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SOCIOLOGY OF ISLAM & MUSLIM SOCIETIES

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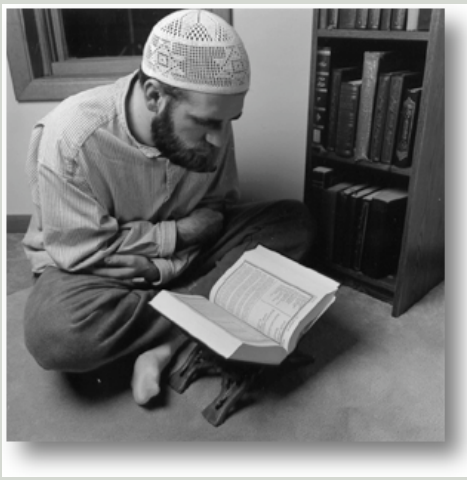


INTRODUCTION

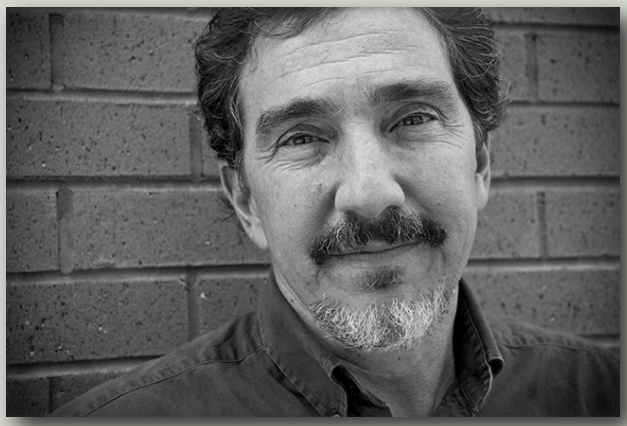
Charles Kurzman

The sociology of Islam and Muslim societies is "hot," for all the wrong reasons. It is not because globalization has drawn the world closer together, or because sociology is internationalizing its focus beyond its historical interest in Western Europe and North America. No, the sociology of Islam is "hot" because of the common but inaccurate association of Islam with terrorism and international conflict. The world wants to know why we are seeing such violence in the name of Islam, and sociologists -- along with other social scientists -- are expected to have answers.Violence and stereotypes related to Muslims are, sadly, good for business in the sociology of Islam.

These days, many sociology departments now want experts on Islam -- job listings related to Muslim societies have increased significantly from a decade ago, when no department ever advertised a position in this area. Articles on Islam and Muslims are now appearing at a greater rate in sociology journals. The American Sociological Review, for instance, has run approximately six articles on Muslim societies in the past three years, compared with none in the nine years before that and only 19 in the previous 38 years. The annual meeting of the American Sociological Association now features at least one panel every year on the "Middle East and Muslim Societies" -- a compromise rubric that bridges both the older area-studies tradition and newer cross-regional approaches to the study of Islam.

We are a small band, those of us who study these subjects, but we are beginning to get organized. This newsletter is one of the mechanisms for our organization, along with the list-serve and the forthcoming website. I thank Tuğrul Keskin for his work in getting all of this set up and running! A related effort, designed to fit into the area-studies categories that so many universities and funding agencies use, is the Mideast Sociology Working Group, whose information can be found at http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/MideastSociology. Both groups meet informally each year at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association and the Middle East Studies Association, where scholars can get to know each other and brainstorm collaborations. The next of these get-togethers is scheduled for the ASA meeting in San Francisco: Sunday, August 9, 2009, at 12:15-1:45 p.m., including free lunch for graduate students (we plan to meet at the Hilton registration desk and move en masse to a local café).

As in any network of scholars, we cannot expect unanimity. Recent events in Iran, for example, have exposed sharp differences of opinion among sociologists who study Islam. Some have cheered the Green Movement, as the Iranian opposition now calls itself; within this group, some expressed optimism about the potential for political and social change in Iran, while others expressed pessimism and predicted tragedy. Other sociologists, by contrast, have expressed disdain toward the Iranian opposition, viewing it as meaningless middle-class agitation and a vehicle of Western imperialism. I have my own opinions on this subject (if you are interested, you can get a sense of them at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=5017). However, I would like to make a "meta-point" here about this disagreement. And that is: bring on the evidence!



Charles Kurzman is a professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

As sociologists, we have a special expertise in the collection and analysis of evidence on controversial social phenomena. Questions of race relations, economic stratification, gender processes, world systems, and the like are all subject for debate -- and these debates all involve the presentation and evaluation of evidence. This is not to say that theoretical insights are worthless, only that these insights grow with the development of empirical research. This research may be qualitative or quantitative, historical or contemporary, micro or macro, but it all adds to the substance of our debates.

In the sociology of Islam, as in other areas of social science, we have a growing body of evidence with which to engage our disagreements. There is survey evidence from numerous Muslim societies, for example -- the most prominent of these datasets is the World Values Survey, which can be analyzed online at http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org, but other datasets are also available from the Pew Global Attitudes Project, Demographic and Health Surveys, and other sources. There is cross-national macro data available from the World Bank's World Development Indicators database, various United Nations agencies, and the specialized datasets constructed by scholars in various fields. There is further information available on Islamic political parties, on hajj participation, on Islamic terrorism, and other subjects related to Islam. Of course, there is also a world of qualitative data -- single-case and comparative -- out there for researchers to explore. I am not siding with any one form of data, all of which is open to skeptical scrutiny, in my opinion. However, I would like to see us continue to make use of all of this data as we express our disagreements.

One of the side-effects of being a "hot" field is that we are often asked about subjects we have not studied in depth. An "Islam expert" can get questions from students, colleagues, and journalists about anything from classical Islamic sources to contemporary Muslim attitudes. Wherever there is a news story about Muslims, we are liable to get asked about it. None of us could possibly know everything about Islam and Muslim societies. I think it is worthwhile to pause for a moment, when we face one of these issues, and ask ourselves: What do we really know about this, and what evidence would we need to examine in order to offer an informed analysis? One service that our Sociology of Islam network can provide is to link up those of us asking these questions with those of us who have evidence.

Charles Kurzman

June 25, 2009 / Chapel Hill, North Carolina

August 8-11, 2009 in San Francisco, CA for the 104th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association

THE MIDDLE EAST SOCIOLOGY WORKING GROUP INFORMAL GATHERING AT ASA

We are pleased to invite all of you, as members of the Middle East Sociology Working Group, to our semi-annual informal gathering at the American Sociological Association meeting in San Francisco this August.
The gathering is scheduled for 12:15-1:45 p.m. on Sunday, August 9, 2009, just after the Thematic Session, "Communities and Political Engagement in the Middle East." As is our custom, we will meet at the conference registration desk and wander somewhere for a bite. Graduate students' lunch is on the house!

An updated list of Middle East-related ASA panels is now available at our working group website, http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/MideastSociology.

An Interview with Dr. Y. Tzvi Langermann on Islamic Studies and Islam in Israel

By Tugrul Keskin and Najm al-Din Yousefi

Tzvi Langermann was born in Lowell, Massachusetts. He received his degrees from Boston and Harvard Universities.Dr. Langermann has published extensively on Science and Philosophy in Medieval Jewish and Islamic Cultures, Islamic Astronomy, Jews in Medieval Islam, and Jews in Yemen. He also teaches "the Thought of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi" and "Greek Wisdom in Islamic Civilization." He is married to Dina Zilberman, an organizational psychologist; and is the father of Netanel, Michal, and Amos, all three children born a few minutes apart from each other in 2000. Dr. Langermann is the chair of Arabic Studies at Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel. For more information about Dr. Langermann's recent work, please visit his website:
http://www.biu.ac.il/faculty/ytlangermann/

Tugrul Keskin and Najm al-Din Yousefi: Dr. Langermann, thank you for accepting this interview with the Sociology of Islam and Muslim Societies newsletter. First of all, would you please tell us about yourself and your research and how you developed your interest in Islamic Studies?

Dr. Tzvi Langermann: Well, I learned Arabic because of my interest in the history of science; however, I became increasingly interested in the interface between science, philosophy and religious thought in the medieval period, and this led me to explore Islamic thought. When I took up the job at Bar Ilan, I was asked to teach Qur'an, and that really motivated me; it quickly became not just a teaching assignment, but a very serious interest.

Keskin and Yousefi: Would you please tell us why you decided to move to Israel and why you are interested in studying Islam?

Dr. Langermann: I moved to Israel out of a sincere feeling that I am returning to my ancestral homeland. I also want to live in a place where Jewish customs are integrated into the rhythm of life, so that I don't have to constantly make special arrangements in order to observe the Sabbath and holidays, as I had to do in the States. Finally, I also wanted to live in a place with some "oriental" ambiance.
I study Islam for a number of reasons, personal and professional. I began to study Islam by way of my studies in the history of science, which led me to learn Arabic, and which in turn opened up new worlds for me (as learning a new language always does); my studies on Muslim scientists, some of whom (e.g. Ibn Sina) were major religious thinkers, as well as Jewish writers who drew upon Muslim writings, led me to study Islam more deeply. But I must also confess that, for whatever reason or reasons, I have never looked upon Islam as something totally alien.

Keskin and Yousefi: Given the vibrant intellectual exchange between Jewish and

Islamic cultures, what do you make of the modern-era tension between the two cultures that have culminated in the Arab-Israeli conflict? Are the ongoing conflicts likely to have a negative impact on studies of Islamic culture and history in Israel?

Dr. Langermann: The study of Islamic cultures and history developed in Israel in the course of the ongoing and unending conflicts.

I would only add this: in the USA and (maybe less so) in Europe, Islam is a new thing, at least in the public sphere, and for that reason many people are interested in learning about it, so the opportunities are growing. In Israel that is not the case. Unfortunately we are suffering now due to the general neglect of the humanities; perhaps I should say envaluation of or even scorn for the humanities. It is that attitude, rather than any negative feelings coming out of the conflicts, that is already having a negative impact.

Keskin and Yousefi: Would you please give us a brief overview of Islamic Studies in Israeli universities? How many Islamic Studies centers are there in Israel, and what are they like? Do you think that there is enough independent academic research in Islamic Studies and Islam within Israeli Universities?

Dr. Langermann: There are no centers that I know of, nor even departments, that are devoted to Islamic studies. Our department is simply called "Arabic". Some people look upon us simply as the university's Berlitz, and I work hard to let them know that we are strong in our offerings in Islamic thought, as well as the Judaeo-Arabic Cultural Heritage and, of course, Arabic language and literature. I know that experts in Islam in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv also teach in departments of Arabic. There are also departments and centers devoted to Middle Eastern Studies. It's hard to say if there is "enough" research. Can one say if it is enough to meet the demand, the way one can judge whether there are enough Toyotas? Obviously we would like to have more resources at our disposal. But I really should return to a point made earlier. What we really would like to see is a higher appreciation of the humanities—Islamic studies, yes, but also literature of all sorts, and history. In Israel's formative years, under far more difficult economic and other circumstances, the leadership did appreciate the humanities; they realized that that's what it's all about, that's why we sweat and bleed to build a country.

Keskin and Yousefi: In your research you have dealt with Jewish philosophers such as Maimonides who flourished in the cultural milieu of medieval Islam. In light of your research, how do you assess the general attitude of Islamic civilization towards the Jewish contribution?

Dr. Langermann: Overall, Islamic thinkers were receptive to Jewish contributions to medicine and the other sciences, but displayed very little interest in Jewish writings on theology and philosophy; but one should remember, that Jewish writers did not publish religious writings—that means, in the medieval period, deliberately initiate diffusion—the way they did in the sciences. Islamic writers tended to view contributions to the sciences as individual—that is, the contribution of an Isaac Israeli, or, for that matter a Majusi, Masihi, or Ibn Rushd—rather than the contribution of a religious or ethnic group.

Keskin and Yousefi: Do you think that the general attitude of Islamic civilization toward the Jewish contribution has varied significantly in different time-periods and localities?

Dr. Langermann: Again, we must speak more of the receptivity towards the work of Jews, rather than the "Jewish contribution". From the Islamic point of view, the Jewish contribution to civilization, if it can be called that, certainly ended with the Prophet, if not before. However, the contribution of Jews as individuals was acknowledged, as you say, in different degrees depending on the locale and time-period.

Keskin and Yousefi: How have Islamic traditions in theology, philosophy and science shaped medieval Jewish thought?

Dr. Langermann: Enormously. Basically, Jews living in Islamic lands participated in the same enterprise, the same discourse, as Muslim thinkers and scientists did. The key point is an uncompromising insistence upon tawhid. Knowing just what tawhid means, and the related (Maimonides would say the identical) task of avoiding tajsim, requires a lifetime of study and reflection. One is constantly engaged in a process of purifying one's thoughts about the divine.

Keskin and Yousefi: It is curious that, historically speaking, many Jewish scholars have taken a keen interest in studying various aspects of Islamic civilization, whereas very few Muslim scholars have actively engaged in the examination of Jewish theological and philosophical thought. How could we make sense of this asymmetrical interest?

Dr. Langermann: I think that in large measure this is due to the absence of any real tradition of the humanities in Islamic cultures; I mean, the evaluation of the study of other cultures, their language, history, religions, arts, and so forth as a worthwhile and valuable field of knowledge in its own right. A work like al-Biruni's book on India stands out, not only because of its wonderful observations and insights, but also because of the rarity of books of that sort.

Keskin and Yousefi: Do you think that Israeli scholars, who work on Islamic Studies and Islam, have any prejudice against Islam, or hold Islamophobic attitudes?

Dr. Langermann: I am sure that some do. Don't forget that Israel, like Turkey, has been ruled for the most part by avowed secularists; some have a fanatical revulsion towards all religions.

Keskin and Yousefi: Dr. Langermann, we would like to ask you a question that is not directly related with academia, but I think it is important to elaborate on and understand the problem that Jewish people have faced over centuries in Europe. As a Muslim, over the last thirty years, I think Muslims in general have sometimes been accused of using anti-Semitic overtones in their language when they criticize Israeli foreign policies. However, I personally believe that we must not mix two different concepts; criticizing the Israeli Foreign Policy, and racism/anti-Semitism. As a Jew, what is your definition of racism/anti-Semitism, and where do you think that Muslims should draw the line between these two completely different concepts? Do you think anti-Semitism exists in Muslim populated societies the same way it exists in Europe and America?

Dr. Langermann: Well, that's a tall order. Generally, I think there is a big difference between speaking about, or criticizing, or lambasting, "the Israelis" and doing the same to "the Jews"; that's the main difference. Don't forget that powerful elements in Israeli society and politics reject the idea of a "Jewish state". I also don't know exactly how to measure anti-Semitism. I'm sure that if you polled some groups of Muslims about their perceptions of Jews, you would find a lot of negativity (that's an Americanism, I'm not sure if it's in the dictionary). However, just how all of this comes into play in the public sphere is, at least I imagine it to be, a different question, and certainly the more pressing issue. I do want to end by saying that I've had a wonderful experience teaching classes on Qura'n, Sufism, and religious philosophy to classes where Muslims range between one-third to two-thirds of the participants; and I'm pleased that on the whole, my Muslim students realize that I am a believer, a muwahhid, and at least aim towards ibada; and that means that we have in common the most important beliefs. We all belong to ma'shar al-muwahhidin.

Call for Papers:

Special Issue of the Sociology of Islam and Muslim Societies Newsletter

Contemporary Iran: Politics, Society and Economy

The next issue will be published at the beginning of October and we would like to publish your short articles, and abstracts of your dissertation or research, and a book review on Iranian politics, society and economy.

Those who would like to contribute can send us their short articles or book reviews(1500-2000 words) by October 1st.

Please send your submission to:

Najm al-Din Yousefi: nyousefi@vt.edu
and
Tugrul Keskin: tugrulk@pdx.edu

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9th European Sociological Association Conference
European Society or European Societies?
September 2 - 5, 2009
Lisbon, Portugal

The Islamicity of Different Interpretations of HIJĀB

By Rachel Woodlock

Introduction

On a recent holiday to Bali, I moved amongst the island's population wearing my customary cotton headscarf and loose, long-sleeved dress I had adopted upon my conversion to Islam over a decade before. Seeing a white Australian Muslim woman evoked surprised reactions from locals and for those bold enough to ask questions, repeated explanations about my Muslim identity. The only marker of difference that distinguished me from the hundreds of other Australian visitors was my Islamic dress; had I not been wearing a headscarf, I would have attracted little attention outside the normal tourist experience. As a white woman wearing Islamic dress, I carried with me all the contradictory symbols and meanings of Islamic female dress, referred to colloquially as *ḥijāb*. As Franks (2000, 918) argues: "the power relations with which it is associated are situated not only in the meaning with which it is invested but also in the circumstances under which it is worn." As well, women wearing Islamic female dress (however interpreted) are performing a religious act, even if it has other cultural, sociological and political implications. Thus, the question of who has the right and authority to interpret religious dress is part of a wider debate over religious authority generally, where women's bodies have become the contested battle-ground for Islamic authenticity and identity (Yeğenoğlu 1998, 99; Werbner 2007, 162; Mir-Hosseini 2007, 90–91). Based on a simplified version of Abdullah Saeed's (2007) taxonomy this article looks at the discourse surrounding *ḥijāb* offered in four basic orientations: traditionalist, secularist, fundamentalist, and contextualist.

Traditionalists

For those who we might call traditionalists (or perhaps better neo-traditionalists given the ubiquitous nature of modernity) and who follow traditional jurisprudence as it developed over the course of many centuries from around the second/third century AH, face-veiling for women is considered not only permissible, but in some opinions compulsory in public. In the pre-Islamic period, free women (and occasionally free men) veiled their faces as a signal of their status (Stillman 2003, 20–21). This was carried into the Islamic era, and a mutually reinforcing spiral was generated between the sartorial customs of early Muslim cultures and the opinions of religious lawyers generating interpretations of sacred law. Examples of the prerequisite of face-veiling for women include opinions related in the Ḥanafī *fiqh* text *Heavenly Ornaments* (Thanwi 2004, 328) and the Shāfi'ī *Reliance of the Traveller* (Keller 1999, 512) both of which have been translated into English in recent times. Nevertheless, important classical jurists who gave opinions permitting the face, hands and/or feet to remain exposed include Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Ṭabārī. For today's traditionalists, body and/or face veiling are authentic Islamic practices because they accept as authoritative Islamic female dress as it was conceived in classical jurisprudence.

Secularists

For secularists, female veiling practices are associated with backwardness, misogyny, and the undesirable imposition of patriarchal religion intruding in public life. With contradictory arguments, secularists have asserted the *ḥijāb*

represents *both* the passive oppression of women as victims, and the aggressive assertion of religion in the public sphere (Werbner 2007; Scott 2005), whilst denying any other symbols or meanings for Muslim female dress. Western-educated sociologist Fatema Mernissi views the *ḥijāb* as a cloth prison imposed to remove women's agency and voice: "veils hide only what is obscene" (Mernissi 1993, 179). She argues the imposition of *ḥijāb*—the moment in Prophetic history where the apartments of the wives were veiled by a curtain that spelled their privatisation—marked a retreat from an original egalitarianism taught by the Prophet, who was forced to compromise by the overpowering patriarchy of the community (Mernissi 1991, 106–14, 178–79, 185). Mernissi spends a great deal of time attempting to present the *ḥijāb*—conflated to mean both the privatisation of the Prophet's wives and Muslim women's dress—as inauthentic to the Prophet's true message.

Fundamentalists

Fundamentalists claim to resurrect the original teachings of Islam that have been neglected or masked by incorporation of un-Islamic innovations. They do this through a pragmatic, selective retrieval of past doctrines (Marty and Appleby 1993, 3). The discourse about Islamic female dress is one of the most important symbols and boundary markers of Muslim identity for fundamentalists. The *ḥijāb* in their discourse is removed from any notion of cultural traditional Islamic dress, and fundamentalists have sought to elucidate an objective singular truth on what *ḥijāb* means for all Muslim women, everywhere. Although proposing a definitive interpretation, in practice fundamentalists differ on what they define as proper *ḥijāb*. Some (mostly those of the Wahhābī-Salafī persuasion) require that for the woman, the entire body be covered with an opaque, loose, flowing outer cloak or wrap that starts from the head. The face must be covered, either with this garment, or with a separate piece of affixed material, often referred to colloquially as *niqāb* "mask, face-veil" (Al-Munajjid 1997–2008). Other fundamentalists (such as the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyah) give permission for Muslim women to leave the face and hands uncovered, but require loose, opaque clothing that covers the body, usually some sort of coat or dress, coupled with a headscarf pinned or tied so that it that covers the ears and neck, draping down onto the shoulders and/or chest. This is a new type of Islamic dress, referred to by fundamentalists as *al-ziyy al-Islāmī* "Islamic attire" or *al-ziyy al-shar'ī* (*sharī'ah* attire) (El Guindi 1999, 134; Stillman 2003, 158).

Contextualists

Contextualists are Muslims who argue that Islam—and in particular religious law—must be understood contextually (Esack 2005, 142–44). That is, Muslims have always interpreted religion through the paradigmatic lense of particular time-periods, places, cultures, language-groups and classes. Because of this, Muslims developed rich and varied interpretations of Islamic belief and practice, unified around the core doctrines of monotheism and the prophethood of Muhammad. They assert the right to perform *ijtihād*. Contextualists come from the modernist school of thought that arose in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries (for example see Fazlur Rahman's methodology for interpreting Islam in Rahman 1982, 2–11; Sonn 1991, 213–14; Saeed 2006a, 42–43).

Contextualists vary as to their interpretations of Islamic dress, but generally speaking they approach the question by emphasising that a) Islam teaches modesty for men and women, and b) individuals and societies may have different interpretations of what constitutes modesty. (Women Living Under Muslim Laws 1997, 201–226). "The law of modesty in the Qur'an applies to men and women both and applies to them equally. … You have to interpret the Islamic law of modesty, a) according to your own conscience and b) according to your cultural context. What is modest in one society is not modest in another society and so on" (215).

Conclusion

Different types of Muslims provide different answers to the question of what constitutes appropriate Islamic dress, because they have different ways of approaching the interpretation of religion. Traditionalists acknowledge as their source of authority, the received interpretations and rulings of religious law that developed over many centuries. Secularists promote Western-style models of the separation of religion and state and the privatisation of religion. Fundamentalists' source of authority lies in the search for a singular, definitive interpretation of God's will. Lastly, contextualists assert the right of individuals (including women) to interpret religion as appropriate for particular times, cultures and contexts.

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I use the label fundamentalist with some caution, as it is a hotly contested term. In this paper, it is used in the sense given in The Fundamentalism Project (Marty and Appleby 1991).

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Representation of Islam and Muslims by the British Government Between 2001 and 2007

By Leon Moosavi

Introduction

A great suspicion of Islam and Muslims in social and political discussions has led to recognition that Islamophobia is widespread in Britain (Abbas 2006: xv, The Runnymede Trust 1997). Perhaps the major concern about Islamophobia is that it is "prevalent in all sections of our society" and "part of the fabric of everyday life in modern Britain" (The Runnymede Trust 1997: 1, 11). This extends to the political elite, as it has been noted that "Islamophobia reaches all the way up to the highest levels of government" (Cesari 2004b: 41). In the same breath, it has been argued that the 'War on Terror' and other Governmental responses to 9/11 and 7/7 have increased the acceptability of Islamophobia (Allen & Nielsen 2002: 53). This article – which is based on my MA dissertation – is concerned with the ways in which Muslims and Islam have been conveyed in speeches by British Cabinet Ministers of the Labour Government as one of the various ways in which Islamophobia crystallises.

It is important to challenge those representations which are considered to be contradictory, stereotypical or inaccurate as these representations can be accepted as 'truths', leading to real life effects in the form of discrimination. Prejudices are generally assumed to be confined to those with less education and less 'cultural capital' than those in the highest echelon of society. Indeed, one commentator has described how "subtle forms [of Islamophobia] amongst the educated and well-placed elite are well-entrenched and proportionately more dangerous. …[as] the elite formulates and disseminates racism to the grassroots, where it becomes more explicit and violent" (Malik 2004b: 9). Aside from their influence on policy and legislation, ministers are extremely influential within the media and setting the agenda of national debates. In total, 111 speeches from 16 different Cabinet Ministers between 2001 and 2007 were analysed. Due to limited space, I will only briefly share two themes that were explored in the dissertation.

'The True Muslims' and 'The Real Islam'

The Government considers itself to have authority in intervening with theological matters by claiming who is a 'true Muslim' and what the 'real Islam' is. There was often distinctions made between different types of Muslims. The 'good Muslims' were often described as the "moderate" ones. For instance, Gordon Brown called for "partnership with moderate Muslims and moderates everywhere" (Brown 2006b). This moderate Islam is supposedly characterised by being peaceful, non-violent, tolerant, respectful and loving. So for example, Tony Blair claimed, "The doctrine and teachings of Islam are those of peace and harmony. … It is a whole teaching dedicated to building peace in the world" (Blair 2001b).

One manifestation of promoting this 'secularised' Islam is that it is intended to be more personal and practiced behind closed doors to the extent where any Muslim who allows their Islamic beliefs to influence their political activity in the public sphere is considered extreme (Malik 2004b: 13-14). This was emphasised in the ministers' speeches by the constant reference directly to Islam as a "faith" which holds connotations of personal belief rather than as a 'way of life' which is how Islam is typically defined by Muslims themselves.

It is hypothesised by some that these constructions of Islam are to serve political purposes, mainly in making Islam more passive by weakening the ideological resistance that Islamic sources can accommodate for through emphasising Islam's spiritual dimension and reducing its political and social dimensions (Ameli *et al*. 2007: 24). It has been argued that the brand of Islam that most matches the Government's requirements is Sufism which is often presented as the most secularised and passive form of Islam (Cesari 2004b: 50-51,). Ruth Kelly expressed the Government's desire to work specifically with Sufis by saying "[w]e need to always ask ourselves whether we are working with the right groups in the right way. Organisations such as the Sufi Muslim Council are an important part of that work" (Kelly 2006b). So for example, when the Muslim Council of Britain criticised the 'War on Terror' "[t]he State looked instead to the Sufi Muslim Council as a replacement, not because it represented the majority sect among British Muslims, but because it was perceived as supportive of the government's foreign policy" (Kundnani 2007: 182).

Following the line of identifying 'the real Muslims' and 'the true Islam', those who committed terrorism or were considered extreme were said to be abusing Islam and twisting its 'real' teachings. For example, Blair said that "the extremists that threaten violence are not true Muslims in the sense of being true to the proper teaching of Islam" (Blair 2006i). Therefore, it is clear that the discourse does not reject Muslims and Islam per se, but specific variations of them. That some Muslims are worth accommodating is justified in the repeated argument that Muslims have contributed a great deal to British society.

Ministers even went as far to say that they wanted to unite with and empower 'moderate' Muslims to outcast and isolate those non-conformist Muslims they consider extreme (Blair 2001b, Blears 2006), For example, Brown said "we must take steps to isolate extremists from the moderate majority" (Brown 2006b), and despite saying "extremists are explicitly and continuously trying to divide and rule, to drive wedges between nations and between peoples" (Beckett 2006), Margaret Beckett still pushes to "mobilise the vast moderate, majority and push the extremists to the fringe where they belong" (Beckett 2006).

The Government does not hide the fact that it is engaged in promoting specific types of Islam. There is often talk about how it is funding and working with specifically hand-picked Muslim scholars and Muslims organisations to promote a certain version of Islam as well as encouraging mosques to engage in certain activities and giving specific syallabi to Islamic schools for them to teach (Blair 2004c,Blears 2006). For example, Blair has admitted that "one of the things that we are looking at is how you make sure that there is a certain set of agreed rules and guidelines as to how any faith school should teach its own faith" (Blair 2005e) and elsewhere confessed that he has used certain Muslims to promote a specific version of Islam (Blair 2006c).

The idea that there is a 'real Islam' is not only promulgated by the Government though. In fact, there is increasing debates amongst Muslims themselves about who has the right to call themselves a Muslim and what the true Islamic teachings are. Therefore, it has to be accepted that Muslims do – and always will – interpret their religion in a multitude of ways .

Muslims as Monolithic

The constructions of one 'true Islam' is based on one general assumption, which is that Muslims can be categorised into one uniform group. Indeed, one prominent stereotype of Islam and Muslims is that they are static and monolithic, unable to change, evolve or accommodate diversity (Bayart 2005: 242-243, Kalin 2004: 143, 166). This stereotype of Muslims as monolithic has been rejected by many who have commented on the huge diversity of Muslims around the world, including within Britain. Muslims are individuals with unique characteristics and identities, and therefore to attribute them to be part of one monolithic community just because they are Muslim limits them as individuals.

There was a conscious effort by Government Ministers to abandon any construction of Muslims as monolithic which is clearly evident in comments such as by Tony Blair who said, "Islam is not a monolithic faith, but one made up of a rich pattern of diversity" (Blair 2007b) or by Jack Straw who said "Geographically, Islam is spread across the six continents – and it is equally diverse theologically, socially and politically" (Straw 2005f) In some cases an effort was made to recognise there is not one Muslim community, but in fact "Muslim communities" in the plural (Beckett 2006, Blair 2001c). Such statements, nonetheless, restrict Muslims into smaller segmented communities assuming they all embody a certain feature.

Conclusion

The seminal report that introduced the severity of Islamophobia in Britain explained that "[t]he UK Government's official stance [towards Muslims] is one of welcome and inclusion. …It is a fine aspiration. The reality however frequently falls short" (The Runnymede Trust 1997: 1). The analysis in this paper agrees with this conclusion. Islamophobia based on assumptions, stereotypes and inferences were commonly identified. The negative representations of Muslims and Islam can lead to Muslims experiencing prejudice and discrimination in their everyday lives. Thus, these Islamophobic representations demonstrated by the Ministers - many of whom continue to hold positions in Prime Minister Gordon Brown's cabinet - must be challenged.

Finally, this discussion can be aptly summarised by a quote from the former Prime Minister of Britain, Tony Blair, who recently recognised that "there is huge and profound ignorance about Islam" (Blair 2007b).

The bibliography is available on request but was omitted here due to its size.

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If you would like a copy of the full dissertation, which has full quotes from Ministers' speeches, please email me.

Due to space limitation, reference to only a few speeches is included in this paper, although a larger volume of references have been gathered.

Scholarly Research in the Madrassa: A Brief Overview

By Maulana Waris Mazhari

(Translated by Yoginder Sikand)

Some days ago, I had the chance to meet a leading Islamic scholar, an author of several books. During our conversation he remarked that the biggest and most influential Madrassa in India had, in the last thirty years or so, produced only two well-researched books. This, he said, was evidence of the pathetic state of scholarship characteristic of the vast majority of the Indian Madrassa today.

While in the past our Madrassa produced numerous scholars, today this is hardly the case at all. Today, most Madrassa restrict themselves only to the teaching of what is specified in their curriculum. In most cases, the only extra-curricular activity that they provide for their students is training them to deliver emotion-driven speeches. Not surprisingly, then, almost all Madrassa graduates become either teachers or orators. Some of them earn their bread by penning tracts, whose only purpose is to foment sectarian strife. Very few Madrassa graduates actually go on to do any serious scholarly research at all. Shockingly, even those men who spend years teaching voluminous tomes on Hadith, Fiqh and Qur'anic commentary for years on end in the Madrassa often only pen a few tracts of a very elementary sort or a commentary on some basic text book and consider this to be a great scholarly contribution! And their sycophantic students and other followers are ever ready to convince them of the supposed great intellectual contributions that they have made thereby!

It is an undeniable fact that expansion of the frontiers of knowledge, even with regard to religion, is now no longer happening in the Madrassa. If at all this is happening, it is outside the Madrassas—in institutes, universities and private intellectual circles. This is so not just in India alone but throughout the rest of South Asia. The intellectual stagnation in our Madrassas can be exemplified with the help of a single instance. Almost all the Sunni ulema groups in South Asia claim to be heirs of the intellectual legacy of Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, the influential eighteenth century Indian scholar, but besides his Hujjat al-Balagha, no other of his many works is taught in the Madrassas or has been published by them. And today conferences about Shah Waliullah and his legacy are being held at universities in Delhi and Aligarh, not in the Madrassas in Deoband and Lucknow.

Interesting and new, well-researched scholarly Islamic texts are being produced by some Muslim academies in Delhi. But nothing of this sort comes out of the hundreds of publishing houses associated with Madrassas across the country. Scores of journals and magazines are published by Madrassas throughout India, but most of these are of a very poor standard in terms of intellectual output. They lack originality, focus on hypothetical and theoretical issues as against practical realities, are overly preachy and normative and very often are geared to fanning sectarian conflicts and hatred.

The main reason for this pathetic state of affairs is, undoubtedly, the narrow mindedness of the majority of our ulema and Madrassa students. This is related to the fact that they have

restricted the work of Madrassas to what they see as guiding people on issues of day-to-day concern in matters of ritual, practice and belief and the preservation of what is generally considered to be 'Islamic' culture. In this way have cut themselves off from the wider world. But, the question arises, what is the need for students to spend eight long years, studying numerous different subjects, if this is what the Madrassas are training them for? A course of a much shorter duration, of say three years or so, would suffice for this purpose.

Another factor for the poor standards of scholarship and research in Madrassas today is the almost total lack of any collaboration between Madrassas and other academic institutions, which could have helped Madrassas improve their scholarly output. In fact, the relationship between the two sets of institutions is characterized by considerable mutual hostility and suspicion. It is also a fact that the wrong notion of a divide between 'religious' and 'worldly' knowledge that is constantly stressed by the Madrassas has played a major role in this furthering the division between Madrassas and 'secular' institutions.

A third factor for this lamentable state of affairs is that certain families control the vast majority of Madrassas. They have become, in essence, family-run affairs. This is the 'mother of all illnesses', in my humble opinion. It has resulted in the complete absence of democratic functioning in the Madrassas, in their commercialization and in the exploitation of their employees, all of which have had an extremely deleterious impact on the Madrassas and their scholarly environment. The monopoly that certain individuals or families exercise over the Madrassas is often reflected in the sort of literature that they bring out—much of it being pure propaganda, in the form of hagiographies, heaping praise on the founders of their respective institutions and the ulema associated with their sects.

A fourth factor for the deplorable state of scholarship and research in the Madrassas is their extremely restricted syllabus, which has made for the ulema to remain confined within the four walls of their Madrassas and to have little or no knowledge of the rapid changes happening in the world around them. This is reflected in the sort of publications that the Madrassas and the ulema churn out, many of which have no social relevance at all or else lack any originality.

A fifth factor is economic. There are undoubtedly many capable students and teachers in the Madrassas, who, if given the facilities and necessary support, can engage in fruitful scholarly research. However, Madrassas make no arrangement for financing this sort of research work. What generally happens, instead, is that some maulvis take to making money and winning cheap popularity through penning emotionally-driven, and often fiercely sectarian, books of low scholarly standard. They seem to enjoy a mutually beneficial relationship with certain publishing houses affiliated with their own sects. These publishing houses specialize in producing this sort of literature, which rakes in handsome profits for their owners as well as for those who pen these books.

A sixth factor for the virtual absence of any creative scholarly work in the Madrassas is that very few of them have any special departments for research and publications. Most of the few Madrassas that do have such departments lack

qualified people to staff them. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for creative, independent-minded thinkers and scholars to adjust to the closed and insular environment of the Madrassa. Seventhly, the fact that the vast majority of Madrassa graduates have expertise in just one language (Urdu, in north India), with little or no familiarity with English greatly limits their potential as researchers and scholars. Most Madrassa graduates do not even know proper Arabic despite having spent many years ostensibly studying that language.

What Should Be Done?

Intellectual work on a large scale cannot depend simply on the efforts and initiative of individual scholars. Rather, community-based organizations have to create funds and provide facilities to encourage scholars. But this is completely lacking in the case of the Madrassas. In the past, Muslim rulers and nobles generously patronized Madrassa-based scholars. In the West today, huge research foundations like the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation provide research projects to scholars. Sadly, there are virtually no Muslim organizations that promote this sort of work. At least the larger and well-funded Madrassas ought to arrange for separate budgets for research projects that can be assigned to selected scholars to work on.

Improving the standard of scholarship in the Madrassas is inextricably linked to the issue of widening their focus so that they see their task not simply as teaching students a set of texts or expanding their stock of knowledge but also widening their thought and mental horizons. Intellectual development can only happen in an environment that promotes, rather than discourages, curiosity. Sadly, this is totally absent in the Madrassas. Further, Madrassas make little or no provision for teaching social sciences and various languages, without which the sort of creative research that one hopes for cannot be produced. I think Madrassas must include English as a compulsory subject in their curriculum, and, perhaps through open universities or the Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Hyderabad, arrange for their students to learn various social sciences. In the absence of this it is doubtful if the Madrassas can at all engage in any sort of creative and relevant research and scholarly work.

I would also suggest that all big Madrassas set up research centers and academies. Some Madrassas already have such institutions, but, sadly, most of these exist just in name and only for show, bringing out literature glorifying their founders or fanning sectarian hatred and strife. Madrassas must also expand their range of extra-curricular activities in order to encourage students to take greater interest in research work. They can arrange for experts in different subjects (and not just those narrowly defined as ‘religious’) to deliver regular lectures to their students. They can organize regular essay-writing competitions and debates for students. They must also arrange for their libraries to stock important journals and books, including on contemporary social issues and developments. They can provide students with training in writing skills and journalism, and arrange for selected students’ essays on issues of contemporary concern to be published in Madrassa journals or as edited volumes that can be made available to the public. Final year students must be made to write full-length research-based dissertations. This will help improve their writing and analytical skills besides

adding to the scholarly output of the Madrassas. Dissertations of good standard, especially if they represent new and creative thinking, can also be published in the form of books so that the general public can access them. Bigger Madrassas can also encourage scholarly work by organizing annual seminars on topics of current interest and contemporary import.

Madrassas can also arrange for their staff and senior students to visit other Madrassas, and even institutions of learning run by non-Muslims, so as to benefit from them. In this regard some of the larger Madrassas can also consider sending some of their capable students who are firm in their faith to the top institutions of religious learning in the West. These students can play a major and vital role in providing scholarly responses from an Islamic point of view to present-day global challenges.

These are some suggestions for addressing the pathetic state of scholarship that characterizes our Madrassas today. In this regard I believe the major hurdle that we face is the misplaced sense that the Madrassas have of their supposed self-sufficiency, their reluctance to introspect, their feeling that all is right with them and that there is no room for improvement at all. Obviously, this attitude is hardly conducive to intellectual development and the thirst for broadening and deepening their intellectual horizons.

Since the malaise of poor standards of scholarship in the Madrassas is deep-seated and a result of many factors, obviously it cannot be solved at once. For this to change, Madrassas need to critically and realistically examine their present curriculum and system. Only then can they become centers of scholarly activity and creative thought and research—as were Madrassas centuries ago—and in this way prove beneficial not just to Muslims alone but to humankind in general. Or else, this complaint of the poet Muhammad Iqbal will continue to haunt them:

Neither life, nor love. Neither realization, nor vision.

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Shah Mahmoud Hanifi's lecture on the US Foreign Policy and Afghanistan: The Colonial Market for Afghan Languages

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This lecture was more about the language in Afghanistan throughout its history than what I thought it would be about, which was the market for Afghan languages. There was discussion on this fascinating market for a language that Americans tend to associate with negative thoughts, but the core of this lecture was on the history of Afghan languages and how they lead to explain the current market. Professor Shah Mahmoud Hanifi from James Madison University started his lecture by introducing his book, "Colonial Market for Afghan Languages". During colonialism

in India the British handled some languages well, and others not so well, resulting in hundreds of neglected and lost languages throughout this period. Modern day Afghanistan was brought into existence primarily because of the British India Colonialism. The two primary languages in Afghanistan today are Dari and Pashto. The main language that Professor Hanifi focused on was Pashto. Pashto is associated with the boundary between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and the market for spoken Pashto is about $210,000 in a single year. Historically Afghanistan has been pulled by the South with the Indian Ocean, and the North with the Silk Road. When I say "pulled", this means that the geographical North and South locations culturally pulled on Afghan society. These "pulls", natural because of Afghan's location, have affected Afghanistan for hundreds of years. This affected language because people learned mobility with these geographical and cultural pulls. Languages ultimately ended up interacting, combining, becoming lost, and new ones were created throughout the history of Afghanistan; primarily the cause of this is the mobility throughout the region. Mobility throughout the region has always made it hard to pinpoint identities to certain areas. This may lead into a possible foreign policy issue. Since historical, cultural, and geographical influences have had extreme effects on Afghanistan, the different languages are now widespread and have dispersed throughout a huge region. Ultimately, there is no way for someone to identify a particular type of people in a particular section. Which is why US foreign policy officials may find this fact frustrating in foreign affairs with Afghanistan. The effect that mobility has had on Afghan languages is a topic that most Americans are not knowledgeable about, because the history about these languages is not one of particular interest to our society.

Hanifi then went on to explain more of Pashto, and shed light onto the language that so little Americans seem to give a second thought about. Pashto is primarily a rural language that gets trumped by the state bureaucratic language, Persian. Persian is a language of bureaucracies and government in the entire Middle East region. Several theories about where Pashto comes from have been brought up, most attributing the creation of the language to the influences and combinations of other languages. Hanifi introduced H.G. Raverty, a very important name in the study of Pashto to this day. Raverty was a man who studied Pashto and published documents, books, and dictionaries on this language. If one were to look up Raverty's name they would primarily find books that he has written about how to learn Pashto. Born in 1825, Raverty wasn't born long after the earliest printings of Pashto. The earliest printings of Pashto were in the early 1800's, and today there are different types of production used to print Pashto. A main use to print Pashto, present day, is for Shab Namaha, or night lettering. These documents are generally threatening and combine Pashto and Persia. This introduces the most serious interest of foreign policies and affairs with Pashto. The US government shows this interest in the public market for Pashto. The US government has created the DLI, Defense Language Institute, for military purposes to study the language of Pashto. The DLI is the representative of the public market for Pashto.

However, the real money making market, with the annual income of $210,000, comes from the private market of subcontracted work. This subcontracted work is usually done for the government by highly specialized experts. Overall, Hanifi explains in detail how he has studied languages in Afghanistan, Pashto being the major focus. This language has been affected over an extended period of time by cultural and geographical influences, and it extends into the interest of the US market and foreign policy.

This lecture, even though I did not go into detail that US foreign policy plays a role with Pashto, was extremely interesting and the US foreign policy peaked my interest. The fact that the reason there is a market for Pashto today seems to come from the interaction between the US and Afghanistan. The history of this language is so complex and the actual origins are extremely difficult to figure out, and even how to print or speak it may be difficult for people to understand. This shows that language plays a vital role in understanding people in a foreign place that don't seem to speak a mainstream language. Most militaries are not going to think of the complexities of a language when dealing with foreign affairs. Primarily they will focus on hiring translators and personnel who specialize in the particular language in the region. I almost wish I could watch military personnel attempt to communicate with people who speak Pashto, because this language is not a straightforward simple language. Translators and specialists can be hired, but what the military and government will soon find out is that even those highly specialized experts will have a tough time translating and interpreting. Pashto is sometimes combined with other languages, like in the night letters that Afghan groups use. The US government and military are aware of this and therefore try to implement ways to help specialists learn more, most likely the reason for the DLI. My reaction to the night letters was one of immediate interest. Groups combine these two prominent languages in Afghanistan to threaten people across the nation, at least the majority of the time they are threatening. How can the US government and military possibly figure out the Persian and Pashto combination and then figure out where it originates? Even with the DLI this is extremely difficult, because no one can find true, reliable roots to Pashto. Hanifi explained that these letters are printed, photocopied, and handwritten, and to have a printer of some sort that prints numerous amounts of letters written in Pashto seemed to confuse Hanifi. This was particularly interesting because when a person in the room asked how the groups did all this printing, Hanifi, an expert it seems at the language in Afghanistan and its history, was confused at how they could manage this with such a complicated language. Now Pashto is not only a challenging language with its history of the past and cultural influence in the region today, but it is also a tremendously difficult language to produce on paper. It is difficult to produce due to the lettering and symbols that the language incorporates, and the fact that it is a language of no interest to the Afghan government. Also, since the government

trumps this language and speaks Dari instead, they are not going to spend their time figuring out how to find someone truly capable of mastering the mass printing process of Pashto. Yet, if this mass production of Pashto confuses or stumps Hanifi, then surely the US military becomes stumped as well. Pashto is spoken in rural areas, but also in threatening letters that are of particular interest to our government. Pashto, or any other language in Afghanistan for that matter, was never of any interest to our government, military, or other various people in the United States. Now, it appears to me, from this lecture, that all of these languages of Afghanistan have suddenly become a very significant interest to all of the previous people listed, because of US foreign policy concerns and the interactions occurring between Afghanistan and the United States. Pashto is perhaps one of the most complicated hurdles that experts, the US government, researchers, and the US military have ever faced culturally due to the amount of unknown information that all leads back to how this language came about in the first place.

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The Clash of Modernities: The Islamist Challenge and the Making and Unmaking of the "New" Jew, Arab, and Turk. Paradigm Publishers: Boulder, CO (July 2009)

Khaldoun Samman

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, although existing side-by-side at the very 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 landscape, to visit places of far-away time. Americans can cross their southern border and visit their "distant neighbor," as one book's title advertizes.Or we could visit, as a travel promotional 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, because it is ruled by Mullahs, that it is "still feudal" and "stuck" in the fourteenth-century, with the slightest hint in the irony of such a claim. 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 separates "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 there exists a linear historical progress to which all "societies," although at radically different speeds and at varying points, have traveled through. Some may "still" be at a "traditional" or agricultural/rural phase, while others are "nearer" to modernity, living in the Middle ages or feudal-like societies, but as soon as "they" get their true renaissance or religious and secular reformers—their equivalents of "our" philosophes and Luthers—they too can join the more "advanced" societies.

This book argues that 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 colonizer 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 claimed, to deliver their societies—which they admit are "still" in the grips of a stagnant mentality—to this glorious future.

This is what I call the colonizer's temporal template, a way of seeing time and the Other that will have a tremendous impact on the way the colonized, in their attempt to emancipate themselves from the colonizer, understood social change and progress, leading them to think that the only way they could join modernity is through massive cultural, political, and technological overhaul of their societies. In this book we will compare three different kinds of responses to this colonizer's gaze in the Middle East, in which the colonizer's time of the Other was strategically revised in a number of ways, yet remaining loyal to it as well. Kemalism and Zionism, in their efforts to push "their people" forward in time accepted the narrative almost wholeheartedly, and proceeded to eradicate what they perceived as "archaic" characteristics of their Jewish and Turkish cultures, while Arab Nationalists, in a similar desire to get their people to "catch up" to the West, negotiated a more cultural schizophrenic approach on how to appease the colonizer's gaze. But so too, as the book investigates, did the Islamists, who likewise wanted to improve their societies, but in order to move forward in time they prescribed the eradication of Western contamination and reintroduced the prophetic stage that they believe, if it weren't corrupted and just had been left alone and remained true to itself—and if the colonizer and their local Arab co-conspirators didn't intervene with their toxic morality—would have produced true civilization. In this since they all shared the same episteme that the colonizer delivered to the region in the nineteenth century. The colonizers insistence on essentializing their difference between themselves and the Other was based on a temporalized script, a script whose intention was to distantiate the the Arab

and Muslim spatially and temporally from their Western self. Colonial difference, therefore, legitimized the subordination of the global south to colonial rule by positing the colonized—sometimes in a biological and at other times in a cultural evolutionary framework—as too immature for self rule. Representing the Other as living in tents, herding goats, riding camels, and living in a nomadic and Bedouin "premodern" lifestyle was part and parcel of placing the Arab into a time narrative that made him or her appear as belonging to an earlier Age of Man. Of course, some of these constructs were of a romantic sort, where Western Orientalists, feeling entrapped in an ugly industrialized urban zones of polluted areas like that of late 19th century Manchester England, dreamt of the "noble savage" who lived free and in the wild. Yet no matter what the intentions were, romantic or strictly utilitarian in nature, the effect in either case created a temporal trope around which the Arab's culture and civilization were understood. Moreover, the *effects* were exceptionally productive in that by positing this difference the colonized would likewise insist on maintaining this script, but only after removing the colonizer and replacing him with the modern (male) nationalist who himself has matured from his child-like Bedouin past.

The perceived backwardness of the Muslim people when compared to the West, mixed with the feeling of being humiliated by an occupying foreign force, made it all that more necessary to claim a sphere which they could use to inspire their scarred dignity. This book, in its theoretical contribution to the literature on nationalist and Islamist movements in the Middle East, follows the lead of Partha Chatterjee's analysis of Indian nationalism. But while Chatterjee's creative scholarly intervention was not all that useful in analyzing Kemalism and Zionism, his work proved to be highly applicable to Arab nationalism. Given the fact that Arab nationalists were deeply in awe with the culture and power of the West, they devised a way to reproduce the colonizer's cultural and temporal script by acknowledging the latter's scientific and technological superiority, and proceeded to emulate those things that they understood as universal items of modernity, things like statecraft, economy, and science. However, emulating this exterior material domain produced in them a desire to create a spiritual interior domain that they could call all their own, a unique and distinct Arab personality. But as we discover in this book, this interior domain, which they identified as their true personality, required quite a bit of invention, of which their colonial predecessors had already unearthed and manufactured generations earlier. The irony of this is that the most creative aspect of such nationalism, whose intention is "to fashion a 'modern' national culture that is nevertheless not Western," was in fact first launched by the colonizers. It was the latter who created a discourse of colonial difference so as to mark, both culturally and racially, the Other as temporally and spatially distant, creating in effect a narrative script which Arab nationalist would only slightly revise.

Notice that in all the cases above the movements worked within the given constraints provided to them by the colonizer's gaze to force the Other into a faraway time and place. Indeed, the method these movements used to assert their own identity had already been narrated long before the appearance of any of these movements. What Occidentalizers like Herzl,

Ataturk, and Islamists like Qutb, Khomenei, and bin Laden did was simply to take the constructions provided by the Orientalist system and tugged on one or the other side, recreating the images of what they now understood as their authentic self. The only difference is which side of the rope they tugged on. For Herzl and Ataturk they used every muscle in their body to tug their "nation" *out of the Orient* while for the Islamists, with the help of the Almighty, everything possible was done to *pull the Umma back towards Medina and Mecca*—one side desiring to remove the Orient while the other cleansing Islam from the toxins of the Occident. The cultural schizophrenia of the Arab nationalists stood in the middle and was unsure which side of the rope to pull on, but it knew, deep down, that it must in order to "improve" its subjects. Yet, in all three cases "the West," in some mysterious way, remained solidly in place. As Leila Ahmed has persuasively argued, even the most radical sounding narratives never seem to break free from the Orientalist categories to which they are responding. Rather, they tend to "appropriate, in order to negate, the symbolic terms of the original narrative. Standing in relation of antithesis to thesis, the resistance narrative thus reverse—but thereby also accept—the terms set in the first place by the colonizers."

The book will end with the search for what I call "Post-Orientalist" movements. There are now emerging individuals and movements that see the limits of working within the world that the colonizer taught us to inhabit and are looking for ways to articulate a self that allows our collective egos to dissipate a bit and become calmed by the actual interconnected space and time of Self and Other. This book will end by briefly exploring some intellectuals who are turning away from the colonizer's temporal template so as to live in a world not determined by a standard of measurement that is highly judgmental and insulting, but inhabited by a compassionate Being that allows all of us to live free of the tools of an obsessed collective mind to transform us into an image of development.

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