

Racialization of Muslims: From the “Old World” to the “New World Order”

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Time and Location:

Office:

Office Hours:

Course Description

The categorical figure of Muslim is at the core of racialization projects in the “New World.” The racialization of Muslims started in the Old World (15th century Europe), where Catholics and Protestants viewed and treated Muslims, who they equated with Arabs, as a civilizational other. To expunge any trace of this other, the Spanish executed many Muslims/Arabs, sent them to exile or forced them into conversion. To distinguish between “true” Christians and converts, they invented the notion of “purity of blood” (*limpieza de sangre*): the converts were deemed as unfaithful and impure. The colonials transferred this notion to the “New World” and the Americas to justify the massacre of indigenous people and enslavement of Africans. This summary shows how the religious principles of the racialization of Muslims in the Old World were transferred to the Americas to function as and to transubstantiate into the biological basis for the racialization of indigenous people and Africans. In this course, through readings, documentaries, and discussions we will learn about these connections and familiarize ourselves with this history. We will also learn about the other side: the white side of the color line and learn about its contingent, malleable, and constructed nature. This course also is designed to go past the common attempt to “humanize minorities.” The intention is to change the direction of the analysis to, drawing from James Baldwin, ask why whiteness requires the dehumanization of minorities. To approach these topics from different angles, we will have a few guest speakers, such as Neda Maghbouleh, Junaid Rana, Mustafa Bayoumi, Stanley Thangaraj, and Khaled Beydoun, who will join us through Skype.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

By the end of this course:

- Students should be able to explain some of the dominant theories about race, ethnicity, and racialization.
- Students should have a historical understanding of the relationships between racialization projects, colonialism, and nationalism.
- Students should be familiar with and able to articulate the history of racialization of Muslims.
- Students should be able to draw connections between the racialization of Muslims and other minorities and highlight their commonalities and differences.
- Students should be able to explain how domestic projects of racialization are linked to global history and its current geopolitics.

Readings

All the readings will be posted online.

Course Requirements

You are expected to read and be conversant with the assigned readings, participate in seminar discussions, summarize and evaluate articles, and write a final paper, and attend an event. You will be evaluated on the basis of the extent and quality of your seminar participation [10%], reflective notes [30%], facilitation [15%], research paper [30%], and event notes [15%].

- **Reading Assignments:** You are to remain current with the attached reading schedule. That means you are to read the material assigned for each week and come to that week's seminar prepared to discuss **all** of the required readings. I recommend that you set aside one day each week to prepare for the seminar. *Only those who remain current with the reading assignments and consistently contribute to seminar discussions will be eligible to earn a high grade in the seminar.* The readings will be made available on Canvas.
- **Reflective Notes:** Students are expected to produce weekly reflective notes. These notes must contain direct quotes from the readings with proper citation. To make the quotes a coherent part of your argument, you need to unpack them and explain how they contribute to your overall argument. These notes need to be 1000 words long, font Times New Roman, 12, and single-spaced. Each note has to have a cover page which, in addition to your name, has a word count and a title. The title needs to summarize and reflect your argument. In total, you need to have ten reflective notes. The notes cannot be on the weeks for which you are facilitating.
- **Facilitation:** Each student is required to facilitate one session by presenting summaries, comparisons, and critiques of the readings of the day. Your facilitation should comprise two components. The first component must be a critical and analytical summary of the readings. In this part of your facilitation, besides the summary, highlight the main arguments, make connections with other readings, and offer some critiques. In the second part, draw on your critiques and pose two questions to the class for discussion. These questions need to be analytical, meaning that they must not be yes/no questions. They should be thought-provoking questions that stir discussion and debate. The facilitator is required to take note of major points, and craft a one paragraph answer (500 words) to each question and post them on Canvas. On the days that we have guest speakers, we will start the class with the facilitation and devote the second half of the class to the speaker.
- **Research Paper:** You are to prepare a 3000-word length paper on a topic relevant to the seminar. The paper should be a critical and analytical response to a current event. A purely descriptive paper will not be acceptable. For instance, if you are writing about the Muslim Ban, you need to locate your argument within a historical context, support it with the academic literature, and provide your analysis of it. In other words, you need to share your analysis and backed it up with the literature. The paper is due by 12:00 pm on December 9. I will deduct a letter grade for late papers.
- **Event:** All students need to attend an event organized by Muslims. You need to communicate with me after choosing your event and before attending it. One option is to attend a Friday prayer in a local mosque. You are expected to talk to the participants, approach people and explain who you are and why you are there. You need to gain some answers to the questions that you may have, for instance about the ritual (prayer, sermon, its history and philosophy, its collective nature, etc.). After the event, take notes and write a 1000-word essay on the experience. There is no need for external resources. This assignment is directed inwards to help us reflect and re-assess our assumptions.

Readings (Sixteen Weeks)

• Week One: Islam and Christianity in Medieval Times

In this section, we will read Omi and Winant's major piece on racialization. Later in the semester, we will also read some of its critiques. This text helps us to have a basic understanding as we proceed through the semester. Then, we will read about how Islam and Muslims were depicted in major Christian traditions in Europe. While Catholics viewed Muslims and Jews as impure, Protestants treated them as blasphemous. Interestingly, while both branches of Christianity deemed Muslims and Jews in a negative light, they had their rivalries and suspicions against each other.

- Omi, Michael, and Howard Winant. 2015. *Racial Formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge. Introduction: Racial Formation in the United States (1-18) and Part One: Paradigms of Race: Ethnicity, Class, and Nation (21-102)
- Francisco, Adam S. 2016 "Martin Luther, Islam, and the Ottoman Turks." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*. 19 Dec. 2018. [HERE](#).
- Optional: To read The War Against the Turks see [HERE](#).
- Hannaford, Ivan. 1996. *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press. Chapter 4: Jews, Christians, Moores, and Barbarians (87-126)

• Week Two: Race, Ethnicity, and Islam

This set of readings familiarizes us with notions of race and ethnicity. Currently, in sociology, race is primarily associated with corporeal features while ethnicity is defined culturally. These readings show how this distinction is ahistorical and misleading. The fact that we consider racism as negative and ethnicity as benign comes from this misunderstanding which ignores the cultural aspects of race and its religious foundations. The reading by Rana shows how the notion of purity of blood was initially a cultural distinction which was transferred later to the Americas and applied to indigenous Americas.

- Hannaford, Ivan. 1996. *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press. Chapters 7 and 8 (191-274)
- Hirschman, Charles. 2004. "The Origins and Demise of the Concept of Race." *Population and Development Review* 30: 385–415.
- Rana, Junaid. 2007. "The Story of Islamophobia." *Souls* 9 (2): 148–61.

• Week Three: Islam and Muslims in the Classical Political Thought

The negative depiction and treatment of Muslims were not limited to religious scholars or theologians. The readings below show how political philosophers and social scholars who are revered and respected in the West were part of the deeply rooted racialization of Muslims. Montesquieu's major book, *The Spirit of Laws*, which was the most cited political text during the creation of the US Constitution, is known as Thomas Jefferson's political bible. The structure of the political establishment in the United States is extracted from his ideas. What is ignored about him is his hypocritical stance towards Christianity and Islam. This inconsistency also exists in the works of highly respected scholars such as Karl Marx and Max Weber, as two of the founding "fathers" of sociology. The last reading frames this ethnocentric view of science and society as *epistemic racism* which is based on the myth of the inherent superiority of the West over others.

- Montesquieu, Charles de. 1952. *The Spirit of Laws*. Edited by Robert M Hutchins. Chicago: W. Benton. Book XV: What the Manner of Laws of Civil Slavery Relate to the Nature of Climate (261-276) and Book XVI: How the Laws of Domestic Slavery Bear a Relation to the Nature of the Climate (277-298) E-BOOK [E-BOOK HERE](#)

- Optional: Khoshnevis, Hadi. Forthcoming. "From Biology to Culture: Montesquieu's Theory of the Spirit of Nations and the Racialization of Muslims." *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations*.
- Sukidi. 2006. "Max Weber's remarks on Islam: The Protestant Ethic among Muslim Puritans." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 17(2) 195–205.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2010. "Epistemic Islamophobia and Colonial Social Sciences." *Human Architecture: Journal of Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 8 (2): 29–38.

- **Week Four: Islam in the "New World"**

These readings familiarize us with the first encounters. First, we learn about religion and racialization, and then we move on to specifically focus on the history of Muslims in the Americas. Muslims entered the Americas or the "New World" before Protestants. These Muslims were primarily Arabic speaking literate slaves who got involved in underground resistance communities. They worked with other enslaved people and indigenous people to fight against white colonials. These can be considered the first examples of cross-coalition buildings in the "New World."

- Guéno, Michael P. 2017 "Native Americans, Law, and Religion in America." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*. 19 Dec. 2018. [HERE](#)
- Diouf, Sylviane A. 2013. *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*. New York, NY: New York University Press. Chapter One: African Muslims, Christian Europeans, and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (20-70)
- Gomez, Michael Angelo. 2008. *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas*. Reprinted. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter Five: Founding Mothers and Fathers of a Different Sort: African Muslims in the Early North American South (143-184)
- Ghaneabassiri, Kambiz. 2010. *A History of Islam in America: From the New World to the New World Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters One: Islam in the "New World": The Historical Setting (1-9) and Chapter Two: Islamic Beliefs and Practice in Colonial and Antebellum America (10-59).

- **Weeks Five and Six: Religion, Immigration Era, and Race**

The readings here take us to the Immigration Era when the first wave of immigrants from the Middle East - bear in mind that the Middle East is a colonial concept that has no "natural" meaning - come to the United States. These immigrants were primarily uneducated Christian peasants from the Greater Syria which was under the Ottoman rule. The readings show how these immigrants fought to gain citizenship. They show that these immigrants resorted to a white supremacist language which contributed to the racialization of Muslims, "Asians," Africans Americans, and indigenous people.

- Gualtieri, Sarah M. A. 2009. *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Introduction (1-20) and Chapter Two: Claiming Whiteness: Syrians and Naturalization Law (52-80)
- Majaj, Lisa S. 2000. "Arab Americans and the Meaning of Race." In *Postcolonial Theory and the United States: Race, Ethnicity, and Literature*, edited by Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt, 320–37. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press.
- Khoshnevis, Hadi. Forthcoming. *Accruing Whiteness: Power and Resistance in Citizenship Prerequisite Cases of Immigrants from the Middle East*.
- Gualtieri, Sarah M. A. 2008. "Strange Fruit: Syrian Immigrant, Extralegal Violence, and Racial Formation in the United States." In *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, edited by Amaney A. Jamal and Nadine Christine Naber, 147–69. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press.

- Beydoun, Khaled A. 2018. *American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear*. Oakland, California: University of California Press. Chapter Two: The Roots of Modern Islamophobia (45-69)

- **Week Seven: Post-WWII, Arabs, and Muslims**

In this section, we read Edward Said's pathbreaking work, *Orientalism*. My suggestion is to watch the video listed below and then read the text carefully. These readings reveal the links between colonialism and the racialization of Arabs and Muslims. It is primarily in this era that Arab, Muslim, and the Middle East become one.

- Said, Edward W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books. Chapter One: The Scope of Orientalism (1-110) and The Latest Phase (284-328)
- Yeğenoğlu, Meyda. 1998. *Colonial Fantasies : Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Introduction (1-12), Chapter One: Mapping the Field of Colonial Discourse (14-38), and Chapter Three: Supplementing the Orientalist Lack: European Ladies in the Harem (68-94)
- Said, Edward. On Orientalism. Video [HERE](#)

- **Weeks Eight and Nine: Social Movements and Islam and African Americans**

Readings below focus on activism in the aftermath of WW II within the American Muslims communities which included many African American Muslims. Major African American figures that we read about are Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X. These readings also reveal a controversial history around Muslims' institution building in the United States. The focus will be on the Nation of Islam and the experience of Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X with it. Some of the videos are rather long. Plan in advance to cover all the material.

- Ghaneabassiri, Kambiz. 2010. *A History of Islam in America: From the New World to the New World Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter Six: Islam and American Civil Religion in the Aftermath of WW II (228-271) and Chapter Seven: American Muslim Institution Building and Activism, 1960s-1980s (272-326)
- Smith, Jane. I. 2010. *Islam in America*. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter Four: Islam in the African American Community (78-103)
- Pennock, Pamela E. 2017. *The Rise of the Arab American Left: Activists, Allies, and Their Fight against Imperialism and Racism, 1960s-1980s*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. Part One, Section Three: Intersections: Palestine, Arab Americans, and the Movements of the Sixties (79-117) and Part Two, Section Five: "Enemies Within:" Operation Boulder and Infringement of Civil Liberties (143-164)
- Abdullah, Zain. 2015. "Malcolm X, Islam, and the Black Self." In *Malcolm X's Michigan Worldview*, edited by Rita Kiki Edozie and Curtis Stokes, 205-226. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press. [HERE](#)
- Trials of Muhammad Ali. PBS Independent Lens. [HERE](#)
- X, Malcolm, and George Breitman. 1990. *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*. NY: Grove Press: Grove Weidenfeld. Chapter Five: Letters from Abroad (58-63)
- The Nation of Islam and the Assassination of Malcolm X. Video. [HERE](#)
- Malcolm X: Make it Plan. PBS. Video. [HERE](#)

- **Weeks Ten: "Post"-Colonialism and Colonial Situation**

This section focuses on the era that is known as "post-colonial" era in which many of former colonies

gain "independence." The readings show that post-colonialism is a misnomer. Although these countries are not ruled by colonial powers directly, they are still entrapped in a colonial situation in which the colonial relationship is preserved. The first piece discusses the colonial situation, in general, to prepare us to look into the Muslims' question closely.

- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2004. "Race and Ethnicity or Racialized Ethnicities?: Identities within Global Coloniality." *Ethnicities* 4 (3): 315–36.
- Aidi. Hisham D. 2005. "Let Us Be Moors Islam, Race, and "Connected Histories."" *Souls* 7(1): 36-51.
- Werbner, Pnina. 2005. "Islamophobia: Incitement to Religious Hatred: Legislating for a New Fear?" *Anthropology Today* 21 (1): 5–9.
- James Baldwin Debates William F. Buckley. 1965. Video. [HERE](#)
- Haque, Eve. 2010. "Homegrown, Muslim and Other: Tolerance, Secularism and the Limits of Multiculturalism." *Social Identities* 16 (1): 79–101.
- Moallem, Minoo. 2002. "Whose Fundamentalism?" *Meridians* 2 (2): 298–301.

- **Weeks Eleven and Twelve: September 11 and The Global War on Terror**

The readings below focus on the 9/11. These readings connect what we learned about the "New World" to the "New World Order" and the empire.

- Finan, Christopher M. 2007. *From the Palmer Raids to the Patriot Act: A History of the Fight for Free Speech in America*. Boston, Mass: Beacon Press. Introduction (ix-xi) and Chapter One: Ground Zero (1-37)
- Ghaneabassiri, Kambiz. 2010. *A History of Islam in America: From the New World to the New World Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter Eight: Between Experience and Politics: American Muslims and the "New World Order" 1989-2008 (327-377)
- Mamdani, Mahmood. 2002. "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism." *American Anthropologist : Journal of the American Anthropological Association*, 766–75.
- Thangaraj, Stanley. 2016. Managing Race, Class, and Gender: Atlanta's South Asian American Muslims and the Localized Management of the "Global War on Terror." In *South Asian Racialization and Belonging after 9/11*, edited by Aparajita De, 51-66. London: The Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group.
- Naber, Nadine. 2008. "Introduction: Arab Americans and U.S. Racial Formations." In *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, edited by Amaney A. Jamal and Nadine C. Naber, 1–45. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press.
- Bakalian, Anny P., and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. 2009. *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans Respond*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter One: Backlash against Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans (JUST 1-13)
- Read, Jen'nan Ghazal. 2008. "Discrimination and Identity Formation in a Post-9/11 Era: A Comparison of Muslim and Christian Arab Americans." In *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, edited by Amaney A. Jamal and Nadine Christine Naber, 305–17. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press.

- **Weeks Thirteen and Fourteen: Nationalism, Fear, and Islam**

After learning about the historical and the contemporary racialization of Muslims, now we turn our attention to the roots of the function that racialization in general and racialization of Muslims in particular plays in the preservation of white supremacy and the empire. First, we learn about nations and

nationalism. We read Benedict Anderson's seminal piece and its luminary criticism by Partha Chatterjee. Then we learn about the gendered nature of nationalism and racialization with a focus on Muslims in different western countries.

- Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities. Nationalism*. London: Verso. Chapter Three: The Origins of National Consciousness (37-46) and Chapter Eight Patriotism and Racism (141-154)
- Chatterjee, Partha. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton Studies in Culturepowerhistory. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Nagel, Joanne. 2000. "Ethnicity and Sexuality." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26: 107–33.
- McAlister, Melani. 2012. "The Persecuted Body: Evangelical Internationalism, Islam, and the Politics of Fear." In *Facing Fear: The History of an Emotion in Global Perspective*, edited by Michael Laffan and Max Weiss, 133-161. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Hage, Ghassan. 2003. *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*. Annandale, NSW.: Pluto Press. Chapter One: Transnational Capitalism and the Roots of Paranoid Nationalism (7-21) and Chapter Six: Polluting Memories: Migration and Colonial Responsibility in Australia
- Amir-Moazami, Schirin. 2011. "Dialogue as a Governmental Technique: Managing Gendered Islam in Germany." *Feminist Review* 98 (1): 9–27.
- Nagra, Baljit. 2011. "'Our Faith Was Also Hijacked by Those People': Reclaiming Muslim Identity in Canada in a Post-9 11 Era." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37 (3): 425–41.
- Puar, Jasbir K. 2006. "Mapping US Homonormativities." *Gender, Place and Culture* 13 (1): 67–88.
- Trevor Aaronson. How This FBI Strategy Is Actually Creating US-Based Terrorists. TED Talk. [HERE](#)

- **Weeks Fifteen and Sixteen: Global Geopolitics, Race, and Islam**

This last set of readings link the racialization projects with the global geopolitics. Sociology in the United States has claimed that its primary preoccupation is with the domestic. Julian Go shows that as much as sociologists wish that to be the truth, this claim is unfounded. Sociology, similar to other "sciences" such as anthropology and biology, have been involved in colonial projects and oppression. That is maybe why the sociology of race and ethnicity until recently has been disconnected from transnational migration studies and global geopolitics.

- Go, Julian. 2013. "Sociology's Imperial Unconscious: The Emergence of American Sociology in the Context of Empire." In *Sociology and Empire: The Imperial Entanglements of a Discipline*, edited by George Steinmetz, 83–105. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Beydoun, Khaled A. 2018. *American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear*. Oakland, California: University of California Press. Chapter Three: A Reoriented "Clash of Civilizations": 70-91) and Chapter Four: War on Terror, War on Muslims (92-124)
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2002. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving Anthropological Reflections on Culture Relativism and Its Others." *American Anthropologist* 104 (3): 783–90.
- Cainkar, Louise. 2018. Fluid Terror Threat: A Genealogy of the Racialization of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian Americans. *Amerasia Journal* 44(1) 27-59.
- Khoshnevis, Hadi. n.d. "The Inferior White Politics and Practices of Racialization of People from the Middle East in the US." *Ethnicities*.