,” confuse this modern lens as the actual lens of some time-immemorial culture in the same way that Islamists do.

Moreover, reading some of the West’s most influential thinkers today seems like a revised version of John Stuart Mill’s “waiting room of history,” where the United States, in its benevolent role as a democratizing agent in a “neighborhood” (read: Middle East) hostile to pluralism and tolerance, if it does its job competently in Iraq, may finally bring modernity to that part of our troubled and backward world by providing a role model for the other Arabs of the region who remain hopelessly in the grips of despotism. Thomas Friedman, a highly influential *New York Times* bestseller among middle class liberals in the United States, for instance, wrote multiple *New York Times* editorials during the first couple of years of the war on Iraq all the while being in support of the war and only slightly revising his position when American success looked bleak. He assures his readers that “U.S. power is not being used in Iraq for oil, or imperialism, or to shore up a corrupt status quo, as it was in Vietnam and elsewhere in the Arab world during the cold war.” Instead, falling back on earlier rhetoric of the White Man’s burden, the war represents, he asserts, “the most radical-liberal revolutionary war the U.S. has ever launched—a war of choice to install some democracy in the heart of the Arab-Muslim world.”<sup>34</sup> If it does fail, he warns his readers, the blame resides not only in the fact that the United States had too few numbers of troops but also in a time-immemorial “natural tribalism” that defines the Arab world.<sup>35</sup> The discourse of “the heart of the Arab-Muslim world,” “the Arab street,” or the “infertile soil of the Arab world” are utilized not unlike the way social Darwinists rationalized imperial rule during the hey days of imperialism: “In the Arab-Muslim world today the progress-resistant cultural forces seem to be just too strong, especially in Iraq, which is why it is so hard to establish durable democratic institutions in that soil.”<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the problem is that “Iraq was already pretty broken before we got there—broken, it seems, by 1,000 years of Arab-Muslim authoritarianism.”<sup>37</sup> If there are any fingers to be pointed at the United States, it is that the administration did not properly politically prepare the child for its new civilized way of administrating a democratic society: “Had we properly occupied the country, and begun political therapy,” he claims, “it is possible an American iron fist could have held Iraq together long enough to put it on a new course.”<sup>38</sup> Again, when reading Friedman, one cannot help but feel as if he is reading a plagiarized text taken from some nineteenth century philosopher with “the theme of Europe teaching the Orient the meaning of liberty” (Said 1979:172). In Thomas Friedman’s own words:

*Iraq was always a struggle of hope against history. After 9/11, and the Arab Human Development Report detailing the*



*increasingly dysfunctional Arab-Muslim world—which produces way too many terrorists—we had a real interest in collaborating with Iraqis to try to build one decent, progressive, democratizing society in the heart of the Arab East.*<sup>39</sup>

In short, his analysis falls back on the pre-scripted Orientalist fantasy that the Arab world is just not mature enough to take up the opportunity that we, the more advanced civilizations of the West, have offered them. Their culture is too tribalistic and feudal, not yet ripe to take advantage of the fruits of civility and modernity. In that sense, Thomas Friedman, as is the case for Bernard Lewis, Samuel Huntington, and the many others who now stock the shelves of our bookstores, share the same episteme of the folks that came before them in the classical period of imperialism in the nineteenth century.

The underlying idea behind this essay is that the textual and civilizational representations used by Islamists and religious authorities is a product of a global discursive exchange that is expressive of our very present and modern world, of the here and now. To represent the Islamists as “clinging” to a past “real” entity called Islam requires an Orientalist and colonizing lens that suppresses the dialogical—and very immediate—nature of the actual encounter. Indeed, the method that is contained in a Huntington-Lewis type of analysis takes us back once again to viewing the world in a manner very similar to the one contained in the 1893 Chicago’s World Fair where the Other civilizations and religions are once again forced to be locked in the child’s waiting room of history, but this time it is not their race that has to evolve before permitting them to leave their rooms but the complete eradication of their dysfunctional civilization. Otherwise, Samuel Huntington tells us, there is nothing else we can do but to accept the fact that “we” in the West have to bunker down and prepare for a persistent conflict between two antithetical civilizations, one modern and mature and civilized and the Other lost in time, an adolescent who is rebellious and in need of good parenting.

In the attempt to challenge these Orientalist representations of Islam, I am highly influenced by Immanuel Wallerstein’s world-systems analysis and Edward Said’s notion of a “contrapuntal imagination.” Through the imaginative method of these two scholars, the researcher remains aware of the dialogical nature in which cultures are narrated and produced. What I find most productive about the methodologies these two provide is that they allow us to apply a new lens in which we can see the dialogical processes at work in which phenomena like “civilizations,” religions, and identities do not contain their own temporal and spatial bodies but are instead in constant motion with Others. The time and space of the Other is in fact the very same time and space that “We” inhabit. Thus what I find most appealing about a Wallersteinian and a Saidian approach is that we are able to finally clear our lens a bit and see, in fact, that a nation’s (or a religion’s, civilization’s . . .) temporality and spatiality has no isolated essence within a

globe composed of a multiple, yet limited, variety of civilizations, and that to reduce any one of them to a crude temporal or spatial island, each containing its own *Geist*, is to be fooled by those who have been peddling the time machine idea. Such a portrayal runs counter to the idea, as put forward by Wallerstein, Said, and others, that modernity, at the macro level, discursively structures those micro-civilizational differences. What appears as an essential expression of difference is in effect the product of power asymmetries, which form and constitute those differences.

For those who are entrapped within the temporal and spatial lens that the colonizer invented long ago, each nation, religion, or civilization appears to have its own ethos that is stable within its spatial boundaries and temporal origins. In this sense, the people of a specific group are understood as having a single will, one mind, one race, one Qur'an, one five-pillars, one masculinist culture, one "unreformed religion" waiting for a Luther or a Newton to bring them into the modern world. The method I am using here allows for an analysis that challenges this highly essentialized notion of difference by positing that all civilizations are the invention of one modernity that all of us, from different locations, are struggling to bend in multiple ways. Such an analysis suggests that actors in different locations of the modern world-system are constrained to act within multiple political containers, which elites mobilize to their advantage through the use of national, religious, and cultural discourses.

Given such strengths, one of the challenges we now ask of world-system scholars is to address the resurgence of colonialist and racist discourses that are emerging in our midst, especially in Europe, the United States, and Israel. Just as Wallerstein in the 1970s shattered the orthodox theorem that capitalism is reduced to the proletariat-bourgeoisie dichotomies by illustrating that non-wage labor, including such labor forms as slavery and second-serfdom, are all a product of the world-capitalist system, we also need to shatter present hegemonic discourses that suggest there are certain "cultural systems" which stand outside and even predate modernity. In previous decades, we challenged those who often accorded the industrial working class a leading "historical role" of revolution over other figures of labor (such as peasant labor and reproductive labor). We did so by demonstrating that different labor formations were an intrinsic functioning characteristic of capitalism, rather than being different modes of production belonging to different historical periods of mankind. Similarly, today we must forcefully challenge the belief that Islam stands as the symbol of premodern, feudal society.

As many of us have now recognized, Marxists are not immune from holding this essentialist discourse. The manner by which some Marxists have traditionally dealt with religious movements, especially of the Islamic variant, is congruent with the racist discourse found in Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington. The more orthodox variants of Marxist thought tend to see religious identity as "pre-capitalist," belonging to a primitive, fourteenth-

century feudal mentality that has not evolved and that is caught up with the modern mode of global capital production. Islam, then, is a preindustrial social structure frozen in time in which “most people still work in agriculture or in handicraft production.” Hence, the lack of a vibrant capitalist class and a vanguard proletariat which moves the system forward, both of which, according to some Marxists, are crucial for modernity, forms the explanation of “what went wrong” and why Islam has been unable to adapt itself to “modernity, industrialization, and representative democracy.”<sup>40</sup>

This assertion strikes us as quite odd, for, as far as we know, mankind has not yet invented H.G. Wells’ time machine. The fact that the holders of this view can characterize and classify people as living in different historical times shows the alluring and racist power of this discourse. As Ali Mirsepassi has argued, Marxism does not really differ from liberal or conservative views of the global order in that, like its more conservative counterpart, it views history in a linear and evolutionary manner: “The scheme of historical gradation implied in this narrative forecloses the fullness of historical possibility by insisting on the adherence of human practice to an abstract, allegedly scientific, scheme of historical progress.”<sup>41</sup> In the same way that Hegel conceptualized Africa as “a continent enclosed within itself...[where] history is in fact out of the question,” some Marxists, armed with this Orientalist view of history, at times supported nationalist policies which aimed to destroy what they perceived to be archaic institutions acting as obstacles to capitalist or postcapitalist modernity.

This is in fact where World-system and Saidian scholars can have much to say by showing that, within the constitution of the modern world, an “outside,” external, self-containing set of civilizational islands standing next to, but somehow spatially and temporally disconnected from the other more modern civilizations, can no longer be posited to exist. As Georg Simmel, a German sociologist, recognized during the time in which the colonizer’s spatial and temporal template was most prevalent: “The border is not a spatial fact with sociological effects, but a sociological fact which takes a spatial form.”<sup>42</sup> Such a view allows the public, especially in the West, to take another look at their temporal categories and appreciate the fact that their constant discourse of distancing the Other is a myth that serves the purpose of fear and ridicule and is the greatest obstacle to the ideals that they posit as a central core of “Western” belief. The first step is for the writers and intellectuals, by commanding posts of privilege to the way the Other is constructed, to begin to unthink the temporal and spatial lens that they have acquired from the social Darwinists in the nineteenth century and to begin building a new house where all of its members can share the space equally.

### *III. THE TIME OF THE MUSLIM IN THE MODERN WESTERN (ISLAMOPHOBIC) IMAGINATION*

In contrast to Orientalist historians like Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington, other scholars have cautioned against the popular notion that “Islam” and the “West” have historically understood each other as two separate, and antithetical, civilizations. We have become so accustomed to talking about Europe and Islam as distinct civilizations that we forget that up to the early modern period, with the end of the Reformation in Europe, Islam was understood by the Christians of Medieval Europe not as its own world but as a *deviant* sect within the family of monotheists. In contrast to this view of civilizational clash, distinguished scholars like Albert Hourani, Maxine Rodinson, Samir Amin, and Hichem Djait, all of whom are leading figures in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies, have long cautioned against such generalizations, demonstrating that such a history is much too nuanced to be viewed in this modern temporal and spatial lens. Indeed, as Maxine Rodinson has pointed out, Muslims and Christians, up until early modernity, rather than viewing each other as two irreconcilable civilizations, instead perceived one another through the prism of conflicting sects whose origins come from the same original source:

*In the Middle Ages, Islam had been considered a schism, a kind of perversion of Christianity. This was, for example, how Dante regarded it. It was a time of an increasing number of schisms in the Church, expressed not only by religious differences but by political ambitions as well. This was the case with Islam, and indeed, it could now be seen as a mere schism, one of many.*<sup>43</sup>

Christians residing in what would eventually be called Europe, rather than defining Islam as a civilization unconnected to Christendom, instead perceived it as a heretical innovation of Christianity. Islam was not, as it became after the Enlightenment, seen as completely outside of the Christian self, where a strict ontology of difference would produce an understanding that Islam possessed a time-space perimeter that was radically different than the time-space of Europe.

As Rodinson’s intervention above suggests, while Islam is perceived in the Christian Medieval conception as a deviant faith, it nonetheless remains inside the time-space of the self, for even a deviant, no matter how misdirected, is one who has access to the truth but has perverted it. In the words of Hichem Djait, “As excessive as these judgments may be, they arose from the possibility . . . of admitting Islam into the body of Christian truth. Christian apologists simply wished to show that Islam was in error according to the canons of the Church, to deny the Prophet’s claim to be a real prophet, and to prove that the word of God was the word of God. From this standpoint, therefore, Allah is God . . . but he did not speak to Muhammad.”<sup>44</sup> A good case in point is St. John of Damascus (675-749), who incorporates Islam as one of many *Christian* heresies, but with the

defects of denying some of Christianity's essential truths (Hourani 1991: 10). In this sense Islam invoked a common tradition for "they too worshiped God in their own way, even if in doing so they were totally in error."<sup>45</sup>

In this pre-Enlightenment conception of civilizations, the modern temporal template of civilizations, in which each is perceived to have a distinct time-space module, was far from the minds of the elites. For those medieval Christians who resided in the European continent, Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, was an imposture, a fake prophet who peddled Christian ideas but distorted them to attain power. In this sense, he was like the Pope for the Protestants of the sixteenth-century, acquiring an unwarranted post of privilege by deceptively placing himself as the keeper of the keys of heaven. Indeed, in the words of Martin Luther, "the Pope and the Turk are 'the two arch-enemies of Christ and his Holy Church,' and if the Turk is the body of Anti-Christ, the Pope is the Head."<sup>46</sup> In Hichem Djait's words, Islam's "point of departure," for these Christians, "was a deep anger at the Prophet for having blocked humanity's evolution toward universal Christianity by his 'false prophecy'. . . . Muhammad was a false prophet, an imposter, and a hypocrite."<sup>47</sup> For our concern here, no matter how disparaging these remarks may be, they nonetheless placed the Muslim as one who had access to eternal truth but was deceived by a false prophet.

This would radically change in the post-Enlightenment period. Beginning in the late seventeenth century and becoming dogma by the late nineteenth, Islam would become more and more relegated as something quite separate from "Western civilization," a *homo islamicus*, a civilization sealed off in its own allotted time-space, endowed with its unique and essential nature.<sup>48</sup> As this new ontology of civilizational difference consolidated itself into a systematic worldview, the Islam-as-a-sect argument of Christianity gave way to a more rationalist, historicist, evolutionary, progressive, and secular philosophy. The East and Orient in general, and Islam in particular, came to be understood in secularized and laicized language. This was not a quick transition from one system of thought to the other. Indeed, as Hichem Djait has explained, throughout this transition there was an intermingling of the two perspectives, where "Orientalism used first Christianity and then secular humanism as a stick to beat Islam." But it would be through this transition that Europe and its intellectuals would finally converge on the idea of progress and "of a civilizing or liberating mission."<sup>49</sup> In this sense, rather than viewing a Christian religious worldview as being overtaken by a secular one, it is more accurate to describe it as a transition in which religious discourse was redeployed in a more secular framework, where "anyone who studied the Orient a secular vocabulary in keeping with these frameworks was required."<sup>50</sup>

The discursive power of this change should not be underestimated, for it allowed Eurocentric theorists to assign Europe with an exemplary status relative to other civilizations, thereby locking Islam into a temporal cage to which Europeans marched out of and freed themselves from many centuries



past.<sup>51</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein captures well the ideological utility this intellectual change offered the West:

*The core of the explanation that was developed was remarkably simple. Only European "civilization," which had its roots in the Greco-Roman world of Antiquity (and for some in the world of the Old Testament as well) could have produced "modernity"—a catchall term for a pastiche of customs, norms, and practices that flourished in the capitalist world-economy.... There must be, there must always have been, something in the non-European high civilizations that was incompatible with the human march toward modernity and true universalism. Unlike European civilization, which was asserted to be inherently progressive, the other high civilizations must have been somehow frozen in their trajectories, incapable therefore of transforming themselves into some version of modernity without the intrusion of outside (that is, European) forces.*<sup>52</sup>

Such intellectual changes were already visible by 1697 with one of the pioneers of the Enlightenment, Peter Bayle (1647-1706), whose monumental *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Historical and Critical Dictionary 1697) influenced French Encyclopedists like Diderot and other rationalist philosophers of the eighteenth century. Indeed, his *Dictionnaire*, whom many called the "arsenal of the Enlightenment," marks a turning point by which to evaluate the emergence of a new civilizational discourse.<sup>53</sup> But it was not until Orientalists in the nineteenth century—like Volney, Montesquieu, Hegel, and Renan—focused in on comparing Islam to Europe that we can say this discourse became the dominant way of understanding the "difference" between Islam and the West, for it was not until then that such differences were sharpened so as to indicate a kind of typology of social types which accused Islam of cultural deficiencies in its distorted path to modernity. It is in this intellectual context that the idea emerges that the "underdeveloped" nature of Islamic societies was due not simply to political and economic factors but to something much "deeper," and, in the words of our contemporary Orientalist Bernard Lewis, is the product of a "classical Islamic view."<sup>54</sup>

Volney (1757-1820), whose multivolume encyclopedia *Description del Egypte* (1809-22) came out of the Napoleonic Expedition of Egypt, provides a clear illustration of this new temporal ideology. In his detailed description of the Egyptians, he denounces Islam by accusing it for its crudity and anti-scientism, "bearing the mark of the barbarism it grew out of."<sup>55</sup> In his *Travels in Egypt and Syria*, for instance, he uses a discourse that will become a staple of Orientalist thought towards Islam, a discourse that will have a great effect not only on European thinkers but Muslims like Kemal Ataturk and other Middle Easterners as well. Volney's description of



Islam, in this passage below, utilizes effectively the temporal script that will shape many intellectual and political thinkers to come:

*So far from helping to remedy the abuses of government, the spirit of Islamism, one might say, is their original source. To be convinced of this, simply examine the book which is the repository of that spirit. . . . Anyone who reads the Koran will be forced to admit that it has no idea either of man's duties in society or of the formation of the body politic or the principles of the art of governance. . . . If amidst the babel of this perpetual delirium any grand design or coherent meaning ever breaks through, it speaks with the voice of an obstinate, impassioned fanaticism. . . . The inevitable consequence of all this is to set up the most absolute despotism in the person of the ruler through the blindest self-sacrifice on the part of his followers. And this indeed was Muhammad's goal. He wanted, not to enlighten but to reign. He sought, not disciples but subjects. Of all the men who have dared to give laws to nations none, assuredly, was ever more ignorant than Muhammad. Of all the absurd creations of the human mind none is more wretched than his book. . . . It would be easy to prove that the troubles of the State and the ignorance of the people in that part of the world are more or less directly traceable to the Koran and its morality.<sup>56</sup>*

Following the example of Volney, the French Philosopher Voltaire would write a play with the title *Fanatism, or Muhammad the Prophet* depicting Muhammad as a theocratic tyrant, "who uses the sentiments and beliefs of human beings in order to serve his 'affreux desseins.'"<sup>57</sup> Likewise, for the great German philosopher, Hegel, Islamic civilization was of use only in so far that it had the historic task "to hand on Greco-Roman civilization to modern Europe," where "the Spirit had moved from Islam to modern Europe, whose historical mission was to absorb the antithesis into a synthesis, and nothing was left in the Muslim world except sensual enjoyment and oriental repose."<sup>58</sup> Interesting enough, in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, while Hegel praises Islam as serving an important function in the East by introducing the abstract One into that part of the world, thereby "transcending the negativity of the Oriental mind," he still ends up finding it lacking in that, unlike the concrete manifestation of the Spirit in Europe, its version of universalism was too abstract, causing the Spirit to lose its energy and thereby vanishing Islam "from the stage of history."<sup>59</sup>

As we can see here, Islam was no longer viewed in the Medieval sense of a monotheistic sect led by a false prophet but as a civilization in and of itself that had played a role in the evolution of man but that, somehow, due to its internal makeup, ceased to evolve. For Ernest Renan

(1832-92), this was expressed as a natural course of development, where “different peoples have different abilities to move along this path. . . . There is a hierarchy of peoples, languages and cultures. . . . The Semitic spirit and Islam have conquered the world, but it can produce nothing else.”<sup>60</sup> In his now very famous lecture of 1883 that he delivered at the Sorbonne entitled “Islam and Science,” he came to the conclusion that “Islam was the characteristic product of the Semitic mentality. It was a religion which prevented the use of reason and growth of science. . . . There had never been, there could not be, such a thing as a Muslim scientist: science had indeed existed and been tolerated inside Islamic society, but the scientists and philosophers were not really Muslims.”<sup>61</sup> So that, even when there were individuals within the Islamic world who have passed on a philosophical legacy, like Avicenna, they were not, in Renan’s mind, really Muslims or Arabs, for science came to them only as the “fossilized remnants of the ancient Hellenic world.” This denial is in keeping with Renan’s view of the development of mankind, where Muslim philosophy is considered to be an oxymoron for which *falsafa* (Arab philosophy) evolved from an outside, non-Islamic, source. In Renan’s own words, “the Muslim is in the profoundest contempt of education, science, [and] *everything that constitutes the European spirit.*”<sup>62</sup> All one has to do to see this truth at work, says Renan, is visit the East or Africa where he will be “struck by the hidebound spirit of the true believer, by this kind of iron circle which surrounds his head, rendering him absolutely closed to science, incapable of learning anything or of opening himself to a new idea.”<sup>63</sup> The contempt he has for Islam, and the Semitic race in which it arose from, is spelled out explicitly:

*One sees that in all things the Semitic race appears to us to be an incomplete race, by virtue of its simplicity. This race—if I dare use the analogy—is to the Indo-European family what a pencil sketch is to painting; it lacks that variety, that amplitude, that abundance of life which is the condition of perfectibility. Like those individuals who possess so little fecundity that, after a gracious childhood, they attain only the most mediocre virility, the Semitic nations experienced their fullest flowering in their first age and have never been able to achieve true maturity.*<sup>64</sup>

In keeping with this new temporal discourse, Renan’s denunciation of Islam is tied to a “stage in human development through which Europe itself has passed . . . and from which it has won deliverance.”<sup>65</sup>

As we can see here, the nineteenth century represents a period in which the idea of Development, Progress, Evolution, Social forces, and other similar historicist terms were becoming the reigning ideas to explain civilizational, cultural, and religious differences. Dissimilarity between societies and civilizations were now viewed through the lens of a historicist

narrative with its views that all which exists rests on some historical manmade force, which is self-evolving, continuous, and changes in accordance to particular meetings of social and cultural forces that are altered by the internal dynamics of its constituent parts. Hence, each civilization, whether it is a religious or cultural force or the act of spirit, classes, status groups, or racial characteristics, contains within itself a developmental seed that rises in accordance to its particular type. In Albert Hourani's fine précis of this intellectual change, "history as such assumed a new importance: it was the working out of the nature and destiny of the universe, and the study of history was the attempt to define the laws by which the working out took place."<sup>66</sup>

Thus Islam itself became a phase in the historical development of civilizations, one of many in the world each having its own essential time and space. This new system of thought can be characterized as a Toynbee-like-archive list of civilizations, each of which can be narrated, by a gifted historian or social scientist equipped with the proper conceptual tools, from its origins on, as though one were describing a biological organism from its simplest one cell structure to a more complex multi-cell unit. Where and at what point of development each and every unit is to be classified is a decision that needs to be made by a competent individual who has mastered the skills to evaluate the temporal point or historical stage it now resides in.

This point of view affected both intellectuals and statesmen alike, as is the classic examples of the sociologist Max Weber and the British Prime Minister Lord Cromer. In the case of Cromer, whose book *Modern Egypt* would gather together many facets of this new historical narrative into a simple system any literate person can comprehend (and one which will remain with us from his time to our very own, as the case with Thomas Friedman, Nail Ferguson and others today suggests), the occupation of Egypt, he argues, is being used by the British out of an act of kindness towards the less developed Egyptian and Islamic peoples of the Middle East. Cromer's reasoning for this is quite clear: Islam, even though it is a "noble monotheism," is a failure as a social system. The list that he provides of why it is a failure would become the script through which many after him would plagiarize in their attempt to rationalize either the hostile bombardment of that part of the world (as in the case today with the U.S. bombing of Iraq) or "indigenous" Muslim elites charged with "developing" their society (as we will see with the case of Kemal Ataturk below): As a religion Islam is patriarchal and oppresses its women; it does not separate mosque and state; it is intolerant to minorities and other faiths; it permits slavery and forced bondage, and, straight from Renan and Volney before him, it discourages science and Reason. As such, it is no surprise that he holds the belief that "Muslims can scarcely hope to rule themselves or reform their societies."<sup>67</sup>

In more academic circles like that of Max Weber, the perception was that, if development, rationality, science, and capitalism developed in

Europe first and not elsewhere, then part of the explanation for its success may lie in Christianity itself, especially its Protestant variant, leading Weber to a massive historical comparative analysis of many world religions with that of Christianity, including Islam. To no surprise, he found the answer he was looking for: Islam, since it resembles the “pure type” of what he calls a “prophetic book-religion” like the Jewish and Christian tradition, but, unlike the latter two, Islam’s “ethic is ‘feudal,’ oriented—even in its mystical form—towards ‘world conquest’ and not towards ‘world renunciation’ as in Christianity.” Because of this difference in its ethics and ascetic orientation towards the world, he concludes that it must be internal features in Islam that caused it to fail in developing the type of formal rationality it needed to produce modernity. Those reasons are “the obviously unquestioned acceptance of slavery, serfdom, and polygamy; the disesteem for and subjugation of women; the essentially ritualistic character of religious obligations; and finally, the great simplicity of the modest ethical requirements.”<sup>68</sup> As such, the combined effects of its particular “feudal” nature mixed with a particular form of rationality not congruent with modernity, Islam—as a world religion—does not have the proper characteristics to develop a modern society like that found in the West.

In conclusion, we can say that the emerging expansion of colonization throughout the world by the rising power of Western states, gave this historicist temporal lens an intellectual vibrancy to explain the new global hierarchies of the modern world-system. It filled a void leftover by this European expansionary thrust into the global south and helped to explain why one sector of the world ruled and produced more wealth, machinery, finished goods, bigger bridges, steamships, and militaries than any other sector of the world. In the case of the “Muslim world” and, in particular, the Ottoman Empire, the fact that there was outright colonization from the Napoleonic period on, especially with the occupation in 1881 of both Tunisia and Egypt, added a deep sense that something about that part of the world had led to its decline and subordination to Western powers. Thus emerged the idea that Islam, like other “traditional” religious or cultural systems, must contain some type of barrier that does not permit it to progress along the same lines that the West has traveled. It is as though there is a genetic defect that has dwarfed Islam’s development into a mature, fully functioning specimen. This is indeed the central precept of Islamophobia, a view which understands the problems of our globe as stemming from a cultural defect in “their civilization” and the failure to see the possibilities that the problems that challenge us today are just as much “over here” as they are “over there.”

ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This essay comes from a number of sections in Khaldoun Samman, *The Clash of Modernities: The Islamist Challenge and the Making and Unmaking of the "New" Jew, Turk, and Arab*, Boulder, Colorado: Paradigm Press (Forthcoming June 2009).
- <sup>2</sup> Ali Mirsepassi (2000), *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization: Negotiating Modernity in Iran*, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, p. 8.
- <sup>3</sup> Said, Edward (1979), *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books, p.177.
- <sup>4</sup> see Timothy Mitchell (2002: 123-52), *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*, Berkeley, California: The University of California Press.
- <sup>5</sup> Gail Bederman (1996: 31, 35), *Manliness and Civilization: The Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- <sup>6</sup> This analysis is borrowed from Joseph Massad's (2001: 77-78) adaptation in his study of Jordanian nationalism from Johannes Fabian's analysis of anthropology (2002); Joseph Massad (2001), *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan*, New York, New York: Columbia University Press; Johannes Fabian (2002), *Time and the Other*, New York, New York: Columbia University Press.
- <sup>7</sup> Massad (2001: 78).
- <sup>8</sup> quoted in Mathew Jacobson (2000:142), *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples At Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, New York: Hill & Wang..
- <sup>9</sup> quoted in Jacobson (2000:116).
- <sup>10</sup> Raymond Corbey (1995:60), "Ethnographic Showcases, 1870-1930," in Jan Nerveen Pieterse and Bhikhu Parekh (eds.), *The Decolonization of Imagination: Culture, Knowledge, and Power*, London and New Jersey: Zed Books.
- <sup>11</sup> Corbey (1995:72).
- <sup>12</sup> emphasis added, Elizabeth Marshall Thomas (2006:6), *The Old Way: A Story of the First People*, New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- <sup>13</sup> Bederman (1996:31).
- <sup>14</sup> Michael Adas (1989), *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; David C. Engerman et. al., (2003), *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Cold War*, Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press..
- <sup>15</sup> Bederman (1996: 31).
- <sup>16</sup> Fabian (2002:111-12).
- <sup>17</sup> Herbert Spencer cited in Jacobson (2000:142).
- <sup>18</sup> Bederman (1996:29).
- <sup>19</sup> Hegel cited in Mirsepassi (2000:31).
- <sup>20</sup> Paul Mendes-Flohr (1991: 81), *Divided Passions: Jewish Intellectuals and the Experience of Modernity*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- <sup>21</sup> Hegel cited in Mindes-Flohr (1991: 81).
- <sup>22</sup> Jacobson (2000:113).
- <sup>23</sup> Jacobson (2000:119).
- <sup>24</sup> Jacobson (2000:142)
- <sup>25</sup> Adas (2003:27).
- <sup>26</sup> Jacobson (2000: 50).
- <sup>27</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty (2008:9), *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- <sup>28</sup> Fabian (2002).
- <sup>29</sup> Parekh (1995).
- <sup>30</sup> Parekh (1995:93).
- <sup>31</sup> Pieterse and Parekh (1995:93-94)
- <sup>32</sup> Adas (1989).

<sup>33</sup> Bernard Lewis's answer to the question "Why do they hate us?" is posited in terms of the "Islamic mind," located deep in doctrinal ideas, and represents a "return" to "the classical Islamic view" in which "the duty of God's soldiers is to dispatch God's enemies as quickly as possible to the place where God will chastise them—that is to say, the afterlife" (Lewis cited in Ali Mirsepassi, 2000). As Ali Mirsepassi argues (2000: 44), "the venturing of the 'clash of civilization' thesis depends upon the assertion that the hatred felt by Muslims has relatively little to do with any violation on the part of the West, and a great deal more to do with an ancient and almost supernatural form of enmity." Edward Said's (2000) now classic response to Lewis and Huntington is also recommended.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Friedman, *New York Times*, October 30, 2003 "It's No Vietnam."

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, November 8, 2006, "Tolerable or Awful: The Roads Left in Iraq."

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times* November 29, 2006 "Ten Months or Ten Years."

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*

<sup>39</sup> (Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, November 8, 2006, "Tolerable or Awful: The Roads Left in Iraq.")

<sup>40</sup> Lauren Langman and Douglas Morris, "The Roots of Terror," in Michael J. Thompson (2003), *Islam and the West: Critical Perspectives on Modernity*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: United Kingdom, 49–74. The schizophrenic mode of analysis of Langman and Morris's essay brings up many Orientalist assumptions ripe for a world-system's critique. Langman and Morris are struggling to devise a radical revision for the roots of terrorism and the rise of Islamic movements, including by mentioning the need for a "larger social-historical context" and the rise and fall of global hegemonies. But in the end, the entire edifice of their argument is directly taking from Bernard Lewis's book, *Islam and the West*, including this quote with which they are in full agreement: "The highly advanced Islamic pursuits of science, medicine, and philosophy ceased to develop [after the collapse of the Almohad Empire]. 'Independent inquiry virtually came to an end, and science was for the most part reduced to a veneration of a corpus of approved knowledge'" (p.61). They continue down this path by arguing that "Asian 'tigers' have prospered, as has Israel – while Islamic countries have remained poor, backward, and stagnant," leaving us with the intentional impression that it has something to do with the cultural ethic of Islamic culture. The "left" here meets Bernard Lewis in its crudest form. It reminds us very much of the argument levelled against African Americans: "Jews, Koreans, and Chinese made it, so what's wrong with you? Is it the dysfunctional, matriarchical family system now run by single parent families?"

<sup>41</sup> Mirsepassi (2000: 40).

<sup>42</sup> Georg Simmel quoted in Michel Warschawski, *On the Border*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press (2005:xvi).

<sup>43</sup> Maxine Rodinson (1987: 35), *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press.

<sup>44</sup> Hichem Djait (1985: 13), *Europe and Islam: Cultures and Modernity*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

<sup>45</sup> Rodinson (1987: 26).

<sup>46</sup> Albert Hourani (1980: 10), *Europe and the Middle East*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

<sup>47</sup> Djait (1985: 12-13).

<sup>48</sup> Rodinson (1987: 60-61).

<sup>49</sup> Djait (1985: 19).

<sup>50</sup> Said (1979: 12-21).

<sup>51</sup> Djait (1985: 51).



- <sup>52</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein (2006:33), *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power*, New York and London: The New Press.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibrahim Kalin (2004: 154-55), "The Roots of Misconception: Euro-American Perceptions of Islam Before and After September 11," in Joseph Lumbard (ed.), *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition*, Bloomington, Indiana: World Wisdom inc., pp.143-187.
- <sup>54</sup> see Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly* 266 (September 1990, p.49).
- <sup>55</sup> Djait (1985: 24).
- <sup>56</sup> Volney cited in Djait (1985: 25), emphasis added.
- <sup>57</sup> Hourani (1980: 11).
- <sup>58</sup> Hourani (1980: 13, 57).
- <sup>59</sup> Hourani (1991: 26-27).
- <sup>60</sup> Hourani (1991: 29).
- <sup>61</sup> Hourani (1980: 61); Massad (2007: 12-13), *Desiring Arabs*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- <sup>62</sup> Renan cited in Kalin (2004: 171), emphasis added by Kalin.
- <sup>63</sup> Renan cited in Hourani (2004: 11-12).
- <sup>64</sup> Renan cited in Said (1979: 149).
- <sup>65</sup> Djait (1985: 51).
- <sup>66</sup> Hourani (1980: 55).
- <sup>67</sup> Hourani (1980: 12-13).
- <sup>68</sup> Max Weber cited in Hourani (1980: 70).

# ***The Wall Street Journal's Muslims: Representing Islam in American Print News Media***

**Suad Joseph**

*University of California, Davis*

**Benjamin D'Harlingue**

*University of California, Davis*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 131-162.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

# ***The Wall Street Journal's Muslims: Representing Islam in American Print News Media***

**Suad Joseph**

*University of California, Davis*

**Benjamin D'Harlingue**

*University of California, Davis*

## **INTRODUCTION: REPRESENTATIONAL PROJECTS**

"Virtually nothing about the study of Islam is 'free' and undetermined by urgent contemporary pressures," Edward Said (1981) observed nearly three decades ago (135). "The media, the government, the geopolitical strategists, and – although they are marginal to the culture at large – the academic experts on Islam are all in concert: Islam is a threat to Western civilization." "What I am saying," Said (1981) continued, "is that negative images of Islam are very much more prevalent than any others, and that such images correspond, not to what Islam 'is'... but to what prominent sectors of a particular society take it to be " (136).

Since the publishing of Said's book, *Covering Islam* (1981), a tsunami of news media coverage about Islam and Muslims has flooded the consumer public. After September 11, 2001, American print news media increasingly focused on Islam globally and on Arabs, Muslims and Islam in the West, especially in the United States. This essay investigates how representational frameworks construct Islam and "Muslims" in leading U.S.A. print news media. Our project is not about what Islam "is" or the differences between what Islam (or Muslims) "is" and what prominent sectors of society take it to be. We analyze the representation of Islam and Muslims as signifying practices of dominant power relations and hegemonic discourses, taking the leading American conservative daily newspaper, the *Wall Street Journal* (*WSJ*), as a case study. In this essay, we focus on the Op-Ed commentaries in the *WSJ* from 2000-2007.

News media is productively seen, as Teun A. van Dijk (1988) contended, through the social context of power relations in which it is embedded (1). The press is dependent on power elites but also contributes to the production of power. Following Michel Foucault (1977), we can suggest that "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations" (27). Along these lines of thought, Pierre Bourdieu defined journalism as a "field," like law and politics, which has a force and a degree of relative autonomy. "Journalism is a microcosm with its own laws, defined both by its position in the world

at large and by the attractions and repulsions to which it is subject from other such microcosms" (Bourdieu 1996, 39). Bourdieu (2005) argued that the journalistic field has an increasingly powerful hold on the production of meaning (41). He explained, "...the journalistic field, which is increasingly heteronomous, in other words, increasingly subject to the constraints of the economy and of politics, is more and more imposing its constraints on all other fields, particularly the fields of cultural production such as the field of the social sciences, philosophy, etc., and on the political field" (Bourdieu 2005, 41). Journalism and politics, in Bourdieu's reading, participate in broader discursive formations through which power and knowledge are constituted.

If we accept that journalism, as a field in mutually constitutive relations with economy and politics, has an increasing hold on the production of signification and meaning, then the concerns of Edward Said about the prevalence of negative images of Islam and Muslims in the news media raise questions about the power of journalism to shape public understandings and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims. Rey Chow offered an example of this process in relation to Japanese Americans. Chow (2006) argued that, after the U.S. government dropped bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, social, scientific, and humanistic knowledge production in the United States facilitated constructing Japan/Japanese as targets by producing and marking differences between "Japanese" and "American." We might consider, therefore, how Muslims and Islam have, post 9/11, increasingly become produced as targeted objects of surveillance and disciplining through journalistic (and other) practices.

Our study identifies patterns of representation in the *WSJ* commentaries that "encode" messages reflecting the dynamics of power relations in the representation of Muslims, Islam, and Arab and Muslim Americans. Stuart Hall (1999) argues that "encoding" is a process of producing news, which is the result of the relations of production, frames of knowledge, and technical infrastructure at the site of a news organization. Encoding of meaning, for Hall, presumes a common cultural frame among those who receive the message and a coherence in the frame of reference between the producers and consumers. Decoding meaning, then, is the process by which news is received. While we agree with David Morley's (1983) critique of Stuart Hall that texts can be read with multiple meanings, nevertheless, Hall's approach identifies a critical aspect of the workings of hegemonic meanings in news media. We are interested in decoding the fields of power embedded in print news texts, which circulate hegemonic meanings of Islam and Muslims.

In previous work, we documented the racialization of Arab and Muslim Americans through a content analysis of reporting/writing practices in the *New York Times* (arguably the leading U.S.A. liberal newspaper) news articles from 2000-2003 (Joseph and D'Harlingue 2008). We began this project to compare *WSJ* (arguably the leading U.S.A. conservative

newspaper) news articles with news articles in the *NYT*. Finding sufficient overlap in news article representation, we turned our attention to the commentaries, “Op-Eds,” in the *WSJ*.

Why commentaries? Commentaries are not authored by *WSJ* staff. As mainly volunteered contributions, commentaries are positioned to represent the “public,” independent of the “editorial” page – and of each other. We sought to investigate whether the commentaries, regardless of their presumed autonomy, displayed patterns of representation which paralleled patterns in the news articles in both newspapers. Significant reproduction of these patterns would suggest a convergence in the coverage of Islam – a concert of media, government, geopolitical strategists and academics, in Edward Said’s view. The convergence of multiple newspapers and of multiple sites within a newspaper, facilitated by decisions made by editors on what commentaries to publish, we speculated, would imply broad participation in circuits of knowledge production.<sup>1</sup> Our findings did reveal a convergence of patterns in the *WSJ* commentaries published between January 2000 and July 2007. The commentaries form a relatively cohesive constellation of thematics, which collectively essentializes and disparages Islam, Muslims, and Arab and Muslim Americans. While we do not investigate editorial intent, a close reading of the commentaries reveals the semblance of an editorial point of view.

#### *PROJECT METHODS*

We gathered commentaries from the *Wall Street Journal* using ProQuest, searching for all commentaries appearing between January 1, 2000 and July 31, 2007, containing the words Islam and Muslim or their derivatives (such as Islamic, Islamist, Muslim American). The search yielded 1387 commentaries, indicating that the *WSJ* averaged at least one commentary every other day during this period. Of the 1387 commentaries, which offered significant attention, rather than simply a passing reference, to Islam or Muslims, we selected 140 in which Muslims or Islam were the central thematic. Of the 140 articles in which Islam or Muslims were the central thematic, 75% (105 articles) evidenced the patterns that, we argue, are thematically repeated in the *WSJ*. Although they do not all agree with each other or all the points discussed below, if a reader does not disaggregate this assemblage into its multiple and, at times, contradictory components, the frequent reader of the *WSJ* columnists might be persuaded to accept these encodings as autonomous and independent representations of a coherent reality. This paper is concerned with disaggregating and decoding this representational constellation.

#### *WALL STREET JOURNAL ARTICLES DECODED*

---

<sup>1</sup> It would signify that circuits of knowledge production are always imbricated within fields of unequal power relations (Foucault 1980, Gramsci 2000).

In *Wall Street Journal* commentaries from January 1, 2000 to July 31, 2007 in which Islam, Muslim or their derivatives were central to the article, we found the following eight thematics, which emerged as components of a relatively sedimented constellation of meaning, most of which were consistent with representations we found in *New York Times* news articles (Joseph and D'Harlingue 2008) and in our preliminary analysis of *WSJ* news articles.

### 1. The construction of unbridgeable difference between Muslims and the West:

In the commentaries, Muslims, whether citizen or foreign, are frequently portrayed as “not us,” as the embodiment of the illegible, inscrutable other reflecting the binary of Samuel Huntington’s (1996) clash of civilizations – two cultures, two religions, two civilizations. This notion of unbridgeable cultural difference, traceable across multiple *WSJ* commentaries, portrays Islam as inscrutable and almost unintelligible to Judeo-Christian theology and philosophy. The Judeo-Christian traditions, in these templates, are the progenitors of secularism, rationalism, science, capitalism, and market economies. They inspire the production of the autonomous, individualist self and its corresponding democratic state formation. Muslims, whether American or not, are represented as the very embodiment of alterity, the cultural other who stands opposed to the West. The normative presumption of an “us” or “we” with which the reader is meant to identify is constructed as white American and European, and “they” will never be like us.

Christopher DeMuth’s April 29, 2004 commentary, “Guns, Butter and the War on Terror,” directly asserts the “clash of civilizations” thesis. DeMuth (2004) writes, “Yet the war on terror is different from anything we have faced before. It is a clash of civilizations, not economic systems, and it is likely to be long, nasty, and punctuated with harsh reversals.” DeMuth dismisses class conflict and dislodges the histories of the war on terror and the cold war from any explanatory role.

In Robert Bartley’s “Thinking Things Over: Patriotism, Pilgrims and Shaping the Future” (November 19, 2001), Islam is posed as a discreet entity resisting modernity, Enlightenment, capitalism, and the West. Bartley writes, “Islam did inspire great civilizations and empires that ruled non-Muslim peoples with some tolerance. But it has failed to reach an accommodation with modernity so largely shaped by the Christian, Enlightenment and capitalist West. We are in the early stages of testing whether this impasse is permanent. To reject modernity is to consign your people to economic backwardness.” Bartley’s (2001) difference-making strategy deploys the Western “we”: “Just at this moment, clearly, we’re having a dust-up with Islam” (A21). Using this Western “we,” Bartley invites



his readers into a cultural company excluding Muslims.<sup>2</sup> Cultures are not equal for Bartley. Before September 11, 2001, he contends: “The academy was obsessed with ‘post-modernism’ (meaning the abandonment of standards), and ‘multiculturalism’ (meaning any old culture was as good as the next one).” He continues: “But now, after the unspeakable evil we witnessed on September 11, only a few aging and pitiful radicals will stand to argue that there are no standards, that one culture is as good as another, that America is a malign force in the world.”<sup>3</sup> Bartley imagines the U.S. nation as a time and space determined entirely by a European lineage, a Pilgrim genealogy. Writing near the Thanksgiving holiday, Bartley states: “This week, redolent with American tradition and folklore, is an apt time to reflect on the new patriotism. The flags are an affirmation of a community that reaches back through the generations to the first settlers carrying Western civilization to these shores.” Adding that “the United States is a unique nation, based not on ethnic kinship but on a set of ideas,” Bartley (2001) implies that Muslim countries are not based on ideas and principles and, thus, are not nations in the modern sense.<sup>4</sup>

*WSJ* readers are given the idea that Muslims live in a distinct “Muslim” world, separate from the West; in an April 8, 2003 article, authored by Noah Feldman, entitled “Muslim Democrats? Why not!,” Feldman (2003) writes: “If many in the West cannot imagine democracy without separation of church and state, many in the Muslim world find it impossible to imagine legitimate democracy with it” (A14). Feldman’s article suggests that Islam itself is not necessarily incompatible with democracy: “Is Islamic democracy possible, whether in Iraq or elsewhere? A large and growing number of Muslims believe that it is.” However, Feldman believes that Muslims face special obstacles to democracy. He says that “no Arab country is a true democracy,” yet “Islam is not the barrier to democracy” for these countries. Feldman (2003) suggests that the problem is that Muslim democrats “have to contest alternative interpretations [of Islam] posed by extremists who are instead unconsciously influenced by totalitarianism and Marxism.” Feldman’s use of the term “unconsciously” asserts another level of difference. In psychoanalytical grammar, the unconscious references familial dynamics as the most

---

<sup>2</sup> Jaspir Puar and Amit Rai (2002) make a related argument about the figure of the terrorist in opposition to the figure of the patriot.

<sup>3</sup> Lisa Duggan (2003) has shown how neoliberalism is able to assimilate notions of multiculturalism in the interests of capital and dominant gendered, racial, and sexual formations. Wahneema Lubiano (1997) calls for a critical multiculturalism as opposed to the popularly circulated notions of multiculturalism. Such popular notions, more readily absorbed by liberalism and more readily refuted, focus mostly on “cultural” differences and acceptance of “difference” but do not challenge uneven power relations.

<sup>4</sup> Steven Salaita (2006) has compared the colonialist rhetoric that white settlers used in North America to carry out genocide against Native Americans to the types of colonialist rhetoric deployed against Palestinians, a largely Muslim (and also Christian) population. Similar parallels are evident in Bartley’s invocation of Thanksgiving nostalgia alongside anti-Muslim rhetoric.

primordial arenas of repression. In this primordial site of repression, Feldman places totalitarianism and Marxism to shape the extremist “Muslim” into the undemocratic anti-modern self. The “unconscious” evokes a sense of action without reflection. Feldman’s fielding of the term “unconsciously” also stages an arena of action in which Muslims unreflectively imbibe totalitarianism and Marxism – pitting the unconscious, unreflective Muslim political actor against the reflective, agential Western democrat. Muslim democrats are not viewed as exerting agency or acting other than in relationship to Muslim extremists who appear to continually foil the possibilities of democracy and modernity. In Feldman’s discourse, the political conditions of the Muslim world are viewed through a psychological drama, which is collective, communal, essentialized experience; whereas Western subjects are accounted for through a psychodynamic framework in which subject formation is individualized and therefore more compatible with his conceptions of Western democracy.<sup>5</sup>

For Feldman, the separation of church and state in the U.S. and the West is a given. He writes: “Separation of church and state is an excellent idea, even, even a constitutional necessity, in a religiously diverse country like the U.S. Where almost everybody in a country is Muslim, however, a democratic state may nonetheless have a religious character” (Feldman 2003). This statement ignores the Christian underpinnings of Western democracies and their policies. Moreover, it assumes that a state governing predominantly Muslims is inherently more likely to have a religious character. Although governments of predominantly Christian countries mostly do represent themselves as “secular,” we should think of “secularity” not as a mode of separating the religious from the governmental, but rather, as Talal Asad (2003) suggests, the secular should be understood as a regulatory norm that creates the effect of public values pitted against individualized private beliefs. The secular may be deployed to articulate a figuring of religion in relation to the state, but that figuring is not always one of strict separation.

Another way to construct unbridgeable difference is through reference to kinship or differences in family structures, as Laurie Mylroie does in a commentary entitled “The Baluch Connection” (March 18, 2003). Laurie Mylroie’s (2003) article details a conspiracy theory of sorts, alleging that some U.S. authorities’ “official positions is thus that a single family is at the center of almost all the major terrorist attacks against U.S. targets since 1993” (A16). The notion is that terrorists are so alike that they are all in the same family. Later, it becomes unclear whether it is really one literal family or whether “family” is being used more metaphorically. Mylroie (2003)

---

<sup>5</sup> See Joseph (1999) for a critique of the deployment of psychoanalytical typologies to universalize notions of normative individualism as well as the presumption that the only alternative to individualism must be a “collective,” “communal” or “familial” self. Joseph suggests a construct of the “connective” self in some Arab societies that is more fluid, context-organized, and recognized as mature and functional in those societies.

goes from asserting, "this Baluch 'family' is from Kuwait," to suggesting, "rather than one family, these terrorists are, quite plausibly, elements of Iraq's Baluch network." Representations of Muslims frequently deploy the family as the all-determining factor motivating and organizing Muslims' actions and social life. In this instance, assumptions about kinship connections slip into the idea that Muslims are so different from the normative "we" that differences amongst them cannot be discerned. They might as well be "one" family.

## 2. Unbridgeable differences as incompatible with modernity

Mark Bowden's January 2, 2007 commentary, titled "So, Saddam Is Dead," expresses the notion that Muslim nations are not real nations and thus not compatible with modernity. The article reads:

*Any nation is, at heart, an idea. Once people started organizing themselves in groups larger than their own blood lines, they had to invent reasons for considering themselves part of something bigger -- tribes, city states, feudal kingdoms, nations, empires. Language, customs, religion, ideology and geographic proximity have all served. The idea of a state that accepts as equal citizens people from all corners of the globe, a nation founded on abstract principles, is a relative newcomer. We have been trying to get the people inhabiting a large swath of land between and on both sides of the Tigris and Euphrates to embrace the concept. It is an ongoing struggle with less-than-encouraging results. (Bowden 2007)*

Muslim states are portrayed as intolerant of religious and ethnic minorities within their states (including Muslim minorities), as oppressive to women, as anti-Semitic. The benchmarks of modern nations in which religion is subordinated to national loyalties are not achieved by Muslim states as represented in *WSJ* commentaries.

In a February 26, 2002 article, entitled "Quashing Hate Politics Is the Key to Defeating Terrorism," George Melloan builds on the presumption that Muslims have not reached a separation of religion and state and do not yet have the capacity for modern nationhood. "Yet there is one aspect of Islam that gives pause. As the noted Princeton scholar Bernard Lewis has pointed out, there is no concept in Islam of a separation of church and state" (Melloan 2002). Melloan's line of argumentation ends up positing Islamic political and religious as backwards or outdated. Discussing the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, Melloan states:

*But then the orthodox Jews of Israel, a small minority, also have a strict interpretation of religious law. So it must be noted that in addition to the conflicts between religious beliefs, there is another conflict, between orthodoxy and liberalism, that is*

*just as profound. Liberalism, meaning a respect and toleration of other views, gained ground in the world during the 20th century, partly because of the success of an American experiment founded on a Bill of Rights and church-state separation which ultimately led to a popular reaction against racial and religious bigotry.*

Melloan links Americans and Jews through a common liberalism, placing them temporally in the 20th century and figuring them politically as anti-racist and opposed to religious bigotry. Melloan positions Muslims against politically and temporally progressive Israeli Jews and Americans, by listing examples of predominantly Islamic states informed by or governed through Islamic religious doctrine. "Orthodoxy, the mind-set that regards other beliefs with deep and sometimes violent suspicions, has been on the defensive for years," asserts Melloan before suggesting that, although socialism at one point might have offered an alternative to religiously-inflected political formations in the Middle East – an area that Melloan (2002) describes as "the spawning ground for global terrorism" – instead, as most people of the world lost faith in socialism, Muslims "reverted back to their cultural roots," – religiosity in the face of modernity.

Gender is the penultimate site for demonstrating that Islam is anti-modern and non-democratic. Gender norms and relations in predominately Muslim countries are represented as antithetical to the progress of Western women's movements and, indeed, call for strategies for saving Muslim women. Kay Hymowitz's March 7, 2003 commentary, entitled, "The Women Feminists Forgot," denounces activities scheduled in the US for International Women's Day, 2003. She accuses feminists of not "raising their voices against genuine female oppression," which she locates "in the fundamentalist Muslim world," where "many females there are not allowed to drive, vote or venture out of the house alone" and where "women [...] are expected to cheerfully endure, in the discreet words of the Arab News, 'a light beating' from disapproving husbands." Glossing over domestic violence and restrictions on women's movement and political participation in the US, Hymowitz (2003) locates the oppression of women solely in the "Muslim world," where "millions of people—female and male—[...] suffer under the rule of tyrants," while "gender feminists," "post-colonial or multicultural feminists," and "United Nations feminists" are averting their eyes from the truth that only Western-style democracies have made the feminist principle of the full rights and dignity of women a reality.

Hymowitz's commentary amounts to a call to "save" Muslim women. She states: "Feminists had an extraordinary opportunity after Sept. 11, when pictures of other-worldly creatures in blue burqas shocked even beer-chugging Super Bowl fans into becoming women's rights advocates" (Hymowitz 2003). September 11, 2001 is marked as the moment in which women in burqas become subjects of interest and shock. By calling women in burqas "other worldly creatures," Hymowitz reduces these subjects to the

alien, the not human as a result of Islam. Who counts as “human” is linked to rights in Western liberal democracies, the sites which signify modern political subjectivity. Hymowitz’s narrative dehumanizes Muslim women while supporting an interventionist rhetoric that purports to be aimed at the alleviation of oppressive conditions against Muslim women. Labeling as “trivial” critiques of gender oppression in Western-style democracies, Hymowitz challenges feminists who argue against U.S. military interventions, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, which can save Muslim women.

The mission of the U.S. to save Muslim women from patriarchy is on display in Daniel Henninger’s March 11, 2005 commentary, “Wonder Land: Muslim Women Seize Chance To Claim Rights.” Asserting that “this process of freedom finding new life seems to be happening now around the Middle East,” Henninger congratulates the Bush family. “In Washington this week, women from 15 Muslim nations met at the State Department with Laura Bush, and the subject, as it tends to be with the Bushes these days, was freedom. [...] The correlation between the two Bush military interventions and the political rise of women in Afghanistan and Iraq is direct and obvious. But now women throughout the Islamic world are accelerating similar claims for basic human and political rights” (Henninger 2005). Henninger qualifies, “I am not suggesting that George W. Bush is the father of women’s rights in the Middle East. Egypt had a formal feminist movement in the 1920s.” Then he asserts, “The fact remains that promoting greater freedom for these women was on the official Bush agenda before September 11. The liberation of Iraq has injected the broader women’s movement with energy and immediacy that did not exist previously.” Creating a strict dichotomy between Western feminism and Middle Eastern and Islamic feminisms, Henninger (2005) credits “Western modernity” in the form of US intervention with the push toward women’s liberation:

*The admission of Muslim women to the modern world is a delicate, complex process. It is further apace in Morocco under King Mohammed VI than under the bitter-enders in Saudi Arabia. And the template of the Western women's movement doesn't apply here; "reproductive rights," for instance, is a non-issue. But Western modernity, offering the systemic protections of civil legal codes, is undeniably present. With its action in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. expanded the opening for those Muslim women who were already willing to push their cause. After the fall of Saddam and the election of January 30, it is harder than it was for authoritarian regimes to force their women into the shadows.*

By Henninger’s account, the West brings “admittance” of Muslim women to modernity.



### 3. Supremacy of Islamic religion triggers Islamic fanaticism and terrorism

Islam and fanaticism appear to be interchangeable co-words in *WSJ* commentaries, and fanaticism inevitably leads to terrorist practices. A series of logical equivalencies ensue: Islam inspires most believers to fanatical religious belief = fanatics are easily transformed into terrorists = Muslims readily are fanatical and readily transformed into terrorists = terrorists are interchangeable with each other. Once this interchangeability has been established, anyone labeled a terrorist slips into the sequence of associations used to profile a terrorist. In the racialized logic undergirding this narrative, all terrorists look alike – like “Muslims” or “Arabs.” By this logic, the commentator only has to cast the word “Arab” or “Muslim” in his/her op-ed piece, and the question of terrorism is brought to the fore. According to this fantasy, if Arabs or Muslims are amongst us, terrorists are in our midst. Thus, we are faced with an omnipresence of terror spawned by religious fanaticism constitutive of Islam.

Steven Emerson’s “The Terror Master’s,” was published April 18, 2003. According to Emerson, “Because of its conspicuously brazen support of Saddam Hussein [...] Syria’s role in supporting American terrorism and threatening American interests has finally come into focus.” Emerson claims: “Syria was successful in deceiving the world” into thinking “that Syria has not been involved in ‘international terrorism’ since 1986.” But to the contrary, Emerson says, “I have always failed to see how the State Department could portray Damascus in this light given its direct support, training, supplies and sanctuary extended to Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah, to name just a few of the groups that serve as de facto members of the Syrian foreign service.” Emerson conflates all these groups, suggesting they are all “international terrorists.” He links Syria, and by implication, all these groups, to al Qaeda and “Islamic extremists”: “Syria has been working hand-in-hand with Islamic extremists in Europe for years, providing transit, sanctuary and training for al Qaeda terrorists traveling between Iraq and the Arab world.” Segueing into a broader condemnation of links to terrorism in “the Arab World,” Emerson goes on to condemn the Palestine Liberation front, linking the Palestinian Authority to Palestinian Liberation front “terrorist leader Abu Abbas” by arguing: “The Palestinian Authority’s defense of Abbas is not just symbolic; it’s self-protecting. If Abbas goes down, so could Yasser Arafat.” Emerson (2003) says of the PA: “As for the mass murder carried out by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the PA today continues to protect the killers and masterminds.”

Emerson generally condemns Arab organizations, leaders, and states as supporters of terrorism emerging from Islamic fanaticism. He says: “The duplicitous role of Saudi Arabia in extending support to al-Qaeda, Hamas and other terrorist groups also needs to be fully exposed.” Emerson’s (2003) conclusion to the article exposes his argument that suggests all Arab nations and leaders support terrorism: “In unprecedented ways, the war of liberation of Iraq has provided a unique opportunity to see exactly where Arab nations



and Islamic leaders have stood on the issue of international terrorism. If anything, the war has enabled Americans to see an unvarnished reality of true attitudes toward the U.S.” For Emerson, terrorism is everywhere in the Middle East; the entire region poses a threat to the U.S.; Arab leadership supports terrorism; the terrorism is based in Islamic fanaticism.

#### 4. Arab Muslims are the source of Islamic terrorism and extremism

Many *WSJ* commentaries depict Arabs as the center of Islamic extremism. Arguing that the U.S. should work closely with Turkey as an ally because Turkey has exhibited “decades long fortitude in the service of Western interests and a Pax Americana,” Melik Kaylan’s October 25, 2001 commentary, entitled “The Turkish Model,” constructs Arab Muslims as jihadist, sexist, and intolerant and non-Arab Muslims as more modern, progressive, and democratic. In the following, a psychological category is deployed to make the point, as Ottoman rule is portrayed as tolerant, bringing “sanity” to an otherwise presumably insane Middle East:

*For centuries, the Ottoman Empire presided over Muslim doctrine and much of Islam’s geography. Its subjects lived under a precise and codified system of multiethnic religious tolerance. One might say, with hindsight, that the Ottomans conferred a sanity on the Middle East that has not existed since their departure. These days, Turkey endures as the most prominent secular Muslim society in the world; indeed as one of Islam’s few functioning democracies.*

In another passage, Saudi Arabia and Arabs in general are marked as primitive, backward, the source of a bad Islam, and antithetical to the West and non-Arab Muslim societies:

*Saudi cultural influence has grown out of all proportion, allowing them to export their primitive home-grown form of jihadist Wahhabism throughout the world. The time is long overdue for the West to help effect an equivalent but countervailing dissemination of the Turkish model through the Islamic geosphere.*

*There is no reason why Indonesia or Malaysia, so far from the Mideast, should opt for an Arabian approach to religion except that it was the only one on offer. Several non-Arab Muslim countries have elected women prime ministers. For these cultures, the Kemalist system, with its liberation of women to dress, work, travel and study in relative freedom, is surely more sympathetic than the Saudi variety. (Kaylan 2001)*

The freedom of women is again deployed here as a measure of modernity and Western sympathy, and Arab societies are represented as more oppressive to women. As Saba Mahmood (2008) has noted, Western liberal discourse frequently equates women's freedom with secularism and women's oppression with religiosity when it comes to Islamic countries. For Western liberal discourse, the status of women has come to index Islamic cultures' proximity to terrorism. In the passages above, the "Arabian approach" is typified simultaneously by ethnic and religious intolerance, sexism, and jihadism. Arab Muslims are portrayed as imposing Islamic extremism upon non-Arab Muslims who otherwise tend more toward freedom and secular democracy favorable to the West. Turkey, the pinnacle of this celebrated non-Arab Islam, is positioned as an ally to the West in a fight against (Arab) fundamentalism: "This is not a West vs. Islam crusade, because non-fundamentalist Muslims such as Turks will fight for the Western side" (Kaylan 2001). In a final passage, the article glosses over Turkish agency, by calling its cultural formation "unwittingly" produced. It also calls for U.S. intervention in a hegemonic spread of Turkish culture (supposedly supportive of a "pax Americana"): "However unwittingly, the Turks have already crafted a cultural product much in demand. For our own sakes, it's time the West helped package it and export it to the Muslim world" (Kaylan 2001).

A September 21, 2001 commentary by Michael Radu, entitled "The Americas: Latin America Has Its Own Problems With Terrorism," provides an apt example of the depiction of Arabs as the main perpetrators of terrorism, whether Islamic or otherwise. Radu (2001) writes:

*On the other hand, Islamic terrorism is unlikely to find much of a haven in Latin America, in part for social reasons – the absence of significant Muslim communities there – and in part for ideological reasons – the Marxist-Leninist ideology of Latin America's homegrown terrorist organizations does not truck much with religion, long ago described by Karl Marx as "the opiate of the people." While there are some Arab groups (mostly Palestinian and Syrian) in countries like El Salvador, Honduras, Ecuador, Brazil and Argentina (whose former president, Saul Menem, was himself of Arab origin), they are Christian and, when politicized, mostly communist. The long-time leaders of the Salvadoran and Ecuadorian Communist parties have both been of Arab extraction.*

If Islamic terrorism is unlikely to find much haven without "significant Muslim communities," the implication is that where such communities do exist terrorism is likely to find haven. Yet, the reader is told, there are "Latin America's homegrown terrorist organizations," which are Marxist-Leninist. The article seems to ask, without stating directly: from where might terrorism arise if not from Muslim Arabs? For an answer, the reader's attention is

directed to the Arab population. The implication is that the size of Arab populations could be a useful indicator of terrorist potentialities; terrorism requires an Arab population for its manifestation. The article argues that, “when politicized,” Arabs in Latin America are “mostly communist” and, we can infer by implication, Marxist-Leninist terrorists. The implication of the argument is that, when Arabs are politicized, they are either communists or fundamentalists; in either case, they are the foreign causes of terrorism in their host countries.

While distinguishing between “Islamic and Latin extremists” (as if one cannot be both a Latin American and a Muslim), the article still links them together, stating that they share “hatred of the U.S., capitalism, and, in some cases, the Jews” (Radu 2001). The linking of all terrorists lumps together all so-called Islamic terrorists and non-Islamic terrorists (basically anyone who opposes the U.S.). The list Radu gives includes the Castro and Hugo Chavez regimes, “the mushrooming ‘human rights network’ throughout Latin America,” “segments of the Catholic church in Mexico and Brazil,” the ETA, the IRA, FARC, FARP, ERP, the Zapatistas (who he incorrectly labels Marxist), and ELN.<sup>6</sup> The article further links Muslims and Arabs to “terrorism” (Marxist, separatist, Islamic) with the following statement: “Interestingly, Tupac Amaru’s Web site now has pages in Turkish and Arabic” (Radu 2001). Mere communication in these languages links the native speakers of those languages to terrorism. In sum, a number of *WSJ* commentaries rehearse the theme that Arabs bring terrorism—whether Marxist or Islamic—to the countries to which they immigrate. According to this logic, all terrorists are the same and are somehow linked to Islam and/or Arabs.

##### 5. Global network of terror, fed by Arab and Muslim groups, led by Al-Qaeda

Even before the September 11<sup>th</sup> plane attacks on the World Trade Center, the *Wall Street Journal* printed commentaries suggesting that there exists a global terror network made of Arab and Muslim groups. One such article is Steven Emerson’s November 3, 2000 commentary, entitled “Hillary and Hamas.” Emerson criticized Hillary Clinton for accepting donations from Muslim American organizations, which he implies is an endorsement of terrorism. Emerson claims to have already revealed in the mid-1990s “that both the president and the first lady had hosted militant Islamic groups, which had, at the White House, proclaimed their support for terrorism”:

---

<sup>6</sup> These acronyms stand for: Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, or Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA); Irish Republican Army (IRA); Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia; Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias del Pueblo, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People (FARP); and, Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional, or National Liberation Army (ELN).

*Mrs. Clinton announced at an Oct. 25 news conference that she was returning \$50,000 in campaign contributions raised by the American Muslim Alliance, an anti-Israeli group whose leaders have sanctioned terrorism, published anti-Semitic statements and repeatedly hosted conferences that were forums for denunciations of Jews and exhortations to wage Jihad. The first lady also revealed she was returning a \$1,000 contribution from Abdulrahman Alamoudi, an official of the American Muslim Council, who has openly championed Hamas and defended other terrorists, including those behind the World Trade Center bombing.*

To Emerson, any participation in mainstream U.S. electoral politics by Muslim organizations, even liberal or moderate ones, means the entry of terrorism into American politics. Any criticism of the Israeli state, particularly when such criticism is in defense of the lives of Arabs or Muslims, is anti-Semitic and linked to terrorism. Emerson scorns Hillary Clinton for meeting “repeatedly over the years with other groups that had openly supported Hamas, Hezbollah and other foreign terrorist organizations.” Emerson asks us to “look at the results” of Hillary Clinton “hosting and inviting the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), the American Muslim Council (AMC) and the American Muslim Alliance (AMA).” For Emerson, Palestinians claiming any place in historical Palestine is problematical: “What have these groups done since Mrs. Clinton began reaching out to them? On Sept. 16, at a Washington rally sponsored by CAIR, AMC, and MPAC, the head of CAIR, Nihad Awad, declared: ‘They have been saying “next year to Jerusalem,” we say “next year to all of Palestine!”’” To Emerson (2000), this is extremism: “Of course, Mrs. Clinton cannot be held responsible for the views of other people. The issue is whether she has unwittingly enabled these groups to gain legitimacy. Clearly she is aware of the danger of associating with extremists.” Emerson claims that American Muslim groups are linked to terrorism, argues for complete isolation of Muslim American organizations, and depicts any support for Palestinian liberation as terrorism.

Many pre-911 articles associate al-Qaeda, Muslims, and global terror. Emerson wrote a commentary with Daniel Pipes, entitled “Terrorism on Trial” and published May 31, 2001, in which these two writers suggest that al-Qaeda is coordinating a global Muslim terrorist effort that can only be stopped by a state of legal exception in the treatment of Muslims. They write:

*Al-Qaeda is an umbrella organization that includes a wide range of Islamist groups, including Hezbollah (Lebanon), Islamic Jihad (Egypt), the Armed Islamic Group (Algeria), as well as a raft of Iraqis, Sudanese, Pakistanis, Afghans and*

*Jordanians. Each of its constituent groups has the capability to carry out its own independent recruiting and operations.*

*[...] Even if bin Laden himself were to be killed, this Islamist network would survive and continue to expand, sustained by its ideological adhesion. Islamism is the glue that keeps these groups together, and fired up.*

For Emerson and Pipes, Al-Qaeda is interchangeable with a number of Islamist groups. Treating Al-Qaeda as a global threat, Emerson and Pipes find “most disconcerting” Al-Qaeda’s “entrenchment in the West.” Emerson and Pipes write that Al-Qaeda’s “procurement network for such material as night vision goggles, construction equipment, cell phones, and satellite telephones was based mostly in the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Denmark, Bosnia and Croatia. The chemicals purchased for use in the manufacture of chemical weapons came from the Czech Republic.” They attack Muslim American organizations: “In the often long waits between terrorist attacks, Al-Qaeda’s member organizations maintained operational readiness by acting under the cover of front-company businesses and nonprofit, tax-deductible religious charities. These nongovernmental groups, many of them still operating, are based mainly in the U.S. and Britain, as well as in the Middle East.” From this article, it is clear that even before 9/11, *WSJ* commentaries were constructing the notion of the sleeper cell and the idea that no Islamic charities, not even Muslim American organizations, could be trusted because almost all were linked to Al-Qaeda. Muslim immigrants are portrayed as dangerous and must be repressed. This template foreshadows policy that would be enacted shortly after this article’s appearance:

*First, we should think of Al-Qaeda not as an organization dominated by one man but as a global Islamist "Internet" with gateways and access points around the world.*

*Second, Al-Qaeda has a world-wide operational reach. Especially noteworthy is its success in the U.S. and Europe, where it recruits primarily [...] among Muslim immigrants. The legal implications of this fact are as serious as they are delicate. [...]*

*[T]rials alone are not enough. In conceptualizing the Al-Qaeda problem only in terms of law enforcement, the U.S. government misses the larger point: Yes, the operatives engage in crimes, but they are better thought of as soldiers, not criminals. To fight Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups requires an understanding that they (along with some states) have*

*silently declared war on the U.S.; in turn, we must fight them as we would in a war.*

*Seeing acts of terror as battles, not crimes, improves the U.S. approach to this problem. It means that, as in a conventional war, America's armed forces, not its policemen and lawyers, are primarily deployed to protect Americans. Rather than drag low-level operatives into American courtrooms, the military will defend us overseas. If a perpetrator is not precisely known, then those who are known to harbor terrorists will be punished. This way, governments and organizations that support terrorism will pay the price, not just the individuals who carry it out. (Emerson and Pipes 2001)*

Commentators like Emerson and Pipes were already making the case for war before 9/11. They link entire pre-dominantly Muslim countries to Al-Qaeda. Muslim immigrants are viewed as recruitment ground for al-Qaeda, as foreign enemies upon whom war should be waged. Muslims cannot be or become American; they cannot be legal subjects before the law. Prescribing military treatment of Muslims and marking Muslims as terrorists beyond mere criminality readies the way for the creation of categories like "illegal combatant." This facilitates future representations of Muslims as natural enemies of the U.S. and begins to sow the ideological justification for the U.S. military and extralegal policing actions that would take place post-9/11: massive round-ups of Muslim immigrants under the rubric of "voluntary interviews," the detention of so-called "enemy combatants" at Guantanamo Bay, and massive casualties in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine.

On October 28, 2003, the *WSJ* published a commentary by Arnold Beichman, entitled "Why I Miss the Cold War." This commentary, which describes al-Qaeda as an "ultra-state," is exemplary of the oft-repeated *WSJ* theme that treats al-Qaeda as *the* global terrorist threat. Blending cold war nostalgia with the colonial discourse of civilizational measurement, Beichman asks: "Can it be that the Kremlin was more civilized outside its own borders than Osama bin Laden is outside his mosque?" While creating a religious enemy comparable to a state enemy, Beichman hitches this enemy to a backward religiosity, uncivilized even when at home. Beichman believes that all Muslims support or will not oppose bin Laden and al-Qaeda. He writes: "Soviet history is replete with courageous opponents among its own people: Sakharov, Solzhenytsin, Bukovsky, Ginsberg, Mandelstam, Pasternak, Akhmatova, Bulgakov, Zamyatin, Zoshchenko and others. Where is the anti-Osama opposition in the Islamic world?" Unlike states the U.S. faced off with during the cold war, all "one need do is read the mosque sermons" to determine that "Islamist jihadists [...] are not interested in negotiations, summit meetings, detente agreements, cultural exchanges or non-aggression pacts, as we all were during the Cold



War. As an ultra-state, ultra-government, ultra-treasury, ultra-supreme court legitimized, in its own eyes, by the Koran, al-Qaeda decides who lives and who dies." Beichman believes that al-Qaeda can be understood as a preeminent state, one that has taken on an ultimate global sovereignty that dishes out death to its opponents. Al-Qaeda is the ultimate enemy, the cause of war. Regardless of what the United States does, there will be war. Muslims want, demand, and bring endless war: "who, realistically, can foresee a Muslim Gorbachev? And even if one arose, how long would he survive? [...] The war with jihadist Islam is a war in which non-Muslims are all hostage to bin Laden, his followers and his successors. Jihadist Islam gave us a taste, on Sept. 11, 2001, of what it could do without WMD. And when they do get WMD? The war goes on, no end in sight" (Beichman 2003). For Beichman, non-Muslims are victims of the war without end. Muslims will accept nothing less than war.

Michael Ledeen's March 3, 2007 commentary, "The Wider War," exhibits a discourse that has come to the fore – namely, that Iran is the primary coordinator of global terrorism. Ledeen proposes that "an impending American assault on Iran" is desirable, perhaps inevitable: "Some accounts claim we will target their nuclear facilities. Others speak of a far more ambitious attack designed to destroy the Islamic Republic's regime. Whatever the truth of these stories -- vigorously denied by the Bush administration -- we are clearly paying much more attention to Iran than we did in the past, and this is a good thing." The war is everywhere for Ledeen: "The terror war now extends to four continents -- running from Thailand and Indonesia to India and Pakistan, down the Horn of Africa to Somalia and Yemen and back up to Afghanistan, on to Iraq, Palestine/Israel, Lebanon, and thence to Europe and the United States." He calls for preemptive war: "we have to attack our enemies when we wish, not respond to their initiatives, and their most important operational bases are outside Iraq and Afghanistan." Ledeen argues that "our primary enemies are states, which provide the jihadis with much of the wherewithal." Ledeen focuses on attacking Muslim countries, with Iran being the most dangerous: "Iran is by far the most important. The Iranians created Hezbollah, probably the most lethal terrorist organization in the world, as well as Islamic Jihad. In all, they support no less than 30 terror groups, both Sunni and Shiite, including al Qaeda." Ledeen continues: "Iran is the keystone of the terrorist edifice." While Ledeen invokes al-Qaeda, it is not central here. Yet, the mere mention of al-Qaeda discursively justifies Ledeen rhetoric, as the association between all terror and al-Qaeda draws, for many, a visceral reaction and summons an entire edifice of meanings around the fantasy figure of the terrorist. For Ledeen, Islam and Muslims are what is wrong with Iran. Pitting Muslims, recognizable by their attire, against democracy and the West, Ledeen writes: "Should there be free elections, no one wearing a turban would be elected to anything, and there is good reason to believe the country is ripe for a pro-Western democratic revolution." Because Ledeen

believes that terrorists are united in a broad network consisting of predominantly Muslim countries, Ledeen (2007) envisions a domino effect of sorts: "A free Iran would deliver a devastating global blow to the terrorists, and would no doubt change the calculus – and perhaps the regime – of Syria. Under those happy circumstances, we might muster the will to insist that the Saudis shut down the Wahhabi schools and mosques, which constitute an assembly line of fanatics all over the world." Ledeen's vision of Iran as terror hub for a broad Islamic network still rests upon the already established rhetoric of Arabs as the busy manufacturers of terrorism. Ledeen's article exemplifies the call to pull Iran into "a global war" with the U.S.

The typical *WSJ* commentary argument against Iran is symptomatic of a broader trend of accusation against Muslim populations. According to a logic that dreams a global Muslim conspiracy, there is a terror network that consists of Muslim populations the world over, Muslim organizations of any sort, Islamic states, and most importantly al-Qaeda. States are key in the formulation of this enemy, for proponents of the notion that we are surrounded by terror posit al-Qaeda as a state of sorts, and they also assign blame for terror to actual states. Iran, like Afghanistan and Iraq, is accused in a number of *WSJ* commentaries of being a harbinger and sponsor of terrorist activity. Many of these commentaries are written by military officials and politicians promoting war on so-called Islamic terror and fanaticism.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> For example, Joseph Lieberman's July 6, 2007 *WSJ* commentary, "Iran's Proxy War," pushes for war while stirring up rumors about Iran supporting so-called "Islamic terrorism" and "fanaticism." Citing military intelligence as if it were indisputable fact, Lieberman builds his case by forwarding the notion that "Iran's actions in Iraq fit a larger pattern of expansionist, extremist behavior across the Middle East today. In addition to sponsoring insurgents in Iraq, Tehran is training, funding and equipping radical Islamist groups in Lebanon, Palestine and Afghanistan." The language of the "network," the association Lieberman seeks to make between Muslims across several countries, is evidenced by his claim that Iran is part of a "larger pattern" of "extremism" and expanding "radical Islamist groups." Iran is made to seem responsible for the United States' military engagements, from Iraq to Afghanistan, and for Israel's too, from Palestine to Lebanon. Lieberman draws connections everywhere, so that the United States can only be seen as at war with a broad conglomeration of states and groups that basically amount to one large Muslim threat: "The involvement of Hezbollah in Iraq, just revealed by Gen. Bergner, illustrates precisely how interconnected are the different threats and challenges we face in the region. The fanatical government of Iran is the common denominator that links them together." Iran is the center link here, functioning for U.S. military and political spokespersons much as al-Qaeda has, that is as a center of a fantasy of the enemy construed to produce a target. By allowing its pages to function as venues for a US senator to promote his policy agenda in the form of a commentary piece, the *WSJ* effectively blends its own corporate news institution with the state. Indeed, it is not uncommon for the *WSJ* to print commentaries from prominent members of US government and military who offer their accounts of current events and propose policy directions. While the U.S. news media is often touted, by itself and others, for its so-called free press and is compared with presses controlled by states in other countries, we might ask how far the U.S. corporate news media really stands from the interests and control of the state.

## 6. The Muslims are coming!

The title of Bret Stephens and Joseph Rago's August 24, 2005 commentary, "Stars, Stripes, Crescent," invokes an image of an American flag emblazoned with the most widely recognized symbol of Islam. They portray Europe's Muslims as bad and warn America of the potential threat of Muslims in America. Stephens and Rago suggest that Muslims in the West are different from their non-Muslim neighbors: "Ever since it became clear that three of the four jihadis who bombed London on July 7 were born and bred in England, the British have been taking a hard look at their Muslim neighbors: Do they share the same values? How do they fare economically? Whom do they cheer when England plays Pakistan at cricket? And how many more would-be bombers are among them?" They add, "If the U.S. is ever attacked by American jihadis, we will no doubt ask the same questions about our Muslim community that Britons are now asking about theirs." Muslims are not considered Britons by Stephens and Rago. If "the British" have been taking a hard look at "their Muslim neighbors," the implication is that one is either "Muslim" or "British" but never both. Muslim difference is demarcated by questionable national loyalties at sporting events, by different "values" (implying questions of morality, loyalty, safety), and different class status—all of these are lumped together with the potential to carry out bombings as indicators of candidates for would-be bombings. The authors note that the British government was keeping demographic data on Muslims prior to the events in question, suggesting that the U.S. government do the same – "jihadis" could arise from the ranks of American Muslims. Making Muslims intense figures of scrutiny, this article serves as a mode of knowledge production about Muslims. Before making a number of claims about Muslims, the authors preface with, "Here is what we know." In the call for a tallying of "what we know" about Muslims, the normative "we" refers to Americans, clearly excluding Muslim Americans. This is an exercise in knowing the other for the purposes of preparation for or aversion of the potential terrorist threat that Muslims supposedly pose. These authors' rhetorical surveillance tallies demographic figures for Arab and Muslim Americans, including population size, income levels, intermarriage rates, religion (for Arab Americans), to gauge the degree to which Arab or Muslim Americans have assimilated into the "great American melting pot." They conclude that Arab Americans are "well on their way toward blending into the great American melting pot," and "Muslim Americans, like Arab-Americans, have fared well in the U.S." Assimilation, however, is not quite achieved. It is the "not yet" character in this narrative that marks Arab Americans as still not entirely American. Stephens and Rago (2005) state that "[i]nformation on American Muslims is sketchier," reversing the usual sequencing of Muslim Americans.

Size of the Muslim population creates anxiety for these authors. "All major Muslim advocacy groups put the number at above six million, which,

as Daniel Pipes of the Middle East Forum observes, has the convenience of being higher than the American Jewish population." Parroting Daniel Pipes, Stephens and Rago propose that higher counts of the American Muslim population are directed at outnumbering Jews. The mere proliferation of Muslim life itself is portrayed as an attempt to overwhelm Jews — as if Muslim self-representation can only be conceived in competition with Jews. The authors demonstrate a desire that there not be too many Muslims: "All independent surveys put the real figure at no more than three million, while the most credible study to date, by Tom Smith of the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center, estimates total Muslim population at 1,886,000. '[It] is hard to accept that Muslims are greater than one percent of the population,' he writes" (Stephens and Rago 2005). Scientific calculations appear to give way to emotion as Stephens and Rago seem to resist the very idea of having too many Muslims in America. It might lead to the crescent-laden American flag the articles title ("Stars, Stripes, Crescent") conjures.

Stephens and Rago differentiate American Muslims: "Four other features set American Muslims apart." These include: "unlike in Europe the overwhelming majority of Muslims arrived here legally"; "21% of Muslim Americans intermarry"; "the average mosque-goer is 34 years old, married with children, has at least a bachelor's degree, and earns about \$74,000 a year [...] suggest[ing] that the religiously committed among them hardly fit the profile of the alienated, angry young Muslim men so common today in Europe"; "Muslim Americans benefit from leaders who, despite some notable exceptions, are generally more responsible than Muslim leaders in Britain and Europe" (Stephens and Rago 2005). Using compliance with restrictive immigration law, higher class status, heteronormative marriage to non-Muslims, and leadership that conforms to the paternalistic discourse of "responsible" minority leadership as normalizing indices, these authors create a dichotomy between European and American Muslims (as bad and good Muslims). The bad Muslim is young, economically marginalized, marries another Muslim, produces more Muslims, and is displeased with the West.

Muslim citizens are potentially a problem, they imply: "So does the U.S. have a "Muslim problem"? If the data above are accurate, they strongly suggest we do not [...]. But that does not mean there aren't any problems. One comes in the form of U.S. mosques funded by Saudi Arabia, which can serve as a conduit for the kingdom's extreme Wahhabist brand of Islam. Mr. Al-Ahmed calls these mosques 'an incubator for suicide bombings and terrorism.'" Stephens and Rago treat mosques as sites of foreign influence and terrorist encroachment. This labeling of Muslims' places of worship as "incubators for terrorism" shows that it is precisely the religious difference of Muslims themselves that is under interrogation. The idea of "incubators for terrorism" displays an interesting slippage between the discourses of reproduction, population, and security from terrorism. It is the very

reproduction – religious, cultural reproduction in this instance, but gesturing toward biological reproduction by the invocation of the medical equipment required in premature biological birthing – of Muslims that is symbolically equated with proliferating terrorism. By linking proliferation of the Muslim population with proliferation of a terrorism to be eliminated, the article comes close to traffic in eugenics discourse. Segueing from reproductive metaphor to the language of child-rearing, the authors write:

*It takes no more than a few men (or women) to carry out a terrorist atrocity, and there can be no guarantee the U.S. is immune from homegrown Islamist terror. But if it can be said that 'it takes a village' to make a terrorist, the U.S. enjoys a measure of safety that our European allies do not. It is a blessing we will continue to enjoy as long as we remain an upwardly mobile, assimilating – and watchful – society.*  
(Stephens and Rago 2005)

Just as a parent looks over a child, Stephens and Rago propose that “society” (non-Muslim Americans) be “watchful” of Muslims. The language of incubation to describe Muslim religiosity, implying the premature infantile status of Muslims, reduces Muslims to children (potentially bad children) to be watched.

Judith Miller’s August 11, 2006 commentary, “Terrorist Extravaganza,” is another example of an article concerned with Muslims overrunning Western metropolises. Miller writes of “the emerging centrality of Britain – or ‘Londonistan,’ the subject of Melanie Phillips’s recent book – as a breeding ground for Islamofascist terror. [...] The fact that British-born nationals are willing to commit suicide suggests that the universe of Islamic terrorists is growing rather than shrinking.” Miller argues that the “new world” of “Islamic terrorism” consists of “European citizens who ‘see themselves as avengers.’” By using the term “Londonistan,” Miller attaches London with a suffix that ends the names of many largely Muslim countries, signifying the presence of Muslims. Inasmuch as “Londonistan” signifies both terrorist activity by “European citizens” as well as the presence of Muslims, we can infer that, for Miller, Muslims in the West amount to a terrorist presence. Yet, Miller suggests the U.S. might be different from “Londonistan”: “Given the integration of Muslims from many Arab and non-Muslim lands into American life, the Muslim rage that devastated Parisian suburbs last summer and shredded the tolerant culture of the Netherlands is not widespread here.” The massive state policing apparatus is another reassurance for Miller: “Another reason not to despair is the tough-minded approach adopted by the police department of the al-Qaeda’s No. 1 target, New York. With 1,000 of its 37,000 uniformed officers and 15,000 civilian employees assigned to counterterrorism, the New York Police Department has become an urban model for fighting terrorism.” Miller also assures, New York’s police force has “more Arabic speakers than any other law



enforcement agency in the country,' and, terrorism experts say, more Pashtu, Urdu and Farsi speakers than the F.B.I." It is clear from which populations "terrorism" emerges for Miller. She asserts the likelihood of terrorist attack: "The odds of another successful attack in the U.S. are clearly in the terrorists' favor. But New Yorkers should be somewhat comforted by the fact that this city, so far, has reveled in its ethnic and religious diversity and is doing all it can to ensure that those who want to harm America feel unwelcome here. New York isn't 'New Yorkistan'" (Miller 2006). By describing the fight against terror as an attempt to fend off the possibility of "New Yorkistan," Miller makes clear that a victory for terrorism would mean a shift toward a Muslim identity for New York. The implication is that countries that have names that end in "-istan" are terrorist, that largely Muslim countries are terrorist, and that where terror prevails we can attribute a Muslim identity. For Miller, the NYPD is what keeps us safe from terrorists. Miller thinks that Muslims are the source of terror, but that NYPD can cleanse New York of Islam's terror.

#### 7. Islam is comparable to Nazi fascism.

Roger Scruton's August 17, 2006 article, entitled "'Islamofascism,'" is exemplary of this comparison between Islam and Nazi fascism, made throughout a number of articles. It provides a useful starting point for describing what generally is signaled by this term, "Islamofascism," or other references to the supposedly fascist character of Islam and Muslims. According to Scruton: "The term 'Islamofascism' was introduced by the French writer Maxine Rodinson (1915-2004) to describe the Iranian Revolution of 1978. Rodinson was a Marxist, who described as 'fascist' any movement of which he disapproved. But we should be grateful to him for coining a word that enables people on the left to denounce our common enemy." For Scruton, all of "us" are under threat by Islamic terrorism, regardless of "our" politics, left or right, liberal or conservative, capitalist or communist. For Scruton, Muslims are not part of this "us," for Muslims are, in the end, sympathetic to terrorism. Scruton writes, "This prompts the question whether terrorism is really as alien to Islam as we should all like to believe." Demonstrating the monolithic unity he attributes to Muslims, Scruton writes of "the deep-down insecurity of the Muslim psyche in the modern world." In this essentializing fantasy, Muslims think and feel as one psyche, "the Muslim psyche," which is dogmatic, temperamental, intolerant, dangerous, even animal-like: "In the presence of Islam, we all feel, you have to tread carefully, as though humoring a dangerous animal. The Koran must never be questioned; Islam must be described as a religion of peace – isn't that the meaning of the word? – and jokes about the prophet are an absolute no-no. If religion comes up in conversation, best to slip quietly away, accompanying your departure with abject apologies for the Crusades." Scruton believes that there is such a thing as a "Muslim psyche" and that this psyche is intolerant. Scruton's racializing discourse – the comparison



between Muslims and animals – accuses Islam of displaying all the trappings of fascism – intolerance, group think, curtailment of critical speech, party line. While fascism is itself most typically associated with that most notorious of racial projects, namely Nazism, Scruton scorns the language that has been drafted to combat the contemporary incarnation of racism that stands, several scholars have argued, as anti-Semitism's legacy<sup>8</sup>: "And in Europe this pussyfooting is now being transcribed into law, with 'Islamophobia' already a crime in Belgium and movements across the continent to censor everything at which a Muslim might take offence, including articles like this one." Calling legislation against Islamophobia an example of "pussyfooting," Scruton uses a misogynist slur to deny systemic discrimination against Muslims and to preemptively rebuke criticism of his own article. Scruton (2006) goes on: "All this leads to a certain skepticism among ordinary people, whose 'racist' or 'xenophobic' prejudices are denounced by the media as the real cause of Muslim disaffection." Scruton figures "ordinary people" as victims not only to Muslims but to a homogenized media establishment. These rhetorical maneuvers render racism or xenophobia as understandable sentiments that the ordinary (non-Muslim) person naturally turns to in the face of the fascist Islamic threat.

Scruton claims an intrinsically terrorist slant in Islam and Muslims: "The majority of European Muslims do not approve of terrorism. But there are majorities and majorities." For Scruton, majority Muslim opposition to "terrorism" does not amount to much. Scruton puts quotation marks around the phrase "religion of peace" referring to Islam, arguing that significant numbers of Muslims support or rationalize terrorism. He contends that there cannot be a tolerance for the Muslim threat to civic order: "Now of course it is wrong to give gratuitous offence to people of other faiths; it is right to respect people's beliefs, when these beliefs pose no threat to civil order; and we should extend toward resident Muslims all the toleration and neighborly goodwill that we hope to receive from them. But recent events have caused people to wonder exactly where Muslims stand in such matters." Islam is portrayed as an intolerant religion that forces submission upon adherents and non-adherents:

*Although 'islam' is derived from the same root as 'salaam,' it does not mean peace but submission. And although the Koran tells us that there shall be no compulsion in matters of religion, it does not overflow with kindness toward those who refuse to submit to God's will. The best they can hope for is [...] humiliating rites of subservience. [...] And the anger with which public Muslims greet any attempt to challenge, to ridicule or to marginalize their faith is every bit as ferocious as that which animated the murderer of Theo Van Gogh.*

---

<sup>8</sup> See Mufti (2007), Anidjar (2003), Smoodin (2007).

Submission to the Koran flows into Muslims' murderous enforcement over subject non-Muslim populations and "Islamic piety" equates to "fanaticism and egomania." Perhaps most condescending is Scruton's final passage in which Scruton suggests that Muslims do not laugh enough and do not appreciate jokes and irony. If Muslims were to grasp these things, he suggests, there could be "negotiations" with Muslims:

*Irony means accepting 'the other,' as someone other than you. It was irony that led Christ to declare that his 'kingdom is not of this world,' not to be achieved through politics. Such irony is a long way from the humorless incantations of the Koran. Yet it is from a posture of irony that every real negotiation, every offer of peace, every acceptance of the other, begins. The way forward, it seems to me, is to encourage the re-emergence of an ironical Islam [...]. We should also encourage those ethnic and religious jokes which did so much to defuse tension in the days before political correctness. And maybe, one day, the rigid face of some puritanical mullah will crack open in a hesitant smile, and negotiations can at last begin. (Scruton 2006)*

For Scruton, there can be peace – if only Muslims had a better sense of humor. Scruton sees two distinct sides that are in a war, and on one side are Muslims, all fanatical and violently serious, and on the other side are Christians, who know how to take a good joke, a trait indicative of Christians' peaceful tolerance and intent. Scruton claims that Islam is a fascist threat without even comparing it to Nazism.

This contrasts with Oriana Fallaci's earlier March 13, 2003 commentary, "The Rage, the Pride and the Doubt," which positions Islam and Muslims and Middle Eastern people as the greatest threats to the U.S. and the West. She compares their threat to Nazism, Pearl Harbor, and the Alamo. Calling for war, Fallaci begins by calling to mind Pearl Harbor and war with Japan:

*This war [...] should have happened one year ago. That is, when the ruins of the Towers were still smoking and the whole civilized world felt American. [...] one year ago, nobody questioned that another Pearl Harbor had been inflicted on the U.S. and that the U.S. had all the right to respond. As a matter of fact, it should have happened before. I mean when Bill Clinton was president, and small Pearl Harbors were bursting abroad. In Somalia, in Kenya, in Yemen. As I shall never tire of repeating, we did not need September 11 to see that the cancer was there. September 11 was the excruciating confirmation of a reality which had been burning for decades.*

To rationalize war on Iraq and Palestine, Fallaci links Saddam Hussein to Osama bin Laden and Palestinian suicide bombers. She claims that Hussein “had connections with al-Qaeda and supported terrorism, [and] rewarded the families of Palestinian kamikazes at the rate of \$25,000 each.” Referring to Palestinian “kamikaze,” Fallaci aligns Palestinians with the U.S.’s racialized enemies of World War II. Comparing Saddam Hussein to Hitler, Fallaci constructs the international governmental protocols of weapons inspection as something that the U.S. cannot afford or wait for:

*[H]e had never disarmed, never given up his arsenal of deadly weapons [...] let’s be serious: if seventy years ago the ineffective League of Nations had sent its inspectors to Germany, do you think Hitler would have shown them Peenemunde where Von Braun was manufacturing V2s? Do you think that Hitler would have disclosed the camps of Auschwitz, of Mauthausen, Buchenwald, Dachau? Yet the inspection comedy resumed.*

Fallaci links Osama bin Laden to Hussein and suggests the threat of both is as great as that of Hitler. She extends the valence of this threat to all Muslims:

*Mr. Bush [...] sent his troops to the front [...] without realizing that his enemies (but I should say the enemies of the West) are not only in Baghdad. They are also in Europe. [...] In Europe your enemies are everywhere, Mr. Bush. [...] Europe is no longer Europe. It is a province of Islam, as Spain and Portugal were at the time of the Moors. It hosts almost 16 million Muslim immigrants and teems with mullahs, imams, mosques, burqas, chadors. It lodges thousands of Islamic terrorists whom governments don’t know how to identify and control. People are afraid, and in waving the flag of pacifism – pacifism synonymous with anti-Americanism – they feel protected.*

In this passage, Muslim immigrants to Europe are depicted as enemies of the United States and the West. Fallaci points special attention on religious leaders and Muslim women wearing chadors or burqas, marking Muslim attire through a racializing and gendering lens. She proposes a religious war between the (Christian) West and Muslims: “A war made in cold blood to respond to the Holy War that the enemies of the West declared upon the West on September 11.” The racializing and imperial valence of this rhetoric is revealed by Fallaci’s (2003) closing statements in which she invokes civilizational rhetoric in a comparison of this so-called “Holy War” to U.S. colonial war with Mexico: “As a proud defender of Western civilization, without reservations I should join Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair in the

new Alamo. Without reluctance I should fight and die with them. And this is the only thing about which I have no doubts at all."

#### 8. Choose: "Us" or the "Terrorists"

Many *Wall Street Journal* commentators expressed their patriotism post-9/11, taking up President Bush's injunction that "you are either with us or you are with the terrorists." Martin Kramer's November 15, 2001 commentary, "Terrorism? What Terrorism?!" provides one such example. In it Kramer presents a concerted attack on Middle East studies as a field of inquiry. Kramer argues that there should be "a comprehensive assessment of national needs in Middle Eastern studies." The article criticizes the Middle East Studies Association in particular, blaming it, indirectly, for the 9/11/01 plane attacks: "On Sept. 21, MESA's board issued a statement on the terror attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It encapsulates all the ills of this very sick discipline – one that did nothing to prepare America for the encounter with Muslim extremism, and that can't contribute anything to America's defense." The Middle East Studies Association is said to have "downplayed the growth of Muslim extremism, helping to lull America into complacency." Edward Said is portrayed as a leader of efforts to leave the U.S. defenseless against terrorism. The article claims of MESA's statement that "its most striking feature is a studied avoidance of the words 'terror,' 'terrorism,' and 'terrorist.' These were 'violent acts,' 'horrific acts,' and 'tragic events.' But even now, the board members of MESA cannot bring themselves to describe any Arabs or Muslims – even suicide kamikazes who kill thousands of American civilians – as terrorists." Scholars of the Middle East are denounced unless they use the word "terrorism" and "terrorists" to describe opposition to the U.S. Indeed scholars of the Middle East are portrayed as spokespersons for terrorism: "For years the academics' response to terrorism has been to act as amplifiers for the 'grievances' behind it" (Kramer 2001).

Contending that the "Middle East may be pregnant with more such attacks," the article portrays the Middle East as a woman's body in need of abortion (Kramer 2001). This portrayal aligns with racialized discourses which construct non-white women's bodies as sick and in need of reproductive coercion. This rhetoric also corresponds to the biologizing/disease metaphors earlier in the article that calls MESA "sick." The article continues that scholars of Middle Eastern studies have been economically privileged by investments in the Middle East prompted by terrorist attacks. The article argues for de-funding current professors of Middle East studies for their alleged collaboration with terrorism. The solution for Kramer is the alignment of Middle East studies with U.S. military and national interests.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> This type of attack on academic programs in Middle East Studies is not uncommon. Over the last couple of years, David Horowitz's Islamofascism Awareness Week campaign, rallying at colleges and universities across the country, has argued that Middle East studies,

## CONCLUSIONS

The United States has been involved in “wars of maneuver” (in the Gramscian sense of struggle at the level of arms), which are concentrated in the Middle East and in Muslim countries. In tandem, there are “wars of position” (in the Gramscian sense of struggle at the level of ideas) in the US news media in relationship to Islam and Muslims (Gramsci 2000). In the current constellations of global power dynamics, Islam has been positioned as the “enemy” of the West, of capitalism, of secularism, of modernity, of Christianity, of Judaism, even of women and individualism (Samuel Huntington 1996, Bernard Lewis 2003). Following Rey Chow’s (2006) argument about the aftermath of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we can suggest that social and scientific knowledge production, particularly in print news media such as the *WSJ* has become, to a considerable degree, a practice of constructing targets – military targets in the Middle East and Muslim world and people targets in domestic sites. This practice has entailed the production of differences between “Islam,” “Muslims,” the “Muslim World” and the West. It entailed the construction of the “Muslim World” in a discourse of representation, which, while building on older, Orientalist and colonial discourses, has come to encode far more potent dimensions of danger and urgency.

As Teun A. van Dijk (1988, 1) contends, “Through its specific discursive and cognitive strategies of selection, emphasis, focusing, exaggeration, relevance assignment, description, style, or rhetoric it [journalism] has a powerful role in the final definition of the situation” (Dijk 1991, 41). We suggest that commentaries are a site in which the representational practices of respected print news media construct Islam and Muslims as *the* danger from which the “West” must protect itself, aggressively, even militarily. We have, in this paper, discussed the power of the journalistic field to represent. We have argued that the *WSJ* inscribes an image of Islam and Muslims as different and dangerous. We have gestured at the violence of journalist practices when they target objects for surveillance and disciplining. Given the power of these representations on other fields, such as politics, we suggest that the *WSJ*, whether inadvertently or intentionally (investigating intentionality is not our subject), contributes to the demonization of Islam and Muslims. This is not an exercise in identifying what the *WSJ* “got wrong.” Rather, the argument is that the paper’s structure of representation participates in and contributes toward the production of politics, policy, rights, and citizenship.

Some journalists in the news industry are drawing attention to the importance of newspapers’ viewpoints in reporting. In an Op-Ed entitled “Drawing a Clearer Line Between News and Opinion,” (September 24, 2006



edition of the *New York Times*) Byron Calame, the Public Editor for the *New York Times*, argues that newspapers should draw a clearer line between news and opinion. Calame calls for the naming or labeling of instances in which a paper offers opinion versus objective fact. When not articulated as an editorial point of view, a news article is often thought to be objective, facts belonging to everybody. Our works shows that this is not the case. In contrast to news articles, commentaries are marked so that they are shown to be the view of one person. This can be deceptive. What is elided in this view of commentaries is the fact that the newspaper has made a decision to print particular commentaries. It is not enough merely to mark the difference between opinion and supposed fact—between news and commentary. What must also be acknowledged is that commentaries can put out the opinions of the newspaper while appearing to not do precisely that. Commentaries should not be thought of as individual opinions given the chance to air in the paper. We think that the *Wall Street Journal* would do well to recognize and reflect upon this representational structure. There is a systematic continuity of the voices they represent and print that adheres to the paper – so that it matters less whose name is on the article. The collective representations have profound ramifications, culturally and politically.

Foucault's (1978) notion of discourse suggests that subjects are crafted through discourse: "Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (101). Judith Butler (1997) contends that Foucault does not adequately account for the psychic effects of power or the ways that discourse hails subjects into the processes of identification. While we have not undertaken the project of evaluating the impact of these representational practices on Muslims outside the United States, we believe one can safely assume that the process has had deleterious consequences for those subjects, as well as for their regard for U.S. media.

It is clear that such practices of representations essentialize Islam and Muslims. The essentialization of Islam and Muslims prescribes, produces, and makes the Muslim as enemy, marshaling the associational imageries, which rationalize aggressive and even preemptive actions against the constructed enemy in self-defense. While constructed as "scientific," based on research and analysis in the public interest, such preemptive practices are often ideological guises for governmental action. While it is not researched in this project, we might suggest that such representational structures work to nurture a public climate of opinion that feeds a frenzy around national security, surveillance, and the urgency of containing Islam and Muslims – including the Muslims within – which then makes violent action toward Muslims, even Muslim U.S. citizens, more palatable. While many *Wall Street Journal* commentaries (in a somewhat Schmittian fashion) seem to indicate a community of fate united in common cause against an immanent, timeless enemy—the Muslim of irreducible, existential difference—



news representations do not simply describe a veritable and inevitable state of affairs. Rather, these articles mobilize affective economies and discursive structures that performatively constitute the enemy.<sup>10</sup> As Jacques Derrida (2005) has pointed out in his critique of Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt (1996), in order to yield an enemy, the enemy is not merely found but is deemed. The symbolic dimensions of journalistic discourse which we find in the WSJ may contribute to the production of subjectivities, imaginaries, knowledges, antagonisms, affinities and identities, which construct the “Muslim” and “Islam” as probable targets of disciplinary actions and violence, even Muslim citizens of the United States.

#### WALL STREET JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Bartley, Robert. “Thinking Things Over: Patriotism, Pilgrims and Shaping the Future.” *Wall Street Journal* 19 November 2001, Eastern edition: A21.
- Beichman, Arnold. “Why I Miss the Cold War.” *Wall Street Journal* 28 October 2003, Eastern edition: A16.
- Bowden, Mark. “So, Saddam Is Dead.” *Wall Street Journal* 2 January 2007, Eastern edition: A23.
- DeMuth, Christopher. “Guns, Butter and the War on Terror.” *Wall Street Journal* 29 April 2004, Eastern edition: A16.
- Emerson, Steven. “The Terror Masters.” *Wall Street Journal* 18 April 2003, Eastern edition: A8.
- . “Hillary and Hamas.” *Wall Street Journal* 3 November 2000, Eastern edition: A20.
- Emerson, Steven and Daniel Pipes. “Terrorism on Trial.” *Wall Street Journal* 31 May 2001, Eastern edition: A16.
- Fallaci, Oriana. “The Rage, the Pride and the Doubt.” *Wall Street Journal* 13 March 2003, Eastern edition: A12.
- Feldman, Noah. “Muslim Democrats? Why Not!” *Wall Street Journal* 8 April 2003, Eastern edition: A14.
- Heninger, Daniel. “Wonder Land: Muslim Women Seize Chance To Claim Rights.” *Wall Street Journal* 11 March 2005, Eastern edition: A10.
- Hymowitz, Kay. “The Women Feminists Forgot.” *Wall Street Journal* 7 March 2003, Eastern edition: A10.
- Kaylan, Melik. “The Turkish Model.” *Wall Street Journal* 25 October 2001, Eastern edition: A20.
- Kramer, Martin. “Terrorism? What Terrorism?!” *Wall Street Journal* 15 November 2001, Eastern edition: A26.
- Ledeen, Michael. “The Wider War.” *Wall Street Journal* 3 March 2007, Eastern edition: A9.

<sup>10</sup> For more on the notion of “affective economies,” see Sara Ahmed (2004).

- Lieberman, Joseph. "Iran's Proxy War." *Wall Street Journal* 6 July 2007, Eastern edition: A9.
- Melloan, George. "Quashing Hate Politics Is the Key to Defeating Terrorism." *Wall Street Journal*. (Eastern edition). New York, N.Y.: Feb 26, 2002. pg. A.19
- Miller, Judith. "Terrorist Extravaganza." *Wall Street Journal* 11 August 2006, Eastern edition: A12.
- Myroie, Laurie. "The Baluch Connection." *Wall Street Journal* 18 March 2003, Eastern edition: A16.
- Radu, Michael. "The Americas: Latin America Has Its Own Problems With Terrorism." *Wall Street Journal* 21 September 2001, Eastern edition: A23.
- Scruton, Roger. "Islamofascism." *Wall Street Journal* 17 August 2006, Eastern edition: A8.
- Stephens, Bret and Joseph Rago. "Stars, Stripes, Crescent." *Wall Street Journal* 24 August 2005, Eastern edition: A10.

#### *NEW YORK TIMES* ARTICLE

- Calame, Byron. "Drawing a Clearer Line Between News and Opinion." *New York Times*. 24 September 2006, late edition (East coast), sec 4:12.

#### REFERENCES

- Ahmed, Sara. "Affective Economies." *Social Text* 22.2 (2004): 117-139.
- Anidjar, Gil. *The Arab, the Jew: A History of the Enemy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Asad, Talal. *Formations of the secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *On Television and Journalism*. London, UK: Pluto Press, 1996.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field." *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*. Eds. Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2005.
- Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Chow, Rey. *The Age of the World Target: Self-Referentiality in War, Theory and Comparative Work*. Duke University Press, 2006.
- Dijk, Teun A. van. *Racism and the Press*. Routledge London & New York, 1991.
- Dijk, Teun A. van. *News As Discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1988.
- Derrida, Jacques. *The Politics of Friendship*. Trans. George Collins. New York: Verso, 2005.
- Duggan, Lisa. *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.

- Gramsci, Antonio, "The Art and Science of Politics." *The Antonio Gramsci Reader*. Ed. David Forgacs. New York: New York University Press, 2000. 222-245
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Tavistock, 1977.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge*. Brighton, UK: Harvester, 1980.
- Hall, Stuart. "Encoding, Decoding." *The Cultural Studies Reader* (Second Edition). Ed. Simon During. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Huntington, Samuel. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Joseph, Suad. "Intimate Selving: Theories and Dynamics of Self, Gender and Identity in Arab Families." In Joseph, Suad, Ed., *Intimate Selving in Arab Families: Gender, Self and Identity*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999.
- Joseph, Suad and Benjamin D'Harlingue, with Alvin Ka Hin Wong. "Arab Americans and Muslim Americans in the New York Times, Before and After 9/11." *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*. Eds. Amaney Jamal and Nadine Naber. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008. 229 -275
- Lewis, Bernard. *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2003.
- Lubiano, Wahneema. "Like Being Mugged by a Metaphor: Multiculturalism and State Narratives." *Mapping Multiculturalism*. Eds. Avery F. Gordon and Christopher Newfield. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997. 64-75
- Mahmood, Saba. "Feminism, Democracy, and Empire: Islam and the War on Terror." *Women's Studies on the Edge*. Ed. Joan Wallach Scott. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Morley, David. "Cultural Transformations: The Politics of Resistance." *Language, Image, Media*. Eds. Howard Davis and Paul Walton. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.
- Mufti, Aamir R. *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press: 2007.
- Puar, Jasbir K. and Amit S. Rai. "Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots." *Social Text* 20.3 (2002): 117-148.
- Said, Edward. *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World..* New York: Random House, 1981.
- Salaita, Steven. *The Holy Land in Transit: Colonialism and the Quest for Canaan*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006.

Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. Trans. George Schwab. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Smoodin, Eric. *Untitled Talk*. Panel: Censorship and Profiling. Campus Discussion Series: Conversations on Academic Freedom. University of California, Davis. 25 October 2007.

# ***Muslims – Enemies of the State: The New Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO)***

**Hatem Bazian**

*University of California, Berkeley*

*ISLAMOPHOBIA STUDIES JOURNAL*  
VOLUME 1, NO. 1, SPRING 2012, PP. 163-206.

Published by:

Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project,  
Center for Race and Gender, University of California, Berkeley.

Disclaimer:

Statements of fact and opinion in the articles, notes, perspectives, etc. in the *Islamophobia Studies Journal* are those of the respective authors and contributors. They are not the expression of the editorial or advisory board and staff. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in this journal and *ISJ* cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

## ***Muslims – Enemies of the State: The New Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO)***

**Hatem Bazian**

*University of California, Berkeley*

### **INTRODUCTION**

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Sunday edition published a special report, "Reagan, Hoover and the UC Red Scare," which exposed the role played by the FBI in undermining the leadership of the University of California Administration and led to the eventual resignation of the then UC President Clark Kerr—a fact known to many on campus but finally vindicated by official documents. The Sunday report, based on recently released "secret FBI files," illustrated "how the bureau's covert campaign to disrupt the Free Speech Movement and topple President Clark Kerr" was structurally linked to launching "the political career of an actor named Ronald Reagan."<sup>1</sup> The FBI campaign ended the successful academic and leadership career of Clark Kerr and brought Ronald Reagan, whose fame was just beginning to take hold as a flag bearer for a resurgent right wing, to the spotlight eventually leading to his rise as the two term republican president in the 1980s. Further revelations published by the *SF Chronicle* point to Ronald Reagan being an FBI informant at an even earlier stage of his career; on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1947, while serving as President of the Actors Union at the height of the HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee) and McCarthy era, he, along with his wife Jane Wyman, provided names of individuals in the movie industry allegedly "having" communist connections in Hollywood.<sup>2</sup>

The operations run by the FBI against Clark Kerr and others deemed "enemies of the state" by then FBI Director J. E. Hoover came to be known years later as COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) and managed to target thousands of individuals in this country and abroad. The FBI program was heavily dependent on creating and managing a public fear of communism, resulting in an induced panic. The government security structure was then mobilized to systematically violate American constitutional rights—a strategy very much resembling that of the current period as experienced by Muslims in the post 9/11 era.

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the FBI's NY office arrested four Muslim men, Onta Williams, James Cromitie, David Williams, and Laguerre Payen, on terrorism charges; according to media reports, they were caught "red-handed" in a plot to attack a synagogue as well as shoot down a military aircraft with a Stinger missile. The foiled plot was widely celebrated by law



enforcement agencies, political leaders and right-wing media pundits as proof of the need for every counter terrorism measure put in place post 9/11 and for vigilance against “homegrown” Muslim terrorists.

On the community level, Muslim political, civic and religious organizations moved swiftly to condemn those involved and once again proclaim their readiness to cooperate with security agencies in defending the homeland against possible attacks. In this case, the four men were lured into this amateur operation by Mr. Shahed Hussain, “a former New York motel owner who became an FBI informant in 2002 to avoid deportation to Pakistan after being arrested on fraud charges.”<sup>3</sup> The plot is similar to others uncovered by security agencies in New York, Chicago, Seattle and other major cities with the common story line of a paid informant helping uncover yet another Muslim sleeper cell intent on doing us all harm.

For instance, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005, the FBI, according to an affidavit submitted in Federal District Court in Sacramento, arrested five Muslim men on terrorism charges in Lodi, California. The plot involved Hamid Hayat, a 22 year-old Pakistani American who, prior to the arrest, worked as a cherry picker, and Mr. Hayat’s father, Umer Hayat, 47, who worked as an ice cream truck driver in the city of Lodi. Thus both men and the threat they posed to America’s food supply chain were at the center of the FBI terrorism cases. In addition, the FBI arrested three other men from the Lodi Muslim community, Muhammad Adil Khan, 47, his 19 year-old son Muhammad Hasan Adil and Shabbir Ahmed, 38, on immigration related violations but nevertheless included them in the terrorism charges filed in this case. The key evidence in the case was garnered by a paid informant, 32 year-old Pakistani native Naseem Khan, who became Hayat’s best friend while assigned by the FBI to monitor the Lodi Muslim community and report on possible Jihadists in the area.<sup>4</sup>

Since the events of September 11, 2001, the FBI and other security agencies have resorted to the recruitment of Muslim informants by means of enticement and, if necessary, threats of deportation or financial ruin. From the cases that have come to light, it is clear that vast sections of the Muslim community and its civic and religious institutions are the intended targets of these FBI operations. As the then Attorney General Alberto Gonzales stated after the Lodi indictments, “Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the number one priority of the (Justice) Department has been to detect, disrupt and prevent terrorist attacks,” which means using every tool available including the recruitment and deployment of paid informants.<sup>5</sup> For many, this is a legitimate use of national resources to possibly prevent another 9/11, and the Muslim community, collectively, should be ready to cooperate with the authorities in conducting these much needed operations. A more direct conclusion drawn from these operations is that the FBI and the Justice Department views Muslim American communities as incubators of terrorism that must be monitored and, if needed, infiltrated to preemptively catch them before they plan an attack.

These preemptive security operations are directed at the Muslim American community with the goal of “smoking” the terrorists out before they can do us harm as well as eliciting maximum cooperation from its leadership on the “global war on terror.” The FBI operations mentioned above and others that can be readily documented point toward a comprehensive intelligence program directed at the American Muslim community and all of its civic, religious and charitable institutions.<sup>6</sup> At its core, the program is rationalized with the intent to “detect” and “disrupt” terrorism activities before they take place; however, the assumption underlying it is that every American Muslim is a suspect until proven otherwise. The FBI and other security agencies have deemed American Muslim communities “enemies of the state” and no resource should be spared in targeting them and “disrupting” their potential operations. From the outset, it appears that the FBI and the security agencies have not distinguished between “the terrorists” who carried out the operations on 9/11 and the American Muslim community who, along with the rest of this country’s citizenry, was a victim of the attacks, and instead a dragnet security approach seems to be the preferred method. Important questions must be raised as to the causes behind current and future FBI programs targeting the American Muslim community; what are the specific strategies deployed and how to best protect and defend the community as it faces massive constitutional and civil rights violations? How similar or dissimilar are the current operations to those deployed in the 1960s, and what lessons, if any, were learned by civil rights advocates and how to best utilize them in the current period? More importantly, should the Muslim community expect to sacrifice its constitutional and civil rights in exchange for security and a sense of belonging in a post 9/11 America? The answers to these questions can best be attained by examining an earlier period in American history that witnessed a program targeting the African American community and civil rights movements in the 1950s, ‘60s and early ‘70s that was recorded as a success for the FBI and the security agencies—the COINTELPRO Programs.

The post 9/11 constitutional and civil rights violations are so similar, if not identical at times, to the 1960s that they warrant examining the current operations with an eye on the programs conducted in the past against groups in the Civil Rights and Anti-War Movements. “The Alarming Record of the F.B.I.’s Informant in the Bronx Bomb Plot”<sup>7</sup> screamed a Village Voice headline on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009; the article went on to detail the most recent sting operation directed at “suspected Muslim terrorists” who were prevented from causing damage by the intervention of a Federal security agency. The tactic of recruiting and using informants to entrap individuals associated with the “new enemies of the state” is almost a line by line reading of a 1960s script. I do firmly assert that the best approach to studying the security strategies employed against the Muslim community in

a post 9/11 America is by looking back into the history before moving forward to the present. Consequently, to de-construct the current security period, we must first explore the specifics of the 1960s COINTELPRO program and highlight the methods used that made it a success. In reality, some officers engaged in the current war on terror referenced the 1960s operations in e-mails that the group Anonymous hacked into and published on a number of websites including Truthout.com with one exchange making explicit mention of the operations: "I keep telling you, you and I are going to laugh and raise a beer one day, when everything Intel (NYPD's Intelligence Division) has been involved in during the last 10 years comes out - it always eventually comes out. They are going to make Hoover, COINTEL, Red Squads, etc look like rank amateurs [sic] compared to some of the damn right felonious activity, and violations of US citizen's rights they have been engaged in."<sup>8</sup> In order to comprehend the extent of the current operations, we must first examine the records of the COINTELPRO operations, which will allow us to recognize the main tools used against targeted groups at the time and then to extrapolate lessons through the construction of a sound comparison with the current operations directed at Muslims and Arabs in the US and abroad.

#### *LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD*

To begin our task it is important to introduce a working definition of COINTELPRO that can better guide and narrow the focus of this comparative examination. In their seminal work, *Agents of Repression*, Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall (2002) defined the term as follows:

*COINTELPRO is the FBI domestic Counterintelligence Programs designed to destroy individuals and organizations the FBI considers to be politically objectionable. Tactics included all manners of official lying and media misinformation, systematically levying false charges against those targeted, manufacturing evidence to obtain their convictions, withholding evidence which might exonerate them, and occasionally assassinating "key leaders." The FBI says COINTELPRO ended in 1971; all reasonable interpretations of FBI performance indicate it continues today, albeit under other code-names.<sup>9</sup>*

One can find evidence of similar operations in the late 1970s, '80s and the '90s as well. In addition to the usual set of suspects and targets that the FBI pursued in the 1960s and early '70s, the scope was expanded to include anti-Nuclear weapons activists, Central American and South Africa Solidarity Movements, and beginning in the '80s environmental and anti-globalization organizers and organizations were included in the list of targets.<sup>10</sup> This work will not attempt to cover each of these groups or

movements and the security operations carried out against them, but it is important to keep this in mind as we move to explore, briefly, COINTELPRO history and then to draw on the key elements that I believe have been retained and currently are deployed against the “new enemies of the state.”

The definition speaks of “programs” and not merely one operation, as many tend to assume or argue “the bad apple” defense. When some records of COINTELPRO became available after the 1975 Church Committee, the public was informed of the FBI requesting “3,247 illegal, repressive and disruptive actions throughout the course” of the program but of those requests “only 2,370 were carried out.”<sup>11</sup> Requested, in this context, points to the presence of paper work; however, by inference we can argue that a long list of possible operations was conducted without records or papers being kept. In addition, the FBI under J. E. Hoover developed in 1960 the “Security Index” and “Rabble Rouser Index” containing the names of people to be summarily arrested and detained in the event of war,” which “listed 200,000 names, including writer Norman Mailer and Democratic Senator Paul Douglas.”<sup>12</sup> According to the Church Committee report, the “FBI headquarters alone have developed over 500,000 domestic intelligence files” over the period of the COINTELPRO program with 65,000 such files opened in 1972 alone and were also “augmented by additional files at FBI Filed Offices” around the country.<sup>13</sup> As a matter of fact, more individuals and groups faced “intelligence scrutiny than the number of files would appear to indicate, since typically, each domestic intelligence file contains information on more than one individual or group.”<sup>14</sup>

J. E. Hoover, the longest serving director of the FBI (served as director from 1924 until 1971), marshaled and exercised unfettered power targeting a host of organizations and individuals that he deemed politically objectionable. However, when we look back to the 1960s period, it is clear that one of the most underreported stories to this day is the massive violations of civil and human rights by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the vindictive leadership of J. E. Hoover. If we track the tenure of Hoover at the FBI’s helm since the 1920s, then we arrive at the conclusion that throughout these years the norm was the absence of civil rights protection for minorities and labor and anti-war activists; on the contrary, the government agency entrusted with their protection was responsible for egregious constitutional and criminal violations. Up to this day, the American public is still in the dark when it comes to the real nuts and bolts of what took place in the last century and in particular the 1960s and how Federal Agents abused their power to commit high crimes against thousands of innocent American citizens. We must add to this the fact that Hoover’s own files were “lost” after his death, and with them 60 years of evidence is no longer accessible. Yet, a more insulting aspect of this is the fact that a number of buildings across this nation are inscribed with the name of J. E. Hoover. Also, no senior government officials have really

answered to this day for the many crimes committed; rather the often-used approach of attempting to forget and offer general remarks of remorse without real substantive changes is in place.<sup>15</sup>

Knowledge of the conduct of J. E. Hoover's agency came to the public through the initial diligent work of the "Citizens Committee to Investigate the FBI" who, in March, 1971, managed to "remove secret files from an FBI office in Media, Pennsylvania and subsequently releas[ed] them to the press."<sup>16</sup> Prior to this release, no concrete evidence of FBI wrongdoing was available to the public, thus the documents emerged at a very crucial period in America's political and social history. By 1971, public support for the Vietnam War was waning and a variety of political movements calling for the withdrawal of US troops and the end of the conflict were gaining support across many sectors of American society.

Indeed, Anti-war protests built upon the long Civil Rights struggle presented a major challenge to the status quo and the elite power structure was increasingly concerned about a possible loss of control and change in the long-held white power structure. Fear of losing such control provided the needed rationale for engaging in the massive civil and human rights violations that had made COINTELPRO the logical answer at the height of the cold war. The American power elite did not want to face the fact that the Vietnam War was a mistake and a disaster and the continued racist structure reflected in the political, social and economic arena was immoral and no-longer sustainable. At the time, the established political elite wanted to divert attention from existing foreign policy failures and lay the blame on the civil rights and anti-war movements at home. Wars, in the modern period and the distant past, consume society's financial resources and rob the poor and middle class of future possibilities; hence, the need to rally and keep public support for imperial adventures is a primary requirement and is critically needed to keep the war machine moving over a long period despite well-established failures. However, when an Iraq war is falsely constructed and the threat is magnified beyond what is warranted, the political elite must marshal and "manufacture" public support, which is sufficient for the initial war effort but unsustainable for a long-term commitment since citizens of the empire can be mollified for a short period if victory is at hand but not if the cost in blood and money is too high.

In the past and at present, the ruling elite will not come out and admit responsibility for selling a rotten war to its citizens; rather blame is shifted toward those opposing the war and their lack of patriotism is indentified as the main source for lack of success on the war front. Thus, we find in the late '60s and early '70s the targeting of the civil rights and anti-war movements by the higher-ups in our government deployed as a strategic tool to shift the blame for the failure in Vietnam, resulting in further magnification of domestic economic disparities already existing inside of American society. How do we understand the government and our own leaders moving to suppress dissent, fabricating evidence and targeting law



abiding citizens for no other reason than engaging in activities protected by the Constitution! COINTELPRO, the program we are about to examine in detail, begins much earlier than the 1960s or '70s, but it becomes far more magnified during the later years of President Johnson and into Nixon's administration, which deployed an even more pernicious and sinister use of blame and fear in order to maintain control and discredit the opposition.

Both Johnson and Nixon faced a growing opposition to the Vietnam War efforts, and dissent reached almost every sector of American society—the introduction of the draft finally bringing the white middle class into the front lines in large numbers. Wars are popular in the initial stage; however the longer they drag and the more costly in terms of blood and money, the more the ruling elite and its structures come under stress and the people begin to question the wisdom behind them. Nixon inherited the Vietnam War and ran his campaign on the promise of getting the country out of it; however, promises made on the road to the White House are seldom kept. On his part, Nixon continued the war effort and intensified the COINTELPRO structure as opposition to the unpopular war grew louder and more daring and intensified.

Not content with leaving matters alone, President Nixon was involved with J. E. Hoover in a massive counterintelligence operation at home directed at all those he deemed enemies, including the Democratic Party itself. Nixon unleashed all available forces against those deemed “unpatriotic” and unsupportive of the war effort while placing no legal limits to prevent abuse of power. “Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely” is an apt description for the Nixon Administration since their fall was by their own doing. Through a convergence of forces and events, a wider opening emerged and more information came to the surface about FBI practices and its operations against law-abiding citizens. Nixon's “Plumbers” and their inept break-in into the Watergate hotel contributed to an opening in the American political system that, in the end, helped expose larger parts of FBI files, including COINTELPRO operations. Events beginning with the break-in and other FBI missteps culminated in the Church Committee report of 1975. The Church Committee covered many elements, but for our purposes we will focus on Book II, Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, which had the following conclusions in the opening summary:

*We have seen segments of our Government, in their attitudes and actions, adopt tactics unworthy of a democracy, and occasionally reminiscent of the tactics of totalitarian regimes. We have seen a consistent pattern in which programs initiated with limited goals, such as preventing criminal violence or identifying foreign spies, were expanded to what witnesses characterized as “vacuum clearers,” sweeping in information about lawful activities of American citizens.... Too many people have been spied upon by too many Government*



agencies and too much information has been collected. The Government has often undertaken the secret surveillance of citizens on the basis of their political beliefs, even when those beliefs posed no threat of violence or illegal acts on behalf of a hostile foreign power. The Government, operating primarily through secret informants, but also using other intrusive techniques such as wiretaps, microphone “bugs,” surreptitious mail opening, and break-ins, has swept in vast amounts of information about the personal lives, views, and associations of American citizens. Investigations of groups deemed potentially dangerous—and even of groups suspected of associating with potentially dangerous organizations—have continued for decades, despite the fact that those groups did not engage in unlawful activity. Groups and individuals have been harassed and disrupted because of their political views and their lifestyles. Investigations have been based upon vague standards whose breadth made excessive collection inevitable. Unsavory and vicious tactics have been employed—including anonymous attempts to break up marriages, disrupt meetings, ostracize persons from their professions, and provoke target groups into rivalries that might result in death. Intelligence agencies have served the political and personal objectives of presidents and other high officials. While the agencies often committed excesses in response to pressure from high officials in the Executive branch and Congress, they also occasionally initiated improper activities and then concealed them from officials whom they had a duty to inform. ... Governmental officials—including those whose principle duty is to enforce the law—have violated or ignored the law over long periods of time and have advocated and defended their right to break the law. The Constitutional system of checks and balances has not adequately controlled intelligence activities. Until recently the Executive branch has neither delineated the scope of permissible activities nor established procedures for supervising intelligence agencies. Congress has failed to exercise sufficient oversight, seldom questioning the use to which its appropriations were being put. Most domestic intelligence issues have not reached the courts, and in those cases when they have reached the courts, the judiciary has been reluctant to grapple with them.<sup>17</sup>

While the conclusion above provides a categorical condemnation of government activities, in the view of historian Howard Zinn, the report was nothing more than “a complex process of consolidation” based on “the need to satisfy a disillusioned public that the system was criticizing and correcting itself.”<sup>18</sup> Even though the system engaged in a “process of consolidation,”

the value of what was exposed should not be underestimated, for it corroborated, for the first time, that which was known all-along on the streets among political activists—that is, the FBI and Hoover were involved in organized criminal activities against the American people.”<sup>19</sup>

If you ask most Americans today about COINTELPRO, you would hardly get anyone who would know what it was, and some might think only of Hip Hop groups using this name, but for many victims of the program it was and still is a reality. Consider for a moment the black-nationalist movement, the Chicano Brown Berets activists and the Native American organizations targeted by COINTELPRO operations and whether they are still living the outcomes of these events! Did the FBI have anything to do with so many African-American leaders being killed either in fomented inner fighting or “shoot-outs with police”?!

Let us for a moment examine the following facts that document the scope of domestic intelligence carried out under the COINTELPRO programs:

1. “Nearly a quarter of a million first class letters were opened and photographed in the United States by the CIA between 1953-1973, producing a CIA computerized index of nearly one and one-half million names;
2. At least 130,000 first class letters were opened and photographed by the FBI between 1940-1966 right in U.S. cities;
3. Some 300,000 individuals were indexed in a CIA computer system and separate files were created on approximately 7,200 Americans and over 100 domestic groups during the course of the CIA’s Operation Chaos (1967-1973);
4. Millions of private telegrams sent from, to, or through the United States were obtained by the National Security Agency from 1947 to 1975 under a secret arrangement with three United States telegraph companies;
5. An estimated 100,000 Americans were subjects of United States Army intelligence files created between the mid-1960s and 1971;
6. Intelligence files on more than 11,000 individuals and groups were created by the Internal Revenue Service between 1969 and 1973, and tax investigations were started on the basis of political rather than tax criteria;
7. At least 26,000 individuals were at one point catalogued on an FBI list of persons to be rounded up in the event of a “national emergency.”<sup>20</sup>

In the 1960s, the FBI directed most of its resources at dismantling the Black Power movement/s with all of its sub-groups and ideologies. For Hoover’s FBI, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and Elijah

Muhammed represented a singular threat even though each one of them engaged in the struggle for equal rights from a different ideological prism. What brought them together in the eyes of the FBI was the possibility of developing a movement that could challenge and possibly change the existing American power structure. The FBI directive included below was sent to the attention of all offices, which if read carefully may have been intended to give agents considerable freedom of operations in pursuit of the Agency's goals, which possibly included actual criminal activities on the part of the Agency itself and sworn officers of the US government.

The COINTELPRO operations focused on disrupting the work of organizations through a variety of tactics and diverting their energies away from their main mission. In order to accomplish this task the FBI resorted to a "bag of dirty tricks," which violated every aspect of the US Constitution. For the FBI, the targeted organizations and leaders were a threat to the US and they had to be dealt with as "enemies of the state," citizenship status notwithstanding. Before reading the directive below, it is important to comprehend what was meant at the time by a "threat" to the US, which had to do with one particular view of what this country represented and an attempt at preserving it. Thus, all those working for civil rights, according to this particular view, were a "threat" that had to be dealt with "by any means necessary." Through the directives issued by the FBI Director, a certain atmosphere was created where by "any means necessary" took on a more explicit meaning. By nodding in a certain direction and constituting the perceived threat in such a wide circle, the higher-ups could impact the zeal and intensity of the agents on the ground, which resulted in the documented violations. In this regard, one has to reflect at the most recent memos written by Justice Department lawyer and UC Berkeley Professor of Law John Yoo in post 9/11, which provided the rationale for acts of torture during the Iraq invasion. A mere nod in one direction led the ground level staff to take extreme measures resulting in cases of torture and the photo evidence that came out of Abu-Ghareb prison in Iraq.

It is in this context of higher ups giving the green light for actions directed against lawful activities that we begin to comprehend what was at work during this period. How the FBI was able to eliminate directly or indirectly every political organization of significance in the 1960s and '70's in addition to every major Black, Native American, and Chicano national leadership on the scene! Looking at the available evidence may provide a clue as to what tactics were used against political activists and organizations at the time.

Below is an important directive, and we must spend some time evaluating its content and the impact it had on field offices and officers managing cases at a critical period in American history:

**FBI Directive to Filed Offices**

SAC, Albany

August 25, 1967

Personal Attention To All Offices

Director, FBI

Counterintelligence Program

Black Nationalist – Hate Groups

Internal Security

... The purpose of this new counterintelligence endeavor is to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder. The activities of all such groups of intelligence interest to the Bureau must be followed on a continuous basis so we will be in a position to promptly take advantage of all opportunities for counterintelligence and to inspire action in instances where circumstances warrant. The pernicious background of such groups, their duplicity, and devious maneuvers must be exposed to public scrutiny where such publicity will have a neutralizing effect. Efforts of the various groups to consolidate their forces or to recruit new or youthful adherents must be frustrated. No opportunity should be missed to exploit through counterintelligence techniques the organizational and personal conflicts of the leaderships of the groups and where possible an effort should be made to capitalize upon existing conflicts between competing black nationalist organizations. When an opportunity is apparent to disrupt or neutralize black nationalist, hate-type organizations through cooperation of established local news media contacts or through such contact with sources available to the Seat of Government, in every instance careful attention must be given to the proposal to insure the targeted group is disrupted, ridiculed, or discredited through the publicity and not merely publicized....

You are also cautioned that the nature of this endeavor is such that under no circumstances should the existence of the program be made known outside the Bureau and appropriate within-office security should be afforded to sensitive operations and techniques considered under the program.

No counterintelligence action under this program may be initiated by the field without specific prior Bureau authorization."<sup>21</sup>

A number of key elements in the above directive are critical for a proper understanding of what COINTELPRO is all about and would also help us identify current operations having similar strategies. The government issued directive was about the FBI “counterintelligence endeavor... to **expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize** the activities of black nationalist hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder.” The key operational words in this directive are: **Expose, Disrupt, Misdirect, Discredit, or otherwise Neutralize** the ... black nationalist hate-type organizations. The FBI operations covered “all such groups” and the “intelligence” was of “interest to the Bureau.” Furthermore, all such groups, from the FBI’s perspective, “must be followed on a continuous basis so we will be in a position to promptly take advantage of all opportunities for counterintelligence and to inspire action in instances where circumstances warrant.”

We can say that the FBI has an equal opportunity approach in dealing with those it defines as enemies, which at the time included almost every known Black, Latino, Asian, Native American and progressive organization—not to mention segments of the Democratic Party itself. Even though the above letter does speak of Black organizations, in other documents the targets included Native American, Chicano, Asians, Arabs, Communist, Socialist, Labor, ACLU and Women groups. In the Senate Intelligence Committee, the FBI admitted to officially approving a total of 2,370 COINTELPRO operations,<sup>22</sup> but it is widely known that these operations represent the tip of the iceberg and do not account for many missions not recorded altogether. The common thread among all of the organizations targeted is their readiness to take positions, both on domestic and foreign policy issues, contrary to those held or advocated by certain ruling circles within the government. On a completely smaller tangent, it did not matter whether it was a democrat or a republican in the White House or Congress—the operations continued unabated. When the time comes for a class action lawsuit against the government, this provides a context for it since Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, Arabs, Communists, Labor and Civil Rights activists and everyone else were targeted as a group for no other reason than being a member of such a group exercising their constitutional rights to freedom of association and speech, which were violated systematically by the government and its agents.

What is meant by “to inspire action in instances where circumstances warrant” and could this have been used to cause splits in the targeted organization or engage in further efforts that resulted in the destruction of targeted groups? How many Black Panthers were killed as a result of this FBI “inspired action”!? Was the assassination of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King such an “inspired action”!? Was Fred Hampton in Chicago an FBI “inspired action”!? A closer reading of yet another directive may

provide further clues regarding the intent and the scope of FBI authorized operations:

### **Counterintelligence Program**

*Black Nationalist – Hate Groups*

*Racial Intelligence*

*3/4/68*

#### Background

.... The Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), a pro-Chinese communist group, was active in Philadelphia, Pa., in the summer of 1967. The Philadelphia office alerted local police, who then put RAM leaders under close scrutiny. They were arrested on every possible charge until they could no longer make bail. As a result, RAM leaders spent most of the summer in jail and no violence traceable to RAM took place...

#### Goals

For maximum effectiveness of the Counterintelligence Program, and to prevent wasted effort, long range goals are being set.

1. Prevent the coalition of militant black nationalist groups. In unity there is strength; a truism that is no less valid for all its triteness. An effective coalition of black nationalist groups might be the first step toward a real "Mau Mau" in America, the beginning of a true black revolution.
2. Prevent the rise of a "messiah" who could unify, and electrify, the militant black nationalist movement. Malcolm X might have been such a "messiah;" he is the martyr of the movement today. Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael and Elijah Muhammad all aspire to this position. Elijah Muhammad is less of a threat because of his age. King could be a very real contender for this position should he abandon his supposed "obedience" to "white, liberal doctrines (nonviolence) and embrace black nationalism." Carmichael has the necessary charisma to be a real threat in this way.
3. Prevent violence on the part of black nationalist groups. This is of primary importance, and is, of course, a goal of our investigative activity; it should also be a goal of the Counterintelligence Program. Through counterintelligence it should be possible to pinpoint potential troublemakers and neutralize them before they exercise their potential for violence.
4. Prevent militant black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability, by discrediting them to three separate segments of the community. The goal of discrediting black nationalists must be handled tactically in three ways. You must discredit those groups and individuals to, first, the



*responsible Negro community. Second, they must be discredited to the white community, both the responsible community and the “liberals” who have vestiges of sympathy for militant black nationalist[s] simply because they are Negroes. Third, these groups must be discredited in the eyes of Negro radicals, the followers of the movement. This last area requires entirely different tactics from the first two. Publicity about violent tendencies and radical statements merely enhances black nationalists to the last group; it adds “respectability” in a different way.*

5. *A final goal should be to prevent the long range growth of militant black nationalist organizations, especially among the youth. Specific tactics to prevent these groups from converting young people must be developed.*

#### Targets

*Primary targets of the Counterintelligence Program, Black Nationalist-Hate Groups, should be the most violent and radical groups and their leaders. We should emphasize those leaders and organizations that are nationwide in scope and are most capable of disrupting this country. These targets should include the radical and violence-prone leaders, members, and followers of the:*

*Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)*

*Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)*

*Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM)*

*Nation of Islam (NOI)*

*Offices handling these cases and those of Stokely Carmichael of SNCC, H. Rap Brown of SNCC, Martin Luther King of SCLC, Maxwell Stanford of RAM, and Elijah Muhammed of NOI, should be alert for counterintelligence suggestions....”<sup>23</sup>*

The second directive above from FBI headquarters sheds more light into the specific goals and major targets of the operations. I do not need to speak of the inherent racism contained in the text and spirit of the directive; it is a given fact governing the full scope of FBI operations at the time. However, we must identify the key words in the directive above, for they give exact meaning to what was pursued: “Prevent the coalition of militant black nationalist groups, ... Prevent the rise of a “messiah” who could unify, and electrify, ... Prevent the militant black nationalist movement, ... Prevent violence on the part of black nationalist groups, ... Prevent militant black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability, ... Prevent the long range growth of militant black nationalist organizations, especially among the youth.”

When we look back at what took place, then we must assess the price that the African American, Native American and Latino communities paid with their blood and continue to pay as a byproduct of FBI and government sanctioned operations. The FBI with its operations managed to remove at least two full generations of leaders, and whatever we attribute to failure in these communities presently has its foundation, yes, in early slavery and conquest, internal divisions, contradictions between African American groups and leaders, but more responsibility should be directly assigned to the illegal operations carried out systematically against the people by government agents over a long period of time. If it was one or two bad apples then one can understand, however these were operations carried out with specific orders across the board for all to engage in massive violations of the Constitution, basic protected rights, and the ability to peacefully petition one's own government for redress of grievances.

As we begin to understand the extent of the present COINTELPRO operations directed at Arabs, Muslims and Southeast Asians, we must keep in mind the intended outcomes from this current campaign. After reading all the existing primary documents related to 1960s COINTELPRO and providing some samples above, the possible desired outcomes of the current campaign can be summed up in the following five points:

1. Prevent the coalition of Arab, Muslim and Southeast Asian groups.
2. Prevent the rise of a unifying figure/s.
3. Prevent violence/terrorism from within these communities.
4. Prevent Muslim leadership from gaining respectability in the "mainstream" of American society.
5. Prevent the growth of Muslim resistance organizations among the youth.

The above five items are just quick reflections of what was desired from the 1960s campaign and, if deployed against the current targets, would possibly have these same outcomes in mind. At present, the FBI is utilizing similar strategies in its operations, and it is instructive for us to use the existing approach to illustrate the specifics of the current campaign.

#### *THE NEW COINTELPRO: MUSLIMS, THE NEW ENEMIES OF THE STATE*

The full extent of COINTELPRO operations in the 1960s and early '70s are somewhat documented, but the more recent operations are less known; most people think that this was/is something in the distant past and that the modern FBI is a professional organization that only engages in legitimate security matters. One surely can see some validity to this perspective; however, it lacks a clear view of the historical continuity within the FBI and the lack of real change of attitude at the top. In the most recent past, the FBI operations were directed against the Committee in Solidarity

with the People of El-Salvador (CISPES), environmentalist, anti-globalization activists as well as anti-war organizers. Furthermore, many Palestinians, South Africans, Koreans, Central Americans, Chinese and Black Nationalist activists were subject to constant monitoring and harassment by various sections of the security infrastructure in the US.<sup>24</sup> This limited and more focused work will not deal with the post COINTELPRO period as some works and publications on a number of movements are available, but I do feel a more comprehensive comparative and chronological analysis is badly needed, which I may at a future date undertake to close the knowledge gaps, where possible.

I am going to move from the FBI days in the '60s and '70s to address the new operations underway targeting the new "enemies" of the state, Arabs, Muslims and South East Asians. My interest in the subject emerges out of deep involvement in Civil Rights and Human Rights work domestically and globally over a period of 30 years covering the full spectrum of movements from the Anti-Apartheid, Central and Latin America Solidarity Movements and work with Young Koreans United to immigrant rights, affirmative action, Americans with Disabilities as well as environmental economic training and anti-NAFTA organizing, and witnessing, even before 9/11, the systematic targeting of Muslims as the new "enemies" of the state. I view the history of human and civil rights as a constant work in progress and part of a continuum that requires us to document, compare, and evaluate every period so as to help each generation prevent security agencies from violating the collective rights of all those inhabiting this country, documented or otherwise. In previous periods, the targets were Native Americans, African Americans, Chinese Americans, Irish and Italian Americans, but today it is Muslims, Arabs and South East Asians that are the target of government security programs rooted in fear mongering, Islamophobia and political opportunism. This work is intended to draw parallels with the security tools deployed in the COINTELPRO program and illustrate the damage inflicted upon the impacted communities in the process with the hope of not only serving intellectual and academic purposes but more importantly to be utilized as a tool to speak truth to power and organize to defend human and civil rights. Intellectuals have a responsibility, and knowledge should be rooted in an epistemology of emancipation and not be content to function as embedded scholars solving imperial problems near and far.

On Monday August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Seth Rosenfeld, a researcher and author at the Center for Investigative Reporting, had an article published in the *SF Chronicle* titled, "Activist Richard Aoki Named as Informant,"<sup>25</sup> which provided evidence linking the 1960s activist to the FBI and more importantly positing him as the possible source for the Black Panther Party's weapons. The debate on his role is by no means final, and the article and responses to it are still underway, but what is significant is the continued stream of information, documents, investigations and reporting focusing on

an important period in America's history. Reading and discussing this earlier historical period is very critical; however, a few months ago a stream of documents obtained through a FOIA request revealed that the NYPD was engaging in spying activities against Muslim Students in the Northeast, including campuses 300 miles away from city limits. The documents included may be accessed via the link provided in the endnotes and demonstrate the extent of the operations directed at the current targeted communities.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, in yet another collection of de-classified documents obtained as a result of a FOIA request by the ACLU and ALC (Asian Law Caucus), the FBI, the documents demonstrate, "has turned its community outreach programs into a secretive domestic intelligence initiative that systematically, and in some instances illegally, collects and stores information about Americans' First Amendment-protected activities."<sup>27</sup> The FBI and the Justice Department initiated a number of outreach programs directed at the Arab, Muslim and Southeast Asian communities, and in each instance these were utilized for intelligence gathering purposes thus violating their Constitutional Rights.

#### THE ACLU DOCUMENTS:

- The FBI visited the Seaside Mosque five times in 2005 for "mosque outreach" and documented congregants' innocuous discussions regarding frustrations over delays in airline travel, a property purchase of a new mosque, where men and women would pray at the new mosque, and even the sale of date fruits after services. It also documented the subject of a particular sermon, raising First Amendment concerns. Despite an apparent lack of information related to crime or terrorism, the FBI's records of discussions with mosque leaders and congregants were all classified as "secret," marked "positive intelligence," and disseminated outside the FBI.

- The FBI met with members of the South Bay Islamic Association four times (1, 2, 3, & 4) from 2004 to 2007. FBI agents documented as "positive intelligence" and disseminated outside the FBI an individual's complaint of travel delays during the Hajj pilgrimage caused by the No Fly list, as well as an individual's conversation about the Hajj, "Islam in general," Muslims' safety in the U.S., and community fears regarding an FBI investigation of imams in Lodi, California. Two memoranda from 2006 and 2007 contain no descriptive information apart from the name and location of mosques contacted by the FBI, which might be appropriate to record in a normal community outreach context, but were instead classified as "secret," labeled "positive intelligence," and disseminated outside the FBI.

- A 2005 FBI memorandum described contact with a representative of the South Bay Afghan Community Center and failed attempts to set up an outreach meeting with the Afghan Cultural Center. The document identifies

the representatives of each organization and lists the address and phone number of the Afghan Cultural Center. This information was described as “positive intelligence” and disseminated outside the FBI.

- A 2006 FBI memorandum documented contact with a named representative of the Islamic Network Group to discuss a recently written article, the name of which was redacted. This information was labeled “positive intelligence” and disseminated outside the FBI.

- A 2005 FBI memorandum contained a detailed description of the Islamic Center of Santa Cruz and documented a meeting with a congregant, including his name, religious affiliation, and his discussion of congregants’ financial contributions to the Center and community support for Islam. The document was classified as “secret,” marked “positive intelligence,” and disseminated outside the FBI.

- A 2005 FBI memorandum described a meeting with a representative of the Granada Islamic School at the Santa Clara Muslim Community Association. The document detailed the school’s facilities and summarized a conversation regarding the school’s structure and its relationship with its parent organization. This information was described as “positive intelligence” and disseminated outside the FBI.

- A 2007 FBI memorandum entitled “Mosque Liaison Contacts” reported FBI contact with 20 northern California mosques. The name, address, and contact information for each mosque was described as “positive intelligence” and disseminated outside the FBI.

- A 2007 FBI memorandum documented two visits to the Anjuman-e-Najmi mosque in Fremont, California, identified congregants by name, described their conversations, associated them with the Dawoodi Bohra community of Shi’a Muslims, and reproduced the contents of a lengthy e-mail describing the community’s religious beliefs and history. This information was labeled “positive intelligence” and disseminated outside the FBI.

- Two 2008 FBI memoranda described contact with representatives of the Bay Area Cultural Connections (BAYCC), which was formerly the Turkish Center Musalla. The first describes the history, mission, and activities of the BAYCC, the ethnicity of its members and its affiliation with another organization. The second memorandum indicates that the FBI used a named meeting participant’s cell phone number to search LexisNexis and Department of Motor Vehicle records, and obtained and recorded detailed information about him, including his date of birth, social security number,

address and home telephone number. Both memoranda were classified as “secret.”<sup>28</sup>

Declassified documents at both ends of the country provide ample evidence as to the existence of a massive intelligence gathering program, which focused on members of the Arab, Muslim and Southeast Asian communities, treating them all as suspects and using discredited methods from the 1960s to “catch the terrorists” before they do “us” any harm. The red-scare of the 1960s has become a green one by utilizing the same method. The targets at the present are the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian populations with all of their sub-divisions, ethnic groupings, theological orientations and levels of political involvement. In his book, *War at Home (Date?)*, Brian Glick identifies the four major methods—“1. Infiltration; 2. Psychological Warfare From Outside; 3. Harassment Through the Legal System; 4. Extralegal Force and Violence”<sup>29</sup>—employed by the FBI during the height of the COINTELPRO program. I propose comparing the four mentioned strategies used by the FBI and security agencies in the COINTELPRO programs to what is being done today to Arabs, Muslims and South Asians in the current “War on Terrorism” and seeing if a sufficient case can be made of systematic violations of civil and constitutional rights.

Taking the issue of infiltration first, at present Muslim communities globally are subject to a massive infiltration campaign, and the same goal is pursued domestically inside the United States. The problem confronting the Department of Homeland Security today is how to gain access to a closed religious community that has been identified as the “new enemy of the state,” one that the country must be defended against to prevent possible future attacks. Here we are concerned with identifying the active operational methods and tools of those who are designing and implementing a new infiltration program directed at law abiding Muslim communities in America.

Since immediately after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the FBI has engaged in a massive recruitment campaign directed at members of Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities. In major cities with large Arab, Muslim and South Asian populations, the FBI placed ads in newspapers and on TV and radio, seeking individuals with language skills as well as knowledge of the identified/targeted communities. Such an effort followed an old proven tactic of the carrot and stick. In some cases, recruitment was undertaken by means of a very sweet tasting carrot, that being money, position, prestige and allure of the world or a green card for an illegal immigrant. At times, though, the best tool for recruitment is a very long and mighty stick, which produces results; however, the first method is often preferable since it originates in an inherent weakness in the individual that makes them want to cooperate to secure a benefit they have been after for some time. The second is less full proof since the individual has possibly



demonstrated a resistance to a carrot offer and only after reaching a breaking point he/she becomes ready to cooperate and be employed by the security agencies. In my estimation, the period of recruitment was put in place immediately after September 11<sup>th</sup>, and it is still underway twelve years removed from the tragic events as FOIA documents from the NYPD and SFPD demonstrate. I do not know the number of those to be recruited, but it would take a large investment in human agents to infiltrate a 3-7 million member community with all its sub-groups and nationalities. In the previous COINTELPRO programs, the most frequently used intelligence collection technique was through the deployment of informants accounting for 83% frequency followed by 74% of a confidential police source being the source for information.<sup>30</sup>

In case after case since 9/11, the FBI has worked to recruit a number of Muslims and Arabs for infiltration purposes and has deployed them in every mosque, community center, and charitable institution. In the New York, Albany, Lodi and LA cases, the infiltrators' identities have become public knowledge and the methods used are already part of public records as well. At least in three cases the infiltrator was a community member that was pressured into an informant role as a way to avoid possible deportation.

The link between immigration status and security agencies has a long history, but a more refined approach was put into place during the Presidency of Ronald Reagan through the Alien Border Control Committee (ABCC) that wanted to "speed-up" the deportation proceedings. According to the ABCC, "where criminal prosecution is not practicable for an alien actually engaged in the support of terrorism within the United States, procedures should be developed, utilizing current authorities, if possible, to expeditiously deport such aliens while protecting classified information and methods by which such information is obtained."<sup>31</sup> The FBI threatening individuals with speedy deportation and removal from the country once coupled with possible deficiencies in their paperwork made the proposal for an infiltration role an option for many. In one case in Knoxville, Tennessee, the FBI agents arrested a young Palestinian man, drove him to the airport and threatened him with deportation if he refused to cooperate and become an informant for the agency. As a matter of fact, the FBI agent who arrested this Palestinian man showed-up in my own lecture at the University of Knoxville and introduced himself afterward as well, which means the fishing/threatening expedition for informants or infiltrators was still underway.

While Muslim and Arab infiltrators and informants are more desirable due to their knowledge of the community, the easy access they have and the lack of suspicion on the part of mosque or community center attendees, the FBI did employ individuals who went undercover and pretended to be either new coverts or heritage seekers reconnecting with their lost Muslim roots. An example of this type of infiltration is the on-going case in Orange County, California, involving Craig Monteilh, a 46-year-old convicted Irvine

felon and a con artist employed by the FBI to spy and collect information on the inside affairs of Muslim community centers in the area. To gain access to the community, Mr. Monteilh claimed to be of mixed French-Syrian heritage and wanted to reconnect with his family roots by converting to Islam. Sure enough, in a short period of time, Mr. Monteilh befriended a small group of Muslim youths in the Islamic Center of Irvine and on more than one occasion taped and delivered to the FBI conversations that he claims implicate all of those recorded to be terrorists "bent on carrying out violent attacks in Orange County."<sup>32</sup>

In another report to the FBI, Mr. Monteilh insisted that he "observed six to eight young Middle Eastern Muslims loading barrels in the back of the mosque," which for him was key evidence of their planning attacks on targets including "shopping malls, Fashion Island, South Coast Plaza" and "the Irvine Spectrum."<sup>33</sup> The FBI handlers had a debate about the veracity of Mr. Monteilh's claims but opted to follow-up on it by sending "a radiological team to snoop inside the mosque, using a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) warrant, which allows agents to search home or buildings without their owners' permission or knowledge."<sup>34</sup> No conclusive evidence emerged from this surveillance and it is not clear whether other actions took place based on this single claim, but as early as 2005, the FBI did acknowledge conducting other "radiation tests at Mosques in the United States,"<sup>35</sup> which possibly included Orange County centers.

The FBI's use of con-convert Craig Monteilh as an infiltrator landed an Afghan immigrant, 34-year-old Ahmadullah Sais Niazi in jail on perjury charges for failing to disclose on his passport application and other documents "previous trips to Pakistan and the fact that his brother-in-law was a high ranking member of a Taliban faction allied with Al-Qaeda."<sup>36</sup> According to Mr. Niazi, after the arrest, the FBI offered and pressured him to become an informant inside the Muslim community, "threatening that if he didn't cooperate, they'd turn his life into a "living hell."" From this case, we can see that the FBI is employing external agents to possibly target a community and then recruit, through enticement or threats, members from within to further the intelligence agencies' agendas, which they claim is prevention of future terrorist attacks. What is of interest to us in the Orange County episode is the fact that community members including Mr. Niazi himself, the Imam of the Mosque, Sadullah Khan and CAIR's LA executive director Hussam Ayloush all have reported to the FBI and the local police their concerns about Jihadi ideas and statements espoused frequently by Craig Monteilh and the possibility that he might carry out terrorist attacks. Thus, Muslims in Irvine acted in this case like any other person who, after hearing of someone thinking, planning or urging others around him to engage in terrorist acts in their own community, would report him to the authorities, unbeknownst to them that their own government and the FBI is the one fomenting these activities in the mosque.

Yet another type of infiltration was documented that originates in ideological opposition to the Muslim community and an attempt to maintain or protect some type of self-interest represented in various aspects of the US political, social, religious, economic as well as foreign policy. A group that has been offering its services for its own ideological reasons are the Israel-supporting members of American society and some members of the Christian right. A number of existing outfits have been at work targeting Muslim organizations and individuals for the benefit of securing Israel's political and economic interest in America. Many of Israel's supporting individuals and organizations view, with great alarm, the increase in number and assertiveness of the American Muslim community since it has the potential in the long run of causing a re-consideration of existing policies vis-à-vis the Middle East and the Muslim world. The infiltration program directed by Israel's supporters have longer experience in this field and are also able to recruit from a diverse pool of persons that speak Arabic and served possibly in some capacity in Occupied Palestine, if not originally coming from Arabic or Persian speaking states. I am pointing this out so we are able to understand the range of possibilities deployed in this current security project. However, the Israel-supporting recruits might always be ready to oversell the threat, and the information collected is highly tainted since the goal of the operations they are involved in is connected to a foreign country's interests first and then domestic American security, second. A similar condition would also be found among the agents borrowed from Arab and Muslim countries, but a slight difference exists in that the information collected by such individuals are always re-examined due to a lack of trust in whatever is produced by "third world" personnel, an issue not considered when it comes to Israel's materials. The Christian right infiltrations are more recent and are more often than not connected to Israel supporter networks and not, at present, a completely independent enterprise.

An example of an Israel supporter's type of infiltration is that of Rita Katz, the director of the Site Institute, who published a book, *Terrorist Hunter: The Extraordinary Story of a Woman Who Went Undercover to Infiltrate the Radical Islamic Groups Operating in America*, documenting her adventures in pursuit of American Muslim terrorists. The book was released by Harpercollins with the author being "Anonymous," but after lawsuits filed by individuals and groups mentioned in the book, Rita Katz admitted to being the infiltrator who wrote the published work.<sup>37</sup> When we examine Rita Katz's work and background we conclude that Israel and its interests are at the heart of the infiltration efforts, which were directed at protecting its interest by discrediting Muslim communities and institutions.

In one interview given to National Review online by Rita Katz and conducted by Kathryn Jean Lopez on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003, a clear idea emerges about the main drive behind the infiltration and what interests it is intended to protect:

*Little could I imagine when I responded to an employment ad in a paper, just over five years ago, that my career would evolve the way it did. It all started by pure chance; I was looking for a job, responded to an ad, and was hired to work for a Middle-East research institute. I wasn't trained or instructed there, but rather on my own initiative and quite accidentally I started to study a certain charity, the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF), and I realized that this was a front group for Hamas. After a few months, I wanted to get to know in person the people I studied so closely, so I went to a fundraiser of theirs dressed as a Muslim woman. Soon thereafter I was attending conferences, visiting mosques, participating in rallies — and the more I did, the more I discovered the enormity of the problem of radicalism on U.S. soil.*

*Frightening is an understatement. During certain times, such as the widely televised lynching of two Israeli soldiers in the West Bank, attending some of these meetings, particularly the smaller ones, was terrifying. Being a Jewish woman among inflamed Muslims calling for jihad against Jews and death to Jews, I knew that I would face grave consequences if I were exposed. Other difficult experiences I had were actually in open, public rallies, where various people told sob stories about how they were abused because they were Muslims or Arabs. Some of these stories were really heartbreaking. But then came the leaders of the Muslim community and expressed their views, and that put me back on track. One such example was with Abdurahman al-Amoudi, who was considered by many a moderate Muslim leader and, as such, was a regular visitor to the White House. In a public rally he stated his support for Hamas and Hezbollah, two designated terrorist organizations. I recorded him, gave the videotape to the media, and this in fact brought an end to his lobbying career with the administration. But in spite of the danger, I never had a point where I wanted to quit. Whenever the going got tough, I had successes such as exposing al-Amoudi, deporting terrorists, preventing the government from unwittingly funding front groups for terror, and many others I describe in the book, to invigorate me.<sup>38</sup>*

Muslim and Arab communities are subject to massive spying and infiltration operations, which are being directed by a diverse array of agencies, governmental and private, with devastating consequences to institutions and individuals alike. This is not to exclude Muslim-Muslim or Arab-Arab

infiltrations directed at the sectarian divides, which might be yet another element that is rarely understood or covered. In this respect, a variety of initiatives undertaken by a number of Arab and Muslim groupings seeking to distance themselves from “radical,” “conservative” or “extreme” ideologies should be included under the same rubric discussed above.

During the 1960s, infiltration was not limited to a basic spy and report operations; on the contrary, the enterprise’s “purpose was to discredit and disrupt” the activities of targeted individuals and organizations. At times it was very difficult to identify who was actually responsible for what activities, considering the heavy involvement of FBI agents in undercover operations across the political spectrum.

On the issue of recruitment, a painful fact, which has to do with the cooperation of the targeted communities in the recruitment campaign, must be brought to everyone’s attention. Beginning in August 2002, during the 39<sup>th</sup> annual Islamic Society of North America National Convention in Washington, DC, the largest Muslim gathering in the country, one information booth caught my eyes more than the other 1000 or so in the Bazaar and lobby area—a fully decked FBI recruitment table. The Justice Department and other governmental agencies, including the FBI, have become a mainstay in every annual convention since 2002, not only at ISNA’s meetings but also in the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee gatherings. While this might seem shocking, it, nevertheless, can be readily compared to the Japanese American experience during WWII and the readiness of a sizable number of community members to cooperate with the US government and demonstrate their patriotism by serving America’s interest in the War effort. As a matter of fact, for a long period of time after WWII, tension developed within the Japanese American community between those who cooperated and those who resisted or refused to play the “either you are with us or with the enemy” card, a not dissimilar predicament that Muslims, Arabs and South East Asians find themselves facing.

We are in a period full of fomented fear, and one way to demonstrate that we are good is, presumably, through opening our doors and arms to the FBI. Some, during the Convention, made sure to say to the FBI agents at the table that we do not have anything to hide and you can come to any and all of our centers, events, schools, and conferences to see for yourself. I can understand the logic behind such PR with government agencies; since we are citizens and they are part of our government, it would be okay for us to invite them to our Convention in order to open lines of communication and possible job opportunity. However, this was not a job fair with all employers invited to participate; on the contrary the only prominent presence was distinctly security, military and foreign policy oriented ones; it is like a prisoner inviting the prison warden to check on the performance of the prisoners in the prison yard. As I was conducting interviews, one



conference attendee argued with me at the time that “we need to show them that we are Americans and we have nothing to hide and they can come to our events and centers and see for themselves!” It is precisely this perspective—that we must prove to certain representatives of the government that we are loyal and must be given a pass into the prison yard called contemporary America—that defines the community as guilty and needing to prove their collective innocence. Once we accept this logic, then the community deserves neither freedom nor citizenship, for we have not understood the meaning or responsibility of either. Another person I interviewed went into an overdrive attack on me for merely posing this idea to him in the form of question, and he accused me in return of being a radical and not wanting to integrate into American society; he argued that we should see the FBI, military, justice department information tables as a sign of belonging to America and also taking our place at the table. My answer was yes we are at the table but on the menu! If it was a Muslim job fair and all employers were welcome, then we would see all government agencies as well as the private sector and the local police, rather than only those agencies that are engaged in readily documentable abuses of various members and institutions in the Muslim, Arab and South East Asian communities.

In addition to the national events, almost every mosque and community center had had some type of a get together with their local FBI office director under the premise that we were ready to cooperate. Some of these meetings did focus on hate crimes directed at the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities, which can be viewed as legitimate; however, isolated crimes should be the least of the community’s concerns at this time since the campaign against the targeted communities is being carried out through the top political leadership in the country and by government agencies in our society. The targeted communities should have intensified their political work, developed coalitions and mobilized to pressure the local political leaders in both parties to protect and serve the needs of the community. In some cases, this was done; New Jersey, the Mosque Foundation in Chicago and, to some extent, San Francisco managed to create grass roots responses that must be studied so that lessons learned can be shared with communities around the country.

The Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities, in seeking to cast themselves in a positive light, facilitated the recruitment process and possibly made it more successful than if the FBI was left to its own fumbling devices. Not to imply that the Muslims were the only ones to do so in their national convention; the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee likewise had an FBI table prominent in their annual meeting in Washington, DC, which was seen by some as a major sign of “our inclusion” in the fabric of America. What we see here is the mixing of assimilation politics with civil rights advocacy by a targeted immigrant population. Both of these elements are intrinsic to the mission of many national organizations and the lack of



specialization mixed with a rather weak structure leads to critical and unforgivable lapses of judgment. Likewise, the Council on American Islamic Relations on national and regional levels embarked on hosting community meetings with local FBI officers as a way to provide information to an already fearful Muslim public and at the same time help to open channels of communication with the powerful agency, a strategic mistake by an organization that up to that point was solidly building a civil rights power house for the Muslim community and for that reason had been systematically targeted.

My critique of these initiatives are not directed at undermining the work that has been done by so many people in all these organizations who often operated under the gun in attempting to mount a defense of the community at a moment of crisis. The missions of the organizations mentioned above are inspiring and this critique should, if understood correctly, help re-direct the effort into more appropriate avenues. Through the many meetings held by the targeted communities with the FBI in mosques, churches and community organizations, the agency has been able to recruit the needed personnel for its on-going new COINTELPRO project. The community was/is afraid, the argument went, and a way to make people feel safe is to bring in agents of the FBI or their public relations officers to speak to people and offer help and support. Yes, the community faced hate crime attacks, and the FBI was involved in providing protection, but these invitations, at least in my own estimation, were not initiated with this aspect in mind. On the contrary, the key motivation was to demonstrate our readiness to cooperate with the FBI and other security agencies in such a way that in the process we could be seen or considered by the "other" to be worthy of being "one of us," i.e. Muslim, Arab and South East Asians citizens of America.

The mixing of agendas is critical and leads to major mistakes. Assimilation and being accepted is not the same as acting as civil rights organizations or religious institutions; the former is about seeking acceptance while the latter must, by definition, be an opposition and a vanguard of resistance to the excesses of existing government security agencies and more so at times of heightened tensions. Why an opposition? We must be reminded that it is in the nature of authoritarian and antidemocratic governments to seek restrictions and legislative limitations on the liberties of citizens; therefore civil rights organizations are the antithesis to these forms of power in well developed civil societies. When civil rights organizations are preoccupied with assimilation, then the outcome of such an approach is compromising fundamental rights at the cost of access and representation. Also, the access and representation sought from the ruling/governing power structure is often dependent upon services rendered to the power structure from such an encounter. Access to ruling circles is granted for a variety of purposes and at present, for Arabs, Muslims and South East Asians, is governed on the one hand by domestic

security considerations and on the other by possible help in reducing anti-American sentiments arising from US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and showing America's softer and gentler side. In both cases, the relationship and access is not intended to recognize representation or grant a seat at the table equal to all others. The relationship is governed by an epistemology of "otherness" and is framing the community as an external to the collective definition of "us."

How to infiltrate a relatively closed religious community? This was done systematically by use of existing community organizations and leveraging their state of fear and insecurity to produce openings that could be capitalized upon by the security agencies. It would be safe to say that at this point the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI has already developed a database, which contains the names of every local, regional, and national leader in the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities. In addition, this database contain names of individuals who are more than happy and ready to offer their services for the agency at a discounted rate or no fee at all. Infiltration is under way on the premise of securing America from sleeper cells operating among law abiding Muslim citizens, and no one should have anything to fear from these operations. Events of 9/11 are used as the benchmark to mollify and silence opposing voices, build a more robust domestic security structure, and expand international military reach while targeting Muslims so as to rationalize this massive build-up.

It should not come as a surprise that the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities are divided on a myriad of issues including that of nationality, language group, gender dynamics, world view, level of religiosity, and class to point out just the obvious. From the FBI's perspective, this condition provides ample inroads into this (presumed) insular community, and if we add to it the large number of immigrants settled in this country after the failed covert operations in parts of the Muslim world, then the scope of infiltration becomes more readily attainable. On the racial, ethnic, national and religious front, Muslims for sure are not a homogenous population. They are very diverse, and this condition coupled with an intensification of fear, threats and a mighty governmental stick allows for inducement to cooperate and an effective strategy for infiltration. One very prominent example of how existing divisions in the community were utilized was in the area of theological and sectarian articulations of Islam, both in the Muslim world but more importantly in the US, as differing trends opposing and antagonistic toward each other in pre 9/11 period, which were recast into a security beneficial language and a good and bad Muslim landscape. In this area, the good Muslim or good Muslim organization was the one in agreement and expressing readiness to assist in US foreign policy as it had been articulated by the neo-conservative and the pro-war political elite while the opposite type of Muslim indeed was cast as the villain. As such, those who were brought close to centers of power translated this and spoke not in terms of

cooperation in the war on terrorism and in directly supporting a more militaristic foreign policy but in terms of an affirmation of the correctness of the type of Islam they advocate and represent. In more than one way, the US and its security agencies defined the type of Islam to be supported and the one to be opposed. Similar to the ways that the FBI and security agencies managed in the 1960s to highlight and support particular groups and organizations within the African American community, the Muslim community and its leadership has effectively been instrumentalized and deployed to maximize domestic and foreign policy priorities (we can debate and discuss these priorities, but the constitutional and civil rights of Muslims were not at the core nor were they considered at the inception of the strategy). The goals of the infiltration have not changed much since the FBI and the US security agencies look back at COINTELPRO as a success model even though it was discredited afterward. The measurement of success is the complete elimination of the “radical” movements of the 1960s and the early ‘70s and their replacement by political forces that were more ready to acquiesce to security agency programs rather than maintain a mode of resistance.

It is far too early to tell what shape or direction the infiltration will take, but if we use the ‘60s cookbook, then we can contemplate some possible operations. I maintain that immigrant Muslim communities in the US are overwhelmingly peaceful and rarely consider violence as an option for bringing about political changes in America. The reasons for this are based on the make-up, the causes of immigration in the first place, and the level of economic well-being among members of the community. One aspect of the infiltration goal might be to create/encourage an inclination toward violence among some members of the community, which can then be used to justify greater security measures taken against the targeted communities. Yes; and no! Conspiracies do exist, but the case above is not one of them since it is based on an abundance of evidence of the FBI’s use of such methods domestically and since the CIA made it into a science in the international arena.<sup>39</sup> If any members of the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities in the US take violence as a method and are located within urban centers, then spend the time finding out who within the group encouraged this strategy, and rest assured that the security agencies footprints will not be far away. The above is not a discussion of violence or non-violence in movements (a question that would be raised by a shortsighted individual reading what I wrote and thinking that I am condemning or supporting one view or the other, which is not the case and such a person would have missed the point completely). Violence as a tactic in urban centers has no possibility of success, and the long history of revolutions and guerrilla movements is offered as evidence. Among the many elements for a guerrilla movement’s success is not being stationary and not open to being contained in a defined territory that is easily controlled by its opponents. Arab, Muslim and South East Asian

communities in the US are for the most part urban, lack connections to rural areas and barely can survive a few days without a stop at the local 7-11 and Starbucks; the security agencies know this and understand its meaning if violence is pursued. While it is correct to say that modern warfare does demonstrate the ability of an urban group inflicting damage through attacks, the long term impact and the sustainability of this type of violence is at best highly doubtful. The events of 9/11 were carried out by an outsider group that had no real connection to existing communities inside the US, but guilt by association defines all by the wrong actions of a few co-religionists.

The primary goal of the infiltration program is to discredit and disrupt the operations of "the enemy" who in this case are Arabs, Muslims and South East Asian Americans. Thus, we must be clear that the security structures' attempt at discrediting and disrupting "the enemy" is intertwined with the primary goals of pro-Israel forces that have made an immediate link between the larger war on terrorism and their on-going campaign against the Palestinians. As such, the infiltration program has a twofold goal: one directed at those who might express support to Bin Laden and the second focusing on pro-Palestine sentiments among the targeted communities. Both goals cannot be achieved without a systematic infiltration campaign attentive to a successful discrediting and disruption program.

However, in dealing with religious movements the discrediting campaign involves far more than a simple spy on the inside; rather the intent of such a program is a discrediting of the ideology that gives rise to it. What this means for the infiltration program is possibly the encouragement of counter movements that cause a clash of ideologies; however, the security structure in the process makes sure to develop or support the "alternative" ideology camp. A similar strategy was deployed in the 1960s by creating an array of FBI "leftist" inspired organizations that focused on attacking legitimate leftist groups. In order to discredit Bin Laden's ideology, the infiltration campaign would need to develop an antithesis paradigm and develop support for it as a way to "win" the war. I am speaking of Bin Laden's ideology in reference to Muslim communities in America, which might be a little odd since I have already argued the lack of any direct links with Bin Ladin's Al-Qaeda, but the reference point here is the perception that underlies the security structure's thinking, which views Arabs, Muslims and South Asians as extended pockets of ideological support and affinity to Al-Qaeda as well as possibly acting as incubators for it. If such pockets exist, it is easy for them to be transformed into active networks; thus, the infiltration program, from the FBI's perspective, is warranted, if not absolutely necessary, to prevent such an eventuality.

Here the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI would have to engage in ideological discrediting and disruption if the campaign is to have much success. At this point, I will not contemplate the methods that will be deployed by the agencies to accomplish this ideological task; instead I will direct individuals to follow this project by paying extra attention to the

wider debates involving Islam in the world and what initiatives are supported and which ones are fought or get discredited. A final note on infiltration, some with ill intent will take what I have written above as a sign of support for “terrorists” since I am pointing out the campaign being carried out against them, which would only help those who are enemies of this country. Contrary to such ill intentions, I write to bring awareness to what is an already existing policy wrongfully directed at a community that has committed no crimes. As to supporting “terrorists,” I recommend for anyone making such an argument to look no further than those with power and influence in our society who provided training, money and support when they issued a sub-contract for the Afghan war against the Russians. What makes the same person acceptable to our country one day and despised the next? They call it the national interest!

#### *“PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE FROM OUTSIDE”*

The second major tool employed during the height of COINTELPRO operations was “Psychological Warfare From Outside” the targeted group. This is very easy to deal with at this time, considering the 24/7 negative attention directed at Islam and Muslims in the mainstream media. I am not one who considers all media to be evil but do understand that some have agendas while others are connected to certain ideological camps and are ready to employ their pen, voice, or image to pursue the empire’s project at home and abroad. The pressure to keep a job and have a steady check to pay for the costs of living prevents many from taking on the empire and its many embedded executives and high-up watchdogs.

The constant barrage of negative stories on Islam and Muslims that often has no connection to what is taking place is intended to maintain a siege mentality among members of the targeted group. It is hoped that this constant external psychological pressure will lead to behavior modification among members of the targeted group or groups. Since human beings like to have an over-all positive image of themselves, when confronted with a constant wave of negative constructs directed at the core belief system, often the response can take a number of forms and one of them is a move toward behavior modification. The message from the negative campaign is that the problem is your belief system and if you change it or completely leave it behind then you will be accepted as a normal and positive “member of the community.” What we have here is a basic behavior modification program directed at Arabs, Muslims and South East Asians, the goal of which is to bring about a complete change in the worldview and the essential outlook of the targeted groups. The legal cases, arrests of individuals, the uncovering of some secret groups training in a hamlet, and detailed accounts of money movements are all intended to keep the psychological pressure on the targeted communities. Yes, a number of these cases are real and the evidence warrants a prosecution, but the overwhelming number of



all others are nothing more than a psychological tool deployed for the specific purpose of containment and behavior modification.

Another possible response of individuals facing such a psychological program might be to take a defensive and antagonistic position thus resorting to retaliation and violence against the security agencies. In such instances, the individual or a group of individuals begins to see the state structure, security agencies and the society in general as enemies that are out to get them by any means necessary, and as such the only response would be to do unto others as they would do unto you. In my opinion, this gives the security agencies the success they were seeking from the beginning and can further assert the correctness of their approach since they did discover a "sleeper terrorist cell" somewhere in middle America.

What we find here is the success of the psychological program in producing two desired outcomes: one in terms of behavior modification that leads to questioning one's own core beliefs or seeking an alternative to them altogether, and the second possibly developing a more hostile attitude that can manifest in seeking revenge for what is seen as an attack on the community. In both cases, the security agencies can claim success for the psychological program and the targeted groups are left in utter internal and external destruction. A third possible outcome that might be witnessed in some communities that were insular before 9/11 is opting for a complete withdrawal from engagement in public or civic life altogether and becoming more inward focused and closed to outsiders (both Muslim and others in society).

The number of cases directly connected to 9/11 is limited; however, the continuing stream of arrests and charges brought against Arabs, Muslims and South West Asians are intended to maintain the psychological pressure and are not in any way connected to those who carried out the attacks. Through a barrage of negative messages directed at the targeted communities, another benefit can be accrued in keeping possible allies at bay, which can help in the long run in isolating those deemed problematic from a security point of view. How to achieve an end game where the target is being pursued for a possible future crime and the only indication for violence is represented in the religious thought held by the individuals or groups under scrutiny! External psychological warfare provides the needed tool to isolate and narrow the target field from millions to possibly hundreds of thousands—which, if combined with other resources, then, in the minds of security agencies, makes the elimination of the threat possible.

One aspect of the external psychological warfare in the present period is the sub-contracting as well as privatization of certain elements of the program. At present, the internet has become a major tool in creating and fomenting negative stories about all Muslim leaders in this country and abroad. Just as the FBI COINTELPRO memos above targeted the Black leadership for the purpose of denying them respectability in the eyes of both the white liberal community as well as their own black community, the



same game is being carried out against all existing Muslim leadership with the goal of bringing about behavior modification. I maintain that a centralized network of private outfits are at work 24/7 and are responsible for maintaining the pressure on national and regional Arab, Muslim and Southeast Asian leadership. The tasks assigned to them involve monitoring and seeding the internet with as many negative stories and responses as humanly or technologically possible. No leader should be left alone for either he is to be brought closer to the power structure to do its bidding or to be kept at bay from all supporters within and outside the community. Humans are keen at wanting and seeking companionship even if at times at the cost of one's own principles, and every person has a breaking point while only very few will resist to the end. If you know the psychological math, then one can understand the rate of success associated with this strategy. The targeted community leadership is already sidelined for the most part and only those who are open to play along and march to the beat of government domestic and foreign policy drums are given the time on the microphone, TV or access to the halls of power. From the security organization's point of view, the goal should be the domestication of a leadership so that it no longer objects to power politics being deployed against the best interest of the community since leaderless people will accept anything. We merely need to reflect on the success associated with psychological pressure applied against the Black community and the outcomes that are currently manifested in the collapse of the inner city.

In general, the general public will keep going and will respond to the ruling power's directives applied against them, and the lack or the neutralization of leadership will make it possible to direct the energies away from critical analysis and possible demands for change. In the FBI memos above, the key wording is "Prevent militant black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability," and if we change the statement to include the current targets, Arabs, Muslims and Southeast Asians, then we can understand the unfolding campaign. When we examine internet files and Google search each and every leader, we are struck by the volumes of attacks directed at them, which makes it seem that thousands of people are engaged in these efforts, but the reality is that much of it is centralized and generated for the specific purpose of forcing behavior modification.

My hypothesis includes the presence of communication hubs that are responsible for monitoring, collecting and mobilizing data for the purpose of this effort. The private nature of the enterprise makes it possible to perfectly hide the operations from the public eye or to bring it to an end. These private outfits are highly ideological and are pursuing their goals and objectives at the expense of the targeted communities. I do maintain that one of the largest private outfits dedicated to this effort is the ADL (Anti-Defamation League), which operates from a highly ideological prism and has both the know-how and the national reach to carry forth this work. The ADL was caught red handed in such an effort in 1992 in San Francisco

where the organization was found in actual possession of some 10,000 files of individuals and organizations active in the Bay Area. At a certain point, the ADL had a paid private eye named Roy Bullock, who volunteered for the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and, through it, managed to collect all needed data and pass it on to the ADL. In addition, the ADL employed the help of a San Francisco Police Department Officer named Tom Gerard who was assigned by the SFPD to work as a liaison to the local Arab community, attending almost every function under the rubric of providing security to the community. In this case, both Gerard and Bullock collected the data and obtained the police files on individuals from a very wide range of backgrounds. The point that I want to make is that the ADL is committed ideologically to Israel and would see pressure on Arab, Muslim and Southeast Asian leadership as serving its long term interests through maintaining the current policies favoring Israel in the United States of America. In this context, one can see that often the door toward easing the pressure on the leadership involves their readiness to engage on the margins with a normalization project toward the pro-Israel forces, which are often engaged at center stage in the psychological pressure campaign.

#### *THE LEGAL SYSTEM: AN INSTRUMENT OF CONTROL*

One of the most powerful tools at the disposal of the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security is the legal system, which can be deployed as an instrument of control rather than the basic adjudication of disputes among various parties, including the government. The legal system and law in general is born out of social conditions and is highly influenced by them. When "separate but equal" was the law, the social conditions informed and provided the constructed boundaries for the legal arguments presented at the Supreme Court. The same can be said about present day conditions where the judiciary has been more than ready to play along providing the government needed legal cover for massive civil and human rights violations. During the early days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Justice Department perfected the use of the legal system in a campaign of harassment and intimidation directed at Anarchists, labor movements and communists alike. Presently, we are witnessing once again the employment of the legal system in a well-designed legal harassment campaign directed at the leadership and activists in the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities.

Though maintaining that the goals of this campaign are many, we can summarize some of them in the next few pages. First, through the legal process, the FBI and the Homeland Security structures can immediately put the individuals and organizations out of business since an arrest or a search warrant is intended to halt all activities carried out by the identified subject or organization. In the Holy Land Foundation case, Dennis Lormel, a former Justice Department official who worked on the government's anti-terrorism financing effort, professed after the not guilty verdict that the

government can still claim a victory since through the arrests "they're creating a deterrent." For Lormel, "there is disruption caused by these kind of cases. The bottom line is that money did go to Hamas. If [the Holy Land defendants] weren't willing participants, they were unwittingly used." When we examine the non-profit sector and community based organizations, we find that a few individuals are responsible for keeping the group moving, and if they are suddenly removed from the scene, then the immediate outcome is a state of paralysis that would take time to overcome. By targeting the leadership and the activist segments of the Arab, Muslim and Southeast Asian communities, the FBI and Homeland Security are essentially causing an internal collapse in many of the non-profit organizations providing a variety of services. We must always be reminded of the harm and utter destruction visited upon the Native Americans and African American communities in a similar process that has been under way since the early days of this country; at present the targets are the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities.

Second, by arresting, charging or serving a search warrant, the FBI and Homeland Security can immediately produce negative responses in the community toward those individuals and groups targeted. It is common for people to speak in private, saying that they must have something on them otherwise they would not have done what they have done to them. The "stay away from trouble" attitude common among many immigrants gets a new lease on life and produces a success for the security agencies. It is also important to remember that the security agencies likewise might engage in seeding community discussions through visits and interviews with community members thus producing the needed narrative in mosques, centers and places of gathering. Often, members of the community acting out of fear or an attempt to distance themselves from what is under way offer and volunteer information that either authenticates or builds upon what the FBI agents have been asking about in the first place. The end result is a success in creating a big gulf within the targeted community.

Third, the legal process allows for a media frenzy to take place and a wider negative campaign connected to the targeted individuals and groups to permeate society. Often, the media is contacted before a given raid or arrest in such a way as to guarantee sensational coverage on local channels and, if it is a big fish, on the hour-long national news shows. The intent of these pre-arranged media spectacles are to make the story of the arrest, raid, or search warrant as widely known as possible and help generate additional stories on the subject matter. No one wants day old news and thus the breaking story creates frenzy among media sharks, which further helps to achieve the psychological part of the campaign discussed above.

Fourth, through the arrests, raids and searches, the FBI and Homeland Security are able to indirectly direct the agenda of activists and community organizations. Immediately after the arrests, the targeted community groups or individuals begin to mobilize for some type of a legal

response, hire a lawyer, and organize a committee to handle the emerging situation, which might involve meetings face to face with the FBI or other security agencies. What is relevant for us is the actual directing of the groups or individuals agendas away from what they were doing to what the FBI and Homeland Security want them to do—i.e., to follow the legal train to nowhere for the next few years. Instead of capacity building and fundraising for a future school, community meetings instead are overtaken by legal defense committee issues and trying to get more funds to hire a better lawyer and so forth. A monumental shift in community priorities occurs, and resources are strained to the limits during this period.

Fifth, another more damaging outcome of this approach is the real possibility for splits and fall-outs among community members who begin to point fingers at each other and at those who were arrested, charged, raided, or searched. As the saying in Arabic goes, “When a cow falls, all the knives begin to cut through it,” which means the legal entanglement of a member or more of the community creates an internal feeding frenzy that often leads to self destruction. In such a period and with the first goal of infiltration already accomplished, the FBI and the Homeland Security might use the occasion to further push existing differences toward eventual splits and internal hostilities. A similar approach with minor differences was operational against the Black Panther Party in the 1960s and the early 1970s.

Sixth, the legal process allows for new and less experienced people to emerge at the local community level, and their initial period will be taken up with figuring out who is who and what needs to be done at a time when the group is under siege. These are the moments that make it possible for infiltrators to take positions of power and influence within the community. In some cases, the change of leadership is a welcome relief from an old and tired grouping, but the manner in which it is achieved should raise the alarm for everyone concerned since change from the outside is not a healthy process for Arabs and Muslims in the US or in Iraq.

Seventh, the legal process is very expensive, and if the community groups, who, for the most part, are first and second generation immigrants and possessing limited resources, are required to mount a large number of legal battles, then their financial position is greatly impacted. On a national level, the resources committed for legal defense funds and hiring lawyers are putting a strain on the community and impacting schools and mosques’ projects across the country. In addition, the legal campaign could not have come at a worst time where the economy is at a downturn and many professionals Muslims in the electronic industry lost their jobs as the ‘90s bubble burst. Take for example Professor Sami Al-Arian’s case where the retainer for the lawyer was upward of \$500,000, and the figure is expected to go way over two or three million by the end of this important legal battle. Another legal case, the closing down of the Holy Land Foundation and freezing its assets, has already cost over two million, and it is likely that

court proceedings will go on until all the funds are drained by legal fees. In the Holy Land Foundation case, the US government froze about \$5 million of the organization's funds but in the legal process allowed the lawyers to be compensated from these funds; thus it is in the best interest of the government legal team to possibly prolong the case until all the monies are exhausted. A number of areas in the US have been hard hit by government legal campaigns, and it will take sometime before they are able to recover both financially and organizationally to normal levels.

Eighth, the legal harassment also leads to disrupting national networks that were built on years of trust and relations and developed over generations. Often, Immigrant communities develop state and national networks based on the need to maintain some links with individuals and families from "back home," which in due time begin to translate into alliances that serve as the bedrock for the emergence of civic and political organizations. When legal battles are deployed by the government, one of the outcomes of this is the disruption of these relations and the planting of seeds of doubt and mistrust among people who have had longstanding relations.

Ninth, the regional and national patterns of organizations and groups begin to take on more of a localized character due to the preoccupation with legal battles governed by specific associations and references to them. As such Chicago Muslims begin to focus mainly on their own crisis; likewise Dallas and New Jersey each will be preoccupied with their own set of legal cases, which militate against further strengthening of national networks. Also, connected to this is the need for resources, which begins to impact the level of openness to share and raise funds for other than one's own localized legal crisis.

Tenth, through its legal harassments, the government can set in motion a great tide of fear, which begins to permeate every sector of the targeted community. Fear is a very important commodity and its introduction as an instrument of control is a strategic one. Fearful people will accept a variety of initiatives that under normal circumstances would be considered unthinkable. In the case of an immigrant who has limited knowledge of this society, fear tends to have a profound impact and in some cases it can lead to a complete sense of hopelessness, which government agents can then use for their own interests. The legal tools are intended to bring about fear and provide an apt lesson to everyone in the Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities. If you dare to get out of line, then what awaits you is sometimes ten-times worse than what your friend down the street got. Also, if you have some assets that you have been able to collect in your ten, twenty, or thirty years of work in the US, you might as well kiss all of them goodbye, for they will be taken away from you, and you will spend every penny attempting to clear your name. For sure these are the lessons of a government that has the ability to use all powers at its disposal



to achieve a set of goals, unjust as they maybe, against “the new enemies of the state.”

In addition to the above, we must include a host of other measures that are intended to impact everyone in the society, thus creating further support for the already deployed security policies. Among these are the no fly list, electronic GPS monitoring, security index, communication intercepts, as well as the most recent signing by President Obama of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which permits indefinite detention without trial for those accused of terrorism, including US citizens. These measures and others create a new legal frontier where citizens and in particular Muslims are treated as guilty parties, and their collective rights to privacy, association, assembly, and religious freedom are at best on probation and at worst suspended until further notice. The “war on terrorism” globally translates to legal war on Arabs, Muslims and Southeast Asian American at home.

The government’s power and the ever-increasing need to restrain it should preoccupy the energies of all citizens since it possesses all the tools to render absolute injustice further making it the norm without any recourse. The legal recourse is expensive and contingent on the society’s social attitudes and not divorced from it. In our current period, the courts have given all the needed leeway to the executive branch to overstep various significant parts of the constitution, and a high rate of public support made it possible to affirm these steps. As such the legal harassment by the government will continue, and we should expect a limited number of court victories; this, however, ought not to prevent us from understanding the structure that has been deployed and the real impacts highlighted above, which will last for years.

#### *EXTRALEGAL FORCE AND VIOLENCE*

The employment of extralegal force and violence has already been seen in the international arena, with two countries experiencing first hand the full weight of US force. Will the power deployed overseas be introduced in this country? A note on America’s long history of extralegal force and violence at this point is important.

For a number of communities in the United States, extralegal force and violence are but a daily reality that they have been living with generation after generation. Native Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans and Asian Americans can provide case after case, evidence after evidence of what they have experienced in this country over many generations. One can say that what the US is currently deploying overseas has been first perfected at home through its uses on a number of communities and in the Western Hemisphere as well as Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines. When we see the racism directed at Arabs, Muslims and South East Asians, then we should be reminded of its origin and not view it as being out of character in the long American experience; on the



contrary, it is that which remains fixed regardless of time and period. Some will point to the progress made over the years, and indeed much has been done but it was not through the generosity and noble character of those holding seats in the power structure but rather despite their extreme arrogance and resistance that change has been achieved.

In the current war on terrorism, I cannot find nor say that any extra legal force and violence has been used by government agents domestically against members of the Arab, Muslim and South East Asians populations. We do have mistreatment of arrested individuals, a civil and human rights violation, but it does not fit into what is understood as being extra legal force and violence, where assassination and possible elimination is the outcome. However, on the international level and for those detainees in Guantanamo, Cuba, the treatment and the impacts fit into aspects of the plan. The drone attack on Anwar al-Awlaqi and others in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen and Iraq is an illustrative example of the deployment of extralegal force and unrestrained violence in the conduct of the global war on terrorism. In the case of al-Awlaqi, being a US citizen did not provide him any protection, and the President authorized his elimination without recourse to the courts. The important question that must be raised is what are the limits of Presidential authority in the conduct of the war on terror and what recourse do US citizens have in case they are designated as terrorist without trial or judicial review.

More broadly speaking, the current war on terrorism has led to the militarization of American society with layers upon layers of security infrastructure put in place to "fight" the war on terror at home and abroad with the glorification of violence at every juncture from movies to TV to video games. The war on terror epistemology is rooted in the logic of violence, and the rationalization that we have been attacked continues to oil its machinery. At the local level, police departments are linked to the national security infrastructure with Joint Terrorism Task Forces that leverage local resources to further the goals of the new COINTELPRO campaign with police officers being at ease to play along, whether for an offer of new equipment, extra-pay, travel or the mere excitement of joining the hunt for terrorists at home. Furthermore, American society's militarization becomes more pernicious as it is deployed against Mexican immigrants with the border becoming a battleground for those wanting to secure the "homeland," and economic imperatives are translated into a debate about security and preventing terrorists from crossing into the country. Force and violence as a policy is rationalized in the first place against "terrorists," but its impact is far reaching, and Mexicans, African Americans, Arabs, Muslims, Sikhs and others are swept as legitimate targets since they collectively fit the criteria of the constructed "other." Walking in any train station, university, school, office building, and public space, we are confronted with the ever increasing spectacle of militarization and security with police dressed in combat like gear, cameras all over the place and a

readiness to deploy violence at a moment's notice with no questions asked. Should we be surprised to see random acts of violence on college campuses and at schools and movie theaters if the epistemology of the day is one rooted in rationalization of violence and glorification of death and killing as a form of entertainment?

### CONCLUSION

The four elements discussed above in relation to COINTELPRO point to a wide ranging strategy deployed by sections of the US government against law-abiding American citizens for no other reason than being Arab, Muslim and South East Asian. By entangling individuals and organizations in the ever expanding web of the new COINTELPRO, the government is seeking behavior modification to such an extent that the targeted communities would be transformed into full partners in the "global war on terrorism" as it has been defined by those in power. The embedded assumption is that Arab, Muslim and South East Asian communities in the US have some kind of connection to those who carried out the attacks on 9/11 and as such must collectively engage in acts of repentance. As to the acceptable penance for this glaring connection, the power structure and those allied with it accept nothing less than total collaboration and total prostration to the imperial global project. The current power structure needs assistance in the global imperial project involving the Arab and Muslim world, and domestic collaborators are badly needed to provide a native rationalization to the American public that "our" efforts are noble and will help bring "enlightenment" or possibly "reformation" to the barbarians at the gate of civilization.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *SF Chronicle*, Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> The SF Chronicle filed a Freedom of Information Request and managed after a 17 years legal fight to obtain documents detailing the scope of FBI operations involving the University of California as well as Ronald Reagan . The released documents included files pertaining to Ronald Reagan's cooperation with the FBI during his years in Hollywood when he served as the President of the Actors Guild Association and naming -names to the agency of individuals with alleged communist links. The record and original copies are found at the following site operated by the SF Chronicle: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2002/06/09/MNCFTIME1.DTL>

<sup>3</sup> Tony Allen-Mills, "FBI 'Lured Dimwits' into Terror Plot," *The Sunday Times*, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Demian, Bulwa, *SF Chronicle*, Terror Trial: Defense Admits to Tall Tales, Not Crimes- Informant Says Camp Attendance Never Confirmed, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. See Frontline coverage of the Lodi case in the documentary, *The EnemyWithin*, and the specific reference to the Informant Naseem Khan.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/enemywithin/loDI/response.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Demian Bulwa, "Lodi Terror Trainee Convicted," *SF Chronicle*, Wednesday April 26, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> For references to a number of active cases visit the Muslim Legal Defense Fund website at: <http://www.muslimlegalfund.org/mlfa/cases>. Also, the SF Asian Law Caucus has an on-going Civil Rights and National Security Project focusing on systematic documentation of instances of FBI harassment and violations of basic rights. The ALC helped form a coalition in SF that culminated in the SF Human Rights Commission holding a September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, hearing focusing on FBI violations of Arabs, Muslims and South Asian Rights. Furthermore, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Asian Law Caucus and the San Francisco Bay Guardian on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010, filed a lawsuit against the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to speed the release of FBI records on the investigation and surveillance of Muslim communities in the Bay Area. John Solomon, Gonzales Was Told of FBI Violations, *Washington Post*, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Graham Rayman, "The Alarming Record of the F.B.I.'s Informant in the Bronx Bomb Plot," *The Village Voice*, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> See the article by Jason Leopold and Matthew Harwood, Hacked Intel Email: NYPD Involved in "Damn Right Felonious Activity", September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. <http://truth-out.org/news/item/11326-hacked-intel-email-nypd-involved-in-da>

<sup>9</sup> Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression*. South End Press, 2002, p. xii.

<sup>10</sup> For materials covering the periods mentioned above see Theoharis, Athan G. *The FBI and American Democracy: A Brief Critical History*, Kansas University Press, 2004. Also, Theoharis, Athan G; Tony G. Poveda, Susan Rosenfeld, Richard Gid Powers. *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide*. Checkmark Books, 2000. Also, for good context, read Heidi Bochosian. *The Assault on Free Speech, Public Assembly, and Dissent: A National Lawyers Guild Report on Government Violations of First Amendment Rights in the United States*. North River Press, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Linfield, *Freedom Under Fire*. South End Press, 1990, p. 136.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

<sup>13</sup> Church Committee Report, Book II: Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, p. 6, 1975.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> For an over-all context and alternative view of US history see Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, Harper Perennial, 2005 edition.

<sup>16</sup> Brian, Glick, *War at Home: Covert Action Against U.S Activists and What We Can Do About it*, South End Press, 1989, p. 7. The author cites the source in footnote 15, Cowan, Paul, Nick Egleson, and Nat Hentoff, *State Secrets: Police Surveillance in America* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974).

<sup>17</sup> *Church Committee Report, Book II, Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans*, pp. 3-6, 1975.

<sup>18</sup> Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*, p. 542

<sup>19</sup> Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*, p. 542

<sup>20</sup> *Church Committee Report, Book II, Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans*, pp. 6-7, 1975.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 78

<sup>24</sup> See Camille T. Taiara, "Students under surveillance? Secrecy surrounding SFSU's routine use of undercover cops to videotape political events raises concerns." *SF Bay Guardian*, June 18<sup>th</sup> 2003. "A civil lawsuit accusing San Francisco State University of discriminating against Arab and Muslim student activists has revealed that the university routinely uses

undercover cops to videotape political events on campus, according to a sworn deposition by SFSU police chief Kim Wible.”

<sup>25</sup> Read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/crime/article/Activist-Richard-Aoki-named-as-informant-3800133.php#ixzz27W3W3PpC>

<sup>26</sup> See the documents at <http://hosted.ap.org/specials/interactives/documents/nypd-msa-report.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> See [http://www.aclu.org/files/assets/aclu\\_eye\\_on\\_the\\_fbi\\_-\\_mosque\\_outreach\\_03272012\\_0\\_0.pdf](http://www.aclu.org/files/assets/aclu_eye_on_the_fbi_-_mosque_outreach_03272012_0_0.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.aclu.org/files/assets/aclu\\_eye\\_on\\_the\\_fbi\\_-\\_mosque\\_outreach\\_03272012\\_0\\_0.pdf](http://www.aclu.org/files/assets/aclu_eye_on_the_fbi_-_mosque_outreach_03272012_0_0.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Brian, Glick, *War at Home: Covert Action Against U.S. Activists and What We Can Do About it*, (Date?) p. 10

<sup>30</sup> Church Committee Report, Volume 6: Federal Bureau of Investigation, p. 367

<sup>31</sup> James X. Dempsey and David Cole, *Terrorism and the Constitution: Sacrificing Civil Liberties in the Name of National Security*, The First Amendment Foundation, 1999, p. 37.

<sup>32</sup> Nick Schou, “The FBI, the Islamic Center of Irvine and Craig Monteilh: Who was Conning Whom?,” *Orange Coast Weekly*, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Anonymous, *Terrorist Hunter: The Extraordinary Story of a Woman Who Went Undercover to Infiltrate the Radical Islamic Groups Operating in America*, Harper Collins Publishers, 2002. The ISBN for the hard cover edition is 0-06-052819-2

<sup>38</sup> <http://old.nationalreview.com/interrogatory/interrogatory062603.asp>

<sup>39</sup> For a clear treatment of this subject see Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression*, South End Press, Third Edition, 2002. Also, M. Wesley Swearingen, *FBI Secrets: An Agent’s Expose*, South End Press, 1995. See the edited work of Cathy Perkus, *COINTELPRO: The FBI’s Secret War on Political Freedom*, Monad Press, New York, 1975.