

# **FRAMING ISLAM AS A THREAT**

## **The Use of Islam by Some U.S. Conservatives as a Platform for Cultural Politics in the Decade after 9/11**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Why, in the aftermath of 9/11, did a segment of U.S. security experts, political elite, media and other institutions classify not just al-Qaeda but the entire religion of Islam as a security threat, thereby countering the prevailing professional consensus and White House policy that maintained a distinction between terrorism and Islam? Why did this oppositional threat narrative on Islam expand and even degenerate into warning about the “Islamization” of America by its tiny population of Muslim-Americans—a perceived threat sufficiently convincing that legislators in two dozen states introduced bills to prevent the spread of Islamic law, or sharia, and a Republican Presidential front-runner exclaimed, “I believe Shariah is a mortal threat to the survival of freedom in the United States and in the world as we know it”?

This dissertation takes these puzzles as its object of inquiry. Using a framework that conceptualizes discourses and their agents as fundamentally political, this study deepens the literature’s characterizations of this discourse as “Islamophobia,” the “new Orientalism,” the “new McCarthyism,” and so on by examining how it functioned *politically* as a form of cultural politics, and how such political factors played a role in its expansion in the decade after 9/11.

The approach is syncretic, blending Foucauldian genealogy with its emphasis on power, a more interpretive Bourdieuan relational sociology, and synthetic social movement theory. First, it examines the discourse at its macro-level, in the historical and structural factors that formed its conditions of emergence; specifically: 1) the culturally-resident political framing structure that rendered this discourse meaningful and credible; 2) the politically-relevant social-structural resources that rendered it influential; and 3) the more historically contingent or eventful political openings or opportunity “structure” that otherwise enabled, supported, or incentivized it. Then, it examines this threat discourse at its micro-level, biographically profiling three of its more influential polemicists, analyzing their strategies of cultural politics.

The study concludes that this threat discourse functioned as a distinctive strategy by the more entrepreneurial segments of the U.S. conservative movement, who—in the emotion-laden wake of 9/11—seized Islam as another opportune site to advance their ongoing project of cultural politics.

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Any discretionary endeavor involving the investment of significant time and money has personal opportunity costs. My educational quest at Virginia Tech was undertaken while working full time and then radically changing careers from the Navy's Special Operations Officer community to the security professional and intelligence communities. It was kept alive while trying to meet the special needs of one child going through the worst phase of a mental disorder, the needs of another who struggled to survive a life-threatening cancer, and the needs of four others who were dealing with those crises, amidst yet another cross-country military move and three other moves. And, it continued amidst yet two more crises that emerged during the dissertation phase. First, we finally settled by purchasing an old colonial only to find out that much of it had to be rebuilt from the foundation up due to termite damage that was neither identifiable nor covered in the termite insurance policy, thus forcing me to strap on the long-retired tool belt every night after work for a year to salvage it. Then, not long after restarting this dissertation, I was preliminarily diagnosed with stage III lung cancer and thought to have only eighteen months to live. After a three-month process of more definitive diagnosis, including lung surgery to remove two fast growing masses, the final diagnosis was a rare, cancer-like but slower progressing lung and—as it turned out—heart disease, for which there is no medical cure.

Although the trials that have buffeted the Belt family during this formal education period have been turned into greater blessings, the added stress of it was obvious at times, impacting my wife of over thirty years, Cynthia, and our six children—Kristin, David, Beth, Jessica, Stephen and Hannah. You all know how much I love you, and how you continue to inspire and motivate me to do what I would likely not have attempted on my own.

At the professional level, I want to thank the Deans at National Defense University and National Intelligence University—and especially Ambassador Cindy Courville. Your encouragement has meant so much and has helped keep my interest alive amidst working a full-time job on these two faculties, mentoring theses, conducting outreach, and performing strategic research.

At the academic level, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my principal mentor at Virginia Tech, Professor Gerard Toal, and to my other committee members, Professors Tim Luke, Joel Peters, and Ariel Ahram. Gerard kindly encouraged me to take the time off during these trials, and then graciously reinvested himself to get the project going again. My life over the past few years has been immensely richer because of his scholarship, generosity, and patience.

With these inadequate acknowledgements, let me preface this with something of my *positionality*.

## PREFACE

Like the Space Shuttle Challenger mishap and Kennedy's assassination before it, it seems that every adult has a story of where they were when they heard the news about "9/11". For me, it was still early morning on the U.S. West Coast when the Chief of Staff for U.S. Navy Region Northwest called my home on a government-owned island and asked if I had turned on the television yet. At the time, I was the Commanding Officer of an ordnance mobilization activity, charged—among other things—with providing the missiles and bombs for the Pacific Fleet's aircraft carriers, their Northwest-based guided-missile escorts, and for the prepositioning ships for the Marines, Army, and other branches of the military. Within a couple hours of the news, the first guided missile ship able to get underway was at this installation's explosives operations pier and quickly loading surface-to-air missiles for the unthinkable—to shoot down other potentially hijacked commercial airliners still inbound over the Pacific that might be targeting Seattle. Within a couple more hours, the installation was beginning its first full mobilization for war ... against an unidentifiable and unknown enemy. Not waiting for their mobilization orders to be drafted, dozens of reservists assigned to the naval base had started long-drives from as far away as Iowa. Four-hundred Coast Guardsmen of the port security contingent were ordered by Seattle's Coast Guard District Thirteen to the island indefinitely to help safeguard the strategic assets from a threat not imagined: *an enemy within*.

What only the day before had been familiar—an idyllic base of national park-like proportions for my family of eight—had become a strange Alamo-like garrison that was fending off attacks on our high-explosives operations from a new non-state enemy that we didn't know, and which experts were imagining as lurking everywhere, with other sophisticated plans to strike. In the course of hours, everything we knew about national security seemed no longer valid, yet, valid knowledge that we might replace it with had not been formulated.

Beyond the shores of this military island, the broader and basic national security paradigm had been similarly ruptured. In the words of Simon Dalby, "a strangely ominous silence filled the discursive space where political declarations were expected" (2003, 61). Not accommodated by existing discourses, the events of 9/11 seemed "unspeakable" (Steinert 2003), and the "expected sources" of meaning fell silent as the hegemonic Western security narratives collapsed (Croft 2006, 55). This unspeakableness of the moment was captured in London's *The Guardian*, which on the front page ran a speechless photo of the fireball produced at the moment the second aircraft flew into the north tower, and on its second and third pages similarly printed no words used, but just a

single black and white photograph stretching all the way across the double spread, of southern Manhattan enveloped in the dust and smoke (Campbell 2001).

In the aftermath, expert after expert across the spectrum agreed: *everything had changed*. Indeed, immediately after the event, the phrase “9/11 changed everything” became popular (Henninger 2006). On the night of the attacks 74 percent of Americans viewed the events of 9/11 as a turning point, and that “things will change forever” (Ipsos-Reid 2001). This and other polls after the event suggested that it had instantly become a *somatic marker*, or a symbol of obsessive collective sense of trauma and loss, similar to the role of the Holocaust for Jews (Connolly 2002, 35; Ó Tuathail 2003). The magnitude of this affective resource can be seen in just the internet portion of the post-9/11 decade’s archive, which registered over a half-billion distinct entries of “9/11” and “September 11” and their variants. The dislocation was so complete, that James Der Derian (2002, 321) would lament over the emergent schema of “Before 9.11 and after 9.11”, noting that the rupture had even forced social scientists to “survey international as well as domestic politics by this temporal rift”.

From such a complete dislocation, this “crisis” of (in)security was ultimately a crisis of master narratives, which—in turn—was a crisis of knowledge. Fortunately, at this time, the tools of knowledge and knowledge itself were in full expansion. And, like the Pentagon, where ground was broken on another 9/11 sixty years earlier, it was upon the more virtual architecture of the ICT revolution that the nation rushed to build the new Panopticon for surveillance of everything related to al-Qaeda, including the little known major world religion from which it emerged.

By 2004, one of my daughters’ cancer encouraged a cross-country move to Washington, D.C. to receive treatment at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and I became part of this new security apparatus, housed at the National Defense University. Within a year, and at the request of the university president, I had founded and was leading global community of practice of over four-hundred subject matter experts on the topic of countering violent extremism—a euphemism for al-Qaeda and associated movements. At a key center of this rapidly emerging discourse, I could not help but notice that a prominent segment of security analyses related to the newly identified threat that was produced outside of the more authoritative institutions housing security professionals and scholars on the topic. Notably, this was an identifiable discourse unto itself; it was distinct—standing apart from the more professional literature, not only in its topical horizons, but also its content. Moreover, this segment of discourse—largely from more popular experts who were often lodged in their own organizations—curiously excluded from view key realms of

information that professional security analyses would have been compelled to include. It was when I realized that this discourse emanated essentially (if not entirely) from one political faction—*the one that I significantly identified with*—I started to pay closer attention.

For a couple years, I (and everyone else, it seemed) attributed this more popular and tendentious segment of post-9/11 threat discourse to an understandable spike of irrational fear of a largely unknown but major threat within an equally unknown and growing world religion, and the almost invisible U.S. ethnic and religious minority that formed its domestic adherents. But, rather than taper off as distance from 9/11 was gained, the discourse anachronistically worsened and began to exhibit other curious features that would turn that notion on its head.

*David Belt*

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## THE PUZZLING POST-9/11 THREAT DISCOURSE

*I believe Shariah is a mortal threat to the survival of freedom in the United States and in the world as we know it.*

—Newt Gingrich (2010)

### 1. The Counternarrative

On September 17<sup>th</sup> President Bush formally broke the nation’s self-imposed moment of silence and rendered the official interpretation of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack. To visually symbolize what his speech intended to convey, the chosen venue was the Islamic Center of Washington, where The White House staff had assembled for the cameras whatever Muslim symbolic and leadership figures they could cobble together on short notice.<sup>1</sup> It was a crucial act of public diplomacy, creating distance between “terrorists” and “Islam”.

“The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam, the president said. “That’s not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace.” He added, “These terrorists don’t represent peace. They represent evil and war” (PBS Newshour 2001).

The Bush administration’s terror/Islam distinction was politically safe for at least two reasons: First, not only did it represent a core value of Western liberalism that was enshrined in the Constitution, but it represented a historical lesson learned in the wake of a previous collective outrage over the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In that illiberal moment, another non-white and immigrant segment of society—Japanese-Americans—were collectively considered a threat and sent to internment camps. The embarrassing anti-Communist witch hunts led by Senator Joseph McCarthy a decade after that internment had further underscored the value’s universality. The next

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<sup>1</sup> Video of the speech is available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0phxuzQ7sE>, and the transcript is available at [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/terrorism/july-dec01/bush\\_speech\\_9-17.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/terrorism/july-dec01/bush_speech_9-17.html)

segment of the president's speech revealed an obvious attempt to contain any such illiberal urges after the previous week's attacks:

Women who cover their heads in this country must feel comfortable going outside their homes. Moms who wear cover must be not intimidated in America. That's not the America I know. That's not the America I value. ... This is a great country. It's a great country because we share the same values of respect and dignity and human worth (PBS Newshour 2001).

The second reason why the "Islam is peace" frame must have seemed politically safe was that—despite Samuel Huntington's (1993) pervasively popularized phrase after 9/11, "Islam has bloody borders"—it was the prevailing consensus amongst national security professionals and scholars in the various related disciplines. The categories of people that security practitioners and scholars had found in Muslim societies are the categories we had found in every society—a continuum of dynamic and diverse solidarities, groups, and agents, loosely held by ideological commitments animated by the dynamic socio-historical conditions in which they are situated (Ayoob 2007; Esposito and Mogahed 2008). In the literature, "Islam" is more anthropologically "Islams"—a diverse and even dynamic continuum, with the vast majority of Muslims structured ideologically within their state's or tribal region's highly peculiar hegemony. At the historical juncture of the President's speech, this literature portrayed Muslim revolutionary movements similarly, as a complex continuum that warranted careful disaggregation of its constituent parts, and with only the more extreme fringe subscribing to an ideology that legitimizes violent jihad in contemporary contexts outside of unequivocal physical occupation of Muslim territory for purposes hostile to the *umma*.

But, despite its solid normative and empirical foundations, the "Islam is peace" frame was sure to encounter opposition or resistance when set in the context of such a complete rupture of the U.S. security framework. An early and emblematic cultural figure to articulate complete opposition to the White House position was a Bush family friend—the prominent Evangelical leader Franklin Graham, and son of evangelist Billy Graham. "I believe it is a very evil and wicked religion," Graham said unapologetically (*USA Today* 2001, September 21). Despite President's evangelical bona fides, other evangelical leaders expressed similar opposition. Jerry Falwell, for example, in a prominent interview with CBS correspondent Bob Simon on *60 Minutes*, characterized at least some of the U.S. religious conservative consensus. "I think Mohammed was a terrorist," he said; adding that, "he was a violent man, a man of war."<sup>2</sup> Dissidence also existed among the experts housed in conservative policy advocacy organizations. William S. Lind at the conservative Free Congress

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<sup>2</sup> From the CBS *60 Minutes* aired 6 October 2002. <https://www.cbspressexpress.com/cbs-news/releases/view?id=2199>

Foundation, for example, countered the White House frame. “There is no such thing as peaceful Islam,” he said; adding “Islamic [sic] cannot fit into an America in which the first loyalty is to the American Constitution,” and “they are a fifth column in this country” (Washington Post 2001, November 19).

Such sporadic dissident and reactionary speech acts in the more immediate aftermath of 9/11 seemed destined to become relatively insignificant compared to the vast amount of more banal information produced on the nexus of Islam and threat during that period, especially as distance from the event increased. By the post-9/11 decade’s end, for example, the number of active internet-based U.S. only productions across the spectrum with “Islam” and “jihad” in the topic would rise to over 400 million and 50 million respectively, and English books published with “jihad” in the title in the would rise to 39,400, compared to only 4,280 published in *all previous* decades.<sup>3</sup>

And, as distance from the dislocation was gained, we might have expected that such emotion-laden speech that completely countered the more official “Islam is peace” storyline would be subsumed by a more rational *corrective*. One such hypothetical corrective from U.S. religious conservatives—both Christian and Jewish—reasonably might have been this: “Islam—although a false derivative of our faith—is normally peaceful, but has an ambiguous ‘just war’ tradition that can be readily manipulated by discontents.” Another hypothetical corrective to the “religion of peace” frame from more secular conservatives might have been: “The Islamic faith is a broad continuum, part of which condones violence when other Muslims are threatened or invaded, and in those contexts celebrates self-sacrifice on behalf of the faith or other Muslims.”

But, such correctives did not emerge among the elite within this significant segment of the electorate. What persisted as a recognizable structure in this segment of *popular*<sup>4</sup> security discourse was less of a *corrective* than a *counter* narrative—one that countered the Islam is peace frame, erasing the more normative and official terrorist/Islam distinction, and portraying Islam—the religion itself—as the threat, and—by association—its 1.5 billion adherents worldwide. Just as puzzling was that—by the mid-point of the post-9/11 decade—this oppositional threat narrative had undergone a process akin to what Giddens (1984) called *structuration*—becoming more pervasive, deliberate,

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<sup>3</sup> Based on a *Google Books* search in July 2011. Comparatively, English books and magazines with “Islam” in the title had jumped fourfold to about 364,000, up from 91,600 in the previous decade. .

<sup>4</sup> “Popular” in a Bourdieuan sense, in that their speech was “excluded from the dictionaries of the legitimate language” (Bourdieu 1991,91, 188); it was, in Foucault’s parlance, “disqualified, or nonlegitimized knowledges” (Foucault 2003, 9). All manner of social practice can be categorized into more formal, practical and popular categories. For example, the discipline of Critical Geopolitics sees the geopolitical as comprising four linked facets: popular geopolitics, formal geopolitics, structural geopolitics, and practical geopolitics.

developed, organized, and culturally sedimented. A more widely recognizable *discourse* at this point, the core tenets of counternarrative would remain essentially unchanged, and were summarized this way by Muslim-American journalist Stephen Schwartz (2010) under the classification of “Islamophobia”:

The terrorism of Al-Qaida is an inevitable product of the principles of Islam; that Islam is an inexorably violent religion motivated by jihadism (“holy war”); that the radical interpretation of Islam is the only authoritative one; and that Muslims are therefore a menacing “other” inextricably linked to radical ideology.

By this juncture, the counternarrative’s institutionalization was beginning to create something of a global counter-reactionary movement, however insignificant. In 2006, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) launched the *Islamophobia Observatory* to register an official protest of this discourse. In its fifth report, it would use the terms “institutionalization and legitimization” to describe the more permanent structural feature of “the phenomenon of Islamophobia” in Western states (OIC 2011, 2012; *Arab News* 2012). This institutionalization manifested in three ways:

Firstly, the counternarrative was becoming characterized by more deliberate and apparently well-funded productions suitable for mass marketing and continual reproduction in various forms. Typical was the 2006 documentary, *Islam: What the West Needs to Know*, by Quixotic Media, who immediately uploaded the documentary to YouTube, where it was available free of charge. The documentary argued from Quran and the Sunna that violent jihad against non-Muslims, along with the subjugation of other religions and non-Islamic political systems, were canonical tenets, having characterized mainstream Islamic thought throughout the faith’s history.

On the 21 July 2006 and 20 August 2006 C-SPAN radio programs Q& A, interviewer Brian Lamb further publicized the documentary, describing how his interest in it arose from an advertisement for it in the *Washington Times*. Interviewing one of the film’s main spokespersons, Robert Spencer, who had been a colleague with Lind at the Free Congress Foundation. Lamb asked Spencer what he thought of the aired statements by Presidents Bush and Clinton, along with others, that unequivocally described Islam as a religion of peace. Spencer’s globally broadcasted reply reliably expressed the unchanging basics of the counternarrative:

I think that’s all hogwash, I’m sorry to say. Islam is the only religion in the world that has a developed doctrine, theology and legal system that mandates violence against unbelievers and mandates that Muslims must wage war in order to establish the hegemony of the Islamic social order all over the world.

Now these things are objectively verifiable facts. Anyone can look at the Koran, anyone can look at the Muslim sources, the Muslim history, Muslim legal texts and so on and find that to be true.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, the threat discourse had become institutionalized in the various popular authorities, blogs, media and other grassroots organizations in U.S. civil society. In the categories of experts and blogs, the decade witnessed the emergence of specific authorities whose entire practice was articulating the counternarrative. The aforementioned documentary's main spokesperson, Robert Spencer, for example, was positioned as Director of the newly created blog, Jihad Watch, the sole function of which was to advance the counternarrative. Mr. Spencer would go on to write thirteen related books before the decade was over, such as *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions About the World's Fastest Growing Faith*, and *Religion of Peace? Why Christianity Is and Islam Isn't*. And, in the last category of grassroots organizations, for example, was ACT! for America, which was larger than even the American Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Like other organizations of its kind, it was founded for the express purpose of protecting the nation from the threat of "radical" Islam, which—upon closer inspection—was highly euphemized code for any pious Muslim. The organization's founder, Brigitte Gabriel<sup>6</sup>, for example, speaking at the Intelligence Summit in Washington, D.C. (for which she serves on the board of advisors<sup>7</sup>) on February 19, 2006, told the audience, "America and the West are doomed to failure in this war unless they stand up and identify the real enemy, Islam" (Hoyt 2008). Similarly, the blog at the Australian Jewish News in 2007 quoted her as saying, "Every practicing Muslim is a radical Muslim" (Hoyt 2008).

A third marker of the counternarrative's institutionalization was its incorporation into the belief-structure of the U.S. populace. Prior to 9/11, the term "anti-Islam" was virtually not existent in Western states. Works that portrayed Islam as a threat were insignificant, and anti-Islam sentiments in the U.S. at that juncture were much scarcer than in Europe. As National Defense University's Kenneth Moss wrote in 2000, "While one can find anti-Islamic statements by American religious leaders, the characteristics of religion in the United States have insulated it some from the legacy of Islamic-Christian confrontation in Europe" (Moss 2000, 45). Yet, curiously, U.S. anti-Islam sentiments *increased* with distance from the 9/11 dislocation, as measured by professional polling. As early as 2006, according to an ABC poll, U.S. anti-Islam sentiments in the U.S. would come to mirror those in Europe: nearly six in ten Americans thought the religion was "prone to violent extremism," half regarded it "unfavorably," and one in four admitted to "prejudicial feelings

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.q-and-a.org/Transcript/?ProgramID=1086>

<sup>6</sup> Her real name will not be divulged here, to respect her wishes.

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.actforamerica.org/index.php/learn/about-ms-gabriel>

against Muslims and Arabs alike” (Cohen 2006). By 2013, polling found a 17 percent increase since 2002 among Americans who believe Islam encourages violence (Pew 2013).

Some of this increase could be gaged by the many books set within the counternarrative that became national bestsellers. Two of Spencer’s *New York Times* bestsellers were *The Truth About Muhammad* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*. Both of Brigitte Gabriel’s books became bestsellers. Her 2008 *Because They Hate: A Survivor of Islamic Terror Warns America* was clearly written with the express purpose of erasing the official terrorist/Islam distinction. Popular Christian figures also became authorities of the counternarrative through their bestsellers, which emphasized the role of Islam in evangelical apocalyptic and eschatological beliefs. Joel Richardson attained authority status through his *New York Times* bestseller was *The Islamic Antichrist: The Shocking Truth About the Nature of the Beast* (2009) was a follow-on from his first book, *Antichrist: Islam’s Awaited Messiah* (2006), and a foreshadow of his *Mideast Beast: The Case for an Islamic Antichrist*.

## 2. A Puzzling Inward Turn

Later in the post-9/11 decade, soon after President Bush was replaced by Democratic president Barack Obama, and about the same time when the broader questions concerning the threat from parts of Islam’s continuum had been settled—when al-Qaedaism had been marginalized by Muslims, by more committed Islamists, and even the by the Salafist clerical establishment in Saudi Arabia from which it largely had sprung—the counternarrative on Islam more visibly morphed, shifting the threat axis inward—from Islam as an external threat to Islamization as an internal threat.

To be clear, the propensity to obsess over an internal threat of *violent jihad* from its tiny population of Muslim-Americans had existed from the outset after 9/11. Steven Emerson’s (2003) bestseller *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us*, and his highly rated 2006 *Jihad Incorporated: A Guide to Militant Islam in the US* were typical of this propensity. But the enemy-within discourse in the immediate aftermath of the rupture of the U.S. security narrative in the wake of 9/11 had largely subsided as the security apparatus had failed to produce al-Qaeda-affiliated cells among Muslim Americans. In the nine year period between September 2001 and 2010, there were 82 cases involving 176 mostly troubled and lone-acting young Muslim-Americans—20 per year—who radicalized to the point of plotting attacks (Jenkins 2011, 9; Cassidy 2013). Four had managed to follow through with their plans and 20 Americans were killed over those nine years, or about 2 per year on average. Threat writing from those individuals and institutions typically involved in

portraying Islam as a threat reliably blew this threat out of all proportion by systematically excluding relevant context. For example, these analyses doted on the minute details of these young Muslims, but never widened the aperture of the analytical lens to assess the *degree* of threat—how the two dozen individuals attacked and killed in this decade by troubled Muslim youth compares to the 1.38 *million* Americans *each year* who—according to annual FBI violent crime statistics—are violently attacked by non-Muslims, the vast majority of whom are other at-risk youth in poorer segments of society that somehow did not merit such scrutiny (FBI 2008, Table 2).<sup>8</sup>

But, the emerging re-obsession with the internal threat was not about an *openly violent* jihad by at-risk segments of U.S. Muslim youth, but about a *non-violent* and *surreptitious* one by Muslim-American leadership. In this more conspiratorial and paranoid threat narrative, Islam posed not only an open challenge to the U.S.’s hegemony, its European heartland and its Holy Land, but also a subversive challenge to its Constitution and local way of life. According to this emerging threat narrative, the U.S. was now in danger of “Islamization,” or the institutionalization of Islamic law, or sharia—always imagined in Taliban-like terms, as an illiberal and even barbaric foreign religious code, and which gradually and stealthily was being imposed upon the nation’s 300 million mostly Christian and secular voters against their collective will by a virtually invisible population of Muslim-Americans.

Up until this time, the global discourse on the subject of “Islamization” had been related to Muslim societies in the context of pan-Islamism, and increasingly in Europe in the context of globalization. The Islamization threat narrative’s emergence in Europe is emblemized by Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn’s (1997) book, *Against Islamization of Our Culture: Dutch Identity as a Foundation*. It portrayed Islam not merely as incompatible with, but existentially threatening to “Western civilisation”—“an extraordinary threat, as a hostile society” (quoted in Lunsing 2003, 20). Since then, there had been a yearly production of popular literature that spread alarm over the gradual Islamization of European cultural and legal structures. The early European works of this nature included Egyptian-born British political commentator, Bat Ye’or’s (2007), *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, which warned of the transformation of Europe into “Eurabia”—a fundamentally anti-Christian, anti-Western, anti-American, and anti-Semitic cultural and political appendage of the Arab/Muslim world. The earlier American works that warned of this process in Europe included Canadian-born conservative columnist Mark Steyn’s (2008) *America Alone: The end of the world as we know it*—a *New York Times* bestseller, which similarly portrayed a leftist-weakened heartland of Western Civilization overrun by barbaric “Islamists”.

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<sup>8</sup> See [http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/data/table\\_02.html](http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/data/table_02.html)



The threat narrative that the U.S. was now under the same threat of Islamization as Europe is puzzling one. The notion was never the subject of a respected threat assessment in the field of security professionals for two obvious reasons: there is practically no Islam *in* America, and that the unnoticeable population of Muslim-American adults were a highly diverse, largely content populace.

First, other than the steady dribble of occasional incompetent youth— “underwear bomber”, the “Times Square bomber”, or the planning building of new mosque in lower Manhattan, or in Murfreesboro, Tennessee—Islam and especially the average Muslim-American are virtually invisible to the average American, with 62 percent of U.S. citizens admitting in an August 19, 2010 *TIME* poll taken as the height of the hype over sharia that they had *never met* one.

Muslims were invisible to the average America because their population was tiny. National surveys from 2000 to 2007 suggest that Muslims comprise between 0.2 to 0.6 percent of the U.S. adult population, and this populace was growing only slightly (Pew Research Center 2007, 9-10). Unlike Europe—where Muslims accounted for a much higher 3.8 percent of the 425 million E.U. inhabitants—Muslims adults comprised less than one percent of U.S. inhabitants, and since 1989 had accounted for barely *one fifteenth* of the legal immigrants who enter the country each year (Pew Research Center 2007, 2011).

Second, even if there had been a sizeable population of Muslim adults in the U.S., socio-economic structures of Muslim-Americans did not indicate that they were clamoring for less secularism and more Islam in their daily lives. For example, several social analyses at the height of the Islamization discourse suggested that America’s tiny Muslim population is not 80-95 percent extremist—as Kedar and Yerushalmi (2011) had tacitly conveyed—but generally “middle-class and mostly mainstream,” according to the Pew Research Center’s 2007 report by that name. In this demographic—as in all—there was obviously a segment of Muslim-Americans who were disloyal, or unpatriotic and whose main allegiance lies with the anti-Western global resistance. But what the Islamization threat narrative excluded from view was that the available empirical studies suggested that this disloyal demographic was a small fraction of this tiny population of Muslims in the country.

In stark contrast to the largely unassimilated average European Muslim (Sen 2006; Mansur 2008), Pew found Muslim Americans are “largely assimilated, happy with their lives, and moderate with respect to many of the issues that have divided Muslims and Westerners around the world” (Pew Research Center 2007, 1). More than Christians, Jews or any other faith group, Muslim Americans (60 percent) were found to be “thriving” (Gallup 2011). Similarly, they are more likely than the general U.S. population to have a job (70 vs. 63 percent), more likely to be a professional

(30 vs. 26 percent), equally as likely to be doing what they do best in their job (81 vs. 84 percent), and not much less likely to be registered to vote (64 vs. 81 percent) (Gallup 2009).

The Islamization discourse also rendered completely invisible important ideational and social-psychological contexts that might help us more accurately estimate the threat component within this minority. Although a high level of religious commitment is necessary for radicalization and revolutionary development in this subculture, Pew estimated that a mere 23 percent of Muslim Americans over 18 years of age—or only 322,000—a had enough religious commitment to attend mosque once a week and pray the five salah, with equal fraction not doing them (Pew Research Center 2007, 25).<sup>9</sup>

Contrary to the counternarrative’s lazy groupism, which portrayed “Muslims” and “Islam” as homogenous entities, Pew Research Center (2007, 1) found America’s Muslims to be “a highly diverse population ... decidedly American in their outlook, values, and attitudes,” and found that their political ideology (the first of the following two figures) roughly mirrored that of the general U.S. population (the latter figure): very liberal (6 vs. 5 percent); liberal (23 vs. 17 percent); moderate (38 vs. 32 percent); conservative (21 vs. 32 percent); and very conservative (4 vs. 7 percent).

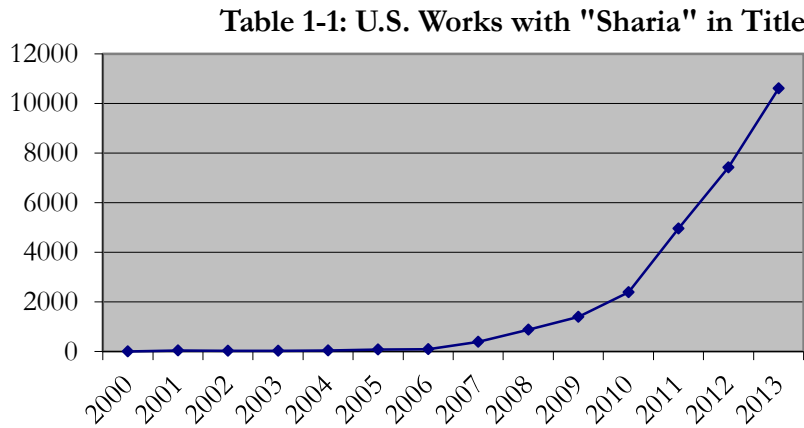
Also excluded from the Islamization threat narrative was that—despite the fact that Muslim Americans are by far the youngest group, with a median age of 36 (compared to 46-55 for other major faith groups)—Gallup (2011) found little evidence of youthful extremism, and even found that Muslim-Americans were “the *least* likely major religious group in the U.S. to say there is ever a justification for individuals or small groups to attack civilians”. Where “roughly 1 in 10” Muslim Americans agreed with the statement that “such attacks are sometimes justified,” Gallup found that “in every other major religious group except Mormons, the proportion of people who say such attacks are sometimes justified is at least twice that” (Gallup 2011, 6). The 2011 Gallup study, *Muslim Americans*, seemed to put the terrorist recruiting pool at 10 percent of the Muslim population, or roughly one for every 2000 Americans—hardly a demographic that, as Former Speaker and GOP presidential candidate Newt Gingrich said could threaten “to *impose* an extraordinarily different system on us”—to “replace American freedom with Sharia” (Gingrich and Gingrich 2010).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> A majority of Muslim Americans (51%) fall somewhere in between (Pew Research Center 2007, 25)

<sup>10</sup> Rand Corporation’s assessment was far rosier, pinning jihad-orientation at 1 in 30,000 American Muslims, based on the number who had actually mobilized into violence (Jenkins 2010, vii).

These facts notwithstanding, publications with the term “sharia” in English and in the title only, and published *in the U.S. alone*, began to increase precipitously around 2007 (Table 1-1):<sup>11</sup>



The Islamization threat narrative’s emergence was also puzzling in that it expanded exponentially at the end of the post-9/11 decade. In 2001, there were eleven works about the Islamization of other societies, and one about the Islamization of America, from conservative intellectual, Dr. Daniel Pipes. By 2006, there were 22 works published in the U.S. on the topic of Islamization, but still only one about the Islamization of America—again, from Pipes, in a July 12, 2006 post at his website, [www.danielpipes.org](http://www.danielpipes.org).

The evident increase in the Islamization threat narrative in 2007 began as other, mainly Jewish-Americans and conservative cultural entrepreneurs joined Pipes in warning their constituents of the danger. One was David Horowitz, editor of *FrontPage Magazine* and sponsor of the aforementioned Jihad Watch. In a 2 April e-mail to that blog’s subscribers, Horowitz fantastically warned of “the purposeful and systematic dismantling of all aspects of our culture” via the imposition of “Sharia law on the U.S., replacing our law with provisions such as the stoning of adulterous women and cutting off thieves’ hands.”

As late as 2009, just before the exponential rise of the Islamization threat narrative, Pipes was still its leading intellectual advocate. His November 25<sup>th</sup> article, “Islamism 2.0”, portrayed moderate European Muslims and even Muslim-Americans as a fifth column, as his opening paragraph reveals:

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<sup>11</sup> Similar to the other charts, the data was produced in an advanced Google search of the terms “sharia” (but not “shariah”, not shari’a, and not shari’ah), *in the title only*, and restricted to language of English, and produced in the region United States only, and then a separate search for each year in the range.

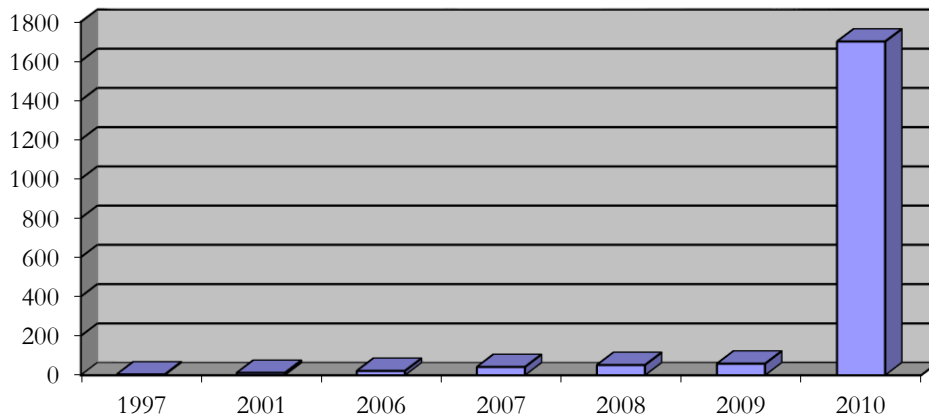
To borrow a computer term, if Ayatollah Khomeini, Osama bin Laden, and Nidal Hasan represent Islamism 1.0, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (the prime minister of Turkey), Tariq Ramadan (a Swiss intellectual), and Keith Ellison (a U.S. congressman) represent Islamism 2.0. The former kill more people but the latter pose a greater threat to Western civilization.

These non-violent Western Muslims, he added, “threaten civilized life” even more than the violent ones like bin Laden, as they gradually “move the country toward Shari’a.” In Pipes’s estimate, America’s destruction by its tiny population of half-black, half-immigrant adult Muslims supposedly already had begun, surreptitiously, in a form of lawful Islamism by Muslim movements that would prefer direct violence, but must settle with a more Gramscian culture war. He noted correctly that “Other once-violent Islamist organizations in Algeria, Egypt, and Syria have recognized the potential of lawful Islamism and largely renounced violence,” but then added without specific empirical support the notion that “One also sees a parallel shift in Western countries; Ramadan and Ellison represent a burgeoning trend.”

Typical of the more finished Islamization products was the documentary *The Third Jihad*. According the documentary’s website, radical Islamists were engaging in a “multifaceted strategy to overcome the western world,” waging a “cultural jihad” to “infiltrate and undermine our society from within”. Despite the lack of support for this threat narrative within the academic or professional security communities, the documentary enjoyed full television preview on December 22, 2009 by Fox News Channel’s *Hannity & Colmes*.

Even with this kind of publicity, it was puzzling why in 2010 U.S. works with “Islamization” in the title shifted from steady dribble to deluge (Table 1-2):

**Table 1-2: U.S. Works with "Islamization" in Title**



Viewing the visibly emerging sharia conspiracy from Europe, *The Guardian's* Sarah Posner (2011) identified its main themes:

The conspiracy theory about sharia law is fivefold: that the goal of Islam is totalitarianism; that the mastermind of bringing this totalitarianism to the world is the Muslim Brotherhood, the grandfather of all Islamic groups from Hamas to the Islamic Society of North America; that these organizations within the US are traitors in league with the American left and are bent on acts of sedition against America; that the majority of mosques in the US are run by imams who promote such sedition; and that through this fifth column sharia law has already infiltrated the US and could result in a complete takeover if not stopped.

### ***The Islamization Conspiracy's Exclusive Political Place and Level of Influence***

By the end of the post-9/11 decade, it was obvious that this threat discourse was not only exclusively housed in one of the two main U.S. political factions, but that it had gained a measure of credibility therein. This threat discourse, according to one major report, had “mainstreamed what was once considered fringe, extremist rhetoric” (Ali et al. 2011, 2). In the run up to the mid-term elections in 2010, for example, an August 18 Pew Research Center poll revealed that a full one third of registered Republican voters believed that President Obama was a secret Muslim (Pew 2010).<sup>12</sup> A week later, an August 27 poll commissioned by *Newsweek* found that 52 percent of Republicans believed that it was either ‘definitely true’ or ‘probably true’ that ‘Barack Obama sympathizes with the goals of Islamic fundamentalists who want to impose Islamic law around the world’ (Stein 2010).<sup>13</sup> By the time of the mid-term elections in 2010, conservative legislators in nearly two dozen states had introduced bills to restrict the use of Islamic law, and voters in the solidly red state of Oklahoma seemed so persuaded that Islam itself was a significant internal threat that seventy percent voted for the “Save Our State” amendment to contain the nefarious attempt by Muslims to Islamize the nation by legal means, through the spread of sharia (Armbruster 2010). And, among the conservative elite, many of the GOP or Republican Party candidates for president had at least suggested that Islamization was a credible threat to the nation. The apogee of the Islamization discourse seemed to be when GOP Presidential front-runner Newt Gingrich, speaking in 2010 to

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<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.pewforum.org/2010/08/18/growing-number-of-americans-say-obama-is-a-muslim/>

By the end of the post-9/11 decade, another survey of “likely Republican” voters in the red states Alabama and Mississippi found that—on the question of “Do you think Barack Obama is a Christian or a Muslim, or are you not sure?—45 percent in Alabama and 59 percent in Mississippi were sure he was a Muslim, and only 12 percent believed his own statements that he was a Christian (Public Policy Polling 2012).

<sup>13</sup> See <http://nw-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/1004-ftop.pdf>.

conservatives at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), exclaimed, “I believe Shariah is a mortal threat to the survival of freedom in the United States and in the world as we know it.”

### 3. Significance

Finally, another puzzling feature of this discourse was how it managed to become significant enough to impact international relations. Evidence was mounting to suggest that this more tendentious U.S. discourse on Islam was beginning to negatively influence perceptions of the U.S. among a quarter of the world’s population that was Muslim. As early as the five year anniversary of 9/11, citizens of eight Muslim-majority countries were already citing “American negative perceptions of Islam” as the greatest threat to the Muslim world (Martin 2010).<sup>14</sup> Such Muslim perceptions of Western hostility toward them would go on to catalyze the “war on Islam” master narrative, which had been conceptualized by modern Islamic thinkers and had in become pervasive in Muslim communities worldwide, especially by the end of the Bush administration’s post-9/11 “War on Terror” (e.g. Jan 2002, Fatani 2004, Islamophobia Watch 2009). By 2009, for example, the main page of *Islamophobia Watch*, was describing its mission as “Documenting the War against Islam”—a function which amounted to archiving the statements of U.S. intellectuals who popularized the notion of Islam as threat.

This popular U.S. threat discourse regarding Islam was also top on the agenda of many of the world’s Muslim leaders, and understandable given the context of their own restive population of underemployed and increasingly online young Muslim males. In reaction, some Muslim leaders took the matter to the UN, via their collective vehicle, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In March 2010, the UN Human Rights Council agreed with the OIC and passed the historically unprecedented resolution, “combating defamation of religions.” If unchecked, the resolution warned, this security discourse would “fuel discrimination, extremism and misperception leading to polarization and fragmentation with dangerous unintended and unforeseen consequences” (Middle East Online, 2010). By this point, even the Secretary-General of the OIC, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, were using the “war on Islam” frame for the discourse, saying that “Islamophobia, insulting Islamic values and sparking and spreading hatred for Islam are high on the agenda of the West, and urged the entire Muslim states to take established, and institutionalized collective measures” to confront

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<sup>14</sup> Research from American University professor Akbar Ahmed’s 2006 world tour to produce *Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization* (2007)

the western plots (Fars News Agency 2010). Later, in the historic July 2011 meeting between the OIC members and Western states—hosted by Ihsanoglu and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—Ihsanoglu said that “we continue to be particularly disturbed by attitudes of certain individuals or groups exploiting the freedom of expression to incite hatred by demonizing purposefully the religions and their followers” (Arab News 2011).

Thus, just as Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* in September 1988 created an anti-Western solidarity among Muslims worldwide (Reuters 2009), this tendentious post-9/11 popular U.S. threat discourse on Islam functioned within the category of humiliation or grievance structures—perceived political injustices, which were widely understood to be factors leading to radicalization, evidenced by Islamist extremist use of the discourse in the frame of the West’s war on Islam (Moghaddam and Marsella 2003; Quilliam 2010; Lynch 2010; Borum 2011; Ali et al. 2011; Halverson, Goodall and Corman 2011; Speckhard 2012).<sup>15</sup> In other words, the much more systematic securitization of Islam by this popular threat discourse was apparently creating something of a security dilemma, fueling ever-increasing mutual hostility that leads to more physical violence or broader conflict (Posen 1993). And, nearing the tenth anniversary of 9/11, a global poll by the Pew Research Center (2011) empirically established that such a mutually destructive social-psychological structure had indeed emerged.

In this context, And, in view of this macro-level radicalization feature, the *first* foreign policy initiatives of the newly-elected Obama administration were historic speeches to Muslims worldwide from both Turkey and Egypt, where the President expressly used the term “war on Islam” in attempts to contain it.

Perhaps, for the first time in history, a nation’s *discourse about a threat* was becoming recognized by that nation’s leaders as a hazard to national security in its own right. *How could this be?* Given this Islam(ization) threat discourse’s weak empirical grounding, the obvious question seemed to be why did it emerge and gain this apparent level of influence at its zenith?

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<sup>15</sup> Ali et al. (2011), for example, wrote that, “One of Al Qaeda’s greatest recruitment and propaganda tool is the assertion that the West is at war with Islam and Muslims—an argument that is strengthened every day by those who suggest all Muslims are terrorists and all those practicing Islam are jeopardizing U.S. security.”

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## THE SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

### Review of the Literature

*This struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it is a struggle for civilization.*

—President George W. Bush

Address to the Nation, 11 September 2006

Puzzles somewhat similar to those had prompted some scholars, researchers, and investigative journalists to search for answers. This chapter reviews the answers offered to date in the longer, more widely-cited and rigorously empirical literature with an emphasis on identifying the distinctive concepts or ontological categories. The insights of shorter journal articles and book chapters by scholars and subject matter experts, and articles from investigative journalists—while not formally reviewed as individual works—will be included as appropriate.

The analysis of this literature revealed four broad conceptualizations of this discourse: 1) Holy Land geopolitics; 2) civilizational clash ideology; 3) right-wing xenophobic social network; and—subsuming them all—4) religious right wing xenophobic network for purposes of civilizational and Holy Land geopolitics.

### 1. Holy Land Geopolitics

Initial attempts to make sense of this discourse were dominated by the late controversial critical theorist and political activist, Edward Said. Said's prolific writing on the subject—*Orientalism* (1978, 2003) and *Covering Islam* (1981, 1997)—the original and updated works—spanned more than a quarter of a century, with his updated works addressing the more contentious discourse on Islam,



both before and after 9/11. Because many of the literature's conceptualizations of this discourse (apparently unknowingly) built upon Said's earlier thinking, it seems worthwhile here to briefly illuminate some of his more salient insights into what some scholars have referred to as the "new Orientalism" (Crooke 2006; Rowe 2012).

In his earliest work, Said's (1978) object was mainly European colonial era discourse, which he approached at the macro-level, and which therefore lacked empirical fit in addressing the obvious role of agency in U.S. discourse that produced Islam as a threat. Said's insights at this point were nevertheless intriguing. Mobilizing Lacanian psychoanalytical (and now mainstream political and discourse) theory's approach to radical alterity, he concluded that "European culture gained strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (1978, 3). Much of the ensuing literature observed how discourse on Islam played a role in this form of national and civilizational identity politics (Bhabha 1996, 87; Castells 1997; Shryock 2013).

Said's integration of Gramsci's more political perspective also yielded a promising sub-hypothesis. The vast production of knowledge on Islam by Westerners, Said argued, was never disinterested, but was a function of a broader hegemonic competition between civilizations—"the West" and "Islam"—with the ultimate intent "to control, manipulate even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different..." (1978, 12). In this sense, Western knowledge produced about the Eastern other, he said, was not pure subject matter, but geopolitical subject matter, or knowledge inextricably connected with power. In other words, knowledge produced about Islam was the handmaiden of empire. Under this paradigm, the U.S. historical infatuation with that region and religion—in Said's words—"has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world" (1978, 12).

Said would continue to emphasize the role of politics or—more correctly—*geopolitics*. Nearly twenty years later, in his 1997 update to *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*, Said retained Foucault's paradigm of "affiliation of knowledge with power" (1997, xlix), asserting that "it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that all discourse on Islam has an interest in some authority or power", and that "truth about such matters as 'Islam' is relative to who produces it" (1997, lviii).

But, strategic interest and politics inherently involves the role of political agents—both individuals and groups. Said's emphasis thus turned from structure to agency—from a macro-level or civilizational form of identity politics, to a more micro-level *strategy* of Holy Land geopolitics by intellectuals organic to a particular political interest. Although the knowledge produced by this advocacy network was ostensibly about Islam, its unspoken aims were about Israel. As much as

twelve years earlier, Said (1985, 8) had characterized modern Orientalism as having the same neo-colonial political objective as its forebear: “the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the destruction of Palestinian society and the sustained Zionist assault upon Palestinian nationalism”—all of which have “been led and staffed by Orientalists.” He continued, “Whereas in the past, it was European Christian Orientalists who supplied European culture with arguments for colonizing and suppressing Islam, as well as for despising Jews, it is now the Jewish national movement that produces a cadre of colonial functionaries whose ideological theses about the Islamic or Arab mind are implemented in the administration of the Palestinian Arabs, an oppressed minority within the white-European-democracy that is Israel.”

In Said’s (1997, xxii) other words, its function was so that “more Americans and Europeans will see Israel as a victim of Islamic violence” and to “obscure what it is that Israel and the United States...have been doing.” In this strategy, Said emphasized a “corps of ‘experts’ on Islam and the Jewish-controlled elements of the mainstream media that produced Islam as threat in effort to spoil any peace process that would demobilize Israel from its present occupation of its Biblical homeland of Judea and Samaria—an emphasis strengthened a decade later by Mearsheimer and Walt’s (2007) *The Israel Lobby* (Said 1997, xi). Rather than merely the media, Said (1997, xvi) was now focused more on the role of these individual polemicists:

‘Islam’ defines a relatively small proportion of what actually takes place in the Islamic world, which numbers a billion people, and includes dozens of countries, societies, traditions, languages, and , of course, an infinite number of different experiences. It is simply false to try to trace all this back to something called ‘Islam,’ no matter how vociferously polemical Orientalists – mainly active in the United States, Britain, and Israel – insisted that Islam regulates Islamic societies from top to bottom , that dar al-Islam is a single, coherent entity, that church and state are really one in Islam, and so forth.

The agency at the center of this steady portrayal of Islam as threat had two non-state components: the individual experts and intellectuals, and the media enablers. In the category of individual polemicists, Said noted that they were all pro-Israel (1997, 13). In the frame of “The East is a career” from Disraeli’s novel *Tancred* (1847, II xiv), Said (1997, xxxv) charged: “What matters to ‘experts’ like Miller, Huntington, Martin Kramer, Daniel Pipes, and Barry Rubin, plus a whole battery of Israeli academics is to make sure that the ‘threat’ is kept before our eyes,” and to “excoriate Islam for its terror, despotism and violence, while asserting themselves profitable consultancies, frequent television appearances, and book contracts.” Typifying this, Israel advocate Steven Emerson’s PBS film *Jihad in America* was in Said’s (1997, xxvi) words, “cynically designed and

promoted to exploit just this fear”, which was part of the overall strategy by these well-funded non-state actors to “exaggerate and inflate Muslim extremism within the Muslim world.” Said characterized these polemicists as “The worst offenders in the cultural war against Islam”, and cited Jewish and Zionist academic Bernard Lewis’s essay “The Roots of Muslim Rage” as typical of products that characterized Muslims “as one terrifyingly collective person enraged at an outside world”.

In the category of the media, the enablers included the owners of the *New Republic* and *The Atlantic*, Martin Peretz and Morton Zuckerman, whom Said (1997, xxii) asserted, were “great supporters of Israel, and therefore biased against Islam.”<sup>16</sup> The editorial focus of these media magnates, he added, was “the relentless drive to defend Israel at all costs”:

Peretz’s extraordinary defamations are spun out so as to completely obscure the historical reality, that indeed it was the case that mostly-European Jews came to Palestine, a country already inhabited and settled by another people, destroyed their society, disposed them, and drove two-thirds of them out; in addition, Israel has been in military occupation of Palestinian (as well as Lebanese and Syrian) territory for several decades, has unilaterally annexed East Jerusalem, an act unrecognized by any country on earth, and has arrogated to itself the right to wage ‘pre-emptive’ war against several Arab countries. Unable to deal with these facts except as right by virtue of Israel’s superiority, Peretz displaces on to the Muslims and Arabs a theory of gratuitous violence and cultural inferiority (Said 1997, xxiv).

Further implicating the more mainstream media’s role in manufacturing fear of Islam, Said describes how they functioned to give voice to these non-state pro-Israel polemicists:

For every unusual book like Richard Bulliet’s *Islam: The View from the Edge* (Columbia 1994), there are many more books and articles expressing views like David Pryce-Jones in *The Closed Circle* (Harper, 1991), Charles Krauthammer’s strident account of what he calls ‘the global intifada’ (*Washington Post*, February 16, 1990), or any of A.M. Rosenthal’s pieces in *The New York Times* (for example, his “The Decline of the West,” September 27, 1996) in which Islam, terrorism, the Palestinians are routinely harangued together; these tend to be what passes for informed analysis and coverage in the United States’ prestige media. The daily reader of the mainstream media is most unlikely to encounter, for instance, Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad’s careful analysis of ‘Islamist Perceptions of US Policy in the Near East,’ which appeared, alas, in an obscure academic book... (Said 1997, xxviii).

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<sup>16</sup> Lewis’s “Roots of Muslim Rage”, for example, had appeared in the September 1990 issue of prominent U.S. periodical, *The Atlantic* (Said 1997, xxxii).

From this perspective, these polemicists thrive in an anti-intellectualist U.S. epistemological culture—one that is “basically indifferent and already poorly informed American clientele” (1997, xxxv).

The role of Holy Land geopolitics notwithstanding, Said (1997, xvi-ii) also described the more racialized characteristics of this discourse well before 9/11—“the tendency to reduce Islam to a handful of rules, stereotypes, and generalizations about the faith, its founder, and all of its people, then the reinforcement of every negative fact associated with Islam – its violence, primitiveness, atavism, threatening qualities.”

After 9/11 and just before his death, Said began to grapple with a new feature beyond geopolitics and racialized representation: the obsession-like *volume* of U.S. discourse about Islam. Because this exponential increase in the production of knowledge about Islam now clearly involved much more of American society than the Israel lobby and its organic polemicists, Said (2003) seemed to be forced back to the macro-level of ideational structure, and—specifically—civilizational identity politics. America’s current obsession with its perennial Eastern other, he asserted, was rooted in “fear of a monotheistic, culturally and militarily formidable competitor to Christianity” (2003, 336, 344). The next work reviewed takes up this notion more formally.

## 2. Civilizational Clash Ideology

The first significant work that indirectly examined U.S. Islam-as-threat discourse was *False Prophets: The ‘Clash of Civilizations’ and the Global War on Terror*, by Richard Bonney (2008), Professor of Modern History at the University of Leicester from 1984 to 2006. The book was part of an Oxford series under the conceptual framework “the past in the present,” and—in that context—examined the *ideological antecedents* of the Bush administration’s “global war on terror,” and the role of politically-interested intellectuals and other elite in advancing that ideology in foreign policy and security discourse during a moment of crisis after the terrorist attacks of 2001. Bonney’s research for *False Prophets* produced other insights that are more relevant to this inquiry.

First, in Bonney’s work, the “past” was conceptualized as a culturally-situated pretext, cognitive schema<sup>17</sup>, or ideology—a relevant ideational structure distinct from those offered by the ensuing

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<sup>17</sup> The concept of schema, as used here, means those mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals’ processing of information (Entman 1993, 53).

literature on the topic of manufacturing the Muslim menace after 9/11. The specific ideology that Bonney illuminated as having a role in the securitization of Islam was an embellished derivative of the “clash of civilizations” theory of conflict, popularized by Princeton University’s professor-emeritus of Middle East history, Bernard Lewis’s (1993) “The Roots of Muslim Rage”, and again in Samuel Huntington’s (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking of World Order*.

At the macro or structural level, the clash of civilizations schema after 9/11 functioned in establishing the unconscious West/Islam, friend/enemy distinction that permeates Islam-as-threat discourse; it tended to reduce to a cosmic struggle between the West on the one hand and its ineradicable enemy, Islam, on the other. *False Prophets* demonstrated how such a paradigmatic cultural or ideological structure can be influential in the present when either unconsciously mobilized or deliberately “hijacked” for interested purposes by intellectuals and other elite agents. This influence of this cognitive structure was evident in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, as President Bush, his advisors, and constituents in “the American Jewish Lobby” and the “Christian Right” spoke naturally—as it seemed—in the frame of a clash of civilizations.

The role of such ideational structures in influencing discourse and social practice broadly, of course, is well-informed by the more conceptual literature, which views these cognitive blueprints for the way things naturally are (or should be) as key guidelines for behavior. According to discourse theorist Van Dijk (2006, 115, 117, 120), for example, ideologies “are the ultimate basis of the discourses” and play a key role in identity politics, with the polarization between ingroups and outgroups being a prominent feature of these ideological structures. In this case, the implications seem clear; the clash of civilizations ideology’s explicit identification of Islam as the U.S.’s future formidable and global enemy constituted a key foundation for the post-9/11 securitization of Islam broadly.

Second, at the micro-level, or level of agency, Bonney’s work corroborated Said’s (1997, 2003) earlier emphasis on the important role of agency in producing Islam as threat. It is noteworthy that the “false prophets” whom he profiled as the clash-of-civilization ideology’s intellectual proponents—individuals like Bernard Lewis and Daniel Pipes—were also the popularizers of the later more explicit Islam-as-threat discourse. This was also true of their constituencies in the American Jewish lobby, the Christian Right, and nationalists broadly—each of which is the subject of an entire chapter, denoting how their language during this period was significantly influenced by clash of civilizations ideology and how they helped reproduce or enact it in foreign policy.

Pro-Israel and neoconservative thinkers, for example, set to work after 9/11 to reconceptualize the nation's ruptured security narrative—not as a largely police and intelligence response to a limited transnational threat, but in more familiar terms of an enemy worthy of a superpower and triumphant Western Civilization. The titles of the resulting productions were performative in this way; there was Eliot Cohen's (2001) "World War IV: Let's Call this Conflict What it is", published in the *Wall Street Journal* on 20 November, and Norman Podhoretz's (2002) "How to Win World War IV", published in *Commentary* two months later in February. The World War IV frame inevitably conflated al-Qaeda—then a small and relatively unarmed non-state organization who had declared unilateral war on the U.S.—with Islam broadly, which thus enabled West-Islam civilizational war conceptualizations by influential neoconservatives like Podhoretz to say that "the stakes are nothing less than the survival of Western civilization..."(Kessler 2007).

Similarly, key thinkers in the U.S. religious Right—both Catholic and evangelical—played a significant role in producing Islam as the main threat. Catholic intellectual George Weigel—also influenced by the ideology of Western civilizational declinism—viewed "a Europe increasingly influenced, and perhaps even dominated, by radicalized Islamic populations, convinced that their long-delayed triumph in the European heartland is at hand" (Bonney 2008, 130). Another prominent Catholic intellectual, Father Richard Neuhaus, similarly, viewed Huntington's thesis of an impending clash of civilizations as America's surest guide, and viewed the conflict as "a war of religion", interpreting bin Laden and his ilk not as "fundamentalists" but "faithful Muslims" (2008, 132).

Third, the work illuminated how agents unconsciously operating under such an ideological structure can construct geographies that they do not intend to. Unlike much of the ensuing literature that restricted its view to those polemicists who explicitly attempted to erase the Bush administration's official terrorism/Islam distinction, *False Prophets* distinctively illuminates how those steeped in this ideology unconsciously yet effectively erased that distinction. Through imprecise and hyperbolic language congruent with their internalized clash of civilizations schema, for example, President Bush and his advisors—while explicitly committed to the Islam is peace storyline—nevertheless unconsciously and effectively framed the entire religion and its 1.5 billion adherents as a threat.

The obvious context in which these political elite were involved in articulating that ideology was in the justification for power-politics in relation to advocating for resources for the "Global War on Terror," the purportedly linked invasion of Iraq, and other foreign policy that benefited Israel. In

this context, the book provided persuasive empirical evidence of how this ideological structure or cultural antecedent shaped post-9/11 text or discourse. Steeped in its influence, the Commander-in-Chief and his top advisors tacitly portrayed a cosmic war with a great evil and formidable foe and existential threat to Western Civilization. Even the imprecise “global war on terror” frame was a transposition of the clash of civilizations ideology, more obviously implicated in the equally loose terms of a universal and perennial “Crusade” against barbarians in the “Muslim” world “to save civilization”.

This role of such hyperbolic and imprecise language in implicitly producing Islam as a threat was later corroborated by Georgetown University’s scholar on Islam-Western relations, John Esposito:

Prominent scholars, public intellectuals and political commentators such as Bernard Lewis, Samuel Huntington, Daniel Pipes, and Martin Kramer, reflecting a post-Cold War tendency, have reduced Islam and Islamic revivalism to stereotypical phrases or caricatures: “Islam against the West”, “Islam’s War with Modernity”, and “Roots of Muslim Rage”. They lump together indiscriminately Islamic political and social movements under the umbrella of Fundamentalism or Islamism, with little or no distinction between mainstream and violent extremist movements (Esposito 2008, 13).

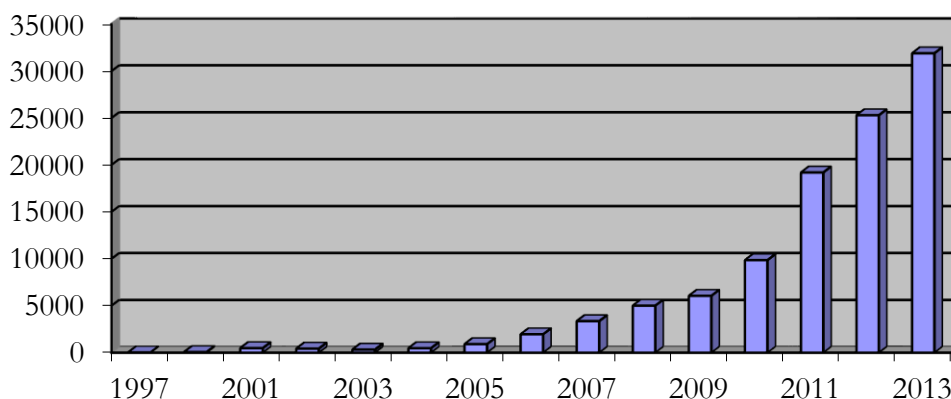
Typical— and also indicative of the clash of civilizations ideology’s influence—was Podhoretz’s call for a more explicit name for this great and worthy foe—something containing the civilizational signifier “Islam”. In his view, the phrase “global war on terrorism” was absurd because “terrorism” was merely the tactic. That made as much sense as “calling the enemy in World War II ‘the blitzkrieg’ rather than Germany, or ‘the dive bomber’ rather than Japan” (Podhoretz 2007, 8). We needed to name the real enemy behind the tactic, he argued, which he implied was something with Islam in the name. As Bonney notes, “whatever the imprecise terminology, the more the language has turned towards Islamic or Islamist terrorism, the more the religion of Islam itself appears to be implicated in the definition of the enemy” (2008, 4).

### ***Answers after the Post-9/11 Decade***

Around the time that *False Prophets* was going to press, analyses that attempted to address the broader questions of a persisting and increasing securitization of Islam self-organized under the neologism of “Islamophobia.” Most of this literature approvingly cited the first major report to use the neologism, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, by Runnymede Trust in 1997, which framed the problem in terms of “the dread, hatred and hostility towards Islam and Muslims....” The popularity

of the term grew exponentially in the latter half of the post-9/11 decade, mirroring the emergence of more negative writing on Islam broadly. More professional literature produced *in the U.S. alone* that used that specific term, “Islamophobia,” *in the title only* numbered only 21 in 1997—the year of Runnymede Trust’s report on the topic.<sup>18</sup> After 9/11, use of the term in titles in the more professional and exclusively U.S. literature remained fairly flat until the mid-point of the decade, when it jumped precipitously, doubling every year or two, and reaching 32,000 in U.S. literature titles by 2013 (Chart 2-1):

Chart 2-1  
**U.S. Professional Literature with "Islamophobia" in Title**



By the tenth anniversary of 9/11, the term had taken on a reflexive element, and was used as the cover titles for the internationally-read periodicals—*The Nation* (Islamophobia: Anatomy of an American Panic), and *TIME* (Is America Islamophobic?)—for articles critical of the U.S. as a nation in this phenomenon’s grip. The following two works were self-classified under this “Islamophobia” neologism, and enjoyed the advantage of having been published after the post-9/11 decade, having much more of the discourse in view.

### 3. Right-Wing Xenophobic Social Network

The next major work of research turned from an unintentionally discriminating ideational structure to an intentionally discriminating social structure, and is the first more empirically rigorous inquiry that attempts to specifically address the puzzling rise and persistence of U.S. discourse that explicitly identified Islam as a threat. This 130-page report, *Fear, Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia*

<sup>18</sup> .pdf files containing the word “Islamophobia”



*Network in America*,<sup>19</sup> was published at the tenth anniversary of 9/11 by a team of researchers—Wajahat Ali, Eli Clifton, Matthew Duss, Lee Fang, Scott Keyes, and Faiz Shakir—at the more leftist Center for American Progress in Washington DC.

The groundbreaking report’s approach can be classified as a social-structural analysis in that it mapped the agents involved in the discourse within their functional categories. While the report attempted neither a network analysis, nor a broader interpretive sociology or critical discourse analysis, it nevertheless identified five principal “misinformation experts”; the philanthropic or “funders” base of primarily seven foundations; and the discourse’s “echo-chamber”—a much larger set of figures and organizations across the spectrum of religious, political, media and grassroots organizers.

The discourse agents described by the report as “the central nervous system of the Islamophobia network” included some of those centered by Said (1997, 2003) and Bonney (2008), such as Daniel Pipes of the Philadelphia-based Middle East Forum (MEF), Steven Emerson of the Investigative Project on Terrorism. It also implicated three others: the aforementioned Robert Spencer of Stop Islamization of America (SIOA) and Jihad Watch, Frank Gaffney of the Center for Security Policy (CSP), and David Yerushalmi of the Society of Americans for National Existence. A corroborating report in 2013—*Legislating Fear: Islamophobia and its Impact in the United States* by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)—identified a much expanded “inner core” of around forty principal polemicists, including Pamela Geller’s Atlas Shrugs. The report stated that, “Together, this core group of deeply intertwined individuals and organizations manufacture and exaggerate threats of “creeping Sharia,” Islamic domination of the West, and purported obligatory calls to violence against all non-Muslims by the Koran” (2011, 2).

The report pointed to the role of political activists or grassroots organizations, especially Brigitte Gabriel’s ACT! for America, and the religious right, including Pat Robertson’s Christian Broadcasting Network. Additionally, *Fear Inc.* identified the role of a “loosely aligned, ideologically-akin group of right-wing blogs, magazines, radio stations, newspapers, and television news shows...” such as Fox News Channel and Christian Broadcasting Network, *National Review*, and *The Washington Times* (Ali et al. 2011, 85).<sup>20</sup> According to the Ali and colleagues, Fox News Channel played a crucial role as the television element that socialized the notion of Islam as a present danger.

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<sup>19</sup> Available at [www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/08/pdf/islamophobia.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/08/pdf/islamophobia.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> The report’s emphasis on the role of conservative media notwithstanding, other literature described how the securitization of Islam was a function of both right and left-wing media. Cesari (2011), for example, had implicated all of the media in the “securitization” of Islam through its more banal, everyday selectivity bias, or its failure to

The main thrust of the *Fear, Inc.* report's research, however, was another element of the discourse's social structure—its philanthropic base. It discovered that these donors consisted largely of seven private foundations which—in the decade beginning in 2001—gave \$42.6 million to a few of the discourse's principal agents (Ali et al. 2011).

Keeping the right-wing xenophobic social network emphasis, the report in its executive summary characterized the discourse as a narrow project—one emerging not from “a vast right-wing conspiracy,” but “rather a small, tightly networked group” of polemicists who were “sustained by funding from a clutch of key foundations,” and who also received support from “effective advocates, media partners, and grassroots organizing” (Ali et al. 2011).<sup>21</sup>

#### **4. Religious Right Wing Xenophobic Network for Purposes of Civilizational and Holy Land Geopolitics.**

The next work that emerged—*The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims*, by Nathan Lean (2012)—also had relevance to this inquiry, evidenced by its two central research questions:

What then, is the cause of such a steady and persistent rise in anti-Muslim sentiment? Why is it that ten years after September 11, 2001, fear, mistrust, and hatred of Muslims were at their highest levels ever? (Lean 2012, 9)

The book was based on research from the author's academic research at Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), and its Forward was written by that institution's authority on U.S.-Muslim relations, Professor John Esposito. *The Islamophobia Industry's* chief answer to these questions was almost captured in its title and subtitle—building upon the *Fear Inc.* report's foundation of a right-wing xenophobic social network, but more distinctively emphasizing the role of racist predispositions and religious conservatives, particularly Zionists.

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disaggregate domestic Muslims from the typically bad news involving some foreign Muslims. For example, a 2007 media survey of twenty-four countries demonstrated that Western media coverage of the politics and violence in Muslim-majority countries was ten times more than its coverage of other aspects of life there, such as the economic development, culture, religion, daily life, and ethics (World Economic Forum 2008, 104).

<sup>21</sup> The emphasis on social structure notwithstanding, one of the report's key authors suggested that yet another factor was in play that functioned as the glue that held these organizations together: *racial hatred*. In his characterization of the discourse, Faiz Shakir—one of the authors and the vice president of its publishing think tank—attributed the discourse to such structural social-psychological predispositions, saying that “We know it's driven primarily by hatred against Muslims...” (Lobe 2011).

Lean's key point of congruence with the earlier *Fear, Inc.* report was how he emphasized the dual role of discriminatory ideology and an interested social network. He approvingly cited UNC Professor Carl Ernst's description of the discourse as "a type of bigotry similar to anti-Semitism and racial prejudice" that is supported by a coalition of right-wing organizations (2012, 62). In Lean's characterization outside of this text, the discourse was "the racism du jour," promoted and escalated by a few prominent "Islamophobes" and their financial backers (Saif 2013).

*The Islamophobia Industry* also underscored what appeared to be a growing consensus in the literature—however implicit—that this form of xenophobia is formed significantly not merely by right-wing anti-Muslim racism, but through interdiscursivity, or in interaction with two particular religious ideologies—Judeo-Christian Zionism and Christian apocalypticism. In this, the book builds on Said's earlier arguments about the role of Holy Land geopolitics, with the book's analysis emphasizing Zionism and the role of a network of Zionist special interests. In Lean's (2012, 133) terms, this cottage industry was "honeycombed with pro-Israeli magnates who served as financial suppliers, injecting eye-popping cash flows into the accounts of various fear campaigns." By this point, this view enjoyed a broad consensus in the literature, having been a key conclusion in nearly all of the earlier literature, including Said (1997), Bonney (2008), Davidson (2011) and the *Fear, Inc.* report (2011).<sup>22</sup>

But the *Islamophobia Industry* also built on works such as Bonney's (2008) *False Prophets*, which expanded Said's sole emphasis on Zionism to one that included its related ideology of Christian apocalypticism. In Lean (2012)'s terms, the discourse was "about the advancement of apocalyptic worldviews at the expense and even harm of a portion of the population" (2012, 14). Davidson (2011, 91-92) had underscored this:

"The Zionists saw the potential of focusing paranoid politics on American Muslims as a way to marginalise a group that was often critical of Israel and its ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. Thus, the Zionist extremist Daniel Pipes has repeatedly called into question the loyalty of American Muslims and singled them out as somehow anti-American because, 'a substantial' number of them 'share with suicide hijackers a hatred of the United States'. The Christian fundamentalists have a fear and loathing of Islam even older than that of the Zionists. For the fundamentalists September 11 opened the door to a new crusade, to the renewal of the age old battle between Christendom and Islam now brought into the heartland of America."

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<sup>22</sup> Lean maintained his emphasis on the role of Zionism at a June 1, 2012 Georgetown University book event, saying that all of the people involved in this practice of securitizing Islam "espouse fervent anti-Muslim sentiment on the one hand, and ardent support of all things Israel on the other," and that "the large portion of Islamophobic propaganda has actually come from people and organizations that are connected in some ways to the occupied territories" (2012. 01.06).

The role of Christian fundamentalists within U.S. Holy Land geopolitics broadly will surprise no one familiar with the Bible, where the religious ideologies of Zionism and Christian apocalypticism appear inextricably linked. Doctrinally, it is difficult to extricate one from the other, since both are in part a function of scriptural prophecy—scripture that is copiously cited in contemporary Zionist and apocalyptic texts that cast Islam as the end-times antagonist in Israel’s cosmic struggle to return and occupy all of its Promised Land, as a prelude to the Messiah’s coming or return.

That context notwithstanding, the important observation made in the book was that that “Behind individuals like David Horowitz and Robert Spencer are far more nebulous and ideological figures that see the promotion of anti-Muslim sentiment as a necessary method for gaining the upper hand in a cosmic war playing out thousands of miles away in the West Bank” (2012, 11). In this regard, it was a strategy of advancing xenophobia related to Islam in support of a broader strategy of Holy Land geopolitics.

In addition to the role of these three ideological structures, Lean (2012, 14) viewed this discourse’s exponential rise within the framework of a xenophobic social network in terms almost identical to those postulated by Said fifteen years earlier: that is, “a concerted effort on the part of a small cabal of xenophobes to manufacture fear for personal gain.” And, in addition to his emphasis on the small cabal of individuals involved, Lean emphasized the role of the broader social structure or network of which they were a part. Similar to the term “Inc.” in the *Fear Inc.* report, the book’s title, *The Islamophobia Industry*, captures the notion of what it also termed as an “industry of hate” or “fear industry”—to underscore the crucial role of a social network or discourse coalition in the persistence of this discourse. And, in other terms similar to the *Fear Inc.* report, this social network included what Lean (2012, 10) described as “bigoted bloggers, racist politicians, fundamentalist religious leaders, Fox News pundits, and religious Zionists.” In his other words, “the decade-long spasm of Islamophobia that rattled through the American public,” rather than any detached individual agency, “is the product of a tight-knit and interconnected confederation of right-wing fear merchants” comprised of Christian fundamentalists, Zionists of all persuasions, and far right-wing Republicans (2012, 10).

## **5. What about Politics?**

In any new complex social phenomenon, including this latest U.S. conspiracy about infiltrating barbarians from the East, it seems that our first inclination is to try and interpret it in familiar

terms—to pour the new wine into old wine skins, as the old adage goes. The aforementioned literature’s various characterizations of this discourse— “new” orientalism, “new” racism, “new” anti-Semitism, and “new” McCarthyism”—reflect this tendency to some degree. Yet, the literature reviewed also suggests that we might add yet another “new” variant to a very old category of practice—that is, *domestic politics*.

The basis for such a hypothesis begins with Said’s (1997, lvii) only axiom related to “all discourse on Islam”; namely, that it “*has an interest in some authority or power*” [emphasis mine]. My reasoning is analogous: If Zionist interests *within* the U.S. conservative movement had found the threat of Islam useful in its geopolitical struggle for its biblical homeland, then isn’t it also likely that key elements within the broader U.S. conservative movement would find it similarly useful in its political project of struggle for the culture at home?

In Bonney (2008), for example, we began to see how ostensibly pro-Israel intellectuals like Bernard Lewis and Daniel Pipes functioned organically within domestic political movements. Lewis had used the topic of Islam to advance a conservative cultural agenda. Esposito (2011, xxv) observed how—in his role as an advisor to the Bush administration and advocate of its invasion of Iraq—Lewis had advanced an obvious political interest; he “chided Europeans for losing their loyalties, self-confidence, and respect for their own culture, charging that they have ‘surrendered’ to Islam in a mood of ‘self-abasement,’ ‘political correctness,’ and ‘multi-culturalism.’”

Similarly, in Lean (2012) we find the Christian and socially conservative Family Research Council “using race and religion as wedge issues to encourage evangelical opposition and grow the Republican coalition” (2012, 94), and that “the GOP had found that the wedge issue offered a beneficial base into which they could tap and leverage an edge over their Democratic foes whom they painted as soft on terrorism” (2012, 12). Without explicitly saying so, *The Islamophobia Industry* implicated the role of discourse about Islam in the conservative project of cultural politics, characterizing the American Family Association Bryan Fischer’s speech at the 2011 Value Voters Summit as motivated by “the desire to establish a homogeneous culture characterized by conservative political and religious values...” (2012, 98).

The role of domestic politics was also implicated by the literature not reviewed here. Sheehi (2011), for example, while seeing “Islamophobia” as essentially “underscored by racism and a desire to control and manage dissent,” also concluded that it had a utilitarian component, namely, “to promote political and economic goals, both domestically and abroad” (2011, 65, 32). In this vein, Ernst (2013) also described “the political angle” of “attacks on Islam, noting how they were also

linked with criticism of President Obama,” and especially when the enemies list is expanded to include “leftist radicals” (2013, 4).

Nearly all of the literature contained such remarks—often in passing, as if “common sense”—about the role of domestic or identity politics—a factor corroborated by my own research which had begun well before any of this later literature had been published. Yet, for some reason, this seemingly obvious factor was not incorporated into the literature’s characterizations of the discourse, and had not been the subject of any empirical research directive.

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## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND METHOD

*Structures shape people's practices, but it is also people's practices that constitute (and reproduce) structures. In this view of things, human agency and structure, far from being opposed, in fact presuppose each other. Structures are enacted by what Giddens calls "knowledgeable" human agents (i.e., people who know what they are doing and how to do it), and agents act by putting into practice their necessarily structured knowledge. Hence, "structures must not be conceptualized as simply placing constraints on human agency, but as enabling" (Giddens 1976, 161).*

—William H. Sewell (2005, 127)

### 1. Research Objective

The literature related to this puzzling threat discourse revealed that there was yet an insufficiently scrutinized potential causal factor: *politics* at the domestic level, including identity politics, cultural politics, cultural struggle, and so on. This dissertation took this question as its object of inquiry. Using a framework that conceptualizes discourses and their agents as fundamentally political, this study deepens the literature's characterizations of this discourse as "Islamophobia," the "new Orientalism," the "new McCarthyism," and so on by examining how it functioned *politically* at the *domestic* level—that is, mainly at the level of identity or cultural politics—and how related political factors played a role in its expansion in the decade after 9/11.

### 2. Method of Inquiry

To explore this complex question, my approach is a syncretic interpretive discourse analysis, blending Foucauldian genealogy, Bourdieuan relational sociology, Emirbayer and Goodwin's (1996)

and Sewell's (2005) distinctive reformulations of interpretive sociology, and McAdam and colleagues' (1996, 1997) synthetic social movement analytic.<sup>23</sup> Operationalizing this analytic framework, the first half of the empirical inquiry examines the discourse at its macro-level, in the historical and structural factors that formed its conditions of emergence; specifically: 1) the culturally-resident political framing structure that rendered this discourse meaningful and credible; 2) the politically-relevant social-structural resources that rendered it so influential; and 3) the more historically contingent or eventful political openings or opportunity "structure" that otherwise enabled, supported, or incentivized it. The second half of the inquiry shifts from structure to agency<sup>24</sup>; it examines this threat discourse at its micro or individual level, biographically profiling three of its more influential polemicists, analyzing their strategies of cultural politics. Each of these analytic components of the approach merits elaboration.

### *Foucauldian Genealogy*

First, what I am attempting here—especially in the three empirical chapters prior to the individual polemicist profiles—is in part something akin to a Foucauldian genealogy, or "history of the present"—an analysis of "historically situated systems of institutions and discursive practices" from the perspective of power; that is, in terms of its apparatus of power—including its "tactics and strategies of power" (Foucault 1980, 77; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, xxv, 15).<sup>25</sup> It is a diagnostic of power and knowledge; it examines the constructed nature of social facts in the context of the discourse agents' will to truth and struggle for power through the production of knowledge; it "studies the emergence of a battle," "strategies of domination," and examines *how* the knowledge produced in this threat discourse is "enmeshed in a network of power" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982,

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<sup>23</sup> The analytical practice of such theoretical and methodological pluralism or syncretism seems also well established. Bourdieu, in his *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (1992, 28) warned against "methodological fetishism" and was himself a great innovator throughout his sociologies of practice. Foucault, similarly, encouraged us to not see his work as a coherent method but rather a box of tools to use as each project demanded. In an interview in *Le Monde* in 1975, he said, "The more, new, possible or unexpected uses there are, the happier I shall be.... All my books... are little tool boxes..." (cited Mills 2003, 7).

<sup>24</sup> Agency, as used here, is the knowledgeable use of schemas and resources to sustain preferred structures, or change non-preferred ones; it entails "an ability to coordinate one's actions with others and against others, to form collective projects, to persuade, to coerce, and to monitor the simultaneous effect of one's own and others' activities" (Sewell 2005, 143-145).

<sup>25</sup> Although the first three analytic chapters examine three distinctive political structural categories, the approach is not structuralist, as was Foucault's early mode. I am not, for example, seeking atemporal structures with agency radically decentered, but structures set in their historical context and in the context of their relation to the practice or discourse at hand. In this vein, it is not purely structuralist and synchronic, but historicist and diachronic; it is an analysis of those objective structures that were subjectively manipulated, mobilized or otherwise put into practice by social agents over the course of time.



105-106, 109, 114). Just as Foucault's genealogical analysis concentrated "on those cultural practices in which power and knowledge cross" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 120), so this analysis will focus on those elements of this threat discourse that imply power or political struggle. As such, the analysis focuses little on the knowledge the discourse produces about the threat of Islam (ization), and much on the various technologies of power/knowledge at both the structural and agentic level that are perceived by the agents involved to have domestic political utility. In this sense the genealogy is functionalist; or an analysis of its subjective, political function; it leads us away from a focus on the content and accuracy of the narratives to how the narratives function to achieve the goal. It seeks the question "how is this discourse used"? and "what role does it play in society"? (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 17).

#### *Reformulated Bourdieuan Relational Sociology*

Second, adding range and depth and the anthropomorphism that the genealogy lacked, my approach was also an interpretive or "relational" sociology in the Bourdieuan sense—that is, placing the text in context, or placing the micro-level strategies of the agents involved in the broader macro-level conditions of emergence that rendered that practice meaningful, materially enabled it, and otherwise incentivized it or made it possible. This broader interpretive approach to understanding collective action or social practice seems fairly well established. The point of Max Weber's early interpretive or hermeneutic sociology was that "explanation of a social practice requires careful examination of the meaning and intentionality of actors in a particular historical and social context" (Herf 1984, 4).

The dominant work in this approach has been Bourdieu's "theory of practice" (1977, 1990, 1991), which addresses both the objective structures related to the socio-historical contexts in which collective social action emerges and makes sense, as well as the subjective disposition to compete and advance self-interest through strategies to accumulate both economic and symbolic forms of capital. A Bourdieuan "relational" approach to any social phenomenon meant, in Thompson's words, "locating the object of investigation"—in this case, a discourse—"in its specific historical and local/national/international and relational context" (Thompson 2008, 67). In his own words, Bourdieu (1991, 29) urged that all social analysis "take account of the social-historical conditions within which the object of analysis is produced, constructed and received."

Bourdieu (1988, xvii) argued against the "indefensible forms of internal analysis" such as the more linguistic approaches to discourse analysis, which seek to understand "cultural

productions...in isolation and divorced from the conditions of their production and utilization.” His sociology thus avoided more narrowly conceived accounts of social phenomenon (which he critically described as “micro-sociology”), which “can lead one purely and simply to miss a ‘reality’ that does not yield to immediate intuition because it lies in structures transcending the interaction which they inform.” (Bourdieu 1991, 67-68). In his other words, Bourdieu contended that it was insufficient to look on the surface at texts and other discursive practices, and that instead we must excavate beneath them and examine the social field or market—the relational structures where social interaction and events occur (Bourdieu 2005, 148).

This basic Weberian and Bourdieuan interpretive approach enjoys a wider interdisciplinary consensus. Giddens (1984), Sewell (1993, 2005), and other widely-cited sociologists have elaborated on how all “practice” is comprised of or shaped by both individual (agential) and structural elements.<sup>26</sup> Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994, 1996), for example, view social action as shaped by a duality of 1) human agency, situated in and “deeply structured”; 2) by “environments” of action, such as “the societal (network) and cultural environments” (1994, 1443).

My particular interpretive approach to discourse analysis and social phenomena or practice broadly expands upon these approaches by synthesizing both Sewell’s (1993, 2005) reformulation of the concept, to include chronological contextualization, or the placement of some event, action or situation in its stream of events and Emirbayer and Goodwin’s (1996) distinctive interpretive framework of agency and structure.

Sewell’s (2005) approach was solidly interpretive, advocating that we join structure and the conjuncture of events in a common causal universe that centers on human agents. In other words, social phenomena aren’t subject to general laws, but are path dependent, involving different causes which are contingent, specific to the context, and ultimately involve creative agents. Similar to Foucault’s genealogy, Sewell’s most distinctive contribution was the emphasis on joining historical events to structure as part of the conditions of emergence. For Sewell (2005, 10), we cannot know why something happens or what its significance might be without knowing where it fits in a sequence of happenings. Rather than assuming causal independence through time, Sewell’s (2005,

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<sup>26</sup> Building on Bourdieu’s sociology, Sewell (1992, 2005) theorized that collective action and its discursive practices can be explained through both structural and conjunctural contextualization. He cited Kimeldorf’s (1988) analysis of a radical San Francisco longshoremen’s union in the 1930s—“the ‘34 men”—to theorize such collective action by “joining structure, conjuncture, and events in a common causal universe, one that centers on acting human subjects” (Sewell 2005, 109). In this approach, the relevant registers of causation include “preexisting structural conditions (cultural, social, demographic, and economic), conjunctural conditions (such as the generalized labor militancy of the 1930s); and contingent strategic or volitional actions” (Sewell 2005, 109).

100) approach assumes that events are normally “path dependent,” that is, that what has happened at an earlier point in time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time.

For Emirbayer and Goodwin (1996, 1), structure should be conceptualized broadly in three environmental contexts: 1) the cultural realm of basic mental schemas, hostile myths, master narratives, political ideologies and so on; 2) the social-structural realm of material, media-institutional, social network elements of all kinds; and 3) the social-psychological realm of collective anxieties, insecurities, fear, hostility, hatred, resentment, grievance structures and so on.

Again, in this vein the inquiry will focus on the distinctly politically-functioning discursive practices of the principal agents involved, and on their enabling political structural and historical conditions or contexts; and it will begin with the latter.

### ***Political Framing, Resource and Opportunity Structures***

Because this social practice was exclusive to one U.S. political movement, I further conceptualized these structural and eventful conditions of emergence in the more interdisciplinary terms of widely-cited social movement theorists, McAdams and colleagues (1996, 1997), specifically: 1) the cultural frames, schemas, or mental structures that social movement theorists imply is the raw material for cultural or political framing and that therefore rendered the Islam(ization) threat discourse meaningful; 2) the politically-relevant social-structural resources which broadly support the framing intellectuals and which all movement elite seize or otherwise mobilize to sustain and disseminate the framing productions, thereby rendering it so influential and 3) those other softer and harder structural shifts, event-trends, or contingencies that constituted political opportunity or openings or eventful political openings or opportunity “structure” that otherwise enabled, supported, or incentivized the practice.<sup>27</sup> Each of these will now be discussed in order.

Chapter 5—Political Framing Structure—examines the U.S. cultural political schemata and threat myths that served as this threat discourse’s building materials for the discourse agents’ cultural framing strategies. The notion that cultural or ideological structures are creatively put into play by social actors—whether unconsciously as common sense, or strategically or deliberately to achieve certain interests—was popularized by Swidler’s (1986) phrases, “culture in action” and “cultural

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<sup>27</sup> These three contexts are outlined in the subtitle of McAdam, McCarthy and Zald’s (1996) *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings*. These also span the three categorical contextual realms theorized by Emirbayer and Goodwin (1996, 1) cultural or ideological; 2) social-psychological or emotional; and 3) social-structural or institutional, philanthropic, solidarity and other societal networks.

toolkit”. To engage in cultural practice, Sewell (2005, 11, 167-168) notes, is to make use of a semiotic code to achieve their interests. Members of a semiotic community, he adds, “are capable not only of recognizing statements made in a semiotic code ... but of using the code as well, of putting it into practice”. To be able to use a code (or a schema), he adds “means more than being able to apply it mechanically in stereotyped situations;” it also means “having the ability to elaborate it, to modify or adapt its rules to novel circumstances.” This semiotic work of meaning making by movement intellectuals involves the mobilization of cultural frames, or the discursive pretexts or blueprints of more concrete social action and patterns of interaction (Benford and Snow 2000, 611).

Borrowing from David Snow and various colleagues’ work on the issue, social movement theorists McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996) acknowledged this function of “cultural framing” as “... conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action.”<sup>28</sup> From the perspective of movement intellectuals and elite, culture—as an ideational structure—is resource-laden; its resident frames not only *constrain* and shape their own thinking and that of their market, but they *enable* by providing them with a toolkit to frame, interpret, or categorize the events and situations of the empirical world imaginatively (within in these preexisting cultural forms, expectations, or predispositions) to resonate with the market they are attempting to influence (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994, 1441).

Again, my focus in this segment of the inquiry is on those cultural frames that were mobilized with apparent perception of domestic political utility in view. Analytically, my task is to identify the political codes and categories that emerge from post-9/11 texts that frame Islam(ization) as a threat, and then find their interdiscursivity with political frames, schemata, or pretexts that rendered them meaningful.<sup>29</sup> The three main framing categories that emerge in this discourse and that are examined here are those encompassing both dyads of the political: the discourse coalition’s outside, or enemies—both foreign and domestic—and its friendly inside, or self.

Chapter 6—Political Resource Structure—shifts the analysis from the *discursive* resources to its *non-discursive* resources—from the threat discourse’s cultural framing structure to its social resource

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<sup>28</sup> Framing is the practice implied by the concept of human agency—the “capacity to appropriate, reproduce, and, potentially, to innovate upon received cultural categories and conditions of action in accordance with their personal and collective ideas, interests, and commitments” (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994, 1443; Emirbayer and Mische, 1994).

<sup>29</sup> The implication is that such structures are enacted in framing strategies by “knowledgeable” human agents, who put into practice their structured knowledge (Sewell 1992, 4). Similarly, the power of agency arises from the actor’s knowledge of the schemas and resources in a person’s particular social milieu, which means the ability to apply these schemas to new contexts (Sewell 1992, 20).

structure or power apparatus. Recall Foucault's conclusion that the world's objects or truths—including security myths—are largely a function of a significant social base, and that truth "is supported materially by a whole range of practices and institutions" (Foucault 1972, 224; 1980, 194). In his later analysis of discourse or knowledge, Foucault developed a grid of analysis that he called the *dispositif* or the apparatus of power, which included non-discursive elements, such as institutions and philanthropy, that reflected the key role of non-discursive cultural practices, or—in his words—"strategies and relations of forces supporting certain types of knowledge" (Foucault 1980, 194; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 184).<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, this segment of the study examines this discourse's apparatus of power, or its social, material, and non-discursive base. My specific focus is the philanthropic base that funded its principal polemicists and large-scale productions, and the institutional (and media) sub-society in which it was housed and which rendered its polemicists as authoritative and credible. The analysis will not merely incorporate newer investigative journalism published since the *Fear Inc.* report (Ali et al. 2011), but will offer an analysis of the ideology that undergirded this patronage. In the case of the discourse's media-institutional base, the analysis will examine it in terms of mini-case studies for the conservative movement's central identifying institutions, examining their broader function and habitus within the movement, and their typical role and strategies in this discourse. To retain the empirically grounded and empathetic mode of inquiry that guides this inquiry, the analysis will tend to be more qualitative and bring as much of the discourse's text and other empirical features to the fore as necessary.

Having examined the political framing structure and the resource structure, Chapter 7 shifts to the threat discourse's distinctive third contextual and structural realm—political opportunities or opportunity "structure." Despite the early literature's suffix of "structure,"<sup>31</sup> the concept of political opportunity typically involves looking at the "windows" of opportunity or openings for the kind of

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<sup>30</sup> A sufficiently broad concept, the apparatus, in his words, is "a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative reforms, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid" (1980: 194; also Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982: 121). Beyond its obvious structural or non-discursive components, it is important to note that the apparatus of power also has a strategic and discursive element; it was—in Foucault's (1980, 194, 196) words— "always inscribed in a play of power" and involved "strategies of relations of forces supporting and supported by types of knowledge." Some discursive strategies will be examined here, but the last three chapters will more deliberately focus on them.

<sup>31</sup> The term 'opportunity structure,' in the social sciences commonly means 'the notion that opportunity, the chance to gain certain rewards or goals, is shaped by the way the society or an institution is organized (or structured)' (*The Online Dictionary of the Social Sciences*, <http://bitbucket.icaap.org/dict.pl?alpha=O>). The term was originally developed by Cloward and Ohlin (1960) in their *Delinquency and Opportunity*. Their general theory of delinquent subcultures found that when more successful pathways are blocked, other more delinquent opportunity structures are found (Scott and Marshall 2009, 532).

political practice or movement under examination, which often derive from structures that have undergone or still undergoing transformation, and are not properly categorized under the cultural frames, social resources and strategies (Romano 2006, 19).<sup>32</sup>

This analysis will avoid the potential pitfall of examining broad economic, demographic, and other antecedent factors (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 1997, 26). In this case, the paramount factor in this category was obviously the crisis of (in)security and dislocation that the attacks on 9/11 created. As introduced in the Preface, this rupture in the U.S. security narrative, the ensuing national trauma, and the related explosion of discourse on Islam opportunistically presented perhaps the single greatest affective resource for politics in recent history. Few other events have so focused the nation (and the broader Western world), transformed its security apparatus, and spawned such an explosion in contentious, highly politicized discourse on a topic. But even such a powerful antecedent factor as “9/11” and the ensuing “War on Terror” had little explanatory impact on this discourse beyond its *casus belli*, and so the analysis will focus instead on other elements that provided sufficient openings or incentives to engage in this form of threat or security politics that empirically emerged as categories in the grounded theory phase.

The analytical elements of political opportunity examined here also align closely with those factors that leading social movement theorists have conceptualized as comprising opportunity structure. In McAdam, McCarthy and Zald’s (1996) terms, for example, these include: 1) the “relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system”; 2) the “stability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity”; 3) the “presence of elite allies”; 4) the political system’s “capacity and propensity for repression” of the movement and its practices; and 5) external, including “international and foreign influences” supportive of the establishment or its challenging movement.<sup>33</sup>

First, to capture “the relative openness” of the institutionalized political system and its “capacity and propensity for repression,” we will examine the opening for politics that emerged from the conservative strategy to build a parallel society of media and other knowledge institutions, and its

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<sup>32</sup> The signification here of political opportunities as a structure must be caveated, since that conceptualization is being (or has been) abandoned by movement theorists. In Goodwin and Jasper’s (2004, 16) words, the signifier is now “an oxymoron that collapsed fleeting strategic opportunities into stable structures” (Goodwin & Jasper 2004, 16). Instead, they say, “we need to be sensitive to the historically shifting and situationally contingent combinations and sequences of processes and events that give rise to varying forms of social movements and collective action more generally” (Goodwin and Jasper 2004, 27).

<sup>33</sup> These were summarized by Romano (2006, 20). See also McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (1997, 26, 39).

rapid expansion into the emerging alternative media over the first half of the post-9/11 decade.<sup>34</sup> Second, to capture the second and third factors of “the stability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity” and the “presence of elite allies,” we will examine the sympathy for this discourse from conservative political and religious elite. Third, to address the aforementioned fifth factor of external influences, along with related macro-level contexts, we will examine the accentuated crisis of the U.S. conservative movement in the decade after 9/11.

### ***Political Framing and Resource Mobilization Strategies***

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 will focus on how this discourse’s principal agents manipulated or mobilized the cultural and social structures examined in the first three analytic chapters.

Because our research objective was to understand how this threat discourse functioned politically at the domestic and especially the identity level, and how related political factors played a role in its expansion throughout the post-9/11 decade, these last three analytic chapters on the discursive practices or agentic strategies are similarly sensitized to the political. They will examine the more *politically-relevant* everyday framing strategies or habitus of three individuals organic to the conservative movement who were widely viewed as the discourse’s principal polemicists, proponents, or popularizers. Accordingly, we will sensitize the data to strategies of domestic politics, including identity politics, counterhegemonic struggle, and so on, as informed by the conceptual framework and the categories that emerged in the grounded theory approach.

### ***Case Selection***

The three polemicists of this threat discourse selected for data production are Daniel Pipes, Robert Spencer, and Brigitte Gabriel, along with their organizations. Their selection over other candidates is based on the following criteria.

First, this examination seeks to work from the same discourse—the same data sources—as the literature from which the later “Islamophobia” prevailing consensus had emerged. All of that literature—including all of the literature just reviewed, even Said (1997 and Bonney (2008), prominently centered Daniel Pipes as a principal node in this discourse. As already evident from the introductory chapter, and as will become much more evident in the later profile chapters devoted to

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<sup>34</sup> This is admittedly a narrower examination than ultimately warranted. Other institutions, including the Bush administration or The White House, were part of this threat discourse’s opportunity structure, and merit consideration in further research. The omission of these additional institutions here is not intended to diminish the importance of their influence, but is merely a factor of scope in this first exploration of this political factor.

them, both Pipes and Robert Spencer were leading ideologues in the early counternarrative and in the later Islamization threat narrative, and—for this reason—were implicated in all of the literature since 2008—literature reviewed and not reviewed.<sup>35</sup>

Whereas Pipes has been at the fore of Islam criticism since the Islamic revolution in Iran, and was recognized by Harvard University as one its “Harvard 100” most influential living alumni, Spencer has emerged only in the latter half of the post-9/11 decade, rapidly publishing eight books on Islam, two of which were *New York Times* bestsellers, and leading the most popular blog in the field, Jihad Watch.<sup>36</sup>

The selection of the also aforementioned Lebanese-American and evangelical Christian Brigitte Gabriel over others, such as Steven Emerson, was reflective of not merely her two bestselling books set within the counternarrative, but of her distinctive position in the field as a more activist knowledge producer and leader of ACT! for America, which is self-described as “the largest grassroots citizen action network” in the U.S., dedicated to “preserving national security and

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<sup>35</sup> Edward Said had more to say about Pipes than anyone else, and Bonney’s (2008) *False Prophets* devoted an entire chapter to him. Both Ali and colleagues’ (2011) *Fear Inc.*, and Lean’s (2012) *Islamophobia Industry* prominently centered both Pipes and Spencer as part of the inner core of “Islamophobes.” The discourse’s “misinformation experts” in the assessment of the *Fear Inc.* (2011, 4) report as—in this order—Frank Gaffney of the Center for Security Policy, Daniel Pipes at the Middle East Forum, David Yerushalmi at the Society of Americans for National Existence, Robert Spencer of Jihad Watch and Stop Islamization of America, and Steven Emerson of the Investigative Project on Terrorism. The same pattern was revealed in literature not reviewed. Yildirim (2007), for example, described Pipes and Spencer as the co-centers of the anti-Islam epistemological terrain. A report by UC Berkeley-CAIR (2010) states: “Some individuals, institutions, and groups were at the center of pushing Islamophobia in America during the period covered by this report: Pamela Geller and Stop the Islamization of America (SIOA); Robert Spencer and Jihad Watch; Brigitte Gabriel and Act! for America; Frank Gaffney and the Center for Security Policy (CSP); Steven Emerson and the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT); Newt Gingrich;...and Daniel Pipes.” And, the opening two paragraphs of the 162-page CAIR 2013 report on the subject described the five people in the U.S. Islamophobia “inner core”—in this order—as Daniel Pipes, Steven Emerson, Pamela Geller, Robert Spencer, David Horowitz and Brigitte Gabriel. Besides the literature, investigative reporting suggested that these individuals selected were considered most representative of this discourse. For example, the graduate-level course at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia that was disestablished after *Wired’s* Danger Room in early May 2012 revealed that it was teaching the most pessimistic version of the counternarrative regarding Islam to mid-grade officers from the various services. One of the course’s serious scenarios for U.S. policy in what it implied was the ongoing war against Islam included “Saudi Arabia threatened with starvation, Mecca and Medina destroyed, Islam reduced to cult status, ... taking war to a civilian population wherever necessary (the historical precedents of Dresden, Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki being applicable...)” (Ackerman 2012; Clifton 2012). While the course’s reference list was populated by some material from the Defense Department and politicized institutes outside of academia, such as staunchly pro-Israel Brookings Institute, it made significant use of Daniel Pipes and his *Middle East Forum* (89 references), Robert Spencer and *JihadWatch* (44 references), as well as Frank Gaffney’s *Center for Security Policy* and his general counsel David Yerushalmi (69 references) (Clifton and Gharib 2012). A similar pattern emerged after Norway right-wing extremist Anders Breivik’s murders of over seventy youth. In outlining his *casus belli*, Breivik’s manifesto had made 162 *positive* or legitimizing references to Robert Spencer and his website *Jihad Watch*, and—coming in third place behind the Egyptian-born British “Eurabia” ideologue Bat Ye’or—Daniel Pipes and his Middle East Forum (Clifton 2011).

<sup>36</sup> JihadWatch even before the “ground zero mosque” spectacle was #37, in March 2009, in the Wikio rankings for top blogs on politics, and—based on its website counter—had 7.5 million readers in the six months between September, 28, 2008 and April 8, 2009.



combating Islamic supremacy”, and whose stated membership in 2011 was over 185,000 and has since climbed to more than 240,000—nearly twice that of the powerful AIPAC (Fichtner 2011).

Second, these three are sufficiently distinct in religious background, niche markets, epistemic predispositions, and forms of cultural capital, and the kinds of organizations that they operate—distinctions that will help illuminate different aspects of the broader discourse, and to serve as representatives (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1: Case Selection Criteria Distinctions

| <i>Framing Agent</i>                   | <i>Epistemic Mode</i>                     | <i>Pre-9/11 Capital</i>   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Daniel Pipes</i><br>Jewish          | Formal,<br>Intellectual knowledge         | PhD Medieval Islamic History, Harvard<br>Middle East journal editor                   |
| <i>Robert Spencer</i><br>Catholic      | Practical,<br>Specialized knowledge       | MS Religious Studies, UNC.<br>Conservative think tanks                                |
| <i>Brigitte Gabriel</i><br>Evangelical | Popular,<br>Emotional, symbolic knowledge | Arab Christian wounded by Muslim militia.<br>Christian Broadcasting Network affiliate |

### ***Data Production***

Data for the analysis of their discourse is produced from across span of each agent’s relevant oeuvre, with the major emphasis being on their threat writing and broader relevant habitus after 9/11 and especially in the latter half of the post-9/11 decade, when the Islamization conspiracy emerged. Since the nature of a practice is best interpreted in its everyday habitus, the analysis will produce most of the data from this realm, much of which was lodged in the alternative media. Each of the three agents selected possessed sufficient capital to win book contracts with conservative publishing houses and earn national bestseller status; nevertheless, the vast bulk of their threat writing was more banal, or “everyday” in nature—in e-mails to their subscriber lists, blog posts, interviews on conservative radio or cable television, short articles for conservative newspapers and e-magazines, and speeches at conservative events, usually broadcast immediately afterwards in YouTube. But, because their mode of production also included the more traditional book-publishing, the data presented will include an appropriate proportion from their published books.

### *Conceptual Framework: Data Sensitization*

The inclusion of a conceptual framework as the next chapter—Chapter 4—would be viewed by purists of grounded theory as “forcing” the data, hindering the emergence of those categories of

explanation that are most salient (Glaser 1992, 31).<sup>37</sup> To preclude such a weakness and criticism, this step of theoretical sensitizing in this inquiry was taken not *a priori* but *a posteriori*—after two years of preliminary investigation of this discourse via grounded theory, which included the cataloguing of 900 files of data categories which emerged from the discourse. Thus, rather than shopping for preconceived concepts to dress the data in, the concepts offered in the following conceptual framework were selected to fit the data already categorized. In this way, each ‘thinking tool’ in our conceptual framework earned its way into the analysis. In other words, the generalizable concepts from these theorists which form our conceptual framework did not drive our data production, but were *driven by* preliminary data production using the grounded theory approach.<sup>38</sup>

### *Empathy via Data Presentation*

Finally, in the spirit of the basic interpretive approach and grounded theory, this inquiry attempts an empathetic and reflexive sociology that brings “the perspectives and voice” of those studied to the fore (Strauss and Corbin 1994, 274). The interpretive ethos, or *verstehen* strives for empathetic understanding, or understanding the meaning of action from the actor's point of view. To help grasp their influence, the inquiry also brings to the fore their more implicit visual strategies, including the *image-like* function of the discourse agents’ everyday productions.

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<sup>37</sup> In *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emergence vs. Forcing* (1992), Glaser advocated a process of systematic comparison to produce the basic categories of data *without forcing them* through rigid methods of questions and hypotheses or preconceived theoretical frameworks. Glaser’s purist approach aligns with the ‘anti-sciences’ spirit of Foucault, who cautioned against investigations under a ‘unitary body of theory’ which he saw as ‘some arbitrary idea of what constitutes a science and its objects’ (Foucault 1980, 83). Glaser criticized the approach of competing grounded theorists Strauss and Corbin, calling their resulting analysis ‘full conceptual description’; that is, description resulting from forcing data and analysis through theoretically sensitized preconceptions or hypotheses, as well as their methodological techniques (Glaser 1992, 33, 43). Strauss and Corbin (1998) countered Glaser critique, arguing that conceptual ordering was necessary for theory development (Charmaz 2000, 513). On the issue of implicitly stating a hypothesis in the form of a research question, grounded theorists Strauss and Corbin (1998, 150) also countered, advocating that researchers describe as their final conceptualization their ‘gut sense’ or storyline about the subject matter of the research.

<sup>38</sup> This step of theoretical sensitizing served two other functions: it translated the categories and sub-categories produced in step one’s more purist grounded theory into the lexicon of the sociological consensus; and it illuminated the still obscure characteristics and applicable categories and sub-categories which other social analyses of similar phenomena found to be generalizable. The function of this step was not so much to produce *new* data or to somehow change the existing data, but—in the words of other grounded theorists—to “stimulate our thinking about properties or dimensions that we can then use to examine the data in front of us” (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 45); to “stimulate reflection about the data at hand” (Corbin 1998, 122); and to “provide different ways of knowing the data” (Mills et al. 2006, 4).<sup>38</sup> Strauss (2004) further seemed to encourage this in his principles of grounded theory; these include, first theoretical sensitizing of the data, and second theoretical sampling of the data; that is, reentering the data sensitized from these sociological frameworks to compare the theory with the concepts already generated and with the raw text or practices published by the subject data producers.

### ***Terms and Sociological Categorization***

The U.S. conservative movement is heterogeneous and comprised of more common sub-identifiers such as fiscal-conservative, social conservative, paleoconservative, and neoconservative—terms that are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. Where such subfactional distinctions cannot be safely made without mischaracterizing an individual or group, this inquiry will simply use the broader identifier of “conservative”. This rather non-anthropological mode of not trying to be more specific in the characterization of the discourse, its proponents, and its supporting institutions is based on several factors.

First, the use of the broader “big tent” signifier of conservative aligns with the literature that analyzes conservatives and the farther right. In their analysis of the Western Right broadly, for example, Blee and Creasap (2010, 269) observe and advocate for a categorization within a continuum of conservatives in the center, transitioning to right-wing, and then to far right. They use the label “conservative” for the mainstream who support patriotism, free enterprise, capitalism, and/or a traditional moral order and for which violence is not a frequent tactic or goal, and they reserve the more negative and belittling terms “right-wing” and “far Right” for groups that advocate violence or hateful speech (Blee and Creasap 2010, 269-270). They reserve the term “right-wing” for movements in the United States that “openly and virulently embrace racism, anti-Semitism, and/or xenophobia and promote violence,” and include “long-standing racist movements such as the KKK; white supremacist, neo-Nazi, and white power skinhead groups; and racialist and violent groups of nationalists and patriots” (Blee and Creasap 2010, 275).

These latter terms—right wing and far right—are expressly avoided in this analysis, since none of the post-9/11 threat discourse under analysis in this inquiry explicitly or implicitly called for violence or deployed hateful speech towards Muslims, although some seemed to advocate non-physically-injuring forms of violence as a necessary security measure, such as racial profiling and even deportation. In this vein, it also seems unfair to categorize segments of this threat discourse (and its principal agents) as xenophobic or racist. Some of the principal proponents of the discourse, for example, were Arab, and others were African American. Apparently all had a high affinity for Jews, distinguishing it from threat discourse in Europe, and for secular Muslims and prominent more progressive Muslims like Zuhdi Jasser or Ishad Manji who themselves securitized Islamists.

Second, in keeping with the sociological principle of empathy, the inquiry will also follow Blee and Creasap’s (2010, 269-270) lead in describing these agents in their own terms; that is, in terms

they accept.<sup>39</sup> The proponents of this discourse, as well as the media and philanthropic institutions that support them, do not make the distinctions among themselves that their critics make. As we will see in his profile, Daniel Pipes—once happy with being described as “neoconservative”—has since abandoned that signifier and describes himself as “simply conservative.” Robert Spencer has described himself merely as “Catholic” with “no religious agenda.” Brigitte Gabriel’s organization, ACT! for America uses secular and politically-neutral terms to describe itself as “the only grassroots organization dedicated to national security and terrorism” and “a citizen action network that promotes public policies and legislation that defend America and democratic values against those who wish to topple them.”<sup>40</sup> The more overtly political David Horowitz Freedom Center—the parent of organization of JihadWatch—describes itself as merely “conservative” and its mission “to defend the principles of individual freedom, the rule of law, private property, and limited government.”<sup>41</sup>

Third, the discourse’s supporting institutional base makes no such distinctions other than conservative. It is apparent that conservative ideologue William F. Buckley’s politically-necessary strategy of congealing the U.S. conservative movement as a “big tent”—blind to its own distinctions—had become normative (Factor 2014). Buckley’s *National Review* uses only the “conservative”<sup>42</sup> self-descriptor. Other main institutions of support refuse such political qualifiers altogether; the *Washington Times* is merely “a full-service, general interest daily newspaper in the nation's capital.”<sup>43</sup>

Fourth, social polling firms such as Pew and Gallup do not distinguish between types of conservatives, categorizing Americans within the self-descriptors of Republican, Democrat or Independent, or as either conservative or liberal.

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<sup>39</sup> As Brinkley (1994, 414) notes, “American conservatism is not easy to characterize... [It] encompasses a broad range of ideas, impulses and constituencies, and many conservatives feel no obligation to choose among the conflicting, even incompatible impulses that fuel their politics. Individual conservatives find it possible, and at times perhaps even necessary, to embrace several clashing ideas at once. Conservatism...is a cluster of related (and sometimes unrelated) ideas from which those who consider themselves conservatives draw different elements at different times.”

<sup>40</sup> See <http://www.actforamerica.org/index.php/learn/about-act-for-america>

<sup>41</sup> See <http://www.frontpagemag.com/biography/>

<sup>42</sup> See <http://mediakit.nationalreview.com/>

<sup>43</sup> See <http://www.washingtontimes.com/about/>

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## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

*Each age and society re-creates its 'Others'. Far from being a static thing then, identity of self or of Other is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies.*

—Edward Said (2003, 331)

*Prisons manufactured delinquents, but delinquents turned out to be useful, in the economic domain as much as the political. Criminals come in handy.*

—Michel Foucault (1980, 40)

The notion that domestic politics and politically-relevant structural factors played a key role in the production of this threat discourse, for example, is not merely derived from the aforementioned statements in the substantive literature, but by the readily apparent features on the surface of the discourse. The conceptual framework that follows relates five conceptual categories that readily emerged in this discourse to their corresponding conceptualizations about discourse in general from prominent social philosophers, as well as discourse, cultural, critical, and social movement theorists—most of whom were working broadly within in the poststructuralist paradigm. These five categories of thinking tools are: 1) discourse as politically-interested; 2) discourse and security discourse as identity politics; 3) discourse as counterhegemonic struggle; 4) discourse as the site or field of struggle; and 5) the role of discourse agents.

### 1. Discourse as Politically-Interested

Discursive or knowledge structures—like all forms of structure—imply power, or interestedness (Laclau 1994, 17; Foucault 1980). From the perspective of interdisciplinary

international relations theorists Adler and Pouliot (2011, 21), all competent social practice (with discourse being the paramount social practice) is “eminently political in that it sustains, or undermines, existing patterns of power relations.” From the perspective of the largely interdisciplinary field of discourse theory, public discourse is also inherently interested. In the philosopher of language Bakhtin’s (1981) terms, our language or discourse is “inhabited by intentions.” Such intentionality is seen in the very terms for discourse agencies: the “advocacy network” that defends a cause (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 1); the “epistemic community” that seek change in a specific area of policy (McGann 2011, 71); the “discourse coalition” that coalesces around and advances a set of storylines to achieve its interests (Hajer 1993, 47).

The notion that an area of knowledge could be politicized is perhaps best known in the Foucauldian notion of power/knowledge. In social practice, the two terms are inseparable. “Power and knowledge directly imply one another,” Foucault (1977a, 27-28) said; there is no field of knowledge—whether fields in philosophy, the environment, and security or threats—that “does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.”

In his *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault (1977a, 25) observed that the systems of punishment in our society were “situated in a certain ‘political economy’” that incentivized the prison to “participate in the fabrication of a delinquency that it is supposed to combat.” Delinquency, in this context, had “a number of advantages”; it was useful to a meaningful segment of society (Foucault 1977a, 278). In his other words, Foucault (1980, 40) concluded that “Prisons manufactured delinquents, who turned out to be useful, and in the economic domain as much as the political,” and that “criminals come in handy.” Logically, just as there were a “number of advantages” or utility of the criminal threat to society, so all threats come in handy—each threat has its associated political economy that depends upon on it and even reproduces it as a means of its own survival.

In their study of Britain’s moral panics, for example, Hall and colleagues (1978, 52) observed that the media and other “agencies of control” that benefited from the panic were problematically at the center of the discourse about it, which rather than solve the problem, institutionalized it and blew it out of all proportion to the actual threat offered. As crucial actors in this drama, these agents of control “advertently and inadvertently amplify the deviancy they seem so absolutely committed to controlling” (1978, 52). This was Said’s Foucauldian point from earlier—that “all discourse on Islam has an interest in some authority or power” (1997, lviii). Other discourse psychologists, discourse theorists, critical theorists, and social movement theorists similarly take this view as axiomatic; our

descriptions of the world do not neutrally reflect that world, but play an active role in creating it, changing it, or maintaining it, to suit our interests (e.g. Gergen 2009, 14; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 1).

Foucault's pessimistic view of discourse flowed from his broader view of the social. Political struggle, or "war" as he called it, was a permanent feature of social relations (Foucault 1997, 110). The main drama of history, he contended, was "the endlessly repeated play of dominations" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 109-10). Within this context of political struggle, Foucault links these discursive plays for the "truth"—the dominant "knowledge" about the world—with the systems of power behind them. Consequently, discourses "need to be analyzed, not in terms of types of consciousness, modes of perception and forms of ideology," he argued, "but in terms of tactics and strategies of power" (1980, 77).

In a similar vein, discourse theorists Laclau and Mouffe (1985) stress the practice of *discursive struggle*. Various discourses (and the institutional systems of power behind them) each describe the world in a particular way within the broader, enduring context of the struggle for dominance. This was cultural theorist Gramsci's (1971) classical thesis. For Gramsci, various interests erect discourses that compete for "hegemony," or attempt to organize popular consent for social and moral orders that naturalize more favorable positions for themselves. It was Gramsci's view that, in modern Western states, political struggle did not involve direct, violent engagement of the political structure, but, rather, indirect, non-violent, and largely discursive "counter-hegemonic" struggle in the institutions in which that societal order is legitimized, or—logically—in competing institutions. This conceptualization of discourse as a function of the broader context of cultural struggle has significant implications. From this view, all public discourse in modern is suspect of politicization; it is the main means by which competing factions attempt to delegitimize or maintain the dominant order or a particular dominant policy regime.

This view of discourse within the context of social struggle enjoys a wider consensus among other prominent social philosophers. Bourdieu, for example, saw the central feature of public discourse as the "labor of categorization," which he observed not as something that occurs merely at certain instances or historical junctures, but "is continually being performed, at every moment of ordinary existence, in the struggles in which agents clash over the meaning of the social world and their position in it..." (Bourdieu 1991, 236). Such interestedness was for Bourdieu the core "logic" and "energy" in all social practice, even if its masqueraded as disinterestedness (Bourdieu 1990, 122;

Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).<sup>44</sup> Even the more professional production of truth under the broad name of science is part of the apparatus of some power, Bourdieu said; it is part of “the social mechanisms which ensure the maintenance of the established order” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 51), and is “conducted in the name of specific *interests* (Bourdieu 1993, 9).<sup>45</sup>

The aim of this “symbolic struggle” is to advance a group’s ideology, or naturalized vision of a particular hierarchical social order “that is best suited to their interest” (Bourdieu 1991, 167). Such symbolic struggle, he added, “aims to produce and impose representations (mental, verbal, visual or theatrical) of the social world,” to “make or unmake groups”, and to “transform the social world in accordance with their interests—by producing, reproducing or destroying the representations that make groups visible for themselves and for others” (Bourdieu 1991, 127). Importantly, such inherently interested symbolic production—or what Bourdieu also called the “political labour of representation”—advances a group’s ideology and interests via the construction of the self and other through the imposition of a binary or hierarchical schema (Bourdieu 1991, 130, 167).

Discourses also function politically to make some advocated courses of action legitimate, and others illegitimate. This was Said’s (2003, 336) later Foucauldian notion of discourse on Islam as “power using knowledge to advance itself”. From this perspective, in his examination of how the expensive post-war policy of reconstructing Germany was justified, Jackson (2006, 31) concluded that discourse is less about any “transcendentally rational process of persuasion” than “the creative deployment of arguments in such a way as to shape the public discursive space in favor of one or another course of action.” Recall from Bonney (2008) how neoconservative elite in the U.S. after 9/11 used clash of civilizations discourse to justify the policy of the Global War on Terror and—within that strategy—the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

Social movement theorists similarly emphasize the political nature discourse or “framing” strategies. Introduced earlier, framing in Entman’s (1993, 5) words means “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment

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<sup>44</sup> In all productions, Bourdieu contended, there was an ‘interest’ which ‘cannot be dissociated from a reasonable expectation of material and/or symbolic profit’ (1977, 221-222). This is obviously not new; the notion that it is interest (and not merely social relations) that drives action was the contention of sociology’s founding thinkers, like David Hume, Adam Smith and Alexis de Tocqueville, as well as its classical theorists, including Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and Georg Simmel (Swedberg 2003, 3).

<sup>45</sup> But Said, Bourdieu and Foucault were overly cynical. We know that academia, government and the media are themselves subcultures, and are generally and somewhat constrained by subcultural regulations or identity complex normal to each. But, it is from these professions that these truths emerged in the first place, and where the ethos of disinterest and even empathy, along with reflexivity—or science bent back upon itself—are at least held out in their literature as the institutional guiding lights.



recommendation for the item described.” In the words of prominent movement theorists Benford and Snow, framing “implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction” and particularly in the process of movement (and its enemies) identity construction or “semiotic acts of identification”; it involves “the struggle over the production of mobilizing and countermobilizing ideas and meanings” and “the generation or selection of interpretive frames that compete with others” (Benford and Snow 2000, 613-614). The *frames* advanced in this discursive process, they add, are politically strategic; they are “deliberative, utilitarian and goal directed”; they are developed “to achieve a specific purpose – to recruit new members, mobilize adherents, acquire resources, and so forth” (2000, 624-625).

Whether we call this process “framing,” as did Entman (1993), Benford and Snow (2000), and others, “framing processes” as did McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (1997), or “cultural framing”, as did Romano (2006), the concept implied is not meaningfully distinct from what Bourdieu (1991) described as the “labour of categorization,” what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) described as the process of identification, or what Hall (1982) termed “the politics of signification.” It is by this discursive practice that individuals and groups systematically *represent* the world to shape the perceptions of those that they are trying to influence. In this sense, the purpose of discourse is to erect a regime of collective action frames or “action oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns” (Snow and Benford 1992).<sup>46</sup>

Such a categorization of all public discourse as fundamentally political is also informed by the range of poststructuralist specialty fields, including critical (media and culture) theory, critical discourse analysis (van Dijk 1993), and critical geopolitics (Ó Tuathail 1996). The notion that the media would manipulate knowledge for ideological gain was a key contention in Gans’s (1979) *Deciding What’s News*, in Herman and Chomsky’s (1988) *Manufacturing Consent*, and in Cook’s (1998/2005) *Governing with the News: The News Media as a Political Institution*. Similarly, strategic security and foreign policy discourse has also been shown to be politically interested. The “critical turn” of geopolitics emerged in recognition that the discursive practice of geopolitics was a non-neutral, social construct, reflecting both ideological or normative underpinnings and the (social) Darwinistic struggle for primacy or dominance (Kearns 2003, 173). In other words, this more

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<sup>46</sup> Because this definition of framing is ontologically similar to the same concept by other names, it enjoys a wide consensus, including among communication theorists and social psychologists. In their work on “framing terrorism”, for example, Norris, Kern and Just (2003, 1) define “news frames” as “representing persistent patterns of selection, emphasis, and exclusion that furnish a coherent interpretation and evaluation of events.” In its widespread use among social movement theorists, the term is always used in the context of highly interested and deliberate political work, and is a strategy enacted by agents organic to and positioned by political movements.

critical approach to geopolitics views it not as a disinterested analysis or description of the geographical world, but as a fundamentally ideological and politicized practice (Ó Tuathail and Agnew 1992).

## 2. Discourse and Security Discourse as Identity Politics

Public discourse, including security discourse, cannot adequately be understood apart from the paradigm of the politics of identity. At the root of all political identity is a distinct “lack” (Laclau 1994, 3-4). Identities are not unified, but plural; they are inherently unstable, being perpetually impinged upon by the impersonal and contingent historical events, structures in crisis or transformation, and the similarly uncertain innovations by elite agents (Sewell 2005). In attempts to halt this slide of perpetual identity insecurity—which as Castells (1997) noted is particularly acute in the era of globalization—discourse—including security discourse—functions as a form of identity politics—as a “boundary producing political performance” (Campbell 1998, 62). In other words, because the boundary between inside and outside, self and other, is never static; the project of affirming identity is necessarily an ongoing one that requires constant work to secure the collectivity’s boundaries against the threatening outside (Campbell 1998, 114).

This translates to more visible identity-instituting practices or *identification*—the kind of practices that Schmitt (1932) called “the political,” wherein any group can exist as an identifiable entity only through radical alterity, in juxtaposition to the other, or the constant articulation of the essentializing and dichotomizing friend/enemy distinction. “The process of identity formation,” Norval (1994, 120-121), concluded, “cannot be thought merely in terms of an elaboration of a set of features characteristic of a certain identity...[but also] the positing of an ‘other’ which is constituted as opposed to the identity in the process of construction.”<sup>47</sup> This also was Said’s (2003, 331) point in the introductory quote above.

The point is that all political identities—those of self and others of all kinds—are not primordial, or natural; instead—like all identities—they are “constituted in relation to difference”; they are performatively constituted—“through the inscription of boundaries that serve to demarcate an ‘inside’ from an ‘outside,’ a ‘self’ from an ‘other,’ a ‘domestic’ from a foreign” (Campbell 1998, 9).

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<sup>47</sup> And, in their widely-referenced work on discourse theory, Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000, 4) classify discourses as “concrete systems of social relations that are intrinsically political, and their formation is an act of radical institution, which involves the construction antagonisms and the drawing of political frontiers between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’” and “always involve the exercise of power.”

The collectivity's identity is not an objective historical given or truth, but is continually "secured by the effective and continual ideological demarcation of those who are 'false' to the defining ideals" (Campbell 1992, 105). In this bifurcated schema, identity is established "in relation to a series of differences that have become socially recognized," with differences or otherness being essential to any identity's emergence (Connolly 2002 [1991], 64). This seems especially the case in Western culture, where self-identity can be constituted only in juxtaposition to a meaningfully different other (Derrida 1976; Dalby 1990, 17; Shapiro 1988, 101-2). This difference is interpreted as danger, and it is in this sense all public discourse shades to security or threat discourse broadly.

In any politics of identity, the discourse surrounding them not only politically identify the collective's outside, or those events, structures and agencies that are not us, and that constitute the realm of our insecure; they also identify the we, the self, the inside, the realm of secure. This was Campbell's (1998) [1992] conclusion in his analysis of Cold War security texts, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. The study revealed that there was much more going on in these strategic security and policy texts than attempts to understand and contain the Soviet threat. These security productions also functioned politically, or—in the terms of the book's subtitle—in the "politics of identity," and it did so not merely in narrating or identifying the political outside, but in narrating the political inside, or "scripting the self" and the more hegemonic struggle to impose a particular order or vision of the world that served the interests of those who wrote these texts (1998, 30). Campbell adds that:

While one might have expected few if any references to national values or purposes in confidential documents prepared for the inner sanctum of national security policy (after all, don't they know who they are or what they represent?), the texts of foreign policy are replete with statements about fulfillment of the republic, the fundamental purpose of the nation, God-given rights, moral codes, the principles of European civilization, the fear of cultural and spiritual loss, and the responsibilities and duties thrust upon the gleaming example of America. In this sense, the texts that guided national security policy did more than simply offer strategic analyses of the 'reality' they confronted: they actively concerned themselves with the scripting of a particular American identity (1998, 31-32).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> In this vein, deconstruction of National Security Strategy (NSS) documents from the post-war Truman era to the post-9/11 War on Terror suggested that "national security" or "security discourse" was—in Schubiner's (2006) words—"a tool for identity construction of 'us' and 'them,' which works through narrations and speech acts that disguise the actual goals of the discourse." In this sense, "war is not only waged on the battlefield, but also through the dominant telling of historical narratives, through discourses that conceal the use of force and relations of power." Schubiner adds, "National security discourse—including the rhetoric of democracy, American values and free markets—functions as a polemical device that is employed increasingly to achieve political ends and as a result, has little to do with actual human security."

In this function, security discourses—in Alvarez’s (2006, 77) words—are part of the collectivity’s “official culture” and “provide definitions of patriotism, loyalty, boundaries and belonging”. For example, in his announcement that the U.S. was sending military forces to Saudi Arabia in the second Gulf War in 1990, President Bush performatively said, “In the life of a nation, we’re called upon to define who we are and what we believe.” By manifestly linking American identity to present danger, the president had highlighted how “the boundaries of a state’s identity are secured by the representation of danger...” (Campbell 1998, 3).

It is in this context that *insecurity*—or identity insecurity—is the necessary condition and means of a secure identity. Campbell (1998, 13) concluded that insecurity or danger—as articulated through various foreign policy speeches and security texts—“is thus not a threat to the state’s identity or existence; it is its condition of possibility;” and that a collectivity’s identity is therefore not as much threatened by as much as it is “secured” through (discourses of) danger (1998, 50). What we might call “security politics,” then, is merely the ubiquitous practice of identity politics in security writing, or discourses of danger, wherein the explicit practice of securitization of things is less self-defense than it is the construction of self.<sup>49</sup>

From this vantage point, we can better understand why security discourse is prone to blowing the threat out of all proportion to that actually presented, and why U.S. conservative discourse quickly leaped from al-Qaeda—a small, non-state group that threatened the U.S. with acts of asymmetric resistance—to “Islam,” a different civilization, and one that threatened the U.S. with complete annihilation.<sup>50</sup>

### 3. Discourse as Counterhegemonic Struggle

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<sup>49</sup> Here, security, or the “securitization” (Wæver, 1995, 55) is not self-defense; it is self-identification, or the practice of self. This follows Buzan’s (1991, 141) earlier Schmittian argument that “states need to be threatened” and that “if no threats existed, part of the state’s basic Hobbesian function would disappear.” This concept of securitization that was advanced by the Copenhagen School blends both classical realism influenced by Schmitt (1932) with contemporary social constructionism and discourse ontology (Williams 2003, 511). The notion that security threats do not objectively and independently exist, but derive from subjective interpretation, social construction, or *securitization* constitutes a corrective to the epistemic realism that dominates international relations and security studies.

<sup>50</sup> As Williams (2003, 515-17) notes, this is a common feature in discourses of danger; they not only defines what a threat is; they define who is an insider and who is an outsider *said to be existentially threatening to their survival*. What is at stake, then, is not merely security of the part, but of the whole society—what Wæver (1993, 23) described as “societal security”, or “the ability of a society to persist in its essential character under changing conditions and possible or actual threats”.

Recall that the response to the “Islam is peace” narrative was not a *corrective*, but a *counter* narrative, with meanings infused into terms like “jihad,” for example, set in polar opposition to those more legitimate meanings infused by professional security writing, by academic security studies, by the mainstream media, and by other more progressive societal institutions. This had all of the marks not of *mere* domestic political struggle that engages a proximate political enemy, such as the Democrats, or President Obama, but of *counterhegemonic* struggle. By “counterhegemonic,” of course, we mean the Gramscian conceptualization of opposition to the dominant ideology or doxa—known variously as counterculture, cultural struggle, culture war, and cultural politics.<sup>51</sup>

For Gramsci, such forms of opposition to the official or hegemonic conception were a key feature of politics, and particularly the subversion of the dominant culture. In every society, popular culture, or folklore functioned as a form of resistance; it was a “conception of the world and life” that stood in opposition to the “official” one (Gramsci 1971, 189). In Castells’s (1997) terms, it is “resistance” to the legitimizing identity and institutions.

The practice of counternarrative—or “countermemory”—as Foucault (1977, 144) referred to it—is a form of power-knowledge; it is a discursive practice that opposes, challenges, undermines, and resists the dominant, normative memory, which itself effectively disqualifies, excludes, or silences alternative accounts of the world. These “insurrection of knowledges” were set “against the institutions” where the more legitimate, formal, or scientific discourses were housed (Foucault 1980, 87). Such cultural resistance was so fundamental and pervasive that it constituted what is arguably one of Foucault’s most basic social axioms: “where there is power, there is resistance” (1978, 95). And, the very odd emergence of such polar opposition (rather than a corrective) to the Islam is peace storyline suggests its function within such a resistance or cultural struggle.

The notion that the post-9/11 discourse of danger about Islam functioned as a strategy within the GOP’s broader culture war would not have surprised Bourdieu, who—like Gramsci and Foucault—viewed countercultural struggle as central to the understanding of discourse and social practice broadly. Bourdieu made frequent references to “the establishment” on the one hand, and to its challengers on the other. The challengers were positioned outside the establishment and use as their weapons “subversion strategies,” or “the strategies of heresy” (1993, 73); theirs is the practice of “counterculture,” or “the cult of everything that is outside ‘legitimate’ culture,” or

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<sup>51</sup> In another conception, “cultural politics” also refers to the processes through which the prevailing values of a society are internalized and lived by subjects who identify with the imagined community fashioned and reproduced by such narratives” (Rowe, 2012).

“outside the ‘establishment’, external to official culture”, and “defined negatively by what it defines itself against” (1993, 2-3).<sup>52</sup> Whether it is the opposition between right and left, or orthodoxy and heterodoxy, he observed, the struggle is structurally identical, with unorthodox entrants able to unseat the establishment through cultural productions that are distinct, or distinctly unorthodox (1993, 135).

Counternarratives (rather than corrective narratives) emerge in society, Bourdieu observed, as marginalized or dominated producers “have to resort to subversive strategies” (1986, 139), or—as he said elsewhere—“the imposition of rival “schemes of classification” (1991, 127-128). The purpose of such “distinction strategies” is to destroy the dominant, official, “ordinary order”, either by severing adherence to the legitimate knowledge, or subverting that system by challenging it with “the politically unthinkable,” “taboo,” or, in the popular vernacular, the *politically-incorrect* (1993 51, 115). Borrowing from Gramsci, Bourdieu viewed the purpose of such “heretical discourse” as counterhegemonic, aiming to “produce a new common sense” (1991, 129). Such cultural resistance, he observed, not only rejects the dominant culture, but rejects it “in a movement of pure negation” (Garnham and Williams 1986, 126).

In Hajer’s analysis of European environmental security discourse in the 1990s, the discourse about protecting nature from the effects of acid rain was not merely advocating certain *policies*, but also a certain *kind of society*. In other words, it was a much deeper national ideology or governmentality set being debated (Hajer 1996, 256). In his words:

It seemed obvious that much more was going on in environmental politics than fighting environmental degradation. The differences in style, both in terms of ways of life and of conducting politics, signaled that environmental politics was in fact a field of profound ‘cultural politics’. Environmental politics appeared to be a stage in which society reflected on its record: values were at risk” (Hajer 2005, 297).

Similarly, in their examination of British society’s extreme overreaction to the threat of “mugging” in the 1970s—Hall and colleagues (1978) argued that this mugging crisis was not merely about crime per se. Instead, this crime of mugging, with its attending themes of race, immigration and degenerative morality of British youth, became for the social conservatives the metaphor and index for the purportedly broader, more profound crisis of hegemony, or the disintegration of the

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<sup>52</sup> Hoffer (1951, 130) had similarly noted that marginalized movements involved a struggle against the discredited prevailing order—the set of rules, methods, arguments, logic and domain of objects, which govern what will be visible and which will be considered to be true.

dominant social, moral order. For these conservatives, it was the symbol for the broader master narrative of declinism—that the “British way of life” was coming apart at the seams (1978, vii-viii).

From this vantage point, we might ask whether the seemingly anti-rational and empirically-challenged crisis over sharia (Islamization)—like the crisis over mugging in post-war Britain—was emblematic of the deeper structural crisis or identity insecurity that conservatives and fundamentalists in every society perceive, and a strategy of action to address it in counterhegemonic struggle.

#### **4. Discourse as a Site, Platform, or Field of Struggle**

Although considered outside of professional literature, a report by CAIR (2013, 42) described how Muslim-American leadership—in response to the group’s survey in 2011—believed they were “being used as a political tool”; contending that “We are no longer considered a community as much as a platform.” The next category of data emerging from this threat discourse was how it functioned not merely as a *platform, site, or field* for the U.S. conservative movement’s more profound domestic cultural struggle. Here I want to draw out a subtle distinction between the concept that a discourse can function *in* the field of politics, and the concept that it can function *as* a field of politics. In this latter sense, discourse is not narrowly restricted to the linguistic tool that is used *in* a social struggle; but, rather, it can function as the cognitive space or site upon which a more fundamental, pre-existing political competition takes place, albeit in a new context.

In war (and its less obvious form by other means, politics), the meeting of battling forces takes place on fields of opportunity, often “shaped” or “prepared” expressly for that purpose. The literature describes such fields of struggle. Returning to Hajer’s (1995, 1996, 2005) examination of European environmental security discourse in the 1990s, he revealed how this discourse—more than merely a discourse about the environment—functioned as such a field of deeper cultural struggle—a “stage” upon which cultural struggle could take place, or—in his words—*as* “a field of profound ‘cultural politics.’”

This observation of how discourse could function as “a stage” for politics was well-informed by the theoretical literature. New topical fields are sites of opportunity which can be seized or exploited for political struggle. Even forms of scientific discourse can be appropriated as a field of politics.

For Bourdieu, the social realm was “the site of continual struggles to define what the social world is” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 70). He saw the broad array of social fields functioning as “a space of play and competition in which the social agents and institutions which all possess the determinate quantity of specific capital (economic and cultural capital in particular) sufficient to occupy the dominant positions within their respective fields confront one another in strategies aimed at preserving or transforming this balance of forces” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 76). In his view, scientific discourses—widely perceived as *apolitical* systems of knowledge—had become part of “the social mechanisms which ensure the maintenance of the established order” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, 51) and were “conducted in the name of specific interests” (Bourdieu 1993, 9). To make this point, Bourdieu noted that the sociology of right wing intellectuals is “almost always done by left-wing intellectuals and vice versa” (Bourdieu 1993, 50).

Foucault had made similar observations. He viewed discourses not only as “tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations”, but as “strategical”—the *sites of struggle*, through which agents advance their interests (Foucault 1979, 101-2). In his series on *The History of Sexuality* (1978-1986), for example, he argued how even the human body functioned as an opportune field of cultural struggle where ideologies are contested.

Various discourse theorists have offered similar conceptualizations of discourses as fields or sites of political struggle. Laclau (1990), for example, noted how discursive constructs like myths can function as opportunistic “surfaces of inscription” upon which social needs and projects can be sited. In a related concept, Laclau and Mouffe (2001, 112–113) observed that a discourse tends to be formed around nodal points. These identifiable nodes carry little meaning on their own—hence their term for them as “empty signifiers” (Laclau 1996, 44) or “floating signifiers” (Laclau 1990, 28). An empty signifier functions to provide structure to the discourse, the same way as a sports field provides structure for the competition; it functions as a *topic of contestation* in the underlying political project; it is an “empty” shell, populated with contending meanings by framing agents vying to advance their positions (Laclau 1996, 69).

Implicit narratives or metaphors can also function as empty shells upon which cultural struggle can be enacted. Returning to Hajer’s (2005) analysis of environmental security discourse, it was the deployment of metaphors in that security discourse that led him to conclude that the discourse functioned as a field of cultural struggle. “Acid rain,” for example, was “emblematic of the bigger ‘problem’” (2005, 298); it was part of a broader critique narrative on industrial society itself. Dead



trees from acid rain metaphorically signified a “structural problem” with society broadly—“a broader crisis of industrial society” (2005, 299).

The question for the ensuing analysis is whether “Islamization” security discourse also functioned as such a metaphor or empty shell—as a new opportune field of cultural struggle.

## 5. The Role of Discourse Agents

The question of how U.S. post-9/11 threat discourse on Islam functioned politically at the domestic and especially the identity level obviously implies that the discourse’s principal polemicists were not disinterested security professionals, but political apparatchiks, even cultural warriors. But, this implication aligns with the classic conceptualization of the nature of public intellectuals, experts, pundits, polemicists, or specialists in modern, Western society, as articulated by Gramsci, mainly in the eighth of his ten *Prison Notebooks*.<sup>53</sup> His more voluntarist, anti-determinist analytic framework was distinctly poststructuralist in that it directs us away from a purely structuralist preoccupation with the text alone, and towards a more interpretive understanding that texts emerge from culturally and historically specific social struggles, produced by agents—individual, groups, organizations, institutions—strategically engaged in the struggle for power (Jones 2006, 5). Two groups of agents emerge in Gramsci’s analysis: the volunteers and the organic intellectuals.

In his “Voluntarism and the Social Masses,” Gramsci (1971, 165) highlighted the role of elite agency—or “volunteer action”—in societal factions characterized by significant “passivity” towards such action. In this, Gramsci distinguished the more individual-based “voluntarism” from broader (class-based) mass-level social action. Volunteers, he wrote, are “those who have detached themselves from the mass by arbitrary individual initiative, and who often stand in opposition to that mass” (1971, 442). Collective action is often marked by such volunteer “supermen” or “Caesars” who—rather than engage in the hard work of collective class struggle in the necessary war of position (by changing society from within)—instead attempt to change society through the accumulation of more heroic and existentialist individual acts.

The second category of agency is the more specialized and political intellectual—one who is organic to the non-elite, or working class and functioning in support of that political block in its class struggle. In the modern Western state, every political, economic and/or cultural interest had

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<sup>53</sup> His earlier 1926 essay *Some aspects of the southern question*, written before his arrest by Fascist forces, also deals with the production and function of public intellectuals.

its own particular specialized category of intellectuals who served its interests. “Every social group coming into existence,” he said, “creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields” (1971, 5). The bourgeoisie, for example, created their organic intellectuals; the capitalist entrepreneur, he said, “creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organizers of a new culture, of a new legal system, etc.” (1971, 5). In Gramsci’s (1971, 3) words, these intellectuals are “the thinking and organizing element of a particular fundamental social class,” and should be characterized “by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong.”

Clearly, Gramsci’s insights in this regard were generalizable across human societies, given the prominent role of organic intellectuals in historical and contemporary social movements worldwide. The Muslim Brotherhood had its strata of intellectuals, as did pan-Islamism broadly. In the U.S., the liberation of blacks, women, gays and other marginalized identities in various civil rights movements were largely a function of their own intellectuals, and not led from the outside. Even capitalism emerged lock-step with new types of intellectuals—to include accountants, lawyers, economists and finance experts, industrial engineers, and so on.

For Gramsci, these more practical, non-elite intellectuals were the only ones capable of efficacious counter-hegemonic struggle—of gradually breaking the masses away from the existing consensus or “common sense” regarding the social order, and producing a new revolutionary mass consciousness, “national popular” ideology, or “new modes of thought” that better served the interests of their faction. This simply could not be done by out-of-touch formal scholars who sat in ivory towers writing erudite and scholarly arguments for obscure academic journals, or by the more traditional elite intellectuals who saw themselves independent of any political group. For this reason, it was more of an observation than an argument when Gramsci (1971, 3) said that the notion of a non-interested intellectual “as a distinct social category independent of social class is a myth.”

The interestedness of discourse agents goes beyond that organic to any particular political faction. Even geopolitical discourse from Ratzel to Mackinder, Haushofer to Bowman, Spykman to Kissinger—in the words of Ó Tuathail and Agnew (1998, 79)—was never an objective and disinterested activity but an organic part of the political philosophy and ambitions of these very public intellectuals”. Their geopolitics has not been a disinterested explanation of the world, but rather a production of knowledge to aid nationalistic pursuit of primacy over the other.

It is in the paradigm of power advancing by knowledge that the interestedness of intellectuals—or the nexus of intellectuals and politics—was not a problem for Gramsci. Under the Marxist paradigm, intellectuals were expected to be political; many of his cohorts were public leaders and organizers of a more communist counter-hegemonic project toward proletarian self-government within a civil society then dominated by Fascist bourgeois interests (Herrera-Zgaib 2009, 148). In his words, the intellectual “must have a certain technical capacity,” and “must be an organizer of the masses...” (1971, 5). He added, “If not all entrepreneurs, at least an elite among them must have the capacity to be an organizer of society in general” (1971, 5). “A human mass does not “distinguish” itself,” and “does not become independent in its own right” without, organizing itself, he said; and “there is no organization without intellectuals, that is without organizers and leaders,” for they provide the necessary “theoretical aspect of the theory-practice nexus essential to all effective organizations” (1971, 334). For this reason, he added, “the mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence ... but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organiser, ‘permanent persuader’ and not just a simple orator...” (1971, 10).

In this broader role as political functionaries, organic intellectuals—as the source of all discourse that is recognized by authoritative within their movement—also had the distinct function as *identity* logicians, or functioning in the process of identification—in legitimizing one particular social hierarchy over another via political ideologies or master narratives of self and other (Bowman 1994, 141).

In conclusion, there seems to be much by way of the theoretical literature that informs the notion that there may be much more going on in this otherwise puzzling post-9/11 discourse than securing the nation against a credible, objective threat from Islam(ization). With this framework now sensitizing the data, we can press on to understand how this particular discourse functioned politically, and—to begin with—what political factors were involved.

## POLITICAL FRAMING STRUCTURE

*The construction of identities uses building materials from history... and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects....*

—Manuel Castells (1997, 7)

To address the second part of our research question of how political factors played a role in this discourse's emergence and expansion, we will—as noted earlier—begin with those political factors in the cultural context, with what Castells in the quote above described as the “building materials” from history and culture that are manipulated in every political project.

Again, here we are problematizing the prevailing consensus from the literature that the cultural building materials for this discourse were merely those of racism, xenophobia, and Holy Land and civilizational clash ideologies. And, here we are also obviously problematizing the notion that this kind of practice was something “new.” This may seem to be implied in the substantive literature's various signifiers for it—the “new McCarthyism” (Fekete 2009, Bein 2004), the “new anti-Semitism” (Fotopoulos 2007), and “new face of discrimination” (Allen 2005), and so on. In each these cases, the adjective “new” is joined to something quite old and familiar, and merely implies that it is something that has recurred (and even periodically recurs) in a new skin. As Nobel laureate John Coetzee (1980) aptly put it, “In every generation, without fail, there is an episode of hysteria about the barbarians.” To grasp why this is so, we must dig deeper into the cultural substrate.

The main challenge for any movement is to construct and maintain a strong sense of a particular identity that underwrites political action or identity of a certain kind. To do this, movement elite make use of familiar and transposable cognitive frames or schemas, and other mental structures, such as ideologies, scripts and so on—the mental building materials that comprise their culture, creatively relating them to social contexts in efforts to achieve some goal (Entman

1993, 52).<sup>54</sup> In other words, such cultural mental structures, including ideologies, are enacted by what Giddens (1976, 161) called “knowledgeable” human agents; hence, such “structures must not be conceptualized as simply placing constraints on human agency, but as enabling.”

All knowledge is represented by these “culturally shared mental constructs,” which “function automatically, outside of conscious awareness” (Brubaker, et al. 2004, 41). In other words, discourse agents do not create their own language, as it may appear, but they select segments of language that is culturally, historically and ideologically available to comprise their basic thought and their components. In this way, every speech act is both novel and culturally familiar, with an ideological history.

Therefore, all “new” narratives or myths that emerge are intelligible and credible to the extent that they draw from and build upon such mental structures. This semiotic work is the main function of movement intellectuals and elite; they use or mobilize resources that are already part of the rhetorical commonplace so that the approach advocated can “make sense” to the movement’s existing or potential base (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, 47-50). Again, this means that a sub-society’s set of schemas are “transposable” or “generalizable” in the sense that they can be applied in or extended to a variety of strategies and contexts when the opportunity arises; they are capable of being actualized or put into practice in a range of different circumstances (Sewell 2005, 131-132, 140).<sup>55</sup>

In Sewell’s (2005, 164) terms, “to engage in cultural practice means to utilize existing cultural symbols to accomplish some end.” All collective action entails making use of a semiotic code to do something in the world, or putting it into practice, and knowledgeable social actors play upon the culture’s myths and symbols and reinterpret the world to align with their interests (2005, 167-168). The use and influence of cultural antecedents such as ideologies or elemental security discourses in security writing is well established. Dalby (1988), for example, documented how the U.S. Cold War Committee on the Present Danger drew on a four “security discourses,” especially geopolitics, but also realism, Sovietology, and nuclear strategy “to ideologically construct the Soviet Union as a dangerous ‘Other’” (Dalby 1988, 415).

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<sup>54</sup> Entman (1993, 52) described culture as “the stock of commonly invoked frames.” Ideologies, as Volosinov stressed in his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, encompass the ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving which make the ways of that society seem “natural” or unquestioned to its members (Eagleton 1991).

<sup>55</sup> Agency, to put it Sewell’s other terms, is the actor’s capacity to reinterpret and mobilize an array of resources in terms of cultural schemas other than those that initially constituted the array (Sewell 2005, 143).

This notion that discourses make use of such subcultural resources was the subject of some of the substantive literature on U.S. discourse related to Islam. In the wake of the U.S. liberation of Kuwait, for example, Georgetown University's John Esposito (1992, xix), observed how readily "destructive stereotypes" regarding Islam and Arabs were "reinforced" in explanations. Esposito's student, Lean (2012), in his first chapter "Monsters Among Us" offered a selective "history of sowing fear in America" to suggest that this darker side of U.S. culture played a role in the demonization and dehumanization of Muslims after 9/11.

U.S. culture broadly is marked by a system of symbolic binary codes that specify good and evil (Alexander and Smith 1993). In terms of the Schmittian political binary, this translates to the good self, or friend, and the evil other, or enemy. And, within this latter subcategory of the evil other, or enemy, there are two more distinctive schemata subcategories of enemies outside and inside—again political schemas that correspond with the fundamentalist Muslim distinction of "far enemy" and "near enemy." In the U.S. this political schema has been institutionalized as the familiar phrase, "enemies foreign and domestic," in the U.S. Oath of Office.

In this vein, this chapter will examine those building materials from culture and history in these three basic political categories of the good self, and the evil other, both foreign and domestic—the three categories that readily emerged in the data. Specifically, we will examine: 1) those antecedents regarding the foreign enemy that rendered credible first the shift in the threat axis from al-Qaeda to Islam; 2) those cognitive schemas regarding enemies within—the infiltrators and traitors—that shaped this peculiar and more political practice of conspiratorial linking of their newest foreign ideological foe to domestic political rivals, in a grand subversive scheme to Islamize America; and 3) those cultural antecedents that align with yet another puzzling and pervasive feature of conservative discourse about the threat of Islam: *the narration of the patriotic, exceptional but vulnerable self*.

## **1. Enemies Foreign: The East and Islam as "the West's" Dangerous Other**

Recall how the post-9/11 shift in the threat frame of al-Qaeda in particular to Islam broadly—in stark opposition to the more official and academic "Islam is peace" frame and terrorist/Islam distinction—occurred quickly and seemingly naturally. It was if it were something that conservatives somehow already knew. Despite the relative silence in professional security writing regarding the threat of "Islam" broadly (excluding the continuing resistance of revolutionary Iran) during the previous two generations of struggle to defeat Nazism and Communism, or during the

unprecedented Westernization of the world after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the West was now threatened by a rising *Storm from the East*, to use the phrase in Viorst's (2007) book title.

In the same vein as the anecdotes offered in the introduction, several conservative figures after 9/11 felt politically safe among their audiences in advancing similar frames. In his military uniform among his audience at First Baptist Church of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma in June 2002, for example, then Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, and Army Lieutenant General William G. "Jerry" Boykin explicitly opposed his Commander-in-Chief's "Islam is peace" frame. Flashing to the audience images taken while commanding the 1993 failed mission in Mogadishu Somalia, Boykin said, "Ladies and gentleman, this is your enemy," implicating the entire town and their religion, Islam. "It is the principalities of darkness," he said, "it is a demonic presence in that city that God revealed to me as the enemy" (Arkin 2003). Similarly, among the more apocalyptically-minded Christian audiences fixated on Israel, these frames were especially prevalent. At John Hagee's 2007 Christians United for Israel (CUFI) conference, the aforementioned and later-profiled Brigitte Gabriel told her like-minded audience (to much applause): "The difference, my friends, between Israel and the Arab world is the difference between civilization and barbarism," adding that "It's the difference between good and evil." And, it was in this vein that Republican Congressman Allen West felt free to express his conviction that Arabs are naturally "wild" because God cursed Ishmael and his descendants (Tashman 2010).

### ***Subcultural Frames***

At this point we should ask what political frames in U.S. culture in the category of foreign enemies made this discourse so natural or obvious for conservatives. As noted in the introduction, the post-9/11 counternarrative regarding Islam and ensuing Islamization conspiracy was never *pure* description; it did not sufficiently correspond with objective, grounded reality in the broader swath of the world's Islams. The reason why it didn't is quite simple: *It did not have to*. The schemas within the U.S. culture that could be transposed onto the contemporary and real object of Islam, thereby securitizing it, were such that the new counternarrative was—for many—believable *a priori*—that is, without getting off of the couch, so to speak, to check it out.

"Enemies foreign" is not only a central political schema in U.S. culture, but it has also always had a significant hemispheric orientation toward the East, or Oriental. The Oriental's central position in this Western cultural schema harkens back to the Platonic era, in Aristotle's bifurcations

of reality into Greeks within and Orientals outside and to the East (Dossa 1987).<sup>56</sup> Four centuries later, Jesus' disciple John, in the book of Revelation had a vision of hordes of invaders from lands to the East descending upon the Holy Land for the great battle of Armageddon. In one verse, for example, we read how "The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East" (Revelation 16: 12). Given the Christian heritage of European states and the U.S, this frame is prominent in contemporary extra-biblical apocalyptic and threat literature dating back to the Industrial Revolution, when in 1895 Kaiser Wilhelm II is said to have sketched his famous "Yellow Peril." With the lebensraum tacitly framed as the new Promised Land, the sketch depicted the Archangel Michael in company with angelic-like German citizens with military shields under a heavenly cross, standing their ground as hordes from the Orient approached. Similarly, it was this "kings from the East" frame that informed the popular book *The Yellow Peril or Orient vs. Occident* in 1911, by the influential American Church of God leader and British Israelist, Greenberry Rupert.<sup>57</sup> Rupert (1911, 438) saw these kings as the "Mohammedans." The "yellow peril" threat frame would go on to become culturally-ensconced. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1933, *TIME* lamented, "Again, Yellow Peril." The magazine wrote that "The Yellow Peril has for 30 years been a great circulation-getter for the Hearstpapers...", attributing the scare to Hearst's "fertile mind" wherein "the stern duties of a patriot and the hot desires of a journalist are constantly interbreeding."

These frames of enemies foreign and the East-West demarcation of self and other materialized in Kennan's (1946) description of an implacable enemy in racialized terms of naturalized difference, such as "the Russian or the oriental mind." The East-West bifurcation was accentuated after World War II when the collective geopolitical construct "the West" was interpellated with greater vigor to justify the vast expenditure of funds for the reconstruction of Germany (Jackson 2006). In this discursive strategy, Western Civilization (including Germany) was set off as under threat against its civilizational other to the East, represented by the contemporary Soviet threat (Jackson, 2006).<sup>58</sup>

After 9/11, threat discourse from disparate U.S. conservative intellectuals involved a similar grand geopolitical and hegemonic strategy, which can be characterized as civilizational

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<sup>56</sup> Dossa (1987, 343) argued that a key foundations for this practice was basic Western political philosophy dating back to the Classical period of Plato. In discovering their own political philosophy, the ancient Greeks, he contends, discovered "their Orient—an Orient radically opposed, in politics and morals, to their own Occident."

<sup>57</sup> Rupert (1911) may be read at <https://archive.org/details/cu31924023207818>

<sup>58</sup> This strategy involved a more determined effort to construct and shore up this particularist identity of Western Civilization over any rival notion of civilization (with a small "c").



fundamentalism or *civilizationalism*,<sup>59</sup> which sought to suture the “the West”—from Amsterdam to Americus Georgia—as an enduring, stable and homogenous collective identity via its juxtaposition to threats of “Islam” and “multiculturalism,” which were the predominant euphemisms for the East and Easterners within (O’ Hagan 2004; Cox 2002).

### *Frames of Islam as Threat*

The importance of political frames of a West-East threat axis notwithstanding, it was the building materials from culture that identify Islam as the main Eastern threat that were brought to the surface of post-9/11 threat discourse. In this sense, Rupert’s (1911) conception of the “Mohammedans” as the “kings of the East” and therefore enemies of God and the West was not an anomalous innovation. Such Western frames of Islam as other and danger have remained persistent since their first construction as wartime propaganda at the time of the First Crusade (Lyons 2011; Reeves 2000). The menace of Islam continued to figure prominently from medieval era Christian texts through the colonial period (Southern 1962, 22-24). Earlier, in Dante’s 14<sup>th</sup> –century epic poem *Inferno*, Muhammad was depicted in the deep recesses of Hell and sliced from chin to navel with his bowels falling out, as the fitting punishment for someone “who divided society”—an image still common in contemporary art and political cartoons (Moore, 2006).

Later, in perhaps the supreme achievement in Christian literature, Dostoevski described “the crimes committed by the Turks and Circassians in all parts of Bulgaria.” “They do all sorts of things you can’t imagine,” said one Bulgarian eyewitness, and he went on to give this account of their “bestial cruelty”: “These Turks took pleasure in torturing children, too; cutting the unborn child from the mother’s womb, and tossing the babies up in the air and catching them on the points of their bayonets before their mother’s eyes. Doing it before the mother’s eyes was what gave zest to the amusement” (Dostoevski 1933, 245). Even in modern European philosophical texts, such as Hegel’s (1924) *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* and *The Philosophy of History*, Islam was framed as antithetical to Western, Christian thought and a threat. In his *Lectures* Hegel states that the “religion of Islam is essentially fanatical,”—a charge that he repeats in his *History* (Schewel 2011, 11).

In his *New York Times* bestseller, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*, Robert Spencer (2005) worked from a wealth of anti-Islamic discourse from various European elite now enshrined in Western history, for example:

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<sup>59</sup> Cox (2002, 163) described civilizationalism as “a conscious affirmation of belonging to a civilization”, meaning a particular Civilization, as opposed to civilization.

Winston Churchill (1899, 249-50) wrote, Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step; and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science, the science against which it had vainly struggled, the civilisation of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilisation of ancient Rome (Spencer 2005, 92).

Spencer's text notwithstanding, the main cognitive structure that rendered credible the post-9/11 securitization of Islam was not the relatively obscure texts and quotes by Europeans during the colonial era that few Americans had read or heard. To be sure, the post-9/11 caricatures of Islam and Muslim were characteristic of a much more familiar and even home-grown language, reflective of the racialized grammar of representation of blacks in the U.S. prior to the civil rights movement.<sup>60</sup> It is these features that prompted the substantive literature's characterizations of the discourse as "new face of discrimination" (Allen 2005). Moreover, the securitization of Islam was also enhanced by events in more recent history, as the "Arab terrorist" and threat frame that emerged from the attack on Israeli athlete at the 1972 Munich Olympics morphed into the "Islamic terrorists" frame during the 1979 Iranian revolution, when US embassy personnel were taken hostage in Iran for 444 days (Kumar 2012).

But, as was the case with Rupert's (1911) *Yellow Peril* over Russia and "the Mohammedans", the cultural antecedents that informed the threat axis shift from al-Qaeda to Islam by key U.S. conservatives after 9/11 were *scriptural*. In the first book of the Christian New Testament, six hundred years before the advent of Islam, Jesus had warned that "false messiahs and false prophets will appear" after him, and that God's elect should not go after them (Matthew 24: 24). The widely-held Christian classification of Muhammad as such a false prophet is enhanced by a story set down two thousand years earlier in Genesis, the first book of the Jewish Pentateuch and Christian Old Testament. There, the angel of the Lord in metaphorical terms described the nature and position of Ishmael, who is held by both the Quran and the Bible to be the father of the nation of the Arabs. This text positions Ishmael as "a wild donkey" whose "hand will be against everyone" and who would "live in hostility" toward his brother Isaac, who in this context is a metaphor for the nation of Israel (Genesis 16:12).<sup>61</sup> After Jesus, the Apostle Paul positioned Ishmael and Isaac in a metaphorical binary schema of the flesh (our evil, carnal nature) and the spirit, with the former warring against the latter (Galatians 4: 21-30). And, in the last book of the New Testament, there

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<sup>60</sup> See Leab's (1976) *From Sambo to Superspade*, or Bogle's (1973) *Toms, coons, Mulattos, Mammies and bucks: an interpretative history of blacks in American films*.

<sup>61</sup> It was Isaac's son, Jacob, who was renamed as Israel (Genesis 32:28).

are other antecedents to the “kings of the East” mentioned in Rupert’s text regarding the final battle of Armageddon. The “four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates”— who had been “kept ready for this very hour” were “released to kill a third of mankind” (Revelation 9: 13-15). The obvious contemporary application is that of four countries among those there—Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Pakistan, perhaps—who would cross the Euphrates on land in route to Jerusalem. Then in Revelation 17 we read how Babylon the Great—whose ancient seat is in modern day Iraq—is “the mother of all prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth,” and how this woman “was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.”<sup>62</sup>

Still other biblical antecedents that inform the ideology of Christian Zionism also undergird post-9/11 U.S. threat discourse regarding Islam. Works such as John Hagee’s (2007) bestseller, *In Defense of Israel: The Bible’s Mandate for Supporting the Jewish State*, mobilize scripture such as where the Lord said to Abram, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river—the river Euphrates” (Genesis 15: 18). A much larger set of scriptural passages like this informs the widespread affinity for Israel among Christians worldwide and especially Americans. For many U.S. religious conservatives, the only entities blocking the way of Israel’s rightful and certain expansion into the fullness of the lands promised it by God are the Philistines who still inhabit those lands, along with their faith, Islam. This sentiment was evident in Christian Zionist and Armageddon hawk Joel Rosenberg’s (2006) bestselling novel, *The Ezekiel Option*, by the Christian publisher Tyndale House. In this plot, the head of the Mossad, Dr. Mordechai, sees an emerging axis of Russia, Iran Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Sudan and Saudi Arabia as forming against Israel, but proposes not a military or “Samson Option,” but instead “The Ezekiel Option,” in which Israel allows God to wage war against its enemies.

With these frames operative in many of the post-9/11 bestsellers—both non-fiction and fiction—we can begin to understand the vast influence of Samuel Huntington’s (1996) clash of civilizations thesis, as noted by Bonney (2008). When Huntington (1996, 217) warned that the “fundamental problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization,” he was merely stating what many—somehow—already knew. Five years later, in 2001, this frame of Islam as threat was more fully ensconced in the American psyche, and ready for

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<sup>62</sup> This scriptural basis for the hostile myth is enhanced by another, related cultural structure: the widespread belief in America at that juncture regarding the inerrancy of the scriptures. In 2005, 63 percent of *all* Americans, 77 percent of all Republicans, and 89 percent of Evangelicals believed in the literal truth of the Bible (Rasmussen Reports 2005). Similarly, *Gallup* reported in May 2007 that—based on the average of the past three years’ polling—78 percent of *all* Americans believed that the Bible was the actual word of God to be taken literally, or the inspired word of God, which had some figurative statements (Newport 2007).

mobilization after al-Qaeda's attacks, providing a key element of resistance to the more dominant terrorist/Islam and emerging good Muslim/bad Islamist distinctions (Belt 2009). With their market sensitized to these subcultural resources, some conservative elite could credibly shift the threat axis from al-Qaeda—the newly-emerging small transnational, non-state actor organization armed only with small arms—and could readily call into remembrance the West's eternal civilizational Other to the East, and that they heretofore had ignored to the nation's peril.

## 2. Enemies Domestic: Infiltrators and Traitors

Suspiciously, the counternarrative regarding Islam that emerged in the decade after 9/11 was not as it seemed on the surface—all about Islam. It began to reliably include a non-sequitur mass at its core that was not about the newest foreign enemy, but the old domestic one. When Christian evangelist Billy Graham, for example, talked about Islam in terms of “barbarians beating at our gates from without,” he did not stop there. In that same sentence he went on to link that threat of barbarians without to the “moral termites from within”—a phrase that his audience understood as denoting progressivism broadly (Chafe 2003, 26-27). And, when Pat Robertson, hosting the April 28<sup>th</sup> 2006 Christian Broadcasting Network's *The 700 Club*, countered the dominant consensus, saying “It is not a religion of peace,” he similarly did not end the discussion on the topic of the threat of Islam, but on the topic of his political rivals, “the American left,” who needed to “wake up” to the danger that Islam presents (MediaMatters 2006). Similarly, in March 2011, popular Fox News Channel host Glenn Beck linked his domestic enemies to his newest foreign enemy, warning that America and other Western states are “being divvied up” by the “uber left” and the “Islamicists” (Mirkinson 2011).<sup>63</sup> In this same frame, Erick Stakelbeck, the Christian Broadcasting Network's “terrorism analyst”—in a June 2011 event hosted by ACT! for America's Brigitte Gabriel—explained that “the Left sees Islam as an ally and Western Civilization and the Judeo-Christian tradition is the enemy” and they (Islam and the Left) “have a shared hatred for this country” (Ingersoll 2011).

And, during the later manufactured hype over sharia or Islamization, this practice of linking of some conservatives' newest foreign enemy with the broader movement's domestic political rivals

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<sup>63</sup> In March 2011, Beck hosted a program to talk “about history's failed revolutions and what they can teach us today”, and contended that “radicals, Islamists, communists, socialists, labor unions from all over the world are working together, even though they don't agree with each other on everything... (Theel, 2011).

continued. But, there was a twist: the foreign enemy was now within; it had infiltrated the homeland. Marking this *foreign enemy within* threat narrative were Sperry's (2005) book *Infiltration: How Muslim Spies and Subversives Have Penetrated Washington*, published by world's largest Christian publisher, Thomas Nelson, and Gaubatz and Sperry's (2009) *Muslim Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld that's Conspiring to Islamize America*, published by evangelical Joseph Farah's conspiratorial *WorldNetDaily*. Among political elite, former-GOP presidential frontrunner Michele Bachmann garnered headlines in at the end of the post-9/11 decade by claiming that key government institutions had been infiltrated by disloyal Muslim-Americans who were agents of the nation's enemies. Bachmann told the American Family Association's Sandy Rios that "there has been deep penetration in the halls of our United States government by the Muslim Brotherhood", and that "it appears that there are individuals who are associated with the Muslim Brotherhood who have positions, very sensitive positions, in our Department of Justice, our Department of Homeland Security, potentially even in the National Intelligence Agency [sic]" (Tashman 2012).

The infiltration schema was also shaping the discourse of some prominent religious figures. In a March 2011 interview with *Newsmax*, Franklin Graham said that President Barack Obama had allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to infiltrate the US government and influence administration decisions. "The Muslim Brotherhood is very strong and active here in our country," Graham told *Newsmax*. "We have these people advising our military and State Department. We've brought in Muslims to tell us how to make policy toward Muslim countries. He added, "It's like a farmer asking a fox, 'How do I protect my hen house?'" (Gonsalves and Walter 2011). Similarly, on July 4, 2011, in an interview with the increasingly right security pundit Frank Gaffney, the aforementioned former Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Army general and popular Christian speaker Jerry Boykin implicated as an agent of a Muslim Brotherhood plot "to penetrate our government" the young Muslim woman, Huma Abedin—a longtime logistics (not policy) aide to the Obama administration's Secretary of State, and highly-likely future presidential candidate, Hillary Rodham Clinton (Tashman 2011).

Conservative media institutions also were eager to advance the infiltration frame. In a series of articles in 2008, *Washington Times* reporter Bill Gertz hounded Muslim-American Hesham Islam—a former naval officer and then senior advisor to the Secretary of the Navy—implicating him as an agent of the enemy. Gertz alleged that Hesham had persuaded Pentagon officials to not renew the contract for J2 intelligence analyst, Stephen Coughlin. At the time, Coughlin's Power Point brief—based on his 2006 Master's thesis from National Intelligence University (then Joint Military

Intelligence College)—was enjoying far-reaching access at the Pentagon, framing “true” Islam within the jihadist interpretation, in opposition to the Commander-in-Chief’s “Islam is peace” frame, and tacitly framing Muslim-Americans who had any past or present association with the predominant Muslim-American civic associations as infiltrating agents of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>64</sup>

Again, this pervasive post-9/11 frame of the infiltrating foreign enemy was almost always tethered that of the traitor, or disloyal citizen—someone trusted part of the self, who from that position on the inside functions as a crucial accomplice, unlocking the gate, aiding and abetting. In the case of the purported Islamization of America, the infiltration of foreign religious competitors—euphemized variously as a “stealth jihad”—was being made possible by the farther Right’s duty traitors—the Left.

That this strategy dubious practice of linking the conservative movement’s newest foreign enemy with its traditional domestic enemy was perceived by a few conservative elite to have political utility was evident in how prevalent this practice became in their discourse. Republican candidate for president, Michele Bachmann, for example—in a 2010 interview on conservative talk radio’s popular *The Mike Gallagher Show*—asserted that the opposing political party had allied with America’s ideological foe to destroy the nation. “It seems like there is this common cause that is occurring with the left and with radical Islam...” she said (MN Progressive Project 2010). Similarly, GOP presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich, at Christian Zionist leader John Hagee’s Cornerstone Church in Texas, spoke in highly euphemistic terms that his audience understood well, “convinced that if we do not decisively win the struggle over the nature of America,” that the nation will be “a secular atheist country, potentially one dominated by radical Islamists and with no understanding of what it once meant to be an American” (Mantyla 2011). In his 2011 speech to his base via the American Enterprise Institute, Gingrich began by advancing the Islamization of America frame. “Stealth jihadis,” he said, “use political, cultural, societal, religious, intellectual tools...to replace Western civilization with a radical imposition of Shariah” (Shane, 2011). Then, bridging the enemies foreign and domestic frames, he said, “The left’s refusal to tell the truth about the Islamist threat is a natural parallel to the 70-year pattern of left-wing intellectuals refusing to tell the truth about communism and the Soviet Union”.

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<sup>64</sup> Based on professional meetings with Mr. Coughlin at the time, and the unclassified version of his thesis he gave me. The frame of infiltration was advanced even among some active and former military officer faculty at government institutions of higher learning within the defense and interagency arena. At National Defense University’s Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk Virginia, for example, the curriculum text and outside speaker presentations for a course on Islam made nation-wide headlines when it was learned that it framed the American government bureaucracies, the White House, and even Capitol Hill as co-opted by subversive Muslim elements (Rushing 2012).

Finally, in the texts that housed this latest episode of paranoia, they did not stop with disloyal Muslim-Americans, as books titles such as David Horowitz's (2006) *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left* and Andrew McCarthy's *The Grand Jihad: How Islam and the Left Sabotage America*, and his *How Obama Embraces Islam's Sharia Agenda* suggest.

### ***Subcultural Frames***

This practice of political *frame-bridging*, or the linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames—foreign and domestic enemies, in this case—is typical of political movement strategies (Benford and Snow 2000, 624). The more peculiar mode of linking one's more progressive domestic political rivals to foreign enemies is a subculturally-ensconced strategy of action among more fundamentalist conservatives in the U.S. and in Islamic countries.

Fundamentalist Islamic movements, for example, link the local regime judged to be insufficiently Islamic—"the near enemy"—with secular Western states who are thought to be surreptitiously Westernizing and destroying their culture—"the far enemy"—in the effort to delegitimize the former (Gerges 2005). In the eyes of Iran's clerics, says Qom-trained Shiite theologian Mehdi Khalaji, the enemy's armies are innumerable and include everyone who adheres to modern liberal values and cultural institutions. In the view of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, he explains, "Western cultural colonizers are trying to destroy the cultural 'authenticity' of Muslims and deprive it of its 'originality' and there are colonized minds within Muslim community who are knowingly or unknowingly the West's agents...such as intellectuals, scholars, artists and writers..." (Khalaji 2012).

In nearly all recurring episodes of hysteria about the far enemy, there are corresponding frames of that enemy having infiltrated with the assistance of domestic traitors. This is exacerbated in the more heterogeneous and pluralistic Western societies, where the question of who is part of self and who is not engenders perennial identity insecurity. This insecurity of self—in turn—generates antagonistic identity politics to secure self-identity through the ideological demarcation of those inside—often signified as "the patriots"—and those outside—"the traitors," "infiltrators", the "fifth column", and so on. This may explain why many American conservatives are said to be not so much nationalistic as they are patriotic (Lievan 2004). For the patriot subject position to figure so prominently in U.S. culture, its opposite the traitor must be prominently juxtaposed—co-constituting each other in what Foucault (2003 [1975], 109) termed as a "schematic dichotomy" of patriot/traitor, which was also a "binary schema" of in the sense that it divides society in two. Again, just as there can be no heroes without villains—and no great heroes without great villains—

the frame of the patriot has no meaning apart from that of the traitor, or the enemy within; the presence of one evokes the other; the one has no meaning and cannot exist apart from the other (Hall 1997, 236; Derrida, 1978, 1981).

For this reason, perhaps, it should have come as no surprise that when the threat frame of Islam as a foreign enemy was losing its political utility, some influential conservative intellectuals and elite shifted the threat axis once again to religio-political enemies that dwelled within the nation's borders—both the infiltrators, or the tiny half-immigrant, half-black minority group of Muslim-Americans, and the traitors, or the more hegemonic domestic political rivals, the Left.

But, what was surprising was the richness of the cultural repertory that these framing agents enjoyed. U.S. culture is replete with historical building materials or antecedents for framing Muslim Americans as foreign agents and *infiltrators* intent on the Islamization or sharia-ization of the homeland, and for framing the nation's more progressive elites and institutions as disloyal *traitors* who were complicit with this conspiracy.

The frames of an infiltrating enemy within is a recurring one. Historically, such bouts of paranoia regarding the enemies domestic emerged when actions by some individual members of a scapegoated group or “folk devils” were—out of all proportion—framed as representative of the whole subgroup (Cohen 1972, 9; Jones and Jones 1999). Here we must think of *Washington Times's* Gertz's hounding of Hesham Islam at the Pentagon, and General Boykin's hysteria over Huma Abedin at State Department. Every (sub)society has its folk devils—groups or archetypes that occupy this position, and who are useful as boundary markers, or visible reminders of what we should not be. As Cohen (1972, 2) in his work on Britain's moral panics notes, “the identities of such social types are public property”; they are culturally fixed subject positions.

This subject position of the enemy within can be traced to the beginning of Western Civilization, beginning most famously with Nero's persecution of the Church in the first century, and Pliny's inquisition of the Christians in the early second century Roman Empire. After the Christianization of that empire by Constantine, the enemy within mentality turned to heretics. In 390, Rome's Theodosian Code established a state religion, thereby implicating anyone who did not submit to it as “demented and insane” with “depraved desires and beliefs”. By 1163, Englishmen William of Newburgh wrote that heretics “as the prophet says,” seem to have “multiplied beyond number”, and characterized them in so many medical tropes, such as “pest”, “cancer”, “leper,” and “germ” (Bosmajian 1999, 20-21). The twelfth and thirteenth century witnessed more Nero-like persecution of the disloyal elements within in Pope Innocent III and Gregory IV's inquisitions.



In U.S. history in particular, the frame of the foreign enemy within—the traitorous elements, impurities or infectious elements on the inside that were vectors of outside diseases—what Hofstadter (1964) pejoratively called the “paranoid style”—has been pervasive and has permeated all genre of discourse.

In the American Revolution, the link was manifest in the form of coercive loyalty oaths, which served to demarcate the friend-enemy boundary—those inside who sided with the Revolution from those outside who were “secret enemies” or “traitor[s] in thought, but not in deed,” in Jefferson’s words (Levy 1963, 30; Bosmajian 1999, 50). By 1778, each of the colonial states had a loyalty test that it imposed upon all citizens, with New York law having empowered the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies to tender such an oath (Bosmajian 1990, 50).

In language identical to that of today’s Islamization conspiracy proponents, Scottish physicist Dr. John Robison in 1797 wrote *Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe, carried on in the Secret Meetings of the Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies* (Edinburgh), and thus began an influential scare in Europe. He framed the Masons on continental Europe as formed “for the express purpose of rooting out all religious establishments, and overturning all the existing governments of Europe” (Robison 1798, 12).<sup>65</sup> On the morning of May 9, 1798, on the day of that John Adams had proclaimed for “solemn humiliation, fasting, and prayer,” Connecticut-born Reverend Jedidiah Morse—at both the New North Church in Boston and the other from his home pulpit in Charlestown—announced that the secret European society which was believed to have caused the French Revolution, the Illuminati, had infiltrated the U.S. and was now actively working to overthrow the nation’s civil and religious institutions (Stauffer 1918, 10-11). Morse, who had just read Robison’s (1797) *Proofs of a Conspiracy*, which had been reprinted in the U.S. in 1798, was armed with all he needed. “As a faithful watchmen,” he said, “I would give you warning of your present danger.” The context, according to Stauffer (1918), was the rapid disintegration of puritanism after the Revolution, and ominous discontent with the standing order.

Lyman Beecher’s (1835) “Plea for the West” claimed that “Protestantism was engaged in a life-or-death struggle with Catholicism” (1835, 47). Beecher, a Presbyterian minister from New Haven, fancied that “A corps of men acting systematically and perserveringly for their own ends,” may “inflame and divide the nation...and throw down our free institutions” (Beecher 1835, 63). The Catholicization narrative began to take root that same year, 1835, when Samuel F.B. Morse—the inventor of the telegraph—wrote *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States: The Numbers*

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<sup>65</sup> Can be read electronically at <https://archive.org/details/proofsofconspira00r>

of *Brutus*, attempting to prove that a plot by the Catholics was afoot. Austria is “now acting in this country” said Morse; “She has devised a grand scheme. . . . She has her Jesuit missionaries traveling through the land. . . .” He added “This society having ostensibly a religious object, has been for nearly four years at work in the United States, without attracting, out of the religious world, much attention to its operations” (Morse 1835, 17-18).<sup>66</sup> Twenty years later, the Catholicization threat-narrative was still dominant; the *Texas State Times*, on September 15, 1855 wrote that:

It is a notorious fact that the Monarchs of Europe and the Pope of Rome are at this very moment plotting our destruction and threatening the extinction of our political, civil, and religious institutions. We have the best reasons for believing that corruption has found its way into our Executive Chamber, and that our Executive head is tainted with the infectious venom of Catholicism. . . . (Hofstadter 1964, 78).

The nineteenth century in the U.S. experienced still more conspiracies about resistance elements inside linked to the nation’s foreign enemies. The emergence of trade unions in the nineteenth century were similarly framed in terms of the enemy within linked to foreign elements. Outlawing a tailor’s union in 1830, the judge wrote of them “they are of foreign origin and I am led to believe mainly upheld by foreigners” (Zinn 1980, 218, 235).

After World War I, the conspiracies linking domestic traitors with foreign enemies resumed. The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 gave new life to this conspiracy frame, and underscored the primacy that the U.S. gave to enemies domestic. The threat writing at the time of this “First Red Scare”—as it became known—revealed that “most Americans were more concerned with Bolshevism at home than Bolshevism abroad” (Leffler 1994, 14-15). And, at this domestic level, Bolsheviks—like all security threats—turned out to be politically useful; politicians on both sides discovered this “new rhetorical resource” and framed their domestic opponents as closet sympathizers with this foreign ideological other (Jackson 2006, 57). Moves of self-purification followed, such as the Palmer raids of 1919 which deported suspected communist sympathizers, and the late-Interwar institutionalization of the “House Un-American Activities Committee” (Kovel 1994, 17-21; Leffler 1994, 15-16).

Primed in this way, the attacks on Pearl Harbor set off a second and well-known episode of hysteria about the enemy within. On the mere suspicion of mass loyalty of Japanese-Americans to the Japanese emperor, President Roosevelt signed an executive order in February 1942 ordering to

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<sup>66</sup> Can be read electronically at [http://arcticbeacon.com/books/Samuel\\_Morse\\_A\\_FOREIGN\\_CONSPIRACY,1853-With-Addendums.pdf](http://arcticbeacon.com/books/Samuel_Morse_A_FOREIGN_CONSPIRACY,1853-With-Addendums.pdf)

concentration camps in the interior of the United States 127,000 Americans of known Japanese ancestry—two-thirds of whom were born in the U.S., most of whom had never been to Japan to visit relatives, and many of whom were World War I veterans (Library of Congress 2014).<sup>67</sup>

Notwithstanding these historical resources, the dual infiltration-traitor frame that pervades post-9/11 discourse had its clearest antecedents in the Second Red Scare, between the mid-1940s to the mid-1960s. By 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, led by the newly-elected representative Richard M. Nixon, was re-enacting this age-old fundamentalist mentality to root out the enemy, the godless, the heretic within. American students of the Jehovah's Witnesses faith who could not pledge allegiance to the flag were deemed treacherous and threatened with incarceration (Bosmajian 1999, 4). And, when women fought for the retention of day-care programs after the war, the *New York World Telegram* in 1947 charged that “the entire program of child care was conceived by leftists operating out of communist work cells” (Chafe 1991, 165).

That same year, the Sovietization of America frame emerged at the more popular level in works such as the 10 cents comic-book classic, *Is This Tomorrow: America Under Communism*. Published in 1947 by the Catechetical Guild Educational Society based in St. Paul, Minnesota, under the leadership of Father Louis Gales, it tells the over-the-top story of a Red sleeper cell that takes over America through agents in the media, Congress, and public schools. It begins, saying:

Today, there are approximately 85,000 official members of the Communist Party in the United States. There are hundreds of additional members whose names are not carried on the Party roles because acting as disciplined fifth columnists of the Kremlin, they have wormed their way into key positions in government offices, and other positions of public trust.

Communists themselves claim that for every official Party member, there are ten others ready, willing and able to do the Party's bidding.

These people are working day and night—laying the groundwork to overthrow YOUR GOVERNMENT!<sup>68</sup>

And, at the practical or official level, U.S. strategic documents, such as NSC-17 (1948)—appropriately titled “The Internal Security of the United States”—warned of the unofficial members of the Communist conspiracy: the “convinced communist,” who hid membership; the “fellow traveler” who was not a member; the “sympathizer” who was not in total agreement but entertained “friendly feelings”; the “opportunist” who furthered his own interest through the party; the

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<sup>67</sup> Photo: Children pledging allegiance to U.S. flag at Weill public school, San Fran., prior to relocation (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog).

<sup>68</sup> Available at <http://conelrad.blogspot.com/2010/12/is-this-tomorrow-america-under.html>

“confused liberal” who believed cooperation was possible; and, finally, other “well-meaning, socially minded, charitable people” who were deceived by Communist slogans or fronts (Peck 2006, 264).

It was in this paranoid milieu that the era’s more emblematic proponent of the enemies domestic frame emerged. Wisconsin Senator “Joe” McCarthy had advanced the scare by framing the nation’s foreign ideological enemy as infiltrating the homeland at the highest levels of government, with the aid of traitorous domestic rivals. The aforementioned charge by former GOP presidential frontrunner Michele Bachmann that agents of the Muslim Brotherhood had infiltrated key government and intelligence positions unwittingly had mobilized the classic frames and from the patriot subject position of Senator Joe McCarthy who in February 1950 told the Senate that he had a list of 57 “card-carrying Communists” (members of the Communist Party of the United States of America, CPUSA), yet were working in the State Department (Reeves 1997, 224).

Speaking in the Senate on June 14, 1951, the senator incredulously implicated U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall as the leader of “a great conspiracy” involving the alliance of the nation’s foreign and domestic enemies. “How can we account for our present situation,” he began his speech, “unless we believe that men high in this government are concerting to deliver us to disaster?” (Congress 1951). He added:

It is the great crime of the Truman administration that it has refused to undertake the job of ferreting the enemy from its ranks. I once puzzled over that refusal. The President, I said, is a loyal American; why does he not lead in this enterprise? I think that I know why he does not. The President is not master in his own house. Those who are master there not only have a desire to protect the sappers and miners - they could not do otherwise. They themselves are not free. They belong to a larger conspiracy, the world-wide web of which has been spun from Moscow.

The progenitor of the anti-elitism strategy of action that would soon come to characterize the GOP, McCarthy spoke of “the traitorous actions” of the nation’s elite, “born with silver spoons in their mouths” who have lived in “the finest homes” and had “the finest college educations.” He framed as “elitists” the federal workers at the U.S. Department of State and linked that frame to that of the traitor, saying “I have here in my hand a list of 205” who are “members of the Communist Party and who are nevertheless all still working and shaping policy in the State Department” (Lately 1973, 94).

The McCarthyesque frame of high-level traitors—the foreign enemy within *and in control*—was propagated well into the 1960s by political advocacy groups in civil society. The influential John Birch Society, established in 1958, was notorious in this regard. Its founder, Robert Welch—

implicated even President Eisenhower of being a Communist agent. With regard to Eisenhower, he wrote in a widely publicized piece that began the society's demise, "it is difficult to avoid raising the question of deliberate treason" (Berlet and Lyons 2000, 179). In 1964, the society had broadened its infiltration frame, imagining that the United Nations (an initiative of President Franklin D. Roosevelt) was—in the words of that organization's John Rousselot—"an instrument of the Soviet Communist conspiracy" (San Francisco Chronicle 1964, July 31). The group has since extended its conspiratorial and infiltration frames, and is currently active throughout the U.S., part of the broader "Patriot" movement.<sup>69</sup>

The frame of enemies within became politically useful during the civil rights era. A classic case was when the House Un-American Activities Committee met in October 1967 to determine the extent and manner to which various troubles the country was experiencing—race riots, lootings, arsons, and so on—had been "planned, instigated, incited, or supported by Communist and other subversive organizations and individuals" (Congress, 1967). Yet, these hearings were dubiously led by white southern segregationists like Virginia's Representative William Tuck, who supported the "massive resistance" policy introduced by Virginia Senator Harry Byrd to resist the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling, which mandated public school desegregation (Woods 2004, 227-228). After 9/11, an almost identical set of hearings on the threat of radicalization among Muslim-Americans was led in the first half of 2011 by Republican New York Representative Peter King, who chaired House Homeland Security Committee. The genuine intent to determine the facts was dubious, given that much of the Republican members' focus was on scoring political points against the Democrats.<sup>70</sup>

After such a reliable history of this practice, we might predict that this continuous propagation of the *enemy within* frame might immediately reemerge in new political contexts after the Islamization of America conspiracy. And, of course, this is what we find. Already, in the post-Great Recession era, the more rightist element in the U.S. is engaged in characteristic hyperbole by remobilizing the

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<sup>69</sup> The Southern Poverty Law Center (2012) identified the John Birch Society as one of 1274 anti-government "Patriot" groups that were active in 2011. Generally, Patriot groups define themselves as opposed to the "New World Order," engage in groundless conspiracy theorizing, or advocate or adhere to extreme antigovernment doctrines.

<sup>70</sup> For example, during King's second hearing on Muslim radicalization in U.S. prisons on 15 June 2011, Republican representatives Dan Lungren and Jeff Duncan found the platform useful to point out how "the political correctness" among Democrats in the room was "astounding," and to complain that the mere discussion about the threat of radical Islam appeared to be "off limits" for Democrats (Piraneo 2011).

“Sovietization of America” variant in political quests for liberty from gun control<sup>71</sup> and the Affordable Care Act.<sup>72</sup>

### 3. The Patriot Self in Decline: Disciplining the Vulnerabilities

Recall from the conceptual framework how all identity is constituted in relation to difference, and—therefore—how a collective’s security discourse about its others also and necessarily is an act of self-identification, (re)constituting itself.<sup>73</sup> In other words, threat discourses not only politically identify the collective’s outside—those events, structures and agencies that are not us, and that through this process of externalization and securitization constitute danger—they identify the We, the self, the inside, the realm of security. It is in this context that *in*security—or identity insecurity—is the necessary condition and means of a secure identity.

In the case at hand, post-9/11 threat discourse that was ostensibly about America’s newest dangerous other was shot-through with frames of self and practices of self. Much more than merely a practice that identified the movement’s others—its enemies foreign and domestic, religious and political, Islam and the Left—it was also what Foucault (1982, 208) described as a “*dividing practice*” that not only separated these others from the self, but also separated the healthy and diseased tissue within the body politic. This latter dividing practice functioned as a form of self-identification by way of self-discipline, or self-normalization.

Historically, this self-identifying and self-disciplinary feature of identity or cultural politics has permeated U.S. threat or security discourse. Texts identifying foreign and domestic *threats outside* of the movement were replete with identification of *vulnerabilities inside* the still exceptional self. Again, the concept of security in these texts, therefore—rather than entailing some positive eradication of dangers outside the movement—involved reducing insecurity inside. It was in this vein that Buzan (1991, 112) had noted that “Insecurity reflects a combination of threats and vulnerabilities, and the two cannot meaningfully be separated.”

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<sup>71</sup> “An American Soviet poster depicting the supreme comrade Obama with a child during the gun disarmament era.” Source: <http://www.dailysquib.co.uk/world/3738-comrade-obama-urges-you-to-drop-the-guns-for-the-childrens-sake.html>. See also <http://www.libertygunrights.com/Primakov%201.pdf>

<sup>72</sup> In the context of resistance to the Affordable Care Act, 2014. From the article, “The Sovietization of America: Its Over”. Source: <http://markamerica.com/2012/06/28/the-sovietization-of-america-its-over/>

<sup>73</sup> In Campbell’s (1998, 9) words, identity is performatively constituted “through the inscription of boundaries that serve to demarcate an ‘inside’ from an ‘outside,’ a ‘self’ from an ‘other,’ a ‘domestic’ from a foreign.”

In a fundamentalist strategy of action that resurrected that of the Thatcherite Tories in Britain and the McCarthyites and later Moral Majority in successive generations in the U.S, post-9/11 conservative threat writers warned of a nation and broader civilization in dissolution or decay, and especially in terms of loss of cultural identity (Bowman 1994, 144).<sup>74</sup> This was especially the case among civilizational fundamentalists on both sides of the Atlantic, where the frame of Islam as evil was often bridged with the frame of the Western self in decline. Recall the frame of Dante's Muhammad in Hell. This pretext was remobilized in 2006 in a cartoon by *Studi Cattolici*—an Italian magazine with links to the conservative Roman Catholic group, Opus Dei. “Isn't that man there, split in two from head to navel, Mohammed?” Dante asks Virgil in the cartoon's caption. “Yes and he is cut in two because he has divided society,” Virgil replies, adding that. “While that woman there, with the burning coals, represents the politics of Italy towards Islam.” In this frame of self-decline, Cesare Cavalleri, the editor of the magazine, said “This is not a cartoon against Mohammed. It is a cartoon which addresses the loss of the West's identity” (Moore 2006).

Such post-9/11 declinism was characterized in a dual threat frame of the progressive culture (the Left) and its destructive policy of multiculturalism, which was responsible for the reverse colonization of the Western heartland and Holy Land (by Islam). In this dual-threat frame, the battle is established along both religious and political, and foreign and domestic lines, against the “Islam-Leftist axis.”

Giving credence to this dual threat frame, Huntington after 9/11 broadened his threat conception of Islam as the fundamental problem for the West to include the ideology of multiculturalism (2004, 171). In his *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, Huntington (2004) asserted that the advance of both progressive ideology and its offspring multiculturalism had meant that few people in the West—whether more progressive natives or immigrants—identified with Western Civilization, and few of America's more progressive cultural and business elites still identified with America's once dominant Anglo-Protestant culture (see also, Kurth 2009).

Attending these prominent frames of declinism at the hands of these religio-political others, were frames of self-exceptionalism, interpellating the reader into self-purification and patriotic action to save the good self from certain death. Recall Canadian-born conservative columnist Mark Steyn's

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<sup>74</sup> In Bowman's words: “Thus, when certain hegemonizing groups claim that the nation is threatened with dissolution or decay (as has been done in Britain by the Thatcherite Tories and in the United States by the McCarthyites and the ‘Moral Majority’) and attempt to ‘correct’ or fix the character of the nation along moral or political lines, constituent parts of the national entity are marked off as enemies.”

(2008) *America Alone: The end of the world as we know it*—a *New York Times* bestseller, which similarly portrayed a leftist-weakened heartland of Western Civilization overrun by another civilization, as captured in his book cover introduction:

Someday soon you might wake up to the call to prayer from a muezzin. Europeans already are. And the liberals will still tell you that “diversity is our strength”—while Talibanic enforcers cruse Greenwich Village burning books and barber shops, the Supreme Court decides sharia law doesn’t violate the “separation of church and state,” and the Hollywood Left decides to give up on gay rights in favor of the much safer charms of [Islamic] polygamy.

If you think this can’t happen, you haven’t been paying attention....

The future, as Steyn shows, belongs to the fecund and the confident. And the Islamists are both, while the West is looking ever more like the ruins of a civilization.

But America can survive, prosper, and defend its freedom only if it continues to believe in itself, in the sturdier virtues of self-reliance (not government), in the centrality of family, and in the conviction that our country really is the world’s last best hope.

Such self-disciplinary themes figured prominently in Catholic intellectual Roger Scruton’s (2009) “Islam and the West: Lines of Demarcation”, published in the Jewish quarterly, *Azure*. The article quickly made its way onto Brigitte Gabriel’s *ACT! for America’s* education page, from where it gained wider readership.<sup>75</sup> Despite the camouflage of threats outside, the article’s obvious purpose was to identify vulnerabilities inside—such as the “enormous cultural shift” since the Vietnam War (undoubtedly due to progressivism and multiculturalism). In a classic jeremiad style, he laments how that (more progressive) citizens of Western states “have lost their appetite for foreign wars” and “lost confidence in their way of life,” and how self-critics on the Left like Said and Chomsky with a habitus of “feeling guilty” “alerts your enemy to the possibility of destroying you”. Scruton then adds, “We should therefore be prepared to affirm what we have, and to express our determination to hold on to it.”

Another work typical of this self-disciplinary strategy of action was the article “Fearing for Freedom in a Post-Christian Europe,” which appeared in Daniel Pipes’s *Islamist Watch* on January 31, 2010. The project’s director David Rusin—a U.S. professor of astrophysics and cosmology—criticized European Christian leaders for failing to defend “their faith and the civilization built around it.” Rusin cited retiring Czech Cardinal Miloslav Vlk, who warned of the “fall of Europe” as

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<sup>75</sup> [http://www.actforamericaeducation.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=86](http://www.actforamericaeducation.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=86)



“the spiritual vacuum” created by Europe’s radical secularization was being filled by Islam.<sup>76</sup> A similar article sponsored by Pipe’s *Islamist Watch* that typifies this feature of self-discipline in post-9/11 threat discourse was Kathy Shaidle’s article, “Toronto’s Love of Diversity Is Tested by Islamists.” Published by the farther Right e-daily *Pajamas Media* (now *PJ Media*) on June 9, 2010, this Canadian blogger—who wrote the blog *Relapsed Catholic*—focused not on Islamists, as the title suggests, but on the progressive elite and culture. For this task, Shaidle approvingly cited dissident intellectual Salim Mansur:

The elite in this country has abandoned its own history out of any number of reasons — too tired to procreate, too despondent about the future, too concerned about the immediate present, too many guilty feelings about the past, too little pride in the achievements of those who built this country — and decided that the better way of securing ‘peace, order, and good government’ [Canada’s official motto] is to appease the demands of immigrants rather than demand of them an acceptance of the country’s history which they have chosen to make their home.

Such self-disciplinary features of post-9/11 threat discourse ostensibly on the topic of Islam often shifted to security of the Holy Land, Israel. Fearful of collectively losing God’s blessing as a nation, the more Zionist segment of evangelicals often fused the two nation’s identities. With America’s identity conflated with Israel’s, threats to Israel were threats to America. Moreover, loyalty to Israel means not only loyalty to America, but the very *existence* of America, as the Christians United for Israel (CUFI) slogan “Defend America, Vote Israel” suggests.<sup>77</sup> For example, at a Republican Jewish Coalition in Los Angeles in 2010, then presidential candidate Michele Bachmann said that “I am convinced in my heart and in my mind that if the United States fails to stand with Israel, that is the end of the United States” (Birkey 2010).

Similarly, on June 7, 2011, bestselling Holy Land thriller novelist and Armageddon hawk Joel Rosenberg marked the anniversary of Israel’s Six Day War by sending his subscribers an e-mail celebrating the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecy about how God would bring the Jewish Diaspora home from the nations, and how this miraculous event marked the “dramatic retaking of the Biblical heartland known as Judea and Samaria by the prophetically reborn Jewish State.” He then played to his market’s self-anxieties by centering the evil forces at work that threaten to thwart the Almighty’s dispensational plan. “As I write this,” he said, “Iranian leaders says [sic] the End of Days

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<sup>76</sup> Such frames in post-9/11 conservative discourse on Islam lends credence to Said’s (2003, 344) last formulation regarding U.S. discourse on Islam, which characterized it as “fear of a monotheistic, culturally and militarily formidable competitor to Christianity.”

<sup>77</sup> See [http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=DefendAmerica\\_VoteIsrael](http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=DefendAmerica_VoteIsrael)

has come and the Twelfth Imam will emerge from occultation very soon. They are calling for the annihilation of Israel, sending an Iranian submarine to the Red Sea, and a new report says Iran could build nuclear weapons in just two months.” But, the more practical self-disciplinary utility of the bridged Israel-self frame was evident in Rosenberg’s e-mail to his subscribers two weeks later, on August 10, 2011, when he announced the event in Washington DC titled in jeremiad style: “The gathering storm: An urgent call to prayer, fasting and repentance for America, Israel and the Church.” The event’s underlying political purpose was evident in its two framing questions that centered Islam and the Left: “How serious is the threat of Radical Islam to America, Israel and the Church?” and “How serious is the threat of Rampant Secularism to America, Israel and the Church?”

The second key feature of this segment of U.S. conservative politics of self-identity is how frames of self-decline—from which the self-disciplinary or self-normalizing strategy is based—are also tethered to frames of self-exceptionalism and even universalism (Kagen 2008). Of course, the ideology of American exceptionalism permeates across the political spectrum, but the conservative threat discourse was unique in its bridging of frames of exceptionalism and decline, evidenced in the Tea Party’s post-Obama-election battle cry of “we want our country back”. Much of this strategy will be seen the ensuing profiles of especially the last two individual discourse agents—Robert Spencer and Brigitte Gabriel. For now, we might simply point to one on typical instance of the articulation of exceptionalism amidst decline and loss; it was Andrew McCarthy’s book jacket endorsement for Stop Islamization of America’s director Pamela Geller’s latest book, *The Post-American Presidency: The Obama Administration’s War on America*. There, McCarthy characterized the book as must reading for those who want to know “where we’re headed if we don’t take our exceptional country back.”

### ***Subcultural Frames***

The self-disciplinary pattern of framing security from outside threats in terms of purity and health on the inside had its U.S. antecedents in the jeremiad literary device common in early colonial security discourse. Deriving its name and style from the biblical Old Testament books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, the earliest jeremiads in Puritan discourse lamented the backslidden state of morality or sinfulness of society, and prophesied its downfall if meaningful repentance did not emerge (Bercovitch 1978). The jeremiad as a literary device, in this regard, forms a conjuncture with the broader Western emergence of another biblical frame or archetype of pastor (and of pastoral

writing or pastoral power) which Foucault (1982, 218) traced as spreading throughout the social body in non-religious institutions and settings.

The U.S. jeremiad is not merely a literary device; it is a culturally-ensconced mindset or predisposition of fundamentalists in which self-identity is wrapped in adversity, and is therefore prone to dissonance or identity insecurity during episodes of victory, before the normal state of adversity is recreated (Perry 1953, 33). Perhaps, it was this cultural schema that predisposed some prominent conservatives to imagine the enemy of Islamization inside when the nation was obviously no longer existentially threatened by Islam outside.

The jeremiad's attempt to discipline the societal self into a homogenous unity, while punishing those perceived to be the source of impurity derives from the Puritanical, fundamentalist *ideal*. In the U.S. colonial era, for instance, the Massachusetts Bay Colony punished Thomas Morton for his book, *The New English Canaan* (1637), wherein Morton had denounced the Colony's policy of land enclosure and near genocide of the native population, whom he found "more full of humanity than the Christians..." (Drinnon 1997, 19). For his moral challenge to Puritan identity and to their division of the world into civilized/barbarian, the Colony governor speculated that Morton might be the agent of a foreign power sent to undermine the Puritan colony. "It is most likely the Jesuits... have sent him over to do us mischief," he said (Drinnon 1997, 33).

Historically, in the identification of the more fundamentalist U.S. self, identity—like identity everywhere—has been acquired relationally in an economy of sameness and difference. Strength at the center is set off against weakness at the center—purity against impurity, civilization against barbarism, the healthy body against diseased tissue, and so on (Campbell 1998, 88-89). In addition to those resistance elements on the inside like Morton who challenged the frames of self, the sources of impurity in Colonial America were usually those who were the weakest. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this translated to women, who constituted over eighty percent of the witch trials. In Massachusetts alone, beginning around 1694, up to several hundred thousand women functioned as this necessary source of difference—the weak and impure elements of the body politic—and were executed on spurious charges of sorcery, witchcraft, and black magic. Other minorities similarly filled the "heretic" subject position. In this category were the Quakers, or "Friends", who had under William Penn's leadership signed the unbreakable peace treaty with the Indians. Others deemed to be "fifth columnists" in Satan's army were the Catholics in Virginia who refused to attend Church of England services (Slotkin 1973, 128-45; Boyer 1974, 6).

Jeremiad-like frames of societal decline have infused more contemporary and prominent Western discourse. The geopolitician H.J. Mackinder (1902, 358) wrote that Britain's own resources had been exhausted and that it needed those of its "daughter nations" to stave off further decline (Toal 1989). The fantastic sales across Europe and the U.S. of Spengler's two-volume series *The Decline of the West*, which appeared in Germany at the end of World War I in 1918, hinted at a broader Western market that was predisposed or perennially obsessed with the loss of self. The most recent antecedents are in the Cold War era security texts. Ostensibly about dangerous others, these texts also served as a platform for self-identity politics, advancing the seemingly incoherent dual frames of self-exceptionalism and self-vulnerability together.

As we have seen throughout Western threat discourse, the process of self-identification in these texts depended on the ability to persuasively link elements of identity insecurity on the nation's inside to threats on the outside (Campbell 1998, 140). And, like the earlier jeremiads, the Cold War texts were not merely descriptive of threats on the outside, but politically performative, disciplining the vulnerabilities on the inside. In Campbell's (1998, 31) words, they were "replete with statements about the fulfillment of the republic, the fundamental purpose of the nation, God-given rights, moral codes, the principles of European civilization, the fear of cultural and spiritual loss...." For example, the Cold War's overarching top secret policy document, National Security Council Paper (NSC-68), conceptualized containing the Soviets as a function of "the creation and maintenance of strength at the center" (Campbell 1998, 24).<sup>78</sup>

This document's pretext, the 1946 "Moscow Embassy Telegram #511"—contained similar frames of self-discipline in the face of decline. Here Kennan argued that "World communism is like a malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue" (Etzold and Gaddis 1978, 63). Four years later in 1950, Kennan advanced this self-disciplinary frame, writing that Communism "had to be viewed as a crisis of our own civilization and the principal antidote lay in overcoming the weaknesses of our own institutions."<sup>79</sup>

Frames of self-discipline were often positive in tone; rather than a strategy of delineating the negative developments or sinfulness of society, they recalled the nation's exceptionalism as if to hold out the standard for which we must reenergize ourselves toward to gain security. For instance, in

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<sup>78</sup> Source: Draft study prepared by the Policy Planning Staff, Annex VIII, NSC 68/1 "The Strategy of Freedom," November 10, 1950, in *Foreign Relations of the United States 1950, Volume I: National Security Affairs*; Foreign Economic Policy, Washington, D.C., 1977, p. 406.

<sup>79</sup> "Draft Memorandum by the Counsellor (Iennan) to the Secretary of State," February 17, 1950, in FRUS 1950, Volume 1, p. 164.

the NSC-17 series (1948), which dealt with internal security, Communism was “directed generally against the inherent dignity, freedom, and sacredness of the individual; against all God-given rights and values; against the Judeo-Christian code of morals on which our western civilization rests...” (Campbell 1998, 27).<sup>80</sup>

Immediately after the Cold War, U.S. self-identifying and self-disciplinary discourses that bridged frames of danger abroad and decline at home, and security outside by purity inside, were redeployed in new contexts. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, for example, a revisionist discourse emerged in which the nation’s staunchest Cold War ally, Japan, was re-cast into enemies foreign category, as an economic threat (Ó Tuathail 1992, 976). Ostensibly a threat discourse about a foreign other at the economic gates, it featured a significant self-identifying or self-disciplinary element, with politically useful “policy prescriptions for reinvigorating American society and industry” (Ó Tuathail 1993, 191). The fear then was not Sovietization, but Japanization of America, and the attending discourses posited the need to reclaim the American dream by adopting new practices of social discipline (Luke 1990, 35).

In conclusion, the key frames and ideologies selected to produce this latest little scare over the Eastern barbarians at the gate were not merely those that the literature led us to anticipate—those of racism, xenophobia on the one hand, and those of struggle for the Holy Land on the other. They were also *political* frames—that is, the historically-shaped and enacted mental structures that encompass both dyads of the political—the identification of the enemies foreign and domestic—with the latter in terms of infiltrators and traitors—and identification of the exceptional yet vulnerable self. In other words, this latest conspiracy of foreign agents infiltrating the homeland with the assistance of familiar traitors, was incentivized and rendered credible to no small degree by the rich culturally and subculturally-resident *political* schemas, cognitive frames, recurring strategies of action, and ideologies that a few more entrepreneurial conservative actors could and did transpose onto current contexts, with—as the next chapter suggests—an apparent expectation of gaining political advantage.

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<sup>80</sup> Source: NSC-17, “The Internal-Security of the United States,” June 28, 1948, Records Group 273, National Archives of the United States. See page 6-7, 9, 20.

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## POLITICAL RESOURCE STRUCTURE

*Truth is something which is supported materially by a whole range of practices and institutions: universities, government departments, publishing houses, scientific bodies and so on.*

—Michel Foucault (1972, 224)

The existence of those more discursive political framing resources and the successful manipulation of them by a few more entrepreneurial conservative elite constitute merely the beginning of the answer to the puzzle as to how this discourse functioned politically, and how political factors contributed to its persistence and expansion over the post-9/11 decade. Another part of the answer lies in the more non-discursive political resource structure or apparatus of power that undergirded this threat discourse.

This notion that discourses are supported by significant non-discursive, social and material elements is well-supported in literature dating back nearly fifty years. In both Hall's (1972) and Cohen's (1972) analysis of moral panics, it was the institution of the mass media broadly that was implicated in the construction of the panic's cognitive and psychological basis. Althusser (1971) had noted how ideological beliefs were "materialized" in specific types of institutions and organizations in civil society, such as religious and political organizations (Howarth 2000, 94). Foucault's (1972) conclusion in the quote above supports this notion that the world's objects or truths—including security myths—are largely a function of the "harder" non-discursive social structure. In his later analysis of discourse or knowledge, Foucault developed a grid of analysis that he called the *dispositif* or the apparatus of power, which included both discursive and non-discursive elements—not only the "strategies and relations of forces supporting certain types of knowledge," but the harder forces such as institutions and financing or philanthropy (Foucault 1980, 194; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982,

184).<sup>81</sup> It is these latter, more non-discursive, or social-structural elements of the apparatus that we will now examine for their domestic political function and role in this threat discourse's expansion. The two key categories of social and political structure emerged in the data align with two in Foucault's apparatus: the discourse's philanthropic or funding base, and its base of propagating institutions.

## 1. The Philanthropic Base: The Economy of Islam(ization) as Threat

A crucial resource in the construction of Islam(ization) as a threat after 9/11 was the philanthropic base that funded the organizations of the principal polemicists involved.

This should come as no surprise to conservatives; the U.S. conservative movement owes its current force to philanthropic support. The activities of 350 public policy-oriented think tanks at the federal, state, and local levels were supported largely by the strategies of only 79 conservative philanthropic foundations (Krehely et al. 2004). The John M. Olin foundation, for example, spent hundreds of millions of dollars to construct what its president William E. Simon called the “counterintelligentsia” to offset the dominance of liberals in universities and the mainstream media, and to otherwise advance the conservative cultural struggle (Miller 2006; O' Connor 2008; Stefancic and Delgado 1996).<sup>82</sup>

This huge role of ideologically-motivated philanthropy in the conservative movement broadly was also reflected in this much narrower post-9/11 popular threat discourse on Islam(ization). In the first nine years after 9/11, for example, just seven philanthropic organizations—Donors Capital Fund, Richard Mellon Scaife Foundation, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Newton and Rochelle Becker Foundation and Newton and Rochelle Becker Charitable Trust, Russell Berrie Foundation, Anchorage Charitable Fund and William Rosenwald Family Fund, and the Fairbrook Foundation—gave \$42.6 million to the main proponents of the discourse that framed Islam(ization) as a threat, based on their annual reports and Form 990s. These recipients were David Horowitz's Freedom Center (including Jihad Watch), Daniel Pipes's Middle East Forum, Frank Gaffney's

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<sup>81</sup> A sufficiently broad concept, the apparatus, in his words, is “a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative reforms, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid” (1980, 194; also Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 121).

<sup>82</sup> Miller (2006) describes the Olin foundation's role helping Irving Kristol and others as they moved ideologically from left to right to found the neoconservative movement, and in building institutions such as the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation.

Center for Security Policy, and Brigitte Gabriel's ACT! for America, Steven Emerson's Investigative Project for Terrorism, along with the Clarion Fund (Ali et al. 2011, 13-15).

And, from the (990) tax forms of the principal organizations that framed the Islam(ization) threat we learned that this contentious threat discourse that incorporated both of the movement's domestic political and religious enemies was handsomely rewarded with lucrative salaries. Frank Gaffney and David Horowitz, (the sponsor of Jihad Watch), for example, had taken home salaries of \$288,000 and \$461,000 respectively in the years towards the end of the post-9/11 decade (Politico 2010; Vogel and Russonello 2010); and Brigitte Gabriel's salary from American Congress for Truth and ACT! for America was \$178,411 in 2009 (Goodstein 2011). All of these salaries were exclusive of the royalties of the widely-advertised books, fees from their central program of public speaking engagements, significant travel budgets, well-funded retirement accounts, vacation-like retreats that conducted some business (i.e. Horowitz's "Restoration Weekend"), and similar perks.

From these quick assessments alone, we might conclude with Said's (1996, 1997) aforementioned assessments that these discourse agents were willing to fabricate these politically-oppositional and wildly fantastic Islam(ization) threat narratives throughout the post-9/11 decade because of these wealthy patrons who continued to lavish this kind of largess upon these willing agents in exchange for this politically-performative threat discourse that served their narrow ideological interests.

But, while the illumination of these economic incentives may begin to answer the question why this threat discourse was able to gain influence as distance from 9/11 increased in the ensuing decade, it does not sufficiently illuminate the motivations behind the generous patronage, and this is a key part of our research question. Again, this question of motivation for this discourse and the patronage/economy behind it seems to have been settled in much of the literature. As noted, beginning well before 9/11 with Edward Said, the links between U.S. discourse on Islam and Zionism are well-established (e.g. Said 1997, Davidson 2011; Ali et al. 2011). Bulkin and Nevel (2012), for example, reveal how some of the philanthropic institutions that had funded the agents who framed Islam(ization) as a threat were the main patrons of the U.S. Zionist movement, and had also funded organizations associated with the Israeli settler movement, and multiple organizations that were "engaged in propaganda ('hasbara') initiatives designed to justify Israeli government policies and actions, including continued expansionism, and to defend Israel by improving its image around the world."



Yet, deeper analysis of the discourse's institutional support structure—both its philanthropic base, and its broader media-propagation network—expands upon this characterization. In the case of the main philanthropic organizations that funded the post-9/11 Islam(ization) threat discourse, for example, their giving records, mission statements, and affiliations of their boards position them into one of two categories, either: 1) conservative with significant Zionist emphasis, or co-emphasis, or 2) plain conservative with no (or virtually no) Zionist interest. The following cases of three of the threat discourse's main patrons—one significantly Zionist and two non-Zionist—are instructive. They provide a deeper understanding of this support structure and reveal how and why the discourse's influence grew through the end of the post-9/11 decade, and reveal the broader perceived domestic political utility that seemed to have attracted their patronage for the discourse's principal proponents.

### ***Patrons with Significant Zionist Emphasis***

Clearly, several conservative philanthropists were attracted to the Islam(ization) threat discourse because of the perception that it benefited the Zionist movement directly—that is, using the topic of a threatening Islam as a platform for Holy Land geopolitics. The main patrons for this threat discourse who had track records of giving to Zionist causes included the Newton D. and Rochelle F. Becker Foundations, the Anchorage Charitable Fund and the William Rosenwald Family Fund, the Russell Berrie Foundation, and the Fairbrook Foundation (Ali et al. 2011, Blumenthal 2012, Bulkin and Nevel 2012).

For example, from its (990 tax form, the Newton D. & Rochelle F. Becker Foundation's mission was stated as philanthropy “directed to the Jewish community, particularly Jewish organizations and programs that combat media bias against Israel and the Jewish people, Israel advocacy, and democracy defense.” Other key patrons with a Zionist emphasis displayed much stronger conservative interests. The giving record of the less Zionist Anchorage Fund, for example, included many conservative institutions that could be classified as more conservative than Zionist, such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Hoover Institution, and the Hudson Institute.

Their giving to the principal framers of the threat of Islam(ization) reflect their Zionist tendencies. For example, the more Zionist Becker, Berrie and Rosenwald family funds gave Daniel Pipes—a “Guardian of Zion” awardee—almost \$3.0 million, while giving a combined \$0.9 million to Gaffney and Horowitz's more broadly counterhegemonic organizations. In the case of the \$2.3 million given to Pipes by the Rosenwald Family Fund, the motivation was apparently Zionist, given

Heiress Nina Rosenwald's membership on the board of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) (Blumenthal 2012).

An instructive case that illuminates the apparent Zionist interests in this threat discourse's economy is that of the Fairbrook Foundation and its principals, Aubrey Chernik—a Los Angeles-area software security entrepreneur—and his wife, Joyce. Between 2004 and 2009, the Chernicks were a major source of funding for the Jihad Watch project at Horowitz's Center. In the three years leading up to the “ground zero mosque” spectacle, which was created by the Director for Jihad Watch, Robert Spencer, and his partner Pamela Geller, in their Stop the Islamization of America organization—the Chernicks had given the lion's share of the \$920,000 that Horowitz's center had funneled to Jihad Watch (Rozen 2010; Vogel and Russonello 2010). But the Chernicks also provided nearly \$1.5 million to other organizations that framed Islam as a threat to the U.S. and to Israel, including Daniel Pipes's Middle East Forum, Brigitte Gabriel's ACT! For America, and Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy (Ali et al. 2011). In 2010 alone, the Fairbrook Foundation gave \$30,000 *per month* to Pipes and \$14,250 *per month* to Horowitz's (for Jihad Watch and Pipes's organizations, \$90,000 to David Yerushalmi (his Society of Americans for National Existence)—the ultraorthodox Jewish lawyer who wrote much of the anti-sharia legislation introduced by conservative state legislators, mentioned in the introductory chapter—but much less to Gaffney's organization, which lacked overtly Jewish bona fides.<sup>83</sup>

The utility of the discourse to Zionist interests becomes more evident when we examine the other organizations that the Chernick's were affiliated with and that they funded. Aubrey Chernick was a former trustee of the AIPAC affiliate, Washington Institute for Near East Policy. His wife, Joyce, served on the board of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies—a neoconservative, hawkish, pro-Israel policy advocacy organization founded after 9/11 (Rozen 2010).

But the Chernick's patronage was not merely for U.S. Jewish and Christian sympathizers with right of Israel to live securely in its biblical homeland, but to those parts of the U.S. Zionist apparatus that produced the most return on investment for defending Israel's settlement expansion into the Palestinian West Bank. They had donated generously, for example, to the New York based Aish HaTorah—“fire of the Torah”—an Orthodox Jewish organization.

Noteably, the Aish HaTorah shares an address (and staff, apparently) with the secretive non-profit, the Clarion Fund, which produced the anti-Muslim films *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against*

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<sup>83</sup> See the Fairbrook Foundation's 2010 Form 990 at [http://conservativetransparency.org/donor/fairbrook-foundation/?order\\_by=year+DESC&page=2](http://conservativetransparency.org/donor/fairbrook-foundation/?order_by=year+DESC&page=2)

*the West, The Third Jihad, and Iranium*, the first of which featured Pipes and Gabriel, whom the Chernicks also funded directly. In other words, the shadowy Clarion Fund seems to be a virtual storefront for Aish Ha Torah, for whom the *Obsession* film’s director and the producer, Raphael Shore, was the international wing’s director (Safi, 2009). The role of this special interest was underscored by several works of investigative journalism over course of the post-9/11 decade. Shore’s brother, Ephraim, for example, was the director of Honest Reporting, which monitor’s the global media for biases against Israel and advocates for Israel’s occupation of Palestine and against any two-state solution.

Per its publicly available (990) IRS forms, the Zionist organizations that Fairbrook Foundation was a benefactor for Zionist American Friends of Ateret Cohanim—which funneled money to the more radical Yitzhar settlement in the Northern West Bank and funds Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem through “appropriation” of Arab homes—as well as the Central Fund for Israel, a New York-based tax-exempt non-profit, which has been described as a clearinghouse for funding part of Israel’s settler movement (Blumenthal 2010; Rozen 2010).<sup>84</sup> And, in addition to giving \$619,000 to the Zionist Organization of America, the Chernicks had funded other less extreme components of what Mearsheimer and Walt (2007) described as U.S. Zionist apparatus, or “Israel lobby”(See also Bulkin and Nevel 2012).<sup>85</sup>

From beneficiaries such as these, the appeal of this threat discourse for the Chernicks seems to be in its utility in Holy Land geopolitics. But, like the other organizations here that are categorized as U.S. Zionism’s patrons, the Fairbrook Foundation’s ideological criterion for giving includes broader conservative interests. Aubrey Chernick in 2005, for example, helped provide the first round of the \$3.5 million venture capital funding to the highly influential upstart Pajamas (now PJ) Media—a conservative commentary website (Pajamas Media 2005).

### ***Patrons with Little or No Zionist Emphasis***

The largess of conservative patrons with significant Zionist ideological motivations notwithstanding, the largest donors to the principal framers of this latest episode of paranoia had

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<sup>84</sup> Chernick, through the Central Fund of Israel and Ateret Cohenim, has funded the Yitzhar settlement, as well as to the messianic settlers dedicated to “Judaizing” East Jerusalem (Blumenthal, 2010). Yitzhar’s rabbi, Yitzhak Shapira, in his book *Torat HaMelech, or The King’s Torah*, cited rabbinical texts to declare that gentiles, including their babies, could be killed in order to “curb their evil inclinations.” In 2006, the rabbi was briefly held by Israeli police for urging his supporters to murder all Palestinians over the age of 13 (Blumenthal, 2010).

<sup>85</sup> Such as the Hudson Institute, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), the Anti-Defamation League, and CAMERA, which polices anti-Israel bias in the media

long been the central patrons of the U.S. conservative movement broadly, with comparatively little or no Zionist sympathies in their giving records. The established conservative foundations of Richard Mellon Scaife and Lynde and Harry Bradley gave far more than did foundations sympathetic to Zionism to two of the Islam(ization) threat discourse's principal agents, Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy (\$3.7M non-Zionist vs. \$0.9M Zionist) and David Horowitz's Freedom Center (\$7.7M non-Zionist vs. 0.7M Zionist).<sup>86</sup> In the case of the trio of foundations controlled by Richard Mellon Scaife and his family members, they gave \$7.9 million dollars between 2001 to 2009 to just eight of the principal framers of Islam(ization) as a threat. This included \$2.9 million to Gaffney's Center for Security Policy and \$3.4 million to the Horowitz's Freedom Center (Ali et al. 2011).

The criterion for all funding from the Scaife foundation was solidly conservative. With annual giving at the launch of the post-9/11 decade ranging around \$26 million, the Scaife foundations were described by the *Washington Post* in its May 2, 1999 edition with the headline "Funding Father of the Right."<sup>87</sup> The patronage of the Scaife foundations—in stark contrast to that of the Chernicks—centered on the conservative movement's main institutions, including the Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, the Federalist Society, the Free Congress Foundation, the Cato Institute, Grover Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform, and many others. The Scaife funds provided comparatively minor funding to a few components of the conservative apparatus that could be classified as neoconservative with Zionist interests, such as the flagship magazine *Commentary* and the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (Bulkin and Nevel 2012).

And, in the case of the Lynde and Harry Bradley foundation and its aligned donors, it gave a total of \$5.4 million to the handful of principal agents of the Islam(ization) threat discourse, including \$3.4 million to Horowitz and \$815,000 to Gaffney, and \$300,000 to Pipes (Ali et al. 2011). Similarly, the Bradley Foundation similarly had little apparent Zionist interest. Founded by a cofounder of the far-right John Birch Society, the Bradley Foundation's ideologically-tied giving made the Bradley Foundation—in the words of Media Transparency—"the country's largest and

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<sup>86</sup> The major funding sources for Gaffney's center, for example, were in order of giving the archconservative philanthropist Richard Mellon Scaife (\$3 million); the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation (\$800,000), the Newton and Rochelle Becker Foundation (and Charitable Trust) (about \$375,000) and the Anchorage Charitable Fund and William Rosenwald Family Fund (about \$437,000), and with the Fairbrook Foundation contributing smaller amounts (Ali et al. 2011). This can be gleaned from the table in the Fear Inc., report by Ali and colleagues (2011, 13-15).

<sup>87</sup> Available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/clinton/stories/scaife050299.htm>

most influential right-wing organization,”<sup>88</sup> with assets at over \$650 million and annual giving at \$45 million at the beginning of the decade.

The Bradley Foundation’s conservative motivation can be found in its annual reports reveal that it intends to fund those U.S. organizations deemed by its Board (which includes the popular conservative commentator George F. Will) to be important in the strengthening of the central institutions of the conservative movement.<sup>89</sup> It is by this ideological criterion that the Bradley foundation awarded the vast majority of its grants, which in just 2010 involved \$37 million directed toward many of the central, identifying organizations of the U.S. conservative movement. Notably, the foundation did not privilege organizations sympathetic to Zionism; it gave less to the pro-Israel Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, for example, than it did to the Institute for Global Engagement—a small Washington DC-based organization, whose conservative Christian President Chris Seiple had been critical of Israeli settlement expansionism at the expense of Palestinians, calling for a more “just peace” with a state for the Palestinians.<sup>90</sup>

This analysis of the discourse’s philanthropic base somewhat problematizes the literature’s characterization of this threat discourse going back to Edward Said as funded by primarily Zionist interests. Together, the Scaife and Bradley foundations—with historical track records of giving tied directly to conservative cultural politics—gave *twice* as much as the aforementioned four patrons with Zionist interests to organizations that did little else during this decade than promote Islam(ization) as a threat (Ali et al. 2011, 13-15). By this, we should not minimize the factor of Holy Land geopolitics in this threat discourse; rather, we should characterize that factor as competing with (if not secondary to) that of mere domestic politics.

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<sup>88</sup> Available at <http://cursor.org/about/themoney.php>. This description aligns with this philosophical position in its 2010 annual report: The Bradley brothers were committed to preserving and defending the tradition of free representative government and private enterprise that has enabled the American nation and, in a larger sense, the entire Western world to flourish intellectually and economically. The Bradleys believed that the good society is a free society. The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation is likewise devoted to strengthening American democratic capitalism and the institutions, principles and values that sustain and nurture it.

<sup>89</sup> The Bradley foundation’s “current program interests,” for example, constitute a restatement of the main grievance against the Left that animates U.S. conservatism: “This expansive understanding of citizenship is being challenged today, however, by contemporary forces and ideas that regard individuals more as passive and helpless victims of powerful external forces than as personally responsible, self-governing citizens, and that foster a deep skepticism about citizenly values and mediating structures. Consequently, authority and accountability tend to flow away from citizens toward centralized, bureaucratic, “service-providing” institutions that claim to be peculiarly equipped to cope with those external forces on behalf of their “clients.” This systematic disenfranchisement of the citizen, and the consequent erosion of citizenly mediating structures, pose grave threats to the free society that the Bradley bothers [sic] cherished.”

<sup>90</sup> See Chris Seiple’s article on this at <http://www.glocal.net/2009/01/26/palestinian-israeli-conflict/>

## 2. The Political-Institutional Base

This second segment of this chapter examines the threat discourse's institutional support structure; specifically, its more significant media and publishing institutions, along with smaller grassroots security and cultural policy advocacy organizations. The primary goals here are to examine the broader nature of the institutions that housed the Islam(ization) threat discourse, their role as this threat discourse's social resource structure or apparatus, and how they advanced a distinctly domestic political agenda through this support.

A secondary goal is to deepen the literature, which—as we saw—had formed a consensus regarding the centrality or primacy of Zionism and Holy Land geopolitics as the institutional motivation for this discourse. To this end, the analysis excludes many of the institutions that Mearsheimer and Walt (2007, 112-117) would characterize as those of “the Israel lobby”; that is, the “loose coalition of individuals and organizations” in the U.S. that “actively work to shape U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction.”—security policy advocacy organizations such as Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, and Middle East Forum.<sup>91</sup>

All of the institutions examined below should be viewed as *non-Zionist* and expressly conservative, having mission statements and histories that suggest that they were formed for the express purpose of U.S. domestic counterhegemonic struggle, and have continued to operate in that capacity (Pierson and Skocpol 2007; Diamond 1995).

### *Magazines/Commentaries*

Recall from the introduction that, by the end of the Bush administration, the “war on Islam” master narrative seemed to be becoming a more structural hostile myth, with the potential to fuel a destructive cycle of fear and hostility between Muslim and Western societies (Lynch 2010, Pew 2011). This realization had led the new Obama administration to make this the subject of its first foreign policy initiative, resulting in the President's historic speeches directly to the world's Muslims from two staunch ally states that had become highly anti-American, wherein he explicitly used that phrase—“war on Islam”—in an attempt to contain this emerging master narrative. Such a manifest

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<sup>91</sup> The authors note that, to be part of the lobby, an organization's pursuit of shaping foreign policy in support of Israel “must be an important part of its mission and consume a substantial percentage of its resources and agenda,” and for an individual, “this means devoting some portion of one's professional or personal life (or in some cases, substantial amounts of money) to influencing U.S. Middle East policy (2007, 114).

strategic security issue, it might seem, would be immune from politicization, and would receive support from across the political spectrum.

Yet, on the day after President Obama's 4 June 2009 address from Cairo to Muslims worldwide, the iconic conservative magazine, *National Review*, published a puzzling article—"Making Believe: Obama's speech was deep in fable, short on fact". Not only did it further antagonize Muslims worldwide by explicitly countering the normative "Islam is peace" frame, but it engaged the new President's much anticipated foreign policy speech with something akin to an official GOP rebuttal to a State of the Union address—an institutionalized occasion for domestic politics. The article antagonized both of the conservative movement's enemies—foreign and domestic, religious and political—describing the speech as "warmed-over leftist dogma sprinkled with a fictional accounting of Islam and its history." Islam, it countered "isn't a religion of peace with a legacy so overflowing with achievement in science, philosophy, and the arts," as President Obama claimed:

Though Obama portrayed Islam as having a "proud tradition of tolerance," it has a far more consequential legacy of intolerance. Islam strives for hegemony, seeking not to co-exist but to make all the world the realm of the Muslims (*dar al-Islam*) while regarding those parts not under its dominion as the realm of war (*dar al-Harb*).

The selection of the spokesperson for this deliberately subversive speech act was itself counterhegemonic in function. This flagship of U.S. conservatism chose not to tap an established scholar of Islamic affairs with a solid reputation in the Muslim-American community who could have cited the reasons why the U.S. (and especially the GOP, after the two GOP-led invasions) was not at war with Islam, and who could have articulated a more Kennan-like grand strategy for both U.S.-Muslim relations and the containment of violent extremism ideology within the Islamic continuum. Instead, it opted for counterhegemonic symbolism and published an article by someone whom it had shaped into its own columnist, Andrew McCarthy—a figure whose egregiously politicized security writing was introduced in the previous chapter.

The key capital which McCarthy possessed, and for which his rebuttal article was chosen for publishing, was that he had an established track-record (including hundreds of articles and posts in *National Review*) of practicing *security politics*; that is, of using the topic of Islam as a threat to engage in domestic politics. This was evidenced by his other *National Review* articles, such as "The President Stands with Sharia," and by the titles and subtitles of the *three* books that he managed to publish in 2010: *How the Obama Administration has Politicized Justice*, *The Grand Jihad: How Islam and the Left*

*Sabotage America*, and *How Obama Embraces Islam's Sharia Agenda*.<sup>92</sup> In other words, this iconic conservative commentary disregarded the highly radicalizing and threatening “war on Islam” master narrative and published McCarthy’s rebuttal not because of his knowledge of Islam in terms of a security issue, but because of his reliable habitus of using the topic of Islam as a platform in the delegitimizing of the conservative movement’s domestic political opponents.

But, should we be surprised at this? Recently described as “the Bible of American conservatism” (Hari 2007, 31), *National Review*’s advertising kit describes itself as “America’s most widely read and influential magazine and web site for conservative news, commentary, and opinion” and its media-kit describes itself as “America’s leading conservative voice for news and opinion” for over 58 years.<sup>93</sup> But, *National Review* functions not first and foremost a “news” institution, or even an “American” institution; it is a “conservative” instrument, or conservative “voice” with an overarching mission of advancing the conservative worldview.

Russell Kirk’s (1953) *The Conservative Mind* was the philosophical cornerstone of the nascent U.S. conservative movement, and *National Review* was its first identifying institution (Goldberg 2005; Edwards 2003; Rusher 2002). The purpose of its organization in 1955 by conservative intellectual and icon William F. Buckley Jr. was counterhegemonic. Conservative victories, Buckley wrote, suffered because of bias in the universities and in the media, prompting him to call for a new conservative journal to compete with liberals, to compensate for “Conservative weakness” in the academy, and to “focus the energies” of the movement (Edwards, 2003). *National Review*, therefore, according to Edwards (2003), was “not simply a journal of opinion but a political act...”

And, since its founding, *National Review* has been a counterhegemonic instrument, advocating for the conservative causes, and—correspondingly—writing against liberal or progressive causes.<sup>94</sup> After the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) Supreme Court decision, for example, *National Review* columnists such as former Yale political philosopher Willmoore Kendall argued against forced desegregation (Gross et al. 2011, 334). In the 1960s it advocated for Barry Goldwater; in the 1990s it advocated against Bill Clinton, and so on. In the decade after 9/11—as McCarthy’s rebuttal demonstrates—the *Review* continued to function *not* as a neutral source of information and political

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<sup>92</sup> McCarthy’s only recognized credential was that he, when a former federal prosecutor after the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, had prosecuted the extremist “blind sheikh”, Omar Abdul Rahman, who had given the theological justification for the attack. McCarthy himself knew that he was not an authority and in his article, he referred to Robert Spencer twice for such authority.

<sup>93</sup> <http://mediakit.nationalreview.com/>

<sup>94</sup> The entire history of the institution, in Hart’s (2005, ix) words, “represents a Quest Narrative: the quest for a politically viable and thoughtful American conservatism.”



commentary, but as a source of highly positioned adversarial advocacy to advance conservative interests on the wide range of topics.

On the topic of Islam broadly in the decade after 9/11—especially late in the decade when even the threat from Islamic extremism (let alone Islam itself) was being downplayed by even the Director of National Intelligence—*National Review's* cadre of experts on the topic—Frank Gaffney, Andrew McCarthy, Daniel Pipes, Mark Steyn, and lesser-known others—reliably politicized the topic. Their articles—all readily available (listed by author and by year) on its website—typically began with the topic *du jour*—such as the mass shooting at Fort Hood by U.S. Army Major Nidal Hassan. From these topics, the Review's commentary reliably took the counternarrative position, in opposition to the mainstream, and then—just as reliably—shifted to more performative domestic cultural politics, describing the ineptness, political correctness, or other ideological failure of some part of the more progressive outside, especially the Obama administration. Again, in all of these articles, Islam—like so many other topics of the day—served as a useful platform for politics, and the *Review's* cultural capital was extended to its chosen authors, extending to them both a national audience and credibility or authority.

### ***Newspapers***

After President Obama's aforementioned speech in Cairo to the world's Muslim communities, another iconic conservative institution, the *Washington Times*, on June 9, 2009, carried this non-sequitur headline: "Gaffney: America's first Muslim president?: Obama aligns with the policies of Shariah-adherents." Bypassing the strategic importance of the foreign policy initiative and even rational criticism of the new administration's approach, this central identifying newspaper of the conservative movement delved into crude tabloid-like politics, noting that "there is mounting evidence that the president not only identifies with Muslims, but actually may still be one himself." It not only insinuated that the new president was deceptively practicing Christianity while actually being a Muslim, but it implied that all practicing Muslims are also practicing *taqiyya* so as to hide their subversive designs to destroy America from within.

*Washington Times* had not made a mistake. Its chosen author for this opportunity, Frank Gaffney, was the newspaper's signature security expert—one whom it had singularly produced as an authority with 1400 articles, in what has been described as "the longest-running weekly column in

the history of the *Washington Times*.”<sup>95</sup> In the latter half of the post-9/11 decade alone, the *Times* contains 570 citations for Gaffney’s articles and others that favorably cite him. In other words, the editors of the newspaper knew precisely what Gaffney would write; that is why he was in that position in the first place.

In the lead-up to the president’s first foreign policy initiative regarding the “war on Islam” master narrative, the *Times* on February 3, 2009 published Gaffney’s “S-U-B-M-I-S-S-I-O-N”—a reference to the new Democratic president’s compliance with the very meaning of the word, “Islam”. And, the day after the President’s first speech to Muslims worldwide from Ankara Turkey on April 6, 2009, the *Times* published its own rebuttal-like article from Gaffney, “Reality checks abroad: Obama initiatives confront unpleasant facts.” Still another occasion for politicization of the topic presented itself after a seemingly innocuous statement by John Brennan—the assistant to President Obama for homeland security and counterterrorism—in early August 2009 at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where he referred to the President’s statement to Muslims worldwide in Cairo in June, that “America is not and never will be at war with Islam.” The *Times* predictably responded on August 12<sup>th</sup> with a rebuttal article by Gaffney titled, “But is ‘Islam’ at war with us,” where he reliably made the case that “Islam” was.

The *Washington Times* (on its website) claims itself to be “a full-service, general interest” newspaper. It mentions nothing about its being founded as a counterhegemonic institution to offset the more progressive influence of the *Washington Post*. The *Times* was read daily and endorsed as such a conservative counterhegemonic institution by President Reagan (Clarkson 1987). It is a distinctly oppositional conservative political position that progressives widely acknowledge (Blumenthal 2006; Mantyla 2007), that conservatives frequently tout,<sup>96</sup> and that it promotes itself, with such identifiers as the “vanguard of a media insurgency” and the centerpiece of a “news counterestablishment” (*Washington Times* 2007, May 17).

The newspaper was founded in 1982 and owned and operated until 2010 by the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon to be the newspaper for the nation’s religious conservatives. At its 20th anniversary, in 2002, Moon said that the newspaper “is responsible to let the American people know about God” and that it would “become the instrument in spreading the truth about God to the world” (Ahrens 2002). But, for the newspaper’s managing editor after 9/11, Francis Coombs,

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<sup>95</sup> See <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Peace/2014/02/25/FRANK-GAFFNEYS-WEEKLY-COLUMN-COMES-TO-BREITBART>

<sup>96</sup> See, for example Conservapedia’s article on “The Washington Times,” which describes it as “a conservative daily newspaper in Washington, D.C. which strives to counterbalance the liberal slant of the Washington Post.”

the mission was political and not religious; “journalism is war,” was his oft-repeated motto in the newsroom (Blumenthal 2006).

By mid-point of the post-9/11 decade, the newspaper nearly went bankrupt, with its editorial position having devolved to what was described by Blumenthal (2006) in a cover story in *The Nation* as “hard right” and “characterized by extreme racial animus and connections to nativist and neo-Confederate organizations.” Southern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Project executive director Mark Potok described the institution as a “key part of the radical right's apparatus in the United States,” significantly responsible for fueling the nativism that emerged within the GOP, and as being “in bed with bigots and white supremacists” (Blumenthal 2006).

As was the case with its editorial position on Islam(ization), it was arguably politics, and not bigotry or opposition to immigration that was foremost in its editorial position. For example, Arkansas “Justice” Jim Johnson—a leader of the segregationist Capital Citizens Council chapter of Little Rock—curiously published two anti-Clinton op-ed articles in the newspaper in 1995. It was later learned that the aforementioned Richard Mellon Scaife had provided \$2.4 million in a scheme in which “sources” were paid to concoct anti-Clinton stories, and that Johnson and *The Washington Times* editor-in-chief at the time, Wesley Pruden, were linked to this project (Blumenthal 2006).

And, as was the case with *National Review*, the newspaper’s editorial position has been to politicize the topics that it selects for news. In the case of Islam broadly after 9/11—as the above examples begin to suggest—the newspaper’s editorial mode was for its columnist experts—Gaffney, for example—to make some weak, uncontextualized reference to a purported threat related to that topic of great general interest, then to delegitimize the Obama administration in the discussion, and then to capture this politically performative speech act in the title and subtitle. For example, Gaffney’s article on the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 was: “GAFFNEY: Islamists’ tipping point: Obama impotence signals opportunity for Shariah”. His article at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 was similar: “GAFFNEY: Obama’s 9/11 delusion.”

In all of the *Washington Times*’ security commentary, the security topic was politicized, containing politically-performative speech acts that delegitimized the Democrats, the president, his administration, or the broader more progressive “establishment”. This politicization was especially evident since the beginning of the Obama administration. During the campaign, the newspaper published apparently everything Gaffney could manage to write on the topics of Islam and the Left, with titles such as: “Obama’s Islamist problem” (August 19, 2008). After conservatives lost the White House, the threat commentary became even more politically antagonistic, with articles like

“Embracing of Shariah? 'Respect' should be a two-way street” (March 17, 2009); “GAFFNEY: Courting Shariah: Kagan supported Islam at Harvard but not the U.S. military” (June 2009); and “Security compromised: White House policies embolden our enemies” (November 24, 2009).

And in the lead up to the mid-term elections in 2010, it was dubiously “Obama” that was centered in all “security” commentary, with articles like: “GAFFNEY: A Shrine to Sharia” (June 28, 2010); “GAFFNEY: Obama’s ‘teachable’ Shariah moment” (August 17, 2010); “GAFFNEY: Obama’s sneak attack on U.S. defense” (November 15, 2010); GAFFNEY: Obama’s next war: President’s ill-considered Islamist backing puts Israel in the cross hairs (May 23, 2011); GAFFNEY: The post-constitutional president: Obama shows contempt for his oath of office (Oct 8, 2012).

*The Washington Times*—and not merely Gaffney, McCarthy, Pipes, and rest of its cadre of experts—was so fully central to the sharia scare strategy that on September 29, 2009, the newspaper’s editors published their own article, “The threat of 'stealth jihad': West responds to pressure with accommodation.” Even in titles that weren’t more explicit in this regard, all articles advancing the Islam(ization) threat narrative functioned counterhegemonically—that is, within the realm of the conservative movement’s domestic cultural struggle—to somehow delegitimize the more progressive outside. For example, at the ninth anniversary of 9/11, on September 14 2010, *The Washington Times* ran the article by the aforementioned Andrew McCarthy and colleagues, “WOOLSEY & MCCARTHY & SOYSTER: Second Opinion Needed on Sharia: Our Political Establishment Wears Blinders and Ignores the Threat.” The article followed the same pattern as that of McCarthy’s in the *National Review* (and expressed clearly in titles or subtitles of each of McCarthy’s books) to raise the specter of a great threat from Islam(ization), and then to use that platform of fear to go on and delegitimize the progressive outside broadly, signified variously in code words such as “political establishment,” or “politically-correct,” and often more explicitly referring directly to “Obama”.

This pattern or strategy of action extended across all possible events remotely related to Islam, and across all of the newspaper’s cadre of experts, whose clear role was not only to obscure key contextualizing facts related to Islam and Islamization that would reveal the absurdity of this threat discourse, but to—again—antagonistically delegitimize some view or policy of the Left broadly and the president and his administration specifically. In the case of its agent, Daniel Pipes, even the article titles accomplish the same purpose: “PIPES: Obama: My Muslim Faith” (September 11,

2012); “PIPES: Obama: ‘I have never been a Muslim’” (September 7, 2012); “PIPES: ‘Rushdie rules’ reach Florida: Obama endorses privileged status for Islam” (September 20, 2010), and so on.<sup>97</sup>

Again, within this strategy of security politics, any event broadly related to Islam, no matter how trivial, constituted opportunity for domestic cultural politics, and the newspaper’s cadre of Islam experts were expected to perform. In the case of the latter mentioned article by Pipes, the security event selected for politics was Florida Pastor Terry Jones’s planned burning of the Quran, and the fact that the President, the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, and others had all urged him not to, for fear of Muslim violence against Americans if he proceeded. Had *The Washington Times* responsibly and apolitically sought to inform debate, its editors could have asked Pipes to inject some context with his criticism. Pipes might have at least acknowledged that in the era of global-connectedness, such an act by an obscure pastor of a tiny church of twenty persons in rural Florida might be viewed by those in less free societies as tacit U.S. government approval and another pillar in their “war on Islam” master narrative, and sure to spark some to call for retributive justice in their Friday sermons, thereby putting U.S. citizens working in Muslim majority countries at much greater risk. No such context was to be found. Instead, Pipes reliably politicized the event, saying, “Mr. Obama, in effect, enforced Islamic law, a precedent that could lead to other forms of compulsory Sharia compliance.”

### ***Television/Broadcast Media***

At the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11, the Fox News anchor pulled her viewers’ attention from the hundreds of other important national and international issues, and introduced a “controversial” “anti-jihad” subway advertisement going up in ten subway stations across New York City. As the Fox News cameras displayed the ad, she read it: “In any war between the civilized man and the savage, support the civilized man. Support Israel. Defeat Jihad.” “And here’s *the woman* behind the ads...,” she added, insinuating that she was introducing a total stranger. The co-anchor then spoke and conceded that, “Actually, we’ve reported some other controversies having to do with *this*

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<sup>97</sup> For others, see:

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/search/?cx=015385541671335030271%3Anfb7f1nj88q&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=UTF-8&q=%22Daniel+Pipes%22&siteurl=www.washingtontimes.com%2F&ref=www.google.com%2Furl%3Fsa%3Dt%26rct%3Dj%26q%3D%26esrc%3Ds%26source%3Dweb%26cd%3D1%26ved%3D0CCgQFjAA%26url%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.washingtontimes.com%252F%26ei%3DUYVhU-GYHKfOsASYzIHIBQ%26usg%3DAFQjCNF6oXuQ2GwFQNWvgQF7gEq8DtSMGg%26bvm%3Dbv.65636070%2Cd.cWc&ss=3898j1568198j18>

*particular woman*”. The anchor then admitted that fact: “We have; Pamela Geller is *her name*—a very outspoken blogger who’s been in *the headlines* before. She headed a campaign some two years ago to block construction of a mosque near ground zero....”<sup>98</sup>

Neither anchor let on that it was Fox News that had put Geller in the headlines before, with the Mike Huckabee show and many other Fox programs in 2010 on the subject of “the 911 mosque at ground zero.” And neither let on that Geller since had been an institution in Fox programming, appearing regularly across many of its programs to speak as the Channel’s authority on matters related to Islam broadly.

Just ten days earlier, for example—during the violent protests over the purposively provocative “Innocence of Muslims” movie trailer—Geller had been a guest expert on Fox, appearing with former ambassador John Bolton. Then, Fox’s anchor Patti Ann Browne introduced Geller a little differently, saying, “let’s bring in blogger, author, and executive director for Stop the Islamization of America”.<sup>99</sup> Browne said nothing about the fact that Geller’s organization was listed as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. And although the topic this time how the strategically-important relationship between Egypt and the US has changed, Browne made no mention that Geller was not a foreign policy expert but a college drop-out whose only bona fides for the interview seemed to be that she was prone to politically-antagonistic rhetoric, having regularly referred to President Obama as “Hussein,” describing him as “the love-child of Malcolm X,” and so on.

Only nine days before, on the September 15 edition of *Fox & Friends*, Fox had created yet another “news” opportunity for Geller to appear. After her introduction and with the Fox cameras slowly panning across her book, *Stop the Islamization of America*, Geller reliably tied Muslim extremism to Obama. Her thrust of her interview, predictably, was not informative commentary on the security issue, but on attacking the President, saying that president Obama is “sanctioning these murderous rages that these Muslim mobs have been going on” and that the President—“by condemning the [Innocence of Muslims] movie” (that started riots in Muslim communities worldwide) is adhering “to the blasphemy laws under sharia” which state that you “cannot criticize or offend Islam” (MediaMatters 2012).<sup>100</sup> During Geller’s speech, Fox’s foot screen banners were also hard at work politicizing the topic, reading “Respecting religious freedom: President Obama’s

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<sup>98</sup> See video “See video “FOX News report on Pamela Geller and anti-jihad subway ads” at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2QPQCmOlfk>.

<sup>99</sup> See video “Pamela Geller on FOX News on Libyan Embassy Attack and the Violent Muslim Protests across the world” at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjRCJKlb4og>.

<sup>100</sup> See video at <http://mediamatters.org/video/2012/09/15/fox-guest-pamela-geller-obama-is-sanctioning-th/189919>

stance under scrutiny,” and “Avoiding confrontation: Geller: President sanctions blasphemy laws”, and so on.

By featuring Geller regularly and across the spectrum of its programming, Fox News Channel singlehandedly transformed both her, her books, and her rancorous politics into nationally-known commodities. As we’ve already begun to see, Fox went out of its way to promote Geller’s politically-antagonistic books that were only superficially related to Islam(ization). When Geller appeared on Fox’s September 21, 2011 edition of the Sean Hannity show, Hannity introduced Geller—while the camera pans to across her new book—as “the author of the BRAND-NEW-BOOK—in bookstores everywhere—Stop the Islamization of America—conservative blogger and our friend, Pam Geller...”<sup>101</sup> Earlier, on the March 13, 2011 edition of *Fox & Friends*, the hostess rhetorically asked whether the *New York Times* was being insensitive by running a full page ad “It’s time to quit the Catholic Church”, but refused an almost identical ad “It’s time to quit Islam”. The host then said, “And here is the creator of the ad, author of the book, *Stop the Islamization of America*. As was Fox’s usual mode, its cameras at this point panned across Geller’s book. Similarly, on the July 29, 2010 edition of *Fox & Friends*, the topic delivered via the main Fox banner was “Honor killings on the rise: Group launches campaign to end Muslim murders”. The show’s hostess Gretchen Carlson shifted to the non-sequitur, introducing Geller as “a blogger for AtlasShrugs.com and the executive director of Stop the Islamization of America; and she’s co-authored a new book *The Post-American Presidency: The Obama Administration’s War on America*.” After the camera slowly pans across Geller’s book, Carlson then asks Geller, “Alright, what are the issues that you are tackling, not only in this book, but also in this billboard campaign?” Two days later, on July 31<sup>st</sup> edition of Fox Business, Fox produced Geller again to discuss yet another wide-ranging topic; this time, the British Prime Minister’s description of Gaza as a “prison camp”, and—before the interview, in what would otherwise be a non-sequitur on this topic of Gaza’s siege—the host introduced her new book, *The Post-American Presidency*.

The pattern was always the same; Fox produced Geller as an authority on opportune events related to Islam not because of any authoritative credentials, for which she had none whatsoever; but because she and her books was useful politically at the domestic level, in delegitimizing President Obama and/or the Left broadly. This working relationship for purposes of Islam-related politics continued well beyond the tenth anniversary of 9/11. On the July 1 2013 edition of Fox

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<sup>101</sup> Geller provides all of her Fox News Channel appearances on her own YouTube site. This video can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BSI9yq9oFs>.

News's *Hannity*, for example, Geller was hard at work, describing President Obama as “consistently on the side of jihadist Islamic supremacist regimes” (MediaMatters 2013).

These examples typify how the Fox News Channel functioned as both agent and institutional resource apparatus in the Islam(ization) threat discourse after 9/11. But, a deeper analysis of Fox News Channel helps ascertain the motivation behind the cable giant's editors' use of Geller in this fashion, and for otherwise (through the use of other spokespersons like Geller) positioning itself so prominently in the threat discourse's apparatus.

Fox News Channel's promotion of the Islam(ization) threat discourse throughout the latter part of the post-9/11 explains at least some of its otherwise nonsensical expansion. It was the highest rated cable news network during this time, attracting more viewers than all other cable-news outlets combined (Gillette 2008). According to Nielsen Media Research, the cable giant was reaching 98 million households in America—virtually the entire country. And, it was also the most profitable component of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp, reaping an estimated profit of \$816 million, rivaling the earnings of News Corp.'s entire film division, which includes 20th Century Fox (Dickinson 2011).

But, with its bare-bones newsgathering operation—with only one-third of the staff and 30 fewer bureaus than even CNN, which is not a serious news source—Fox was hardly in the business of professional journalism (Dickinson 2011). This comes as no surprise to the viewing public broadly, who told the Pew Research Center in 2009 that they viewed Fox News as the “most ideological network”. Nor would that characterization meet with much resistance among Fox News Channel employees. The network, based his extensive interviews of several hundred Fox employees, past and present, Dickinson (2011) characterizes Fox as “a giant soundstage created to mimic the look and feel of a news operation, cleverly camouflaging political propaganda as independent journalism.” Sean Wilentz, a Princeton historian and author of *The Age of Reagan*, also characterized the entire network “devoted 24 hours a day” to entirely politics, and it's broadcast as ‘the news’” (Dickinson 2011). Jones (2012) similarly noted that “The genre of news offered important and necessary ‘cover’ for the [Fox] network, helping to thwart charges of propaganda or partisanship (Jones 2012, 178). A former deputy of Fox's Chairman Roger Ailes also described the network in terms of political machine disguised as news: “It's a political campaign – a 24/7 political campaign” (Dickinson 2011).

And, all components of the Fox News programming function as vehicles for politics (Jones 2012, 179). Fox Chairman Roger Ailes, for example uses *Fox & Friends*—what appears to be



merely a morning talk show—as one of his primary vehicles for politics. Dickinson (2011) notes that “According to insiders, the morning show’s anchors, who appear to be chatting ad-lib, are actually working from daily, structured talking points that come straight from the top. A former Fox deputy said that “Prior to broadcast, Steve Doocy, Gretchen Carlson – that gang – they meet with Roger.... And Roger gives them the spin.” *Fox & Friends*, Dickinson (2011) points out, was the program where the smear about Obama having attended a madrassa emerged, with Doocy stating that Obama was “raised as a Muslim” (Dickinson 2011). According to the network’s former media critic, Obama’s election drove Fox “to be more of a political campaign than it ever was before” (Dickinson 2011).

In his analysis of Fox News Channel, Jones (2012, 179) states: “That Fox News is, consistently and across all of its programs, offering a conservative ideological voice and doing so under the heading of “news” is, at this date, an undeniable point. Scholars and media-watchdog groups have provided detailed evidence of Fox's overtly ideological narratives in both its news and its opinion programs”. He revealed how this niche media institution used the format of “news” stories surrounding the Islamization of America to conduct political work:

Fox News's speech acts may name something—say, for instance, branding an Islamic community center in the Manhattan neighborhood near the former World Trade Center a “Ground Zero mosque”—but the utterance also warns citizens of a supposed threat to American values and honor, perhaps even mobilizing people to vote in the midterm congressional elections for candidates voicing opposition to such a “mosque.” Thus, the repeated iteration of such utterances across programming day parts not only creates realities—“mosque,” not community center, becomes the standard usage, even outside of Fox's utterances—but also has the potential to mobilize actions through its performative power (Jones 2012, 184).

Jones adds, “Fox has successfully shown how TV news need not be *about* politics but can *be* politics instead. Fox has demonstrated that news production is aimed not at representing truth but at representing audiences it can assemble around its ideological renderings of ‘truth’”.

Fox’s strategy is also counterhegemonic, in terms of the broader conservative cultural struggle. In the words of Fox News host Chris Wallace, Fox was the counter-weight [to NBC News]...they have a liberal agenda, and we tell the other side of the story” (Corn 2011).

It is in this strategy that we begin to understand how Geller’s distinct *lack* of authoritative credentials was actually her main form of cultural capital, as it aligned with Fox’s unabashed anti-intellectualism and anti-elitism, and was performative in that it tacitly delegitimized the scholarly and security professional communities, which Fox systematically excluded from its programming. In this

vein—following the aforementioned move by *National Review* in selecting Andrew McCarthy for its rebuttal to the president’s historic address to Muslims worldwide—Fox News rarely (if ever) invited highly-credentialed scholars or security professionals to provide apolitical analyses that reflect the complexities reliably found in security threats. Instead, Fox’s editorial policy sought out polemicists like Geller who were organic to the conservative movement, and with the propensity to engage in politics, but possessing few if any of the credentials normative for the status of authority in the dominant societal institutions.

Along this line, Geller and Spencer’s grassroots organization, Stop Islamization of America, was itself a form of taboo or counterhegemonic resistance. The fact that Geller’s organization was listed as an “anti-Muslim hate group” by the Southern Poverty Law Center, for example, seems less a problem for Fox than a deliberate criterion for her selection. In this, Fox’s production of Geller—much like the *National Review*’s production of McCarthy during this time—can be viewed as a function of her ability to serve as a symbol of resistance to the dominant and more progressive societal order.<sup>102</sup>

### ***Publishing Houses***

In 2006, the official and societally-dominant “Islam is peace” frame was represented in Karen Armstrong’s glowing biography of Islam’s prophet, *Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time*, by the mainstream publisher Harper-Collins. But, that same year, another book—distinctively oppositional in the title—*The Truth about Muhammad: Founder of the World’s Most Intolerant Religion*, emerged from the niche conservative publisher, Regnery. What the farther Left and former Catholic nun author, Karen Armstrong, had excluded from view in her work on Muhammad, the farther Right and Catholic deacon author, Robert Spencer—an employee of David Horowitz—used for his entire text on the faith’s founder. In this rebuttal-like, counternarrative, Regnery was continuing its strategy of counterhegemonic publishing.

In this strategy, Regnery productions subvert the more progressive and dominant outside by excluding from view all texts and authors housed within the more legitimate knowledge society, and

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<sup>102</sup> This was Fox’s broader mode of operation. For example, when National Public Radio fired its popular host Juan Williams for admitting to Bill O’Reilly on an October 18, 2010 show that he felt fear when he saw people in traditional Muslim dress when flying, Fox immediately hired him in a three contract worth \$2 million. Obviously, Fox hired Williams not for what might have been its new strategy to provide more substantive, nuanced discussion of newsworthy events and trends, but merely as a symbolic counterhegemonic statement of Fox’s position opposite to that of the more progressive outside.

selecting for the entire realm of visibility those topics or objects that dominant societal norms and legitimizing institutions viewed as taboo or considered illegitimate knowledge. To facilitate this mode of struggle, Regnery developed its trademarked “politically incorrect” series, exemplified by Spencer’s *New York Times* bestseller, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)* (2005).

On the topic of Islam broadly, all of Regnery’s productions could be categorized within this realm of politically-incorrect—counter cultural, that is, supporting the conservative opposing or counternarrative. It produced titles like Michelle Malkin’s *In Defense of Internment* [of Muslim-Americans], Robert Spencer’s *Onward Muslim Soldiers*, his *Religion of Peace? Why Christianity Is and Islam Isn’t*, his *Stealth Jihad*, and his *The Complete Infidel’s Guide to the Koran*, Erik Stakelbeck’s *The [Muslim-American] Terrorist Next Door*, Tony Blankley’s *The West’s Last Chance* [in the face of Islam’s takeover], Geert Wilders’s *Marked for Death: Islam’s War Against the West and Me*, and so on.

Regnery more explicitly institutionalized its strategy of security politics via the platform of Islam with titles like David Horowitz’s *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left* (2006), all the while continuing to struggle in works not related to Islam, such as Horowitz’s McCarthyesque works, *The Professors* (2007), and his (liberal) *Radicals* (2012).

The obvious politicization evident in Regnery’s publishing should surprise no one. Up until this point, Regnery Publishing had been the country’s leading publisher of distinctively conservative books. Founded by Henry Regnery in 1947 with counterhegemonic struggle in mind, the publisher openly touted its position as “central to the conservative movement”.<sup>103</sup> Regnery helped establish and sustain the postwar U.S. conservative intellectual movement with works such as Russell Kirk’s *The Conservative Mind*, and William F. Buckley Jr.’s *God and Man at Yale*. Its website states:

Since Regnery opened its doors back in 1947, the conservative movement has grown from a few intellectuals, economists, editorial writers, and authors to become the most vibrant political and intellectual movement in the country. Regnery Publishing has grown with the movement and is as central to the conservative movement today as it was more than 65 years ago.

Owned by the Washington DC-based Eagle Publishing, Regnery’s stated ideological position is opaque compared to its sister institution, *Human Events*, which was also co-founded by Henry Regnery, and whose website touts itself as “the nation’s leading conservative voice since we were established in 1944.” Its editor, David Harsanyi is senior editor at *The Federalist*, and was author of *Obama’s Four Horsemen: The Disasters Unleashed by Obama’s Reelection*, as well as the well-read *Nanny State: How Food Fascists, Teetotaling Do-Gooders, Priggish Moralists, and other Boneheaded Bureaucrats are*

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<sup>103</sup> See <http://www.regnery.com/about/>

*Turning America into a Nation of Children*. Harsanyi also contributed to Glenn Beck's *Arguing With Idiots* and is a major partner for Beck's website, The Blaze (Roberts 2011). Its short list of eight contributors include Raymond Ibrahim, who was functioned more as the more politically-incorrect "bad cop" at both Spencer's Jihad Watch and Pipes's Middle East Forum, as outlined in the later profiles.

Given this ideological orientation, it is not surprising that Regnery touts its counterhegemonic purpose of publishing books that "challenge the status quo".<sup>104</sup> As was the case with its books related to the topic of Islam, Regnery's mode is often explicit delegitimization of the progressive outside, seen in titles like these from its website, beginning with just the first three letters of the alphabet (Table 6-1):

Table 6-1: Regnery Publishing's Counterhegemonic Titles (Beginning with A, B, or C)<sup>105</sup>

***A Slobbering Love Affair, Bernard Goldberg***

In the New York Times bestseller, *A Slobbering Love Affair*, author Bernard Goldberg shows how the mainstream media's hopelessly one-sided coverage of President Obama has shredded America's trust in journalism and endangered our free society.

***After America, Mark Steyn***

Just in time for the presidential election, the New York Times bestseller comes to paperback! Featuring a new introduction, this edition takes on Obama's disastrous plan for our nation, and reveals what a post-American world could look like.

***Bad News, Russ Braley***

The New York Times is the most enterprising American newspaper in the field of foreign policy. It maintains more foreign correspondents—at enormous expense—and publishes more foreign news than any other American news organization. This combined

***Bankrupt, David Limbaugh***

The intellectual and moral bankruptcy of the Democratic Party, by a lawyer and syndicated columnist.

***Beating Obamacare, Betsy McCaughey***

***Betrayal, Bill Gertz***

Gertz tells the alarming story of how the Clinton administration has weakened our military and jeopardized our national security.

***Boy Clinton, R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.***

Tyrrell draws all the known facts about Clinton—plus many never before revealed—into the most comprehensive and illuminating biography ever written about a sitting U.S. president.

***Breakdown, Bill Gertz***

Extensive material on how Clinton administration mismanagement of both our military and our intelligence agencies made us sitting ducks for this kind of attack.

***Conduct Unbecoming, Buzz Patterson***

*Conduct Unbecoming* reveals how Obama's disregard for our military and a strong foreign policy is exposing us to unprecedented risks in the 21st century.

***Control Freaks, Terry Jeffrey***

Provocative and compelling, *Control Freaks* sounds the alarm that Barack Obama and the liberal establishment are stealing our liberties—and shows why we need to wake up and do something about it while they can still be stopped.

<sup>104</sup> See <http://www.regnery.com/about/>

<sup>105</sup> See <http://www.regnery.com/complete-catalog/>

***Courting Disaster, Marc Thiessen***

Courting Disaster shows how America's dedicated intelligence professionals went head-to-head with the world's most dangerous terrorists, and won—only to have Barack Obama expose America's secrets to the enemy, endorse smears against our intelligence officers, and put them at risk of prosecution for defending our country.

***Crimes Against Liberty, David Limbaugh***

Skillfully unraveling the tangled web of Obama's broken promises and blatant fabrications, bestselling author David Limbaugh constructs an air-tight indictment of Obama, charging him with ambitiously unraveling the Constitution and ultimately stripping of us our God-given freedoms.

***Culture of Corruption, Michelle Malkin***

In her devastating expose, Culture of Corruption, bestselling author and investigative reporter Michelle Malkin cites example after example of Team Obama's corrupt dealings and abuses of power. Malkin shows how Obama has hand-picked a team that will do his dirty work for him and exposes dozens of corrupt dealings—all of which the liberal media would rather keep hidden.

But Regnery was not alone in the realm of counterhegemonic publishing. Andrew McCarthy's (2010) aforementioned *The Grand Jihad: How Islam and the Left Sabotage America*—the repackaging of Horowitz's book by Regnery—was published by another conservative heavyweight, Encounter Books, with praise on its book cover from the more polarizing conservative elite, such as Rush Limbaugh. That the book was written not to assess the threat from this faction's newest foreign enemy, but the threat from its old domestic one is evident in Encounter's book summary also printed on its cover, noting how the global jihad movement “has found the ideal partner in President Barack Obama, whose Islamist sympathies run deep.”

That yet another publisher could advance the Islamization scare strategy, and even implicate the U.S. president as being part of the Islamo-Leftist alliance out to “shred the fabric” of the Constitution, is understandable when we learn that Encounter was founded by Peter Collier, who wrote such works as *The Anti-Chomsky Reader*, with David Horowitz, and who chose to name the publishing house after the neo-conservative icon Irving Kristol's magazine, *Encounter*.

Encounter's counterhegemonic strategy and function in the conservative cultural struggle is also evident in the books published by its editor since 2005, Roger Kimball, such as *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education* (1990, 2008); *The Rape of the Masters: How Political Correctness Sabotages Art* (2004); *Experiments Against Reality: The Fate of Culture in the Postmodern Era* (2000); and *The Long March: How the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s Changed America* (2000).

Encounter's counterhegemonic strategy is also evident in its list of authors—which includes all of the Right's chief ideologues, such as William F. Buckley, David Horowitz, William Kristol, Norman Podhoretz (the neo-conservative *Commentary's* editor-in-chief for 35 years), David Pryce-Jones (a senior editor at *National Review* since 1999—and their politically antagonistic titles, such as

Horowitz's *Indoctrination U.: The Left's War Against Academic Freedom*, John Bolton's *How Barack Obama is Endangering our National Sovereignty* and Ronald Radosh's (of PJ Media) *Commies: A Journey Through the Old Left, the New Left and the Leftover Left*. Encounter's list of politically-incorrect titles related to Islam— Spencer's *Islam Unveiled*, Melanie Phillips's (who also works for Horowitz) *Londonistan*, and Ibn Warraq's *What the Koran Really Says*, and so on—function similarly to delegitimize the more progressive regime of truth.

Encounter's broader counterhegemonic function was rendered possible by the underwriting by key conservative philanthropic institutions who directly funded its Encounter for Culture Foundation. The aforementioned conservative patron, the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, for example, invested \$3.5 million to start up Encounter as its own publishing arm, and then contributed around \$1 million annually to Encounter Books from its "Intellectual Infrastructure" project. By 9/11, before underwriting much of the principal polemicists of the Islam(ization) threat strategy, the Bradley Foundation had supported over 400 books in the previous fourteen years. Its president, Michael Joyce, explained that "if you want to have an influence on the world of ideas, books are where you want to put your money. It is what we are most proud of, of all the things we've done here" (Alterman 1999).

### ***Policy Advocacy Organizations***

The title of the 90-minute speech advertised at the National Press Club on August 8th, 2012 was not all that odd given the U.S. discourse over the previous decade: "Muslim Brotherhood Influence Operations." The source of this news-making speech was the aforementioned established conservative policy advocacy organization that focused on national security issues, the Center for Security Policy. But, as previously indicated, the Center was no stranger to making news. It had been the original source cited by "the national security five," led by Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann, who made national news by joining General Boykin in implicating as an infiltrating agent of the Muslim Brotherhood, Huma Abedin. Recall that Abedin was the young Muslim woman and longtime logistics (not policy) aide to the Obama administration's Secretary of State, and highly-likely future presidential candidate, Hillary Rodham Clinton. But, dubiously, this conservative security coalition excluded from view—as the *Washington Post* had pointed out—that Abedin was anything but Islamist, as other employees of various agencies clearly were, by virtue of their dress and lifestyle. She had not only posed provocatively for *Vogue*, but had married and had the child

of a Jewish congressman, New York rep. Anthony Weiner, notorious for sending out a photo of his genitals on Twitter (Milibank 2012).

In the actual brief, the now familiar McCarthy reliably used the opportunity for politics, lamenting the present time “when government policy”—a euphemism for the Obama administration—“is being radically harmonized with the agenda of the Muslim Brotherhood,” and when “policy has shifted in the direction of avowed enemies of the United States.”

The role of such conservative think tanks in the post-9/11 discourse that framed Islam (ization) as a threat was an important one, and we need go no further than the Center for Security Policy to grasp how their discourse on the threat of Islam(ization) functioned politically. This will not come as a surprise, since analyses of think tanks in America have revealed how they have—in Medvetz’s (2012, 6) words—“become indispensable to the practice of ‘politics as a vocation.’”

This particular “security policy” organization exemplifies how some of these institutions carry on such a political vocation under the guise of impartial security analysis. Founded in 1988 by the aforementioned Frank Gaffney, who remained active as its president throughout the post-9/11 decade, the Center’s place in the broader conservative apparatus and culture war is well-known. According to its website, the Center “has been nationally and internationally recognized as a resource for timely, informed and penetrating analyses of foreign and defense policy matters.” Few would agree with that self-characterization. A political appointee of Ronald Reagan, Gaffney’s credentials are political, not substantive, and the Center—rather than being nationally recognized—has become an instrument for narrowly advancing the U.S. conservative movement on the platform of security. It was in this context that the Center was able to secure and then routinely tout Dick Cheney’s endorsement for its “contributions to the national debate about security policy”.<sup>106</sup>

The Center for Security Policy’s role in advancing the conservative interests on the platform of security is evident in its funding stream from philanthropic foundations at the center of either domestic conservative cultural politics specifically, or that also include Holy Land geopolitics. In the post-9/11 decade, the Center received nearly \$20 million from these patrons of the conservative movement, as indicated in the previous section. Gaffney’s organization also appealed to the ideological giving goals of New York investment banker Lawrence Kadish, who—along with giving to Gaffney—had been a patron of both the Republican National Committee and George W. Bush (Vest 2002). Gaffney’s style of security politics appealed to Kadish, who had also underwritten other (“Joe”) McCarthyesque organizations. One such organization was William Bennett’s

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<sup>106</sup> See <http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/about-us/what-others-have-said-about-the-center/>

Americans for Victory Over Terrorism, where he and Gaffney serve as “senior advisers” on the topic of post-9/11 “external” and “internal” threats to America—the latter of which included former President Jimmy Carter and African American Representative Maxine Waters (Vest 2002).

Given the Center’s function in the conservative movement’s struggle, it is not surprising that in the arena of security its productions are politically symbolic, rather than substantive. Since 1990, for example, through its “Keepers of the Flame” award, the Center had recognized individuals for devoting their public careers to the defense of the U.S. and “American values around the world”. The values recognized, however, were conservative values, and all of the annual awards that were not given to senior military generals have gone to Republican politicians, or—in the case of Joseph Lieberman—a Jewish independent.

In the decade after 9/11, Gaffney and his Center opportunistically shifted the vast bulk of its security platform to Islam, becoming sufficiently adept in that topic to use it as a platform for political struggle. During the mid-term elections in 2010, for example, the Center released the report “Shariah: The Threat to America,” by an assembled group of that described themselves as “Team ‘B’ II”—following the earlier Team ‘B’ of the Committee for the Present Danger (which—much to the satisfaction of military industrial complex—overblew the Soviet threat).<sup>107</sup>

The subtle nature of the conservative use of security topics for purposes of cultural struggle against the more progressive outside was evident in Part II of the sharia report (Figure 6-1):

Figure 6-1: *Sharia: The Threat to America* (page 134 excerpt)<sup>108</sup>

As we have discussed above, such unwillingness to recognize and acknowledge the enemy’s battle doctrine emanates directly from the proclivity of Americans, both in and out of public office, to accommodate even troubling conduct in the name of religious tolerance, multiculturalism and political correctness. This blindness, however it is rationalized, has a predictable effect: It translates into an inability even to gauge accurately how far advanced is the assault, let alone to execute an effective strategy for countering it.

Former Joint Chiefs of Staff analyst Stephen Coughlin wrote his seminal master’s thesis for the National Defense Intelligence College on the U.S. refusal to study and internalize *what the enemy himself says* about why he fights jihad. Coughlin concluded that the failure to investigate these sources has left U.S. national security leadership “disarmed in the war of ideas.”<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> As noted, the original Team B—a group of non-CIA realists including Rumsfeld, Cheney and Wolfowitz— was chaired by Pipe’s father, Richard in 1976; it was formed to provide an alternative assessment of the Soviet military and political threat (Sandbrook 2011, 99). Those conservative bona fides notwithstanding, it was odd that Gaffney’s team would identify with this project. Kaplan (2004) criticized the Team B report for having “been wrong on nearly every point.” Anne Cahn of the Arms Control Disarmament Agency in a BBC documentary about Team B’s estimate said that “all of it was fantasy”, saying that “if you go through most of Team B’s specific allegations about weapons systems, and you just examine them one by one, they were all wrong” (Paine 2005, 23). And Peter Kenez, one of Richard Pipes’s graduate students at Harvard, contends that the elder Pipes approached the Soviets as an adversary advocate prosecutor intent only on proving the worst, and excluding other information from view (Kenez 1991, 1995).

<sup>108</sup> See <http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/upload/wysiwyg/article%20pdfs/Shariah%20-%20The%20Threat%20to%20America%20%28Team%20B%20Report%29%2009142010.pdf>



CSP's sharia report also contained more direct delegitimization of the Obama administration (Figure 6-2):

Figure 6-2: *Sharia: The Threat to America* (Page 135 excerpt)

Of particular concern are the 2010 versions of the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review, the Homeland Security Department's Quadrennial Review<sup>413</sup> and the White House-issued National Security Strategy.<sup>414</sup> All hew to the same troubling language guidelines promulgated by DHS,<sup>415</sup> the FBI's Counterterrorism Analytical Lexicon<sup>416</sup> and the National Counterterrorism Center's vocabulary regulations<sup>417</sup> – to the effect that no reference to Islam, jihad or shariah may be made when discussing the threat. This is not simply incompetence. It amounts to malfeasance and it places the U.S. government demonstrably and officially in compliance with Islamic law on slander – a posture that puts the nation in grave peril.

After citing the U.S. oath of office and the duty of government officials to protect the U.S. Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic, the report then more directly attempted to delegitimize the Obama administration, saying, “There is, arguably, no more dramatic example of a senior U.S. government official failing to perform his duty to know – and, seemingly, to fulfill his oath of office – than that of John Brennan, Homeland Security Advisor and Counter-terrorism Advisor to President Obama”

Gaffney's Center seems poised to continue this form of politics. Only a month after the brief by McCarthy that it had organized at the National Press Club—a full eleven years after 9/11—Gaffney himself was at the Family Research Council's September 2012 Values Voter Summit. He flashed a Power Point slide of Muslim organizations in the United States, and charged that “all” of the U.S. major Muslim organizations are offshoots of the Brotherhood, and committed to “civilizational jihad.” And, true to form, lest anyone think that this was an ordinary security brief, Gaffney then flashed the photos of eight prominent Muslims who serve in or are close to the Obama administration, and charged that they—obviously with the administration's complicity—are “working to subvert our nation from within” (Jilani 2012).

### ***More Explicitly Counterhegemonic Organizations***

Following the pattern of the aforementioned identifying institutions of the conservative movement, another segment of threat discourse related to Islam after 9/11 was published or sponsored by institutions that abandoned all presentations of disinterestedness and had long functioned in the open as recognizable counterhegemonic nodes in the conservative domestic culture war. The David Horowitz Freedom Center provides a useful window into this component of the Islam(ization) threat discourse's apparatus.

The role of using the platform of security to engage in domestic cultural politics is implied in the Freedom Center's stated mission—"the defense of free societies whose moral, cultural and economic foundations are under attack by enemies both secular and religious, at home and abroad." With Horowitz's aforementioned book *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left* already in view, we could have readily concluded that the ambiguous language of enemies at home and abroad, secular and religious, is obviously highly euphemized code for the Left and Islam. The next statement on its website removes all doubt:

The David Horowitz Freedom Center combats the efforts of the radical left and its Islamist allies to destroy American values and disarm this country as it attempts to defend itself in a time of terror. The leftist offensive is most obvious on our nation's campuses, where the Freedom Center protects students from indoctrination and intimidation and works to give conservative students a place in the marketplace of ideas from which they are otherwise excluded.

Horowitz was never known for his contributions to the nation broadly through the production of apolitical knowledge, or knowledge beneficial to all segments of society. He always has been and remains known for being a more extreme culture warrior. A member of the radical Left in his youth, Horowitz explained on al-Jazeera's August 21, 2008 *Riz Khan Show* that he had "spent 25 years in the American Left", whose agendas, he asserted, "are definitely to destroy this country." His Saul of Tarsus-like conversion to the radical Right in the 1980s led to the 1988 establishment of his counterhegemonic Center for the Study of Popular Culture, and its mission for the next eighteen years (until renamed in 2006) was to establish a conservative presence in Hollywood and show how popular culture had become a political battleground. Horowitz's new mission was emblemized by his pamphlets, "The Art of Political War" that exhorted the GOP to more adversarial politics, and "Hating Whitey", which confronted the progressives for blaming whites for the relatively deprived state of minorities.

Beyond his recent counterhegemonic books, including *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America* (2007), Horowitz's primary mouthpiece is his Center's *FrontPage Magazine*, which boasts 1.5 million visitors and over 870,000 unique visitors a month (DHFC website 2014). In terms of counterhegemonic content, style and regulations concerning authoritative knowledge, *FrontPage* boasts hundreds of columnists who are largely non-institutionalized conservatives who—outside of their own blogs—lack larger access and credibility.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> See the DHFC's list of columnists at <http://www.frontpagemag.com/columnists/>

The openly counterhegemonic nature of Horowitz’s Center is also seen in its component projects. Since 2003, the Freedom Center has promoted an Academic Bill of Rights to—in its words—“free the American university from political indoctrination and renew its commitment to true intellectual diversity.” Since 2005, its DiscoverTheNetworks.com has in another McCarthyesque mode mapped the Left and its apparatus of power, and bills itself as “the largest publicly accessible database defining the chief groups and individuals of the Left and their organizational interlocks.” In the same vein, the Horowitz Center’s Israel Security Project functions to counter the more progressive movement’s support for the Palestinians, and its TruthRevolt project works—in its words—“to unmask leftists in the media for who they are, destroy their credibility with the American Public, and devastate their funding bases.”<sup>110</sup>

But, the Center’s web-based self-description of counterhegemonic activity also contains two apparent non-sequitur projects related to Islam. The first was its 2003 launch of JihadWatch, and the second was its 2007 launch of the national “Islamofascism Awareness Week,” which was a program on college campuses in affiliation with conservative student groups.

But, why would a conservative institution of such long-standing and openly touted counterhegemonic bona fides bring the topic of Islam broadly—of watching jihad and making the nation aware of “Islamofascism”—into its tent? One answer might seem obvious from the Freedom Center’s text above—because Jihad Watch’s radical counternarrative on Islam and national broadcasting of the politically-incorrect term “Islamofascism” are like terrorism—so egregious and transgressive of societal norms that they draw desired attention of the more progressive national media that it boasts about.

But, there is another and much less obvious reason. As the Horowitz’s book *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left* suggests, the threat of Islam presented yet another angle or platform from which U.S. conservatives might delegitimize the progressive outside.

In conclusion, recall Said’s (1997, lviii) Foucauldian conclusion in *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*, that “it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that all discourse on Islam has an interest in some authority or power.” From the foregoing analysis, it seems clear that this basic axiom about all U.S. discourse on Islam being inherently politically-interested remained valid in the post-9/11 decade, with political interestedness being manifest across the discourse’s philanthropic base and its supporting discourse institutions. But at this social structural level, there were at least three more specific findings that reveals how this threat

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<sup>110</sup> See the DHFC’s self description “About DHFC” at <http://www.horowitzfreedomcenter.org/about>

discourse functioned politically, and why it was able to anachronistically expand throughout the post-9/11 decade.

First, the research suggested that there was a somewhat broader segment of the U.S. conservative movement that was involved than that anticipated by the literature. Second, it revealed how the discourse's social structural base could hardly be described as fringe, but included the movement's central identifying institutions—institutions that were created for the broader culture war, and not in a single case founded upon the basis of far right wing causes or even for struggle for the Holy Land. Third, it also suggested that the central conservative institutions and philanthropists involved played *an even more important role* than those of the narrower far right wing or expressly Zionist ones, as the literature led us to anticipate. These iconic institutions of the conservative movement were not merely complicit in this discourse—as if they were aiding and abetting the key proponents—but were the principal agents of this discourse themselves. By generously funding, publishing, and otherwise promoting those polemicists who were predisposed to engaging in domestic cultural politics while on the topic of Islam as a threat, these central identifying institutions of the U.S. conservative movement not only provided these agents with necessary authority and credibility outside “the establishment”, they *produced* them. The *National Review* and Encounter Books created Andrew McCarthy; *The Washington Times* and the Bradley Foundation and Scaife funds created Frank Gaffney and Daniel Pipes; *Fox News Channel* created Pamela Geller, and so on.

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## POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

*Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereo-typical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by the editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially-accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions....*

—Stan Cohen (1972, 28)

This segment of the inquiry continues to this discourse over the threat of Islam(ization), and particularly what political factors were involved in its expansion. Having already examined the political framing structure and the resource structure, the inquiry now shifts to the threat discourse's distinctive third contextual and structural realm—political opportunities or opportunity “structure.” The analytical elements of political opportunity examined here, as discussed earlier, align with those factors that leading social movement theorists have conceptualized as comprising opportunity structure (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). First, to capture the relative openness of the institutionalized political system and its capacity for repression, we will examine the opening for politics that emerged from the conservative strategy to build a parallel society of media and other knowledge institutions, and its rapid expansion into the emerging alternative media over the first half of the post-9/11 decade. Second, to capture the stability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity and the presence of elite allies, we will examine the sympathy for this discourse from conservative political and religious elite. And, third, to address the external influences, along with related macro-level contexts, we will examine two historical social-psychological events—the accentuated crisis of the U.S. conservative movement in the decade after 9/11, and the related mood of anti-Islam resistance that had emerged by the time of the Islamization part of the threat discourse.

## 1. The Conservative Sub-Society and Its Expansion into the Alternative Media

The kind of threat politics practiced by the U.S. conservative movement in the decade after 9/11 was enabled, incentivized, and rendered credible by two related factors at the level of social structure: 1) the parallel sub-society of conservative institutions in which this discourse was entirely lodged; and 2) the rapid expansion of that sub-society into the alternative media during the first half of the post-9/11 decade. The expansion of this conservative, subcultural media-institutional enclave presented the opening or the opportunity for more dissident, subversive forms of cultural politics, because it bypassed altogether the more progressive, dominant, or legitimate knowledge society, thereby reducing its capacity for repression or sanction of such discourse.<sup>111</sup>

This practice has been well-theorized and long-implemented by fundamentalist movements and other groups marginalized or stigmatized by the dominant knowledge society, who seek to create greater opportunity for political struggle. Each society, in Foucault's (1980) terms, "has its regime of truth; its general politics of truth."<sup>112</sup> This regime, in the words of Herman and Chomsky (1988, 298, 305), constitutes an "elite" or "doctrinal consensus" that cultural producers must negotiate. U.S. conservatives in the decade after 9/11 constantly referred to this regime of truth or knowledge regulatory structure as "political correctness," and their strategy of "resistance" or "subversion" of this "legitimizing" identity and institutions, as Castells's (1997) termed it, was not to work within it, but to bypass it altogether.

In Bourdieu's (1993, 2) terms, this was a strategy of "counterculture," which (recall from the conceptual framework) is "the cult of everything that is outside 'legitimate' culture", "outside the 'establishment', external to official culture." In Foucault's (1977, 144) terms, it was a strategy of "countermemory" or counternarrative. All such cultural practice and struggle "relies on institutional support" or counterhegemonic architecture (Foucault 1981, 55). It requires a material base in the form of institutions; discourse is—as we saw in the last chapter—undergirded by non-discursive, material elements of the apparatus (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 108-109). And—as introduced in the previous chapter—it was upon the U.S. conservative movement's counterhegemonic architecture

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<sup>111</sup> The notion that movements can also create expanded opportunities for politics by expanding their organizational and institutional structure seems established (Trivedi 2004; Gamson and Meyer 1996).

<sup>112</sup> "In every society," he said, "the production of discourse is at once controlled ... to avert its powers and its dangers..." (Foucault 1972, 216). He added that "we all know the rules of exclusion" and that "the most obvious and familiar of these concerns what is prohibited" (1972, 216). He used the term, "logophobia", which entailed society's discursive "taboos," or its "thresholds and limits," that prevented uncontrollable chaos—a fear "of everything that could possibly be violent, discontinuous, querulous, disordered even and perilous..." (1972, 228, 229).

that the early post-9/11 counternarrative (rather than a corrective) to the Islam is peace storyline emerged and continued to advance, and that the later Islamization threat narrative was exclusively housed.

This was not how the earlier theoretical conceptualizations of cultural struggle had imagined it would proceed. (Counter)hegemonic struggle in the early Gramscian view, for example, was *intellectual* in nature; it proceeded as a political ideology's elite and intellectuals seek through a "war of position" *within* civil society's dominant institutions—the mass media, schools, churches, and so on—to imperceptibly subvert the dominant ideology or doxa housed therein (Gramsci 1971, 125-33).<sup>113</sup> But, what Gramsci, writing earlier in the twentieth century, could not have imagined was how media or informational technological innovations might democratize and help build these institutions, thereby enabling a counterhegemonic project to turn from an intellectual movement into a secessionist movement. Marginalized political factions could simply create their own sub-society of resistance or alternative institutions, effectively bypassing and weakening the more official, dominant, or legitimizing knowledge society.<sup>114</sup>

Muslim fundamentalists have long advanced a strategy to create a parallel religious or "Islamic" enclave in the areas of education, religion and culture which competed with and diminished the effective control of the state, and gradually won over the masses from the secular order (Hefner 2001, 504). In Egypt, for example, the Ikhwan or Muslim Brotherhood established itself in the 1970s through such a "parallel Islamic sector," as an alternative to the various cultural, religious, and service-oriented institutions of the state (Wickham 2002, 95).<sup>115</sup> And, under communism, dissident movements like Poland's Solidarity similarly bypassed the centralized, official, and political society and created political space in the form of their own institutions—resistance institutions that subverted and weakened the legitimizing institutions (Kumar 1993, 386; Lagos et al. 2007). Czech

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<sup>113</sup> Gramsci (1971) theorized that every society is in the process of non-violent but potentially destabilizing wars of position for cultural dominance in civil society's institutions. His emphasis on the war of position derived from Marx's gradual realization that modes of thought are not overdetermined by dominant material or economic relations, but by societal institutions that emerged to reproduce the ideology that serves the interests of those who want to preserve their privileged status within the unequal social order. Within this superstructure of modern Western state are a vast range of institutions—political, religious, educational, media, even athletic or sports—that comprise "civil society" (Gramsci, 1971, 12). Because of this role of the cultural superstructure, he argued, revolutions in Western societies required a war of position fought over a protracted period in that realm (1971, 108).

<sup>114</sup> This process of culture war was described by later theorists who saw cultural struggle proceeding as the challenging movement "slowly builds up the strength of the social foundations of a new state" by "creating alternative institutions and alternative intellectual resources within existing society" (Cox 1983, 165).

<sup>115</sup> According to Nawara (2013), the Ikhwan movement "functions as an international secret underground society operating its own totalitarian parallel state, a state-within-the-state"; it "secretly owns and/or controls businesses, political parties, militias, media institutions, schools, hospitals, charities, syndicates and even student unions..."

dissident Vaclav Benda (1977) [1991] advanced this strategy in the tract *Parallel Polis*, published through the *samizdat*—the movement’s underground publishing apparatus.<sup>116</sup>

Similarly, in the decades preceding 9/11, the U.S. conservative movement embarked upon such a counterhegemonic strategy of institution-building, driven by perceptions that existing knowledge institutions were in the thrall of liberalism, and hostile to conservative values and ideology (Gross et al. 2011, 333). Conservative intellectual William F. Buckley’s aforementioned launch of *National Review* in 1955 was the first strategic move toward such a parallel knowledge society that, in Friedman’s (2005, 224-225) words—began to enable conservatives to “compete with and triumph over the prevailing interpretations of the previous half-century.”

This strategy was reinvigorated by former Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr’s memo in the early 1970s calling for business leaders to fund the construction of a conservative “counterestablishment” to disseminate conservative ideas (Reclaim Democracy, 2014).<sup>117</sup> In his August 23 1971 “Confidential Memorandum: Attack of American Free Enterprise System” to his friend on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Powell—who was serving on the boards of 11 corporations at the time—outlined a series of modest steps for corporate funded scholars and other experts to vigorously counter the perceived “broad attack” by “Communists, New Leftists and other revolutionaries” and by liberal elites in the “college campus, the pulpit, the media, the intellectual and literary journals, [and] the arts and sciences.”

The actual attempt at such a strategy came later in the 1970s, when neoconservative Irving Kristol and former Treasury Secretary William Simon spearheaded a coalition of businessmen to fund conservative think tanks, intellectuals, and commentaries that would flood the media with conservative perspectives. Conservative philanthropists were recruited to advance this strategy. Heir of much of the Mellon oil fortune, the late Richard Mellon Scaife—who (as we saw in the last chapter) was a chief source of funding for the principal agents who framed Islam(ization) in the post-9/11 decade—was a chief patron of this strategy to build counterhegemonic parallel society of conservative institutions, for reasons Kaiser and Chinoy (1999) describe:

Confounded by Goldwater's devastating defeat that November, many conservatives concluded that they could only win an election in the future by matching their enemy's firepower. It was time, as a Scaife associate of that era put it, to wage “the war of ideas.” Scaife enthusiastically adopted this view. “We saw what the Democrats were doing and decided to do the mirror image, but do it better,” this Scaife

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<sup>116</sup> The marginalized Muslim population in Germany has also erected such a “parallel society” (Pötzl 2008) or “Parallelgesellschaften” (Hiscott 2005).

<sup>117</sup> Available at [http://reclaimdemocracy.org/powell\\_memo\\_lewis/](http://reclaimdemocracy.org/powell_memo_lewis/)



associate said. “In those days [the early 1970s] you had the American Civil Liberties Union, the government-supported legal corporations [neighborhood legal services programs], a strong Democratic Party with strong labor support, the Brookings Institution, the New York Times and Washington Post and all these other people on the left – and nobody on the right.” The idea was to correct that imbalance.

In addition to those central identifying institutions outlined in the previous chapter, the list of lesser known conservative institutions built as part of this parallel society is extensive. To counter the progressive National Public Radio, a universe of conservative talk radio emerged, hosted by polemicists like Rush Limbaugh and Michael Savage, and those of Christian genre, such as James Dobson’s *Focus on the Family*. To counter the secular influence of public schools and progressive academia, the homeschooling movement and several Christian universities emerged, such as Jerry Falwell’s Liberty University and Bob Jones University, whose science department advances a young-earth creationism. To counter the ACLU, conservatives built alternative legal advocacy institutions, such as the American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ), the Alliance Defense Fund, and the Thomas More Law Center. And, to counter the evolution-naturalizing scientific establishment, conservatives built institutions that housed the counternarrative of “intelligent design”, such as the Discovery Institute, and the more young-earth Institute for Creation Research, and Creation Research Institute. The list is far more extensive in each of these categories.

Contemporary conservative elite more readily admit that these institutions were built not merely as conservative counterweights but as a conservative enclave. In a 6 April 2011 interview with one-time Republican presidential contender, Mike Huckabee, on *The Daily Show*, host Jon Stewart pointed to this strategy, and Huckabee justified it in view of the mainstream institutions being so heavily biased toward the liberal worldview. And—again, as shown in the previous chapter—it was within this safe-haven that conservative elite after 9/11 could not only confidently advance the Islam(ization) threat (counter)narrative, but—based on the mission statements and history of the central conservative institutions previous profiled—could advance their overarching strategy of cultural politics.

### ***Expansion into the Alternative Media***

But, the kind of threat politics that emerged toward the end of the post-9/11 decade was significantly more anti-rational and politically-antagonistic than that which had emerged in the aftermath of 9/11. On the morning of 2001, for example, what could be said regarding security

related matters in the U.S. conservative movement was still largely determined by the movement's more central, "big tent" institutions, with their professionally-trained editorial boards, a code of journalistic ethics, a respected board of directors, and—above all—a corporate advertising base which needed to sell products across the broader swath of society.

But, by the mid-point of the post-9/11 decade, that had changed. The emerging "new" or alternative media had significantly eroded the "monopoly of production" that these institutions enjoyed. Emblematic of how media power in Western society had become more diffuse and less a top-down, juridical, concentrated, and oligarchic, and more of a system of micro-nodes, was YouTube which debuted in 2005, with its "broadcast yourself" motto. Just before the height of the Islamization conspiracy that some conservative elite created or expressed solidarity for, a March 2010 CNN survey had revealed that more Americans were getting news from the internet or "outside of the circle of professionals," to use Bourdieu's (1991, 173) terms than from traditional print media or radio (Gross 2010).<sup>118</sup>

That this new media technology had created the opportunity for even greater virtual ungoverned space for more unrestricted politics was not lost on conservative activists, who began to rearticulate the strategy of secession that Justice Powell had advanced in the 1970s. In a fitting article for the new conservative e-daily, *WorldNetDaily*, William Lind (2007)—an aforementioned early proponent of the counternarrative and the Director of the Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation—noted that conservatives could "choose between two strategies." The first, as he put it, "is to try to retake the existing institutions—the public schools, the universities, the media, the entertainment industry and most of the mainline churches—from the cultural Marxists." But, Lind—apparently unaware of the conservative movement's history or its then-sizeable existing institutional subsociety—advocated another, "more promising" strategy: "We can separate ourselves and our families from the institutions the cultural Marxists control and build new institutions for ourselves, institutions that reflect and will help us recover our traditional Western culture" (Lind 2007). He advocated that conservatives place more emphasis on the "movement to secede from the corrupt, dominant culture and create parallel institutions".

And, writing from his ever-popular Jihad Watch.org blog, Horowitz's employee, and Lind's former colleague at the Foundation, Robert Spencer, captured the spirit of this invigorated strategy

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<sup>118</sup> That trend began before 9/11. As early as 1996, *National Review* was forced to align with the trend, leading the way with its National Review Online, NRO, which featured separate and always more extreme editorial content from the print magazine. The move was well-informed. NRO's influence has grown to average more than one million page views a day (weekdays) and more than four million unique visitors a month.<sup>118</sup>

in a July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010 post. “We have the truth on our side,” Spencer said confidently, “we have the alternate media—which is still very small compared to the mainstream media, but it is growing apace as the frustration of people who realize they're being lied to increases.” He was right; it was growing apace. Many conservative upstarts in the alternative media were now functioning as key nodes in the conservative parallel universe—alternative media institutions like *WorldNetDaily*, Horowitz’s *Front Page Magazine*, *American Thinker*, and *Pajamas (now PJ) Media*. The rapid expansion of these media outlets enabled conservative culture warriors with a modicum of cultural capital to bypass what Daniel Pipes derogatively referred to as the “stifling consensus” of the “establishment” (Pipes 2010; Pipes & Chadha 2006).

*WorldNetDaily* was key in this regard. Created in 1997 as a project of the more rightist evangelical, Joseph Farah, the e-daily apparently printed everything that the Islam(ization) threat discourse’s principal agents managed to write. Gradually, the alternative conservative e-daily became more influential than the more identifiable legacy institutions. When the sharia hype was just mounting, for example, the institution had become so central to the conservative movement that the Republican National Committee apparently rented access to its email list (Henke 2009; Krepel 2009). The e-daily even branched into publishing. In 2009, it published *Muslim Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld That’s Conspiring to Islamize America*, which had been funded by Gaffney’s Center for Security Policy (Elliot 2011); and in 2011, it published *Stop the Islamization of America*, by Pamela Geller.

The Islamization conspiracy theory was but one of many that the tabloid-like institution had advanced. It was also a leader in advancing the “birther” movement related to President Obama’s citizenship. When confronted on this, its editor and CEO, Farah, admitted the site knowingly published misinformation if it supports their political goals (Elliot 2011). With its track record clearly established, *WorldNetDaily* was dubbed by *Salon* as “the biggest, dumbest wingnut site on the Web” (Goode 2003, 4; Pareene 2011), and more moderate elements of the GOP had begun urging other conservatives to not support it (Henke 2009).

This changing nature of the conservative media society was bound to have concomitant effects on the subculture’s political ideology, in keeping with the tenets of medium theory (Deibert 1997, ix-x; Meyrowitz 2008).<sup>119</sup> By the end of the decade, these more rightist alternative media-based nodes

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<sup>119</sup> Media is thought to be not simply channels for transmitting information, but are themselves distinct social-psychological environments that shape certain types of interaction and interpretation, and discourage others (Meyrowitz, 2008).

had clearly eclipsed the more centrist elements of the conservative enclave’s legacy apparatus of power, and were dragging them farther right. Digital Director of the Romney campaign, Zac Moffat, said that websites like Breitbart and Drudge represent a major shift in how the media works, significantly eroding the influence of everything more toward the political center on the conservative electorate (O’Connor 2012).<sup>120</sup> At Andrew Breitbart’s consortium of blogs (where Gaffney’s column from the *Washington Times* would eventually move in 2014),<sup>121</sup> for example, all topics of news were politicized. It was here that Andrew McCarthy in 2010 could credibly say (without challenge) that “Islamists” and “leftists” share totalitarian goals, “totalitarian in the sense that they want to control every aspect of the individual’s life, and [are] virulently opposed to capitalism and individual liberty,” adding that “even though they [Obama and Saudi King Abdullah] part company on the details of what they would transform it into, they both need to topple American constitutional republicanism in order to install their utopias” (Posner 2011).

Another example of how their expanding alternative media enclave seemed to be normalizing more extreme forms of political discourse among key conservatives was *Pajamas* (now PJ) *Media*. Launched in November 2005—again, with venture capital raised by the earlier profiled conservative and Zionist philanthropist, Aubrey Chernick—*Pajamas Media*’s mission was to *replace* the mainstream media’s professional journalists with a network of conservative and politically activist citizen-journalists. “Pajamas” was a reference to the “Pajamahadeen”, or those bloggers, who—from home in their pajamas—could “challenge and fact-check traditional media.” The website was the brainchild of activist Charles Johnson and Roger L. Simon, who—after his investigation into the Killian documents controversy—forced a retraction of *60 Minutes* criticism of President George W. Bush’s service in the Air National Guard, and forced Dan Rather’s resignation from CBS News. Johnson (2012)—reflecting back on the media upstart’s beginnings—noted how it was “conceived as a place where left and right could meet and engage in rational debate.” Its centrist positioning strategy was the reason it had kept putting off Jihad Watch’s Robert Spencer who—according to Johnson—incessantly asked to have his articles published at the site. Yet, the ideological shift over the next seven years was profound enough to force Johnson to leave. And, at the end of the post-9/11 decade, on the news that Spencer had finally landed a column there, Johnson (2012) lamented,

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<sup>120</sup> Breitbart’s farther Right editor John Nolte has called for a “twitter war” to harass liberal elite and media, and whose own militant tendencies is reflected by his twice sending tweets calling for liberals thought to be leading America’s moral slide to be murdered (Johnson, 2012: 05.16).

<sup>121</sup> See <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Peace/2014/02/25/FRANK-GAFFNEYS-WEEKLY-COLUMN-COMES-TO-BREITBART>

“I suppose this is another indicator of how far to the right the conservative movement has swung, when a site like *Pajamas Media*, has become a hangout for the worst kind of gutter bigotry.”

### ***The Democratization of Authority***

The conservative enclave—now expanded into the alternative media institutions like *WND*, *PJ Media*, *FrontPageMagazine*, and *Jihad Watch*—presented these more politically-antagonistic and activist intellectuals with the kind of authority that heretofore had been reserved for those with traditional credentials and who were further accredited by their positionality in recognized authoritative institutions of knowledge. For example, by the end of the post-9/11 decade, Horowitz’s *FrontPageMagazine* had over 870,000 unique visitors each month (65 million hits) and was linked to over 2000 other conservative websites (DHFC website 2014). This trend had grown throughout the post-9/11 decade, as the Horowitz center’s Tax Form 990 for 2008 shows, before *Jihad Watch*’s popularity grew significantly in 2010 (Figure 7-1).<sup>122</sup>

Figure 7-1: David Horowitz Freedom Center 2008 Tax Form 990 excerpt

|   |              |   |                               |
|---|--------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>4b</b>   | (Code _____) | (Expenses \$ <b>664,457</b> . including grants of \$ _____) | (Revenue \$ <b>30,268</b> . ) |
| <p><b>-FRONTPAGEMAG.COM (FPM) IS THE CENTER’S MAIN DAILY NEWS WEBSITE. WITH UP TO 10 ORIGINAL ARTICLES FEATURED DAILY, THE CENTER BRINGS NEWS AND COMMENTARY TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WORLDWIDE. THE MISSION OF FRONTPAGE IS TO DELIVER THE NEWS ON THE WAR AT HOME AND ABROAD. FPM HAS ABOUT 750,000 UNIQUE VISITORS EVERY MONTH.</b></p>   |              |   |                               |
|   |              |   |                               |
|   |              |   |                               |
|   |              |   |                               |
|   |              |   |                               |
|   |              |   |                               |
|   |              |   |                               |
| <b>4c</b>   | (Code _____) | (Expenses \$ <b>369,213</b> . including grants of \$ _____) | (Revenue \$ <b>3,441</b> . )  |
| <p><b>-JIHAD WATCH IS A CENTER PROGRAM RUN BY NOTED AUTHOR ROBERT SPENCER. JIHADWATCH.ORG IS A DAILY NEWS SITE WITH NEWS AND OPINION ON THE WAR WITH RADICAL ISLAM, THE STUDY AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE JIHADIST WORLDVIEW, SHARIA LAW, AND THE THREATS TO WESTERN CIVILIZATION. JIHAD WATCH IS READ BY OVER 500,000 UNIQUE VISITORS EVERY MONTH. ROBERT SPENCER IS A NY TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND HIS ARTICLES ARE READ BY MILLIONS WORLDWIDE.</b></p> |              |   |                               |

But it was more than impressive “circulation” that contributed to this subtle epistemic effect of the democratization of authority. Regulations for authority in the alternative media were also alternative, benefiting the popular producer. By 2008, Pew Research Center found that Western societies were decreasingly in a mood to rely on mainstream media and institutionalized authorities for their truth, and increasingly relying on more popular sources proliferating in the alternative media (Pew Research Center 2008). The movement’s affinity for the samizdat-like alternative media

<sup>122</sup> The entire Form 990 is available at *The Tennessean*, <http://archive.tennessean.com/assets/pdf/DN1658821023.PDF>

can be found in McLuhan’s (2005)[1967] axiom, “the medium is the message.” The *alternative* media, more than anything, symbolized an alternative message, as did U.S. conservatism.

Traditional epistemic authority also suffered decline in relative terms; it was simply being “drowned out” as the nodes of information multiplied exponentially from 16 to 2,280 million between 1995 and 2012. The circulation figures for popular conservative experts on Islam(ization)—those of Horowitz’s *FrontPageMagazine* and Spencer’s *Jihad Watch*—concomitantly grew, even exceeding those experts in the traditional, professional security field, and effectively bypassing what Foucault (1972, 50-55) had called society’s “enunciative modalities,” and challenging the “rarefaction” of authority within academic disciplines (Foucault 1981, 60). Even celebrated institutionalized conservative scholars like Bernard Lewis watched their influence shrink relative to these popular authorities. And, while Bernard Lewis had once earned the ire of the late Edward Said in his books *Orientalism* (1978) and *Covering Islam* (1997), it was now discourse agents housed in their own institutions in the alternative media whom *Fox News*, *Washington Times* and other conservative-niche media institutions summoned for discussion on Islam broadly. Similarly, Internet posts referencing Lewis on the subjects of “Islam” or “jihad” are at least a third fewer than those referencing Robert Spencer of Jihad Watch, for example.<sup>123</sup>

This same pattern of effective popular authority can be seen with other experts on Islam. The number of web entries returned from an advanced Google search of the discourse’s principal agents at the end of the post-9/11 decade compared to more traditional experts on the topic of Islam begins to reveal just how much authority had been democratized (Table 7-1):

Table 7-1: Relative Authority of Experts on Islam

| <i>Internet Citations</i> | <i>Name (as Searched)</i> | <i>Institution and Credentials</i>  |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1,090,000                 | “Daniel Pipes”            | Add 402,000 if “Middle East Forum” is included  |
| 929,000                   | “David Horowitz”          | Add 1,930,000 if “FrontPage” Magazine is included   |
| 927,000                   | “Robert Spencer,” Islam   | Add 8,570,000 if “Jihad Watch” is included and 1,240,000 more if “jihadwatch” is included                     |
| 458,000                   | “Frank Gaffney”           | Add 267,000 if “Center for Security Policy” is included   |
| 351,000                   | “Brigitte Gabriel”        | Add 3,330,000 if “ACT! for America” is included.  |
| 118,000                   | “Marc Lynch,” Islam       | George Washington University’s renowned authority on the Muslim Brotherhood; author of the blog, Abu Aardvark |
| 20,900                    | “Quintan Wiktorowicz”     | Established scholar on Islamism on Obama’s National Security  |

<sup>123</sup> If the search is expanded to include references to Spencer’s organization “JihadWatch,” the comparison becomes even more lopsided.

|        |                    |  |
|--------|--------------------|--|
|        |                    | Council; author of <i>Radical Islam Rising</i> .   |
| 18,100 | “Peter Mandaville” | Director, Ali Vural Ak Center for Global Islamic Studies, George Mason University; author of <i>Political Global Islam</i> . |

And, Bonney’s (2008) analysis of Bernard Lewis’s influence on Vice President Dick Cheney and the Bush administration’s invasion of Iraq notwithstanding, it was apparently not so much the traditional, formal authorities operating in the legitimate knowledge society, but the popular ones operating in the alternative media segment of the parallel conservative knowledge society, who had the most influence in shaping the early counternarrative on Islam and the later Islamization conspiracy. Gingrich’s emphasis on the threat of sharia and his use of the term, “stealth jihad” in 2010, for example, were borrowed not from formal authorities like Lewis, but from the new popular blogger, Robert Spencer, who had published his book by that name in 2008.

***Ideological Identification as De facto Credibility***

Another related reason for the expanded credibility and influence of this threat discourse’s agents was the changing epistemic nature of their market—the consumers of their products—who had increasingly shifted to *identifying with* information—that is, *selecting* or subscribing to (with a simple mouse click”) those nodes of ideologically-driven knowledge that aligned with their predispositions and worldview. In this process they became captured by their own identification practices and lodged entirely within this “virtual community.” In other words, the rapid emergence of the alternative media coincident with the post-9/11 decade enabled individuals who are ideologically aligned, or who have similar needs or interests to create a “virtual community” or “internet mediated community” (Iriberry and Leroy 2009, 11; 19; Bellini and Vargas 2003, 3).

On this phenomenon in the context of the conservative knowledge ghetto, Jamieson and Cappella (2008, x) argue that this structure of conservative media produces a safe haven that “reinforces the views of these outlets’ like-minded audience members, helps them maintain ideological coherence, protects them from counter persuasion, reinforces conservative values and dispositions, holds Republican candidates and leaders accountable to conservative ideals, tightens their audience’s ties to the Republican Party, and distances listeners, readers, and viewers from ‘liberals’ in general, and Democrats, in particular.” Similarly, Jones (2012, 181) concludes that Fox News Channel, in conjunction with other conservative media outlets, “provides a steady and consistent diet of such overtly ideological symbolic material to sufficiently sustain viewer interest and commitments as a community”.

This notion that U.S conservatives had both ideologically captured and insulated themselves within their own incestuous, solipsistic media enclave was evident at the end of the post-9/11 decade. According to Public Policy Polling (PPP) in January 2014, for example, 69 percent of Republicans viewed Fox News Channel as the most trusted, with no other network polling above 7 percent for GOP viewers.<sup>124</sup> By the time of the Islamization conspiracy enough empirical data had been gathered to suggest that this epistemic closure had become a strategic issue for the GOP. Polling from various organizations from 2007 to 2011, for example, consistently revealed that Fox News's market was least knowledgeable about national and international affairs (Pew Research Center, 2007; World Public Opinion, 2010; Public Religion Research Institute, 2011). A study by the University of Maryland revealed that the ignorance of Fox News Channel viewers actually *increased* (rather than decreased, as would be expected) the *longer* they watched the “news” network (Dickinson 2011). Similarly, nearly six in ten Republicans who said that they trusted Fox News believed also believed that Muslim-Americans were trying to establish sharia in the U.S., contrasted with Republicans who relied on other news sources, whose beliefs align with those of the general population (PRR and Brookings 2011).

By the time that the fantastic sharia-ization conspiracy had convinced a segment of the U.S. conservative electorate, prominent conservative intellectuals had begun the debate surrounding this feature of “epistemic closure”, or close-mindedness, that capture within the movement's own knowledge society was creating. Cohen (2010) explains:

First used in this context by Julian Sanchez of the libertarian Cato Institute, the phrase “epistemic closure” has been ricocheting among conservative publications and blogs as a high-toned abbreviation for ideological intolerance and misinformation. Conservative media, Mr. Sanchez wrote at [juliansanchez.com](http://juliansanchez.com) — referring to outlets like Fox News and National Review and to talk-show stars like Rush Limbaugh, Mark R. Levin and Glenn Beck — have “become worryingly untethered from reality as the impetus to satisfy the demand for red meat overtakes any motivation to report accurately.”

It was in this trusted conservative media enclave that a de facto authority of threat narratives and their proponents emerged. A typical example was during the GOP primaries on May 1, 2012, when Fox News's Sean Hannity interviewed Geert Wilders.<sup>125</sup> When Wilders wildly exaggerated the threat from Islamization, saying that Europe had become “almost half Islamic,” Hannity did not feel compelled to challenge him. During the lengthy interview, Fox News's editors could have checked and notified Hannity of Eurostat's figures, which showed that Muslims comprised only 13 to 16

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<sup>124</sup> An almost equal 57 percent of Democrats deemed Fox the least trusted network.

<sup>125</sup> [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=oE0SMdKn71g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=oE0SMdKn71g)



million, or merely 2.5 to 3.5 percent of the EU's population of 500 million in 2009. They could have even reviewed the widely publicized short excerpts of Saunders (2012, 54), which debunked the Islamization of Europe threat narrative, and pinpointed the future Muslim population of the Netherlands—Wilders' home—in 15 years at only 7.8 percent.<sup>126</sup> They could have pushed back further, noting that much of that very small Muslim population (almost 1/20<sup>th</sup> of the U.S. Hispanic population, for example) was fully assimilated and more European than Islamic in cultural values. And, Fox's editors could have also quickly checked that, accounting for population growth, the Muslim population across all of Europe in 2030 will be only 2 percent higher than then, according to Pew Research Center's latest estimate (Pew Research Center 2011). But, through Fox's silence on this context, it imparted authority to Wilders. With that goal achieved, Fox News could move on in non-sequitur fashion to more blatant domestic politics: "This president [Obama] won't even recognize that there is a war on terror," Hannity blurted.

## 2. Solidarity for the Threat Discourse among Some Conservative Elite

A second key component of the structure of broader political opportunity or opening that incentivized and rendered credible the post-9/11 U.S. conservative Islam(ization) threat discourse was the solidarity surrounding it among more than a few conservative political and religious elite.<sup>127</sup>

### *Solidarity among Political Elite*

Despite the broad diversity or heterogeneity within the U.S. conservative movement, as noted by Factor (2014, 93, 215, 362, 375), solidarity for the Islam(ization) threat discourse was strong among the front-running GOP presidential candidates during the latter half of the post-9/11 decade, and curiously *absent entirely* from Democrat political figures (Summers 2011). Just as dubious was the fact that—among this segment of the conservative political elite—the Islamization threat

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<sup>126</sup> In a widely publicized excerpt of his book, Saunders (2012) wrote: "Deprived of any genuine facts suggesting an overwhelming Muslim baby boom, the more radical Muslim-tide proponents simply make them up. More than 13 million people have now viewed the YouTube video Muslim Demographics, which claims among other things that Germany will be a "Muslim state" by 2050. Every one of the video's claims is untrue. It says that French Muslims have 8.1 children and ethnic-French families 1.8 (the figures are 2.8 and 1.9, respectively). It says that a quarter of the Belgian population is Muslim (it's 6%), that the Netherlands will be half Muslim in 15 years (it will be 7.8% Muslim in 18 years) — and so on."

<sup>127</sup> Again, this factor aligns with McAdams and colleagues (1996) second and third factors of opportunity structure; that is: "the stability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity" and the "presence of elite allies."

narrative's attendant practice of political frame bridging, or the linking the movement's foreign and domestic enemies, Islam and the Left, was prevalent.

Out in front of the political pack with this solidarity in 2008, after his second place in the Iowa primary, GOP presidential hopeful Senator Rick Santorum uttered the counternarrative's more apocalyptic elements. In a speech organized by David Horowitz, Santorum first targeted the progressive culture of Europe, which was—in his words—“creating an opportunity for the creation of Eurabia, or Euristan.” For this reason, he said, “there will be no Europe left to fight [Islam, with us].” Santorum then shifted the threat axis from the Left to Islam, and from Sunni extremists to the Shi'ite sect as a whole, because they want “to bring back the Mahdi.” He added: “And do you know when the Mahdi returns? At the Apocalypse at the end of the world. You see, they are not interested in conquering the world; they [all Shia Muslims] are interested in destroying the world.” What we need to do to prevent this apocalypse, he concluded with great ambiguity, is “eradicate”. In a post-script, he added, “this is going to be a long war” (Santorum 2007). In his next bid for the presidency to unseat Barak Obama, Santorum demonstrated complete solidarity with the Islamization threat narrative, describing “creeping sharia” as a “huge issue” and “an existential threat to America” (Summers 2011).<sup>128</sup>

In a July 2010 speech at the *American Enterprise Institute*, as the mid-term elections loomed, Presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich shifted the threat axis from the strategic crisis in American manufacturing, energy, education, structural deficit and other critical topics to Islamization via “stealth jihad” by subversive elements among America's Muslims to “replace Western Civilization with a radical imposition of sharia”—which he characterized as a “mortal threat to the survival of freedom in the United States and in the world as we know it” (Shane 2011, Miller 2010). “Stealth jihadis,” he added, “use political, cultural, societal, religious, intellectual tools...to replace Western civilization with a radical imposition of Shariah” (Shane 2011). The same year, at the 2010 Values Voters Summit, Gingrich called for a federal ban on sharia, and on the ninth anniversary of 9/11, went as far as to produce a film with his wife on the existential threat of Islamization, *America at Risk: The War With No Name*. In it, he warned Americans about unspecified and ambiguous “radical

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<sup>128</sup> Santorum perceived “Islam” as so useful that it was often woven into his political speech as a non-sequitur, out of place ingredient. In January 2012 during the South Carolina caucus, former Senator Rick Santorum juxtaposed enemies foreign and domestic. He centered “the people on the left” and their push for equality, asking “where do you think this concept of equality comes from?” “It doesn't come from Islam” he said, “It comes from the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (Walshe 2012).

Islamists” inside America, who were threatening “to impose an extraordinarily different system on us”—to “replace American freedom with Sharia” (Gingrich and Gingrich 2010).

But, Gingrich found the conspiracy about the left’s involvement in this Islamization too useful to pass up. In his speech to AEI, he said that “The left’s refusal to tell the truth about the Islamist threat is a natural parallel to the 70-year pattern of left-wing intellectuals refusing to tell the truth about communism and the Soviet Union” (Shane 2011).<sup>129</sup> In another speech, he said, “I don't think we should be intimidated by our political elites, and I don't think we should be intimidated by universities who have been accepting money from the Saudis and who, therefore, now have people who are apologists for the very people who want to kill us.” (Spencer 2012). And continuing this form of frame bridging, at the First Redeemer Church in Cumming Georgia in late February 2012, he said, “We have a secular elitist wing that deeply, deeply disbelieves in America, that wants to create a different country based on a different set of principles,” he said. “And we have a radical Islamist one which legitimately and authentically hates us and should” (Lin 2012).<sup>130</sup>

Minnesota Republican Congresswoman and founder of the House Tea Party caucus, Michele Bachmann, during her run for President, also maintained strong solidarity with the Islam(ization) threat discourse. We had seen in the chapter on the threat discourse’s framing resources how—during mid-term elections in 2010—Bachmann, in an interview on conservative radio’s popular *The Mike Gallagher Show*, asserted that the GOP’s opposing domestic political party had allied with their ideological foreign enemy to destroy the nation. “It seems like there is this common cause that is occurring with the left and with radical Islam...” she said, adding that “It’s frightening to think how the left in this country, just as you've correctly stated, Michael, is throwing in with common cause with these radical elements of Islamic extremism” (MN Progressive Project 2010). On the threat of Islamization, in July 2012, there was Bachmann’s aforementioned 16 page McCarthyite letter defending her attempt to root out “deep penetration” by the Muslim Brotherhood into the U.S. government. The highly-publicized letter obviously had ulterior motives than protecting the nation from subversion. Had the Congresswoman really had credible, actionable intelligence that terrorist

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<sup>129</sup> Continuing that paranoid theme of infiltration into the Republican New Hampshire primary presidential debate, Gingrich tacitly securitized all Muslim-Americans, citing a case where one had lied about his loyalty to the nation in order to attack it, and then compared the situation of America’s current 5<sup>th</sup> column in this minority community to that of the Nazis and Communists (Khan & Bingham, 2011).

<sup>130</sup> In a similar strategy of identity politics, Gingrich told religious conservatives at the American Family Association’s pastors’ policy briefing in Iowa that “until you replace this president and until you have the Congress and the new president replace large parts of our bureaucracies, we’re going to continue to be dominated by secular, anti-Christian and anti-Jewish elite.” He then pointed to “our secular elites” who “do everything they can to prove they are not anti-Muslim” (Marr, 2011).

supporters had infiltrated the U.S. government, the letter would have been classified secret, and we would have not learned about it until after the investigation, thereby not tipping off the infiltrators. But, Bachmann sent her letter to the media and then in July appeared on the American Family Association's Sandy Rios' show to broadcast it (Tashman 2012). And, when challenged, she hinted that she has access to secret information as a member of the House Select Committee on Intelligence supporting her claims (Seitz-Wald 2012).

One-time GOP presidential frontrunner Herman Cain also maintained solidarity with the Islam(ization) threat narrative (Patten, 2010). In a 21 March 2011 interview with *Christianity Today*, Cain said, "Based upon the little knowledge that I have of the Muslim religion," he said, "they have an objective to convert all infidels or kill them", and then went on to describe the subversive "attempt to gradually ease sharia law and the Muslim faith into our government" (Persaud 2011; Sullivan 2011).<sup>131</sup> *Christianity Today's* interviewer, Trevor Persaud, did not challenge Cain's characterization of Islam, or the perceived threat of Islamization, but tacitly affirmed it, responding with the closer, "Is there anything else you'd like to say?"

At the level of the US Congress, the Islam(ization) threat narrative also enjoyed broad solidarity. Gaffney's 2010 report "Sharia: The Threat to America" was praised by Republican members of Congress, such as Trent Franks (AZ), Michele Bachmann (MN), and Pete Hoekstra (MI). When the major conservative alternative media site *WorldNetDaily* published *Muslim Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld That's Conspiring to Islamize America*, Republican North Carolina congresswoman Sue Myrick wrote its forward and led Representatives John Shadegg (AZ), Paul Broun (GA), and Trent Franks (AZ) in calling for an investigation. Similarly, Florida congressman Allen West on Frank Gaffney's radio program in late December 2010 said that he hoped that Congress would focus on the "infiltration of the Sharia practice into all of our operating systems in our country as well as across Western civilization" (Fang 2011).

On the House floor, Texas congressman Louie Gohmert suggested that President Obama's allegiances were with Islamic states instead of the U.S. "I know the president made the mistake one day of saying he had visited all 57 states, and I'm well aware that there are not 57 states in this country, although there are 57 members of OIC, the Islamic states in the world." "Perhaps there was some confusion whether he'd been to all 57 Islamic states as opposed to all 50 U.S. states. But nonetheless, we have an obligation to the 50 American states, not the 57 Muslim, Islamic states....

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<sup>131</sup> With that oppositional frame present in his reasoning, Cain later made headlines when he said that "I wouldn't have Muslims in my administration" (Tashman 2011).

This administration [has been] complicit in helping people who wants [sic] to destroy our country” (Zafar 2011). On CSPAN’s *Washington Journal* after the Benghazi embassy incident and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood President Morsi in Egypt, Gohmert said that “the only way you could explain the horrendous decisions that were complete wrong-headed was if this administration had a bunch of Muslim Brotherhood members giving them advice.”<sup>132</sup>

As the decade wore on, it was *only* Republicans who were supportive of the contentious Islam(ization) threat discourse, and—with one sole apparent exception—only Democrats expressing opposition to it.<sup>133</sup> For example, based on the dozen or so news reports on the topic, when Republican New York Representative Peter King chaired House Homeland Security Committee hearings on Muslim-American radicalization in the first half of 2011, only the Democrats at the hearings were criticizing them, and only Republicans were defending them. After King’s first hearing, the GOP attempted to frame the hearings as disinterested, with Republican Senator Gregory Ball saying, “I understand politics. But we cannot allow our homeland security to become a political football” (Kaplan 2011). And, during King’s second hearing on Muslim radicalization in U.S. prisons on 15 June 2011, for example, King’s GOP colleague Mike McCaul praised the hearings as a way to “end the era of political correctness” (Kane 2012), while his other Republican colleagues Dan Lungren and Jeff Duncan noted how “the political correctness” among Democrats in the room was “astounding”, and complained that the mere discussion about the threat of radical Islam appeared to be “off limits” for Democrats (Piraneo 2011).

Similarly, it was only House Republicans and not one Democrat who on December 15, 2011, signed a letter sent to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Attorney General Eric Holder objecting in principle to considering changes to training programs regarding Muslims or Islam in some defense and intelligence institutions that had been identified as anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim in nature.<sup>134</sup> And, over half of the members of Congress active in the Christian organization House Capitol Ministries<sup>135</sup>—all 23 of them in the Republican Party—had made anti-Muslim statements,

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<sup>132</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzBxJjmNYqw>

<sup>133</sup> The literature suggested otherwise. Sheehi (2011, 43), for example, contended that “Islamophobia” “cuts across party lines.” It didn’t in the latter half of the post-9/11 decade, when Democrats lined up in juxtaposition to Republicans in relation to this discourse.

<sup>134</sup> See

[http://myrick.house.gov/uploads/12152011\\_Letter%20to%20DOJ%20and%20DOD%20re%20CT%20training%20changes.pdf](http://myrick.house.gov/uploads/12152011_Letter%20to%20DOJ%20and%20DOD%20re%20CT%20training%20changes.pdf)

<sup>135</sup> <http://www.capmin.org/site/>

supported the Islam(ization) of America conspiracy theory, or supported anti-Muslim groups (Musaji 2012).<sup>136</sup>

Among the nationally-recognized GOP elite vying for president, it was only former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, Congressman Ron Paul, and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie who did not demonstrate solidarity with the Islam(ization) threat narrative. Christie warned in mid-August 2010 against politicizing the planned lower-Manhattan Park 51 community center and mosque initiative, adding “What offends me the most about all this is that it's being used as a political football by both parties” (Hook and Hamburger 2010).

Lastly, it was virtually only Republican state legislators who introduced nearly eighty bills to safeguard the Constitution from sharia. In states prone to racism across the political spectrum, only four Democrats (Alabama, South Carolina, South Dakota and Kansas) joined the widely publicized conservative-led legislative initiative to restrict judges from consulting sharia in their rulings (despite the fact that state judges are already prohibited from overriding U.S. law, and despite the fact that the vast majority of voters in their states personally did not even know a Muslim) (Langer 2009).<sup>137</sup> These bills selectively obscured the fact that the issue had no relevance in their own states, and pointed dubiously to cases of judges in faraway Dearborn Michigan, who purportedly privileged sharia over the U.S. Constitution. Countering these charges, Dearborn’s mayor Jack O’Reilly (D) said “These people know nothing of Dearborn”, and that this stereotype continually hounds the city. He added that these conservative legislators “just seek to provoke and enflame their base for political gain” (Press and Guide 2011).

### ***Solidarity among Conservative Christian Cultural Warriors***

Frank Gaffney’s aforementioned project, *Sharia: The Threat To America* in 2011, featured a group of twenty authors who had fancifully dubbed themselves Team “B” II—a symbolic identification with the original Cold War-era Team “B”, headed by Daniel Pipes’s father Richard, which had sought to provide a more pessimistic assessment of the Soviet threat than had been rendered by the

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<sup>136</sup> According to Musaji (2012), these include Michele Bachmann, Paul Broun, Trent Franks, Louie Gohmert, Ralph Hall, Pete Hoekstra, Steve King, Doug Lamborn, Gary Miller, Sue Myrick, Mike Pence, Tom Price, Lamar Smith, Allen West, and Lynn Westmoreland, among others. Similarly, among the nation’s other Christian elite, it was only conservatives who expressed opposition to the “religion of peace” storyline. Andrea Lafferty of the conservative network’s Traditional Values Coalition, for example, said in 2011 that “Islam is a geo-political military system wrapped in a cloak of religious belief”, and that “if there are moderate Muslim voices, I challenge them to speak out”—implying that none have or would (Lafferty 2011).

<sup>137</sup> According to an ABC News-Washington Post poll in 2009, over half of all Americans concede that they personally don’t even know a Muslim (Langer 2009).

CIA's strategic estimate. The sharia report's lead author, the aforementioned former Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, General "Jerry" Boykin was by this juncture a favorite among evangelicals for his politically-incorrect position on the nature and threat of Islam. For example, on 10 April 2008, Boykin had spoken at the "Epicenter [of the apocalypse] 2008" Christian conference in Israel, organized by Christian Zionist and Armageddon-hawk Joel Rosenberg, where he earned applause when he waxed apocalyptic, tacitly encouraging Christians to protect Israel in these end times.<sup>138</sup> The Oak Initiative—a coalition of evangelical and Pentecostal clergy founded to be "salt and light" in the time of America's crisis and "greatest threat to its continued existence,"<sup>139</sup>—featured Boykin in a video on its website, giving tacit approval to his charge in the video that ostensibly all Muslims—"those following the dictates of the Qur'an"—are "under an obligation to destroy our Constitution and replace it with shari'ah law" (Mantyla 2010).<sup>140</sup>

And, James Dobson, well-respected among evangelicals and Christians broadly as founder and host of *Focus on the Family*, was—like the Oak Initiative—infatuated with Boykin, hosting him *ten* times on his daily radio show. In 2011, on the February 17th and 18<sup>th</sup> programs, and then again in 2012 on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, Dobson took his audience's eyes off of real family issues to let Boykin—whom he described as his personal hero and a long-time "personal friend"—explain how the Muslim Brotherhood is currently entering "phase four" of a five-phase plan to take over America (DrJamesDobson.org 2011; Mantyla 2011). On the second of the last two programs, when asked by Dobson "what do you see in store of us in this tired old world?" Boykin proudly went beyond the "political correctness" and centered the Islamization of America. "Let me say I have six grandchildren and three of them are females and I must tell you, I am greatly concerned about the day coming when they will be wearing burkas. That's how serious I consider this threat."<sup>141</sup>

In addition to Boykin, the evangelical American Family Association—from its vanguard position on "the frontlines of America's culture war" and boasting over 2 million subscribers and owning 200 radio stations<sup>142</sup>—also maintained solidarity with the Islam(ization) threat narrative. The institution's popular radio personality, Bryan Fischer, on his *Focal Point* radio show in mid-May 2011

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<sup>138</sup> There, Boykin said: "And when I stand up and I stand before Christ, I want there to be blood on my knees and my elbows. I want to be covered with mud. And I want to be standing there with a ragged breast plate of righteousness. And a spear in my hand. And I want to say, "Look at me, Jesus. I've been in the battle. I've been fighting for you." Ladies and gentlemen, put your armor on and get into battle."

<sup>139</sup> See <https://www.theoakinitiative.org/our-purpose#.VA2TgBZuX2k>

<sup>140</sup> The video is available at <http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/boykin-islam-should-not-be-protected-under-first-amendment>

<sup>141</sup> All of the programs are listed at <http://www.drjamesdobson.org/search-results?indexCatalogue=default&searchQuery=boykin&wordsMode=0>

<sup>142</sup> <http://www.afa.net/Detail.aspx?id=31>

said that, following Mohammed's example, "Muslims have been [inbreeding] for fourteen hundred years" at "an enormous cost in intellectual capacity". Like Hannity, Fischer was not compelled to cite supporting empirical evidence of Muslim intellectual degeneration due to inbreeding; he needed only say, "It's just simply the truth." Politicizing the topic, he then went on to denigrate the more progressive regime of truth that would exclude such statements from the realm of authoritative knowledge, saying, "And you get hammered for saying it, but that's because the truth has now become hate speech, the truth has now become bigotry." Rather than censuring the popular conservative figure for this kind of speech, the Republican leadership tacitly condoned it; evangelical presidential contenders Michele Bachmann, Mike Huckabee, and Tim Pawlenty appeared on Fischer's show (RightWingWatch 2011, May 11).

Other prominent Christian figures similarly maintained this solidarity with the threat narrative. Typical was Pat Robertson, who—on his *700 Club* on May 31, 2011—advanced the creeping sharia conspiracy and likened the anti-Islam movement to the anti-Nazi movement. Anticipating the criticism, he asked, "Why is it bigoted to resist Adolf Hitler and the Nazis and to say we don't want to live under Nazi Germany?" (RightwingWatch 2011). Also typical was John Hagee, founder of the Christian Zionist organization, Christians United for Israel, who had subscribed to the sharia-ization conspiracy, saying on his website that, "Global Shari'ah means that every nation in the world will be living under Islamic Law. Never forget this is a theological war!" (Posner 2011).

Observing this odd solidarity among some of the more prominent Republican political and conservative religious elite for this discourse that framed Islam as both a foreign and domestic threat, Shiela Musaji—editor of the *American Muslim*—concluded that "The GOP has declared war on American Muslims" (Musaji 2011).

### ***The Solidarity's Puzzling Anti-Rationalism***

In addition to the fact that the Islam(ization) threat narrative enjoyed solidarity across a surprising number of conservative political and religious elite, there was another feature of this solidarity that provided the threat discourse's principal agents with almost unsanctioned freedom to propagate it, and revealed its perceived political utility: *its anti-rationalist nature*. By anti-rational, I mean that none of the political and cultural elite who expressed solidarity for the threat narrative ever engaged the empirical realm to rationally evaluate the threat of Islam(ization), and to contextualize this threat for their constituents.



For example, when General Boykin framed the Islamization threat on *Focus on the Family* with the image of his existing three granddaughters soon having to wear burkas, neither Dobson, his son, nor co-host LuAnne Crane attempted to challenge this remark or any of his equally anti-rationalist hyperbole over the two pre-recorded sessions. They were, however careful in their questions to raise domestic political themes of liberal, activist judges, anti-immigration, the need to mobilize conservative voters, and so on. Instead of an empirical check on reality, they tacitly approved Boykin's assessments, saying that "we cannot stick our heads in the sand" pretending that this threat doesn't exist.

Yet, sticking their heads in the sand is what the three *Focus on the Family* hosts did overnight, between the first and second interviews, and between when the interviews were recorded and broadcast. Widely publicized and recurrent scientific studies reveal how the population of Muslims in the U.S. is expected to increase from only 2.6 million U.S. Muslims (adults and children) in 2010 to 6.2 million in 2030, or from a mere 0.8 percent of the U.S. population to 1.7 percent (Pew Research Center 2011). And, it is likely that a mere 4 percent of that tiny population of Muslims (about 230,000) will be classified as "very conservative" (Pew Research Center 2007). In other words, only 1 in every 1500 Americans in 2030 *might* believe that a woman's wearing of a burka is a religious obligation.

In all of this solidarity with the threat narrative, conservative leadership like Gingrich, Bachmann, Boykin, Dobson and others excluded from view this kind of rational threat assessment, along with the vast amount of relevant open source literature on the topic that would contextualize "Islam's" threat to the homeland. None of these political and cultural elite, for example, bothered to think in terms of Charles Kurzman of the UNC, Duke, RTI Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, who handily uncovered the fact that of the 150,000 murders in the United States in the post-9/11 decade, eleven Muslim Americans were responsible for only 11 of these deaths, or that virtually no Muslims were involved in the 1.4 million violent crimes or almost 100,000 forcible rapes in the U.S. that took place *each year*.<sup>143</sup> Eleventh grade high school students are doing this level of analysis all across the country, and—yet—the conservative leadership would not, for reasons that are by this point becoming rather obvious.

The otherwise puzzling anti-rationalist nature of this solidarity among state legislators is particularly instructive. When pressed, the sponsors of the wave of anti-sharia legislation in 2010 and

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<sup>143</sup> See <http://sites.duke.edu/tcths/research/> and [https://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/data/table\\_01.html](https://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/data/table_01.html)

2011 could not cite any empirical evidence to justify the legislation that they were introducing with much fanfare. When asked for examples of the threat that had so animated them to take leave of the many pressing economic, health, education, and other needs to introduce legislation to prevent the Islamization of their state, none of them could produce a single case in which Islamic law posed a threat (Murphy 2011). At the time, the legislators—many of whom were lawyers—collectively obscured the obvious, relevant, material facts that were readily available.

The anti-rationalist nature of this solidarity began at its source. When Gaffney’s Center for Security Policy released its follow-on June 21, 2011 report, “Shariah Law and American State Courts: An Assessment of State Appellate Court Cases,” it pinpointed 50 rulings from courts in 23 states that ostensibly proved the “creeping sharia” conspiracy. Yet, in his analysis of the report, Brayton (2011) wrote: “Let me make this as clear as I possibly can: This report is not merely badly researched and badly prepared, it is an outright fraud. No one who actually reads the rulings could reach anything but the opposite conclusion from the one they intend to foster. Nearly every single case they offer argues *against* their conclusion. Now let me prove that assertion.” Brayton then went on to show how the first five cases actually demonstrated the opposite of Gaffney’s claims. In the Michigan case, Brayton observed: “Not only did the court not apply Sharia law, they explicitly rejected any such application and did so precisely on the grounds that doing so would violate the rights of the woman who filed the suit. And this is offered as evidence of creeping Sharia.” That alone, he said, “should give you some idea of the intellectual honesty of those who put out the report.”

Similarly, in its counter report, “Nothing to Fear: Debunking the Mythical ‘Sharia Threat’ to Our Judicial System”, The American Civil Liberties Union (2011), characterized the claims of sharia infiltration as “wrong” and “based both on misinformation and misunderstanding of how our judicial system works.” The ACLU added that “There is no evidence that Islamic law is encroaching on our courts.” On the contrary, it went on, the court cases cited as purportedly illustrative of this problem “actually show the opposite: Courts treat lawsuits that are brought by Muslims or that address the Islamic faith in the same way that they deal with similar claims brought by people of other faiths or that involve no religion at all.”

The solidarity’s puzzling anti-rationalism was typified by Republican Texas state representative Leo Berman, who justified his anti-sharia bill *in Texas* by mentioning the far-removed city of Dearborn Michigan six times, but giving no examples from his own demographically-unique state. Without any empirical evidence, Berman said that “the judges in Dearborn are using and allowing to

be used sharia law.” When pressed for details, the lawmaker managed only to say that “I heard it on a radio station here on my way in to the Capitol one day,” adding, “Isn’t that true?” (ThinkProgress, 2011, April 14). Similarly, when pressed by curious reporters at the state capital, the sponsor of Alabama’s anti-sharia legislation, Republican Senator Gerald Allen, could neither offer examples of Muslims trying to have Islamic law recognized in Alabama courts, nor even define sharia in an interview, embarrassingly saying “I don’t have my file in front of me” (Buckner 2011; Lockett 2011).

In conclusion, the solidarity for the Islam(ization) threat narrative across this segment of U.S. conservative political and religious elite, and their attendant systematic exclusion of information that normally attends rational threat analysis, suggests that much more was going on here than securing the nation from the threat of Islam(ization). And, it was this obvious politicization of Islam by such a surprising number of prominent conservative elite that provided the threat discourse’s agents with the necessary opening to engage in what became an increasingly egregious form of security politics as distance from 9/11 increased.

### **3. Crisis and Identity Insecurity in U.S. Conservatism**

In conceptualizing the political “opportunity structure” that incentivizes or enables a particular social movement or practice, movement theorists also make room for the role of macro-level contexts and for factors “external” to the discourse and its agents (McAdam et al. 1996). In this last but by no means least category, we will examine two such factors that emerged in the decade after 9/11: the ideological crisis of the U.S. conservative movement, and the related mood of civilizational fundamentalism in the U.S., Canada, and Europe.

#### ***Accentuated Crisis of the U.S. Conservative Movement***

At the socio-historical level of analysis, the (counter)narrative of the present danger of Islam (ization) advanced by the central institutions of the U.S. conservative movement, and rendered politically safe by the sufficiently large coalition of prominent political and religious elite, might be further explained by the accentuated crisis that was animating the U.S. conservative movement. In the conceptual framework, we had reviewed why much of public discourse is politicized—this owing to the nature of identity in late modern Western states in particular as being inherently unstable and insecure. For the big-tent U.S. conservative movement, the crisis of identity extended

across three of its main constituents—the neoconservatives, social conservatives, and paleoconservatives.

### *Crises within Neoconservatism*

Per Bonney's (2008) analysis, the neoconservative role in the post-9/11 Islam(ization) threat discourse—like that of social and paleoconservatives—was a large one. This may be partially explained by its revolutionary influence on the U.S. conservative movement broadly, as described by Friedman's (2006) *The Neoconservative Revolution*, and its decidedly rightward influence on the Israel lobby more narrowly, described by Mearsheimer and Walt (2007, 128).<sup>144</sup> There were two distinct crises that neoconservatives were experiencing at the beginning of the 9/11 decade and towards its mid-point.

The first neoconservative crisis was at the international level, and was significantly in existence on the morning of the 9/11 attacks. U.S. neoconservatives are distinct from U.S. social conservatives, who are more focused on declining morality and Judeo-Christian identity as a function of secularism, and U.S. paleoconservatives, who tend to emphasize the threat of diluted biological and cultural identity as a function of multiculturalism and lack of restrictions on immigration—both threats on the domestic axis. The threat that typically animated neoconservatives up to this juncture had tended to be not domestic but foreign in nature—threats to Israel, and rival universalist ideologies like “Godless Communism.” When translated to domestic politics, these interests manifested as opposition to the Carter administration, for example, who neoconservatives believed as “hostile to Israel” (Friedman 2006, 149-50), and whose policies towards the Soviet Union, especially détente and the SALT II agreements, they saw as catastrophic and influenced by the largely antiwar left (Ehrman 1995).

To establish neoconservatism's relevance in all things, the threat of Communism and threats to Israel had to be exaggerated. In his *Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment*, Saunders (1983) describes how neoconservatives, led by Daniel Pipes's father, Richard, operating first as The Committee on the Present Danger in a Team B exercise in 1976, constructed a “Soviet threat” beyond that articulated by Nixon and Ford and their foreign-policy mentor, Henry Kissinger (see also Kampleman 1984; Dalby 1988). The empirically-based reality of the Soviet threat notwithstanding, the neoconservative-created “Reagan Doctrine” seemed

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<sup>144</sup> In Mearsheimer and Walt (2007, 128) analysis—experienced a decided “drift to the right” upon neoconservatism's emergence.

vindicated (Friedman 2006, 167). Consequently, by 1996, Podhoretz had proclaimed with both satisfaction and bewilderment that neoconservatism was “dead” and that “what killed it was not defeat but victory; it died not of failure but of success” (Muravchik 2007).

But, this sense of success for neoconservative elite was short-lived. Without a rival superpower with a competing universalist ideology, and without any remote threat to Israel from any of the two dozen Middle East regimes, the movement lacked the necessary “other” which it had been created in juxtaposition to. In Campbell’s (1998) terms, it had defeated the security threat that was less a threat to the nation’s existence than it was the condition of the neoconservative movement’s existence. For its own survival as an identifying conservative ideology, neoconservatism needed a new threat—a near-peer, hegemony-bent ideology and political rival that threatened its own universalist, hegemonic self-vision of the U.S., and that threatened Israel’s existence.

It is in this context that, near the end of the Soviet Union, neoconservative-oriented intellectuals like Daniel Pipes, Bernard Lewis, and Frank Gaffney began to construct Islam itself within the “clash of civilizations” paradigm (Bonney 2008, Mearsheimer and Walt 2007).<sup>145</sup> And, after 9/11, and in a significant advisory capacity to the Bush administration, it was these same neoconservatives, along with Norman Podhoretz and others, who—as Bonney’s (2008) analysis revealed—advanced this clash of civilizations ideology.<sup>146</sup>

The second aspect of the neoconservative crisis was—counterintuitively—at the domestic level of politics, emerging at the mid-point of the post-9/11 decade. The impetus of this second and domestic crisis was the strategic, neoconservative-led failures of militarily invading Afghanistan and Iraq and attempts at “nation-building”, and the subsequent landslide defeat of the GOP (Friedman 2006). The disastrous foreign policy initiative of the Iraq War—in Packer’s (2005, 15) terms—“will always be linked with the term ‘neoconservative.’” The conservative electorate’s reaction to neoconservatism’s failure in leadership was such that, even before the end of the Bush administration, the *Times* of London heralded “the end of an ideological era in Washington,” the *Toronto Globe and Mail* reported that neoconservatism had been “decisively wiped out,” *National Review Online*’s John Derbyshire had wrote that “all the buzz is that neoconservatism is as dead as

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<sup>145</sup> Daniel Pipes began this project in 1983 with his book on fundamentalist Shi’ite Islam, or Khomeinism, *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power*.

<sup>146</sup> These neoconservative conspiracy theorists drew parallels between the Red Scare of the Cold War era and the current sharia conspiracy. Former CIA head James Woolsey (who served on Gaffney’s “Team B II” report, said at CPAC that the goals of radical Islamists are “roughly parallel to communists in the ’50s and ’60s... We’re in a war with terrorists but that’s not the end. We’re at war with those who want to impose shari’ah, this is our toughest fight” (Posner 2011).

mutton,” and neocon Reagan defense official Kenneth Adelman lamented that “most everything we ever stood for now ...lies in ruins” (Muravchik 2007).

It was this second and separate domestic crisis emerging at the mid-point of the post-9/11 decade that—like the pre-9/11 international *crisis of security*—rendered exaggerated threat discourse regarding Islam as not merely politically safe, but politically necessary. And, it was at this juncture, when neoconservatism was being pronounced dead from the hands of its own conservative electorate—this time not from its success but its failure—the more serious neoconservative threat analyses regarding Islam began to emerge, emblemized by Podhoretz’s (2007) bestselling *World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism*, and by the re-emergence of the Cold-War era Committee on the Present Danger, with its new emphasis on the threat of radical Islam.

### *Crisis within Social and Paleoconservatism*

For U.S. social and paleoconservatives, it was neither the absence of a near-peer international threat, nor any identifiable strategic political failure that formed the bases for their crises; it was, rather, the more subtle threat of late modernity itself—of globalization and cosmopolitanism, and—more particularly—of multiculturalism and secularism.<sup>147</sup> The conjuncture of globalization, the information and communication (ICT) revolution, with its attending new, social and alternative media, had thrown the metaphysical legitimating foundation of traditional identities in the West and worldwide into even greater crisis, with particularist and progressive identities increasing relative to more singular and traditional ones (Marty and Appleby 1991, 2004; Giddens 1991, 2002; Laclau 1994; Castells 1997).

It is in this context that we can understand the appeal among conservatives of the parsimonious sense-making signifier or metaphor of Islamization. Social complexity and ambiguity drives the need for all such metaphorical devices, and the structural crisis of identity and hegemony facing America’s conservatives was highly complex. On the one hand, in the religious and cultural realm, there was identity insecurity over the dilution of Jewish, Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant institutions in the Northern Hemisphere and Israel by ascendant populations of others in the Western heartland and its Holy Land, broadly denoted as “Islam.” On the other hand, in the

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<sup>147</sup> For paleoconservatives, the threat was more that of multiculturalism, which through unrestricted immigration had significantly diluted the largely white, European and Judeo-Christian identity, and which had formed the base of the GOP (Foley 2007, 318). For social conservatives, the threat was described as secularism and progressivism in the dominant institutions and electorate of U.S. society, which had significantly diluted the Judeo-Christian-based moral fabric of the nation, evidenced in the increasing normalization of abortion, homosexuality, erosion of marriage and the family, and so on.

domestic political realm, there was the steady progressive slide toward increased philosophical secularism, broadly denoted as “the left.”<sup>148</sup>

In reaction, Castells (1997, 97, 2) contends, conservatives dug in, with more entrenched affirmation of traditional values, and producing “the widespread surge of powerful expressions of collective identity that challenge globalization and cosmopolitanism on behalf of cultural singularity.”<sup>149</sup> The search for meaning in this crisis, he added, took place “in the reconstruction of defensive identities around communal principles,” giving way to the “new primacy of identity politics” (Castells 1997, 11).<sup>150</sup> In this milieu, Giddens (2002) observed the issues-centered “culture war” emerging between two polarized groups—the cosmopolitans, who embrace the age’s cultural complexity, and traditionalists or fundamentalists, who “find it disturbing and dangerous” and “take refuge in a renewed and purified tradition” of counterhegemonic struggle. There is an analogy from history that seems helpful. Gramsci had seen trade unions as one organ of a counterhegemonic resistance in capitalist society; here, it seems that it is this more fundamentalist segment of social and paleoconservatives that is the organ of counter-hegemonic struggle in the pluralistic and more progressive U.S. society.

In this context of crisis produced by a much broader set of macro-level megatrends, the event-like 9/11 contingency functioned merely as the initiator of the larger charged political sphere, providing greater affective resources and opportunity for the more radical identity or cultural politics common to crises (Laclau 1994, 4; Gramsci 1971). And, it was in this context of more radical identity politics that a more rightist political zeitgeist gradually became normalized across the central conservative establishment in the post-9/11 decade, increasingly dichotomizing the social space.<sup>151</sup>

The GOP had undergone an earlier crisis that had resulted in a significant shift to the right, with the attending normalization of divisive political figures, beginning with Republican Wisconsin

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<sup>148</sup> In Ian Buruma’s (2009) words, “In a bewildering world of global economics, multinational institutions and mass migration, many people are anxious about losing their sense of place; they feel abandoned by their own elites. Right-wing populists like Geert Wilders are tapping into these fears”.

<sup>149</sup> Similarly Balz and Brownstein (1996, 173) write that “Behind all these swirling, swelling movements on the Right is the fear of a world spinning out of control. “People feel they don’t have control over their own lives,” said Republican pollster Frank Luntz, “That they can no longer shape their future” (cited in Castells 1997).

<sup>150</sup> In view of this, Laclau (1994, 4) explains why so much has been politicized in late modernity: The more the ‘foundation’ of the social is put into question, the less the sedimented social practices are able to ensure social reproduction, and the more new acts of political intervention and identification are socially required. This necessarily leads to a politicization of social identities, which we see as a main feature of social life in the societies of the end of the twentieth century.

<sup>151</sup> This can be conceptualized as the cognitive alignment to “bimodal value structure” in which political discourse was being clustered on the pole, or on polar opposition to the perceived counter-position (Edelman 1964: 175-177; Billig 1996).

Senator, Joseph McCarthy. In his *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Clinton*, Berman (1998, 1-3) describes the GOP's first "rightward shift" as frustration mounted over the New Deal coalition and the liberal welfare state, when "Liberalism had become a pejorative word for millions of voters because it was a vehicle for big governmental spending programs for blacks." According to Himmelstein (1983, 15-16), the early 1960s witnessed "an explosion of conservative activity," largely in reaction to the counterculture of liberalism, free love student radicalism, and other "counterestablishment" movements. Goldwater's acceptance speech at the 1964 Republican National Convention accepted some extremism in the big tent. "Anyone who joins us in all sincerity, we welcome," he said, adding, "that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice" and "moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue" (*Washington Post* 1998).<sup>152</sup> By that time, the party had already shifted more rightward, with the incorporation of factions like the Communist conspiracy-oriented and anti-Semitic<sup>153</sup> John Birch Society in the late 1950s, as described by Hofstadter (1964). This early rightward shift notwithstanding, the party up through the Goldwater era still had a significantly moderate ideological center that was a champion of peace (with significant opposition to the Vietnam War), of environmental stewardship, of the civil rights movement, and of the secular order more broadly as our best guarantee of personal liberty (Kabaservice 2012).

But, the more noticeable shift to the right that began in force in reaction to the 1960s came after Goldwater in the 1970s and 1980s with the addition of Jewish New York intellectuals (the neoconservatives), as described by Friedman (2006), and in much larger numbers the "New Right" and fundamentalist and evangelical Christians (the religious right; and the "New Christian Right" (Himmelstein 1983; Liebman and Wuthnow 1983). The crisis reflected in that era's GOP discourse was not merely that of "Godless Communists" abroad but also of the New Left at home (Rusher 2002, 322; Blee and Creasap 2010, 273).

Forty years later, by 2008, when solidarity for the sharia conspiracy began to crystalize among some conservatives, the GOP was undergoing another rightward shift, marked not only by the

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<sup>152</sup> See <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/daily/may98/goldwaterspeech.htm>

<sup>153</sup> The U.S. conservative movement has always had a xenophobic urge. When William F. Buckley Jr. founded the *National Review* in 1955, he fostered a big tent concept of the GOP, with no room for the party's trademark bigotry, such as anti-Catholic sentiments. Buckley's "greater public service", said Catholic polemicist George Weigel, "was to purge the conservative movement of the anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and isolationism that had infested the fever swamps of the American Right in the FDR period and beyond" (Weigel, 2008). For example, Buckley in 1952 left his post as an editor at the *The American Mercury* when he sensed it was turning anti-Semitic. Yet, in his book *McCarthy and His Enemies* (1954), Buckley defended the practice.



contentious threat discourse referred to by its critics as “the New McCarthyism,”<sup>154</sup> but by the emergence of the Tea Party movement in response to the most severe global financial crisis since the Great Depression and the GOP’s landslide loss to the nation’s first black and Democrat president (Kabaservice 2012; Skocpol and Williamson 2012). Comprised of older, conservative white voters, Tea Party leaders had issued direct threats and ousted any centrist incumbent and candidate who might have engaged in the kind of compromising governance necessary for a democracy to function (Skocpol and Williamson 2012, 155).

It was in this more politically-charged atmosphere—with the political center increasingly vacated in U.S. politics, described widely and variously as “gridlock”, “partisan politics” and so on—that the more polarizing figures were vetted for the party’s highest posts of leadership, as suggested in the foregoing section, and that charismatic, populist culture warriors like David Horowitz gained greater influence.<sup>155</sup>

And, it was within this crisis and attending rightward shift that the more entrepreneurial conservative elite—as seen throughout these first three analytical chapters—articulated the nation’s new post-9/11 threat narrative, identifying the movement’s two ideological rivals—religious and secular, foreign and domestic. What now threatened the Judeo-Christian West, including the heartland, Europe, its offspring America, and their Holy Land, Israel, was no longer “Godless Communism” and the New Left, but that of “Islam” or “Islamization,” and “the Left” or “secular elite”—both of which were often captured together and euphemistically as “multiculturalism.” And, it was in this context that the earlier highlighted political practice enemy frame bridging—of linking new enemies foreign and old enemies domestic, in a grand scheme to both Islamize and secularize the nation, was increasingly politically-acceptable and obviously perceived as politically useful by this more entrepreneurial segment of GOP elite.

### ***Civilizational Fundamentalist Mood among the Masses***

In addition to solidarity at the elite level, the Islam(ization) threat discourse (and its principal agents) enjoyed significant sympathy and support at the mass-level. The aforementioned crises among all three categories of conservatives—neo, social, and paleo—were reflected in a general

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<sup>154</sup> A January 2013 Google search for the term “new McCarthyism” returns 153,000 posts to the internet with that exact term, nearly all of which were posted since 2005.

<sup>155</sup> Gramsci described them as “Caesars”; they tended to arrive at the point in all crises that he called “static equilibrium”, in which “the old is dying and the new cannot be born,” when “a great variety of morbid symptoms appear,” including these radical agents (Gramsci 1971, 275; Jones 2006, 99-100).

mass-level mood of civilizational fundamentalism in the U.S.—a mood that largely reflected the more advanced mood of anti-Islam resistance in Europe.

By the mid-point of the post-9/11 decade, according to a CBS poll, favorable impressions of Islam among the U.S. populace had sunk to 20 percent, a huge fall from the 50 percent favorability ratings just after 9/11 (Hoar 2006).<sup>156</sup> And, by the tenth anniversary of 9/11, nearly 6 in 10 white evangelical Protestants—the base of the conservative movement—believed that the “values of Islam are at odds with American values” (PRRI 2011).

This anti-Islam mood in the U.S. was still less prevalent and extreme than it was in Canada and in Europe during this juncture. But, it was Canadians and English-speaking Europeans who formed the market for much of the Islam(ization) threat discourse that emanated from the U.S. in the post-9/11 decade. In Canada, a national poll revealed that a “majority” saw an “irreconcilable” rift between (mainstream) Islam and the West (Macleans 2011). And, at the height of the sharia conspiracy in the U.S., almost 60 percent of Europeans believed Muslims were “fanatical,” and 50 percent believed they were “violent” (Pew Research Center 2011). According to a May 2006 Allensbach study commissioned by the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper, 60 percent of Germans were “increasingly of the opinion that a lasting, peaceful coexistence with the Islamic world will not be possible” (Deutsche-Welle 2006). By the end of the decade, fewer than 10 percent of Germans subscribed to the “religion of peace” storyline (Kern 2011).<sup>157</sup> Similarly, in Britain, researchers in January 2010 found that “only a quarter of native Britons remained optimistic about the local Muslim population” (Sapsted 2010).<sup>158</sup>

Eurobarometer surveys well before 9/11, beginning in 1997, revealed a significant increase in respondents who felt that multicultural society had reached its limits (Open Society Institute 2010, 37-38). By 2008, Gallup’s Dalia Mogahed and Ahmed Younis reported that “Clear majorities in all European countries” expressed “a perceived “Islamic threat” to their cultural identities, driven in part by rising immigration from predominantly Muslim regions” (World Economic Forum 2008, 25). This perception of present danger from Muslim immigration had by the end of the post-9/11 decade in Europe translated to the emergence of a plethora of civilizational fundamentalist groups,

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<sup>156</sup> 29 percent of Americans told *Washington Post*-ABC News pollsters in April 2009 that *mainstream* Islam—to say nothing of the more extreme segments—advocated violence against non-Muslims (Cordesman, 2009). Similarly, by the end of the decade, 28 percent of Americans told Gallup that *Muslim Americans* are sympathetic to al Qaeda (Newport 2011).

<sup>157</sup> See [http://www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/religion\\_und\\_politik/aktuelles/2010/12\\_2010/studie\\_wahrnehmung\\_und\\_akzeptanz\\_religioeser\\_vielfalt.pdf](http://www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/religion_und_politik/aktuelles/2010/12_2010/studie_wahrnehmung_und_akzeptanz_religioeser_vielfalt.pdf).

<sup>158</sup> Similarly, a YouGov poll of June 2010 that found 58 percent of Britons linked Islam with extremism (YouGov 2010).

amounting to a political movement. According to a study by the British think tank Demos in 2011, many of Europe's youth were animated over the same things as U.S. paleoconservatives—"worried about the erosion of their cultural and national identity" from Muslim immigration, and were "turning to populist movements, who they feel speak to these concerns."<sup>159</sup> According to Matthew Goodwin, who spent four years among the farther Right in Britain, "they stressed the need to take urgent and radical action to defend their families and native Britons from extinction and mass conflict" (Goodwin 2011).<sup>160</sup>

And, political movement in Europe translated to political action. Beginning with the French "headscarf" ban in 2004, the post-9/11 decade witnessed a wave of legislation that restricted visibility of Islamic symbols, including the 2009 referendum in Switzerland that banned the building of minarets. This rising resistance to Islam(ization) in Europe was noted by Daniel Pipes in the April 15, 2008 article "Europe or Eurabia?" published by *The Australian*. Pipes expressed pleasure that with the progress of the Europe's emerging resistance to Islamization, which advocated "national values" against the dominant approach of multiculturalism. In a related article, Pipes went on to cite polls of the readership of six leading newspapers in France, Italy, Germany and Spain that week that were in favor of similar anti-Islamization legislation by wide majorities, ranging from 73 percent on the low side among France's *Le Figaro* readers, to 93 percent in Spain's *20 Minutos* readers (Pipes 2009, December 9).<sup>161</sup>

This mood of civilizational fundamentalism was also marked by a series of Malthusian jeremiads, beginning with former GOP Presidential candidate Pat Buchanan's (2001) bestseller *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization*. Buchanan specifically warned that demographics is destiny, as radically secular, cultural Marxist progressives are not having enough children to replace themselves, while Europe's Muslims are.

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<sup>159</sup> And, in response to these sentiments, political parties with anti-Islam platforms have now spread to even the traditionally more liberal Netherlands and Scandinavia, and have parliamentary blocs in eight countries (Guardian 2011). Emblematic of these gains was the nationalist Danish People's Party, which won 14 percent of the vote in November 2007's election. In an interview, the party's leader Pia Kjaersgaard said that "the most important thing for the Danish People's Party is to maintain the Danish identity..." (Alexandru about Denmark 2007). The nationalist Swiss People's Party (SVP) won 29 percent of the vote in October 2007. Later, in 2012, far-right Marine Le Pen of France's Nationalist Front party won 20 percent of the presidential vote, and third place prestige. In Greece, the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn (Chrysi Avgi) won almost seven per cent of the vote.

<sup>160</sup> In 2010, for example, Marine Le Pen, the president of France's National Front party likened Muslim street prayers in France to the Nazi occupation, sparking widespread condemnation (Al Jazeera 2012).<sup>160</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Perhaps riding this wave of resistance, on July 20, 2011, U.S. House Resolution 306 passed, demanding restitution for the "Ottoman Empire's oppression and intentional destruction of much of its ancient Christian populations, including over 2,000,000 Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Pontians, and Syrians" (Smith 2011). Taking advantage of this solidarity, the French Senate followed suit and on January 23, 2012 *criminalized* any public denial of the Ottoman Empire's genocide of Armenians.

Following Buchanan, there was a procession of popular works by other Western civilizational fundamentalists in Europe, such as: Fallaci's (2002) *The Rage and the Pride*; Ye'or's (2005) *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*; Bawer's (2006), *While Europe Slept: How Radical Islam is Destroying the West from Within*; Philips's (2006) *Londonistan*; Steyn's (2008) *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It*; Laqueur's (2009) *The Last Days of Europe: Epitaph for an Old Continent*; Dewinters' (2009) *Inch'Allah?: The Islamization of Europe*; Steyn's (2009) *Lights Out: Islam, Free Speech, and the Twilight of the West*; and Steyn's (2011) *After America: Get Ready for Armageddon*. In his 2006 *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It*, the Canadian conservative Steyn earned *New York Times* bestseller status by taking advantage of this conservative mood of "civilizational exhaustion" from the combined effects of multiculturalism and progressivism—themes sure to resonate with U.S. paleo and social conservatives.<sup>162</sup>

In conclusion, the question that this part of the inquiry continued to explore is how discourse agents in one of two main political parties in the U.S. in the decade after 9/11 could create and expand an empirically-challenged and seemingly anti-rationalist counternarrative regarding Islam, a related panic over Islamization of the stalwartly Christian and secular nation, and a conspiracy linking their traditional political rivals to this plot, and still remain credible leaders and authorities among a sufficient segment of their market. In addition to the rich political resources found in the discourse's cultural frames and its philanthropic and media-institutional base, we find that the threat discourse's agents enjoyed a significant "structure" of opportunities that cross-cut the information-technological, social-structural realms, and political-ideological realms.

First, at the informational-technological level, the ICT revolution and especially the advent of the alternative media enabled U.S. conservatives to increasingly break away from the mainstream knowledge society and expand their own competing "cultural commune" (Castells 1997, 67) or parallel society knowledge institutions. It is in this samizdat-like ungoverned virtual space that the conservative threat discourse's agents gained a measure of distance from the sanctions of society's more progressive legitimatizing institutions, and were able to capture a conservative niche market

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<sup>162</sup> Other principal Islam(ization) threat discourse agents similarly took advantage of this civilizational fundamentalist mood. In a 2010 brief sponsored by Daniel Pipes's Middle East Forum, titled "How Islamists Turned the World Upside Down", Melanie Phillips—the author of her 2006 bestseller jeremiad, *Londonistan*—promoted her newest book on the crisis, *The World Turned Upside Down: The Global Battle over God, Truth and Power*. The brief reliably moved passed the newest enemy of Islam(ism) to target the long-time conservative domestic enemy, euphemized as "Western intelligentsia" and "secular ideologies".

that increasingly identified with information and sources that aligned with their ideological predispositions.

Second, the Islam(ization) threat discourse enjoyed solidarity across a surprisingly large segment of prominent political and religious elite, who individually and collectively advanced the threat narrative as a *political position*, in an anti-rationalist manner, without offering empirical evidence to support their assessments.

Lastly, in the category of broader and even external contexts, there were two related moods that enabled the threat discourse's agents to continue to politicize Islam. First, there were accentuated crises within three of the U.S. conservative movement's central and relevant constituencies—neo, social, and paleo—in which the entire practice was housed. These crises, in addition to causing a lurch rightward, normalized more extreme discourse (and its agents) that opposed the perceived sources of the threats to Western civilizational hegemony and domestic cultural identity, identified variously as multiculturalism and secularism, Islamism and progressivism—or the metaphor that captured them both, Islam(ization). Second, there was a related and politically-supportive general mood of anti-Islam, civilizational fundamentalism that gradually emerged in greater force across the post-9/11 decade in the U.S., Canada, and Europe, reflecting and trailing the much greater resistance to Islam that had developed in Europe by the end of the decade.

With these three macro-level contextual, structural realms in view, we will now engage this threat discourse at the micro-level, with greater empirical rigor from the perspective of agency, or the framing and resource mobilization strategies of three of its principal proponents.

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**DANIEL PIPES**  
**and the Middle East Forum**

*The costumes of revolt are woven from a blend of inherited and invented fibers into collective action frames in confrontation with opponents and elites.*

—Clarence Tarrow (1998, 118)

When President George W. Bush nominated Dr. Daniel Pipes to the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace in 2003, a congressional filibuster immediately ensued, led by Democratic Senators Ted Kennedy and Tom Harkin, who were Pipes’s fellow Harvard alumnus. Harkin spoke at length, categorizing Pipes’s work as anti-Muslim. To support that charge, he cited Pipes’s remarks from October 21, 2001 speech to the American Jewish Congress Convention, where Pipes implicitly had securitized all Muslims and Islam broadly, saying that the “increased stature, and affluence, and enfranchisement of American Muslims...will present true dangers to American Jews.” “Some people call [Pipes] a scholar,” Harkin said, “but this is not the kind of person you want on the USIP” (Baltimore Chronicle 2003, July 23). In a press conference seeking to undo some of the damage over Pipes’s nomination, White House spokesman Ari Fleisher assured the nation that “Mr. Bush disagrees with Mr. Pipes about whether Islam is a peaceful religion” (Stevenson 2003).

Had Pipes been an ordinary Harvard intellectual—one whose scholarship on the topics of the Middle East and Islam had been more widely recognized as useful to society broadly—then such a filibuster would not have ensued (or he would not have been appointed by President Bush). But, as this heated incident suggests, Pipes is no ordinary scholar; the knowledge he produces on topics related to threats in the Middle East and Islam broadly—like the threat writing of Robert Spencer—contain a feature that reliably provoke the more progressive elite like Senators Kennedy and Harkin.

## 1. The Early Years: From Civilizational to Holy Land Geopolitics

It was Daniel Pipes's nemesis Edward Said who, on the subject of positioned knowledge production, reminded us that "no one has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position...", and that "these continue to bear on what he does professionally" (Said 1978, 10).<sup>163</sup> In Pipes's case, such positionality seemed to be especially influential in his Islam-related productions—by productions, I mean, books, reports, articles, blog commentary, and so on.

In 1979, when Islamic revolutionaries in Iran were dynamically rewriting much of contemporary Islamic politics, Pipes was at Harvard. Anachronistically focused on medieval Islamic history in the curriculum, he was nonetheless sensitized to the implications of this emerging global ideological struggle at home. His father Richard—still a professor in Harvard's History Department—had narrowly escaped from Poland and the Holocaust in 1939, and told in his memoirs that he would dedicate his life to teaching the world "how evil ideas lead to evil consequences" (Pipes R, 2004). True to his convictions, Richard devoted himself to the next struggle with an evil ideology, serving as Chairman of "Team B"—a group of non-establishment experts brought in by Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney and George H.W. Bush of the Ford administration to challenge the CIA's orthodoxy regarding the Soviet military threat; and serving on the Washington-based Soviet-focused Committee on the Present Danger (CPD). Richard's hard realist, essentialist, and deterministic mode of knowing regarding America's geopolitical rival functioned as an ideological straitjacket that shaped Team B's assessment of the Soviet threat that amounted to a counternarrative that not only departed from the professional consensus of the CIA, but departed from reality and distorted Soviet threat (Dalby 1988, 423).

The propensity for such counternarrative would come to run in the family. A quarter century later, when the events of 9/11 would present a new ideological foe, the CPD was reinvigorated under the "present danger" of Islam, or euphemistically "terrorism and the ideologies that drive it." And, as if to reenact the Biblical story of Elisha inheriting the prophetic mantle from his elder, Elijah,<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> This was also Bourdieu's essential concept regarding cultural productions—that one's habitus is *structured* by one's class, upbringing, worldview, experience, forms of capital, and position in the field, but also *structuring* of one's dispositions, thinking, and practice.

<sup>164</sup> See 2 Kings 2:9

Daniel replaced Richard at the CPD to advance the counternarrative regarding Islam.<sup>165</sup> Observing his similar “against the flow” disposition emerging Daniel’s security writing and in the institutions he started and led, Harvard Magazine would later describe him as a “chip off the old block” (Tassel 2005).

### ***Civilizational Geopolitics***

As a new cold war with the fundamentalist, revolutionary Khomeinist regime in Iran emerged, Daniel began to capitalize on America’s newfound interest in Islam, finally publishing *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power* in 1983. The book’s late arrival did not prevent it from earning mention in Edward Said’s “Orientalism Reconsidered” (1985), wherein he described Pipes as part of an emerging field of “uncritical” and “younger ideologues and Orientalists.” Even at this early juncture, Said characterized Pipes’s work as politically motivated—“wholly at the service not of knowledge but of an aggressive and interventionary State—the U.S. —whose interests Pipes helps to define” (Said 1985, 96). Pipes’s book, according to Said, was marked by “intellectually scandalous generalizing”; it “makes its assertions and affirmations with little regard for logic or argument”; and uses “rumor, hearsay, and other wisps of evidence” as “the only proof”. The work, Said concluded, “is magic quite unworthy even of high Orientalism,” in that it “masters neither its genuine learning nor its pretense at disinterestedness” (Said 1996, 96-97).

Said’s criticism was reasonable; *In the Path of God* was marked by bold, unwarranted, and even egregious predictions, especially for a Harvard historian. Without the kind of context-based assessment that professional security writing would demand, Pipes confidently predicted the certain “collapse of Khomeini’s government”, and asserted that its “wealth and power will vanish as rapidly as they appeared” “as oil revenues subside”, and that the “Islamic alternative “will lose its appeal” (Pipes 1983, 333). Like Team B’s misguided assessment of the Soviet threat, Pipes’s estimate could not have been more wrong. Such certitude in the face of highly complex, contingent, and agentic social reality would not only become a trait of Pipes’s threat writing, but would relegate it to the margins. *In the Path of God*, for example, had been cited in more scholarly works only 239 times<sup>166</sup> since its first publishing thirty years ago, with many if not most of those citations from its critics like Said.

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<sup>165</sup> See

[http://www.committeethepresentdanger.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1744&Itemid=89](http://www.committeethepresentdanger.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1744&Itemid=89)

<sup>166</sup> Google Scholar tally, January 2012.



With a more eventful and revolutionary vision of Islam coming into vogue, Pipes abandoned the increasingly anachronistic and even non-sequitur realm of medieval Islam and moved into the policy realm. After brief stints teaching history in his father's department at Harvard in parts of 1983 and 1984, in the policy-planning bureaucracy at State Department, and in the policy department at the U.S. Naval War College, Pipes in 1986 landed a less regulated, more conservative, and more politically-positioned post at the Philadelphia-based Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI), leading that institution and serving as the editor of its quarterly journal of world affairs, *Orbis*.

There, Pipes continued his trajectory in the intellectual containment of the West's newest ideological foe, Islam, publishing in 1989 *The Long Shadow: Culture and Politics in the Middle East*. Unlike his first work, this one was permeated with rich and rare (if not unique) veins of insight—all of which were buried in a broader mountain of empirically unconfirmed generalization, and opinion. Foreshadowing his trajectory as an organic intellectual, the work was also marked by crude political binary schemas—caricatures of political enemies like “foreign policy liberals” and “pro-Arab” sympathizers—all juxtaposed to their equally caricatured political opposites. Yet, in a rare moment of reflexivity, Pipes alluded to two principles that he would quickly abandon: that of “placing current events within their larger context”(1989, xi), and avoiding the practice of America's media and thought leaders, whose (over)“emphasis on Israel fundamentally distorts the way Americans perceive the Middle East...”(1989, 273).

In 1988, a second and largely manufactured-for-media event—the Rushdie affair—provided Pipes with yet another emotion-heightened opportunity to enter civilizational geopolitics—this time with a book that took advantage of the event's popular name. His *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, The Ayatollah, and the West*—which Pipes described as rushed and published in early 1990—was solidly if not brilliantly written. Years ahead of Samuel Huntington popularized thesis and again foreshadowing his own propensity, it provided an insightful account of “a confrontation of civilizations” between “the West” and “Islam,” where freedom of expression in the former is interpreted as a hostile act of blasphemy in the latter. Unlike his first work, history would judge this one favorable; Muslim politics over the Mohammed cartoons, and “Innocence of Muslims” movie trailer two decades hence revealed Pipes's original and enduring insight into this phenomenon.

The book also contained two topics and themes that would permeate all of Pipes's work. It broached the question about freedom of speech in the secular state in the era of globalization—a topic that he presciently knew would impact his own propensity to speak conservative truth to more

progressive power. And, it tacitly brought into question the loyalty of Western and Israeli Muslims, or—in his words—“the many millions of Muslims now living in the West and their relationship to the civilization around them” (1990, 16). In a backhanded slap at his emerging enemies, foreign and domestic—Islam and the Left—Pipes described the ironic situation of Khomeini viewing Rushdie as an agent of the United States, when Rushdie was nothing of the sort. Quite the opposite, Pipes retorted, the hapless writer was “a man of the Left” whose work was emblematic of much of the Muslim diaspora’s anti-Western and third worldist anti-Americanism.

### ***The Shift to Holy Land Geopolitics***

Confirming the aforementioned literature’s characterizations of Pipes’s discourse, he spent the rest of the 1990s no longer articulating the clash of civilizations between the West and Islam, but in the more geopolitically-interested position of defending Israel’s continuing expansion into Palestinian territory, or—in conservative terms—the Biblical Jewish homeland of Judea and Samaria. In the role of geopolitical advocacy, defending Zionism necessarily required a lesser of two evils approach to morality; it meant justifying this infraction of international law by demonstrating how the Palestinians and others surrounding Israel and resisting its occupation and continued expansion were not only different, but dangerous—and perennially hostile to the West.

Pipes’s racialized regime of representation—his project of naturalizing difference between the Jews in Israel and the Muslims surrounding and resisting Zionism—mobilized every opportune event. For example, when the U.S. was fully mobilized in the region and it was possible to prevent most Saddam Hussein’s post-war revenge on the Kurds, Pipes weighed-in to sway policy against it. In his “Why America Can’t Save the Kurds,” in the April 11, 1991 edition of *The Wall Street Journal*, Pipes offered little objective justification, but merely warned idealist-leaning policymakers against false hopes, citing what everyone should know: “the realities” of Muslim culture and the “inhumanity” inherent to Middle East politics. Similarly, in 1993, as the Oslo peace process was raising hopes, Pipes assembled eighteen unaltered, previously published articles into the book, *Sandstorm: Middle East Conflicts and America*, functioning as part of the broader argument to derail the peace process, which would have stopped Israel’s expansion. The work framed Islamic culture as a primordial, unchanging, and dysfunctional, and it framed Muslim elites shaped by that culture as unreliable partners in the peace process. With breathtakingly selective glasses, he assured his readers that “Little really changes in the Middle East.” Pipes thus contradicted his statement two years earlier in the *Long Shadow* that “Khomeini’s ideas are not medieval but, on the contrary, are radically

new for Islam” (1991, xii).<sup>167</sup> And, tearing a page from the CPD’s realist and structurally deterministic discourse on the Soviet Union, Pipes’s advice was to abandon all idealism (that the Oslo peace process represented) and leave the region to its determined primordial identity, because—as he put it—“neither American power nor the strength of its example can push away deeply grounded perceptions and habits.”

In 1994, Pipes institutionalized his role as advocate for the expanded Holy Land by founding the Middle East Forum as an independent institution, culminating what he had begun back in 1990 as a project of FPRI. The institution’s new journal, *Middle East Quarterly*, immediately began to function within its design parameters: countering the rising tide of largely unchallenged criticism from the academy and global public opinion for Israel’s expansionist policies and the uncritical “blank check” of nearly \$3 billion in grants that it received from the U.S. each year. For this special mission, the Quarterly’s board of editors is comprised of dissident non-Muslim and pro-Zionist academics that Pipes would later describe as the “five percent” who are not part of the Middle East Studies Association, including fellows from the conservative American Enterprise Institute, and the AIPAC-affiliated Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP).

As the Oslo process progressed, Pipes continued to legitimize Zionism by framing the region as a bad neighborhood and its elite as unreliable peace partners. In his short threat assessment, “There are no moderates,” in the Fall 1995 edition of the *National Interest*, Pipes analysis shifted from the far enemy to the near, describing the peace process as “the misguided U.S. policy” and blaming “the usual suspects” in the U.S. usually critical of Israel’s policies: the “academic specialists.”<sup>168</sup>

In response to the article, Edward Said (1997, xviii) responded, describing Pipes as a “perfidious anti-Muslim” for advancing the counternarrative that moderate Islamists necessary for peaceful interstate relations in the Middle East simply don’t exist. Said wrote in *The Nation* on 12 August 1996 that Pipes’s function within the pro-Israel apparatus was to “make sure that the ‘[Islamic] threat’ is kept before our eyes, the better to excoriate Islam for terror, despotism and violence, while assuring themselves profitable consultancies, frequent TV appearances and book contracts.”<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> What Pipes curiously could not say was that fundamentalism is emerging as a reactive force to the unrivaled sweeping changes that the region has undergone in the past century, and that we should expect many mutations to political Islam in attempts to deal with these forces of change.

<sup>168</sup> Since there are no moderate Islamists, he reasoned, “we should stand by the non-fundamentalists, even when that means accepting, within limits, strong-arm tactics (Egypt, the PLO), the aborting of elections (in Algeria), and deportations (Israel)” (Pipes, 1995).

<sup>169</sup> These characterizations were widespread. Georgetown University Professor John Esposito described Pipes as a political activist with “a right wing Zionist agenda” (Parry and Abunimah 2002). And *Wall St. Journal* identified Pipes’s Middle East Forum as a “pro-Israel think tank” (2002: 09.18)

As an apparatus for Holy Land geopolitics, *Middle East Forum's* productions—like those of Pipes's father Richard in the CPD—entailed ideological moves of exclusion that removed from view Islamism's complex causal basis in the realm of human (in)security. For hundreds of millions of working-age Muslim males with no hope of achieving culturally-important social, political or economic aspirations, a more socially-just and less corrupt Islamist-led regime was preferable to supporting the “status quo,” which Pipes had been arguing for. While the regimes that made up that status quo were willing to look the other way as Israel accelerated its move into Palestinian territory, they were—in the eyes of their subjects—egregiously corrupt, brutal, inept, and otherwise illegitimate, monopolizing—or, under the guise of neo-liberal reforms, plundering—the economy, and otherwise preventing the emergence of normal civil society.

That status quo under which most Muslims were suffering was protected from external threats by Western powers, especially the U.S., and protected from internal threats by their oppressive *mukhabarat*. Compounding this intractable structure of thwarted human needs, the spread of satellite television was at last revealing the stark differences between their lives under the status quo and the lives of Westerners whose governments' policies were helping to maintain it. The absolute lack at the local level, and relative deprivation at the global level, fueled frustration and resistance from the only bastion of political opportunity remaining: the mosque. Yet, for Pipes's threat analysis of Islamic activism and anti-Western sentiments, all of this would be systematically obscured from view.

In 1996, Pipes had also landed a position as a visiting fellow and adjunct scholar at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP)—a think tank spun-off by AIPAC. The institute, according to John Mearsheimer of University of Chicago and Stephen Walt, academic dean at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, played a crucial function within the Israel lobby. In their book, *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* (2007), they note that “Although WINEP plays down its links to Israel and claims that it provides a ‘balanced and realistic’ perspective on Middle East issues, this is not the case.” Instead, they noted, “WINEP is funded and run by individuals who are deeply committed to advancing Israel's agenda,” concluding that “they are hardly neutral observers” (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, 175-176). The appearance of political neutrality is what mattered; the Institute was created for that purpose by Martin Indyk, who—as AIPAC's deputy director for research—found his security writing not taken seriously *because* of his

position in AIPAC (Ottaway 1989). Beinín (1993) noted the nexus of knowledge and power in this part of the broader apparatus:

WINEP built its success on ample funding; an extensive network of relations with the media, policymakers and academics; and dogged focus on its central policy objective—keeping the strategic relationship with Israel at the center of US Middle East policy, a goal that resonates with the anti-Arab and Islamophobic premises of the conventional wisdom on Middle East affairs.

During the Persian Gulf war, WINEP associates were frequent sources of the sound bites, op-eds and canned quotes featured by the mass media. They reinforced the Bush administration's framing of the issues, legitimized the war, affirmed the authority of the media, and provided color commentary once the shooting began (MER 180).<sup>170</sup>

There, at WINEP, Pipes published a policy advocacy paper, *Syria Beyond the Peace Process*. Like his other writing, it functioned as part of the broader argument to derail U.S. support for the ongoing peace process. Facing significant momentum towards a final settlement that would share the Jewish biblical homeland and its capital with its later inhabitants, as well as make some restitution for the half million refugees displaced in Israel's 1948 land-grab, the greater Zionist project simply needed unreliable partners for peace. And, Pipes produced them. Under his pessimistic and conspiratorial lens, Assad's overtures were placed within the prism of Kennan in the last great ideological struggle, namely, the Eastern mind's deceptiveness. In this vein, Assad's pursuit of a peace process with Israel was merely a farce to—in Pipes's assessment—"improve his standing in Washington" (1996, 92-93).

And, because the proponents of Israel's expansion needed such spoilers leading the adjacent states, Pipes also advocated that we keep them there, parroting a well-worn tactic by the authoritarian regimes of the status-quo, which was—in Pipes's terms—the argument that "fundamentalist Islam has become the region's greatest problem", and that Assad's potential to "help resist the surge of fundamentalism" have made him "less of an opponent and more of an ally" (1996, 101-2). Of course, this storyline may or may not have been true, but Pipes's analysis was mere advocacy for that argument, and not any rigorous pursuit of reality.

Continuing his role as framing Muslims as unreliable peace partners during the Oslo process, Pipes in 1996 published *The Hidden Hand Middle East Fears of Conspiracy*. Again, naturalizing difference between the Western and Islamic culture as civilization and barbarism, reason and its lack, the work framed the Arab mind's primordial predisposition for conspiracy thinking, with the effect

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<sup>170</sup> See <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer180/money-media-policy-consensus>).

(and apparent intent) to convey the determined, unchanging nature of political and economic life of the region, including the propensity to political extremism, violence, and lack of modernization.

It was in this strategy that the topic of Islam increasingly became a useful tool in the hands of those contemporary Joshua's in the U.S. and Israel, and their irredentist strategy of reenacting the more than 3,000 year old conquest of Canaan, taking it from its modern-day Philistines. In view of this obvious function, Edward Said, during this time, in 1997, pinpointed the political economy of "the menace theory of Islam." He characterized the entire project as pro-Israeli special interests hoping convince the public that Israel is "a victim of Islamic violence" and to obscure what it is that Israel and the United States have been doing (1997, xxi). Again, Said was not off the mark. Pipes's consistent function as an organic polemicist for the Zionist political apparatus would eventually be recognized by Bar-Ilan University's Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies, with their annual "Guardian of Zion" award.

As we've already seen, Pipe's geopolitical advocacy translated to discrediting the chief source of criticism of Israeli and U.S. policies: the Middle East studies departments in American universities. Toward this effort, Pipes (and a co-author De Atkine) in 1995 wrote the McCarthyesque "Middle Eastern Studies: What Went Wrong?" which questioned the loyalty of American scholars who were critical of U.S. or Israeli policy in the region. In response to the many letters to the editor that their work predictably provoked, their reply marked the point in Pipes's discourse in which themes of countercultural struggle became a pervasive feature:

the Middle Eastern specialist class has had its holy writs questioned! How dare one challenge the conventions of those gurus? Our article aspired to serve notice on an academic community that too often has abrogated its scholarly standards in the quest of political correctness and an elitist countercultural stance (De Atkine and Pipes 1997).

Such counterhegemonic themes became central in the broader practice of attacking the loyalty anyone critical of Israel's policies. In the January 2000 edition of the neoconservative journal *Commentary*, Pipes reviewed Efraim Karsh's *Empires of the Sand*. Positioning himself more completely as a dissident academic, Pipes selected this revisionist work for review *because* it was revisionist. In his terms, it "upends the conventional narrative" constructed in academia—that Middle Easterners were "hapless victims of predatory imperial powers." He concluded on a counterhegemonic and politically antagonistic note of satisfaction, saying that already this "radical rejection of prevailing wisdom has prompted strong reactions from the scholarly community."

Given this dissidence, it is no surprise that Pipes found himself increasingly marginalized—a marginalization that would end when a well-trained cell of al-Qaeda operatives produced the next major event in West-Islam relations.

## **2. 9/11 and the Shift to Domestic Cultural Politics**

9/11—in addition to its rupture of the U.S. security narrative—constituted perhaps the greatest political opportunity in the modern era. As he had done in the two earlier events in West-Islam relations, Pipes quickly moved to capitalize on the nation’s trauma. With America substantially mobilized and hungry for knowledge about their newest and shadowy enemy, Pipes rushed to republish his now vintage *In the Path of God*. That it was an insignificant revision to the earlier edition undoubtedly reflected Pipes’s own primordialist vision outlined earlier—that nothing really changes in the Middle East, and that all Islamic fundamentalist movements are the same.

With Islam centered in national debate, Pipes’s trademark realism and oppositional view functioned as a subject position of a reliably and more polar-positioned conservative polemicist—a necessary commodity in the realm of media-sponsored debate. In this role, Pipes appeared on 110 television and 450 radio shows—an average of ten a week in the twelve month period following the 9/11 attacks (Press 2004). By October 2006—in view of his influence among neoconservative elite toward invading Iraq, and because of his position as the most authoritative conservative voice on the Middle East and Islam during America’s infatuation with the topics over the past five years—Harvard University had ranked him 84<sup>th</sup> on its “Harvard 100” list of its most influential living alumni.

But, Pipes’s impressive rise in influence was not merely a factor of his self-positioning into the niche role of a counterhegemonic commodity for purposes of media debates. Like that of Robert Spencer, it was also due to the increasingly counterhegemonic function of Pipes’s threat writing during this time—the way he began to broaden his niche role of Israel geopolitics into domestic cultural politics. The counterhegemonic feature that increasingly emerged in Pipes’s threat writing was the subversion of the more progressive societal institutions of authoritative knowledge.

### ***Subversion of More Progressive Institutions***

Similar to Spencer’s, Pipes’s threat writing related to Islam increasingly contained a curious element of counterhegemonic resistance or subversion aimed at not merely at the Middle East

academia largely critical of Israel's policies, but at the broader and enduring rivals of the U.S. conservative movement broadly—the Democrats, the more progressive dominant institutions of academia, government and the media, and the broader, more progressive and secular culture. For example, just weeks after the 9/11 attacks, when the nation was trying to interpret the rationality and contexts of al-Qaeda's horrific and symbolic attacks on innocent American civilians and icons of power, Pipes was typing in another direction. In the Winter 2002 edition of his *Middle East Quarterly*, Pipes and a co-author—a graduate student in history—wrote provocatively with more rightist and counterhegemonic overtones, “The United States Government - Islam's Patron?”

Not only was Pipes's threat writing lodged solidly within the conservative counternarrative regarding Islam, it was also becoming more explicitly politically subversive in terms of his efforts to delegitimize the dominant societal institutions. In his article on the government, Pipes sarcastically and antagonistically charged that U.S. officials “are at pains to distance themselves from the great unwashed, those everyday people who watch the news and associate Islam with violence.” Rather than offer a corrective to “officialdom's” four master narratives on Islam that had emerged—that “there is no clash of civilizations”; that “terrorism is not Islamic”; that “Islam is compatible with American ideals and adds to American life”; and that “Americans must learn to appreciate Islam”—Pipes set out to completely counter them.

Also in 2002, despite the conservative movement's increasing demands on him as an organic polemicist, Pipes managed to publish *Militant Islam Reaches America*.<sup>171</sup> While ostensibly about America's foreign enemy (now *within*), the book was not only unscholarly in tone or approach, but obviously rushed and unenlightening, even at this early juncture of knowledge production related to the threats within the Islamic continuum. It was, however, politically performative—yet another milestone along the way in Pipes's strategic turn from the far enemy to the near—from the containment of over-the-horizon Islamic fundamentalist regimes like revolutionary Iran, to the war of position at home against domestic political rivals. Buried beneath the title and focus on Islam, the book has chapters like “Jihad and the professors” and “A monument of apologetics,” which subvert and securitize the more progressive academic and government institutions—all viewed as serving as militant Islam's “apologists” and “patrons.”

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<sup>171</sup> In 2004 Pipes published another book, *Miniatures: Views of Islamic and Middle Eastern Politics*, which was a compilation of 100 essays, many of which were written previously, or significant revisions of earlier works. *Miniatures* essay “A new way to fight terrorism” (pg 16), for example, was the exact title of his previous work in May 2000. The essay that precedes it, “The New Enemy” (pg 14), was previously published with the same title in *Wall Street Journal Europe*, August 27, 1998.



The book begins not with the enemies foreign, or militant Islam—as the title suggested—but enemies domestic—Pipes’s own more progressive rivals in the academy. In the preface he cited Georgetown University professor John Esposito’s four-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, sarcastically describing it as “the best that current scholarship has to offer on the subject of Islam.” He added that “I found that, in an age when objective knowledge has faded as a goal, scholarship readily turns into partisanship...” (Pipes 2002, xvi). Pipes later described Esposito’s book, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (1992), as emblematic of the threat-obscurer straightjacket worn by the exclusively Leftist Middle East Studies Association and the American academy broadly (2002, 89). And, addressing the dominant “political correctness” that was continually sanctioning all of his own production, Pipes rhetorically imagined an institution without such stifling “political constraints,” but then noted: “that would be asking for a very different academy” (2002, 108). He concluded in lamentation over the “stifling consensus” and “intellectual scandal” in the academy over the meaning of “jihad” in Islam and the associated “religion of peace” storyline (2002, 258-268), and noted with dismay that “anyone seeking guidance on the all-important Islamic concept of *jihad* would get almost identical instruction from members of the professoriate across the United States” (2002, 259).

Within this same counterhegemonic strategy of action, Pipes published “Extremists on Campus” in the June 25, 2002 edition of the *New York Sun*. “For three decades,” he wrote, “left-wing extremists have dominated American academics, spouting odd but seemingly harmless theories about ‘deconstruction,’ ‘post-modernism,’ ‘race, gender and class,’ while venting against the United States, its government and its *allies*”—a euphemized reference to Israel (Pipes and Schanzer 2002). He concluded the article with a Frantz Fanon-like call to decolonize: “the time has come...to take back the universities as institutions of civilized discourse.”

And, in this following December 31, 2002 column in the more-dissident *New York Post*, under the headline “What is Jihad,” Pipes again advanced the threat counternarrative regarding Islam while engaging politically the more idealistic academy, charging it with being unrealistic about Islam, and using as his case three American professors of Islamic studies who “colorfully” reinterpret jihad away from its historical martial signification. In his niche subject position as the lone sober realist and adult in the face of broadening trend of immature idealism, Pipes concluded: “It would be

wonderful were jihad to evolve into nothing more aggressive than controlling one's anger, but that will not happen simply by wishing away a gruesome reality.”<sup>172</sup>

Pipes's early strategy of subversion of the academy would continue unabated throughout the post-9/11 decade. On November 15, 2009, Cinnamon Stillwell of Campus Watch wrote “Fort Hood and the Academic Apologists”, and reliably published it in the *American Thinker*. She complained that for interpretation of the event, “the media has turned to Middle East studies ‘experts’ for enlightenment.” In an implicit connection of the Left with Islamists, she noted that writing for the *Washington Post*'s ‘On Faith’ blog, John Esposito, professor and founding director of the Saudi-funded Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University, “extends his long tradition of issuing apologies for radical Islam by conflating Hasan's actions with ‘extremists’ of all religions.” Stillwell's article was performatively counterhegemonic, describing “the culture of political correctness and willful blindness towards Islamist ideology that has infected the U.S. military, intelligence agencies, and so many other institutions” as a condition fostered by “the denizens of the Ivory Tower”.

Similar to what we will see in Spencer's threat writing, Pipes's subversion of the dominant, more progressive regime of truth involved more than merely delegitimizing institutionalized scholars and the rest of “officialdom”; it also included rendering visible the tabooed topics or things typically regulated out of professional security writing, academic security studies, and mainstream journalism. For example, using his reliable neoconservative outlet, *Commentary*, Pipes in 2002 resurrected the long-tabooed subject of race as an object of security, making visible the “well-established tradition of American blacks who convert to Islam turning against their country” (Pipes 2002:10.25). In his similarly reliable conservative outlet, the *New York Sun*, Pipes subverted societal norms again by raising for visibility the connection of America's non-whites with danger, this time championing the more rightist Michelle Malkin's (2004) *In Defense of Internment: The Case for Racial Profiling in World War II and the War on Terror*. Pipes wrote that “Ms. Malkin has done the singular service of breaking the academic single-note scholarship on a critical subject, cutting through a shabby, stultifying consensus...” (Pipes 2004:12.28).

By making visible the tabooed things that the more progressive institutions *normally* exclude, Pipes's analyses defiantly stood juxtaposed to the hegemonic order. The almost puritanical,

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<sup>172</sup> Of course, the more authoritative contemporary fiqh of jihad that most Muslims see as their authority on the matter still reserves its martial variant as a just war defensive mechanism, and its non-violent variant as a means to win the world to Islam—a dual frame of “struggle” that many of us Christian soldiers have naturalized.

oppositional nature of all of Pipes's threat assessments by this time functioned as an ever-present reactionary power that undermined the legitimacy of those institutions, and—by perceived connection—the Left broadly.

### ***Dissident Mode of Production***

Pipes's emerging practice of counterhegemonic struggle or subversion at this juncture was not merely discursive in nature, that is, in the producing of threat analyses that were subversive in terms of their (counter) narratives and more explicit political statements. They were also subversive in their more non-discursive mode of production or publishing—in bypassing or excluding altogether the more progressive, dominant, societal regime of truth. In this, Pipes was merely aligning with the aforementioned conservative counterhegemonic strategy of subversion of the more progressive societal institutions, as manifested in the construction of a samizdat-like alternative society of dissident institutions, increasingly based in the alternative media. In solidarity with this strategy, Pipes created his own dissident set of Forum institutions, including the *Middle East Quarterly*, Campus Watch, Islamist Watch, his blog “Lion's Den.”

At this point, Pipes openly identified his Middle East Forum as a counterhegemonic institution. In response to Edward Said's reference to him in his post-9/11 *Culture and Resistance* as “a second-rate, unemployed scholar” (2002, 177), Pipes wore the characterization as a badge of honor, boasting that “think tanks (like the Middle East Forum) have emerged in the last couple of decades as leading actors in the making of public policy, much to the frustration of the academic thought police” (Pipes 2003), sarcastically turning the Orwellian and Foucaultian phrase on its head.

In this newest mode of subversion, Pipes enacted a kind of epistemic solipsism, wherein he published solely from within the conservative enclave or knowledge sub-society. For example, Middle East Forum had its sponsored articles in 2010 and 2011 (until 9/11) published exclusively in one of two places: in its own *Middle East Quarterly* (70 articles), or in one of the knowledge institutions within the conservative enclave created expressly for counterhegemonic struggle—*Pajamas Media* (33 articles), *FrontPageMagazine* (33 articles), *American Thinker* (31 articles), *Hudson New York* (19 articles), *Jerusalem Post* (7 articles), *National Review Online* (6 articles), and *Jihad Watch* (4 articles), *National Interest* (3 articles), and *Foreign Policy.com* (8 articles).

In other words, it was *because* these institutions were dissident or subversive by intent that Pipes's sponsored threat assessments were published there. In the case of *Foreign Policy*, for example, its founding purpose and mission—according to its website—“was to question commonplace views

and groupthink and to give a voice to alternative views about American foreign policy.”<sup>173</sup> And, since its establishment, Pipes’s *Middle East Quarterly* similarly had been functioning as such a dissident institution within the conservative power-knowledge apparatus; its samizdat, subversive nature was part of its branding, or niche market strategy.

Even at this early juncture, all of Pipes’s threat writing seemed to be not only against the flow of professional consensus regarding Islam, but operating in another realm altogether. When so many security and intelligence professionals focused on al-Qaeda and the potential nexus of al-Qaedaism and weapons of mass destruction, Pipes, for example, was launching the political surveillance apparatus, *Campus Watch*, which began to compile black lists and dossiers of faculty at US campuses whom it considers unpatriotic, America-haters. Inspired in part by a 2001 work from the Israel lobby’s WINEP—*Ivory Towers on Sand: The failure of Middle Eastern studies in America*, by Martin Kramer—Campus Watch’s counterhegemonic mission—in Pipes’s terms—was that of “condemning and curbing the leftist activism that too often passes for Middle East scholarship” (Pipes and Schanzer 2002). In this vein, the website’s introduction, “About Campus Watch,” reconstructs the McCarthy-ite charge that “academics seem generally to dislike their own country and think even less of American allies abroad.”

In April 2006, Pipes again extended the enclave of dissident institutions with the launch of Islamist Watch. Created ostensibly for the front lines of a Kennan-inspired containment of America’s newest Cold War enemy *within*, Islamist Watch’s actual function was that of a broader citizen soldier apparatus that subversively enacted a kind of self-governance and popular security. “The war”, its website proclaimed, “needs to be understood to involve scholarship, think tank research, textbooks, campus activities, the media, press relations, philanthropy, corporate decisions, political lobbying, lawsuits, feature movies, toys, computer games, and much else.” This is not the domain of “government”, it explains, because “the demands of political correctness” prevent government authorities from doing and saying what is needed. Like Spencer’s Jihad Watch, Pipes’s Islamist Watch was not primarily a technology for surveillance of the 0.6 percent of the U.S. population that was Muslim adults, but for delegitimizing the broader, more progressive outside.

By this juncture, all of Pipes’s organizations functioned counterhegemonically. Writing “Five Years of Campus Watch” in the *Jerusalem Post* on September 20 2007, Pipes centered the broader, more progressive societal institutions, stating that “the anti-Americans do not have a monopoly on intelligence or skills, just a near-monopoly on power.” He noted with satisfaction the early success

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<sup>173</sup> See <http://fpgroup.foreignpolicy.com/about/history/>

of the cultural struggle, and particularly the success of this dissident institution's contribution. Campus Watch, he boasted, had already overturned the "once insular world" of Middle East specialists. Yet, for all of the establishment's progress under Campus Watch's forced accountability, Pipes went on, "the field's basic problems remain in place", namely "analytical failures, the mixing of politics with scholarship, intolerance of alternative views, apologetics, and the abuse of power over students." Pipes added that the function of Campus Watch was to retake American universities from the illiberal left. This meant that "pro-American scholars"—who he estimated as comprising as much as five percent of Middle East specialists—would need to grow and to "reach parity with the anti-Americans."

In this more puritanical, complete resistance to the established, orthodox mode of security analysis, the alternative medium was the alternative message. In other words, this more dissident form of threat writing thrived in the conservative movement's dissident regime of truth housed within the alternative media. The vast bulk of Pipes's work was now lodged here in the ungoverned virtual realm, published outside the circle of professionals, avoiding the scrutiny of university officials or journal or major publisher editors and any meaningful peer review process.

It was a strategy that worked. His signature website, DanielPipes.org, emerged as one of the more accessed internet sources of politically dissident knowledge about Islam and the Middle East, attracting by 2011 sixty million page visits, and garnering 112,000 comments.<sup>174</sup> From there, his blog—"Lion's Den"—a play that links him to his heroic namesake Daniel in the Bible—could be accessed to capture his even less regulated (and more political) threat writing.

### **3. Barak Hussein Obama, the Neoconservative Crisis, and More Aggressive Domestic Politics**

Pipes's increasing propensity to use his threat writing and his Middle East Forum as platforms for counterhegemonic struggle took a markedly more earnest and explicit turn in November 2008, after the landslide defeat of the neoconservative political bloc from which he had derived much of his capital. His threat writing at this juncture reflected three more counterhegemonic features: 1) a much more diligent strategy of linking the newest foreign enemy, Islam, to the new Obama

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<sup>174</sup> According to the counter on his website in August 2012, there had been 63 million visits to his personal website, DanielPipes.org. The website's popularity in the US according to traffic is ranked at 67, 646 in August 2012 (See <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/danielpipes.org#>)

administration; 2) a more aggressive struggle against progressive elite; and 3) a more popular and politically antagonistic style of threat writing.

### ***Linking Domestic Rivals to the Newest Foreign Enemy***

Reminiscent of the anti-Semitic conspiracy, *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Pipes played the leading role in constructing its modern-day variant: the alliance between Islamists and Leftists to destroy the U.S. Constitution. The strategy projected the conspiratorial and racist frames that were historically directed at the Jews onto the conservative movement's primary enemies, foreign and domestic—Islam and the Left.<sup>175</sup> By 2008, this strategy to construct an Islamo-Leftist conspiracy had become a strategic pillar of the “Middle East” Forum, reflected in its expanded and incoherent mission statement clause, to “protect the Constitutional order.”<sup>176</sup>

In this strategy, when it became apparent that the defeat of the McCain-Palin platform was all but certain, Pipes published “Allied Menace” in the July 14 2008 *National Review*. The article described “the burgeoning alliance of Western leftists and Islamists” as one that “impedes the West’s efforts to protect itself.” The origin of this alliance, he explained, goes back to Foucault’s visit to Iran during the revolution to overthrow the popularly illegitimate and Western-empowered Shah. Pipes gave four reasons for this seemingly oxymoronic alliance, first among them was the one given by British politician George Galloway: they have the same enemies, namely, “Western civilization in general and the United States, Great Britain, and Israel in particular, plus Jews, believing Christians, and international capitalists ....” Thus, in this allied menace frame, as the Norway terrorist Breivik came to believe, the more immediate threat was not from the far enemy—Islamists in the Muslim majority countries—but from the near enemy; that is, their purported Leftists collaborators in Europe and the U.S.

The components of Pipes’s Middle East Forum during this time functioned as part of the broader ultraconservative apparatus to link enemies foreign with traditional domestic political rivals. The Winter 2010 *Middle East Quarterly*, for example, promoted Jamie Glazov’s (David Horowitz’s editor of *FrontPageMagazine*) recent productions, *United in Hate: The Left’s Romance with Tyranny and*

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<sup>175</sup> Here, Pipes’s strategy of action was also nearly identical to that of Kennan and his notion of a grand conspiracy called the “concealed Comintern”—an “inner central core,” who “may also appear and act in unrelated public capacities,” but “are in reality working closely together as an underground operating directorate of world communism.” For Kennan, this conspiracy involved a Gramscian-style war of position to penetrate and control what he called “a wide variety of national associations or bodies,” and Pipes was now framing Islamists and Leftists as allied in such a conspiracy.

<sup>176</sup> See [www.meforum.org](http://www.meforum.org), accessed 31 October 2011.

*Terror*. The short, one-page book review by Pipes's former co-author and acolyte described how Michel Foucault, Edward Said, and other more leftist academics had lauded early Islamic revolutionary movements—by which he meant the Iranian Revolution—yet predictably obscured how this revolution threw off a Western and especially U.S. neo-imperialist structure in the Shah regime. The one-page book “review” then went on in McCarthyite and early John Birch Society fashion, and in only two sentences, to frame politically progressive journalists, members of the film industry, and even former Democratic president Jimmy Carter as having colluded with the nation's foreign enemies.

Pipes enacted this same strategy of action when President Obama and his entire security team, including General David Petraeus, had chastised Terry Jones—the self-obsessed and arguably mentally-deranged pastor of a tiny Florida church—for burning the Quran. We had noted how Pipes, on this occasion, went beyond trivial to the absurd in its detachment from real world security affairs. Writing in his reliable mouthpiece, *Washington Times*, he advanced the Islamo-Leftist alliance frame, asserting that the President had “enforced Islamic law,” and described it as “a precedent that could lead to other forms of compulsory Shariah compliance” (*Washington Times* 2010).

At this point, such overt domestic cultural politics permeated nearly everything Pipes was writing broadly related to the threat of Islam; nearly everything he wrote on the topic of Islam or the Middle East broadly contained non-sequitur statements that denigrated the U.S. conservative movement's domestic political rivals—typified by his December 10, 2010 interview with *Pajamas Media*, titled “Israel, Iran, Barack Obama's presidency...” (Mitzner and Solomon 2010).

In all of his threat writing at this point—rather than substantive knowledge that might inform the policymaker or strategic planners—the focus was glaringly domestic cultural politics. This was the case even when the topic was Israel. On the pages of *Commentary* in late April 2010, for example, the topic was Israel, but the emphasis was on the silver lining as the “permanent damage these fights have inflicted on Obama,” who in the eyes of many “Zionist Americans” according to an April 22, 2010 Quinnipiac poll—“is seen as “insufficiently supportive of Israel (Pipes 2010: 06; Israel Project 2010).

Even when fundraising, Pipes's function of producing knowledge about Islam is inseparable from combating the domestic political enemy. In a June, 7, 2011 fundraising e-mail to his subscriber list, Pipes described the dire need for support to his Middle East Forum with his signature bridging of the enemies foreign and domestic frames:

Barack Obama is demanding that Israel make concessions to its sworn enemies—or, in Newt Gingrich's words, demanding that Israel 'commit suicide'—even as the president's director of national intelligence absurdly praises Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood as 'a very heterogeneous group, largely secular, which has eschewed violence.'

### ***More Aggressive Struggle against the Liberal Elite***

Although the Obama Administration was often centered in his framing of this new conspiratorial allied menace, Pipes's threat writing continued to be marked by his earlier habitus of counterhegemonic struggle against progressives on both sides of the Atlantic. In his July 20, 2009 "Europe's Future, Newsweek's Fantasy"—a response to the Italian newspaper *Il Foglio's* request to react to an optimistic analysis in *Newsweek* titled, "Why Fears Of A Muslim Takeover Are All Wrong"—Pipes more banally securitized Europe's liberal "elite," especially their idealistic utopian view that "symbiosis, assimilation, good feeling, compromise, and muddling through will prevail." Similarly, in his counterhegemonic "Why I stand with Geert Wilders," Pipes subtly securitized the Left and its political correctness, or "conventional wisdom"—the "view of most politicians, journalists, and academics"—and their "idealistic approach" of multiculturalism. Evoking medical tropes of the sick and weakened host being consumed by the stronger parasite, he noted the lack of virility of the Leftist culture, especially secularism, and its impact on even its Christian women, whose fertility rate is about one third less than the replenishment level, compared to that of the Muslims who enjoy "a dramatically higher, if falling, fertility rate."

In a self-disciplinary move, Pipes framed the sick man as no longer the Islamic Ottomans but the Left-stricken Europe. Europeans, he lamented, "no longer cherish their history, mores, and customs." Leftist ideology, he explains, produces "self-disdain"; it naturalizes "guilt about fascism, racism, and imperialism" and thus devalues Judeo-Christian culture, forming a barrier to assimilation" (Pipes, 2010: 01.19). In the unlikely event that the nationalist "anti-immigrant parties" gain power, Pipes imagined a healthy civilization in which the progressive slide to Eurabia was stopped. "They will likely seek to reject multiculturalism, cut back on immigration, encourage repatriation of immigrants, support Christian institutions, increase indigenous European birthrates, and broadly attempt to re-establish traditional ways," he said.

Also typical of this more diligent anti-left strategy of action was *Middle East Forum's* May 10, 2010 presentation by Melanie Phillips. Phillips was selected *because* she was the author of *Londonistan*, which was a critique of the more progressive governmentality of multiculturalism. Her topic,



predictably, was her latest subversive and apocalyptic book, *The World Turned Upside Down: The Global Battle over God, Truth and Power*. Although Phillips began by talking about the religious rival, Islam, she quickly shifted to cultural politics, delegitimizing the more progressive social order, euphemized as “Western intelligentsia.” The Forum’s summary of the brief amounted to only 348 words of text, with its function more politically performative than informational, delegitimizing “secular ideologies” the postmodern “decline in reason” that allows Islam “to fill the vacuum left behind.”

As was now his habitus with the Obama administration more directly, Pipes used every possible opportunity to link the conservatives’ newest foreign enemy with the more progressive elite. On the occasion of “The Ninth 9/11,” for example, Pipes in the *National Review Online* gave the equivalent of the Republican state of the union address. To the nation’s credit, he said, the conservative half of the population “has made substantial progress”; it has “read the Koran” and volunteered for combat. But to its discredit, “the liberal half and the establishment it inevitably controls, from government to media to the academy to the arts, has become ever more determined to ignore the religious aspect of the war and instead reduce it to counterterrorism and economics.”

The next year, at the tenth anniversary of 9/11, Pipes answered the question put to him by Frank Gaffney’s farther Right *Center for Security Policy*: “Are we safer?” Instead of an objective assessment of the threat of al-Qaeda to the homeland, the center of Pipes’s response was enemies domestic. He noted that “a White House policy document dares not even refer to terrorism in the title”, and that “politicians, journalists, and academics” obscure “the nature of the threat and the proper response to it (Pipes 2011: 09.08).

Again, no potential political opportunity in any bit of news broadly related to Islam was to be lost. On the eve of Turkey’s elections, for example, in a June 9, 2011 blog post, Pipes provocatively reclassified the key NATO member and U.S. ally as a “hostile state.” He then suggested that this new Islamist enemy is being aided and abetted by America’s Leftist elites. His analysis did not contain the expected empirical engagement with the kind of factors that we might expect for such a security analysis; but instead merely produced a photo of President Obama’s Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, caught “high-fiving” Turkey’s Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu.<sup>177</sup>

Pipes strategy of linking enemies foreign to enemies domestic—both the progressive elites broadly and the Obama administration more narrowly—showed no sign of abating after President Obama’s reelection. The July 27, 2012 article in *Campus Watch*, “Professors and Politicos Fooled by the Muslim Brotherhood,” achieved both aims, combining the older, more subtle

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<sup>177</sup> See <http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2011/06/on-the-eve-of-turkey-elections>

counterhegemonic strategy of delegitimizing the progressive academy to the newer, more blatant one centered on the Obama administration.<sup>178</sup>

### ***More Popular and Politically-Antagonistic Style of Threat Writing***

Out of the neoconservative crisis which effectively exiled Pipes from Washington, there was another manifest shift in his security writing; it became increasingly marked by a distinctly more popular, unprofessional, and politically-antagonistic style. From his blog, Lion's Den, on June 4, 2009, in a post titled "Islam in Obama's Cairo Speech", any vestiges of the strategic intellectual Daniel Pipes was gone, and the new trivial, partisan, and conspiracy-minded political Fox News-like commentator had emerged. Rather than provide politically-incorrect insights regarding U.S.-Islam relations, as he was once prone to do, Pipes now displayed a more anti-rationalist paranoia over the new president's greeting in his speech; namely "a greeting of peace from Muslim communities in my country: Assalaamu alaykum." "This Islamic greeting, here written 'Assalaamu alaykum,'" Pipes claimed, "is for one Muslim to address to another" and that "By saying these words, Obama hints at his being a Muslim."<sup>179</sup>

To help him spearhead his strategic shift to more politically-antagonistic, low-brow threat writing, Pipes embraced the very "anti-Islam bloggers" that he was beginning to deride (Boorstein 2010), hiring as the Forum's Associate Director and then Associate Fellow, Raymond Ibrahim. Ibrahim, of Egyptian Coptic Christian descent, had been a prominent member of Robert Spencer's Jihad Watch team. Also providing threat commentary on the president's speech in Cairo, Ibrahim published "Islamist Perfidy and Western Naivety: Which is More Lethal?" in *Pajamas Media*, which was reliably republished at Middle East Forum. After showing how the Leftist elite systematically obscure the true meaning of "jihad," Ibrahim then carefully used Barack Obama's middle name, "Hussein" to begin analysis of his speech to Muslims worldwide. And, to further advance the Islamo-Leftist conspiracy, Ibrahim noted how Obama in his speech had selected for his coded

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<sup>178</sup> The piece began saying, "Engagement with Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood is the consensus among elite opinion and certainly among the ranks of North American Middle East studies academics, the 'experts' tasked with informing the public and, often, policy-makers on foreign policy in the region." It then shifted, noting that "these academics have whitewashed the Muslim Brotherhood, downplayed its Islamist agenda, and urged U.S. cooperation—a policy suggestion the Obama administration has clearly taken to heart," and then added, "Many have been shocked by the speed with which the Obama administration has pursued this policy of outreach."

<sup>179</sup> Thus, in his trademark ideological move of exclusion, Pipes renders invisible the universal tradition to use whatever common vernacular cultural greeting as a matter of respect. Most security professionals, diplomats and business people who routinely travel to Muslim majority countries or who regularly address Muslim groups or even individuals on American streets use this greeting as a voluntary sign of respect. The old adage, "when in Rome..." applies.

speech a passage from Sura 9, “the most violent and intolerant exhortations in all the Koran,” thereby implying that the President’s true identity was that of a closet stealth jihadist.

Part of this shift to a cruder form of threat writing entailed a more diligent move of exclusion with regard to anyone or anything published outside of the more rightist end of the conservative knowledge enclave. Many of the experts that Pipes now cited in his threat writing were those who he had formerly classified as anti-Islam bloggers. In his “Uncovering Early Islam” in the May 16, 2012 edition of *National Review Online*, for example, Pipes favorably reviewed Spencer’s new provocative book, *Did Muhammad Exist?*<sup>180</sup>

In this more heretical form of threat writing, empirical engagement gave way to provocation—either political antagonism, or emotion-evoking imagery. Typifying these features was the article “Life Under Sharia”, published by his project Islamist Watch, on June 21, 2012. Here, professionally-normative, in-depth, rationally-based analyses—what Khaneman (2011) called the “System 2” mode of thought, with rigorous empirical confirmation and contextualization—was absent. In its place was the more emotional and stereotypical “System 1” mode. The piece first evoked a fear of extinction over Islamization, reminding its anticipated conservative market that this “project of the Middle East Forum, defends the freedoms and liberties of Western society against ‘stealth jihad,’ a campaign by Islamists to slowly and methodically implement a Sharia-compliant theocracy in the West.”

As an implied example of the America to come, the article contained links to eight graphic videos of extreme violence or cruelty that took place in Muslim societies: women beaten in Sudan and Saudi Arabia, a stoning to death in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, long imprisonments for men in Turkey and Kuwait for atheist and anti-Muhammad tweets, executions of homosexuals in Iran, and the slaughtering of a convert to Christianity in Tunisia. In the latter link to the June 4, 2012 article “Graphic Video: Muslims Slaughter ‘Apostate’ in Tunisia,” Pipes continued to subvert the establishment’s Islam is peace frame while promoting the piece’s author—the anti-Islam blogger and former deputy at the Middle East Forum, Raymond Ibrahim, who was then lodged at the Zionist Gatestone Institute. The piece described how the masked Muslim “begins to slice away,” and how after about a minute “of graphic knife-carving,” the young Christian “drowns in blood” while the head is held aloft to “more Islamic slogans of victory.”

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<sup>180</sup> As with his other book reviews, Pipes chooses the book to review *because* it is revisionist—in his words—“demonstrating the inconsistencies and mysteries in the conventional account concerning Muhammad’s life, the Koran, and early Islam.”

Pipes by this time had encouraged Ibrahim's System 1 mode of production, typified by his July 12, 2012 "Sodomy 'For the Sake of Islam'"—the title of which accurately denoted the content. By this point, Pipes had so fully embraced the more crude popular style that he was routinely citing or other promoting Ibrahim by cross-posting his productions at Gatestone and *Pajamas Media* to the Middle East Forum, sometimes under a slightly different title.<sup>181</sup>

As the cross-post from Ibrahim suggests, not all of Pipes's cruder, threat writing had overt political content. His key interview role in the low-brow anti-Islam documentary production *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West*, for example, remained centered on Islam. The production itself, however—by Clarion Fund, with Pipes and Gaffney on the board—was geared for domestic politics (Goldberg 2008; Kindy 2008). \$17 million given for the film's marketing—a pass through gift from an anonymous donor via Donors Capital Fund marked for the Clarion Fund to distribute the film—paid for some 28 million DVD copies of the film to be distributed in household newspapers in key swing states just before the 2008 presidential elections, in an obvious effort to sway voters towards the more hawkish GOP McCain-Palin ticket and against the Democratic one of Obama-Biden (Elliot 2008).

But, at his blog, "Lion's Den," Pipes was freer to relax the pretenses of disinterested threat writing, typified by the cross-post from his piece in the *National Review Online* on the eve of the general election, "Why I Am Voting Republican."

#### 4. More Implicit and Puritanical Cultural Politics

At the end of the post-9/11 decade, Middle East Forum and its journal, *Middle East Quarterly*, had a track record—in the words its editor, Efraim Karsh—of "questioning established wisdom, debunking popular myths, and providing an alternative perspective on the region's history and current affairs" (Middle East Forum 2010: 07.01). But, this flaunting of the strategy of counter-cultural struggle does not begin to adequately describe the broader elements of cultural politics that Pipes and his institution had quietly embarked upon. In addition to the more diligent and even crude political engagement of domestic political rivals—both the Obama administration and more progressive elite—Pipes's counterhegemonic strategy included a more implicit element of culture

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<sup>181</sup> Pipes's affinity for the Gatestone Institute, where Ibrahim was lodged, stemmed in part from the 2.3 million dollars of his funding from Sears Roebuck heiress Nina Rosenwald, founder and director of the Gatestone Institute, and former board member of the Israel lobby's AIPAC (Blumenthal 2012). In addition to funding Pipes, Rosenwald had given millions to similar Islam threat polemicists like David Horowitz, Brigitte Gabriel, and Frank Gaffney (Ali 2011).

war that was aimed at the subversion of the broader, more progressive culture, including its societal regulations concerning authority, along with its politics of truth.

### ***Subversion of Societal Regulations Concerning Authority***

We've already indicated how Pipes's strategy of resistance after the election and accentuated conservative crises was marked by more than merely countering the dominant regime of truth's threat narrative with more explicitly politically subversive content. To advance his aforementioned notion of conservative power-knowledge reaching parity with that of the "anti-Americans"—or "the establishment," as he was prone to refer to the political outside (Pipes and Chadha 2006)—Pipes resorted to subverting the societal norms surrounding credentials or authority for security writing. It was his notion that conservatives were just as intelligent, but lacked the empowerment, and that his institutions could bypass the societal regime of truth's regulations concerning authority.

Pipes's basic intuition was correct, of course; every society has a dominant system or regime for producing "truth," or authoritative statements, along with largely unwritten but well-understood regulations concerning the authorities that produce them—what Foucault referred to as the "authorities of delimitation" (Foucault 1972, 46-49, 55). And, to be clear, Pipes had long enacted such a counterhegemonic strategy regarding the *content* or narratives of his threat assessments. For example, when considering whether to publish an article the *Quarterly's* editors have had to answer "no" to the question, "Is this an article other quarterlies would publish?" (Getz 2000). But, he had up to a point attempted to produce this counterhegemonic content with conservatives or younger pro-Israel threat and policy writers who—at the time—might not have the credentials to publish in a more respected, peer-review journal. That regulation was dispensed with, and Pipes seemed to subvert the regulative structure concerning authority by selecting or commissioning threat writers with few or none of the credentials normative of the more dominant societal regime of truth.

In the *Quarterly's* Winter 2008 edition, for example, Melvin E. Lee—identified as "a sea captain and a nuclear engineer in the United States Navy"—fills the dissident journal's pages with "The Fallacy of Grievance-based Terrorism." The article defiantly negated any role of political grievances in radicalization by excluding from view the consensus in the literature on radicalization.<sup>182</sup> In a mocking, sarcastic tone, that was steeped in anti-intellectualism, this "sea captain" and "nuclear

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<sup>182</sup> Europe's main think tank manned by former extremists—the Quilliam Foundation—in 2010 published a case study of radicalization in British Universities which validated a conceptual framework that gives political grievances a central role in the process towards participating personally in terrorism (Quilliam, 2010).

engineer” scornfully dismissed decades of empirical research and asserted without empirical confirmation that those researchers forming broader sociological and psychological consensus “misunderstand the enemy and its nature” (Lee 2008). Similarly, the Winter 2011 edition mocked the academy with an article appropriately described as “the “alternate perspective”, by a PhD student at Catholic University. The review attempted to delegitimize the book *Anti-Terror Lessons of Muslim-Americans* (2010), by David Schanzer and Charles Kurzman of Duke University, and Ebrahim Moosa of University of North Carolina. Pipes’s more extreme counterhegemonic move of pure negation was that of having a student—not another professor of the more conservative persuasion—dismiss these established scholars’ attempt to answer the question “do Muslim-Americans support terror?” as a “complete methodological failure.”

In a similar strategy, Pipe’s Campus Watch recruited a Jewish student who had just graduated from New York University with a degree in Middle East and Islam to criticize prominent scholars on those topics, like Georgetown University’s John Esposito. Campus Watch functioned as the agent to get the student’s criticism of the establishment faculty published in the *American Thinker* (Goldman 2010). Campus Watch also sponsored another author to delegitimize fifteen established professors guilty of “whitewashing the Muslim Brotherhood.” Her credentials appropriate for this task were stated as “a writer whose interests include public affairs and foreign policy,” thereby deliberately mocking the orthodox rules for authority (Doerflinger 2011). This time, the agent Campus Watch helped the unorthodox author publish the work Horowitz’s *FrontPageMagazine*.

This strategy of pure negation of the societal regulations concerning authority was also on display in the Summer 2011 edition of *Middle East Quarterly*, in the article “Shari’a and Violence in American Mosques.” The report’s findings were reliably transgressive of societal norms regarding speech that impugned the broader Muslim-American community; it described how it surveyed 114 randomly selected mosques, finding that “fully 81 percent of the mosques featured Islamic texts that advocate violence” and “in nearly 85 percent of the mosques, the leadership (usually an imam or prayer leader) favorably recommended this literature for study by congregants.” Moreover, the report’s authors added that “58 percent of the mosques invited guest lecturers known for promoting violent jihad” (Kedar and Yerushalmi 2011).

But it was not merely the content that was transgressive of the societal taboos; the authors themselves were heretical. One author, David Yerushalmi, was not merely an Orthodox Jewish lawyer in Brooklyn who had no recognized credentials on the security topic; he was the legal counsel for Gaffney, Spencer and Geller, and had authored the model legislation introduced in two dozen

conservative states to restrict sharia (Summers 2011). In other words, the very author of the legislation to ban sharia from being considered in arbitration was the author that Gaffney had commissioned and Pipes had published on the degree to which U.S. mosques used the harsher interpretations of sharia and other doctrines. The other author, Mordechai Kedar, was similarly interested; he had founded the Israeli equivalent of Pipes's Campus Watch, the Israel Academia Monitor, for purposes of fighting left-leaning "extremist Israeli academics who exploit academic freedom in order to take steps to deny Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state," according to its website.<sup>183</sup>

### ***Increasing Transgression of Threat Taboos and Strategies of Euphemization***

A celebrity after 9/11 for being about the only conservative writer on the threat topic of Islam, Pipes was by the end of the post-9/11 decade effectively marginalized by the thousands of high-quality, professional security products on the topic that had emerged each year. His more complete marginalization during the neoconservatives exodus from Washington marked the point in Pipes's security writing in which he began to openly reflect and even revel in that marginalization as a form of counter-cultural distinction. His writing at this juncture became much more heretical, transgressing societal norms, specifically regarding the norm of political disinterestedness in professional security writing, and norms regarding the classification of all of Islam as a threat.

Pipes's challenge was to transgress these norms while continuing to attract his long-time, more centrist philanthropic patrons, avoiding being classified as an anti-Islam bloggers himself. To do this, Pipes embarked upon a sanction avoidance strategy that carefully and intermittently transgressed the societal taboos regarding speech on Islam. This was a common strategy of counter-cultural producers—one that Bourdieu (1991, 20, 84) described as "strategies of euphemization"<sup>184</sup>, and one that Shuy (1997, 121) described as coded language.<sup>185</sup> Practically, this simply meant that his

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<sup>183</sup> See <http://www.israel-academia-monitor.com/>

<sup>184</sup> See Bourdieu's essay "Censorship and the Imposition of Form", pp 137-162. All such strategies of subversion, Bourdieu observed, enact a style that is "highly sublimated and euphemized" (Bourdieu 1986, 147). The productions subvert the legitimate culture by circumventing its regulatory framework, what he called its "system of specific sanctions and censorships"; and this occurs through forms of "self-censorship", including the manner of saying, "code switching" or "bilingualism" (Bourdieu 1991, 37-38, 77, 129).

<sup>185</sup> Shuy (1997, 123) describes a "partial and disguised codes" as those when "the substituted or coded words are carefully selected to make it appear to anyone who should happen to intercept the conversation that the participants are talking about one thing when, in reality, they are talking about something quite different."

writing on the topic of Islam's threat was marked by highly-euphemized, implicit, coded, messages, carefully aimed at delegitimizing the dominant, more progressive culture.<sup>186</sup>

For example, in his November 20, 2009 article “Major Hasan's Islamist Life”, the title implies that Islam explains his terrorist actions. The piece avoids sanction merely by adding the safely ambiguous suffix, “ist”. Beyond the title, in the text, however, the necessary euphemization was relaxed either intermittently or entirely—using the intended signifier Islam and its euphemized, codeword Islamist interchangeably. In this case, in the text, for example, Pipes wonders rhetorically about the establishment's investigations into the Fort Hood incident: “will they confront the hard truth of the Islamic angle?” The euphemization or coded language is again dropped as Pipes expects that—given the Left's hegemony in academia, government and the media—there will be “a whitewash of the massacre,” rendering invisible the “hostile ideology nearly *exclusive to Muslims*.” Continuing to subvert the more progressive outside and relaxing the euphemization, Pipes laments that “initial responses from the U.S. Army, law enforcement, politicians, and journalists broadly agreed that Maj. Nidal Hasan's murderous rampage had nothing to do with Islam.” As a final subversion of the more progressive societal regime of truth, Pipes readily published the piece not in a legitimate journal or more mainstream magazine, but in David Horowitz's radically counter-cultural and anti-Left *FrontPageMagazine*.<sup>187</sup>

In another example, in the Fall 2009 edition of the *Quarterly*, its editor (and not Pipes) reviewed Davies' (2009) “In Search of the Moderate Muslim.” The implicit message was in the title, which was adapted from the television show “In Search of Bigfoot”—the perennial search for the fuzzy monster who everyone knew didn't even exist. The review concludes that the author performs an important service” by dispensing with the establishment's trite references to “moderate Muslims.” In only 14 years, Pipes had gone from “there are no moderates” referring to Islamists in the Middle East, to subtly, carefully dispensing altogether with the notion that any Muslim could be moderate.

To his subscribers, Pipes openly touted this form of subversion in a December 16, 2010 private fund-raising e-mail. He described the new strategy as the *Forum's* “careful anti-Islamism,” and noted with satisfaction that it was finding wider market appreciation “as anti-Islam sentiments gain traction.”

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<sup>186</sup> Baklouti (2007) first noted this operation of implicit messaging or “degrees of implicitness,” or a “secondary meaning” in anti-Islam discourse, where the signifier has obvious meaning to the subcultural market beyond the explicit or obvious meaning.

<sup>187</sup> See <http://www.danielpipes.org/7763/major-nidal-hasan-islamist-life>



Another way in which Pipes could subvert the political outside and avoid its sanction was to use much if not most of the *Forum's* annual budget to sponsor dissident threat writers to produce articles for publishing in other magazines or e-dailies within the conservative knowledge enclave. In other words, authors were commissioned for articles *because* of their propensity for a radical counternarrative regarding the threat of Islam, and for their propensity to otherwise subvert the broader politics of truth.

Pipes had begun this particular distancing or sanction-avoidance strategy a couple years earlier. In 2006, for example, the Forum sponsored the David Yerushalmi—a co-author of the aforementioned report, “Shari’a and Violence in American Mosques”—to conduct a subversive review of *Knowing the Enemy*, by an outsider academic, Mary Habeck. Pipes commissioned Yerushalmi not merely because of his reliable disposition to produce the counternarrative, but because of his disposition to transgress all of the societal taboos in discussion about Islam. Yerushalmi’s propensity for this kind of transgressive style was obvious, given his white-supremacist article earlier that year, “On Race”, which explained why the founding fathers in their wisdom “did not give women or black slaves the right to vote” (Yerushalmi 2006). And, Yerushalmi reliably subverted the politics of truth in the academy in a transgressive syllogism. Because Muhammad was “a man who lived both a peaceful and a violent, murderous life,” and whose “words and deeds are considered divinely ordained,” then—Yerushalmi reasoned—we cannot expect Muslims to “construct a peaceful ideology or religion.”

With sufficient distance from the piece, Pipes remained the subversive wizard behind the curtain, enabling Yerushalmi to explicitly conclude with a heretical statement, without any euphemization, that “*jihadism is in fact traditional Islam*” (Yerushalmi 2006). Pipes, through his Forum, then functioned as Yerushalmi’s agent to get the subversive book review published at a safe distance from the Middle East Forum, in the September 9, 2006 edition of the anti-establishment and conservative *American Thinker*. Again, by quietly commissioning the counterhegemonic work and getting it published by a third-party conservative magazine, Pipes avoided sanction personally.

In conclusion, recall how Edward Said had charged that Pipes’s productions functioned not as pure or disinterested knowledge about the Islamic threat, but as highly political knowledge that uses the topic of Islam to secure the interests of the Likud faction in Israel and its Zionist supporters in the U.S. And, recall how Said’s basic paradigm for this discourse was reflected in all of the substantive literature, up through the end of the post-9/11 decade. Clearly, this characterization fit

Pipes's threat writing early in his career, which was focused on civilizational and Holy Land geopolitics in the face of an ascendant, resistant post-colonial Islam.

But, after 9/11 and increasingly throughout the rest of the post-9/11 decade, Pipe's threat writing could no longer be forced into that mold. While retaining obvious advocacy for Zionist interests, Pipes's cultural production increasingly reflected a much broader conservative counterhegemonic political agenda. In other words, his threat writing functioned less to protect the West and its Holy Land from its civilizational and geopolitical competitor, "Islam," than it did as a platform for domestic, U.S. cultural struggle, against the more liberal elite, especially in the academy.

With the election of Barack Obama and the ousting of the once-influential neoconservative bloc from Washington, Pipe's security productions about Islam broadly took a more blatant turn to domestic politics, and he systematically positioned himself into an archetypal role of resistance ideologue in the U.S. conservative movement's domestic cultural struggle against what he derogatively referred to as "the establishment" or "officialdom"—the more progressive regime of truth housed in the dominant societal institutions of academia, government bureaucracies, and mainstream corporate media. Increasingly politically antagonistic and propaganda-like, his threat writing systematically began linking the U.S. conservative movement's newest ideological foreign enemy, Islam, to its domestic political rivals, both the liberal elite and the Obama administration.

By the end of the post-9/11 decade, Pipes's subversive threat writing had a more puritanical edge. Even the name of his blog, the "Lion's Den", leverages the semiotic elements in the iconic biblical resistance figure Daniel's uncompromising stance against illegitimate governance, refusing to defile himself by assimilating into the hegemony.

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**ROBERT SPENCER**  
**and Jihad Watch**

*[T]he production of ideas about the social world is always in fact subordinated to the logic of the conquest of power...and thus can be imposed only by professionals capable of manipulating ideas and groups at one and the same time....*

—Pierre Bourdieu (1991, 181)

On July 22, 2011, the most horrific and puzzling terrorist attack on European soil in the modern era had taken place. Its perpetrator was not who many had expected—an al-Qaeda-inspired Muslim—but Anders Breivik, a 32 year-old ethnic Norwegian who saw himself as the last line of defense of Western Christendom from the enemies that was bringing about its abrupt decline. But one of the enemies that he had in mind and the specific target of his attacks in this case was not—as we might expect—elements of Norway’s 50,000 Muslim population (about 2 percent of Norway) who purportedly had no intention of assimilating. Instead, Breivik entered an island youth camp run by Norway’s more Leftist social democratic Labour Party, where he one-by-one sighted and pulled the trigger on nearly 100 of those attending, killing 69 of them, mostly teenagers. Breivik’s manifesto, “2083”—posted to the Internet the day before—lifted segments of the Unabomber’s text, where he changed Ted Kaczynski’s critique of leftism by substituting the words “multiculturalism” or “cultural Marxism”—coded language, as we’ve seen, for Islam and the Left. But, the main source of his inspiration for bridging the enemies foreign and domestic frames was Horowitz’s employee, Robert Spencer. To justify his actions, Breivik’s manifesto cited Robert Spencer’s Jihad Watch 116 times, favorably cited Spencer by name 52 times, and used many of

Spencer’s trademark terms for the right-wing’s domestic political enemies—“useful idiots,” “the leftists,” and so on.”<sup>188</sup>

The use of Mr. Spencer’s threat writing for political projects of all types on both sides of the Atlantic<sup>189</sup> stemmed from his unique perspectives forged in an unorthodox preparation of more than twenty-five years. Spencer’s education for this role was unorthodox, earning his master’s degree in religious studies from the University of North Carolina in 1986, with a thesis emphasis in an esoteric element of Catholic history (Spencer 2008).<sup>190</sup> Spencer then worked in obscurity for the next sixteen years not in institutions that analyzed social threats, but in conservative think tanks such as the Free Congress Foundation—an institution whose “main focus”—in its own words—“is on the Culture War” (Jacobson 2010; Jihad Watch).<sup>191</sup> Mr. Spencer’s emerged as a public figure in 2002, publishing one of the first books set within the counternarrative to the “Islam is peace” frame: *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions About the World’s Fastest Growing Faith*. The work garnered the attention of David Horowitz, and a year later, in October 2003, the two had agreed to launch Jihad Watch as a project of Horowitz’s center, with Spencer as its director. Each Jihad Watch daily digest contains about a dozen attention-grabbing headlines for embedded news articles broadly related to the threat of Islam(ization), sent in by faithful members of the network, and then selected for his (or one of his chosen agents) expert commentary-style analysis.

Proficient in Arabic and now entirely focused on contemporary Islam in terms of its threat to the West broadly, Spencer quickly became internationally known for his blunt, pessimistic, and always politically-incorrect threat assessments and commentary related to Islam as a threat. On August 13, 2006, Spencer was the central subject on CSPAN *Q and A*, when host Brian Lamb interviewed Ambassador Akbar Ahmed, Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University. Lamb began by airing a segment of Spencer’s commentary in the documentary, *Islam, What the West Needs to Know*.

ROBERT SPENCER, FOUNDER, JIHAD WATCH: Islam is the only religion in the world that has a developed doctrine theology and legal system that mandates violence against unbelievers and mandates

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<sup>188</sup> See pg 647 in Breivik’s manifesto, for example.

<sup>189</sup> As noted earlier, Spencer was also the main source of inspiration for one-time GOP presidential front-runner Newt Gingrich, who borrowed Spencer’s term “stealth jihadis” at his July 2010 speech at the American Enterprise Institute.

<sup>190</sup> A “non-Roman” Catholic and “Reverend Deacon” at a Melkite Greek Orthodox (Maronite) church in the US (not to be divulged in this inquiry), Spencer’s thesis was oriented in that faith tradition: “The Monophysite in the Mirror”, and concerns the conversion of John Henry Newman to Catholicism in 1845 and Newman’s denunciation of the Church of England as monophysite.

<sup>191</sup> The Free Congress Foundation—per its website ([www.freecongress.org](http://www.freecongress.org))—has at its “main focus” “the Culture War.” It asks, “Will America return to the culture that made it great, our traditional, Judeo-Christian, Western culture? Or will we continue the long slide into the cultural and moral decay of political correctness?”

that Muslims must wage war in order to establish the homogeneity of the Islamic social order over the world. Now, these things are objectively verifiable facts. Anyone can look at the Koran. Anyone can look at the Muslim sources, the Muslim history, Muslim legal texts and so on and find that to be true.<sup>192</sup>

At this mid-point of the post-9/11 decade, Mr. Spencer's book-length analyses and his blog's shorter running commentary on selected Muslim actions worldwide had garnered the attention of the more politically-active Muslim-American leaders, who were studying and discussing his writings amongst themselves.<sup>193</sup> Overseas, a large percentage of Muslim leaders worldwide knew of Spencer, even though most could not access Jihad Watch due to the site being banned by their government.<sup>194</sup> In her 2008 book, *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West*, even Benazir Bhutto, the late prime minister of Pakistan, had singled out Spencer as the source of the increasing rift between Islam and the West, accusing Spencer of presenting a "skewed, one-sided, and inflammatory story that only helps to sow the seed of civilizational conflict" (Bhutto 2008, 245). The websites—Spencer Watch and Loon Watch—would be founded to contain Spencer and Jihad Watch's influence in advancing the counternarrative on Islam.

Spencer would go on to author twelve books within the counternarrative, including his two aforementioned *New York Times* bestsellers: *The Truth About Muhammad* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*—again, both published by Regnery.<sup>195</sup> The back cover of the latter book begins to expose Spencer's role in the Horowitz apparatus of cultural politics:

Everything (well, almost everything) you know about Islam and the Crusades is wrong because most textbooks and popular history books are written by left-wing academics and Islamic apologists who

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<sup>192</sup> Transcript from the rebroadcast on 13 September 2008; see <http://qanda.org/Transcript/?ProgramID=1090>. As these kinds of statements continued to circulate among conservatives and Muslims, Spencer became a reliable brand. Prior to this, he had been allowed to give briefings on the security aspects of Islam broadly at the request of individual employees at official government institutions, within segments of the United States Central Command, United States Army Command and General Staff College, the U.S. Army's Asymmetric Warfare Group, the FBI, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, and the U.S. intelligence community.

<sup>193</sup> Author's personal experience, in Washington DC meetings with most of the more prominent Muslim-American leaders in the 2004-2008 timeframe.

<sup>194</sup> Author's personal experience in the interfaith movement in Washington DC, and as a security and intelligence professional with a worldwide Muslim community portfolio.

<sup>195</sup> In addition to the above books, he is the author of *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions About the World's Fastest Growing Faith* (Encounter); *Onward Muslim Soldiers: How Jihad Still Threatens America and the West* (Regnery); *Religion of Peace? Why Christianity Is and Islam Isn't* (Regnery), a refutation of moral equivalence and call for all the beneficiaries and heirs of Judeo-Christian Western civilization, whatever their own religious or philosophical perspective may be, to defend it from the global jihad; *Stealth Jihad: How Radical Islam is Subverting America without Guns or Bombs* (Regnery), an expose of how jihadist groups are advancing their agenda in the U.S. today by means other than terrorist attacks; and *The Complete Infidel's Guide to the Koran* (Regnery). He is coauthor, with Daniel Ali, of *Inside Islam: A Guide for Catholics* (Ascension), and editor of the essay collection *The Myth of Islamic Tolerance: How Islamic Law Treats Non-Muslims* (Prometheus). His latest book is *Did Muhammad Exist? An Inquiry Into Islam's Obscure Origins* (ISI).

justify their contemporary political agendas with contrived historical “facts.” But fear not: Robert Spencer (author of the bestseller *Islam Unveiled*) refutes the popular myth....

By the ten year anniversary of 9/11, Spencer seemed to have written more and with more effect within the counternarrative on “Islam” than anyone else in the world. He had created 25,000 blog posts on the subject, with his often lengthy commentary. Far surpassing the websites of other popular threat writers, such as those of Daniel Pipes, Jihad Watch achieved the rank of 45<sup>th</sup> among *all* U.S. political blogs, receiving 33 million visits between May 2006 and May 2009, *before* the website became *more* popular in the “ground zero mosque” spectacle, as we will see. Jihad Watch’s site meter was 19.4 million on March 7, 2008, and was 26.9 million six months later on November 5<sup>th</sup>, or more than 1.2 million views per month.<sup>196</sup>

In the analysis that follows, we will empirically engage Mr. Spencer’s threat discourse to ascertain how it functioned within the realm of domestic cultural politics.

## 1. Manufacturing Jihad: Producing Threat Crises as Opportunity for Politics

Recall from the introduction how—about the mid-term elections in the Obama administration—there was a puzzling inward turn of U.S. conservative threat discourse—when the threat axis began to shift from the foreign threat of Islam to the wildly anti-rationalist domestic threat of Islamization. The political moment surrounding this first manufactured crisis of Islamization was the broader conservative crisis of 2009. The U.S. conservative subculture’s infatuation with Islam had largely been replaced by the “Great Recession” and the election of the nation’s first black and Democratic president—both events leading to the emergence of the U.S. Tea Party, as noted earlier. The threat of Islam (ization) was not mentioned anywhere on the TeaParty.org website, which lauded “true American Patriots from every race, religion, national origin, and walk of life sharing a common belief in the values which made and keep our beloved nation great,” and whose stated core beliefs do not express anything related to enemies foreign as a category.<sup>197</sup> Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair’s February 2009 testimony before

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<sup>196</sup> Based on the ‘site meter’, Jihad Watch experienced a readership of nearly 42,000 per day<sup>196</sup> and 34.5 million total in May 2009, sometime before the site meter was stopped. Just fifteen months later, on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010, Spencer in a Jihad Watch posting gave a verbal update on readership, stating that he thought July 2010 was ‘the biggest month ever for Jihad Watch, with 2,900,225 unique visitors: an average of 93,556 a day.’ Earlier, between September 18 and October 14, 2008, Spencer’s JihadWach counter increased from 25,105,817 to 26,216,284, or 1.2M views in 26 days, or 1.33M per month, equating to 16M per year.

<sup>197</sup> See <http://www.teaparty.org/about-us/>

Congress seemed to reflect the mood of the Tea Party and the nation broadly. In the speech that perhaps marked the end of the post-9/11 security era and the myopic infatuation with Islam, Blair made clear that the far-and-away greatest threat to the U.S. was economic in nature (*Washington Post*, February 13, 2009).

The geopolitical moment had thrown the subject position of mere jihad watchers like Spencer into crisis. It was as if the Jihad Watch function of merely *selecting* global “news” related somehow to jihad or Islam in a faraway land was no longer able to compete with the real threats within the homeland that were in no way related to Islam. It was in this context that the Horowitz and Spencer team seemed to have assessed that more drastic forms of threat politics were needed, and Spencer’s habitus visibly shifting from a simple watcher of jihad overseas to the seemingly incoherent role of manufacturing jihad at home—akin to the proverbial volunteer fireman by day and arson by night.<sup>198</sup>

But manufacturing a new Islam-related threat crisis in the milieu of a nation gripped by economic disaster could not be business-as-usual, everyday commentary from even a blog with such high viewership as Jihad Watch. It was perhaps for this reason that Spencer’s Jihad Watch posts began frequently mentioning Pamela Geller. A fiery New Yorker in her mid-fifties and of Jewish heritage, the aforementioned Geller—from our analysis of *Fox News Channel*—had been an associate publisher of the *New York Observer*, and was an intensely political blogger. Her blog *Atlas Shrugs*—an obvious take-off on Ayn Rand’s famous book—was launched in February 2005, and was at that juncture ranked 16<sup>th</sup> among conservative blogs, tied with Michelle Malkin’s (who, recall, was in favor of internment of Muslim-Americans, similar to that of the Japanese).

Geller was a master of grabbing attention, all the way down to her blog’s photos of herself in a bikini. But her sex appeal to older men was easily matched by her political appeal to some conservatives. On Christmas Eve, 2007, frolicking in a bikini on an Israeli beach and addressing her remarks to U.S. troops deployed, she said, “I am going to endorse any candidate who can beat the anti-Christ on the Democratic ticket”—referring to Barack Obama, whom she then called “a Muslim” (Geller 2007). It was these reliable and visceral shock statements that centered both Islam and the Left that gradually worked their designed magic—elating many conservatives, drawing criticism from progressives, and drawing the attention of the media and viewers, despite the economic crisis.

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<sup>198</sup> The practice of manufacturing events for political purposes is not new. Perhaps the most famous manufactured event over knowledge in Western history was Pope Urban’s (show) trial of Galileo in 1633.

Typifying this media response to Geller's more discursive form of terrorism was the October 8, 2010 *New York Times* article, "Outraged, and Outrageous", by Anne Barnard and Alan Feuer. It described Geller as waging "a form of holy war through Atlas Shrugs, a Web site that attacks Islam with rhetoric venomous enough that PayPal at one point branded it a hate site." The piece noted that Geller had "called for the removal of the Dome of the Rock from atop the Temple Mount in Jerusalem" and "suggested the State Department was run by 'Islamic supremacists'".

By the fall of 2009, Spencer and Geller had formed the *Freedom Defense Initiative* to provide some distance from Horowitz's Center and their blogs. Shortly thereafter, the new activist duo had seized the opportunity to form an American chapter of the "Stop the Islamisation of Europe" movement. Anders Gravers—the Danish leader of that movement—stated that the new Stop Islamization of America chapter "was meant to be a group that should take action, staging demonstrations, happenings and events against the Islamisation of the U.S." (Jihad Watch, 2 April 2010).

It did not matter that there was essentially no Islam in America, or that—unlike Europe's immigrants—America were largely highly traditionalist Catholic and Pentecostal Hispanics. For this bold new panic frame of the Islamization of America to advance, all that was needed was a symbol—a poster-child, so to speak. The raw material for the symbol's construction emerged the next month, on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010, when—following the New York City community board's unanimous vote to approve the project—Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post* carried the headline "Panel Approves 'WTC' Mosque" (Elliot 2010).

For Spencer and Geller, it was too good to be true. The heretofore little-known story went back to early 2009, when American-born, New York City imam, Feisal Abdul Rauf, along with a financier partner, proposed the Cordoba project—the renovation of 51 Park Place, an abandoned building in lower Manhattan, two blocks from the former World Trade Center, transforming it into a 13-story community center with an embedded mosque. News of the proposal broke on December 8, 2009, when the *New York Times* featured the Cordoba project on its front page. Favorable in tone, the piece cited the leading the imam's statement, "We want to push back against the extremists," and noted that the project had support among some Jewish leaders and city officials, as well as 9/11 survivors, and even vetted Rauf with a statement from an FBI spokesman regarding his cooperation with the authorities. Fox News had even taken an uncharacteristically conciliatory position on the multicultural project. On December 21, 2009, the guest-host of "The O'Reilly Factor" interviewed Imam Rauf's wife, Daisy, concluding the interview with, "I like what you're trying to do."



But, when the Post captured the story in a catchy headline “WTC Mosque,” the planned Islamization of America threat narrative had its symbol, and Spencer and Geller quickly transformed it into “the Islamic Supremacist Mega-Mosque at Ground Zero”—to use Geller’s words in a post on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010.<sup>199</sup> Geller had begun the project with a post in her *Atlas Shrugs*: “Monster Mosque Pushes Ahead in Shadow of World Trade Center Islamic Death and Destruction.”<sup>200</sup> “This is Islamic domination and expansionism,” she wrote in her characteristic bombastic style. She then framed the project as an Islamic “victory mosque.” “The location is no accident,” she said, “just as Al-Aqsa was built on top of the Temple in Jerusalem.” She was referring to Jerusalem’s Dome of the Rock mosque, built atop the Jewish Temple Mount, and describing the tendency of Muslim conquerors to Islamize synagogues and churches, similar to the way Constantinople’s Hagia Sophia was Islamized. Spencer over at Jihad Watch cross-posted or commented on everything Geller was writing.

And, on May 7, 2010, Stop the Islamization of America (SIOA) began its “Campaign Offensive: Stop the 911 Mosque!”, organizing a protest against the “911 monster mosque” on May 29<sup>th</sup>, symbolically commemorating May 29, 1453, when “the Ottoman forces led by the Sultan Mehmet II broke through the Byzantine defenses against the Muslim siege of Constantinople.” On May 13<sup>th</sup>, under frame and headline “Mosque Madness at Ground Zero,” Geller and Spencer’s negative portrayal of the project was predictably advanced by the *New York Post*.

The manufactured event was quickly turned into a vehicle for domestic politics, with culture warriors on both sides using it. Fox News Channel’s Sean Hannity featured Geller on his radio show, and rival MSNBC’s right-wing critic, Keith Olbermann gave a heartfelt monologue against SIOA’s politicization of the project. In similar vein, political elite, then already actively campaigning for President, began to brandish his national security credentials by using the site. On July 21, for example, Newt Gingrich linked enemies foreign and domestic, saying that “America is experiencing an Islamist cultural-political offensive designed to undermine and destroy our civilization,” and that “Sadly, too many of our elites are the willing apologists for those who would destroy them if they could.”

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<sup>199</sup> See <http://pamelageller.com/2010/06/video-highlights-from-the-protest-against-the-islamic-supremacist-mega-mosque-at-ground-zero.html/>

<sup>200</sup> See [http://atlasshrugs2000.typepad.com/atlas\\_shrugs/2010/05/monster-mosque-pushes-ahead-in-shadow-of-world-trade-center-islamic-death-and-destruction.html](http://atlasshrugs2000.typepad.com/atlas_shrugs/2010/05/monster-mosque-pushes-ahead-in-shadow-of-world-trade-center-islamic-death-and-destruction.html)

SIOA's June 6 and September 11 anti-mosque rallies in lower Manhattan afforded the platform for more political posturing. In addition to Dutch anti-immigration leader, Geert Wilders, the rallies featured conservative apparatchiks like John Bolton and Andrew Breitbart.

With the ground zero "mega-mosque" site now fully politicized and luring in broader discourse on the topic, opportunity for cultural politics emerged, typified by the August 24, 2010 *Jihad Watch* post that sarcastically denigrated progressive intellectuals: "Christopher Hitchens discovers that the Ground Zero mosque imam is not as moderate as he is cracked up to be."

And during this manufactured threat crisis, no opportunity was wasted to systematically delegitimize every part of the more progressive outside, typified by the September 27<sup>th</sup> post, "60 Minutes whitewashes Ground Zero mega-mosque leaders, smears Pamela Geller." Much of this delegitimizing took the form of linking Islam and the Left as dual threats to the homeland. And, most of it was done in more subtle, banal but relentlessly everyday fashion, typified by his September 8<sup>th</sup> post, "McCarthy: On the Ground Zero mosque, Americans are rejecting the opinion elites," which was—also in typical fashion—a rebroadcast of McCarthy's piece at *National Review*. The piece itself was the typical non-sequitur linking of Islam and the Left—the rise of sharia in the U.S. on the one hand and President's use of the term "our values" on the other.

Manufacturing the new jihad from within was producing its intended returns. Jihad Watch readership surged ahead of *Daily Kos* and *Hot Air*, increasing to 2.9 million unique visitors in July 2010 and to over three million in August. On the single day of July 19<sup>th</sup>, for example, Jihad Watch enjoyed over 163,433 unique visitors.<sup>201</sup> Even this rise in readership was opportunity for threat politics, linking enemies foreign and domestic. In a post on August 27, he wrote that "The rise in readership here at Jihad Watch indicates that there is growing dissatisfaction among the American people about the quality of reporting they're getting on jihad issues from mainstream media sources." And, when this manufactured threat crisis had run its course, with the Park 51 community center project continuing on as planned, Spencer (with Geller now a permanent fixture by his side) capitalized on the newfound fame and credentials, jointly publishing *The Post-American Presidency: The Obama Administration's War on America*—a book that had little to do with Islam (ization), but everything to do with their broader project's unstated aims.

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<sup>201</sup> According to *Compete.com's Site Analytics*; see <http://siteanalytics.compete.com/JihadWatch.org+hotair.com+dailykos.com/>

## 2. Counter-Jihad: Counter (hegemonic) Narrative

The more puritanical counterhegemonic strategy of pure negation emerges not merely in form or style, but also in content—in engaging the official and normative “Islam is peace” narrative not with a more realistic *corrective*, but with the entirely pessimistic and anti-rationalist counternarrative. Akin to the practice that Foucault (1977, 144) called “countermemory,” the practice of counternarrative is a form of power-knowledge; it is a discursive practice that opposes, challenges, undermines, and resists the dominant, normative memory, which itself effectively disqualifies, excludes, or silences alternative accounts of the world. It is a heretical discourse, and all such heresy is mobilized by actors who, as Castells’s (1997, 10) put it, are inscribed “in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination.”

From the conceptual framework, recall that counternarratives constitute what Bourdieu called rival “schemes of classification” (1991, 127-8), and are produced by marginalized or dominated producers who “have to resort to subversive strategies” (1986, 139). Bourdieu made frequent references to “the establishment” on the one hand, and to the challengers on the other. The challengers were positioned “outside the ‘establishment’, external to official culture” (1993, 2-3), who use as their weapons “subversion strategies” or “the strategies of heresy” (1993, 73). Whether it is the opposition between right and left, or orthodoxy and heterodoxy, he observed, the struggle is structurally identical, with unorthodox entrants able to challenge and even unseat the established order through cultural productions that are distinct, or distinctly unorthodox (1993, 135). In all such cultural struggle, “distinction strategies” are wielded to destroy the “ordinary order”, either by severing adherence to the legitimate knowledge, or subverting that system by challenging it with “the politically unthinkable” or “taboo” (1993, 51, 115). Again, the purpose of such “heretical discourse”, according to Bourdieu, is counterhegemonic, attempting to make dominant the marginalized ideology, to “produce” it as the “new common sense” (1991, 129).

In Spencer’s case, especially when battling the charge of “Islamophobia,” he described his efforts not as counternarrative but “counter-jihad.”<sup>202</sup> It was nonetheless a strategy of subversion characterized less as countering the global Islamic jihad than countering the local progressive one. Its function notwithstanding, its practice was marked by political framing—in systematic,

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<sup>202</sup> See, for example, Dave Swindle. 2013. Robert Spencer’s vital role in creating conservatism 3.0. *PJ Media*, October 8

ideologically-aligned moves of selection and exclusion that served the interests of the conservative movement (Entman 1993).

### ***Ideological Moves of Selection: Transgressing the Tabooed***

Like Pipes, Spencer's threat writing was marked by subversion of the broader, more progressive societal norms regarding speech on Islam or other minority institutions. The notion that societal regulations place sanctions on certain objects, narratives, and perspectives, thereby relegating them to the realm of taboo, was at the root of Foucault's cynicism regarding knowledge; it was what he referred to as their "general politics of truth", which functions as a kind of discursive police (Foucault 1972, 224; 1980, 131, 194).<sup>203</sup> In his book *Stealth Jihad* (2008), Spencer described this as "stifling conformism" and blamed it on "the Left" which "has been blazing an anti-American course in academic since the 1960s...", and especially after Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) (2008, 238).

The first move within Spencer's counterhegemonic counterframing strategy was that of selection—selection that deliberately transgressed societal norms or regulations. In the practice of counternarrative, objects that were regulated out of visibility by dominant norms ensconced in society's legitimizing institutions were deliberately and defiantly centered, and often constituted the entire realm of visibility.

As with any (counter)cultural and niche market producer, Spencer's selection of illegitimate objects of visibility, and his selection of illegitimate perspectives or narratives on those objects which are normally visible constitutes a site not merely of counternarrative, but counter-identity. Even the phrase "politically incorrect" is subcultural code among U.S. conservatives for their discourse. It is so central to conservative identity that the staunchly conservative Regnery Publishing's developed the trademarked "Politically-Incorrect Guides" series, which includes Spencer's (2005) *New York Times* bestseller, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*. Understanding its market, Regnery can tout that its position is "central to the conservative movement" because it publishes books that "challenge the status quo".<sup>204</sup> In one of the recommendations for Spencer's (and Regnery's) book, *Eurabia's* author Bat Ye'or, noted that it "Assails, with much erudition, the taboos imposed by the Politically Correct League."

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<sup>203</sup> In this, the conservative movement's politically incorrect discourse on Islam is a form of what Foucault called "popular justice", or a "people's court" (Foucault 1980, 1, 6).

<sup>204</sup> See <http://www.regnery.com/about/>

Spencer's counternarrative enacts such a strategy. At the height of the aforementioned "ground zero mosque" strategy, Spencer welcomed the explosion of new readers that the website was experiencing with this statement about its main form of distinction: "Jihad Watch is a news and commentary site that brings you information about the global jihad effort that the mainstream media largely misreports or ignores altogether."

In his strategy to subvert the establishment with what in Bourdieuan terms was the politically unthinkable or taboo, Spencer selected for his entire view the very realm of objects and perspectives that the dominant "Islam is peace" storyline and its supporting discursive formation excluded from view. In other words, this first move of selection within the counternarrative was to center the narratives and objects of visibility that these popular Muslim and progressive thought leaders decentered, and vice versa. This was especially the case with the Quran and Muhammad.

In his *New York Times* bestseller *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam* (2005) and his *The Complete Infidel's Guide to the Koran* (2009), for example, Spencer radically centered *all* that is tabooed or negative regarding the Quran and other sacred texts and decentered or excluded everything that has been brought under the analytical lens by institutionalized scholars. And, in his 2006 bestseller, *The Truth About Muhammad: Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion*, Spencer radically centered all that European Muslim leader Tariq Ramadan excluded in his *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*, and all that the more leftist ex-Catholic Karen Armstrong (1991, 2001, 2007) excluded in her biography of Islam's founder, *Muhammad*.

Spencer openly boasted of this strategy of subversive knowledge selection. Obviously written by him or another more Rightist polemicist, the National Review Book Service (NRBS) advertised his *Guide to Islam*, saying, "Robert Spencer reveals all the disturbing facts about Islam and its murderous hostility to the West that other books ignore, soft-pedal – or simply lie about."

The politically subversive moves of selection characteristic of Spencer's books carried over into his more banal, everyday cultural productions, especially the dozen or so daily Jihad Watch posts. For example, on January 14, 2009, one of the posts by (and typical of) the one of Spencer's trusted Jihad Watch partner bloggers, Raymond Ibrahim, was "Father Zakaria Botros on 'The perverse sexual habits of the Prophet,' Part II". The post entered the subversive realm of the unsayable or taboo by stating that "No less than 20 Islamic sources—such as the hadiths of Ahmad bin Hanbal—relay that Muhammad used to suck on the tongues of boys and girls."

In another typical example from his website's home page, explaining "Why Jihad Watch?," Spencer transgressed the taboo and selected for heretical commentary Islam's most famous historian

and scholar, Ibn Khaldun, whom the aforementioned Akbar Ahmed's chair at American University is named after. Spencer entered the realm of taboo by raising for visibility Khaldun's statements, such as the one in his *Muqaddimah* that "in the Muslim community, the holy war is a religious duty, because the universalism of the Muslim mission and (the obligation to) convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force."

This everyday counterhegemonic move of selection involved using specific statements of authoritative Muslim scholars—statements typically excluded by more progressive threat writers. When the news headline on December 19, 2009 was "Turkish PM: 'Islamophobia' is a crime against humanity," Spencer in a Jihad Watch post rhetorically asked: "does Islam include a political manifestation that teaches world domination?" and then posts examples from purportedly authoritative Islamic texts that support the counternarrative, as this excerpt reveals (Figure 9-1):

Figure 9-1 Jihad Watch post excerpt, 19 December 2009

Don't take my word for it. Let's go to Majid Khadduri, an Iraqi scholar of Islamic law of international renown. In his book *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, which was published in 1955 and remains one of the most lucid and illuminating works on the subject, Khadduri says this about jihad:

The state which is regarded as the instrument for universalizing a certain religion must perforce be an ever expanding state. The Islamic state, whose principal function was to put God's law into practice, sought to establish Islam as the dominant reigning ideology over the entire world....**The jihad was therefore employed as an instrument for both the universalization of religion and the establishment of an imperial world state.** (P. 51)

Don't believe Khadduri? Very well. How about Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee,

He continued by centering several statements from authoritative Muslim leaders that were obviously meant to delegitimize both the "religion of peace" and "Islamophobia" frames, and the broader more progressive societal politics of truth.

Spencer's posts at the beginning of the Arab Spring similarly achieved the desired countercultural distinction by selecting for his entire realm of visibility all the more pessimistic "news" that was not reported in the more idealistic, normatively-constrained reporting at the time. His February 15, 2011 Jihad Watch, for example, contained the title: "Tunisia: Muslims demonstrate in front of synagogue, chanting Islamic battle cry invoking Muhammad's massacre of Jews." In this YouTube video, Spencer brought into visibility the region's masses of undifferentiated "Muslims" who wanted to massacre Jews, evident from their shouting "Khaybar, Khaybar, O Jews, the army of

Muhammad will return,” in reference to Muhammad’s raid on the Jewish Khaybar oasis. The piece centered this kind of information that professional and other normative discourse on Islam would deem gratuitous in terms of denigrating Muslims and their faith, and only part of the larger context and reasons for the demonstration—all of which Spencer reliably excluded.

### ***Ideological Moves of Exclusion***

The second ideological move within the counterframe on Islam is the second move within framing broadly; that of exclusion. And, conservative threat writing during the post-9/11 decade was marked by the systematic exclusion of texts and contexts that were common to professional or official security writing and academic security studies. Such ideological moves of exclusion are common to discourse; it is a feature that Foucault (1981, 52) described as “procedures of exclusion.”

In this more puritanical counterhegemonic strategy, Spencer—in the production of the counternarrative on the threat of Islam broadly—systematically excluded the very crucial context that any normative security assessment would have been constrained to include. It excluded the entire and entirely relevant realms of local, pre-Islamic culture, historical and political grievances, post-colonial social structure, six decades of Western hegemonic practice and the propping up of corrupt, inept regimes, Western-led invasions and coupes, identity insecurity, structural violence, relative and absolute deprivation, youth bulges, brain drain, human displacements or refugee migrations, regional politics, contingent events, and the strategies of self-interested elite and external actors—to name a few. As we’ve already seen in several examples that showcased other features, all that was typically left in Spencer’s assessment or estimates of threat of Islam was the Quran and other canonical texts, the example of the faith’s prophet, Muhammad, and a highly selective reading of history.

Politicization was evident in the way his counternarrative systematically excluded from view the more anthropological Islam of the literature. In the literature, much of what many newly awakened Western observers viewed as “Islam” was a much more complex set of dispositions, master narratives, discourses, and practices animated by the relatively deprived conditions or contexts in which Muslims found themselves. Anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism existed (Pew Research Center 2011) among many Muslims toward the end of the post-9/11 decade, but it paled in comparison to their resentment over the growing inequalities (or their becoming aware of them) in the neo-liberal and globalizing world order (Ahmed 2008). And, Muslim resentment of the inequalities that globalization was bringing and revealing similarly paled in comparison to resentment

of local governance, which was inept in meeting the economic, political and social aspirations of its rapidly growing, urbanizing, increasingly educated and youthful demographic. And, more than any of this, the source of the most misunderstood security and political discourse in almost entirely conservative and fundamentalist Muslim-majority societies was *fear*—a profound identity insecurity emerging from the challenge that economic neo-liberalism, pluralism, secularism and globalization broadly presented to local Islamic identity or traditional patterns of life (Susser 2010; Lapidus 2002; Crooke 2009). In spite of Muslim discourse aimed at the perceived sources of these grievances and insecurities—together captured in the pervasive “war on Islam” narrative—the professional consensus did not support a more pessimistic identity of “Islam”. But, in Spencer’s (and also in Pipes’s and Gabriel’s) threat assessments and commentaries, no attempt was made to incorporate these elements of an interpretive, broader context-based analysis; all of it was systematically excluded.

As mentioned, in another move of pure negation, Spencer’s threat assessments never cited texts and authors housed within the more progressive and dominant knowledge society of educational institutions, government bureaucracies, and the mainstream media. Instead, the entire realm of visibility of other threat analyses—his entire realm of favorable (non-critical) intertextuality—were those produced “inside the wire” of the conservative enclave.

Of course, Spencer’s threat productions were marked by both framing moves—selection and exclusion. Typical was his August 13, 2011 post, “Pakistan: ‘800 women were victims of ‘honor killings’ – and 2,900 women reported raped – almost eight a day.’” Spencer—a Catholic deacon—systematically excluded or rendered invisible a plethora of easily accessible data—data that demonstrate that femicide among Muslims is not a crisis, is less than that across America, and much less than femicide in predominantly Catholic Mexico and Latin America.<sup>205</sup> The most obvious question excluded from consideration is how such a statistic in a country of 179 million compares to a country like the US, with a population of 313 million. A simple Google search of “rape statistics” quickly yields a US Department of Justice report that lists the 2010 rapes of women in the U.S. at over 233,000, equating to *638 per day*—again, compared to only 8 per day in Pakistan. Were the

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<sup>205</sup> The United Nations Population Fund estimate of 5,000 murders (UNPF 2000) involving honor annually is only 1 percent of the half million annual homicides, and is negligible in a population of 1.5 billion Muslims. Even if we reasoned that only a third of these honor murders are reported, then they would still comprise only 3 percent of homicides, and that percent needs to be reduced by the 10 percent of these honor killings that don’t involve Muslims. Writing in the Spring 2010 edition of Pipes’s Middle East Quarterly, Phyllis Chesler notes that “there were 100 victims murdered for honor in the West, including 33 in North America and 67 in Europe.” Yet, the Quarterly reliably excluded the fact that non-Islam-related homicides of women in the US are the highest in the world, at some 4000 annually, according the Harvard School of Public Health (see <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/2002/04.18/08-homicide.html>).



nature of Spencer's threat assessments not counterhegemonic, then he would not continually select for visibility the tabooed object of "Islamic honor killing," while systematically excluding the context from government reports that suggests that rape in the US is *46 times greater* than rape among the thoroughly Islamized Pakistanis.

### **3. Blogging Jihad: Cultural Politics via Popular Style and Mode of Production**

A clear signal that a discourse has become more political than informational is when it has broken with professional convention; it is when it has become what Bourdieu (1991, 185, 188-190) described as "popular," or recognized "outside the circle of professionals."<sup>206</sup> Given the distinctly and explicitly political features of Spencer's threat writing examined thus far, we should not be surprised to learn that they are joined by such a distinctive popular and even dissident rhetorical style and mode of production. Dissidence in both style and mode of publishing were at the heart of Spencer's leitmotiv of subversive resistance to the dominant, more progressive knowledge society housed in the government, academia, and what he perceived as the "mainstream" media, and the more progressive societal regime of truth that they constituted, and which itself was part of the "enemies domestic" threat category to a significant segment of social conservatives.

#### ***Popular Style***

In all countercultural production, distinction is the goal; it is central to the economy of production (Bourdieu 1984). Dissidence in style is common in this regard, occurring across all arenas of production, and functioning universally as an oblique challenge to the dominant culture or field (Hebdige 1979, 16). And, the first thing we note in Spencer's threat writing is that it is distinctive, breaking markedly from the style of professional, apolitical security writing. This can be seen in the reviews of his books on Amazon.com, for example. These reviews are quite distinct from the reviews of orthodox, apolitical works related to Islam broadly by other renowned experts on the topic. Take, for example, *Global Political Islam* (2007), by George Mason University's Islamism expert, Peter Mandaville. By the end of 2012, Mandaville's superb book had received only one review on Amazon.com—a 5-star review, which made the explicit point that the book was not a polemic. Spencer's bestselling *Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam* (2005), on the other hand, had at that

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<sup>206</sup> Or, as Bourdieu put it in different terms, discourse that is "excluded from the dictionaries of the legitimate language" (Bourdieu 1991, 91).

point received 523 reviews, with 314 of them giving the book a 5-star rating. The political nature of Spencer's book was evident in the fact that most of the remaining reviews were 1-star ratings, complaining that the book *was* a polemic.

But upon examination, Spencer's threat writing was far more than a mere polemic; it was performative in the role of cultural politics, functioning as an identifying code for the conservative market that identifies with it in their daily digestion of Jihad Watch. His and Horowitz's trademarked catch-phrases like "stealth jihad" and the "unholy alliance" of the Left and Islam—functioned like memes—a combination of distinctive subcultural style, ideology, and code that function within the broader U.S. conservative project of identity politics as a distinctive language, or recognizable set of signifiers, politically re-inscribing and legitimizing that sub-society in juxtaposition to and competition with its political outside (Bourdieu 1991, 167).<sup>207</sup> This style and lexicon reproduce a more politically dissident conservative subject position in a process akin to that which Althusser (1971) called interpellation.<sup>208</sup>

All of Spencer's threat writing examined thus far is obviously marked by such a distinctive counterhegemonic style, so we need only to examine one here that typifies how Spencer's threat writing involved rhetorical techniques that purposively subvert the norms or regulatory structure of orthodox, legitimate, professional security writing. This could be seen in the September 24, 2010 post, under the title "Video surfaces of Taliban stoning woman in northwest Pakistan", where Spencer frames the harsh Pashtun sub-culture as "Islam" and "Islam's 'justice'" writ large, and frames the more progressive domestic political rivals, especially in academia, as "apologists," who are effectively aiding and abetting them. The features of popular style in this piece recur through Spencer's threat writing: "It must be exposed"; it is written in the condescending tone of adult supervision, speaking truth to illegitimate display of power. It "is graphic, and beyond disturbing"; it is intended less to communicate content for policymakers and strategists than to inflame and mobilize the masses. It always centers instances of "Sharia" or "[acts that] Muhammad approved of and participated in, according to canonical Islamic sources", which are decentered as unimportant or immaterial in professional security assessments and estimates, and broadly taboo in other writing in

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<sup>207</sup> This process of self-identification is similar to the goal of cultural production in creating a "brand community," which is structurally related in identity by their attachment or admiration of a particular brand (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). Think of brain surgeons and other elite professionals with tattoos sported by black leather sleeveless vests, riding *only* Harley Davidsons on the weekends.

<sup>208</sup> Sharp (1996) had observed these self-identifying rhetorical strategies or techniques in the *The Reader's Digest* during the Cold War.

a multicultural society. This piece typifies three more subversive features present in much of Spencer's threat writing.

### *Political Sarcasm*

First, there is the copious use of sarcasm. The political sarcasm that permeates Spencer's style of threat writing is profoundly counterhegemonic; it is a sarcasm directed at (denigrating) legitimate, professional security writing. Spencer's productions are not unique in this regard; all subversive production—as Bourdieu (1986, 147) observed—make use of sarcasm, which “establishes with its audience the immediate complicity of laughter only because it has persuaded them to reject the presuppositions of the parodied discourse....” Professional security writing and academic security studies—legitimate, normative forms of threat assessment—expressly exclude sarcasm as a rhetorical device for the express reason that it *is* politically subversive. Typifying this style was his December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009 Jihad Watch post, “Houston: Rocket launcher, jihadist writings found in apartment – no charges filed.” Here, Spencer deployed the “Keystone Kops” caricature to delegitimize “the Feds,” who reliably “found no ties to terrorism.”

In all counterhegemonic production, words become infused with different meaning. Typical of other counterhegemonic projects, Spencer's sarcasm proceeded by taking legitimate words and phrases such as jihad and placing them in quotations, or “jihad,” thereby infusing them with oppositional meaning, or transforming them into polysemes that both functioned as code within the subculture and performatively delegitimized the broader, dominant culture. In the piece above, sarcasm was deployed with the quotation marks around the word “justice” (i.e. this is Islam's ‘justice’), to denote a meaning that his subcultural market will instantly recognize as opposite from that of normative discourse, or as a denigration or delegitimizing of that discourse. Spencer's sarcastic lexicon was replete with phrases like “religion of peace,” and “tiny minority of extremists” that denote the opposite meaning, and that his market recognizes and appreciates as mocking the more progressive social order's institutions.<sup>209</sup>

In Spencer's and other U.S. conservative discourse on Islam later in the post-9/11 decade, the term “jihad” in quotations functioned as such an empty shell; it functioned symbolically as a self-identifying boundary and subversive, “politically-incorrect” stance of oppositional, counterhegemonic resistance against the legitimate frame of signifier housed in the more progressive

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<sup>209</sup> These signifying practices, which purposively construct embattled terms to function in the broader practice of semiosis, or the performance and struggle involving signs, in order to elicit a response or achieve a goal.

institutions. In this sense, this signifier itself—through positioning its meaning within the cultural taboo—became a *micro-field* of struggle. From Bourdieu’s (1993, 2) perspective, the massive amount of investment in such a politically-incorrect signifier could be classified within the strategy of “counterculture”, or “everything that is marginal, outside the ‘establishment’, external to official culture,” and “defined negatively by what it defines itself against.”

### *Political Antagonism*

Second, Spencer’s threat writing was marked by constant political antagonism, seen in the above post’s phrase “which apologists will not repudiate.” The more obvious part of style that distinguishes professional and political discourse is the presence of antagonism (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, 114). Here it is useful to distinguish between political antagonism and adversarialism. As part of the broader Horowitz advocacy for conservative causes, Spencer’s threat writing about Islam (ization) was also *adversarial* in that it is typically reflective of America’s pervasive adversary system of adjudication, listing evidence on one side of a narrowly conceived case, for or against something (Marcovits 2010).<sup>210</sup> But, it is also politically antagonistic in that it entails the constant *act of the political* in the Schmittian sense; that is, the demarcation of friends and enemies. In popular threat writing among U.S. conservatives in the decade after 9/11, enemies foreign and domestic—Islam and the Left—were constantly and antagonistically objectified, as seen in the post about the “fifth column” of “dhimmi academics and dhimmi journalists” under the heading of “Why Jihad Watch” on the website’s home page.

This feature of popular style was not limited to blogging; it permeated all popular, countercultural production, typified in Spencer’s November 8, 2011 article, “Is Multiculturalism Evil?,” in the counterhegemonic Catholic *Crisis Magazine*. The article functioned partly as a narration of self, re-inscribing the in-group identity by raising for visibility the superior accomplishments of Western culture and the Catholic Church. But then Spencer’s act of the political abruptly moved from identifying the friend or self-identity politics to enemy or other identity politics. Bridging the “enemies foreign and domestic” frames, he said that “Islamic supremacists” and progressives are colluding to destroy the West through the “cult of Multiculturalism.”

Given his employment as a foot soldier in within Horowitz’s anti-Left apparatus that includes Jamie Glazov, author of *United in Hate: The Left’s Romance with Tyranny and Terror*, it is not surprising

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<sup>210</sup> As with any form of advocacy, the intellectuals of the religious Right “are charged loyally to represent particular clients, whose interests and aims may diverge from what justice requires” (Marcovits 2010, 1).

that Spencer's political antagonism shaded towards the extreme.<sup>211</sup> After it was learned that he was the main inspiration for the aforementioned Norway right-wing extremist's massacre, Spencer on August 4, 2011 posted "Spencer on the Left and Islam, the Norway blame game, and more." The article discussed his interview the day before with Pat Robertson on Christian Broadcasting Network's *700 Club*. In that same August 3<sup>rd</sup> interview, Robertson asked Spencer, "Tell me what it is about the media today that is so in favor of radical Islam; why do they want to put down anyone who tells the truth about this cult?" "Well, I tell you," Spencer replied, "I think the unpleasant truth about it is that the media being essentially hard Left is essentially anti-American, and so anything that is American, that's Western, that's Christian, that's Judeo-Christian, they hate, and so they see Islam and its non-Western and non-Christian and they love it."

From such style we can gather that Spencer's strategy was not one of mere political antagonism, but—like his partner Geller—that of *agent provocateur*. It was intended not merely to inflame (rather than inform), but to create within its own very radically-antagonistic style the opportunity for more and more effective threat politics. This is evidenced in the way Spencer's productions are used by other conservative intellectuals as the raw material for their political antagonism. In the book recommendation for Spencer's counterhegemonic, *Religion of Peace? Why Christianity Is and Islam Isn't*, conservative culture warrior Ann Coulter writes: "*Religion of Peace?* Is the perfect book to give liberals who fervently believe that Christianity is as dangerous – if not more dangerous – than Islam. Robert Spencer skewers the liberals' paranoid and suicidal hatred of Christianity while reminding us how they ignore the real threat: Islamic jihadists with bombs."<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Horowitz is known for his radical political antagonism. In a March 24, 2005 *Washington Times* interview about his website DiscoverTheNetworks, Horowitz said that there "are only a couple of degrees of separation between anybody on the left and the terrorists - and that includes people in the Democratic Party." On Fox News's Glenn Beck show on September 16, 2009, he claimed that "blacks are the human shields of the Democratic Party" and on Hannity a year later on September 3, 2010, claimed that university professors are "recruiting for radical parties, terrorist supporting parties." In his book *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the Radical Left*, Horowitz said that both Muslims and progressives abhor America and American values (Theel 2011).

<sup>212</sup> Similarly, the book recommendation for *Onward Christian Soldiers* is set within this context of cultural politics: "*Onward Muslim Soldiers* gives us a realistic and therefore disturbing assessment of the greatest threat to civilized life in the coming century. There will be many Westerners who will reject the author's diagnosis of the jihadist malaise and his proposed therapy, in the name of 'tolerance,' 'diversity,' and 'inclusiveness.' They are like the Bourbons of old, learning nothing and forgetting everything. It is to be hoped that there will be many others who will heed Spencer's wake-up call and respond by exerting pressure on their political leaders to act now, lest the remnant of the West is reduced to a reeking Camp of Saints." -- Serge Trifkovic, author, *Sword of the Prophet*

### *Political Propaganda*

Third, Spencer's threat writing typically proceeded in the short, parsimonious and complexity-reducing style of propaganda, which is Jihad Watch's signature feature. The central value in a counter-cultural production is in its form, and not its content; in its style, not substance. As master propagandists and political apparatchiks, Spencer and his boss clearly understand this. They also understand that the constitution of political identity—whether friends or enemies—occurs not through any single founding ceremony, but rather through banal, everyday ritual (Butler 1990, 1451).<sup>213</sup> Putting one's self on the Jihad Watch subscription list and reading the everyday dozen sarcastic, politically antagonistic, and ultimately subversive posts for any length of time reveals how Spencer and Horowitz have mastered the art of counterhegemonic propaganda. Jihad Watch's dozen or so everyday postings of short news articles strung together with Spencer's creative subversive and politically antagonistic titles, followed by an almost storyline snippet of related sarcastic, antagonistic, and otherwise politically-performative commentary, function like propaganda and imagery; it appeals less to the rational intellect than to the sub-rational, emotional and identity element of human experience. In this mode, Jihad Watch is an assembly-line of everyday, cheap mass-produced caricatures of self and other, friend and enemy, that subtly and imperceptibly reproduce the conservative patriot in stark juxtaposition to his or her imagined opposites—enemies, foreign and domestic, religious and political.<sup>214</sup>

This propaganda-like style of threat writing is a form of identity politics, and one that Spencer and Horowitz understand has special appeal, especially to social and paleoconservatives, many of whom—as previously discussed—tend to be animated by the crisis of accelerating identity pluralism and uncertainty of late-modern life. In Spencer's propaganda-like threat writing, all such uncertainty surrounding the daily global happenings around which its commentary is advanced is erased and replaced with cocksure certainty, in the absence of any curiosity. As in all propaganda, the author is positioned as the prophet—the incurious knower, but never the knowledge seeker—never treading cautiously in the presence of hybridity, but reliably reducing it, then externalizing it, then securitizing it. In this propaganda style, Spencer could never allude to even the possibility of a loyal and patriotic *pious* Muslim American, or a loyal and patriotic Christian or Jewish conservative

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<sup>213</sup> Studies of propaganda routinely find that repetition is the single most effective technique of persuasion. It does not matter how big the lie is, so long as it keeps being repeated (Oberschall 2000, 993).

<sup>214</sup> *Jihad Watch* churns out a dozen such products a day on an assembly-line like planned method—akin to the “cheap biographies” that Adorno and Horkheimer (1972, 163) had termed the “culture industry.”

who is critical of Israel's expanding occupation and control of Palestinian territory. Instead, the daily reader of Jihad Watch's short, almost image-like snippets of popular style commentary can relax at the level of their pre-cognitive predispositions, all the while nature's inherent continuum of complex identity is reduced into the parsimonious, political caricatures and political binary of the pure in-group and the defiled out-group.

### ***Counterhegemonic Mode of Production and Authority-Building***

McLuhan's (2005)[1967] axiom, "the medium is the message," also finds empirical support in Spencer's main production mode of Jihad Watch, within the alternative media. Even the mode in which Spencer produced his threat assessments and accrued the status of the leading conservative expert on Islam during the post-9/11 decade was counterhegemonic, or politically subversive. In legitimate security writing, an institutionalized expert on the topic of Islam as it relates to security could be considered established in the field with five to twenty articles over a decade. But Spencer boasted a publishing record an order of magnitude above that. On the home page of Jihad Watch toward the end of the post-9/11 decade, he boasted that he had authored nearly 400 articles about jihad and Islamic terrorism.

But, all were produced in an unorthodox, counterhegemonic fashion. All four hundred threat assessments on Islam (ization) were "popular" in the Bourdieuan sense—produced outside the circle of professionals, and outside the legitimate knowledge society and its regulatory framework that other recognized experts on political Islam publish within. They appeared in the *New York Post* and the *Washington Times*, but not the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Or they appeared in Pipes's *Middle East Quarterly*, Horowitz's *FrontPage Magazine*, Farah's *WorldNet Daily*, *National Review Online*, *Human Events*, *PJ (formerly Pajamas) Media*, the *American Thinker*, and Catholicism's *Crisis Magazine*—all e-magazines within the alternative media, and within the aforementioned conservative knowledge society or regime of truth. But, his articles on Islam(ization) never appeared in any journal considered by security or intelligence professionals to be authoritative and apolitical.<sup>215</sup>

This alternative medium of production was not as much imposed upon Spencer and Horowitz as it was chosen by them. In this, their strategy was identical to that of Daniel Pipes, as we will see; it was a strategy of pure resistance that necessarily had to bypass all elements of "the establishment"

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<sup>215</sup> The same pattern existed in television interviews in the latter part of the post-9/11 decade, where he was invited exclusively to the enclave's evangelical *700 Club* or Fox News Channel, guest of Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck, and other conservative culture warriors.

in order to delegitimize them. Because Spencer designs his productions on Islam to be heretical and not submit to the regulations for authoritative production normal to society's main knowledge institutions in academia, government, and security-focused think tanks, the only place of publication remaining is the conservative institutions designed expressly for counterhegemonic struggle.<sup>216</sup> Typifying this strategy was Spencer's aforementioned statement that, "we have the truth on our side...we have the alternate media—which is still very small compared to the mainstream media, but it is growing apace as the frustration of people who realize they're being lied to increases" (Jihad Watch, 9 July 2010).

This counterhegemonic feature of Spencer's mode of production was one that Bourdieu called "a movement of pure negation" (Garnham and Williams 1986, 126). And, it precluded the use of knowledge of threats obtained outside of the conservative enclave. In other words, it *never* acknowledged knowledge housed within or considered legitimate within the more normative, progressive, and authoritative societal institutions.<sup>217</sup> For example, in his sarcastically-titled book, *The Complete Infidel's Guide to the Koran* (2009), Spencer was at liberty to cite for authority only fellow conservative political dissidents, such as "Islamic scholar Daniel Pipes."<sup>218</sup>

Again, in all countercultural production, form trumps content. For this reason, Spencer's more puritanical strategy negating the more progressive outside is adhered to even when minor intertextuality could help him craft a more rigorous counternarrative. For example, in another move to deflect criticism in July 2011 when it was learned that he was perhaps the single greatest inspiration for Breivik's shooting spree in Norway, Spencer countered that Muslim terrorist attacks had since 9/11 killed 17,000—a figure produced not by any official, legitimate institution, but by the counterhegemonic *TheReligionOfPeace.com*. In his move of pure negation, Spencer did not even acknowledge the existence of the U.S. State Department's *Country Reports on Terrorism*, which would have rendered the 17,000 figure much too *low*. The report's annex produced by the National

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<sup>216</sup> These distinct sites of cultural production within a hierarchically structured social space function to designate the audience. For example, Bourdieu cites Jean-Jacques Gautier's description of the elective affinity "between the journalist, his paper, and his readers," noting that, "a good *Figaro* editor... "naturally speaks the language of *Le Figaro*" and is the paper's 'ideal reader'" (1986:149).

<sup>217</sup> The obvious exception is intertextuality in an adversarial sense, critically using selected statements from these institutions to delegitimize them.

<sup>218</sup> This strategy of copiously citing each other to mutually build one another's authority or credibility is pervasive among conservative security experts. In his "The truth is spreading" post to Jihad Watch on December 17, 2011, Spencer proudly trumpeted that "some ideas that began with me or here at Jihad Watch gaining wider currency", noting that "Recently Frank Gaffney of the Center for Security Policy wrote [a piece for the Washington Times](#) that used the phrase "stealth jihad" in the title", and that "Pamela Geller also makes reference to "Islamic supremacism" and other terms I've originated".



Counterterrorism Center put deadly attacks at over 26,000—and not since 9/11, but since 2007, with 75 percent of these deadly attacks taking place in Muslim majority South and Near East Asia (Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism 2011).<sup>219</sup> But, as with any counterhegemonic practice—again, with form trumping content—it was more important for Spencer to delegitimize the establishment by excluding it from view, even at the expense of his argument.<sup>220</sup>

#### 4. Watching Jihad: Banal, Everyday Counterhegemonic Struggle

Jihad Watch’s mission—according to Horowitz’s website—is to “track the attempts of radical Islam to subvert Western culture.” But, like Pipes’s Islamist Watch and Campus Watch, Spencer’s Jihad Watch is not merely a surveillance apparatus; it is a technology of power that—being discursive in nature—produced the very objects it watched for, much of which had little to do with radical Islam.<sup>221</sup> This is not surprising, given its place in the broader Horowitz apparatus. While Jihad Watch’s daily commentary produced a dozen or so instances “jihad” to counter and thereby delegitimize the more progressive “Islam is peace” or “religion of peace” storyline, the puzzling, non-sequitur mass at the core of many of these much of this security writing had little to do with Islam—the conservative movement’s newest foreign enemy born on 9/11— and much to do with the Left—its traditional domestic enemy. In other words, when you crunched through the shallow outer shell of “jihad” in many of Spencer’s productions, there was this incoherent mass related to the more progressive “establishment” on the one hand—euphemized variously as the “elites,” academia, government, “mainstream” media—and the Democratic party and the Obama

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<sup>219</sup> See <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/195555.htm>

<sup>220</sup> Spencer obviously could not have included in his analysis what Harvard’s Stephen Walt highlighted on the page of *Foreign Policy* only five months earlier. Walt had cited the *EU’s 2010 Terrorism Situation and Trend Report*, noting that the overwhelming majority of terrorist incidents in Europe in 2009 were not Islamic in nature, and adding that “the vast majority of these incidents (237 out of 294) were conducted by indigenous European separatist groups, with another forty or so attributed to leftists and/or anarchists. According to the report, a grand total of one (1) attack was conducted by Islamists.” He further noted from the report that “the number of arrests relating to Islamist terrorism (110) decreased by 41 percent compared to 2008, which continues the trend of a steady decrease since 2006” (Walt, 2011; see <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/02/09>).

<sup>221</sup> The notion that discourse produced its objects was Foucault’s (1981, 57). Demonstrating his constructivist commitments, Bourdieu views discourse as performative, in that “it contributes practically to the reality of what it announces by the fact of uttering it, or predicting it and making it pre-dicted, of making it conceivable and above all credible and thus creating the collective representation and will which contribute to its production” (Bourdieu 1991, 128). All such daily labor of representation functions as a “rite”, or a performative practice that strives to bring about its purported object (Bourdieu 1990, 92); its “ritual” or “ceremonial” dimension is thus the *material* part of the discourse (Althusser 1971, 168).

administration more specifically on the other—topics that were politically-useful in the domestic culture war.

This feature in Spencer’s technology of Jihad Watch of more banal, everyday counterhegemonic struggle under the guise of security assessments was typified in the following several blog posts between President Obama’s first foreign policy thrusts in the spring of 2009 and his reelection in the fall of 2012.

The first of President Obama’s speeches to Muslim communities worldwide from Turkey was in early April. Just as this seismic event had prompted the earlier featured counterhegemonic piece by Gaffney in the *Washington Times*, it prompted dozens of follow-on posts in Jihad Watch that month wherein the perceived steps of the new president and his administration were much more central than Islam. The April 13<sup>th</sup> Jihad Watch post, for example, reliably advanced the Islam(ization) threat counternarrative, but also antagonistically mocked the progressive establishment’s “elites” and the President’s efforts to demobilize the damaging “war on Islam” master narrative, noting that “the peoples of the West, and the rest of the Infidel world, continue to not be informed by the members of their political and media elites.”

From that point on, Jihad Watch threat commentary gravitated toward highly selective “news” that was only remotely related to watching “jihad” broadly, but that had political value in terms of domestic cultural struggle. Typical of this banal, everyday counterhegemonic struggle over the next four years of President Obama’s first term was the post that same week, on April 19<sup>th</sup>, “Obama refuses to meet with Netanyahu,” which noted that he had called the key Leftist figure Hugo Chavez “my friend” and that he wanted to meet with Iran’s “Thug-In-Chief” and “bowed to the Saudi King.”

The next week, the April 27<sup>th</sup> post “Obama wants to aid the Palestinians even with Hamas in power,” typified the way in which the jihad watch technology was to function in this form of banal, counterhegemonic struggle. Its list of deadly sins of political correctness by the Obama administration began with noting how the Department of Homeland Security quietly dropped the war on terror phrase, with Janet Napolitano replacing the word “terrorism” with “man-caused disasters.”

Three days later, on April 30<sup>th</sup>, the post, “Israeli intel: ‘Obama wants to make friends with our worst enemies and until now the worst enemies of the United States,’” implied both the destruction of America and its Holy Land was imminent, and that the new Democrat president was more interested in appeasing its real enemies than protecting its Holy Land:

It was evident even in a quick scan of each day's dozen Jihad Watch topics that every action or statement by the new Democratic president was closely scrutinized for political opportunity. After President Obama's next speech to Muslims worldwide on June 6<sup>th</sup>—just like the earlier-featured *National Review* rebuttal article by McCarthy—that day's edition of Jihad Watch contained 20 posts—17 of which had as their central content a focus on domestic cultural struggle, and not the threat of jihad or Islam, per se.

As the Obama administration's first year progressed, the Jihad Watch strategy of linking it to new enemies foreign became even more evident. Typical was the October 8<sup>th</sup> post, "Obama's Muslim adviser says Sharia 'misunderstood,'" which noted how the President's adviser on Muslim affairs, Dalia Mogahed, had appeared on a British television show "hosted by a member of an extremist group to talk about Sharia Law."

President Obama's first year coincided during the surge of attacks by homegrown extremists, which had been the subject of much threat commentary. In that context, even Thanksgiving Day was occasion for Spencer to mobilize for counterhegemonic struggle not only Christian apocalyptic frames, but his title was the identifying Latin phrase of St Andrews so symbolic of Western Christendom, "Dum spiro spero," noting that "the entire government and media establishment hastens to assure the world that the root cause [i.e. Islam itself] is not the root cause. And the President of the United States rushes to make more concessions to the jihadis and their sponsors and allies."

After the holidays, the February 12, 2010 post, "Obama's national defense report ignores Islamic jihad, focuses on climate change", rebroadcasted the counterhegemonic piece from *The Telegraph*, in which the title accurately conveyed the content.

Jihad Watch during President Obama's second year in office advanced the conservative master narratives of an America in abrupt cultural decline, and an Israel existentially threatened—both a consequence of the Obama administration's basic nature and policies. Typical was Spencer's July 9, 2010 article in Horowitz's *FrontPage Magazine*, "The Fear that Wilders is Right", in which he centrally advanced this non-sequitur: "As Pamela Geller and I show in our book *The Post-American Presidency: The Obama Administration's War on America...* [the president] is not only presiding over America's decline, but is in a very real sense the apostle of that decline."

During the 2010 mid-term campaign, the Jihad Watch post on September 16, "Obama praises Turkey as it steps toward Sharia," bolstered the conspiracy narrative. And, on Christmas Eve 2010, the jihad watching industry of Spencer and Horowitz began at the first watch of 0511 AM with a

post that announced a new pamphlet by Spencer and Horowitz titled “Obama and Islam,” which began by noting that “no president in American history has taken a more admiring view of Islam than Barack Obama,” and described his “energetic willingness to pander to the Islamic world...” “The consequence” section at the end of this post reliably delegitimizes the president who “betrayed American values”, “undermined the national interest”, and “abandoned staunch allies like Israel.”

A month later, in the earliest stages of the Arab Spring, Jihad Watch provided threat commentaries with titles like these on February 1<sup>st</sup>: “Obama backs Muslim Brotherhood role in new Egypt government,” and “Obama Administration held secret meeting with Muslim Brotherhood, planning post-Mubarak government.”

The next day, on February 2, 2011, Jihad Watch continued to frame the Islamo-Leftist enemy axis and conspiracy with a post titled “Spencer: Obama’s Brotherhood Moment,” which advertised his article on this at his sister organization in Horowitz’s apparatus, *FrontPage Magazine*. A few days later, the February 11<sup>th</sup> Jihad Watch further subverted the Obama Administration by reprinting the piece from Fox News the day before that reliably noted how “The Obama administration took the rare step Thursday of correcting its own intelligence chief after the official claimed Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood is ‘largely secular.’”

As news of the revolution continued to spill out of the broader Middle East and North Africa region, the banal, everyday production of the Islamo-Leftist enemy axis continued, typified by two successive posts from the February 25<sup>th</sup> Jihad Watch digest: “US State Department spends \$770 million on mosques in the Middle East,” and “Obama praises Algeria for lifting state of emergency that was put in place to prevent Islamic rule.”

In similar vein, over the next two months, watching for “jihad” ultimately entailed watching the U.S. conservative movement’s domestic political rivals, with dozens of similarly counterhegemonic posts that delegitimized the more progressive outside broadly—the culture, the media, the conservatives, academia—along with a relentless negative identity politics centered on the Obama administration. Typical titles were: Spencer: Obama’s Democracy Delusions (March 1, 2011); Dems at King hearings recite Muslim Brotherhood-linked group’s talking points (March 11); Obama White House applauds Hamas-linked CAIR even as FBI cuts it off (March 18); Obama Administration refusing to hand over evidence, delaying trial of Fort Hood jihad murderer (April 12); Al-Jazeera, “the most powerful voice of the Muslim Brotherhood,” has fans in the Obama White House (April 17); and DOJ source says Government’s Muslim “Outreach” jeopardized active terror investigations (April 18). Spencer continued his practice of linking enemies foreign and domestic on April 17<sup>th</sup> in

the post, “Obama’s Muslim faith advisor helped craft ‘perfect Islamic state’ for Sharia project led by Ground Zero Mosque imam Rauf,” which contained a photo of Dalia Mogahed with the caption, “Obama Advisor Loves Sharia.”

Again, like the other years, every possible bit of “news” related to Islam in 2011 was seized as an opportunistic platform for domestic cultural struggle. President Obama’s Middle East policy speech from Foggy Bottom the next month on May 19<sup>th</sup> was no exception; it provided the opportunity for nearly all of the dozen Jihad Watch posts that day, eight of which had the name “Obama” in the post title, such as “Obama calls for the destruction of Israel. The next day followed suit, with four posts with the name “Obama” in the title, including one which tacitly framed the president as Hitler, urging subscribers to “rally” against Obama’s “jihad against Israel”, to prevent another “Auschwitz.”

The next opportunistic news event that Jihad Watch selected as a micro-site for politics was from a Fox News article on December 7<sup>th</sup> and captured in the title, “Lawmakers blast Obama’s Defense Dept for classifying For Hood jihad murders as ‘workplace violence’” (Figure 9-2):

Figure 9-2 Jihad Watch post excerpt, 8 December 2011

Hasan was shouting "Allahu akbar" as he fired. He passed out Qur'ans on the morning of the shooting. He had earlier delivered a power point presentation that was supposed to be a lecture on psychiatry but was instead an exposition of Islam's doctrine of jihad warfare against unbelievers, and a call for Muslims to be excused from the U.S. military -- or else. He had given numerous other indications of his jihadist sentiments. And to the Obama White House his jihad murders are "workplace violence."

All diplomatic engagement by the Obama administration with Muslim leaders and organizations was cast in the light of disloyalty, such as in mid-December when the Department of State was discussing defamation of religion legislation with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. In this context, Jihad Watch republished a piece from the *American Thinker*, “State Department meeting with OIC to discuss free speech restrictions.”

As in earlier chapters and on the Thanksgiving Day post, threat politics is a form of identity politics, or cultural politics, which always involves deeper cultural resources. Typical of this cultural framing was a March 8, 2012 Jihad Watch post in which Spencer reliably reconstructed the Islamo-Leftist alliance by mobilizing biblical scripture and apocalyptic symbolism of the Kings of the East attacking Israel. Predictably, all of those symbolic resources were brought to bear in the

counterhegemonic post, “Well done, good and faithful servant! ‘Khamenei praises Obama for calming war drums.’”

On March 18, 2012, Jihad Watch’s everyday, banal form of domestic cultural politics was on display with a post commenting on a tweet intercepted from one of Spencer’s favorite sources—the aforementioned Dalia Mogahed, President Obama’s adviser on the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Mogahed had written: “To those siding w/Assad: he cannot deliver stability, protection of minorities, or resistance to Israel. He is a killer w/o legitimacy.” Her implicit message that regime legitimacy in the region should be based in part on its resistance to Israel was tantamount to high treason in U.S. politics on both sides of the political aisle, given the power of the Israel lobby (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007).

The Obama administration’s potentially final year of 2012 witnessed an increasingly political orientation to Jihad Watch, which had already demonstrated its central focus on everyday cultural struggle. As the year came to a close, with only six weeks until the general election, this Horowitz project was fully mobilized, enjoying the wave of Muslim protests and statements regarding the intentionally provocative “Innocence of Muslims” or “Muhammad movie” trailer, which reliably constituted the next rich opportunity for threat politics.

## **5. The Self Jihad: Present Danger as the Site of Self-Narration**

Political identity is always relational; the self, or political inside, is formed in juxtaposition to the other, or political outside. In the case of the other identity, what is externalized is usually securitized, or classified as danger, the enemy, insecurity, and so on. In this way, all identity—in Campbell’s (1998, 3) words—is “secured by the representation of danger.” In this context, insecurity or danger—in this case jihad—as assessed through conservative threat writing—was never a threat to the U.S. conservative movement as much as it was “its condition of possibility,” to use Campbell’s (1998, 13) words again. In other words, the present danger from jihad as articulated by Spencer and other popular conservative threat writers in the decade after 9/11 was a necessary condition of the movement’s identity and viability.

In addition to narrating or discursively identifying the other, the second crucial move of politics—which is always identity politics—involves “narrating the self” (Ochs and Capps 1996). And, this process of self-identification often takes place on the site of narration of threats to self. Here, as in all identity politics, we typically exaggerate the degree to which we are good, just as we

typically exaggerate to the degree to which our most significant others are evil. And, as we saw in the fifth chapter, narrating the good self in U.S. security writing typically involved two moves, or two basic schemas—self-aggrandizement, or reaffirming the strong self, and self-discipline, or purifying the vulnerable self.

### ***Self-Aggrandizement: Reaffirming the Strong Self***

The first move of self-identity politics in Spencer's threat writing was that of self-aggrandizement, describing the patriotic self in healthy, chauvinistic terms of self-exceptionalism or self-superiority—a move that drew from cultural antecedents in historical U.S. security writing, as we saw. Its function was politically performative in terms of self-identification; that is, it described the threat in ways that self (identity)—the U.S. conservative movement, its Holy Land, and its parent Western civilization broadly—could remain favorably positioned over that enemy, in terms of morality, power, achievements, and so forth. As such, his self-reassuring narrative functioned at the sub-rational level, like the comfort food of the old American television “Westerns,” where the native Americans who resisted white settler expansionism were positioned as barbaric savages, the settlers as noble souls merely defending their land, and the U.S. government and its military as largely righteous if not non-existent, or invisible. In this way, Spencer's productions on the whole functioned politically to favorably reposition the triumphant, morally superior traditionalist self over all of its religio-political rivals.

In the Spring 2009 issue of Daniel Pipes's *Middle East Quarterly*, for example, Spencer previewed *Faith, Reason, and the War against Jihadism. A Call to Action*—a book published two years earlier by fellow Catholic and cultural warrior, George Weigel. As with all of Spencer's favorable book reviews, the work is featured *because* it is counterhegemonic, or politically subversive. Spencer reassures the conservative reader that Weigel “ably skewers numerous widely held assumptions about the conflict between the Islamic world and the West,” and then concludes in a self-disciplinary move, citing Weigel's “strong call for the recovery of Western cultural self-confidence....”

This notion of a crisis of confidence was a major theme in post-9/11 conservative threat writing. In his book *Stealth Jihad*, Spencer stated that “in college after college, the acolytes of multiculturalism have gained control of the faculty and administration.” Speaking mainly of Europe, Spencer wrote that “university administrators and professors are unwilling and unable to halt the spread of Islamic supremacism in their own backyards” because they are “lacking confidence in their own civilization and culture” (2008, 228). In the book's concluding section, “what is to be done”,

the two actions that top the list were to end Muslim immigration and take pride in our own culture—moves that appeal strongly to his paleoconservative submarket. Similarly, in the conservative publisher Regnery’s list of commissioned reviews of the work, the aforementioned Andrew McCarthy described how Islam is subverting the West from within through “political correctness, and exploitation of the West’s crisis of confidence”—highly euphemized references to the Left.”<sup>222</sup>

This part of Spencer’s broader political project proceeds in his everyday threat commentary, *Jihad Watch*. Typical of this, was in the midst of the Arab Spring, on March 26, 2011, when Spencer posted a speech of Netherland’s anti-Islam politician, Geert Wilders, who in a speech to Rome’s Magna Carta Foundation reliably identified the self-complex’s enemies foreign and domestic, and favorably positioned “Europe’s Judeo-Christian culture,” “Western Civilization,” and identified it in counterhegemonic terms of cultural singularity, rather than multiculturalism, saying: “we do not belong to multiple cultures, but to different branches of one single culture.”

### ***Self-Discipline: Purifying the Vulnerable Self***

The second move within post-9/11 U.S. conservative threat discourse’s category of self-narration or self-identification was that of self-discipline—a move that similarly drew from rich cultural antecedents in the security writing from earlier eras. Disciplining the self is a governmentality of “directing conduct”—to use Foucault’s (2003, 284) words—similar to that exercised in Christian pastoralism.<sup>223</sup> It involves disciplining the exceptional but threatened self by diagnosing its forms of corruption, disease, weakness and other vulnerabilities.<sup>224</sup> This is not surprising; political blocs typically draw distinctions between subalterns who must be accommodated within the bloc, and adversaries who constitute both its threat and condition of possibility (Jones 2006, 64). Political factions work to create and sustain subcultural coherence within their ranks by imposing standards of purity on those deemed members of the group, as well as using such

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<sup>222</sup> See <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/stealth-jihad-robert-spencer/1100391816?ean=9781596985568>

<sup>223</sup> The term *legitimation* has been used to distinguish discourse which interests are advanced not merely through advocacy for particular policies, but through establishing politically-acceptable boundaries of action (Jackson 2006, ix).

<sup>224</sup> We had noted how post-9/11 threat discourse that was ostensibly about America’s newest dangerous other was shot-through with frames of self and practices of self. Much more than merely a practice that identified the movement’s others—its enemies foreign and domestic, religious and political, Islam and the Left—it was also what Foucault (1982, 208) described as a “*dividing practice*” that not only separated these others from the self, but also separated the healthy and diseased tissue within the body politic. This latter dividing practice functioned as a form of *self-identification*, *self-discipline*, or self-normalization.



standards to denote heretical behavior and distinguish between those who are and are not group members (Sewell 2005, 173).

Spencer's everyday productions in Jihad Watch functioned as such a disciplinary technology to create and sustain subcultural coherence within the conservative ranks by imposing standards of purity by calling out those designated as wayward or heretical. Typical of his more banal, everyday form of pastoralism was the September 8, 2006 *Jihad Watch* post "Ralph Peters flailing in a fog of confusion," directed at the popular conservative Christian, retired military officer, and post-9/11 conflict author. Peters had just published an op-ed in the conservative *New York Post* that targeted Spencer, entitled "Islam-Haters: An Enemy Within." In it, he asserted that "a rotten core" and "really ugly" group of "right-wing extremists" is "bent on discrediting honorable conservatism" by "insisting that Islam can never reform, that the violent conquest and subjugation of unbelievers is the faith's primary agenda – and, when you read between the lines, that all Muslims are evil and subhuman." On Peters' notion that "there's nothing in the Koran as merciless as God's behavior in the Book of Joshua", Spencer politely disciplined his wayward brother, beginning with "Sure Ralph. That's why there's a global terrorist movement of Christians, committing violent acts and justifying them by quoting the Book of Joshua," and reminds him and other like-minded conservatives that "The Bible contains no open-ended, universal command to make war against and subjugate unbelievers, a la Qur'an 9: 29."

At the height of the Arab Spring, Spencer similarly exercised this more banal form of disciplinary power use the crisis as an opportunity to reproduce traditionalist Western identity. On February 7, 2011, in a cross-post from Horowitz's *FrontPageMagazine*, "Innocent as Serpents, Wise as Doves", Spencer mobilized Christian scripture in that title and went on to explore the "particular virtues of the West, and the crucial importance of defending them both on principle and in practice." He described the "post-Christian, liberal West" and then chastised Westerners, warning of the destructive nature of Islam's values and the Left's values, both of which are destroying Europe first, and now, more slowly, the US.

Another example of how Jihad Watch functions as a banal, everyday self-disciplinary technology was the December 23, 2011 post, "Cardinal McCarrick expresses "respect" for imam with ties to Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas." Here, Spencer securitized Imam Mohamed Magid of the All Dulles Area Muslims Society (ADAMS) near Washington DC, and disciplined the Catholic leadership in the nation's capital for efforts at interfaith diplomacy.

A month later, on February 2, 2012, Spencer in a post aimed at the Catholic leadership reposted his review of Warraq's *Why the West is Best* which he had published in the Catholic *Crisis* magazine, and in which he tacitly chastised Catholic leadership for failing to resist multiculturalism and to assert the faith's values confidently in the face of ideological, civilizational competition.

This self-disciplinary function of Jihad Watch within Horowitz's broader project of cultural politics continued through the 2012 election, typified by his lamentations-like post, "Not a dime's worth of difference" on November 7th that chastised the Republican Party for having "lost the pop culture, the educational system, and the mainstream media, all of which pump out the Democrat Party line with a fervor...."

These self-identification moves often shaded to a form of puritanism, as Spencer in a Saul-of-Tarsus-like subject position zealously pursued insiders who represented more than a point of subcultural pluralism, and now constituted a threat. In the move to disambiguate, or expel ambiguity and uncertainty, Spencer systematically recategorized the complex reality in the middle into a Manichean-like friend/enemy political binary. In this imaginative geography, all ambiguity and hybridity are erased; there are no good Samaritans, and no Nicodemus figures among the faction's ruling council. In this imaginative geography, well-known conservative Muslims like Suhail Khan and Palestinian sympathizer Grover Norquist (whose wife Sanaa is of Palestinian origin) are an unstable category, and are thus reclassified into enemies practicing deception, dissimulation, or *taqiyya*.<sup>225</sup> Spencer's post on October, 6 2011, "Rep. Frank Wolf calls out Grover Norquist for jihad ties; Norquist cries 'racism'" was typical of this more puritanical form of self-discipline. In it, he states that "Norquist's influence on the Republican Party is extraordinarily damaging, as it keeps on leading so many to turn a blind eye to the stealth jihad that Norquist continues so energetically to advance."

In conclusion, several features of Spencer's threat writing in the decade after 9/11 suggest that the project was never intended to be anything approaching a neutral, apolitical assessment of the threat. His main and even overarching strategy of watching jihad through the surveillance technology Jihad Watch amounted to selecting from the world's happenings that "news" related to Islam that could function politically. Each bit of news selected in Jihad Watch, or each new project of

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<sup>225</sup> For example, on February 8, 2012, the Jihad Watch headline is "Geller: CPAC for Sissies: Self-Censoring for Sharia", where we discover that "Year in, year out, the puppetmasters, Grover Norquist and Suhail Khan, have managed to keep jihad and sharia off the CPAC schedule."

manufactured news, or each use of a tabooed signifier such as “jihad” functioned as micro sites upon which the broader strategy of cultural struggle could be incrementally enacted. Spencer’s practice of not merely watching jihad but manufacturing it as a site for more of this kind of threat politics was particularly telling. Instead of joining forces with a noted expert on Islam’s threat, he partnered with a more extreme political conservative blogger, Pamela Geller, who had no credentials whatsoever related to the threat of Islam, but whose propensity to engage in politically-antagonistic culture war was cut from the same mold as his boss, David Horowitz. Within this overarching strategy of using Islam(ization) as a platform for cultural politics, there were four supporting moves or strategies—two of which mirrored those of Daniel Pipes.

First, Spencer’s basic counternarrative on Islam was marked by more puritanical features of cultural politics. More than merely offering a Team B or pessimistic approach or corrective to the prevailing consensus regarding Islam, Spencer’s project countered that consensus in a move of pure negation. It was a subversive, dissident, heretical threat assessment that opposed, challenged, undermined, and otherwise resisted the dominant, normative threat narrative housed in the dominant political outside, or establishment. Its counterhegemonic function could be seen in the counternarrative’s ideological moves of selection; its entire realm of visibility was comprised of those objects that deliberately transgressed societal norms or regulations—all that was “politically incorrect.” Objects that were regulated out of visibility by dominant norms ensconced in society’s legitimizing institutions were deliberately and defiantly centered, and often constituted the entire realm of visibility. The corresponding move of pure negation in the counternarrative was in his ideological moves of exclusion, whereby the entire realm of visibility normative to professional security writing was excluded from view.

Second—and perhaps owing to his employment by such a long-time conservative culture warrior—much of Spencer’s threat writing was marked by still more puritanical features of counterhegemonic struggle in the non-narrative realm. In addition to functioning as a subcultural identifier for his conservative market, Spencer’s style of threat writing was dubiously marked by pervasive rhetorical techniques that purposively subverted the regulatory structure of orthodox professional security writing; it was replete with various forms of sarcasm, which functioned to delegitimize the going politics of truth, and was replete with political antagonism aimed at the Democrats and the Obama administration.

Spencer’s threat writing was also counterhegemonic in non-narrative mode of production. Without exception, all of his nearly 400 articles about the threat of Islam (ization), for example, were

published outside the circle of professionals, and outside the legitimate knowledge society and its regulatory framework that other recognized authorities whose work is at the nexus of Islam and security publish within. They appeared in the *New York Post* and the *Washington Times*, but never the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Or they appeared in Pipes's *Middle East Quarterly*, Horowitz's *FrontPage Magazine*, Farah's *WorldNet Daily*, *National Review Online*, *Human Events*, *PJ* (formerly *Pajamas Media*), the *American Thinker*, and Catholicism's *Crisis Magazine*—all e-magazines within the alternative media, and within the aforementioned conservative knowledge society or regime of truth. But, they never appeared in any journal considered by security or intelligence professionals to be authoritative and apolitical.

Also in this vein, and like that of Pipes, Spencer's threat writing was subversive of societal norms regarding authority. In another move of pure negation, Spencer's threat assessments never cited texts and authors housed within the more progressive and dominant knowledge society of educational institutions, government bureaucracies, and the mainstream media. Instead, the entire realm of visibility of other threat analyses—his entire realm of favorable (non-critical) intertextuality—were those produced “inside the wire” of the conservative enclave.

Third, Spencer's productions typically involved delegitimizing the conservative movement's domestic political enemies. For example, Jihad Watch's everyday shallow threat commentary on the threat of Islam(ization) reliably contained a non-sequitur politically-performative segment that had little to do with the conservative movement's newest foreign enemy born on 9/11 and much to do with its traditional domestic enemy. This strategy functioned as a form of cultural politics or hegemonic struggle, in that it not only delegitimized the Democratic party and the Obama administration, but also the more progressive societal order—euphemized variously as the “establishment,” the “elites,” “mainstream” media, and so on.

Fourth, Spencer's threat writing was replete with the second pillar in all projects of identity politics—narrating the self, or the friend component of the political binary. And like U.S. security discourse broadly, this typically involved two sub-strategies: 1) self-aggrandizing moves, that (re)positioned the self in terms of triumphalism or exceptionalism; and 2) self-disciplinary or self-normalizing moves that disciplined the exceptional but threatened and even declining self by diagnosing its forms of corruption, disease, weakness and other vulnerabilities, identified the wolves in sheep's clothing, and that shepherded wayward elements of the flock back into the fold.

**BRIGITTE GABRIEL**  
**and ACT! for America**

*There is constant struggle between different classes and class fractions in society, who compete to impose the definition of social world that is best suited to their interest.*

—Pierre Bourdieu (1991, 167)

At the end of the post-9/11 decade, on November 12, 2011, a headline at *The Tennessean* was “ACT! for America founder speaks at anti-Shariah conference in Nashville.” Since its readers might have wondered what the context of America and sharia in the same sentence might be, the newspaper crafted the appropriate subtitle: “Brigitte Gabriel focuses on Islamic infiltration into the American education system.”<sup>226</sup> And, because even that subtitle could not have possibly made sense to any of the readers, *The Tennessean* added a third subtitle that began to render the headline sensible: “Anger, fear, determination permeate anti-Shariah conference.”

In what could be aptly described as the universe next door, the local Memphis Tennessee chapter of Gabriel’s ACT! of America covered this news of Gabriel’s speech at the anti-sharia conference with a different spin. On a web-page with links to “Muhammad’s Personal Record of Jihad” in the upper left corner, and “No Room In America For Islamic Sharia Law” in the upper right, the announcement began with the salutation: “Fellow infidels,” and ended with the electronic signature of sarcastic anti-Islamization pseudonym, “burkasrugly.”

In the video of the conference, Gabriel’s shrill voice rang out with military cadence: “I-want-to-mobilize-the-nation.” The purpose for this mobilization, she added, was “to teach Americans how the radicals are trying to brainwash the children in our country.” But, while the conference—at a

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<sup>226</sup> See <http://www.tennessean.com/VideoNetwork/1271237687001/ACT-for-America-founder-speaks-at-anti-Shariah-conference-in-Nashville>

large Nashville church—was focused on “sharia,” it quickly became apparent that “the radicals” she was talking about weren’t Muslims. Instead of radical mosques—as was charged in the aforementioned article by Yerushalmi in the *Middle East Quarterly*—the culprits behind “why we are seeing a rise in homegrown terrorism” were the radicals in “our public school system.”

After all, she asked, “How did these good people—good Americans—some of them born Americans and raised as Baptists....; how can these people become so radicalized where they are hating our country so much that they are ready to die to kill Americans?” At the rest of his anti-sharia conference, Gabriel harped on about “what’s happening in this country to education,” and how an uncertain “they” are “trying to change our society culturally from within in order to destroy our society.” But, as she continued, it became clearer that the “they” Gabriel was talking about was never radicalized Muslims, but the faculty at the nation’s public schools and universities. It was this army of radicals that Gabriel framed as constituting “the infiltration of our country,” with the schools and universities where they work effectively being “occupied territories.” In Sarah Palin fashion of dividing the nation between the “heartland” and enemy-occupied territory, Gabriel added:

People in the heartland pinch pennies, save their money eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, so they can send their children to college to get an education, to have the American dream...only to find out they are sending them to the Lion’s Den. Children come back home and they are completely changed; they loathe America; they do not like America....

Gabriel shifted the threat axis again to the mainstream media:

When you look at the news and the media and the mainstream media and you think to yourself, why is the mainstream media so biased? Why can’t they see what we see? The reason why is that for the last sixteen years, students graduating out of our Ivy League colleges who have been fed a steady diet of resentment against America, and against Israel, are today the bureau chiefs, the news writers, news anchors, news reporters who are reporting all these things.

They’re doing exactly what Hitler did, she said, adding: “What did Hitler say; what did Hitler do. ‘Give me the children; I’ll change society in ten years.’” Gabriel went on, charging that we’re now seeing “the results of years of the radical agenda in our public schools.”

She spoke so fast and shrill that her audience never had a chance to enter the phase of cognitive reflection to realize that her talk, which was supposed to be about the invasion of the heartland by the newest foreign enemy’s Trojan horse, sharia, instead dwelled almost entirely on the familiar culture war at home.

Every possible point of contention was raised for visibility in order to delegitimize the more progressive societal consensus, or the dominant politics of truth. With the polarization over the

meaning of “jihad,” and—therefore—a meaning upon the very nature of Islam rested—Gabriel was sure to raise it for visibility, as was the habit of Pipes and Spencer. “And by the way,” she said in this vein, “the word jihad is mentioned forty times in the Qur’an—thirty-six times out of forty as a holy war against the infidels to either kill them or subjugate them.”

For her final act, Gabriel continued this implicit or tacit criticism of the more progressive doxa by holding a controversial 7<sup>th</sup> grade textbook<sup>227</sup> and describing the public classroom exercise where American 7<sup>th</sup> graders had to play the script of a Muslim, imagining themselves praying the shahada. She read the text: “Guide us to the straight path—the path of those whom you have favored—not of those who have incurred your wrath, which is the Jews, nor of those who have gone astray, which is the atheists and the Christians.” She read another class exercise from the textbook: “become a Muslim warrior during the Crusades or an ancient jihad; explain weapons, tactics, etc.” “Excuse me?” she railed. “This is a class exercise?!” Engaging once again the more progressive social order, Gabriel shouted to applause: “I believe political correctness needs to be thrown in the garbage....”

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In this last profile of Brigitte Gabriel, we will examine how her broader oeuvre of threat writing relating to Islam in the post-9/11 decade functioned politically. Her strategy of action—as was the case with Spencer—rested on the two identifiable pillars within the more fundamental act of the political—the narration of the friend/enemy distinction, with the construction of the enemy outside divided into enemies foreign and domestic, Islam and the Left.

## 1. Scripting the Patriotic Self

That a church-full of Tennessee Evangelicals would spend a couple days of their busy lives and forego the backlog of other more pressing needs to focus on the sharia-ization of the nation, and applaud regularly during Gabriel’s rant about the threat to their cultural identity and security not from any imagined new encroachment of Islamic culture, as the conference billing suggested, but from the continuing encroachment of progressive secular culture, suggests how threat discourse can function as a platform for identity or cultural politics. And, the features of Gabriel’s speech and the audience’s attraction to her suggests how the agents of a popular threat discourse can function in a

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<sup>227</sup> The controversial text was McDougal’s (1999) *Across the Centuries*, but Gabriel for some reason didn’t mention its name.

manner distinctly different that security professionals or scholars of security studies, whose writing focuses on the same broad threat.

Well before Pipes began publicly criticizing him as an icon of the left, Foucault (1980, 125-126) had observed how discourse agents were not like the earlier era's more universal intellectuals, "speaking in the capacity of master of truth and justice." Instead, they were "organic" or "specific" spokesman for "specific sectors...where their own conditions of life or work situate them." Whether in the service of the state or against it, these spokespersons were necessarily "closer to the proletariat and the masses," sharing in their everyday struggles (Foucault and Rabinow 1984, 68). This built upon Gramsci's contention that the primary task of subaltern groups was to produce such personalities for the purpose of acting in history (Gramsci 2000, 59). In this vein, Gramsci had also observed that it is insufficient for organic intellectuals to remain technocrats; they also functioned in the subject position as movement leader, and thus must be cut out for and willing to participate in the struggle for hegemony—to actively participate in practical, political life, "as constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader' and not just a simple orator" (Gramsci 1971, 10).

Intellectual figures throughout history have been (self) positioned into leadership roles where they not only organize but embody or symbolize a movement's identity—the archetypical subject position for the one who lights the path, affirms and embodies the values, and symbolizes the ideal, the true Patriot (Smith 1988, xxxv; Harré and Davies 2001). They are the movement leader, as Hoffer (1951, 114) had observed, who "personifies the certitude of the creed and the defiance and grandeur of power." They are those who Castells (1997, 361-362) called "symbol mobilizers" and "the Prophets," subverting the symbolic order "on behalf of alternative values," but also identifying the boundaries of that alternative order, embodying its values, and thus becoming a symbol of it, "so that the message is inseparable from the messenger."

The video of Gabriel's speech among Tennessee Evangelicals suggests that Gabriel played such a role. It was because of her distinct lack of orthodox credentials and her willingness to function as these evangelicals' *identifying* agent—their *symbol of self*, standing in defiant resistance to enemies foreign and domestic, Islam and the Left—that her audience identified with her through their attendance at this absurd conference on the Islamization of Tennessee, and regularly applauded at her un-informing cheerleader-like speech on the topic.

The important feature of any symbol is its distinctiveness or rarity—the function of the one, representing the many. For this reason, Gramsci had noted that only a minority of people function as intellectuals or leading ideologues within any given society (Jones 2006, 81-2). And, the



distinctive feature of the field of popular conservative threat writers in the decade after 9/11 was that it was marked not by the many, but by the few. The field's near monopolization by a select few authorities—"rarefaction of speaking subjects," as Foucault termed the narrowing of the field's authorities to a regulated few legitimate speakers (1972, 155)—suggests its main function was not substantive but symbolic.

There was obvious utility of such a few symbolic figures to the U.S. cable newsmakers, which needed only such a few iconic commodity personalities or faces of the resistance who reliably sat upon the oppositional pole, embodying the counternarrative and the movement that it symbolizes. In its intensely political role, the media and especially the conservative media seemed unable to call on many nebulous figures a few times, but had to call on a few symbolic figures many times. What the media need were binary logicians who reliably had *one* position on many things. Gabriel functioned this way, as did Pipes and Spencer. These organic polemicists were called upon not because they would inform the public about the threat, but because they functioned symbolically as those who unflinchingly represented the distinctive pure conservative subject position, and those whom the audience could personally identify with, thereby reconstituting themselves as conservative.

Embodied ideology works this way; it causes people to read themselves into kinship with the archetypes, to make sense of the world through their semiotic acts, and to take on their storylines and narratives as natural. In this capacity—as with any symbolic figure—the crowds who were drawn to hear them, subscribe to their blogs, read their books, or watch them on Glenn Beck or Fox News, were not seeking objective information about the nation's enemies, foreign and domestic, but were identifying or interpellating themselves as conservatives through them.

Again, all political groups or movements need such identifying self-types who embody part of its master narrative set—who give material form and expression to the group's moral, philosophical, and ideological values. And, within the segment of the U.S. evangelical community that is her principal market, it appeared that Gabriel had successfully positioned herself into this symbolic script of the self—a prophet-messenger and guardian angel who on the one hand emerged from low beginnings, suffered, and remained close to the people she saves, and on the other embodies the subculture's myths and symbols, and identifies its boundaries in juxtaposition to its religio-political

rivals, Islam and the Left. It was apparently for this reason that she was named one of the fifty most influential speakers in the U.S.<sup>228</sup>

Her market's affinity for such a subject position is evidenced by the 15 August 2011 e-mail to her subscribers, "The Engine Behind ACT! for America's Growth." Kelly Cook, ACT!'s National Field Director, noted how that the secret to the organization's rapid growth" was simple: "Booking Brigitte Gabriel and Guy Rodgers in large events in churches." Cook continued: "For example, we recently were hosted in a large church in Minneapolis. Approximately 1500 people turned out. Out of the electricity of the evening came several stunning results, including nearly 1000 new members and 83 new chapter leader signups! In just one night!" And, in just ten months prior to her speech regarding "the end times" and "terrorism" at the 2008 Southern California Prophecy Conference, at Calvary Chapel Chino Hills, Gabriel had given two hundred similar presentations—an average of one every other day, surpassing even Spencer and Pipes at their peak.<sup>229</sup>

This collective subcultural need for self-identifying agents like Gabriel was also evident in the otherwise unexplainable demand for her books. Whereas Pipes's and Spencer's books were more objective, well-written, and contained content that—when combined with that which had been excluded, and when purged of their political core—could reasonably illuminate the more textual component of Islamic extremism that professional security analyses and more anthropological works within academic security studies typically tended to deemphasize. Gabriel's two books, on the other hand, were far more subjective and low-brow; giving primacy to form rather than content, symbolism over substance. And, yet, Gabriel's first book's four hundred reviews averaged 4.5 stars, besting Middle East and Pulitzer Prize writer Thomas Friedman's award-winning *From Beirut to Jerusalem*—another story of personal journey from war-torn Lebanon to Zion. But, as was the case of Robert Spencer's books, it is the polarized nature of these reviews—353 five stars, and 20 one stars, with not even one in between in the two or three star categories—that reveals her threat writing's political function.

Obviously, Gabriel's power as a symbolic, identifying figure—one with the power of interpellation—was a function of cultural capital. In her case, this cultural capital was the kind accrued by life's experiences, which—as we saw in Pipes's case—have particular weight in shaping one's habitus (Bourdieu 1990, 61). In other words, to so successfully occupy this subcultural subject

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<sup>228</sup> See <http://www.actforamerica.org/index.php/learn/about-ms-gabriel>

<sup>229</sup> See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation\\_id=annotation\\_161626&feature=iv&src\\_vid=1XH4A-jec0&v=qkAjp4t4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_161626&feature=iv&src_vid=1XH4A-jec0&v=qkAjp4t4)

position, Gabriel had a form of cultural capital that Pipes and Spencer did not. Whereas they could boast terminal and graduate degrees from Harvard and UNC, Gabriel's form of cultural capital was more symbolic: *she had "street cred."* Whereas Pipes and Spencer *spoke Arabic*, learning it in school and short-term immersion, Gabriel *was Arab*, living it, while growing up in the south of Lebanon. And—as we will see—she didn't merely know about violence in Islam from her infiltration of Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah chatrooms, she experienced it personally, at great cost to her family, friends, and childhood. In this regard, when challenged in 2007 on her authority with the question whether she studied Islam, Gabriel could boast:

No, I did not study Islam; I lived Islam. I lived in the Middle East. I read the Koran in the Arabic language -- I do not need translation. There is something about living in a place and being an eyewitness and coming from a culture and blowing the whistle on that culture, and that is very different from someone majoring in Islam and living in the Middle East for two months so they can write their thesis (Elder 2007).

With an eye toward accruing this kind of symbolic capital, Gabriel's autobiographical *Because They Hate* is replete with passages like this:

*It's 1978, I am thirteen years old. My family is in the third year of living in this bomb shelter, a tiny underground room that sits off to the side of a bombed-out pile of rubble that was once our beautiful home." ... "We don't talk about it, but we could die of thirst or starvation if this goes on much longer" ... "I've already gone through being wounded and buried alive in rubble. A direct hit from a shell would be better." ... "I was born in the small town of Marjayoun, a once peaceful, idyllic Christian town in the mountains of southern Lebanon" ... "All that came to an end when a religious war, declared by the Muslims against the Christians, and tore my country and my life apart." (Gabriel 2006, 1-2; italics in original for some reason).*

And from this passage in the book, it was clear that Gabriel understood that this kind of cultural capital was also a function of her ability to symbolize from an Arab perspective the inherent goodness of Israel:

Israel started coming in the middle of the night, between 1976 and 1978, bringing in food for the military, bringing in bomb shelters for those who did not have bomb shelters, bringing in ammunition, bringing in food for the children because the Palestinians and Muslims had cut off all food supplies. ... I remember, at the age of thirteen years old, putting on my Easter dress, my Sunday best, because I wanted to look pretty when I was dead, knowing that when they came to slaughter me, there would be no one to bury me. I remember sobbing to my parents, begging them, "I don't want to die! I'm only thirteen years old!" There was nothing my parents could say to me. I remember sitting in the corner of our bomb shelter with my father reading from Psalms. We all sat together and he started reading, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." My

parents told me, “When they come to slaughter us tonight, you just run towards Israel, and you never look back (Gabriel 2012).

### ***Self-Interpellation: The Hailing of a Patriot***

In the intervening years between this part of her life that she described as “my 9/11” and the next one, she had worked in Israel in her early twenties as an anchor for Middle East Television, operated Pat Robertson’s Christian Broadcasting Network, and married an American co-worker. Gabriel and her husband moved to the United States in 1989 and started a film and television production company (Fichtner 2011).<sup>230</sup> In June 2007, Gabriel launched ACT! for America (formerly American Congress for Truth).<sup>231</sup> But, therein we find the same puzzle that surrounded so much (if not all) of conservative threat discourse in the decade following 9/11. The founding purpose of ACT! for America was in line with the literature’s characterization of this discourse as steeped in the ideology of civilizational clashism and Zionism; namely, to “fearlessly speak out in defense of America, Israel and Western civilization.”

But, subscribing to the ACT! e-mail stream suggested that an altogether different function was the real engine behind ACT!’s growth. Almost each e-mail that emerged from it—several a week—had dubious content that had little if anything to do with containing “radical Islam”—a euphemism for all of Islam. Instead, the e-mails always contained this non-sequitur mass related to the conservatives’ domestic enemies—euphemized variously as “politically-correct enablers,” and had at their center the conservative, patriot self—the “modern-day ‘minutemen,’” as this excerpt of Gabriel’s July 3, 2012 e-mail to subscribers like me reveals (Figure 10-1):

Figure 10-1: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 3 July 2012

**Freedom of speech is under assault by the enablers of radical Islam, those pried pipers of political correctness who generally refuse to debate the facts and the issues, instead resorting to name calling and other propaganda techniques to suppress any and all critique of radical Islam. You who are reading this email are the modern-day “minutemen,” standing in courageous opposition to the tyranny of both radical Islam and its politically correct enablers.**

As the producers of such politically-coded, symbolically-functioning text, Gabriel—as did the other organic polemicists profiled—conferred political subjectivity to their niche conservative market. Their ideologically-laden texts fixed the identity of the reader, who recognized both them and their text as symbolic of the community that they identified with (Bowman 1994). Political

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<sup>230</sup> Details are omitted throughout this inquiry that might compromise her wish to remain anonymous.

<sup>231</sup> ACT was founded earlier in June 2002.

ideologies work this way; they produce identities and positions for people and they are the methods through which groups legitimate a certain societal, national order, with some groups favored and others disfavored (Wetherell 2001, 286). Historically, in other forms of identity conflict, ideologues like Gabriel have created erected ideological structures that closely parallel a religion, with the nation as the deity to whom one's loyalty is due, with the nation's symbolic subject positions like patriots serving as its saviors and saints, its traitors the embodiment of evil, or demons, and its membership programs serving as self-sacrificing ritual (Kaufman 2001, 25). In this way, ACT!'s almost daily ritual of flag-colored e-mails—their red headings and special type, white space, and blue normal text—functioned as a nationalist religion, (re)constituting or interpellating the conservative “modern-day ‘minutemen’” and “Patriots.”

Gabriel's constant reference the “Patriot” stemmed from its self-symbolizing centrality within U.S. conservative subculture. She adroitly mobilized this ideational, nationalistic resource in 2011, with the launching of her “Patriot Partner” program as yet another means to hail the Patriot conservative into self-recognition through acts of token self-sacrifice. As the following e-mail on ACT! for America's fifth anniversary suggests, this pay-for-belonging feature had much in common with similar programs in other Christian cults, such as the Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker blessing-for-a-dollar campaign (Figure 10-2):<sup>232</sup>

Figure 10-2: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 24 September 2012

**Make an online monthly Patriot Partner gift of only \$5—\$1 for each of the five years since ACT! for America was founded.**

**When you do you'll be eligible for something we've never done before.**

**If your name is chosen from the pool of people who make a \$5 monthly gift, I will come to your community to personally meet with you and up to 25 of your friends.**

**I want to shake your hand, look you in the eyes, and thank you for all that you do for America. For your concern, your passion, your patriotism, and your love for this wonderful country.**

**You, me, and 25 of your close friends are going to sit and talk about our hopes and dreams for America, the challenges we'll overcome, and the victories we**

The entire program's underlying, basic function of self-identity politics was evident in the utter lack of content related to “radical Islam” and—in its place—language of self-identity politics, such as “your patriotism, and your love for this wonderful country,” “our hopes and dreams for America,” and so on.

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<sup>232</sup> On September 24, 2012

Most often, Gabriel’s “call to patriots”—as this October 5, 2012 e-mail just before the general election suggests—was a call to deal not with enemies foreign, but with enemies domestic, in the common euphemization of “political correctness” (Figure 10-3):

Figure 10-3: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 5 October 2012

## ***America the Beautiful***

**Dear David,**

**Click on the image or link below and watch an amazing two minute rendition of America the Beautiful.**

**But this is more than a patriotic music video.**

**It’s a call to patriots—and when you read the text that scrolls during the video, you’ll know why!**

***And see if you know what the pianist is tapping out at the end.***

**Had enough of political correctness? Want to send a powerful, patriotic message to your friends?**

**Then forward this email to everyone you know!**

## ***Self Governance***

Gabriel’s grassroots project had yet another feature of self-identity politics, inscribing political faction’s borders through a form of self-government akin to what Foucault described as “popular justice” or a “people’s court” (Foucault 1980, 1, 6). As the U.S. “patriot” movement and the hundred or more independent components of the conservative “militia” movement suggest, the nation’s farther right wing is home to a wide variety of anti-government groups—self-organized citizen soldiers whose dissident political identity is captured in doing for themselves what they perceive as their government is not only unwilling to do, but working to subvert (Castells 1997, 87, 95). Gabriel’s ideology was similar. Security, she wrote in her second book, “is our responsibility” and “we must not expect the government to do it for us.” Civilians, she added, “must defend our families, our communities, and our nations” (2008, 207, 209).

Gabriel’s e-mail on October 2<sup>nd</sup> demonstrated how ACT! was a vehicle for such self-governance, boasting how its members in this grassroots militia had done what their government was not doing, such as finding a jihadist online, and leading authorities to the point of arrest. Enacting self-security this way was fundamentally counterhegemonic, tacitly delegitimizing the more progressive institutions responsible for security.

Self-governance was also enacted in activism. For only 16 cents a day, ACT's "Patriot Partners" could participate in various forms of government policing, such as organized mass-level protests that swamp the phones of state houses and congress with phone calls and e-mails. Typical was this ACT! e-mail to me on May 29, 2012, which boasted how Gabriel's organization was key in advancing the aforementioned David Yerushalmi's draft anti-sharia legislation—a form of popular justice that prohibited federal and state government judges from doing what they were apparently predisposed to do—privilege Islamic law over U.S. code (Figure 10-4):<sup>233</sup>

Figure 10-4: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 29 May 2012

## **Kansas Victory: The Untold Story**

Dear David,

**The week of May 7th, the Kansas legislature passed, on a near-unanimous vote, the Kansas version of ALAC (American Laws for American Courts). According to a Fox News report, Gov. Sam Brownback signed the bill on May 21st.**

**ALAC prohibits judges from applying foreign law when doing so infringes on the constitutional rights of a party to the case. This can include sharia law.**

**Numerous media outlets reported the legislature's vote. But here's what happened behind the scenes that didn't get reported.**

**ACT! for America spearheaded a grassroots effort that produced more than 30,000 phone calls and emails to Kansas legislators.**

**\*\*\*\*\* 30,000 !!! \*\*\*\*\***

Another ACT! project, the "Congressional Scorecard", enabled Gabriel's modern day minutemen to not only guard the nation from its more progressive judges, but from its more progressive legislators, as she described near the end of her second book:

Another weakness of modern democratic societies is that their governments have grown so big that it's difficult for the average citizen to understand and keep track of what goes on in the national legislature. ... Thus, the key to success is knowing the truth and having an organization through which to disseminate it. This is why ACT! For America has created a 'congressional scorecard' program and a voter education project. We research bills we consider important.... We keep tabs on how each elected official votes on these bills" (Gabriel 2008, 221).

Again, such forms of self-governance—like all political action, including security and foreign policy—was a form of self-identification (Hansen 2006). Political practice works this way, positioning the actor in accordance with the nature of the act. Social action relies upon representations of identity, but it is also through the formulation and enactment of practice that

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<sup>233</sup> See Yerushalmi's web page: <http://www.americanfreedomlawcenter.org/about/leaders/david-yerushalmi-esq/>

identities are produced and reproduced (Hansen 2006, 1). In this way, identity is both the producer of, and the product of, all forms of social practice, including foreign policy and security discourses (Hansen 2006, 23).

The Bush administration's policy to invade Iraq, for example, offered the nation yet another opportunity for scripting the exceptional U.S. self in terms of cultural and material supremacy after the humiliation of 9/11. With regular speech acts like "*We're hunting down the terrorists. We're helping Iraqis build a free nation.... We're advancing freedom.... We are removing a source of violence, and so on*," President Bush from the bully pulpit could point the nation to itself, repositioning it as the only actor on the global stage (Chandrasekaran 2007, 337). Gabriel's project functioned similarly, with Islam serving as the necessary prop upon which the script of conservative patriot and minuteman could be enacted. Her daily e-mails to me and her other Patriot Partners pointed us to our own actions. We the people were doing what the more progressive government couldn't do: *keeping the nation safe*. By giving only 16 cents a day, we were "keeping tabs on how each elected official votes," producing mass-level protests that swamp the phones of state houses and congress with phone calls and e-mails, and so on.

### ***Self-Aggrandizement***

Gabriel's threat writing also functioned as a platform for self-identity politics in its self-aggrandizing component, which (re)constructed the idyllic, traditionalist, Judeo-Christian self—the extended Holy Land, Amer-Israel—and it did so in juxtaposition to its imagined religio-political opposites that threaten it—Islam and the Left. In each of her productions—books, speeches, e-mails, and so on—the good conservative self was always being produced relationally, in binary opposition to its imagined outside. In her first book, for example, the production of the Christian self took place in juxtaposition to its civilizational opposite, Islam:

My country of Lebanon was much like America and the West are today. It was an island of freedom in the middle of an Islamic sea of tyranny and oppression.... Our seemingly modern lifestyle progressive thinking, democratic form of government, and schools of higher learning were a thorn in the side of the backward, feuding, feudal Arab world, whose Islamic customs and religious philosophies dominated other countries of the Middle East (Gabriel 2006, 2-3).

As in many more racialized forms of identity politics, Gabriel's threat writing produced the good conservative self in moves that naturalized or fixed difference between the good Judeo-Christian, Western self and its evil other, Muslims and Arabs. Naturalizing difference typically



involves fixing difference biologically, through blood and not culture or circumstances, as this passage in Gabriel's first book enacts:

My day always started with a long breakfast, usually hot milk and eggs....” “For me, every day was like a party.” ... “Lebanon is considered part of the Arab world. However, as a child, I was taught that my people, the Lebanese Christians, are the descendants of the Phoenicians....we are Arabs only by language and not by blood.”

Gabriel's (2008) second *New York Times* bestseller, *They Must Be Stopped*, was similarly replete with more banal civilizationalism, with the exceptional Western self always juxtaposed in binary fashion to its imagined opposite, Islam. To explain Muslim “hatred toward the infidel West,” for example, Gabriel (2008, 6) described the “envy and resentment of the West's material, intellectual, scientific, and economic superiority—in vivid contrast to the squalor, illiteracy, and oppression that mark so much of the Muslim world.” “Every one of us,” she said, “has been summoned to play a role in the conflict between the forces of chaos and civilization” (2008, 10-11). She added that Westerners can't understand Middle Eastern culture and its religion because we “come from a Judeo-Christian background, where the teaching of faith centers on love, tolerance and forgiveness” (2008, 13), implying an opposite basis for faith in Islamic civilization.

Again, this move of reconstructing the good self through in relation to its complete opposite in Gabriel's threat writing took place not merely in her books, but also in her much more prolific speeches and e-mails. In her July 16, 2012 email, “Brutal intolerance,” for example, Gabriel quickly moved past the threat topic of Islam to objectify the religio-political enemy complex—the dominant Muslim-American groups, and their “politically correct enablers” on the Left. But, the other non-sequitur story that emerged from this link functioned similarly as self-narration via self-aggrandizement. In this particular heart-breaking story, a 16 year-old Christian girl, had been brutalized by a Pakistani man who poured highly corrosive acid on her face and down her esophagus. Yet, the main story was less about Islam's evil than self's exceptionalism. It went on to tell how the girl was flown to Texas by unidentified American angels, and healed through 31 surgeries by unidentified Houston, Texas doctors. The individuals involved were “unidentified” because they *were* not individuals; they were the nation—both Pakistani and American. The final act of self-identification via self-aggrandizement was her description of how this brutalized young Christian woman enacted one of the supreme values and symbols of her faith: *forgiveness*.

## ***Self-Discipline***

As was the case with Spencer, Gabriel's threat writing included a substantial disciplinary element—the self-governmentality of pastoralism that defines the boundaries of self, identifies wayward elements of the flock, and shepherds them back into the fold. Gabriel's more banal, everyday form of this pastoralism would not be worth mentioning were it not for its systemic nature as part of the whole self-identification project. Typifying this pastoralism that permeated her threat writing were several statements in her second book. There, she chastises President Bush for saying “I believe that Islam is a great religion and preaches peace”; and Prime Minister Tony Blair for saying, “True Islam is immensely tolerant and open.” Blair and Bush would be advised to take a course on Islam, she added, “It will serve them and freedom well” (2008, 51-52).

But such self-discipline is not applied equally across the conservative subculture; she reserved her sternest discipline in the book for religious leadership: “Nothing disturbs me more,” she said, “than when I see ministers, priests, and rabbis who are involved in interfaith dialogue, listening to imams say that Islam is a peaceful religion that has been hijacked by radicals.” These religious leaders, she warned, “cannot imagine that someone can look them straight in the eye and lie” (2008, 77). This form of self-discipline permeated ACT! for America e-mails as well, as typified by this e-mail excerpt from December 11, 2012, titled “Interfaith naivete,” wherein Gabriel gave this implicit warning of God's wrath against those “Christians who reach out to Muslims” (Figure 10-5):

Figure 10-5: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 11 December 2012

**Dear David,**

**Christians who reach out to Muslims in interfaith efforts frequently do so with the best of intentions. Unfortunately, there's an old saying, “the road to hell is paved with good intentions.”**

**Perhaps this is why Jesus warned his followers, “be wise as serpents and gentle as doves.”**

**The story below (highlights added) illustrates the naivete that characterizes so much of Christian and Jewish interfaith outreach efforts to Muslims.**

This self-disciplinary strategy of action extends to the Church broadly via Gabriel's 700 chapters nationwide. The leader of one of Gabriel's Texas ACT! for America chapters, Dorrie O'Brien of Grand Prairie, and a Tarrant County Republican Party precinct chairwoman, enacted such a self-disciplinary function when she learned that Pastor Bob Roberts Jr. of the area's Northwood Church planned an outreach to local Muslims. O'Brien said that the idea of Christians and Muslims making

friends or having fun together is “repulsive and impossible.”<sup>234</sup> But, what this ACT! Chapter excluded in its political project was the actual reality surrounding the identity of Texas Muslims. The event produced 1,500 Muslims and 1,000 Christians. The reporter at the event wrote: “Jokes were told — one imam commented that the Dallas Cowboys needed divine intervention — and congregants stood in unison to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge of Allegiance.” “A young lady in a hijab sang the Star-Spangled Banner,” Roberts said; and “a combined choir of Muslim and Christian kids sang You Are my Sunshine.” Toward the end, when Roberts, speaking for Christians at NorthWood and other churches from the Dallas area, told the Muslims, “We love you,” all in attendance rose in ovation, as a Muslim in the audience stood and replied, “We love you too” (Evans 2011).

### ***Self-Abiding: Subversively Constructing and Writing within the Conservative Enclave***

Edward Said (1978, 23) had asserted that the unity of Orientalist texts was “due in part to the fact that they frequently refer to each other.” Orientalism was after all, he said, “a system for citing works and authors.” And, as we saw with both Pipes and Spencer, Gabriel’s productions were marked by this endogamic, solipsistic practice of excluding all intertextuality with the legitimizing, more progressive societal institutions and its authorities, and by referencing only information that emerged from within the conservative knowledge society. In other words, in Gabriel’s threat writing, all intertextuality was with other institutions and members of the conservative enclave, *and no others*. Her main strategy in this form of self-identity politics was sending ACT! for America e-mails that forwarded works by other vetted and symbolic movement elite, or generating ACT! events that gave them a public platform where her niche market could experience the conservative movement’s dissident security experts in person.

This practice was performative in the counterhegemonic sense through its inherent anti-intellectualism and anti-elitism, and its move of pure negation of the dominant societal politics of truth. By never quoting orthodox authorities across the U.S. population of over 300 million, and by quoting only the select handful of vetted authorities in the field who are positioned within the parallel conservative knowledge society, Gabriel reinscribed the boundaries of the authorized, dissident ghetto, thereby subverting the more progressive political outside.

Typifying this politically performative move, were Gabriel’s e-mails published over the course of two months in the late summer of 2010. When the “ground zero mosque” spectacle was

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<sup>234</sup> See Northwood Church’s website for a video of the event: [www.northwoodchurch.org](http://www.northwoodchurch.org).

ascendant, ACT! for America on July 26, 2010 sent the e-mail “‘Ground Zero Mosque’ issue heating up.” The e-mail noted that “well-known public figures, such as Newt Gingrich and Sarah Palin, have spoken out against it.” And that other Republicans like Rick Lazio (candidate for governor of New York) and NY Rep. Peter King have called for investigations of the funding for the mosque.” Inscripting the conservative knowledge enclave, the e-mail then forwarded the link to a 60 second advertisement opposing the project by “our friends at The Center for Security Policy,” again, which was Frank Gaffney’s. In a move to delegitimize domestic political rivals, the e-mail noted that public opinion was decidedly against the establishment view.

ACT! then posted a 23 July 2010 article “Behind the mosque” published in the conservative *New York Post* “by our friend and esteemed historian Andrew Bostom,” whom had been close to and cited frequently by Spencer earlier in the decade.<sup>235</sup> On August 6, 2010, under the subject line of “Unbelievable Censorship!,” ACT! notified its subscribers that Ground Zero Mosque news could be gained from event-leader Pamela Geller’s blog AtlasShrugs. Then, citing others within this network, ACT!’s August 17<sup>th</sup> e-mail, “Secretary of State Hillary Clinton working with UN, OIC to criminalize free speech!,” forwarded commentary on the topic “posted recently in Jihad Watch.” On 20 September 2010, Darla from one of ACT!’s many obscure affiliates—the Patriot Action Network—a grassroots blog with over 89,000 members—posted ACT! for America’s e-mail “Sharia report challenges political establishment”. The e-mail cited Frank Gaffney with this:

A powerful new ‘Team B’ report on sharia law, published by the Center for Security Policy, challenges the political establishment’s notions regarding the nature of the threat we are fighting. The report team included two of our speakers at the ACT! for America 2010 National Conference & Legislative Briefing, James Woolsey and Andrew McCarthy.

Further identifying the authorized inside or boundaries of the conservative subculture as it related to the topic of Islam, the ACT! e-mail added excerpts of the article from the *Washington Times* on September 14<sup>th</sup> titled: “Woolsey & McCarthy & Soysters: Second opinion needed on Shariah: Our political establishment wears blinders and ignores the threat.”

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<sup>235</sup> Author of “The Legacy of Jihad” and “The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism,” Bostom (2010) noted that “At least two of Imam Rauf’s books, a 2000 treatise on Islamic law and his 2004 “What’s Right with Islam,” laud “rejuvenating” Islamic religious spirit of Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Wahhab—who the NYPD report listed as the ideological foundation of Islamic extremism. Bostom concluded that “Feisal Rauf’s public image as a devotee of the ‘contemplative’ Sufi school of Islam cannot change the fact that his writings directed at Muslims are full of praise for the most noxious and dangerous Muslim thinkers.” As his final item in the case, he added that “even the classical Sufi master that Rauf extols, the 12th-century jurist Abu Hamed Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, issued opinions on jihad and the imposition of Islamic law on the vanquished non-Muslim populations that were as bellicose and bigoted as those of Ibn Taymiyyah.”

ACT! events functioned similarly to reinscribe the conservative subcultural enclave and identity broadly. On March, 15 2011, ACT! announced that Republican congressman Allen West would be the keynote speaker at its annual National Conference & Legislative Briefing. It cited Newt Gingrich's statement where he said that West would be someone he would definitely consider as a vice presidential running mate. In a similar boundary making function, the e-mail affirmed the legitimacy of other speakers, such as Erick Stakelbeck, former analyst at Israel-advocate Stephen Emerson's Investigative Project on Terrorism, and now host of the Pat Robertson's CBN News program "Stakelbeck on Terror."

In this knowledge enclave, social capital, political ideology, and the performative boundary-forming function of citing each other are more important than knowledge of the threat. Gabriel's assistant director, Guy Rodgers, for example, had also worked for CBN's Pat Robertson, as well as the Christian Coalition's Ralph Reed. The political nature of the ACT! for America project can be seen here, as it was with Spencer's selection of the radical political blogger Geller for his partner in manufacturing jihad. Rodgers' bona fides for the assistant directorship of ACT! had nothing to do with Islam; he was selected based upon his experience as a GOP activist, serving as presidential campaign manager for Patrick J. Buchanan in 1996, and a consultant for John McCain in 2008.

In similar vein, Gabriel's previous key assistant in ACT! for America, Hal Weatherman, was formerly the Chief of Staff of U.S. Rep Sue Myrick (R-NC). The political nature of the threat writing was evident as the layers are peeled back. Congresswoman Myrick had written the forward to the Islamization conspiracy's key text, *Muslim Mafia*, by David Gaubatz (Charlotte Observer 2011). It was Gaffney who had funded Gaubatz to write the book, and it was Joseph Farah's *WorldNetDaily* that published it, and it was Pipes in an interview with Gaffney on his website that promoted it (Pipes 2009), and it was Horowitz who further publicized it with an interview in his *FrontPageMagazine* (20 February 2009). In this way, the enclave drew the boundaries of the authorized security discourse, and—thereby—the boundaries of the authorized conservative self.

## **2. Counter-Narrating the Foreign Enemy**

Again, the identification of the friendly inside or self is but one half of the act of the political; the other half is the identification of the enemy outside. In Gabriel's threat writing in the post-9/11 decade—as was the case with Spencer, Pipes, and many other conservative threat writers—the enemy outside was conceptualized within the schema of enemies foreign and domestic, religious and

political, Islam and the Left. In the first category of narrating the foreign enemy, there were two distinctive features of Gabriel's threat writing that reveal how it functioned politically.

### ***Radically Transgressing Societal Taboos Regarding Minorities***

As was the case with Pipes and Spencer, Gabriel's threat writing did not merely produce oppositional or dissident knowledge about Islam in the context of the foreign enemy, it did so in a way that was politically performative at the level of domestic or cultural politics; that is, by systematically and more egregiously transgressing societal norms or taboos (Hall 2001, 332-3, 336).

Gabriel's first heretical move in assessing the threat of Islam was that racist move of naturalizing difference. Naturalizing difference is a key feature of all Western racialized regimes of representation, where the cultures of dark-skinned people are reduced to nature. The political utility behind naturalizing difference is apparent: if the differences between people with different skin color are "cultural," then immigrants or minority populations can assimilate. But if they are "natural"—as the U.S. South's slave system needed everyone to believe—then the societal order with them in their slave place is also natural (Hall 1997, 245).<sup>236</sup> Just as important, by fixing difference between self and its significant others, the slide of one's own identity is halted and its security is achieved.

In this strategy of naturalizing difference, Gabriel narrated self via the other by representing undifferentiated civilized Jews and Christians on the one hand, and undifferentiated barbaric Muslims (of the Israeli-occupied territories of Palestine and Lebanon) and their civilization "Islam" on the other. This strategy of naturalizing difference within identity politics is typified even in the title of her first bestseller, *Because They Hate*—which was set in the context of Lebanon's civil war in 1975. The book title's "They" was understood as the whole religion, and the title's "Hate" was understood as that religion's and its adherents' fundamental nature, as this passage suggests:

A lot of Muslims poured in from other Muslim countries like Iran, the founder and supporter of Hezbollah, one of the leading terrorist organizations in the world today. They came from Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. The Lebanese civil war was not between the Lebanese; it was a holy war declared on the Christians by the Muslims of the Middle East (2006, 35).

Here, unlike the threat writing of Pipes and Spencer, Gabriel was more prone to dispense with strategies of euphemization. In this book, she quickly dropped the euphemization "radical Islam" and used the term she and her audience understood as the real focus—"the Muslims of the Middle

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<sup>236</sup> Of course, in geopolitical discourses of all stripes—European colonialism and U.S. Zionism alike—the same strategy could be justified through a somewhat less difference naturalizing discourse of "white man's burden" or "*mission civilisatrice*" master narrative.

East.” By using undifferentiated terms like this and like “Muslims poured in” Gabriel was writing back against the politics of truth and implied that extremism in Islam *is* Islam, or the authoritative and historical Islam, and that instances of Muslim violence are normative throughout the faith. Her heretical threat discourse continued this way in undifferentiated terms. When she wrote, “They started massacring the Christians in city after city,” “*they*” implied *all* of “the Muslims”. In this fashion, her next description on this page was how “they” or “the Muslims” “would tie one leg of the baby to the mother and one leg to the father and pull the parents apart, splitting the child in half” (2006, 35).

Purposively transgressing the societal politics of truth, she described her “life-changing experience” with a badly wounded Muslim woman in an Israeli hospital, with unknown contexts surrounding her situation. “And for the first time in my life I saw evil,” she said. “I realized that this Muslim couldn’t love the Jews even after they saved her life.” In a dehumanizing move, she added, “And when you are unable to be grateful to the people who saved your life, you have no soul.”

Gabriel’s threat writing often naturalized difference through such moves of dehumanization. At the Christians United for Israel event in 2007, she said:

The difference, my friends, between Israel and the Arab world is the difference between civilization and barbarism. It’s the difference between good and evil [applause]... this is what we’re witnessing in the Arabic world, They have no SOUL!, they are dead set on killing and destruction. And in the name of something they call “Allah” which is very different from the God we believe...[applause] because our God is the God of love (Wilson 2007; Terkel 2010).

And in her June 24, 2008 speech delivered at the more rightist Intelligence Summit in Washington DC—an organization for which she serves as a member of its advisory board—she said:

America and the West are doomed to failure in this war unless they stand up and identify the real enemy: Islam... If you want to understand the nature of the enemy we face, visualize a tapestry of snakes. They slither and they hiss, and they would eat each other alive, but they will unite in a hideous mass to achieve their common goal of imposing Islam on the world.<sup>237</sup>

Such stereotyping—like all stereotyping—was part of a larger binary-producing strategy that Foucault described as “dividing practices,” dividing the normal from the abnormal, orthodox from

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<sup>237</sup> See <http://www.intelligencesummit.org/speakers/BrigitteGabriel.php>

unorthodox, sacred from the profane, morally good vs evil, victims vs aggressors, civilized vs barbaric, with soul vs without soul, human vs. non-human, and so on.

In his essay on “Stereotyping” Richard Dyer (1977) observed that without the use of types, it might be impossible to make sense of the world; we understand the world by relating its objects, people or events to their appropriate place in our cultural classification schemas (Hall 1997, 257). But, Gabriel’s use of stereotypes is not merely a sense-making or semiotic practice; it is a political practice; or practice of self, making sense of self in relation to essentialized features of the outside world. By keeping a few vivid characterizations of “the Muslims” in view, reducing all of Muslim complexity to parsimonious stereotypes that fit in neat binaries co-occupied with the opposite, traditional U.S. self in the favored half of the binary, Gabriel’s threat writing concerning the other performatively functions to reposition the self. Thus, while on the one hand it is an explicit discourse about the foreign and dangerous other; on the other it is implicitly and performatively a practice of self. And, so it is with all acts of the political.

In her chapter defiantly titled, “Clash of Civilizations,” Gabriel continued to subvert the academy and professional security establishment by bolstering the thesis of Huntington (and Lewis) which security professionals tended to discredit. And, she did so in a purposively subversive way—again, naturalizing difference through the civilized/barbaric binary. “It is in Jerusalem,” she wrote, “that you are able to see clearly the differences between Arabic and Jewish culture as represented by the two sides of the city.” Using tropes of sacred and profane, clean and unclean she wrote: “If you walk one block into the eastern side of the city, the first thing you notice is the uncleanliness.”

Shifting to Islam, she wrote subversively how “Muslims” in “that part of the world” looked upon “killing both Christians and Jews as a sacred duty.” In similarly politically-performative and long-tabooed racialized terms, she continued: “While Christians and Jews learn to repair the world, love their enemy, forgive those who trespass against them, and turn the other cheek, Muslims are taught to fight the infidels, to consider them enemies of Allah” (2006, 103-105).

In her chapter, “Terrorists Among Us,” Gabriel continued to transgress societal norms of linking Muslim-Americans to terror. In racialized, undifferentiated terms, she wrote that “Muslims” in the “the Arab world” have a saying: “First comes Saturday, then comes Sunday.” Every Muslim in the Middle East knows exactly what this means. This is their way of saying that first they’ll get the Jews (who observe Sabbath on Saturday), and then they’ll get the Christians...” (2006, 124).

Gabriel’s threat writing regarding Muslims is akin to racialized discourse broadly. For example, just as in U.S. racialized discourse on blacks—where a black’s primitivism was a function of his



blackness—so her Muslim’s barbarism was a function of his or her Islamic nature, which they could change no more than a leopard could change his spots. For the black in racialized discourse, biology was destiny; for Gabriel’s “the Muslims,” religion is. Just as blacks were reduced to their “essential” caricatured characteristics in works like *Little Black Sambo*—thick lips, fuzzy hair, broad nose, pronounced brow, high buttocks—so her “the Muslims” are similarly reduced, by her attaching to them a standard set of stereotypical features.

Such systematic strategies of subversion permeated Gabriel’s more everyday form of threat writing. In an interview in 2007, for example, Larry Elder asked how Gabriel would classify the world’s 1.2 billion Muslims by ideology. She replied by sweeping every Muslim into the category of martyrdom-seeking jihadist or jihadist supporter and sympathizer who hates by nature:

Not all of them are radicals. We estimate that the radicals are between 15 and 25 percent; that translates to between 180 and 300 million people like Mohammad Atta who are willing to strap bombs to their bodies and commit martyrdom operations. Now, that is still a minority, 15 to 25 percent, but 300 million Mohammad Attas ready to unleash their blood upon the West. . . . Now, the rest of them . . . despise the West, they hate our westernization, they think we are morally corrupt, that we are corrupting the world, and they think we are such a bad influence on the world that we need to be stopped at any cost. They may not be willing to commit martyrdom operations themselves, but they will sit there and cheer on and rally those who are willing to kill us (Elder 2007).

Gabriel’s counterhegemonic strategy to subvert the more progressive societal norms surrounding the faith of the nation’s Muslim minority can best be seen in her second book, *They Must Be Stopped* (2008). Here, Gabriel in several chapters selected for view all that which was tabooed in the more progressive politics of truth. Just her chapter titles revealed the counterhegemonic nature of that which was selected for visibility: “Islam’s contempt for women and minorities,” “Islam and honor killings,” “Islam and child abuse,” “Islam and sex slaves,” “Slavery and Islam,” “Islam and persecution of other faiths.” The text under the section “Islam and Child Abuse” begins this way:

Mohammed was forty-nine years of age when he became betrothed to Aisha, the daughter of one of his closest friends. At the time, she was six years of age. Three years later, after she completed her first menstrual cycle, Aisha and Muhammad consummated their union. At the time, Mohammed was fifty-two, and Aisha was nine. Unfortunately, the Islamic practice of marrying a child bride of the age of nine is still practiced today (2008, 177).

But, transgressing or subverting societal norms of threat knowledge proceeds not merely by such moves of selection, but by moves of exclusion. In all of Gabriel’s productions, the normative,

objective facts—not merely the context and references or citations that were excluded in Spencer’s and Pipes’s threat writing—were curiously and *always* missing; there is never any news related to Islam or Muslims that might put their threat to the nation in context, or set it in its complexity. ACT! for America had never sent an e-mail that showed the threat even in perspective, such as when, in 2011, none of America’s 14,000 murders were due to Islamic extremism (Kurzman 2011), or when we learned that Muslim violence in the U.S. in other years continued to decline and pale in comparison to violence among the broader population (Kurzman 2013).

Gabriel’s threat writing *always* excluded from view all that which professional security writing would be compelled to include in a threat assessment. For example, her March 24, 2011 e-mail, announced “Update—The Doctrine of Abrogation: Open the Koran Day.” “Our goal”, she said, “is to educate the general public about a *little known* yet important doctrine called “abrogation.” Yet, Gabriel reliably excluded from view the prominent Sunni Islamist sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi’s *Fiqh of Jihad* from two years earlier, which had explicitly delegitimized the doctrine of abrogation.

### ***Enacting Subversion on Micro-Fields***

Gabriel’s counternarrative strategies were always enacted on micro-fields of play—fields that were as small as contentious signifiers, such as “jihad” and “moderate Muslim.” Whereas the societal signifier for good Muslim was one who was fully Muslim and fully American, both pious and patriotic—Gabriel’s distinction between bad Muslim and good Muslim was distinctive, and reliably oppositional, as her definition of a practicing Muslim suggests:

I call it a practicing Muslim and a non-practicing Muslim. I think it is a better description than “moderate” and “radical.” A practicing Muslim goes to mosque, prays five times a day, doesn't drink, believes God gave him women to be his property - to beat, to stone to death... He believes Christians and Jews are apes and pigs because they are cursed by Allah. He believes it is his duty to declare war on the infidels because they are Allah's enemies. That is a practicing Muslim (Elder 2007).

Gabriel’s counterhegemonic threat narrative on Islam regularly deployed this distinguishing device of “practicing” versus “moderate.” To subvert the normative view that most practicing Muslims were moderate, she framed “practicing” Muslims who appear “moderate” as wolves in sheep’s clothing, practicing dissimulation. In her 2007 lecture as part of the Islam elective at the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC)—an arm of National Defense University in Norfolk—Gabriel fielded the question: “Should we resist Muslims who want to seek political office in this nation?” Gabriel replied: “Absolutely. If a Muslim who has—who is—a practicing Muslim, who believes the

word of the Koran to be the word of Allah, who abides by Islam, who goes to mosque and prays every Friday, who prays five times a day—this practicing Muslim—who believes in the teachings of the Koran, cannot be a loyal citizen to the United States of America” (Daloglu 2007). As part of her answer to this same question, Gabriel asserted that a Muslim's oath of office is meaningless, giving the following reason: “A Muslim is allowed to lie under any situation to make Islam, or for the benefit of Islam in the long run. A Muslim sworn to office can lay his hand on the Koran and say 'I swear that I'm telling the truth and nothing but the truth,' fully knowing that he is lying because the same Koran that he is swearing on justifies his lying in order to advance the cause of Islam” (Rodda 2008).<sup>238</sup>

Gabriel's politically incorrect narrative regarding the threat related to Islam continued in her second bestseller, *They Must Be Stopped* (2008). Here, her strategies of euphemization to even barely respect societal norms regarding discourse about minorities were all but abandoned. “We are fighting devout Muslims who drink their Islam straight,” she wrote. “Radical Islamists,” she added, are merely devout Muslims “following the instructions of the Koran and walking in the steps of their Prophet Mohammed....” (2008, 50). She continued, “The main driving force behind all Islamic terrorism is the Koran. What drives these passionate soldiers of Allah is Islam itself and the promises made to them by the Prophet Mohammed” (2008, 60).

In this counternarrative in which the threatening Muslim was the pious Muslim, the good Muslim was something of a black swan—an idealized, but still stereotypical patriot akin to America's racialized discourse surrounding the “noble savage”, the “faithful” Christian black slave, like Uncle Tom, in Harriet Beecher Stowe's pro-abolitionist novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Hall 2001, 335-6). Gabriel's Muslim “Uncle Tom,” or Muslim “good nigger” equivalent was produced through frequent intertextual references to Zuhdi Jasser, an ex-Naval officer and medical doctor, who had throughout the post-9/11 decade been stalwart in his criticism of any political elements of Islamic expression. Jasser's status as Gabriel's “good Muslim” also stemmed from the fact that they both took part in the aforementioned documentary, *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West*, and that Jasser also sat as one of Clarion's four-person advisory board, along with Frank Gaffney and Daniel Pipes. It was for this reason that ACT! for America e-mails regularly paraded Jasser as “a Muslim”

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<sup>238</sup> Gabriel's emphasis on Muslim dissimulation seems genuine, given her own propensity for the practice. Rodda (2008) notes that “The next question came from a soldier who introduced himself as Muslim who has been serving in the U.S. Army for the past 19 years. He asked Gabriel if she was a member of Hasbara Fellowship. Gabriel not only answered that she was not a member, but asked, “What's Hasbara Fellowship?” Gabriel is currently listed as a speaker on the official website of Hasbara Fellowships as a member of the organization's Speakers Bureau, and has been since 2005.”

whenever an Uncle Tom figure was deemed useful in disciplining the broader Muslim-American community, or in when these more entrepreneurial conservatives needed to deflect heat from something that was drawing criticism from their political rivals. For example, on January 4, 2011, ACT! sent the e-mail titled “A Muslim supports Rep. Peter King,” thereby deflecting criticism from Democrats that King’s hearings on radicalization in the Muslim-American community were politically motivated, and aimed at delegitimizing the Obama administration’s policies.

We might be tempted to view such racialized, dehumanizing discourse *merely* in terms of the literature, as the “new anti-Muslim racism,” or as Holy Land geopolitics, which finds it easier to inflict pain upon another co-located rival in whom we could no longer see in their anthropological complexity (Vetlesen 2005, 19). To be sure, Gabriel’s threat writing in the post-9/11 decade had empirical fit with both of these related characterizations. Ostensibly in support of Israel’s expanding settlement project, it obscured from view the average Muslim in their complexity by mobilizing metonymy and synecdoche, representing the whole in terms of (and determined by) some of its parts, like other racialized regimes of representation.. It was in this same way that “the Jewish problem” was solved in Germany. By removing the actual Jew in their vast complexity from view, political framers were able to construct the more abstract, archetypal, or stereotypical “the Jew.”

But, Gabriel’s subversive, transgressive speech related to Islam functioned more broadly. It was so systematically and defiantly heretical and unorthodox that it functioned counterhegemonically in the domestic cultural struggle, by subverting the more progressive regime of truth and—by extension—the more progressive and official, dominant outside broadly.

### **3. Narrating Domestic Enemies**

The third and final pillar of Gabriel’s threat writing—in addition to narrating the self and counter-narrating the foreign enemy—was that of narrating the U.S. conservative movement’s domestic political rivals. Similar to that of Pipes and Spencer, all of Gabriel’s threat writing on the subject of the conservative movement’s newest foreign enemy, Islam, also contained this non-sequitur mass related to their more familiar domestic enemies; that is, the more progressive political rivals themselves, the more progressive societal institutions of knowledge, and the broader, more progressive politics of truth.

We had seen how her anti-sharia conference speech in Tennessee church seemed to dwell exclusively in this part of her project, almost missing altogether the movement’s newest foreign

enemy for which the conference was ostensibly organized to counter. Gabriel's threat writing over the post-9/11 decade seemed to follow this pattern, so much so that—in an interview with *der Spiegel* at the end of the decade—Gabriel described the function of ACT! For America in terms that suggested the entire project really *had little to do with the threat of Islam*:

Local groups are encouraged to take action against overly politically correct teachers, excessively tolerant members of Congress and local newspapers that publish "derogatory" articles about the US or Israel (Fichtner 2011).

The counterhegemonic function of this part of Gabriel's project was also evident in its prominent place in the preface to her first book:

And yet, there are still Americans who are unable or unwilling to recognize the nature or the extent of the threat presented by radical Islam. Whether motivated by naïve wishful thinking or rigid political correctness, they assert that Islam is a "moderate," "tolerant," and "peaceful" religion that has been hijacked by "extremists." They ignore the repeated calls to jihad, Islamic holy war, emanating from the government-controlled mosques of so-called moderate Islamic countries such as Egypt, Pakistan, and Indonesia. They refuse to accept that in the Muslim world, extreme is *mainstream* (2006, xi).

In a similar strategy of sarcasm, Gabriel wrote: "Our leaders and politicians bend over backward to tell us how sweetly wonderful Islam is, and that most Muslims are moderate, that a few radicals have hijacked this unbelievably sweet poetry called the Koran..." (2006, 156).

Gabriel's ulterior focus on enemies domestic was manifest in her chapter titled, "The Ivy-Covered Fifth Column", where she engaged the more leftist influence in the academy. Then, in the chapter, "Societies Are Not Created Equal", Gabriel's focus was less about Islamic society than our own, and specifically about the Western governmentality of multiculturalism.<sup>239</sup> The following chapters—"Is Islam a Peaceful Religion," and "Political Correctness Gone Mad"—continued to center and subvert the more progressive culture and its politics of truth.

Gabriel's second book, *They Must Be Stopped*, was also marked by the dubious content that had nothing to do with the nation's newest foreign enemy, and everything to do with the religious conservatives' domestic rivals, typified by this passage:

Because of the rise of political correctness, we have the additional burden of facing people within our own borders—government officials, academics, journalists, and others—who dismiss the threat we're up against, blame America or Israel as the cause the conflict, treat anyone who speaks out against

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<sup>239</sup> Spurning the dominant societal norms of politics of truth that legitimizes multiculturalism, Gabriel wrote: "I believe the degraded state of Arab societies is caused by Islam," she says. "It has spawned generations of people who celebrate death over life, who glorify mass murderers, who exhibit a lack of forgiveness and instead have the drive for revenge as taught by the Koran" (2006, 189).

Islamofascism as an “intolerant bigot”, or treat Islamofascists as oppressed victims. These purveyors of political correctness are foolishly and dangerously aiding and abetting the rising tide of Islamofascism (2008, 208).

This counterhegemonic project continued in a more banal, everyday fashion in her ACT! for America e-mails, as we saw earlier in her co-centering of radical Islam and its “politically-correct enablers.” Typical of the ACT! habitus in this strategy was her October 17, 2009 e-mail which announced a Washington DC metro area screening of the documentary, “An American Tragedy.” The documentary detailed how two reconciled fathers who had lost their sons to “Islam” in a dramatic way faced an additional nightmare: *their government*. At the screening, conservative experts on the topic of Islam—in this case, McCarthy, Pipes, Gaffney, and others—were on hand to explain what is happening to our country, and why it was that these fathers “confronted an American government that seemed in denial” and why this is “a film that Hollywood would not make,” and “the media would not report.” Nearly every statement was counterhegemonic in function, delegitimizing or subverting the various parts of the more progressive regime of truth.

Most ACT! e-mails functioned like Pipes’s and Spencer’s surveillance technologies of Jihad Watch, Islamist Watch, and Campus Watch; that is, in an everyday, banal mode of identity politics by taking advantage of emerging opportune resources from the day’s news. What “news” that was selected was that which could be politicized, or rendered politically performative. Typical was the on October 7, 2011 ACT! e-mail, “Anwar al-Awlaki—bridge builder?”, which started by delegitimizing the various components of the more progressive establishment (Figure 10-6):

Figure 10-6: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 7 October 2011

**Dear David,**

**Over the past several weeks we have talked a lot about “information warfare,” and how the Muslim Brotherhood and its front organizations in America have used it to successfully deceive and mislead many government officials, military leaders, members of the media, and academics.**

**This past September 11th, national security and terrorism correspondent Patrick Poole [posted a well-researched commentary](#) exposing how government Muslim outreach programs have frequently failed, leaving government officials with egg on their faces.**

**These programs often fail because too many in government fall for the disinformation they are fed. Regardless of the reason—ignorance, political correctness, gullibility, naivete’, willful blindness—the fact remains that these**

Then the e-mail continued in counterhegemonic fashion by delegitimizing the “establishment media” (Figure 10-7):

Figure 10-7: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 7 October 2011

**The “establishment media” play an important role in the Muslim Brotherhood information warfare campaign. ... Here are just two of Poole’s posts. Even if you don’t read them, the titles tell it all.**

[Rewind: New York Times hailed Awlaki as “a new generation of Muslim leader”](#)

[Rewind: NPR says Awlaki can “build bridges between Islam and the West”](#)

**Anwar al-Awlaki—“bridge builder.” It would be comic if it weren’t so tragic.**

ACT! For America’s e-mails during the beginning of the election year of 2012 were similar, with Islam increasingly decentered, functioning merely as a segue for the more central content that subverted the Obama Administration and/or some other authoritative element of the more progressive society. On January 17, 2012, for example, the ACT! e-mail was “Obama terrorism advisor distortions,” citing Pipes’s and Spencer’s protégé, Raymond Ibrahim, who “recently posted an enlightening and troubling column on FrontPageMagazine about one of President Obama’s top counter-terrorism advisors.” Ibrahim’s (and now Gabriel’s) purpose was to subversively mock Joint Intelligence Task Force for Combating Terrorism’s (and National Intelligence University adjunct military faculty) Navy Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, and delegitimize his two year-old book, *Militant Islamist Ideology: Understanding the Global Threat* (2010).

Also typifying this pervasive feature was the e-mail two days later, on January 19: “Obama administration and the Muslim Brotherhood.” The e-mail forwarded an article by Barry Rubin, whom—as noted in the literature review—Said (1996) had lumped together with Lewis and Pipes as pro-Israel scholars who “make sure that the [Islamic] threat is kept before our eyes.” The rest of this election year’s e-mails from ACT! for America followed suit. When they didn’t explicitly mention Obama in the e-mail subject line, they nearly always did in the body text, or by implication. Her May 17, 2012 e-mail, for example, derided the Pentagon leadership for ordering a review of the curricula related to Islam at its Joint Professional Military Education centers (Figure 10-8):

Figure 10-8: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 7 May 2012

**Dear David,**

**The Pentagon recently announced that it’s reviewing its training materials to eliminate “offensive” statements.**

**The Obama administration has purged all references to radical Islam from its national strategic threat assessments.**

**Madness is on the march. Shockingly, our country’s leaders are in effect allowing the Muslim Brotherhood to help determine our counterterrorism policies!**

After the Republican Convention, Gabriel's e-mails more diligently framed the Islamo-Leftist alliance conspiracy to Islamize America that Horowitz and Pipes had begun. On August 6, 2012, the subject of Gabriel's e-mail was "The purge continues," and noted how "The Obama administration has already purged all references to radical Islam from its strategic threat assessments." Her next e-mail on August 9, 2012, thanked ACT! patriots for the "over 20,000" email letters they sent to the U.S. House and Senate in support of the five Members of Congress who "had the courage to raise questions about Muslim Brotherhood influence in our government." ACT!'s e-mail on October 8, 2012 seized upon the opportunity delegitimize the Obama Administration's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs as ostensibly preferring to destroy an officer's career rather than stand up to the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in the U.S. government (Figure 10-9):

Figure 10-9: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 8 October 2012

**Dear David,**

**Dozens of Muslim organizations, including many connected to the Muslim Brotherhood, have successfully destroyed the career of an exemplary Army officer.**

**Of course, they couldn't have done it without the complicity of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey.**

**According to the Thomas More Law Center release below (highlights added), General Dempsey "publicly excoriated Lt. Col. (LTC) Matthew Dooley, a 1994 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a highly decorated combat veteran."**

Gabriel then informed us that this Army officer's case at National Defense University wasn't an isolated incident (Figure 10-10):

Figure 10-10: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 8 October 2012

**LTC Dooley's "offense" was the course he taught at the Joint Forces Staff College entitled "Islamic Radicalism." When 57 Muslim organizations objected, Gen. Dempsey fired LTC Dooley from his teaching position and ordered a negative evaluation.**

**This is not a unique situation. There is an ongoing purge in our national defense and law enforcement departments to remove ANY reference to Islam deemed "offensive" to the Muslim Brotherhood.**

This series of red-white-and-blue e-mails leading up to the general election in 2012 ended on November 9 with a post-loss subject "What Now?", and subtitle "Following in the footsteps of our founding fathers." In it, Gabriel's partner, Guy Rodgers, took on one of the organization's more reflexive members who complained that ACT! e-mails were becoming "polarizing" in their focus on the Obama Administration, and wondered why the organization doesn't work *with* the



Administration instead. The response was opportunity for more domestic cultural struggle (Figure 10-11):

Figure 10-11: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 9 November 2012

- 1) Attorney General Eric Holder's exchange with House Judiciary Chairman Lamar Smith. Rep. Smith asked Holder repeatedly if "radical Islam" COULD have been a motive for many of the homegrown terrorists we had arrested. Holder literally tied himself in rhetorical knots trying to avoid answering.**
- 2) John Brennan, President Obama's top counterterrorism advisor, has repeatedly dismissed any notion that "jihad" refers to violence against non-Muslims or that Muslims, who refer to themselves as "jihadists," should be characterized that way. Brennan's position is that jihad only refers to a personal striving to be a good Muslim. This may be appealing to Western sensibilities but it's not the way jihad is characterized in the vast majority of passages in the Qur'an and the most authoritative hadith.**
- 3) In the 9/11 commission report, the terms "jihadist," "jihad," "Muslim," and "Islam," appeared a total of 625 times. In the Obama administration's 2009 "National Intelligence Strategy" report, those terms did not appear once. They were completely stripped out of our intelligence assessment.**
- 4) The Pentagon report that examined the Ft. Hood massacre did not include a single reference to jihad, radical Islam, or any other related term in the body of the report. Instead, it characterized the attack as "workplace violence." This in spite of the fact that Nidal Hasan's behavior and words in the years leading up to the attack, as well as his shouting "Allahu Akbar"**

And—predictably by this point—the e-mail continued on in similar fashion, with each sentence carefully mentioning the Obama administration in connection with the Islamization of America conspiracy (Figure 10-12):

Figure 10-12: ACT! for America e-mail excerpt, 9 November 2012

- 7) As I stated in my Wednesday email, the Obama White House has opened its doors to numerous Muslims who are leaders of or connected to Muslim Brotherhood affiliated organizations.**
- I could provide many other examples, the most recent of which would be the Obama administration's demonstrably false claim that an obscure film on YouTube triggered the assault on our embassy in Cairo and our consulate in Benghazi.**
- The course set by this administration regarding radical Islam could not be clearer. It is a dangerous course that is compromising our national security**

In conclusion, Brigitte Gabriel's threat writing in the decade after 9/11—rather than any attempt at a professional assessment of the threat related to Islam—functioned as a counterhegemonic form of identity politics, or the act of the political—the identification or narration of the friendly self and the dangerous enemy other—both foreign and domestic.

First, on the “self” part of this political binary, in addition the apparent role of Gabriel herself functioning as a self-identifying symbol or subject position for the conservative movement, her ACT! for America technology and its banal, everyday e-mails functioned not to produce objective knowledge about the threat, but rather to allow her market to vicariously share in her everyday struggle. Through her token, symbolic, everyday Patriot Partner giving program, banal letter-writing to members of Congress, forms of participation in self-governance or self-security like the “Congressional Scorecard,” and through self-aggrandizing, self-disciplining moves, the morally-superior, self-defined and self-governing Patriot and minuteman were interpellated.

Second, in the enemies foreign part of the political binary, Gabriel’s counter-narration of the Islamic threat was politically performative in two ways. It was so systematically and defiantly heretical and unorthodox in relation to normative security writing that it tacitly functioned to subvert the more progressive regime of truth’s threat narrative regarding Islam, and—by extension—that more progressive establishment. And, its binary-producing moves of naturalizing difference between the Islamic other and the Judeo-Christian self functioned mainly to fix the identity of the latter.

Third, in the enemies domestic segment of the political binary, all of Gabriel’s threat assessments and commentary ostensibly about America’s newest foreign enemy—Islam—contained this non-sequitur mass at the center about conservative movement’s traditional enemies domestic—the Left—including the government bureaucracies, mainstream media and academia, as well as the more progressive societal doxa.

## CONCLUSIONS

*Indeed, my real argument is that Orientalism is... a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world.*

—Edward Said (1978, 12)

This inquiry focused on a segment of U.S. public discourse on Islam and even Islamization in the decade after 9/11 that history might classify as the “Green Scare,” following the historical colored convention of scares over perceived threats from the East. The specific public discourse in question was the one lodged entirely within the U.S. conservative movement, and outside the circle of professionals, or outside of government institutions, academia, mainstream media, and so on—the realm that Bourdieu called “popular.” It specifically explored how the threat writing that portrayed Islam(ization) as a threat functioned politically at both the domestic and identity or cultural level, and how such political factors played a role in this discourse’s expansion throughout the post-9/11 decade.

The following discussion will organize the research’s conclusions, reflect on their implications at both the practical and more formal, theoretical levels, and suggest opportunities for further research. First, however, we should briefly reexamine the puzzles and the associated substantive literature that formed the genesis of this project.

### 1. Thinking Politically

The genesis of this project was based on three more plainly obvious, superficial features of U.S. popular security discourse on the topic of Islam—features that seemed to defy the prevailing characterizations of it in the growing body of substantive literature.

First, this popular threat discourse offered not merely a more pessimistic *corrective* but an entirely opposite *counter* to the prevailing “Islam is peace” frame and the corresponding terrorist/Islam distinction maintained by security professionals, the academic community, the White House, and other societal institutions where authoritative knowledge about security threats is produced. Second, while such a reaction might seem normal in the immediate and highly emotional aftermath of 9/11, this discourse that portrayed the entire religion of Islam as a threat persisted and expanded to the point of prompting intervention by the OIC, U.N., and the U.S. government. Third, in the early Obama administration, the counternarrative on Islam began to morph into a threat conspiracy over the Islamization of America. As if snatched from the front pages of the tabloid press—this threat narrative claimed that the significantly Judeo-Christian and staunchly secular country of 300 million people—the vast majority of whom of whom polls confirmed admitted that they personally did not even know a Muslim—faced the present danger of its Constitution being replaced by sharia, or Islamic law, via a secretive conspiracy or “stealth jihad” by its tiny population of mostly “moderate and mainstream” Muslim-Americans, to use Pew’s characterization of them. As part of this scheme, it was also maintained that a Muslim-American “underworld” of clandestine agents had achieved “deep penetration,” having secured “sensitive positions” throughout the government, and were working to gradually install sharia.

This inward turn in the counternarrative’s threat axis was rendered more puzzling since it emerged about the same time when the broader questions concerning the threat from parts of Islam’s continuum had been settled—when, for example, social polling revealed that al-Qaeda had been marginalized by Muslims worldwide, and when other analyses suggested that it had been marginalized by even key segments of the more committed Islamist movements from which it had enjoyed much of its support. And, while the notion of such an Islamization of the nation had not materialized in an authoritative professional security assessment, the topic quickly became pervasive in some of the central identifying institutions of the conservative movement, in the threat writing of prominent conservative security experts, and in the speech of a significant segment of conservative political and religious elite.

By the time of the mid-term elections in 2010, a segment of U.S. conservatives seemed persuaded that Islamization was a present danger to the nation. Conservative lawmakers in almost half of the nation’s states, for example, introduced legislation to contain sharia—a term that these elected officials themselves were at pains to even describe—and seventy percent of the Republican stronghold state of Oklahoma voted for the “Save Our State” amendment to contain the nefarious

plot to Islamize their state, despite the fact that almost no one in the state had ever met a member of this minority faith community. The apogee of this little scare seemed to be in 2010, when GOP Presidential front-runner Newt Gingrich said in a major speech to the American Enterprise Institute, “I believe Shariah is a mortal threat to the survival of freedom in the United States and in the world as we know it.”

### ***The Literature***

Related characterizations of these puzzles had prompted investigative journalists and scholars alike to search for answers. The study’s review of this body of substantive literature revealed a predisposition to interpret this discourse in familiar terms, reflected in characterizations such as the latest “phobia,” “new Orientalism,” “new racism,” “new anti-Semitism,” “new McCarthyism,” and so on. The last two and most significant contributions to the literature that emerged in 2011 and 2012—both self-characterized under the frame of “Islamophobia”—embraced this paradigm and joined it with Said’s (1997) characterization of this U.S. discourse on Islam as a handmaiden to Holy Land geopolitics, or the Zionist irredentist struggle to reacquire the Jewish nation’s ancient biblical homeland. The most significant and most recent work on the discourse was *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims* (2012), by Nathan Lean, a student of Georgetown University’s authority on Western and Islamic relations, John Esposito. Lean characterized the discourse as “the racism du jour,” promoted and escalated by a few prominent right-wing Jewish and evangelical “Islamophobes” and their pro-Israel financial backers (Saif 2013). In this paradigm of hatred of Muslims/advocates for Israel, Lean pointed out that all of the people involved in this practice of securitizing Islam “espouse fervent anti-Muslim sentiment on the one hand, and ardent support of all things Israel on the other,” and that the large portion of the discourse came from shadowy Jewish organizations “connected in some ways to the occupied territories.”

*Prima facie*, this paradigm seemed to enjoy an element of discursive closure. A cursory reading of the threat writing of some conservative experts on Islam seemed to corroborate the notion that this was nothing more than a racialized regime of representation, naturalizing difference between the Judeo-Christian “civilized man” inside and Muslim “savage” outside, with the obvious effect of legitimizing the Likud-led bloc’s strategic expansionism into Palestinian territory. The geopolitical utility of the “savages” surrounding Israel had obvious appeal to the practice’s Zionist donors, creating sufficient uncertainty regarding the identity of the people whom Israel’s policies were displacing to demobilize progressive attempts at forging a reconciliation based on withdrawal. The

political paralysis that ensued from this uncertainty in the U.S. allowed Israel's Zionist elite to continue to rapidly change facts on the ground with illegal settlements in the West Bank.

### *Another Factor?*

Yet, the literature's broad consensus in this characterization notwithstanding, nearly all of the literature contained remarks—often in passing, as if “common sense”—that yet another new variant to a very old category of practice was *also* involved in its production: *politics*, including the politics of identity at the domestic level. Sheehi (2011), for example, while seeing “Islamophobia” as essentially “underscored by racism and a desire to control and manage dissent,” also concluded that it had a utilitarian component, namely, “to promote political and economic goals, both domestically and abroad” (2011, 65, 32). Similarly, Ernst (2013) described “the political angle” of “attacks on Islam, noting how they were also linked with criticism of President Obama,” and especially when the enemies list is expanded to include “leftist radicals.” Corroborating these kinds of passing statements in the literature, CAIR (2013) found in its survey of Muslim-American leadership in 2011 that this religious and largely racial minority believed they were “being used as a political tool” and “no longer considered a community as much as a platform.”

Yet—for some reason—this more domestic political factor was not incorporated into the conclusions or central characterizations of the literature, and had not been part of any research directive.

### ***The Research Directive and Method***

I took this remaining insufficiently scrutinized implication that this discourse was at least in some way a function of domestic politics as my object of inquiry. Specifically, I examined how this threat writing functioned politically at the domestic level—that is, at the level of identity or cultural politics—and how distinctly political factors played a role in this threat discourse's expansion throughout the post-9/11 decade.

Here, I extended Said's (1997) only axiom related to “all discourse on Islam”—that it “*has an interest in some authority or power*”—beyond geopolitics to domestic or cultural politics. The reasoning that undergirded this notion seemed fairly straightforward: If Jewish and Christian Zionist interests within the U.S. conservative movement had found the threat of Islam useful in the geopolitical struggle for their faith's biblical homeland, then isn't it also likely that these same elements and other parts of the U.S. conservative movement might find it similarly useful in their cultural struggle at

home? After all, cannot we readily outline other topics of societal importance that segments of the U.S. conservative movement has politicized, or used as “wedge issues” in this post-9/11 decade alone to advance their broader cultural agenda?

To sensitize the data to this political proposition—to help us think politically, that is—I crafted a more poststructuralist conceptual framework, informed by social philosophers like Gramsci, Foucault, and Bourdieu, that viewed public discourse and its agents as fundamentally political. This segment of the theoretical literature corroborated the under-scrutinized notion in the substantive literature that power or political interestedness was also a factor in the production of this threat discourse.

My sociological approach was synthetic. On the one hand, it was akin to a Foucauldian genealogy, examining the discourse historically, from its eventful conditions of emergence, and from the perspective of power; that is, in terms of its apparatus of power—including its tactics and strategies of power. On the other hand, it was also an interpretive or “relational” sociology in the Bourdieuan sense—that is, placing the text in context, or placing the micro-level strategies of the agents involved in the broader macro-level conditions of emergence that rendered that practice meaningful, materially enabled it, and otherwise incentivized it or made it possible.

The first half of the empirical inquiry focused at the macro-level, or the level contextual, structural factors. I examined things like culture, social structure, and social-psychological structure, as well as the path-dependent historical contingencies or event-stream in which it was lodged. Because this social practice was exclusive to one U.S. political movement, I conceptualized these conditions of emergence in the more interdisciplinary terms of widely-cited social movement theorists: First, I explored the culturally-resident political framing structure that rendered the discourse meaningful. Second, I examined the politically-relevant social-structural resources, especially the media institutions and philanthropic network that formed much of this discourse’s political economy. And, third, I studied the more historical and eventful political openings or opportunity structure that otherwise enabled or incentivized it. The second half of the project focused at the micro-level, or the agentic framing and resource mobilization strategies surrounding the discourse. Here, I profiled three representative categories of individuals widely recognized to be the discourse’s principal polemicists, selecting them based on criteria that sought distinctiveness in terms of their worldview, their epistemological habitus, and the kinds of organizations that they operated. The strategies of these individuals—in addition to those of the institutions examined in first part—revealed more of how the discourse functioned politically.

## 2. Conclusions Regarding Politically-Relevant Structural Factors

So, what were the research conclusions? The ways in which this discourse functioned politically and what political factors were involved in its emergence and expansion—as with most social phenomena—was a complex story or genealogy, unfolding in each new chapter and section as the structural, eventful or contextual categories of the discourse and the strategies of its principal agents were examined. As expected, the research demonstrated that there was much more going on in this discourse than protecting the nation from the threat of Islam—as its proponents would have us think. It also demonstrated that there was a good bit more going on here than xenophobia for purposes of Holy Land geopolitical struggle—as the critics of this discourse in the later literature argued.

Beginning with the macro-level political factors that were examined in the first three chapters, the research did not merely reveal *what* political factors were involved, but—more importantly—it revealed *the ways* in which they functioned.

### ***Political Framing Structure***

At the more discursive and cultural levels, the research revealed that the historically-shaped and enacted building materials, schemas, cognitive frames, recurring strategies of action, or mental structures that functioned as the foundation for this discourse were not merely or even mainly those that the literature had led us to anticipate; that is, frames of racism and xenophobia on the one hand, and of those of struggle for the Holy Land on the other. The main frames involved were distinctly political and encompassed both dyads of the political; that is, the identification of enemies foreign and domestic on the one hand, with the latter in terms of infiltrators and traitor, and identification of the exceptional yet vulnerable self on the other. In other words, this latest conspiracy of foreign agents infiltrating the homeland with the assistance of familiar traitors, was incentivized and rendered credible to no small degree by the rich cultural repertory of distinctly political schemas that a few of the more entrepreneurial conservative actors could and did transpose onto current contexts, with an apparent expectation of gaining political advantage.

Even the more blatant political strategy of linking enemies foreign to those domestic was incentivized by these cultural antecedents. Within this rhetorical commonplace, the “enemy within” was a culturally-fixed subject position whose genealogy could be traced from the beginning of Western Civilization, through the inquisitions, through the conspiracies over Free Masons,



Illuminati, and witches, to the loyalty oaths of the American Revolution, to the life-or-death struggle with Catholicization, and so on. Dubiously, in historical threat writing that included this element, the frame of the infiltrating foreign enemy was almost always tethered that of the traitor, or disloyal citizen who from that position on the inside functions as a crucial accomplice, unlocking the gate, aiding and abetting. Resistant, weaker, or otherwise vulnerable elements within the population have always been framed as such agents of the foreign enemy. Recall, for example, how both the trade unions and women's fight for day care in the nineteenth century were similarly framed in terms of the enemy within linked to foreign elements, and, how—after World War I—the Bolsheviks turned out to be politically useful, with politicians deploying this new rhetorical resource to frame their domestic opponents as closet sympathizers with the nation's foreign enemy.

### ***Politically-Relevant Social Resource Structure***

In the more non-discursive, social-structural realm, the research revealed that there were two politically-relevant social resources that also played a significant role in this threat discourse's expansion throughout the post-9/11 decade: 1) its political-institutional base; and 2) the philanthropic base that funded its principal agents and large-scale productions.

#### *The Discourse's Political-Institutional Base*

First, the research revealed how this discourse's social-structural base could only tenuously be categorized within the literature's prevailing characterization. The most tendentious and apparently influential parts of this threat discourse were disseminated not merely by what we could characterize as a fringe cottage industry within the U.S. conservative movement with connections to hate groups and the Zionist movement, but by some of the movement's more central identifying institutions—institutions that were created for the broader culture war, and not in a single case founded upon the basis of far right wing causes or even for struggle for the Holy Land.

Moreover, these iconic institutions of the conservative movement were not merely complicit in this discourse—as if they were aiding and abetting the key proponents—but were the principal agents of this discourse themselves. By generously publishing, and otherwise promoting those polemicists who were predisposed to use the latest “news” regarding Islam as a micro-platform to engage in domestic cultural politics, these central identifying institutions of the U.S. conservative movement not only provided these agents with necessary authority and credibility outside “the establishment”, they created them and—by extension—the discourse. The *National Review* and

Encounter Books created Andrew McCarthy; *The Washington Times* and the Bradley Foundation and Scaife funds created Frank Gaffney and Daniel Pipes; *Fox News Channel* created Pamela Geller, and so on.

Recall, for example, how the *National Review*—the foremost organ of the conservative cultural struggle since 1955—selected the unknown McCarthy to offer the politically antagonistic rebuttal to the president’s rapprochement speech to Muslims worldwide, and to produce other such works as “The President Stands with Sharia”. Recall how the *Washington Times* published everything and anything related to Islamization—no matter how fantastic or politically antagonistic—that Pipes and Gaffney managed to write. Each of the almost daily headlines like Gaffney’s “Obama’s Islamist problem,” or Pipes’s “Obama: My Muslim Faith,” made some weak uncontextualized reference to some purported threat related to Islam, then went on to delegitimize the Obama administration in the discussion. Recall the strategy of Fox News Channel that over the course of many separate interviews always managed to pan the cameras across the cover of Geller’s *Stop the Islamization of America* just before the cable giant interviewed her on topics related to Islam broadly, for which she had no orthodox cultural capital. And recall how the conservative publishing centers—Regnery and Encounter—published everything that fed the counternarrative and the Islamization conspiracy, including such works as Horowitz’s *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left*, and McCarthy’s *The Grand Jihad: How Islam and the Left Sabotage America*, and his *How Obama Embraces Islam’s Sharia Agenda*.

These instances were not anomalies; they were typical or representative of the broader practice by these central identifying institutions of the conservative apparatus of power. This strategy was not limited to these more iconic institutions. Thousands of such articles carrying the counter frame on Islam and the panic over Muslim-Americans’ plot to Islamize America appeared on the pages of other mainstream conservative magazines, like *American Spectator*, and *Human Events*, and newspapers like the *New York Sun* and *New York Post*, other cable television sites like Christian Broadcasting Network, as well as newer more fully ultraconservative e-magazines such as *WorldNetDaily*, *Pajamas* (now PJ) *Media*, and *FrontPageMagazine*.

Importantly, none of these media, publishing, or other institutions in which this threat discourse was exclusively housed were created to produce disinterested knowledge. Like *National Review*, the institutions of Fox News Channel, *Washington Times*, Regnery and Encounter publishers and the others that propagated this discourse were all—as seen in their history and mission statements—created as “conservative” instruments for cultural politics, or counterhegemonic

struggle; that is, opposition to the dominant, more progressive doxa. In this vein, *none* of them could be characterized as created for farther right-wing causes, or for Holy Land geopolitics.

#### *The Threat Discourse's Philanthropic Support Network*

Second, the research also suggested that the central conservative philanthropists involved played *an even more important role* than those of the narrower right wing or expressly Zionist ones, as the literature led us to anticipate. Again, the literature, beginning with Said and extending through the major works that emerged late in the post-9/11 decade, leads us to assume that there are mainly xenophobic and Zionist geopolitical motivations for this discourse. Bulkin and Nevel (2012) had provided the most extensive analysis of the discourse's political economy within Zionism, revealing how some of the philanthropic institutions that had funded the discourse's principal agents were lodged within the broader Zionist movement apparatus, having also funded organizations associated with the Israeli settler movement, and multiple organizations that were engaged in propaganda or hasbara initiatives designed to justify the Likud-led expansionism. The research here both deepened this notion and problematized it. Pro-Zionist philanthropists, as it turned out, were *only part* of the threat discourse's political-economy, and—from this perspective of actual funding provided—apparently *the smaller part*.

In the case of all of the main philanthropic organizations that funded the post-9/11 Islam(ization) threat discourse, except one—the one run by the Chernicks—their giving records, mission statements, and affiliations of their boards positioned them into one of two categories, either: 1) conservative with significant Zionist emphasis, or 2) plain conservative with no (or virtually no) Zionist interest. The largess of conservative patrons with Zionist ideological motivations notwithstanding, the largest donors to the principal framers of the Islam(ization) threat had long been the central patrons of the U.S. conservative movement broadly, with comparatively little or no Zionist sympathies in either their giving records or mission statements. The criterion for funding in the Scaife foundation—which gave the lion's share of the funding to the threat discourse's principal agents—was solidly conservative, described by the *Washington Post* with the headline “Funding Father of the Right.” Similarly, the Bradley Foundation, which was described by Media Transparency as “the country's largest and most influential right-wing organization,” had given the next largest amount to the threat discourse's principal agents, yet it similarly had little apparent Zionist interest. Statements in the Bradley Foundation's annual reports revealed that it intended to fund those U.S. organizations deemed by its Board to be important in the strengthening

of the central institutions of the conservative movement. Together, the Scaife and Bradley foundations—with historical track records of giving tied directly to conservative cultural politics—gave *twice* as much to fund this discourse as did the patrons with Zionist interests.

### ***Political Opportunity Structure***

At the more contingent, eventful level, the research added a third new dimension to the literature, revealing key elements of the discourse’s opportunity “structure.” The conjuncture of three elements within this category of political opportunity emerged as significant.

#### *The Expanded Conservative Enclave of Counterhegemonic Institutions*

First, in the realm of created openings, the research revealed that the kind of threat politics practiced by this segment of the U.S. conservative movement in the decade after 9/11 was enabled, incentivized, and rendered credible by two related factors at the level of social structure. The first one was the movement’s deliberate counterhegemonic strategy of institution-building to create a distinctly conservative knowledge enclave or parallel sub-society—a more traditionally conservative state within a more secular and progressive state. The second was the rapid expansion of that sub-society into the alternative media during the first half of the post-9/11 decade. Many conservatives—as evident throughout this inquiry—for decades had been acutely aware that each society has its regime of truth; its general politics of truth—its elite or doctrinal consensus that was perceived as prejudiced against the conservative worldview. It was for this reason that—beginning with *National Review* in 1955, and continuing with *Pajamas Media* and others in the largely post-9/11 era of the alternative media, the U.S. conservative movement had pursued such a counterhegemonic strategy of alternative institution-building. The expansion of this media-institutional enclave presented the opening or the opportunity for more dissident, subversive forms of cultural politics for one simple reason: it effectively bypassed altogether the more progressive, dominant, or legitimate knowledge society, or regime of truth, and thereby reduced its capacity for repression or sanction of this and other politically-resistant discourses. In this vein, the aforementioned conservative institutions that exclusively housed this threat discourse were not only counterhegemonic in themselves, they were part of a broader conservative counterhegemonic strategy to create an alternative, parallel society, wherein the movement’s struggle for the nation’s culture could be advanced. In this, they followed the pattern of marginalized political factions from Poland’s Solidarity to Egypt’s Ikhwan, who created their own parallel, samizdat-like universe of

dissident institutions, effectively bypassing and subverting the more official, dominant, and progressive knowledge society.

### *The Alliance of Conservative Elite*

Second, the research revealed the existence of solidarity for the threat narrative among a segment of prominent political and religious elite, whose chief strategy of action and habitus in their public life was neither xenophobic, immigration politics, nor Holy Land geopolitics, but decidedly domestic cultural politics.

Recall that, by the mid-point of the post-9/11 decade, there was a polarized positioning regarding this discourse, based upon which political party one was affiliated with. It was only conservative political and religious elite who were sympathetic to the Islam(ization) threat narrative, and this in apparent deliberate juxtaposition to the Democratic elite who expressly avoided either aspect of this threat discourse.

Within this apparent strategy, solidarity for the Islam(ization) threat discourse was expressed in varying degrees among all of the front-running GOP presidential candidates except former Governor Romney, Congressman Ron Paul, and future potential candidate, Governor Chris Christie, and—yet—it was curiously *absent entirely* from all Democrat political figures. Among members of the U.S. Congress, it was similarly *only* Republicans who propagated the counternarrative and related conspiracy regarding Islamization. When Republican New York Representative Peter King chaired House Homeland Security Committee hearings on Muslim-American radicalization, it was only the Democrats who were united in their criticism of them, and only Republicans defending them, with one of King’s GOP colleagues praising the hearings as a way to “end the era of political correctness.” In addition to these political elite, the threat discourse also enjoyed solidarity across some of the more prominent U.S. religious and cultural elite.

Just as dubious was how the Islam(ization) threat narrative’s attendant practice of political frame bridging—linking the movement’s enemies foreign and domestic, religious and political, Islam and the Left—was prevalent in this segment of the conservative political elite.

Moreover, this puzzling solidarity for this threat narrative among more than a few conservative elite was also marked by significant anti-rationalism; that is, the systematically exclusion of inquisitiveness and critical thinking that attended the practice of statecraft and civic leadership, suggesting that much more was going on here than securing the nation from the threat of Islam(ization). Recall, for example, how the Republican legislators in two dozen conservative states

who introduced legislation with the intent to restrict judges from consulting sharia in their rulings, did so despite the fact that state judges were already prohibited from overriding U.S. law, and despite the fact that they could not even give instances of how sharia was being used in the courtroom, and despite the fact that the sharia threat reports from the main conservative security policy advocacy organizations that significantly produced this security concern were shown to be baseless if not fraudulent. And, recall how, when pressed, these lawmakers introducing this anti-sharia legislation could not even explain what sharia was. Observing this anti-rationalist solidarity among many of the more prominent conservative elite, Sheila Musaji—editor of the *American Muslim*—wrote hyperbolically, in obvious exasperation, that “The GOP has declared war on American Muslims.”

#### *Crisis amidst U.S. Neo, Paleo, and Social Conservatives*

Lastly, in the category of broader and even external contexts, there were two related moods or social-psychological structures that enabled or incentivized the threat discourse’s agents to politicize Islam. First, there were accentuated crises within three of the U.S. conservative movement’s central and relevant constituencies—neo, paleo, and social conservatives—in which this threat discourse was housed. These crises, in addition to causing a lurch rightward, normalized more extreme discourse (and its agents) that opposed the perceived sources of the threats to Western civilizational hegemony and domestic cultural identity, identified variously as Islam and progressivism, or euphemistically, multiculturalism and secularism—or, the metaphor that captured them both, Islam(ization). The Islamization metaphor was politically useful in more direct ways; it usefully linked the two worldviews that are perceived to be hostile to traditional America and its Judeo-Christian identity—global Islam and the local Left, and tried to advance a panic over the former to make domestic political gains against the latter.

### **3. Conclusions Regarding How the Discourse Functioned Politically**

Shifting to the micro-level—that is, to the discursive political strategies of the agents involved, the research added another dimension to the literature by demonstrating the distinct ways that this discourse (and its agents) functioned politically, especially in terms of identity or cultural politics.

### ***The Overarching Strategy: Seizing Islam as a Field for Cultural Politics***

It seems especially hard to escape the conclusion that this threat discourse functioned as a distinctive strategy by the more entrepreneurial segments of the U.S. conservative movement, who—in the emotion-laden wake of 9/11 and its rupture to the nation’s security master narrative—seized Islam as another opportune site to advance their ongoing project of cultural politics. In the case of the movement’s iconic media institutions, such as Fox News Channel and the *Washington Times*, along with the surveillance apparatuses of Horowitz’s Jihad Watch and Pipes’s Campus Watch and Islamist Watch, for example—every possible bit of “news” related to the movement’s newest foreign enemy—no matter how trivial—was seized as an opportunistic platform from which the domestic enemies could be engaged. In some cases—such as that of the “ground zero mosque”—such “news” of jihad was even manufactured for purposes of cultural politics.

### ***The Four Moves of Cultural Politics***

Within this broader strategy of securitizing and politicizing Islam, there were four supporting sub-strategies or moves of cultural politics. Before examining these four moves, it is worth mentioning two related observations. First, these categorical strategies of action that emerged from this discourse related to the two dyads of the political, or all project of identity politics: the political outside, others, or enemies, and the political inside, or the friendly self. Again, both of these basic political categories were undergirded by a rich repertory of political frames that were subject to agency, or micro-level discursive tactics or framing strategies enacted by the threat discourse’s principal agents, who creatively transposed them onto current contexts in such a way as to serve the conservative movement’s enduring cultural project. Second, these four moves were present in *virtually all* of the larger productions ostensibly on the threat of Islam or Islamization—by productions which I mean, books, reports, papers, documentaries, blog commentary, e-mail strings, and so on. At least one of these moves was present in *nearly every* production, no matter how trivial, such as blog entries or commentaries.

#### ***1) Counterhegemonic Narration of the Foreign Enemy***

The first move was the counterhegemonic narration of the newest foreign enemy—a narration that functioned less to professionally describe a foreign enemy than to delegitimize the domestic political enemy’s security narrative and—by extension—that enemy itself.

We noted how in the decade after 9/11, many of the U.S. conservative movement's central identifying institutions and their vetted organic experts on the topic of Islam, along with many of the movement's political, religious, and cultural elites, offered *not a corrective* but an oppositional or counter narrative to the "Islam is peace" storyline. In all countercultural production, distinction is the goal; it is central to the economy of production. And in all of Spencer's, Pipes's, and Gabriel's threat writing, the distinction sought was not merely that of opposing the dominant narrative regarding Islam—that is, distinctiveness in the counterevidence put forward, as is normative to professional argumentation and legal adversarialism—but opposing it in *a move of pure negation*.

Counternarratives everywhere function this way. A central act of cultural politics, a counternarrative is always a heretical practice—one that opposes, challenges, undermines, and resists the dominant, normative, official memory, the going orthodoxy. And, they are usually created and maintained by actors—like the social and paleo conservatives in the U.S., and cultural fundamentalists everywhere—who view themselves in crisis, inscribed in positions stigmatized by the more progressive culture and the societal institutions in which it resides.

Therefore, the very existence of this counternarrative suggested its counterhegemonic function. And, in this case, the research revealed that discourse one was obviously intended less as an apolitical description of a threat than a politically performative act aimed at unseating the going orthodoxy—described variously by its proponents as the more leftist "establishment," the Democrats, the Obama administration, and the more progressive societal institutions of the government, academia, and mainstream media.

To this end, this first move of counternarrating the foreign enemy involved the two framing sub-strategies of selection and exclusion. In the first case, these conservative threat writers systematically selected as their sole horizon of visibility that set of objects about Islam that not only typically would not be included anywhere in professional security assessments or intelligence estimates, or even scholarly writing, but those objects that deliberately transgressed societal regulations, or had been relegated to the realm of the unsayable, taboo. In this way, the counternarrative was advanced not by empirically and rigorously working within the normative objects of visibility—that is, to interpret those objects within a modified paradigm—but by *abandoning them altogether* and instead working solely through an alternative realm—a dissident subset of objects of visibility.

The objects that were typically excluded from view in professional security analysis—gratuitous selections from the Quran and other sacred texts that denigrated Muslims and their faith, for



example—were deliberately and defiantly selected and centered by the popular conservative threat writers involved, often constituting their *entire realm* of visibility. The openly Catholic deacon Spencer's (2006) bestseller, *The Truth About Muhammad: Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion*, for example, radically centered all that the more leftist ex-Catholic Karen Armstrong (1991, 2006) felt compelled to exclude in her two biographies of Islam's founder.

In this threat writing, the phrase “politically incorrect” was worn like an identifying badge of honor, and even functioned as subcultural code among U.S. conservatives for *their* discourse. The entire practice, in other words, was not merely one of subversive resistance to the going hegemony of the political enemies, but of self-identification—so much so that the staunchly conservative Regnery publisher developed the trademarked “Politically Incorrect Guide” series, launching Spencer to *New York Times* bestseller status with his *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam*.

In the second and corresponding sub-strategy in political framing that marked conservative threat writing on the topic of Islam(ization) in the decade after 9/11 was systematic, ideological moves of exclusion. Pipes and Spencer, for example—in their own assessments and commentary on the threat of Islam broadly—systematically and dubiously obscured from view entirely the kinds and sources of knowledge—texts and contexts—that were normative to professional, authoritative knowledge, or that professionals would be compelled to include. That they were not sanctioned for this by their patrons, institutional support network, or their broader conservative market is telling.

Again, these two framing strategies within this first move of counternarration of the foreign enemy suggested that this segment of conservative threat writers were not simply making an argument that countered the prevailing view; rather, they were making a much more profound statement about the society from which that prevailing view emerged, resisting it in a move of pure negation.

## **2) *Non-narrative Strategies Subverting the Hegemonic Order***

The second move of cultural politics in this popular conservative post-9/11 threat discourse on Islam was the counterhegemonic *non* or *extra-narrative* strategies. These non-narrative strategies—like the aforementioned narrative strategies—took the form of pure negation, and similarly functioned more implicitly to subvert the more progressive hegemonic order—or, in Pipes's terms, for example—the “establishment,” the “stifling consensus,” or “officialdom.” These counterhegemonic non-narrative strategies included subversive modes of production, dissident rules concerning authority, and the heretical style of threat writing, that is, style marked by sarcasm, strategies of

euphemization, or politically-coded language, and political antagonism—all forms of writing, production, and authority opposite or outside those normative within the circle of professionals.

### *Subversion of Authority*

One non-narrative feature that suggested the threat discourse's counterhegemonic function was its distinctive subversion of societal norms or regulations surrounding authority and the institutions that house those norms. In puritanical moves of pure negation, these conservative popular security experts systematically avoided any intertextuality with those authorities positioned outside of the enclave, no matter how politically benign. In perhaps the oddest and most tell-tale counterhegemonic feature of this discourse, none of the central identifying institutions of the conservative movement that functioned as agents of this threat discourse, and none of the books by conservative threat writers, and none of their more everyday threat writing and commentary, ever favorably or neutrally cited texts or authors housed within the more progressive and dominant knowledge society of educational institutions, government bureaucracies, and the mainstream media—even when it meant that not doing so rendered their counternarrative weaker.

To be clear, this was radically contrary to normal modes of argumentation. In professional debate or courtroom litigation, the disputants often work with the same realm of information, facts, or data, yet bringing it to bear in opposing ways to win the argument. That was *not* what was going on here. The conservative proponents of this discourse were so puritanical in this regard that they could not even work within the same universe of data or sources that the world outside of their narrow movement considered orthodox or authoritative. In all such countercultural production, it is this kind of form that trumps content. In this particular discourse, the form-over-content mode of production was typified by Fox News Channel's repeated commissioning of Geller over any of the thousands of highly credentialed scholars on the subject, for example, to talk about events broadly related to Islam, for which she had no credentials whatsoever.

And, not only did much of conservative threat writing exclude all visibility of the orthodox regime of truth in terms of positive intertextuality, it subverted it through negative intertextuality. Major works related to Islam by authorities celebrated outside of this segment of conservative subculture were heretically mocked in productions by their students or by authors with no credentials in the field whatsoever. We saw, for example, the *Middle East Quarterly* and Forum's express brandishing of authors like the "sea captain and a nuclear engineer in the United States Navy," and another whose credentials were "a writer whose interests include public affairs and

foreign policy,” put forward as authorities on par with the more widely-celebrated authorities on Islam whose works they were criticizing. Such heretical subversion of the more progressive outside was evident in all related modes of production.

In the realm of publishing, we find the same moves of pure negation—negating all of the orthodoxy surrounding publishing of authoritative security writing, shunning the societal norms, and thereby tacitly delegitimizing the broader more progressive knowledge society. The erection of Pipes’s *Middle East Quarterly* was an early strategic pillar in this move, whose litmus test for publishing was to be able to answer “no” to the question: “Is this an article other quarterlies would publish?” Moreover, the vast bulk of threat writing that could be classified within the counternarrative was published exclusively within the conservative knowledge enclave. The threat assessments of even Pipes and Spencer, for example, were propagated in the *New York Post* and the *Washington Times*, but never the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*—in Farah’s *WorldNet Daily*, *National Review Online*, *Human Events*, *PJ (formerly Pajamas) Media*, the *American Thinker*, Catholicism’s *Crisis Magazine*, and obviously Pipes’s *Middle East Quarterly*, Horowitz’s *FrontPage Magazine*, but never in any journal considered by security or intelligence professionals to be authoritative and apolitical.

### *Subversion via Style*

Another non-narrative feature that suggested this discourse’s counterhegemonic function was its distinctive style. A clear signal that a discourse has become more political than professional is when it has broken with professional convention—that is, when it becomes “popular” in the sense that it is recognized as “theirs” by those who are outside the circle of professionals. Three stylistic features of this segment of popular conservative threat writing were politically-performative: sarcasm, political antagonism, and strategies of euphemization.

Firstly, this threat writing was replete with sarcasm, which is a common marker of popular resistance to the legitimizing identity and institutions in every society. For example, the threat writers involved took legitimate words and phrases and placed them in quotations, such as “tiny minority of extremists,” thereby trademarking and infusing them with oppositional meaning, or transforming them into polysemes that functioned both as identifying code within the subculture and as a form of resistance to the broader, dominant culture.

Secondly, this discourse was also replete with political antagonism, or marked by a large sub-cultural lexicon of politically antagonistic signifiers. Recall, for example, the section in Spencer’s

blog, “Why Jihad Watch,” where we found the tip of this politically-antagonistic lexicon, such as the “fifth column” of “dhimmi academics and dhimmi journalists.”

Still another non-narrative move of pure negation within this category of form or style was the strategies of euphemization, degrees of implicitness, or coded language deployed to avoid sanction. The challenge for all of these particular conservative polemicists who advanced the threat of Islam(ization) was to transgress societal norms regarding discourse on this minority faith or its minority or immigrant adherents, while avoiding sanction, or being classified as an “anti-Islam blogger,” and thereby continuing to attract their more centrist philanthropic patrons and moderate conservative market. Recall for example Pipes’s strategy of “careful anti-Islamism” that carefully and intermittently transgressed the societal taboos regarding speech on Islam, thereby subverting the broader, more progressive political culture.

### ***3) Counterhegemonic Narration of Domestic Political Enemy***

The third move within this form of security politics was the counterhegemonic narration of the movement’s traditional domestic political enemy. When we broached the thin outer shell of any of these threat assessments purportedly about the newest foreign enemy—Islam or Islamization—there was nearly always this non-sequitur, political mass at the center. This mass consisted of a segment of words, phrases, or sentences that functioned politically, explicitly delegitimizing some aspect of the conservatives’ domestic political rivals, such as the Obama administration, the rival Democratic Party, their intellectual rivals in the more progressive academic establishments, the Left in general, or the more progressive societal politics of truth and secular culture broadly.

In this regard, the threat discourse’s front-line organizations—Jihad Watch, Islamist Watch, Campus Watch, and ACT! for America, and others—were not mere surveillance apparatuses for purposes of “watching” jihad or Islamists. On the contrary, they were technologies of power that—being discursive in nature—produced the very objects they watched for, much of which had little to do with radical Islam or infiltrating Muslim subversives, and everything to do with the conservatives’ domestic political enemies, the disloyal, traitorous Left, who was now said to be aiding and abetting the destruction of the U.S. via sharia. This more blatant political move of linking the movement’s newest foreign enemy with its traditional domestic one permeated this discourse. In the case of Jihad Watch, this practice of threat politics was to be expected, given its dubious residence in the broader Horowitz apparatus—an apparatus created long ago explicitly and solely to advance the conservative cultural struggle.

#### 4) *Narration of the U.S. Conservative Self*

The fourth move *was what the whole project seemed to be about*. In addition to the politically-performative practice of narrating the political outside—the others, or enemies, both foreign and domestic—the discourse was marked by the corresponding move of all political projects; that is, the narration of the political inside, or the self. Rather than some infrequent, relatively minor practice that merited mention here, the opposite was the case; this segment of post-9/11 conservative threat writing was *shot through* with this feature of narrating the self.

This process of self-identification typically involved two sub-strategies that enacted two basic schemas found in the security writing in earlier eras: 1) self-aggrandizing moves of reaffirming the strong, exceptional and morally superior self that was in decline; and 2) self-disciplining moves of purifying the wayward within that render the body politic vulnerable.

The first move of self-aggrandizement typically involved the (re)positioning the patriotic self in healthy, chauvinistic terms of triumphalism, exceptionalism or superiority. Such self-aggrandizing framing was always juxtaposed to the incoherent frames of civilizational declinism in the face of ascendant competing religious and political ideologies connected to social and paleo conservatives' chief rivals in both the religious and political spheres—the ascendant, globalizing and increasingly resistant, counterhegemonic Islam on the one hand, and the widening progressive cosmopolitanism and secular *Weltanschauung* on the other.

The second move of self-discipline was similar to that exercised in the historical forms of Christian pastoralism, identifying and healing its heretical forms that rendered the body politic vulnerable. This move similarly drew from rich cultural antecedents in the security writing from earlier eras, wherein texts identifying threats outside in terms of the nation's foreign and domestic enemies were replete with identification of its critical vulnerabilities inside, almost always expressed in moral terms. In other words, security was conceptualized not merely as the positive eradication of dangers outside, but in terms of reducing vulnerabilities inside.

This self-disciplinary pattern of framing security from outside threats in terms of purity and health on the inside had its antecedents in the jeremiad literary device common in early colonial security discourse, which lamented the backslidden state of morality or sinfulness of society, and prophesied its downfall if meaningful repentance did not emerge. The everyday productions of conservative threat writing—especially that of Spencer in *Jihad Watch* and Gabriel in her *ACT! for America*—contained these kind self-disciplinary features. They created and sustained subcultural

coherence within the conservative ranks by imposing standards of purity that both interpellated their readers into scripted positions of political activism or subject positions, such as the patriot, and by calling out those designated as the wayward sheep, the heretic, or the traitor.

Narrating the self also took place more implicitly in each of the first three moves. In the first move of (counter) narrating the enemy, the subtle narration of self is always ongoing. In Gabriel's threat writing, for example, the Christian self was favorably positioned in an entire range of identity politics binaries: morally good vs evil, victims vs aggressors, civilized vs barbaric, with soul vs without soul, and so on. Gabriel's project of naturalizing radical, binary difference between the patriotic religious conservative and the Islamic other functioned to fix absolutely and forever in Manicheistic fashion the identity of both dyads in a late modern, globalized world where all traditional identity is otherwise insecure.

In the second non-narrative moves that subverted the rules of authority, there is enacted a kind of self-imposed epistemic solipsism—of an endogamic intercourse within the dissident enclave. This move functioned performatively in this project of self-identification, similar to the dar-al-Islam and dar al-Harb of the fundamentalist Muslims, and the “inner sanctum” of the Gush Emunim; it was a move of pure negation that enabled the core/periphery distinction to be rigidly maintained, reinscribing the borders of the subcultural commune.

The third move of narrating the domestic enemy also functioned within this overarching strategy of self-identification. For “the patriot” subject position that figures so prominently in the U.S. conservative subculture to be interpellated, its opposite, “the traitor,” must be prominently juxtaposed. In this regard, recall that the traitorous leftist was never a threat to the patriotic conservative, but rather a condition of his or her possibility.

In a final and related vein, the manufactured panic and conspiracy served a more subtle crucial semantic and semiotic function within identity politics; the “Islamization” of America storyline, with its conspiratorial alliance of enemies foreign with domestic political rivals, functioned as an emblematic metaphor for the aforementioned broader structural *crisis* in the conservative lebensraum and the associated self-identifying master narratives—the erosion of the nation's traditional moorings by uncontrollable global flows and their progressive collaborators. As such a metaphor, it served to condense the broader complex multichrome reality into simple terms that resonated with the conservative and catalyzed it to subscribe, give, buy books, call their members of congress, show up at rallies, and vote.

Therefore, while this discourse on the one hand was explicitly about the foreign and dangerous other—enemies foreign and domestic—on the other it was implicitly and performatively a practice of self. And, so it is with all acts of the political—all projects of identity politics.

In conclusion, much more was going on post-9/11 conservative threat writing than securing the nation from a credible, objective threat, as presented by the discourse agents involved, or advancing a discourse of xenophobia to cover for Zionism's geopolitical project, as seemed to be the consensus of the later literature. Islam, in this discourse, more than pure or professional subject matter, and more than xenophobic or Holy Land geopolitical subject matter, was also domestic political subject matter. And, here, it was not only *mere political* subject matter that explicitly engaged the Obama administration and Democrats for position in the upcoming election, but also *counterhegemonic* subject matter; it was a *platform* or site for more profound and implicit cultural politics or “culture war” against the more progressive multicultural and secular societal doxa and the institutions that house it. And, as in all project of identity politics—as in all acts of the political—this threat discourse's main function seems to have been to serve as a platform to identify, construct, or interpellate the friendly inside—the U.S. conservative movement itself. In other words, in addition to any characterizations by the literature as the newest twist on the same geopolitics surrounding Israel, the newest xenophobia, or newest form of anti-immigrant racism, it was also significantly the newest opportune platform upon which the more entrepreneurial segment of U.S. neo, paleo, and social conservatives could advance their struggle against the more progressive hegemony, and—in doing so—revitalize themselves.

#### **4. Implications and Opportunities**

My aim throughout this inquiry was to expand and deepen the literature's conceptualization of this discourse by sensitizing the data to the role of domestic politics—or, variously, identity politics, cultural politics, counterhegemonic struggle. The aforementioned conclusions and the study broadly suggest a few implications, both at the more formal level for scholars of security studies, international affairs, and sociology broadly, and at the practical level for security professionals or practitioners who assess or estimate threats at all levels.

From the more practical perspective, it seems that our approach to threats and other objects of security studies and international relations should proceed from a healthy dose of “realism”

regarding not only the subjective, constructed nature of the world's objects, but the politics surrounding them. In addition to any objective aspect of threats to the nation, they are constituted subjectively or discursively—through *our discourse about them*, which—as Bourdieu, Foucault and others have observed—is significantly politically interested. In other words, these very public discourses function not as neutral or disinterested descriptions, but as sites of power and even cultural struggle, upon which social agents advance their goals or interests. In this way, threats outside, like criminals within—as Foucault famously quipped, and as we've seen here—are useful; they come in handy. For this reason, the degree to which that state of Iran (or factions therein) is a threat to U.S. or Israel's interests, for example, depends entirely on the position of the writer—whether, for example, he or she is the recipient of the “Guardian of Zion” award like Daniel Pipes, or a former Middle East CIA officer like Robert Baer (2003), who studied Iran and its proxies without needing to raise money from niche interest groups for his assessments, and who was more at liberty to discover a fundamentally different Iran. And it is for this reason that security practitioners would do well to avoid the trap of false objectivity by drawing upon as many sources as possible for our assessments or estimates, realizing the hazards of taking any one of them as they would have us—as disinterested, for the benefit of society broadly. This strategy, of course, would include reading the relevant works of highly-interested threat writers like those profiled in this study.

The obvious “constructivist” element of this political approach, of course, does not mean that our security analyses will be “divorced from the real world,” as many practitioners still tend to think, and as Walt (1991, 223) had long-ago charged. Rather, it merely means what the conclusions reveal—that every so-called threat has a constructed component; it has a discursive condition of emergence that emerges from interested discourse agents, such as individuals, groups, and organizations, movements, and so on. Purely materialist, objectivist, or “realist” accounts of the world's threats to security delude themselves and become uncritically or unreflexively trapped in their own limited ontological assumptions that obscure the much broader and even subjective components of the threat in question, and thereby misapprehend the very threat object which they view as self-evident. Therefore, the broader political approach does not obscure our emphasis on the more objective components of a threat; rather it offers a much-needed corrective that enables us to see the threats and other objects of the world in their social complexity, as we unearth the layers of politically-interested strategies and other cultural and social structurally induced biases that shape if not distort them.



At the more formal, theoretical level, this research offered a contemporary case study that—as just noted—underscored the utility of the Foucauldian genealogy and its emphasis on power or politics when approaching the world of discourses. Three more specific implications are offered.

Firstly, by revealing the range of both non-discursive political factors and discursive strategies that were involved in this project of security politics—and by showing how they work—the conclusions of this study offer a basic interpretive framework for all such inquiries into the world's discourses and other social practice. At the micro-level of agency, or the strategies of interested agents involved—the conclusions underscore how counterhegemonic struggle entails not merely tactical elements, such as the aforementioned observed four moves of cultural politics; they also entail that broader deliberate strategic element of opportunistically seizing an object of the world—in this case, Islam—as a platform, site, or field of struggle. And, at the macro-level, the study also revealed how discourses are not merely discursive or descriptive in nature, but—as Foucault, Althusser and others have pointed out—are largely a function of a significant social base, supported more materially or non-discursively by range of cultural, social structural, and social-psychological resources, along with favorable eventful or historical conditions. By revealing the range of structural and historical factors involved and how they function, including the agentic political strategies enacted, the research adds needed depth to the topic of security politics that Campbell first broached with his internal analysis of Cold War security texts.

Secondly, the inquiry helps expand our conception of power and its relation to knowledge or discourse. With so much emphasis on the role of geopolitics in the production of the world's security discourses, the conclusions from this study offer us somewhat of an epistemological break, underscoring the role of the distinct categorical set of politics closer to home, termed variously as cultural politics, cultural struggle, counterhegemonic struggle, and so on. In other words, with this distinct categorical realm of political struggle in view, the concept of politics becomes much more than mere domestic political antagonism on the one hand and foreign geopolitics on the other, with the former making gains against domestic opponents and the latter against foreign opponents. And, as the aforementioned conclusions suggest, our conception of (and corresponding approach to) this category of counterhegemonic struggle should be sufficiently expansive to include the narrative and non-narrative strategies and technologies, and to incorporate both the discursive and non-discursive realms.

Thirdly, this research revealed how our approach to security threats and other objects (and associated discourses) of the world from the perspective of politics ought to emphasize identity

politics. This popular security discourse was shot through not merely with the practice of the political that centered on the dyad of the other—in this case, conceptualized as foreign and domestic, religious and political, or the dual threat axis of Islam and the Left—but on the U.S. conservative self, thereby always functioning as a practice of self. This yields insight into the more subtle part of the nature of security politics; that is, how *insecurity* is not a threat to political collectivities, but a condition of their possibility. The study revealed many ways in which was the case. Recall, as just one example, how the rhetorical topography of “Islam” as related to “the West” after 9/11 ranged from the pole position of “religion of peace” to the peripheral position of “stealth jihad.” As the analysis proceeded, it became clear that these inherently opposing legitimate and resistance storylines functioned less to mark off the range of debate about a foreign enemy than they did to demarcate the domestic political factions that positioned and identified themselves by them.

Of course, there is much more that could be said. Suffice it to say, we have gained more appreciation for Said’s earliest and core notion about Western production of knowledge about Islam broadly: that it *has less to do with that world than it does with ours*.

### ***Weaknesses and Opportunities for Future Research***

Finally, I should reflexively point out two ways in which this inquiry was insufficient. The weaknesses noted here, of course, constitute opportunities for others to build upon.

First, as is the case with any inquiry that explores a new hypothesis or otherwise breaks markedly from the prevailing consensus in the literature, this inquiry—even as large as it is by dissertation standards—still suffers lack of breadth and depth, leaving much that there was to know about this phenomenon unknown. Each of the individual areas addressed at the level of structure, historical conjuncture, and agentic strategies—merit deepening. The interpretive approach for this first inquiry was useful. It underscored how discourses do not stand on their own, and cannot be adequately analyzed in what Bourdieu called an “internal analysis.” The more hermeneutical approach demonstrated, for example, how threat discourse is shaped by structural factors, such as cultural building blocks and is largely a function of the power apparatus to which it is organic, and the conditions of political opportunity that surround it. That said, this broader interpretive approach necessarily precluded the needed emphasis on any one of these areas: framing resources, socio-political resources, political opportunities, and it similarly precluded examining important nuances, functions, and subject positions of the threat discourse’s key agents. Again, this more

interpretive approach was necessary to answer our questions of how the discourse functioned politically at the domestic level, but future inquiries should not be so constrained.

Second, my position as a discourse insider—as someone whom many would classify as a social and religious conservative—rendered me somewhat interested. In spite of my reflexive efforts of empathy, and otherwise breaking with convention by offering a sociology of the political movement that I most identify with, I undoubtedly will be the latest to be implicated in Edward Said's (1978, 10) lament regarding Western discourse on Islam broadly—*including his own*—that “no one has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position....” Optimally—if time and space were not the ultimate masters here, as they are in every research project—I would have similarly examined the post-9/11 politics of Islam within the relevant segment of the U.S. progressive movement. We can only hope that some future research project—perhaps empathetically led by someone who identifies significantly as a progressive—will add that breadth that is lacking in this project.

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## APPENDIX

### FAIR USE ANALYZER RESULTS FOR LIST OF FIGURES

Name: David Belt

Description of item under review for fair use: Figure 6-1 and 6-2. Center for Security Policy. 2010. Sharia: The Threat to America: An exercise in competitive analysis. Report of Team 'B' II. pp 134 and 135 excerpts. Report available at:  
<http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/upload/wysiwyg/article%20pdfs/Shariah%20-%20The%20Threat%20to%20America%20%28Team%20B%20Report%29%2009142010.pdf>

Report generated on: 10-02-2014 at : 10:42:06

Based on the information you provided:

Factor 1

Your consideration of the purpose and character of your use of the copyright work weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 2

Your consideration of the nature of the copyrighted work you used weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 3

Your consideration of the amount and substantiality of your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 4

Your consideration of the effect or potential effect on the market after your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Based on the information you provided, your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Name: David Belt

Description of item under review for fair use: Figures 9-1 and 9-2. Jihad Watch.org blog post excerpts from 19 December 2009 and 8 December 2011

Report generated on: 10-02-2014 at : 10:50:51

Based on the information you provided:

Factor 1

Your consideration of the purpose and character of your use of the copyright work weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 2

Your consideration of the nature of the copyrighted work you used weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 3

Your consideration of the amount and substantiality of your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 4

Your consideration of the effect or potential effect on the market after your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Based on the information you provided, your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Name: David Belt

Description of item under review for fair use: Figures 10-1 through 10-12. Excerpts from ACT! for America non-copyrighted e-mails to subscriber David Belt on the dates: 3 Jul 2012, 24 Sep 2012, 5 Oct 2012, 29 May 2012, 11 Dec 2012, 7 Oct 2011, 7 May 2012, 8 Oct 2012, 9 Nov 2012

Report generated on: 10-02-2014 at : 10:59:39

Based on the information you provided:

Factor 1

Your consideration of the purpose and character of your use of the copyright work weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 2

Your consideration of the nature of the copyrighted work you used weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 3

Your consideration of the amount and substantiality of your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Factor 4

Your consideration of the effect or potential effect on the market after your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use

Based on the information you provided, your use of the copyrighted work weighs: in favor of fair use