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The Association for the Sociology of Religion supports the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association and other professional associations in the social sciences with respect to multiple submissions of manuscripts to academic journals. In cases where a manuscript has been determined to have been submitted to this journal when it is also under consideration by another journal or *vice versa*, that manuscript will be rejected from further consideration by *Sociology of Religion*. Persons unfamiliar with the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association may obtain a copy by writing to ASA at 1722 N Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

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What is Society Publishing For?

David Yamane

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Before I turn to the substantive issue I would like to treat in this column, a word of thanks to Jen'nan Read for her hard work in making this special issue a reality. Most of the articles in this issue were first presented at a conference she organized that received generous support from the Albert and Elaine Borchard Foundation and the Center for the Study of Democracy at UC-Irvine. All of us as sociologists of religion should be grateful for the willingness of organizations such as these to fund our work, and we ought to follow Jen'nan's lead in seeking out these uncommon sources of funding. Thanks also to Kristine Ajrouch for reviewing the issue and writing a commentary on its contents.

* * *

Last December, I attended an executive seminar on "Society Publishing: Envisioning Futures, Evolving Strategies," hosted by Blackwell Publishing at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The daylong seminar covered a variety of interesting topics, such as: "institutional repositories" as alternatives to scholarly journals, the implications of usage-based versus subscription pricing for libraries, and the ever-provocative issue of impact factors.¹ Sitting in this seminar for an entire day raised a more general question, what is society publishing for? Why does the Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) as a professional society sponsor a journal?

Margaret Branschofsky, a librarian at Tufts University who spoke at the seminar, suggested four functions of society publishing: registration, archive, dissemination, and validation. *Registration* is essentially publicity for things happening in the field. Book reviews are a good example of this. Given limited advertising budgets for scholarly books, the publication of a book review in a scholarly journal often serves as the major notice to the field as a whole that a book exists. This is especially true for scholars outside the book's immediate area of concern and others beyond the author's circle of family and friends.

Journals also serve as an *archive*, a public form of a scholarly society's institutional memory. To wit: *Sociology of Religion* is committed to publishing the two

¹Although interesting, the issue of impact factors does not affect *Sociology of Religion* directly because this journal is not among those ranked by Thomson ISI.

keynote lectures from the ASR's annual meeting: the Presidential Address and the Paul Hanly Furfey Lecture. The journal also used to have a right of first review for the ASR's Robert J. McNamara Student Paper Award winner, though the council voted recently to rescind that requirement—a decision I hope is reconsidered in the future precisely because of this archival function of the journal. Finally, the journal occasionally publishes special issues based on papers presented at the annual meeting. The first issue to appear under my editorship (v.68/n.1) combined all of these elements: Jay Demerath's Presidential Address, Dipankar Gupta's Furfey Lecture, Nanali Cao's McNamara Award-winning paper, and three other papers from the 2005 annual meeting.

Although it seems obvious that journals are a vehicle for *dissemination* of ideas in a field of study, the rise of the World Wide Web drastically changes the landscape for distribution. Scholars no longer need printed journals to make their work available to a wide audience. Sociologists of religion can and do post their work on their own home pages, on web-based working paper series, and in online repositories like the Hartford Institute for Religion Research's website (<http://hirr.hartsem.edu/>). Moreover, although we should be cognizant of the "digital divide" both within countries and between them, posting work on the web is in many ways a cheaper and more democratic means of dissemination. Individuals who cannot afford subscriptions or do not have access to institutional subscriptions can often still access material that is posted on free websites.

The final function of society publishing—*validation*—is probably the one that first comes to mind for many people. Thus, an immediate response to the question of what society publishing is for would be, "Duh! Society publishing provides a vehicle for people to get jobs, tenure, promotion, and raises." Publishing an article in a professional journal serves to give one's work a sort of "quality stamp" or "seal of approval" that can be leveraged for material gain. *Peer review* is key to this validating function, and it is a major point of distinction from other means of dissemination like posting work on various websites, or even publishing work in non-peer reviewed outlets like edited books. Seen in this light, the World Wide Web's democratic character is both a strength and a weakness when it comes to disseminating scholarship.

Society publishing is not meant to be a democracy, but (ideally) a meritocracy. Consider this journal's mission statement: "*Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review*, the official journal of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, is published quarterly for the purpose of advancing scholarship in the sociological study of religion. The journal seeks to publish original (not previously published) work of exceptional quality and interest without regard to substantive focus, theoretical orientation, or methodological approach." So, while the journal is in fact a forum for registration of work in the field, a public archive for the ASR, and a vehicle for dissemination of ideas, I also know that, at the end of the day, its most important function is that it validates the work and the authors that it publishes. While I do not want to overstate the importance of *Sociology of*

Religion in the field, I do constantly have in mind that publishing (or not publishing) a particular manuscript that is submitted could have an effect on the direction of scholarship or an individual's livelihood. Which is to say that I take the manuscript review process very seriously and seek to make it as efficient and fair as possible.

* * *

Given the importance of peer review to the legitimacy of the journal and its legitimating function, and in the interest of full disclosure to members of our professional society and others, I would like to offer my reflections on how I handle the process at *Sociology of Religion*. I was especially motivated to take up this issue recently by an email message I received expressing concern about the editorial practices of the journal. I would like to take this opportunity to respond to this concern by detailing the journal's editorial process.

The peer review process is essential to *Sociology of Religion*, but it is not perfect. I will certainly make both "Type I" and "Type II" errors along the way: incorrectly rejecting papers that should be accepted and incorrectly accepting papers that should be rejected. Although I aspire run the journal without making any errors, I know that they cannot be avoided entirely. So, my goal is to minimize errors. I do so in a number of ways. I attempt to choose reviewers who have no known bias against a particular author or approach to scholarship (though many of these biases are impossible for me to know). Rather than choosing reviewers who reflect my own biases, as my critic charge, I actually try to find reviewers who differ in theoretical and/or methodological approach from one another. Ideally, each manuscript will be read by three or four reviewers and myself, though often I will render a decision based on just two reviews if the work is highly specialized or I have extraordinary confidence in the reviewers. Furthermore, as often as possible, at least one of the reviewers of each manuscript is a member of our editorial board—a collection of individuals that represents much of the diversity of our field and whose opinions I value very highly in judging manuscripts.

In addition to their qualitative comments on the manuscripts they read, all reviewers are asked to give an overall recommendation using the following categories: (1) accept as is, (2) accept contingent, (3) encourage a revision, (4) permit a revision, and (5) reject outright.² Most often, the reviewers' overall recommendations on a manuscript are the same or are within one category of each other (e.g., some will say "encourage revision" and some will say "permit revision"). Although I read each manuscript myself in the process of rendering an editorial decision, if there is a consensus among the reviewers, I take that very seriously. I am not inclined to reject manuscripts that have significant support

²My advice to reviewers as well as the specific review forms we use are available on the journal's website (<http://www.sorjournal.org/review/review.htm>).

from peer reviewers, or accept manuscripts that do not. My main bias, therefore, is toward the opinions of the peer reviewers—a bias I think is wholly appropriate for *Sociology of Religion*.

This is not to say that my own scholarly judgment has no role in the process. I take a more active role at three points in particular. First, when I “deflect” articles prior to their receiving a peer review. Although this requires much more effort on my part, I do this to protect the journal’s most valuable resource: its peer reviewers. The reality is that finding qualified reviewers who are willing to review for the journal and are able to complete their reviews in a timely fashion is one of the most difficult things I have to do as editor. I frankly do not want to waste the time and energy of these reviewers on manuscripts that I can tell from my initial reading do not meet the minimum standards of the journal (e.g., because the theoretical contribution is weak, the data/methods are problematic, the substance is not a good fit, the argument is unclear). I usually include with my deflection letter detailed comments on the paper, which most authors who have communicated with me have appreciated. In one case, after some correspondence with an author whose paper I deflected, I decided to go ahead and allow a peer review. Now that author is working on a second revision and the paper may eventually be published.

A second point at which I must play a bigger role in the decision-making process is when the peer reviews are at variance with one another and I have the difficult task of adjudicating between them. As I indicated, this is not common, but it does happen. This necessarily involves rejecting a paper that at least one reviewer liked or accepting a paper that at least one reviewer disliked. In making these difficult decisions, I know I run the risk of alienating both authors and reviewers. But I also know that this is an important part of the job of editor. It is why we have editors to make these judgment calls (I agree with Reviewer A more than Reviewer B) and not simply data processors to average the reviews (1 accept + 1 reject = R&R).

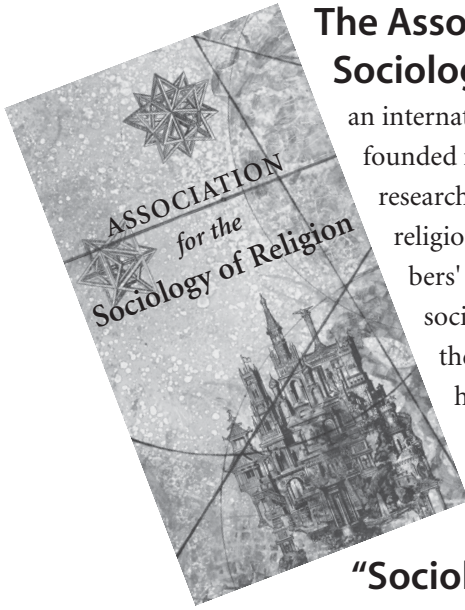
A third, and also very difficult, time when I have to take a more active role is when I am rendering a decision on a revised manuscript that is not progressing quickly toward publication. My general rule is to make an up or down decision on a manuscript after the first revision. I do this because I think that with each revision submitted, an author feels that s/he is closer to a guarantee of eventual publication. I know from personal experience that it is very hard to receive a rejection letter after a second or third revision. This is not to say that I have never allowed second R&Rs, but I do try to commit to either a conditional acceptance or outright rejection after the first revision whenever possible.

At each of these points in the process when I am more actively involved, I do not claim to make judgments from some Archimedean standpoint of objectivity. I remember very well a quote from Leszek Kolakowski I first heard in my undergraduate social theory class: “In all the universe man cannot find a well so deep that, leaning over it, he does not discover at the bottom his own face.” So,

no doubt some of my preferences will creep into the journal, since editors are people, too. Those who are troubled by this can rest assured that these preferences are not permanent. I think Rhys Williams had it exactly right when he told me reassuringly, “That is why editors rotate.” The next editor will likely take the journal in a different direction. I am not Nancy Nason-Clark, and she was not Joe Tamney, and so on.

* * *

Society publishing has many functions. The four I discuss here—registration, archive, dissemination, and validation—have one thing in common: they all provide a service to members of professional associations and to broader scholarly communities. In the end, *Sociology of Religion* exists to serve ASR members in particular and sociologists more generally. If you have concerns about the service we are providing, please contact us (sored@wfu.edu) or our sponsoring society (<http://www.sociologyofreligion.com>).



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an international scholarly association that was founded in 1938 to conduct sociological research in an atmosphere congenial to religious faith. By the mid-1960s, members' interests began to focus on the sociology of religion and to cultivate the diverse elements of its unique heritage to support scholarship relevant to many other subfields of sociology and kindred disciplines.

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Introduction: The Politics of Veiling in Comparative Perspective*

Jen'nan Ghazal Read

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International awareness and interest in Muslim populations skyrocketed after the terrorist attacks on U.S. soil on September 11, 2001. It remains at an all-time high today due to the ongoing war against terror globally and escalating conflicts throughout the Middle East and Asia. This heightened awareness is amplified by the rapid growth of Muslim populations in major metropolitan areas around the world due to immigration, conversion to Islam, and natural population growth. This has been particularly true in western nations such as the United States and France, where Muslims now comprise the second largest monotheistic religious population in both countries. The most frequently cited estimates place both the U.S. and French Muslim populations at 3 to 4 million, which equals roughly 8 percent of the total French population and 1 percent of the total U.S. population (Central Intelligence Agency 2005).

Beyond population growth, an important common denominator linking the French and U.S. cases is the struggle to incorporate Muslim communities into secular societies whose values are often at odds with Islamic beliefs and whose members are often hostile to their presence. In both nations, the global politicization of Islam has served to strengthen existing perceptions that Islam is incompatible with democracy and western civilization, inimical to human rights, in contempt of women, and opposed to western values and interests (Moore 2002). The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, British railways, and Glasgow airport have reaffirmed the widespread belief that being a Muslim is synonymous with being an Islamic fundamentalist. According to recent nationwide polls conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 42 percent of Americans feel that the majority of Muslims around the world are anti-American, 36 percent believe that Islam is more likely than other religions to encourage violence, and 36 percent have an unfavorable opinion of Islam—even

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though two-thirds admit that they know very little or nothing about the religion (Pew Research Center 2004, 2006).

Perhaps no single issue better captures the controversy over Muslim integration than the Islamic practice of veiling.¹ Although veiling predates Islam, many today consider it a universal symbol of women's oppression within a patriarchal religious culture (Read 2002). This belief derives from the relatively subordinate status of women in the Middle East, evidenced by women's comparatively low levels of educational attainment and low rates of labor force participation in many Arab nations (Ahmed 1992). Studies of Muslims in the diaspora, however, suggest considerable diversity in gender relations and more variability of the role of women in Western countries such as the United States and France (Read and Bartkowski 2000; Killian 2006). Some Muslim women wear the veil *against* the wishes of their fathers and husbands, in part to deal with the marginality they experience as outsiders in western society (Read and Bartkowski 2000). Others are motivated to veil to serve progressive ends. The veil allows them to attend co-educational institutions and work in male-dominated occupations that might otherwise be considered inappropriate for non-veiled Muslim women (Bartkowski and Read 2003).

While these studies provide insight into Muslim women's diverse motivations for veiling, individual motives alone are only one piece of an intricate puzzle on the politics of Muslim integration. Equally important is the state's role in determining the opportunities for and consequences of individual modes of integration. Specifically, what role does the state play in shaping the national climate on ethnic relations and integration? What are the mechanisms employed by the state in defining the boundaries of individual, cultural, and religious practices? How are state policies implemented and what are the consequences of such implementation? How do Muslims accommodate state demands, and what are the implications of their coping strategies at the individual, family, community, and societal levels?

These questions lay at the heart of democratic processes in the United States and France, two Western nations that endorse a clear separation of church and state and which institute various policies aimed at maintaining this division. The very policies aimed at strengthening democracy, however, can actually result in the exclusion of religious and ethnic minorities from civic engagement and integration. The politics of veiling demonstrate this point. Although different historical and cultural contexts in France and the United States have translated into different approaches to dealing with Muslim minorities, policies in both nations discourage veiling, either by banning the practice directly (France) or by failing

¹There is considerable diversity in styles of Islamic head coverings. I use the term "veil" to refer generically to the common practice of wearing a headscarf pinned around the face to cover the hair.

to protect the rights of those who veil (United States). For example, in the American case, laws ostensibly driven by security concerns are aimed at women seeking identity cards, while in France, the focus is on problems of immigrant integration epitomized by adolescent girls veiling in school.

However, it is essential not to downplay differences between France and the United States, lest this obscure the distinctiveness of the French and U.S. contexts and lead to overgeneralizations about Muslim experiences in these two countries. One significant distinction between the two countries is in their approach to citizenship and the integration of immigrants. In France, immigrants are expected to shed their cultural identities and become French, which is diametrically opposed to the U.S. multicultural model that embraces difference, at least theoretically. Thus, whereas the French model encourages the abandonment of ethnic identity and adoption of a French civic identity, the U.S. model supports multiple and hyphenated identities including religious ones, such as Muslim American (Killian 2006).

This introduces the second important distinction between the French and U.S. contexts, which is the nature of the relationship between church and state. In France, there has been a long and protracted battle between religion and politics dating back to the French Revolution, which has resulted in a clear separation between church and state and the modern-day promotion of *laïcité* or secularism. Religious difference is discouraged and religious expression of any type (symbolic or other) is expected to exist solely in places of worship or in the home. This stands in stark contrast to the American mantra of religious freedom and public declarations of faith by current and past political leaders, including the President of the United States (Moore 2002).

Finally, the socioeconomic and demographic composition of Muslim communities in France and the United States are quite distinct, resulting in different opportunities for their social, cultural, and political integration. In general, Muslim American immigrants are better educated, more likely to occupy professional and managerial positions, and earn higher incomes than the U.S. population as a whole (Zogby 2004). The children of these immigrants are by-and-large upwardly mobile, politically active, and well-organized, having successfully established numerous political advocacy organizations to lobby for Muslim-friendly policies or, perhaps more accurately, to fight against anti-Muslim ones. The situation in France is quite different, with the vast majority of Muslim immigrants being working-class laborers from the three French colonized Maghrebian countries: Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. Male laborers began immigrating to France after World War II and family reunification policies allowed their wives to join them starting in the mid-1970s (Killian 2006). Today, these North African immigrants have relatively low levels of educational attainment and many are working-class poor, which contributed to the riots in the suburbs of Paris in October 2005. Thus, in the French case, ethnic and religious tensions are often compounded by, and sometimes conflated with, class tensions. In contrast to Muslim

immigrants in the United States, Muslim immigrants in France typically lack the individual and community resources needed to challenge state policies, as we will see from the articles in this issue.

ISSUE CONTENTS AND ORGANIZATION

This special issue of the *Sociology of Religion* begins to tackle some of the questions outlined above regarding the state, religion, and minority integration by bringing together an international group of scholars who are experts on issues surrounding Muslim integration in the United States and France. This compilation of articles by no means provides the definitive answers to the question of veiling practices and Muslim integration. Rather, they are meant to stimulate interdisciplinary and cross-national dialogue on a topic that is central to understanding the relationships between religion, individual rights, and state sovereignty. With the exception of the contribution by Rhys Williams and Gira Vashi, these articles were originally presented as papers at an international conference in France in June 2005. The conference focused on the politics of veiling in France and the United States. I conceived and organized the conference with generous support from the Borchard Foundation and the Center for the Study of Democracy at the University of California, Irvine.

The articles in this special issue are interdisciplinary because many of the experts investigating religious integration in the United States and France are trained in multiple disciplines, including sociology, political science, history, and economics. The first article by **Kathleen Moore** situates recent debates on the Muslim headscarf in the context of legal disputes over the accommodation of religion in public institutions in the United States. After discussing U.S. Supreme Court holdings on government neutrality toward religion, Moore draws on recent court cases that deal with discrimination against veiling and explores how these comport with our understanding of the separation of church and state. **Yvonne Haddad's** article dovetails nicely with Moore's by showing how Muslim American women have come to see the veil as a symbol of their American identity, specifically their American Islamic identity, and as a public declaration of the trust they have in the American system that guarantees freedom of religion and speech. Thus, somewhat ironically, the veil is seen as emblematic of the American democratic system rather than in opposition to it. Haddad situates these modern-day interpretations of the veil in the historical discourse on the role of the veil in combating colonialism and Westernization and in the larger debate among Muslim female academics about the role of the veil in liberating or oppressing Muslim women.

After these two articles that provide historical context for interpreting contemporary debates over the veil, **Rhys Williams' and Gira Vashi's** article offers insight into the on-the-ground experiences of veiled Muslim American women

negotiating their identities in the pre- and post-9/11 eras. Unlike prior work that has focused on the *meaning* of the veil among Muslim American women (Read and Bartkowski 2000), this piece examines the broader social context in which Muslim American women wear the veil and the consequences that it has for their lives. Drawing on in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations with college-age young adults, they demonstrate how involvement with religious organizations provides the cultural resources needed to establish independent identities.

The next two articles turn our attention to the French case. Here again, we begin with a piece that provides an historical context for understanding contemporary debates over the veil. **Sophie Body-Gendrot's** article examines the events that led up to the controversial banning of the headscarf worn by Muslim girls in French schools. She argues that the law banning the headscarf was passed primarily for political reasons, specifically to keep religion from interfering with the state's objective of maintaining a secular educational environment to socialize French citizens. Provocatively, she suggests that the law may have unanticipated benefits for secular French Muslims who do not want their daughters to wear the headscarf, allowing them to refer to the law to deflect potential criticisms from more religious Muslims who feel they are being disloyal to their religion.

The final article turns to the on-the-ground experiences of Muslim women living in France. **Caitlin Killian** draws on in-depth interviews with forty-five Muslim immigrant women from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia to examine how the French context constrains their religious practices and transforms what it means to be a "good Muslim" woman. Killian argues that the controversy over the veil temporarily obscured many of the underlying problems over racial and ethnic tensions in France, including unemployment, discrimination, and a failing education system. This final article nicely summarizes many of the questions raised in this issue regarding the future of Muslim minorities in Western democracies. Beyond that, my hope is that this special issue motivates future research on this important and timely topic.

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Visible through the Veil: The Regulation of Islam in American Law*

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This article examines the Muslim headscarf in light of recent debates about the accommodation of religion in U.S. public institutions. Recent quarrels over such matters as the phrase 'one nation under God' in the Pledge of Allegiance and the posting of the Ten Commandments in courthouses and other government buildings, foreground American attitudes about whether wearing the Muslim headscarf is a practice deserving First Amendment protection. What legal claims have been raised by or on behalf of Muslim women wearing the headscarf in the United States? How do these comport with judicial doctrine on the separation of church and state? And what roles have religious advocacy groups played in promoting positions that have a bearing on how the headscarf is viewed? Viewing the law of regulation as productive rather than protective of the subject, this article analyzes how discourses and practices of secularism have been formed with respect to the question of wearing the Muslim headscarf in a variety of contexts.

The controversy over the French government's recent ban on the Muslim veil (*voile*) or headscarf (*foulard*) in public schools garnered many headlines within France and in the international media. Stating that there is "something aggressive" about children wearing the headscarf to school, French President Jacques Chirac called not only for a ban on religious symbols in schools but also the development of a "code of secularism" for public employees and the right of private employers to ban visible religious garb from the workplace as well (Kaminer 2004:4; Wyatt 2003). The prohibition on wearing religious symbols in state schools was justified on the basis that such symbols violated the principle of *laïcité*—strict secularism—and contradicted the schools' assimilationist function. "Secularism," Chirac proclaimed, "is one of the great successes of the Republic. It is a crucial element of social peace and national cohesion. We cannot let it weaken" (quoted in Mahabir 2004:438).

It seems as though this *affaire du foulard* would be one of the more vivid contemporary illustrations of the continuing "clash" of civilizations, pitting western secular values against fanatic religious fundamentalism. Yet this certainly was not

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the first time the Muslim headscarf—the *hijab*—was central in the construction of the radical difference of the Arab or the Muslim as “other.” In 1994, for instance, in the tiny Caribbean island nation of Trinidad & Tobago, a group of Muslim Islamists¹ launched a litigation campaign to secure the right of Muslim girls to wear the Muslim headscarf in school. The group sued the Holy Name Convent, a Catholic school receiving government assistance, over its refusal to allow an 11-year old Muslim student to modify her uniform by adding the head covering and lengthening the sleeves to the wrists and the skirt to her ankles. The girl’s attorneys raised the power of the Trinidad-Tobago Constitution, the Education Act, and the Qur’an to argue their case in favor of *hijab* in schools (Mahabir 2004:436). They also invoked several U.S. precedents to argue their client’s case, citing judicial doctrines of equal treatment found in *Brown v Board of Education* (1984) and of religious liberty (e.g., *Wisconsin v Yoder* [1971]) (Mahabir 2004:441). The island’s High Court ruled the school board’s decision had been unreasonable and protected the child’s right to pursue her own religious belief free from discrimination.

The headscarf debate is imbued with references not only to Islamic legal authority, but to the social and legal principles of equality and freedom enunciated in landmark court cases in the United States. The Islamist headscarf proponents mobilized multiple sets of legal authority—Islamic and secular—to combat religious discrimination by framing the headscarf not simply as a religious requirement for women but as something that is protected by American constitutional values. Asserting a right to veil, the Islamists justified their demands not merely by reaching back to religious teachings and traditions, but by recourse to the language of rights, and thus, of citizenship. Hence, the debate over the wearing of the headscarf in public settings asserts the Muslim as a subject of governmentality and, therefore, as a citizen. The mobilization of law in this case reveals a complex set of markers and multiple meanings. The rights-based, democratic discourse does not *take the place of* religious rationalizations, yet the former (rights) sets the scene for the latter (religious rationalization) to take hold in a non-Muslim realm.

Cases such as these raise questions about the relationship between the global politicization of Islam and the liberal principles of freedom *from*—as well as freedom *of*—religion. Disputes surrounding the Muslim headscarf reflect larger debates about tolerance and pluralism and the role of religious extremism as a civilizational menace. The elaboration of difference between the western and Islamic worlds has often centered on the status of women—veiling practices, sex segregation of education, arranged marriages, and the like. For contemporary

¹The Hijab-at-School Committee (HASC), a minority Muslim group in Trinidad-Tobago, used the hijab as a means to promote group power for Muslims in society and particularly in Catholic schools (see Mahabir 2004:430).

Islamists the question of *hijab* has become a major preoccupation (Sharif 1987).² In the eyes of the American public the likeness of the Muslim woman clad in the *hijab* stands in stark contrast to the freedoms associated with democracy and secularism. It serves as a synecdoche for extremism and the oppression of women in the name of religion, even though most Muslim women do not wear it and many of those who *do* consider it to be protected by constitutional guarantees of religious freedom. How does the demand for its accommodation contest or affirm American judicial doctrine on discrimination and religious liberty?

The significance of the *hijab* and regulations on wearing it emerges in historical and social contexts, and is not static. Scholars have argued that, for Muslims and non-Muslims alike in the United States, the enormity of 9/11 impelled religious identity to become even more central to an individual's sense of self (e.g., Peek 2005; Naber 2005; Etzioni 2002). There is even some evidence that religion and politics are more deeply entwined in the American psyche after 9/11 (Lampman 2003). Americans of many faiths and denominations report that religious faith is more important in their lives in the post-9/11 era, even if little has changed with respect to regular attendance at worship services (Saad 2003; Gallup 2002). Furthermore, membership in religious organizations, on the rise since September 2001, has a strong positive relationship with political tolerance (Cigler and Joslyn 2002).

Membership in a minority religion can be an important source of identity and experience that lends meaning to existence in a pluralistic society (Moore 1995:136). Identity construction involves image management, including the strategic decision to wear clothing imbued with particular meaning. Religious dress, along with organizational affiliations, serves as an important individual marker or visual cue that helps to promote personal conceptions of self-identification as it simultaneously preserves group cohesion (Peek 2005:219). Also, mosques across the United States in recent years have become visually more "Islamic," incorporating in their design more crescents, domes, and minarets. This "more purposeful visualization" of Islamic symbols in public highlights the claim that Muslim Americans have become more confident as part of the fabric of communal and religious life (Jamal 2005:526).

The wearing of the Muslim headscarf raises an important question: what role do Muslim associations play in promoting the legitimacy of wearing the *hijab* in American public institutions? Significant scholarly attention has been paid to the role of churches in encouraging and facilitating political participation.

²By the beginning of the 20th century, the ruling elites in some Muslim countries had introduced compulsory unveiling laws, and the veil came to represent "retardation." For many contemporary Islamists, the prevalence of the *hijab* represents the victory of Islamic ideas over western hegemony. As Sharif (1987:151) writes, "there is hardly an Islamist magazine that publishes an article on women without emphasizing the importance of the 'Islamic dress code' and proudly displaying pictures of women, even young children of preschool age, adorned with it."

Religious institutions play an important role in mobilizing civic engagement (Den Dulk 2001; Wuthnow 1999; Verba, et al. 1995). New studies show that mosque participation is positively associated with higher levels of a range of political activity. Mosques have the capacity to increase individual levels of political knowledge and civic skills. Mosques not only galvanize group identity and consciousness, but also mobilize more civil involvement with the outside world, a development that may draw veiled Muslim women into mainstream American society in unprecedented numbers (Jamal 2005).

A number of studies have enumerated the reasons some American Muslim women wear the *hijab*, and many have analyzed the phenomenon in terms of gender role attitudes and the politics of identity (Ali 2005; Naber 2005; Hallak and Quina 2004; Bartkowski and Read 2003; Read and Bartkowski 2000; Reece 1996). The salience of the Muslim headscarf after the events of 9/11, combined with the recent adoption in France of a ban on wearing the *hijab* in state schools, makes it compelling to investigate the broader dynamics that condition the reception of, and the political production of, the Muslim headscarf issue in mainstream American society.³ This article explores the claims of discrimination raised by, or on behalf of, Muslim women, and how these comport with our understanding of the separation of church and state in the United States. This is of particular importance because of the increasing visibility of Muslims in the United States, a visibility which the *hijab* accentuates. Especially after 9/11, the heightened daily concern over an "Islamic threat" to the United States has made objects associated with Muslim-ness, such as the *hijab*, the displaced locus of debates over the social reality of contemporary America and the global war on terrorism.

I begin by discussing recent U.S. Supreme Court holdings on government neutrality toward religion, in order to better understand something of the environment in which Muslims' rights claims now surface. Next, I discuss cases in which Muslims mobilize the law to challenge forms of discrimination. How can legal disputes over the Muslim headscarf in the United States add to our understanding of the separation of church and state? In this section I investigate the uses of litigation by religious advocacy groups to advance a particular interpretation of the establishment clause. I conclude by suggesting that we view the law

³Author Anna Secor (2005) illustrates the "political production" of the headscarf issue in Turkey, where political Islamism and secularism square off over the enforcement of antiveiling dress codes in public institutions. In Secor's study, the veil represents a nodal point of intersection between local, nationalist, and international discourses about the meaning of veiling practices. The politicization of the headscarf in Turkey means the "use" of the veiled Muslim woman for political ends, to point out the failure of the state to put into practice its professed democratic ideals (human rights) while the Islamist movement takes on the mantle of democratization by supporting the 'right' to veil in public spaces. The context of my study is quite different, and my point about "political production" simply is that the regulation of veiling by public institutions is productive of a citizen/subject in ways that connects government actions with identity construction.

as productive rather than protective, so that we might see how understandings of the *hijab* are mediated through the prism of contemporary claims about an Islamic threat and the global war on terrorism.

CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

No question vexes the American public more than the role of religious belief in politics and government. Opinion polls show that Americans are getting comfortable with the religiosity of public officials, and have “moved beyond that era when religion was strictly a private affair” (Lampman 2003:13). When in 2002 the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the phrase “One Nation Under God” in public school recitations of the Pledge of Allegiance an unconstitutional violation of the establishment clause, the decision was soundly criticized as “absurd,” “asinine,” “mindless,” and “very dangerous” by a panoply of elected officials and religious commentators (quoted in Ostling 2002: A8). The U.S. Senate immediately and unanimously denounced the ruling, while House members defiantly gathered en masse on the Capitol steps to recite the maligned pledge. Even strong advocates of the strict separation of church and state came out against the appellate court decision; for instance, the Anti-Defamation League said that it “goes against the culture and traditions of this country” (quoted in Ostling 2002:A8). Although the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed this case due to lack of standing (an atheist, the complainant did not have custody of his elementary-school aged daughter, on whose behalf he sued), in 2005 the identical case was filed in the 9th Circuit with similar results.

Questions about the *hijab* in public settings arise in the midst of a broad rethinking of the constitutional prohibition on the official establishment of religion. The U.S. Supreme Court recently considered whether monuments engraved with the Ten Commandments on public grounds violate the constitutional ban on the establishment of religion. In 2005, the Court issued two contradictory and confusing rulings. In *Van Orden v Perry* (125 S. Ct. 2854), the Court ruled in a four-vote plurality, with Justice Breyer writing a concurrence, that the display of the Ten Commandments in a public park at the Texas State Capitol is constitutionally valid because it is just one of 17 statues and has political as well as religious meaning. Chief Justice Rehnquist (for the Court) wrote, “While the Commandments are religious, they have an undeniable historical meaning. Simply having religious content or promoting a message consistent with a religious doctrine does not run afoul of the Establishment Clause.” Yet on the same day the Court, in a 5-4 decision in *McCreary County v A.C.L.U.*, struck down displays of the Ten Commandments in two county courthouses in Kentucky because they were too overtly religious; since they were displayed by themselves, the casual observer could not help but conclude that the courts meant to celebrate and advance a religious message (125 S. Ct. 2722). The Court

majority added the caveat that this ruling does not mean that a sacred text could never be integrated constitutionally into a government display on the subject of law or American history. It is simply meant to uphold the “secular purpose” test, established in 1971 in *Lemon v Kurtzman* (403 U.S. 602) to prohibit government action if it is intended to favor one religion over another or tends to promote adherence to religion in general. Advocates for the constitutionality of the Ten Commandments displays expressed dismay over the refusal of the Court to strike down the standard of government neutrality set out in the *Lemon* ruling. Jared Leland, media and legal counsel for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty (an organization that provided amicus curiae briefs in both cases), wrote that “the separation of church and state does not mean the separation of everything remotely religious from everything remotely governmental” (Becket Fund for Religious Liberty 2005a). On the other side, the ACLU declared that the *McCreary* decision strengthened religious liberty by following the establishment clause’s command against government entanglement with religion (ACLU 2005b).

In a concurrence in the *McCreary* decision Sandra Day O’Connor wrote that “allowing government to be a potential mouthpiece for competing religious ideas risks the sort of division that might easily spill over into suppression of rival beliefs.” With O’Connor’s retirement we might expect to see the Court’s slim majority on church-state matters to flip, leaving this area of law a quandary. In what the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life calls one of the nation’s defining “culture wars” issues, we are left to wonder: When is it appropriate to display religious symbols on government-sponsored property? Does this imply an endorsement of a particular faith? According to a poll conducted by Pew in August 2004, more than seven-in-ten Americans believe that a display of the Ten Commandments on public property is acceptable (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life n.d.).

The sharply contested boundary between government and religion has within it the seeds of legal mobilization. For many advocacy groups, the Supreme Court’s rulings in these cases illustrate an impetus for more legal mobilization and lobbying in the area of church-state law. Some of these same groups also view the rights claims of Muslims as an occasion for litigation, media work, and legislative lobbying. For instance, in November 2005 the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty contacted the principal of a Texas high school to object to the school’s policy not to accommodate Muslim prayer. Under the threat of litigation, the school designated a space specifically for Muslim prayer, and provided Muslim students the opportunity for ten minutes of prayer during the school day (Becket Fund for Religious Liberty 2005b). Organized religious groups that seek to promote religious expression in American society—for instance the Becket Fund, but also the Rutherford Institute, the Alliance Defense Fund, the Center for Law and Religious Freedom, the American Center for Law and Justice, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)—have mobilized legal resources to

advance their interpretations of the religious liberty and establishment clauses of the First Amendment. Many have also taken their campaigns to the “court of public opinion” as well, seeking extensive coverage, via the Internet, radio, television and print media, in an effort to influence popular understandings of their cases (for instance, to garner support for school voucher programs, prayer in schools, and intelligent design). Debate over “public square” religion issues such as these promises to have a long-term impact on the growing national conversation on faith.

MUSLIM AMERICAN WOMEN

While many Americans might have been surprised by the French ban on religious symbols in schools and believed the situation in the United States to be quite different, the First Amendment right to wear religiously-inspired attire is not quite as strongly protected as some might expect. After 9/11, certain rights advocacy groups took up the cause of fighting against anti-Muslim backlash discrimination. The ACLU, for instance, defends persons charged under the U.S.A. Patriot Act and other intelligence-gathering laws, and has also defended Muslim women who have faced discrimination. In June 2004, the Nebraska chapter of the ACLU filed a civil rights lawsuit against the city of Omaha on behalf of Lubna Hussein, who was told she would have to take off her headscarf and encompassing cloak if she wanted to accompany her children at the municipal swimming pool. She was not allowed in the pool area while wearing her *hijab* even though she had not planned on swimming, ostensibly because the city required persons in the pool area to be in swimsuits. Hussein was not permitted to enter even though others were allowed to be in the pool yard while wearing street clothes. In February 2005, the City of Omaha and the Nebraska ACLU announced a settlement, according to which the dress code was amended to accommodate religious and/or medical needs. Ms Hussein was elated by the news. “I am so pleased at this change in policy,” she said. “My little girls have been waiting for a chance to try out the water slides and they’ll finally get the opportunity this summer. We’re happy to feel like part of the community again” (ACLU 2005a).

School Dress Codes and Hijab

Muslim girls are sometimes subject to school dress codes that prohibit the wearing of the *hijab*. Dress is an issue of considerable controversy in American public schools because, as in France, the school is considered an important instrument of the secular state for the public education of its future citizens. From this perspective, the prohibition on religiously inspired attire, such as the *hijab*, strengthens the boundaries of the secularized public sphere against any religious interference and upholds the separation of church and state.

Some instances involving school girls wearing the *hijab* have reached the courts. Nashala Hearn, a sixth-grade student at Ben Franklin Science Academy in Muskogee, Oklahoma, for example, was suspended twice from school for wearing the *hijab*, in violation of the school's dress code banning bandannas, hats, and other head coverings. With the support of the Rutherford Institute, a Christian evangelical public interest law firm, Hearn's parents filed suit against the Muskogee School District in October 2003.⁴ In March 2004, the United States Justice Department filed a motion in federal court in support of Hearn's position. This is an interesting case in which the federal government challenged in court the position of the local school district. According to the federal government's civil rights attorney, "No student should be forced to choose between following her faith and enjoying the benefits of a public education" (Zizzo 2004). The government alleged that the school district violated the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment, which bars states from applying dress codes in a discriminatory manner. The federal position supported the argument in favor of the constitutionality of an accommodation of religious expression, even though by permitting religious attire the school district might run the risk of appearing to endorse a particular religious viewpoint.

Hearn said, "I didn't know it was going to be a problem because on Aug. 18, 2003, my first day of school last year, I explained to my homeroom teacher that I am Muslim and I wear a *hijab* and that I also pray between 1 and 1:30. She said that was fine and that she had a room for me to pray in. From that day forward, I received compliments from other kids as well as school officials" (United States Senate 2004). All that changed, however, when another teacher approached her in the cafeteria and said her *hijab* looked like a bandanna or a handkerchief, both headcoverings banned under the school system's dress code. She was suspended from school until the U.S. Justice Department interceded and had her reinstated in March 2004. Two months later the Muskogee Public Schools reached an agreement to settle the lawsuit in favor of Hearn. The school district agreed to change its dress code to accommodate attire worn for religious reasons, and to offer a training program to all teachers and administrators educating them about the change. Testifying before senators in a U.S. Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing in June 2004, Hearn said her insistence on wearing the *hijab* set off "a bat-

⁴Paraphrasing, it is noteworthy that besides sponsoring Hearn's litigation to challenge prohibitions on the *hijab*, the Rutherford Institute filed a lawsuit in federal court in December 2001 to challenge regulations requiring the Muslim *abaya* in another setting. On behalf of Lt. Colonel Martha McSally, the U.S. Air Force's highest-ranking female fighter pilot, the Institute challenged the military policy requiring U.S. servicewomen stationed in Saudi Arabia to wear the traditional *abaya*, a head-to-toe cloak, when going off base. According to the lawsuit, the policy was "unconstitutional, discriminatory, and an affront to McSally's Christian faith" (Rutherford Institute n.d.). In June 2002, the U.S. Senate voted 93-0 in favor of an amendment to prohibit the Defense Department from requiring or even strongly encouraging U.S. servicewomen stationed in Saudi Arabia to wear the Muslim *abaya*. The common tie between these two cases is the matter of religious liberty.

tle between being obedient to God by wearing my *hijab* to be modest in Islam versus school dress code policy” (United States Senate 2004). At the Senate hearing she testified to feelings of depression and humiliation over of the episode.

In addition to filing lawsuits, advocacy groups have mounted media campaigns to apply pressure on school officials. For instance, in 2005 the Florida office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) intervened with officials of an Amateur Athletic Union tournament at Disney’s Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando after a 12-year-old Muslim girl was told she couldn’t compete in a basketball tournament while wearing the Muslim headscarf. Tournament officials had cited NCAA rules prohibiting head coverings, but later, after being contacted by CAIR, agreed to allow the headscarf if it was tucked in the player’s uniform. In a similar vein, a University of South Florida basketball player—a Muslim convert—said she left the team and lost her athletic scholarship because the head coach refused to allow her to wear long pants, a shirt with long sleeves, and a headscarf during competition. This Muslim student later left school and returned to Christianity (Schneider 2005).

Workplace Discrimination Based on Wearing Hijab

Women in the workplace have encountered discrimination and in some cases have been fired on account of the *hijab*. Instances of workplace discrimination have been well documented by the CAIR (see CAIR 2005). Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) encouraged victims of anti-Arab or anti-Muslim harassment, discrimination, or violence in the workplace to come forward with complaints the agency would investigate and resolve. Even before 9/11, the EEOC was tracking the number of religious discrimination allegations filed across the nation, including by Muslims. Between September 11, 2001, and May 7, 2002—in scarcely a nine-month period following the terrorist attacks—the EEOC received nearly 500 charges of discrimination on the basis of Muslim religion, many of which were *hijab*-related. During a comparable period just one year earlier, the number of complaints filed was only 193 (McNair Law Firm 2002). The following are two examples of *hijab*-related complaints filed with the EEOC.

Karen Crisco, a woman who converted to Islam on September 9, 2001, had worked for a North Carolina medical practice as a licensed practical nurse for over three years. Shortly after her conversion, which was also shortly after 9/11, Crisco wore the *hijab* to work, where she was promptly told to remove it because she had frightened a number of patients. Complaining of a hostile work environment related to her religious beliefs and her romantic relationship with a Muslim man, Crisco reported derogatory comments and verbal harassment on the job. The EEOC investigated the charges, and reached a pre-litigation settlement with the employer for a payment of \$35,000, an offer to reinstate Crisco in her previous position, and an agreement to conduct diversity training and post an employee notice of the requirements of anti-discrimination law (EEOC 2002).

On September 30, 2002, the EEOC sued Alamo Rent-a-Car Company because a customer service representative in its Phoenix office, Bilan Nur, was denied permission to cover her head with a scarf during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Alamo had granted Nur permission to cover during Ramadan in 1999 and 2000, but in December 2001 the company refused to allow her to observe her religious beliefs. Alamo subsequently disciplined, suspended, and fired Nur for failure to remove her scarf. This case went to court after EEOC had exhausted avenues for pre-trial settlement.

Even though Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires employers to accommodate the religious needs of employees, a court ruling in 1977 relaxed the requirement in practice. Every year since 1997, legislation known as the “Workplace Religious Freedom Act” (WRFA) has been introduced in Congress to reinstate protections for religiously observant workers by requiring employers to accommodate the religious needs of their employees, provided it would not result in “significant difficulty or expense.” In 2005, Representative Mark E. Souder (R-Indiana) introduced the WRFA as H.R. 1445. The bill received support from a range of politicians, including Hillary Rodham Clinton, and religious advocacy groups, including the North American Council for Muslim Women. Some advocates for this legislation cite the case of Bilan Nur against Alamo Rent-a-Car as an argument for its necessity. The legislation is opposed by civil liberties groups which argue that the proposed legislation could harm the civil rights of coworkers, patients, and clients whose interests would not be served if employers were required to accommodate all religious practices and beliefs. Just one example cited by the ACLU is the instance of a social worker reading Bible passages, praying, and attempting to “cast out demons” instead of using “secular” mental health practices in treating inmates in a county prison (ACLU 2005c). In the end, H.R. 1445 was referred to committee, but was never voted on in the 109th Session of Congress, though the issue is likely to remain on the legislative agenda for some time.

Discrimination by Government Agencies

A highly publicized post-9/11 bench trial in Florida, *Sultaana Lakiana Myke Freeman v State of Florida*, involved a Muslim woman who wished to have her driver’s license issued either without her photo on it or with a photo of her wearing dress that covered her entire body except for her eyes. Sultana Freeman, a former evangelist who converted to Islam in the 1990s, had been permitted to wear the *niqab*—the concealing face-covering garment, providing a small slit to allow for sight—in the photo for her Florida driver’s license issued in February 2001. However, following a check of its driver’s license database prompted by the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Florida Department of Motor Vehicles sent Freeman a letter stating that her existing license was suspended and she was asked to present herself for a photograph without her *niqab*. Freeman refused and sued the state. Citing security concerns after 9/11, the state of Florida insisted that the woman’s

driver's license was her primary form of identification and that law enforcement personnel ought to be able to determine the woman's identity efficiently with the aid of her license. A license photo of a motorist fully covered would not be very helpful in this endeavor, the state argued. The judge in this case agreed with the state, writing in her ruling that while Freeman "most likely poses no threat to national security, there likely are people who would be willing to use a ruling permitting the wearing of fullface cloaks in driver's license photos by pretending to ascribe to religious beliefs in order to carry out activities that would threaten lives."⁵

The upshot of the court's ruling is that a Muslim woman who was not suspected of any crime was associated with the threat of terrorism merely on the basis of her appearance. While *she* is not a terrorist, the judge said, others who intend to plot terrorist attacks may take advantage of the liberties protected by the Constitution to dress like this woman in order to disguise their identities. When taken up on appeal, the Florida appellate court affirmed the trial court judge's ruling, stating that while "we recognize the tension created as a result of choosing between following the dictates of one's religion and the mandates of secular law . . . as long as the laws are neutral and generally applicable to the citizenry, they must be obeyed."⁶

As in all religions, expected practices vary according to sectarian and cultural interpretations. Many Muslims consider the practice of *hijab* optional, as the product of cultural, rather than religious, tradition. Others see it as a religious obligation. But even among those who see it as a requirement variation exists. Some women cover only their hair with a headscarf while others, like Freeman, cover their entire face. In both the bench trial and the appeal, the record notes the fact that both sides presented expert witnesses on Islamic law to determine which interpretation of the religious tradition would hold sway. For the state, the expert witness averred that exceptions to the practice of *hijab* are made because of necessity and that even in Saudi Arabia women are required to have fullface photos on their passports and for exam-taking. The state also argued that, because the primary purpose of the *hijab* is to avoid sexual enticement, and because the state had made efforts to accommodate the appellant by having a female photographer and no males present when the photo was taken, the necessity of providing security warranted an exception to the Islamic practice. On Freeman's behalf, another expert witness testified that Muslim women must cover themselves and referred to numerous passages in the Qur'an and the

⁵The bench trial was held May 27-29, 2003, and the judge's decision can be found at *Sultaana Lakiana Myke Freeman, Plaintiff, v. State of Florida, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Defendant*, of the Ninth Judicial Circuit in and for Orange County, Florida, Case no. 2002-CA-2828. For a fuller discussion see Haddad, et al. 2006:103-5.

⁶*Sultaana Lakiana Myke Freeman, Appellant, v Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles*, Appellee, Court of Appeal of Florida, Fifth District (2005 Fla. App. LEXIS 13904, September 2, 2005), p. 22.

Sunnah to support his position. According to this witness, no exceptions would be permissible. In her ruling the trial court judge, Circuit Court Judge Janet Thorpe, asserted that she would not choose between contending interpretations of *shari'a* provisions, and agreed with state officials that letting people show only their eyes would compromise efforts to stop terrorists. The trial court ruled in favor of national security interests and consequently limited religious expression by regulating when Islamic religiously-inspired clothing is permitted.

CONCLUSION

At the core of constitutionalism is the premise that both government and citizens must respect the basic rights of all individuals equally to hold and express religious beliefs, or to hold none at all. The First Amendment doctrine of separation of church and state posits that the government is prohibited from advancing an official state religion. At this moment, however, establishment clause jurisprudence is being challenged in litigation campaigns that call for the accommodation of religion in public settings, a position that found favor in many U.S. Supreme Court decisions in the Rehnquist era. The ground is shifting under what appeared to be a relatively settled area of law, and into this change certain church-state rights advocacy groups read an opportunity to mobilize. Christian evangelical, Catholic and Muslim groups in a similar way are conducting litigation and pre-litigation campaigns, sponsoring court cases, writing amicus briefs, and using the threat of litigation to try to expand accommodation of religious expression in schools, prisons, the workplace, neighborhoods and armed services.

In this development we see the mobilization of secular principles of social equality and freedom, enunciated in constitutional cases, for the purpose of expanding opportunities to express personal religious beliefs. This results in the formation of alliances among individuals and groups of various religious faiths, and conditions civic engagement to follow a particular trajectory. However, it is less about religious *freedom* than these alliances might suggest. For Christians and Muslims alike, the mobilization of the law, through lawsuits and media campaigns, serves a larger purpose: the mobilization of a specific religious *identity*.

As constitutional restrictions on accommodation of religion in the public sphere are loosened, the practice of *hijab* places Muslim women in the forefront of an effort to make Islam more visible, promoting a "public Islam" in a concrete and visible way via the circulation of Islamic symbols. The de-institutionalized diffusion of Islam, represented by Muslim individuals asserting demands for accommodation of personal beliefs and practices in a multitude of public spaces, inscribes the public realm with certain expressions of Islamic religiosity. Thus, the law has discursively *produced* a particular kind of Muslim identity (as citizen/subject with particular rights) by increasing the public space in which wear-

ing the *hijab* is officially authorized. The conception of a Muslim communitarian feeling, represented by the Muslim *hijab*, becomes deeply embedded in contests over the public/private divide, even in the face of sharply divergent and highly differentiated views as to the very meaning of veiling. While most Muslim women in the United States choose not to wear the *hijab*, the visibility of it as a focal point for controversy influences American perceptions about what constitutes Islam. The practice of wearing *hijab* and how it is understood in North America are contingent on the construction of a Muslim identity in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society in which secularism is a basic feature.

Such cases as the Florida drivers-license case of Sultaana Freeman putatively pit a benighted image of Islam against the necessities of national security, and only serve to entrench already polarized opinions about the nature of Islam. Worse, such a binarism posits gender relations as an essential point of divergence between the Islamic world and secular democracies, and promotes the simplistic view that cultures are set on an unavoidable collision course, a clash of civilizations. Not only is the *hijab* a volatile emblem that can be viewed as a symbol of male oppression or of modesty and religious or cultural identity, it is also intertwined with discussions about the assimilability of Muslims in western societies. How we understand the regulation of the *hijab* through the law—what are the sources of this regulation, when and why the *hijab* is accommodated in secular, public institutions, and when and why it is *not*—are important research questions and need further investigation as a means not only of seeing the law as constitutive of particular cultural meanings, but of countering the deepening patterns of mistrust among societies.

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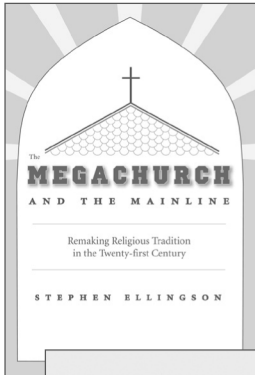
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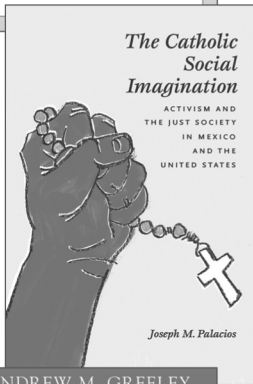
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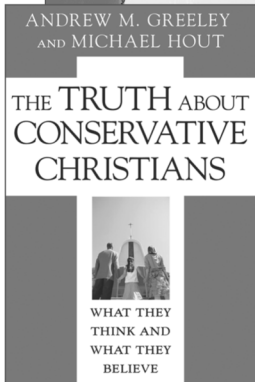
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The Post-9/11 *Hijab* as Icon*

Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad

Georgetown University

This study argues that the process of re-Islamization has accelerated in the aftermath of 9/11 as an increasing number of adolescents and young adults (daughters of immigrant Muslims) are assuming a public Islamic identity by wearing the hijab (headscarf). Drawing on two decades of research on American Muslim communities and in-depth interviews with American Muslim youth, this study finds that the hijab has become a symbol of an American Islamic identity—a public affirmation of trust in the American system that guarantees freedom of religion and speech. At the same time, it has also become a symbol of anti-colonial solidarity and resistance to efforts to eradicate Islam in an American environment that is increasingly seen as anti-Islamic. Implications for the future role of the veil in the lives of American Muslims are discussed

The integration and assimilation of second and third generation Muslims into U.S. society was expected to proceed according to a predictable trajectory noted among previous immigrant groups. The children of the immigrants would shed their parents' religious and cultural markings and become more Americanized, and if a reassertion of a cultural identity occurred (hereafter referred to as "re-Islamization"), it would not take place until the third generation. This pattern appeared to be a reasonable expectation since the ad hoc leadership of the immigrant Muslim community self-consciously set out to emulate the successful integration of non-Protestant religious groups into the American fabric in the 1960s: Jews in their establishment of religious, cultural and political institutions, and Catholics in founding parochial schools that would help shape the future generations (Haddad 1991a; Haddad and Esposito 2000; Haddad and Lummis 1990).

This paper will argue that the process of re-Islamization has been accelerated in the aftermath of 9/11, as an increasing number of adolescents and young adults (daughters of immigrant Muslims) are assuming a public Islamic identity by wearing the *hijab* (headscarf). The Islamophobia that took hold in the public domain as a consequence of the propaganda for the war on terrorism appears to

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have suspended political correctness as it pertains to Arabs, Muslims, and Islam in the public square. This has become an important factor in the re-Islamization of Muslim youth. Faced with a growing American public acceptance of the diatribe against Islam and Muslims, some young American-born Muslim women appear to have appropriated a century old view of the *hijab* as a symbol of solidarity and resistance to efforts to eradicate the religion of Islam.

The *hijab* had become an integral part of revolutionary and anti-colonial struggle, illustrated most vividly in Algeria in the 1950s and Iran in the 1970s (Bullock 2002:87). From this perspective, the re-appropriation of the *hijab* in North America can be seen as a return to authenticity. At the same time, the *hijab* is a public affirmation of trust in the American system that guarantees freedom of religion and speech. For many of the young Muslim women who have decided to wear a *hijab* despite the fact that their mothers have never dressed Islamically, the *hijab* has become a symbol of American Islamic identity. As one Muslim leader once recounted to me, "If they do not wear the *hijab*, how will Americans recognize that there are American Muslims?"

This paper is based on over two decades of research on American Muslim communities in various parts of the United States (Haddad 1991a, 1991b, 2000, 2002; Haddad and Lummis 1990; Haddad and Smith 1993, 1994, 2002; Haddad and Esposito 2000, 2001, 2003; Haddad, et al. 2006). It is supplemented by information gathered through multiple qualitative sources in a larger study on Muslim youth and their adjustment to and integration into American society that I am currently undertaking. The qualitative sources include interviews with over 30 young women that I met at various Muslim gatherings throughout the country; two focus groups of students attending universities on the East Coast discussing the issues they face in their daily life (e.g., the mosques they grew up in, the politics of the mosques, the youth groups, initiation into Islam, etc); transcripts of focus groups held by the Muslim Americans in Public Spaces (MAPS) program; and information gathered by my research assistants on various aspects of Muslim communities in various parts of the United States. These qualitative sources are further supplemented by a review of the literature on "the veil" produced by Muslim women academics as well as recent publications of new voices of young Muslim women eager to "speak out" (Afzal-Khan 2005; Bullock 2005).

This study examines how the *hijab*, for those who have chosen to put one on after 9/11, has become the symbol of authenticity and pride. It discusses why it has increasingly been appropriated by second generation young Muslim women in the United States as a signifier of an identity that defies Western demonization of Islam and the debasement of its women. For an increasing number of second generation American Muslim women, it has become an iconic symbol of the refusal to be defined by the Western media and war propaganda since 9/11, and of affirming authentic Muslim and American identity. As one young woman explained the meaning of her new *hijab*, "Islam is beautiful! Deal with it!"

THE WAR ON TERRORISM AND THE VEIL

In the aftermath of 9/11, the Bush administration launched an all out propaganda campaign to win the hearts and minds of the American public in support of its military campaign in Afghanistan against al-Qaida and the Taliban. The war propaganda cast American efforts to bring about regime change in Arab and Muslim nations as guided by noble and altruistic motives, aimed at bringing civilization to uncivilized Muslims and democracy to those living under autocratic regimes. It was also projected as defending American values deemed valid for all time and place, beginning with the empowerment of Muslim women. The campaign stressed the need to mobilize American armed forces to liberate the Muslim women of Afghanistan, in particular, from their degrading condition. First Lady Laura Bush, for example, in her November 17, 2001 radio address claimed that “the fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women.”¹ The American press initially fell in lock step with the government propaganda effort. Chris Matthews, for example, commented on MSNBC, “They hate us because our culture teaches us to respect women.” Increasingly the American public has identified “the veil,” whether a *hijab* (a covering of the hair) or *burqa* (a coving of the head including the face), with Islamic militancy, extremism, jihadism, and oppression of women.

Muslims have questioned why it took 9/11 to alert the American press and the Bush administration to the misdeeds of the Taliban and their mistreatment of women. They noted that on March 20, 2001, when a delegation of Taliban officials visited Washington, Afghan women and some American feminists picketed the government building where they met and called on the government to save the women of Afghanistan. Their efforts were totally ignored by the press and the U.S. administration. The media obsession with the veil after 9/11 was most evident in its coverage of the response of Afghan women to the liberation of Kabul. The press could not fathom why Afghan women would not cast off their *burqas* and celebrate (Mawlana et. al 1992).² Later coverage of the *hijab* and the *burqa* in the American press became more balanced as reporters began to search for answers as to why after 9/11 young Muslim women in the West increasingly began to wear the *hijab*.³

¹Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011117.html> (Retrieved 6 May 2003).

²There are numerous examples, including Richard Lacayo, “About Face: An Inside Look at How Women Fared Under Taliban Oppression and What the Future Holds for Them Now,” *Time*, 3 December 2002, p. 34, and Susan Sachs, “For Many American Muslims, Complaints of Quiet but Persistent Bias,” *New York Times*, 25 April 2002.

³Again, there are many examples, including Emily Wax, “The Fabric of Their Faith; Since Sept. 11, Head Scarf More Meaningful for Many Muslim Women,” *The Washington Post*, 19 May 2002, p. C1, and Laurie Goodstein, “Muslims Nurture Sense of Self on Campus,” *New York Times*, 3 November 2001.

The Western focus on and apparent obsession with the veil was perceived by many Muslims as the re-emergence of a centuries-old Western effort to liberate Muslim women from Islam. Thus, the perennial issue of “the veil” was placed once again in the center of the debate between Muslims and their “tormentors.” To many Muslims, it appeared as though new crusaders had arisen, eager to “tear off the veil” and convert the Muslim masses into pliant populations. A new generation of liberators was once again eagerly repeating the mantra of the necessity to “civilize” the women of Islam.

Over the centuries, Muslims and Westerners have engaged in endless debates over whether the veil should be vilified or defended. For every criticism raised in the West, a counter argument was developed in defense of Muslim womanhood. The most prominent feature of Islamic literature on women written during the 20th century is its dialogical and/or apologetic nature, regardless of the gender or ideological orientation of the author. As such, it bears the imprint of the colonial experience (Haddad 1998). Most of the discourse appears to be beholden to ever-changing Western values and norms. It mirrors Western discourse in upholding the importance of women’s empowerment. At the same time, it refutes Western norms that debase women by treating them as sex objects and argues that Islam has liberated women and elevated their status. With each encounter, the veil has acquired new meaning and significance as it has been appropriated as a symbol of an identity threatened by a ruthless enemy (Zayzafoon 2005).

Starting in the 1970s, new voices began to question Western stereotypes about Muslim women. They were the voices of American Muslim women who began challenging not only the accuracy but also the motives that perpetuated these stereotypes. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, a few Muslim women were beginning to achieve prominence as scholars on American campuses. The pioneer group was predominantly of urban Arab background, most of whom had been educated overseas and then acquired graduate degrees at American universities. Initially, they tended to be defenders of modernity and secularism. For the most part they were products of the nationalist-socialist discourses taking place in their home countries after the demise of colonialism, and tended to look at women’s issues through the prism of development. Many joined the American feminist movement in the 1970s (Al-Hibri 1994; El-Guindi 1999; Mernissi 1987).

The number of Muslim women academics writing on women’s issues grew after the Iranian Revolution as many who disagreed with the regime of the Ayatollah sought refuge in the United States. Their writings tended to be critical of Islam and its traditions and reflected their deep concern about the impact on women of the reactionary policies of the Iranian regime (Hoodfar 1997; Nashat 2003). Their writings on issues pertaining to Muslim women were supplemented by Turkish and Pakistani scholars (Arat 1998). Some in the immigrant Muslim community were concerned that these scholars were being used by

those hostile to Muslims and that their writings were feeding into the growing antipathy towards Islam in the United States.

UNVEILING WESTERN STEREOTYPES

Muslim encounters with prevailing Western perceptions about Muslim women and their oppression in a patriarchal system predate their emigration to Europe and North America. Carefully choreographed stereotypes for several centuries were instrumental in the West's definition of itself over against an Islamic "other" (Daniel 1993). In the North American context, Muslim women academics assumed the responsibility of countering these stereotypes by unveiling the accumulated layers of prejudice that had shrouded Muslim reality from Western understanding.

The focus of colonial rulers on the veil, according to these scholars, did not arise out of the colonialists' concern for gender equality or the liberation of women. Rather it was a way to demean conquered subjects, justifying the occupation of their lands and the usurpation of their resources. "Male imperialists known in their home societies for their intransigent opposition to feminism led the attack abroad against the 'degradation' of women in Muslim societies and were the foremost champions of unveiling. The custom of veiling and the position of women in Muslim societies became, in their rhetoric, the proof of the inferiority of Islam and the justification of their efforts to undermine Muslim religion and society" (Ahmed 1992:160-1). British and French conquests had been justified as benevolent acts by defenders of the colonial endeavor. The British were conquering Muslim nations driven by the "the white man's burden," while the French were on a "civilizing mission" (Zayzafoon 2005). For both, part of their mission was to unveil the women of Islam.

The colonial thesis was adopted by the collaborators in the upper classes of Arab societies who profited from the occupation. The veil became an important component of the modernization discourse during the first part of the 20th century. Several of the Arab champions of the liberation of women in the Arab world, such as Qasim Amin (1996) in Egypt and Tahar Al-Haddad (1972) and Habib Bourguiba (Salem 1984) in Tunisia, saw the veil as both the symptom and, more importantly, the cause of the backwardness of the Muslim world as it was being subjugated by the armies of Europe. These liberators represented the Arab elite who bought into the Western paradigm of Islamic inferiority that justified colonialism.

To counter their efforts, the Muslim Brotherhood as well as some nationalists, both male and female defended the veil either on the grounds that it is a commandment from God, or that it was part of the Islamic tradition (Haddad 1998). Consequently, the veil became an important symbol of resistance and the

rejection of alien values. "The notion of returning to or holding on to an 'original' Islam and an 'authentic' indigenous culture is itself, then, a response to the discourses of colonialism and the colonial attempt to undermine Islam and Arab culture and replace them with Western practices and beliefs" (Ahmed 1992:237).

Western Literature

The stereotypes portrayed in Western literature have been the subject of several studies by American and European Muslim scholars who have argued that the Western discourse on Muslim women has been intellectually dishonest because it has been predominantly used by individuals with an axe to grind. Admitting that Muslim women have an uphill battle to fight, these scholars insist that the current social, economic, and political realities in Muslim nations (poverty, war, refugee crises) that dominate the daily lives of Muslim women are to blame. In order to "arrive at a west-east discourse liberated from obstinacy of the colonial legacy, a serious effort has to be made to review and reject a great many inherited representations" (Kabbani 1994:13).

These studies have noted that the Western "prototype" of the Muslim woman was invented by the West to suit its own interests, just as Muslims then proceeded to invent counter-prototypes (Ahmed 1992; Zayzafoon 2005). In their analysis of the construction of the Muslim as Other by Western authors, Muslim women scholars have proposed a periodization of the Western depiction of the Muslim woman as the "lewd Saracen." Prior to the 18th century, Muslim women often appeared in romances as the personification of desire. Aggressive and lusty, they fell in love with Christian knights and betrayed their fathers and husbands to help Christians fight against Muslims. The West in this dominant narrative represents social stability, whereas the East represents pleasure and sensuality, where women dwell in harems (Kabbani 1994; Kahf 1999). This theme carries over into travel literature which also depicted themes of violence and sexuality—despotic, sensual men ruling over and abusing helpless women (Fraser 1913; Kabbani 1994; Kahf 1999).

By the 18th century, the harem in Western literature became the "proper" space for Muslim women (Kahf 1999:6). During the Enlightenment, Europe became fully convinced of its superiority over the rest of the world. This superiority led to a different approach to Islam and the East, especially with respect to women. It is during this period that the Muslim woman was projected as the counter image for the ideal Western female. It also declared that the Muslim woman is unhappy in her harem (Alloula 1986; Kahf 1999:111).

A distinct shift is noted in the 19th century, with increased focus on the representation of Muslim/Eastern characters as bizarre and sexually perverse. Descriptions of women focus on their promiscuity, devilishness, and huge sexual appetites. European men reflected the Victorian view of female inferiority and projected it on Muslim women. What the European could not say about European women could be said about Eastern women (Kabbani 1994). This

image of the subjugated Muslim woman in need of rescue was used at the time of the build-up of French and British colonial empires in the 19th century (Ezra 2000; Kahf 1999:153). It was also part of the American justification for the Barbary wars.

The same image was evident in Orientalist paintings in which Eastern women are frequently portrayed naked or scantily clad lounging in harems guarded by forbidding slaves and eunuchs. Vulnerable, naked women who need to be rescued by Western men are presented as the victims of cruel Eastern men. The paintings seemingly contrast the barbarity of the East with the civility of the West. However, Kabbani (1994), Kahf (1999), and Alloula (1986) argue that it is this image of captive beauty that appealed to the patriarchal urges of domination and imperialism of Western men. The paintings present a sharp contrast between ugly, loathsome, evil (dark skinned) Eastern men and beautiful, voluptuous, innocent (light skinned) Eastern women. "Thus she must desire to be saved from her fate in some way," some European men concluded. "By such projection, the European fantasized about the Eastern woman's emotional dependence on him. This appealed to his sense of himself as romantic hero" (Kabbani 1994:79).

Reflecting on her experience as a Muslim woman in the United States, Nimat Hafez Barazangi noted that, although the stereotypes shifted every decade, they were always negative and the Muslim woman is always "the other." During one of her talks, someone in the audience lamented, "Oh, yes, isn't it sad that those women are suffering under illiteracy (1960s), that they are subject to polygamy and divorce (1970s), that they are forced into seclusion (1980s), that they cannot drive (1990s), that they are stoned and beaten in the streets (2000)" (Barazangi 2005:15).

Grappling with the Prevailing Image

Since 9/11, the American media has vastly expanded its coverage of Muslim and Arab women throughout the world. Western audiences have been simultaneously riveted and horrified by the reported treatment of Muslim women. The highly publicized atrocities of the Taliban have left Americans outraged at what Muslim men do to their women. They have also assured the American public of the virtues of American society and provided an outlet for the energies of some American feminists seeking the "empowerment" of Muslim women.

For Muslims, the anti-Islamic themes in the American public square post-9/11 were not seen as a new phase in Western treatment of Islam and Muslims; rather, they appeared to harp on familiar themes that permeate Western literature. The American media had consistently treated Arabs, Muslims, and Islam in derogatory terms. Surveys of the American press have documented its treatment of Arabs and Muslims as the monolithic Other whose beliefs are inferior and sexist and worthy of defamation (Karim 2000; Said 1997). American textbooks have depicted Muslims as barbaric and irrational (Griswald 1975; Jarrar 1976). In a

study of over nine hundred films which feature Arab or Muslim characters, Shaheen (2001) found only three that had a character who was not cast in a stereotypical role. Tania Kamal-Eldin, in her short documentary *Hollywood Harems*, demonstrates how Muslim women have consistently been depicted by the film industry as living in harems, veiled and in need of rescue by the West.

Just as the liberation of women had been a justification of European colonialism during the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries, it is now being used to justify new wars (Ahmed 1992:152). The Western agenda of liberating the women of Islam is the constant, even in the answer to the question—"Liberation from what?"—changes. The Puritans of the 19th century thought the Muslim woman needed relief from overindulgence in sex. It appears at present that the feminists of the 21st century think that she is in need of liberation in order to have more sexual freedom.

WESTERN WOMEN TO THE RESCUE

American zeal for the rescue of Muslim women has been of concern to both Muslim men and women (Melman 1996). Two groups in particular have been singled out by Arab and Muslim feminists as similar in their inability to understand Muslims as humans or to entertain that there are other definitions of womanhood possible besides the ones they identify with. Both Christian missionaries (perceived as the feminists of the 19th and early 20th centuries) and the secular feminists of the second half of the 20th century are accused of advocating the exceptionalism of the American woman and striving to refashion the women of Islam into their own image.

The Missionaries

Scholars have noted that American church women were empowered in the 19th and early 20th centuries by the idea of liberating victimized Asian women. This idea "provided a powerful justification for female agency, in a male-controlled missionary project" (Singh 2000:107). Western female missionaries were frequently motivated to join their profession by the noble calling of caring for the "plight" of the "helpless" women overseas (Singh 2000:107). "The Gospel aimed at 'saving' the 'heathen woman,' thus became a liberating force for missionary women themselves, offering spaces for feminist articulation and legitimizing what were essentially radical moves in challenging established sex roles" (Singh 2000:130).

Missionaries also appear to be complicit in the colonial agenda. Their literature failed to take into consideration the role of colonialism in the oppression of native women, and they did not examine the root causes of poverty and disease. "Posed as binary to a Christian/Protestant ethic of hard work, the oriental woman's existence, constructed as a life of ennui, became a prime target of the

missionary's sympathy" (Singh 2000:122). When the goal of converting Muslims to Christianity did not appear feasible, the missionary strategy was altered to aim at penetrating Islamic societies and altering their values through women. In order to achieve this goal, Protestant missionaries established schools designed for the "taming" of girls, training them to be model wives and mothers despite the irony that a substantial number of the missionary women were not married. Of great importance to the missionaries was the wearing of the veil which was identified as "the chief barrier to progress" (Fleischmann 1998:316). One missionary noted, "What a relief it must be to put aside those troublesome and awkward coverings that they have to wear on the street, to uncover the face and take a long breath" (Fleischmann 1998:316). Many American women volunteered to serve because they felt compelled by what they described as the anguish of Muslim women (Hill 1985:59-60). One missionary book featured photographs of various veiled women of Lebanon—Christian, Druze, Jewish, and Muslim—all portrayed in such a way as to evoke pity in the viewer. The last photograph in the book was the proof of their achievement. It featured high school students with shoulder length hair with a neatly tied bow on top and the proud caption, "Our students" (Van Summer and Zwemer 1907).

The Feminists

Since the 1960s, when the miniskirt and (purported) bra-burning were promoted as symbols of liberation from male domination and made headlines worldwide, Islamists have had "proof" that Western feminism leads to anarchy and the destruction of the social order. The excesses of the feminist movement in the United States have become central in defining Islamic civilization as a counter to what is seen as Western degenerate culture. As Duval (1998:61) notes, "Now the West worships a new kind of God. Their God is called 'do anything you like.' There are no rules or limits. Men and women go around almost naked in the streets, they kiss and touch each other in public, and in the name of liberty they sleep around as they like. Women are exposing that which should be private and allowing them to be used by anyone as a cheap commodity. Can this be called women's liberation, civilization or development? The West is disintegrating, and their people are lost amidst high crime rates, drugs and sexual perversity. Islam prevents all this."

While Islamists were fashioning the new "Muslim woman," Arab and Muslim Americans began to engage the American public in an attempt to alter the image of the Muslim woman and the veil. The first attempt at this was initiated by the wives of Arab ambassadors in Washington who picketed, talked to the press, and published accurate information in the belief that knowledge rectifies false stereotypes. I observed Nuha al-Hegelan, wife of the Saudi Ambassador to the United States in the early 1980s, tell a group of high school social studies teachers that "the veil has always been more than a piece of cloth." She demonstrated how Americans have endowed it with special meaning. Lifting her Yves St. Laurent

shawl from her shoulders and slowly placing it on her head, she told them: "When this designer scarf rests on my shoulders, you see it as stylish and fashionable, when I cover my hair with it, you see it as a symbol of my oppression."

For many Arab Americans who had joined the National Organization for Women (NOW), the real test of American feminists' commitment to Arab women came during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Given NOW's commitment to oppressed women, Arab Americans were disappointed when its leadership refused to condemn the war. They could not understand why the death of over twenty thousand Lebanese and Palestinians, including women and children, were of no concern to the American feminists. Did they not think that Arabs and Muslim women were human? Or did they not hear their cry of agony? In her article "Tear off Your Western Veil," Azizah Al-Hibri (1994) accused Western feminists of the inability to appreciate Muslim feminists, or to hear them since Western feminists are veiled by the stereotypes ingrained in them. She noted that Western feminists have not attempted to educate themselves about Islam. "This attitude has already resulted in western feminists silencing Muslim/Arab-American women, not through coercion, but rather by their astounding inability to hear us regardless of how loudly we protest. And that inability to hear is not the result of a cultural gap! Some of us were right here, in the forefront of U.S. women's movement in the 1960s! Oh yes; you may not have noticed, but many of us are U.S. feminists. We are part of you. We live among you, and we have invisibly struggled by your sides for decades" (Al-Hibri 1994:161).

American feminists are seen as complicit in affirming the view that American culture and values are universal and must be imposed on all people throughout the world. This discourse did not begin in the aftermath of 9/11; for Muslims, it is hauntingly familiar. It harkens back to earlier episodes in European and American encounters with Muslims, where a bifurcation of "Us" and "Them," East and West, backward and progressive, enveloped in darkness and basking in enlightenment, were used to justify Western conquest and colonization of Muslim territory. "Muslim feminists" frequently argue that they do not need to be further victimized by the West. In a lengthy article published in *The Guardian* of London, six Muslim women discussed the irrelevance of Western social values to their lives. They affirmed that Islam has been the major liberating force for them, bolstering their arguments by reference to the *Qur'an* which guarantees gender equality (Bunting 2001:16).

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: THE IMPACT OF 9/11 ON U.S. MUSLIM WOMEN

Some Muslim women who had been wearing a *hijab* prior to 9/11 removed it as a precaution, as many were counseled to do, in order to avoid harassment or worse. Some Muslim scholars overseas even issued *fatwas* (religiously-based legal

opinions) sanctioning the removal of the *hijab* if a Muslim's life is threatened. Other Muslim women became convinced that wearing a headscarf is not prescribed in the *Qur'an*. Rather, they argued, it is a matter of choice. Some continued to insist that wearing a *hijab* is a witness to the faith, even in times of stress. By this interpretation, wearing the *hijab* can be seen as a personal struggle, a *jihad*, as the wearer is tested daily in the public square. Other women chose to wear the *hijab* to witness that they are proud Muslims and are not afraid to say so. The Muslim American Society published an issue of their magazine *The Muslim Journal* in 2001 with articles on the theme praising the women who kept on the *hijab* despite the repercussions of 9/11.

Still, in an America traumatized by 9/11, many Americans began to identify the *hijab* as the standard of the enemy. No more a marker of piety and obedience to God, it came to be seen as an affront and the flaunting of an identity associated with those who have declared war on the United States. Muslim women who wore the *hijab* bore the consequences of blatant stereotyping. They became the objects of both harassment and pity as Americans began to wonder what kind of women they were that they participated in their own oppression. The harassment restricted women's freedom and stripped them of their anonymity. Public catcalls of "I hate you," "Go home," "America is for Americans," and "Death to Muslims" had a devastating effect. Many women stayed home to avoid the public defamation.⁴

The events of 9/11 and their aftermath have in some instances had an important impact on the role of the mosque in women's lives. Prior to 9/11, some mosques in America were beginning to experiment with organizing women's study groups. These groups provided a haven for the homesick and the lonely and were particularly helpful for the newly arrived. These meetings were generally dismissed by professional Muslim women as gatherings for the sharing of rumors and gossip. Such an atmosphere was deemed stifling and restrictive since it tended to reinforce traditions and customs that are routine in the home country, but should not be seen as necessary in the West. At the same time, however, these organizations have the potential to become a venue for a shared view of the world where change and integration are accepted, rejected, or negotiated. In post-9/11 context of mutual fear and apprehension, the mosque became the shelter, pro-

⁴The negative association of the headscarf with Muslim women affects even those who choose not put one on. "Even those Muslim women who do not cover suffer from the negative stereotype of Muslim women: first their identity as a 'non-scarf' wearing woman is effaced by the ubiquitous image of 'the veiled woman,' and second, they are guilty by association: even if they dress like a 'modern woman' the mere fact of their being Muslim makes them suspect" (Bullock 2005: xvi). Muslim men are affected as well. Any man walking with a *muhajjaba* (woman wearing a *hijab*) is vulnerable to being considered a possible terrorist or maybe a member of a sleeper cell waiting for an opportunity to destroy America or kill Americans. Thus, while the husband may "pass" if he is not sporting a beard, a veiled wife next to him not only "outs him," but also renders him vulnerable to being identified as an oppressor of women.

viding a safe space where one could find companionship even with people one would generally dismiss as boring or engaged in vapid discussions.

As more women sought community support, and as women's groups began to flourish, an increasing number of mosques became social centers. They provided a Muslim space, a refuge for Muslim friends who share the same values, where one could be Muslim without outsiders criticizing, accusing, condemning, threatening, and prescribing what one ought to do. They became places of comfort where the recitations of the *Qur'an* provided assurance and affirmation that the period of tribulation is transient and that God will support believers. In finding security in the mosque, many had to put up with more conservative interpretations of Islam. It was a price worth paying for the security in numbers and the assurance of belonging.

At the same time, the backlash from 9/11 put the community on notice. Now was not the time to maintain a low profile. The general suffering of the community necessitated that women step up and assume an activist role. While it might be comforting to gather and seek support, there was a recognition that they needed to participate actively in American society, working to increase public understanding of Islam. Much of this public activism in which women are engaged falls under the rubric of *dawah* (literally to invite or call).

Dawah has traditionally been addressed to two audiences in the American context: the Muslim community itself and the American community at large. Before 9/11, the greatest effort was confined to within the walls of the Islamic center or mosque. It focused especially on the education of the children and of bringing non-practicing Muslims into conformity with Muslim life in the United States. In the aftermath of 9/11, *dawah* in some instances changed from mission to outreach, from the commission to convert America and the world to Islam to an activism that requires new skills in communication, dialogue, and inter-faith cooperation. The emphasis shifted from the superiority of Islam over all faiths, to one that emphasizes pluralism and Islam's recognition of Christianity and Judaism as valid divine religions. The encounter with Christians that used to concentrate on the theological errors of Christian doctrine now focuses on the cordial relations between the Abrahamic faiths.

In response to 9/11, some Muslims see a great need to stop internal bickering and start to collaborate on how to present their issues cohesively. Ad hoc improvisation has led to multiple interpretations, confusion, and discord, and new voices are urgently needed to help Muslims navigate a situation in which the stakes are extremely high. It seems clear that Muslim women, perhaps especially those who choose to veil, are becoming increasingly important as interpreters of a new American Islam. The participation in the public discourse of a *muhajjaba* who is fluent in English is highly important in altering public prejudice against Islam and Muslims. Her voice is particularly helpful if she has the skills to use both the discourse and the language of the majority in formulating her arguments, allowing her to communicate to Americans in such a way that they see her as legiti-

mately American and not a suspicious outsider. At least for the present, the veil seems a permanent fixture of American Islam—though it is still not adopted by even a majority of Muslim women—and an important tool in helping Muslims not only survive but respond creatively to the tensions of post-9/11 society in the United States.

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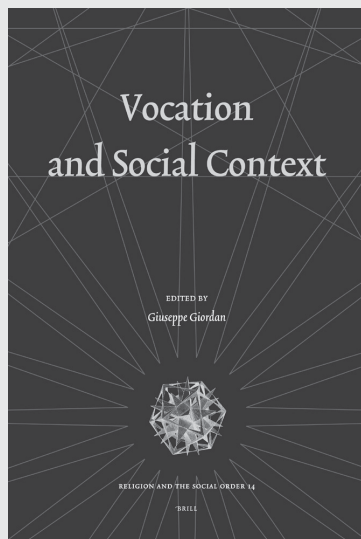
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Vocation and Social Context

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The category of *Beruf* has intrigued sociology since Max Weber made it a fundamental element in understanding the relationship between the individual and society. The richness of the concept can be found in the simultaneous polarity and interpenetration between the subject's personal profession and the feeling of a call from God: precisely this ambiguity widens the possibility of applying the concept in understanding the meaning that individuals give to their own professions, activities and, more generally, "life in the world." Illustrating the different ways in which "vocation-profession" can be interpreted, and how it can be studied from various perspectives and with different scientific sensibilities, this book demonstrates how the concept of *Beruf* continues to be fertile for contemporary sociology. Contributors: Anthony J. Blasi, Andrew J. Weigert, Franco Garelli, Luigi Berzano, Robert M. Fishman, Keeley S. Jones, Laura M. Leming, Giovanni Dal Piaz, Robert C. Butler

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Hijab and American Muslim Women: Creating the Space for Autonomous Selves*

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Among Muslims living in the United States, Islamic religious practices are negotiated and adapted to a new culture. A visible and controversial symbol of Muslims' differences from dominant American Christianity is the hijab worn by many Muslim women. The decision to wear hijab occurs within a two-fold cultural context: (1) the assumption by many non-Muslims that hijab encapsulates Islam's inherent violation of women's "equal rights"; and (2) a widespread Muslim critique of American culture for its individualism, materialism, and lax sexual mores. Using data from interviews and observations with college-age, second-generation Muslim Americans, we explore the context, meanings, and consequences of wearing hijab. Second-generation Muslim women are negotiating social and religious identities in contrast both to non-Muslim Americans and to their immigrant families. Hijab has multiple meanings as a religious and social symbol; it provides a clear identity marker at a life-course transitional time, and it provides culturally legitimate space for young women who are formulating Muslim-American identities

As increasing numbers of Muslims live in the United States, and as Islam becomes increasingly visible as a public religious presence in what is still a Christian-majority country, many Islamic religious practices are being adopted, adapted to, and abandoned by American Muslims. This is particularly true for first and second generation Muslims from traditionally Islamic societies such as

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Pakistan or Egypt. Some of these adaptations make Muslims more like the American majority in speech, dress, and cultural folkways. Other adaptations call attention to differences between Muslims and other Americans, particularly native-born Christians.

A visible and often controversial difference is the *hijab*, the headscarf that covers a woman's head, hair, neck, and ears—leaving only the face showing.¹ Many, but not all, Muslims consider wearing *hijab* theologically mandated. Many second-generation young women in the U.S. choose to wear *hijab*—often when they are in college and sometimes over their parents' objections. Drawing on the extant sociological literature, interviews, and ethnographic observations, we address the practice of wearing *hijab* by young Muslim-American women.² We consider the context in which it is worn, the meanings it has for young women, and the consequences they see it having for their lives.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE AND IDENTITY IN AMERICA

Dimensions of the story we tell here are familiar to any student of immigration and religious pluralism in America. The British colonies that later emerged as the United States were overwhelmingly Protestant—in many cases non-litur-

¹There is no uniformly accepted set of terms for the clothing/covering we discuss here. Mernissi (1987) notes that the Qur'anic text in which *hijab* is used refers to a curtain used to separate the Prophet and his wife from some wedding guests in Medina, and thus the term refers to a boundary that segregates and protects. She is critical of the interpretations of the term *hijab* that have made it a veil worn by women alone. Roald (2001: 260) agrees that *hijab* is not a technically accurate rendering of "veil" from Qur'anic Arabic, but is critical of Mernissi's (1987; 2003/1985) and Ahmad's (1992) readings of the pertinent Qur'an and *hadith* passages for being selectively feminist. Roald also notes that *jilbab*, another word in the Qur'an, is a vague term that connotes a one-piece garment, which often includes the face covering, but not always. Roald (2001: 262-3) provides a variety of regional variations in the terms used to describe Muslim women's clothing. We will follow the conventions of current American scholarship—and the informants from our research—in using *hijab* to refer to the scarf that covers head, hair, neck, and ears, but leaves the face uncovered, *jilbab* to mean the one-piece full-length robe-like dress that does not necessarily cover the head, and *nikab* to refer to the face-covering. When the English word "veil" is used in general conversation or media, the reference could be to various clothing items and leaves unclear whether the face is covered. However, when the young women we interviewed referred to "covering," they almost invariably meant wearing the *hijab* headscarf, usually without the *nikab*.

²In this article we will use the terms "American Muslims" and "Muslim Americans" interchangeably. However, we note a difference in implications. The connotation of the former term is that "Muslim" is the main identity, and "American" is the qualifier adjective. We heard this term often from our respondents and found it in the "how to" literature on Islamic parenting and families (e.g., Hasan 2000); it indicates that those involved are working to create an American version of Islam. However, doing research within the U.S. involves studying people who are almost all "Americans," and thus the qualifying adjective (the hyphenated identity) is "Muslim," as it might be Italian-, Irish-, or Jewish-Americans.

gical, highly sectarian forms of Calvinism. Throughout American history, groups as varied as Baptists, Quakers, Mormons, Catholics, and Jews have at one time or another been religious “others.” In general, those who encountered the greatest discrimination have been those with the most visibly different religious practices (Moore 1986). For example, Italian Catholics’ street parades with religious icons, combined with the distinctive dress worn by those in religious orders, provided targets for anti-Catholic nativists (Orsi 1985; Bennett 1988). Similarly, Orthodox Jews’ yarmulkes, payot, and strict Sabbath rules provided a visibility that made it easier for American anti-Semites to construct them as different, sinister, and non-assimilable.

In recent years, *hijab* has become the most visible symbol of Muslim identity and issues in America. Bartkowski and Read (2003), Hoodfar (1993), Read and Bartkowski (2000), Schmidt (2004:105-10), and Shakeri (1998) have written insightfully on the “veil” and the meanings American Muslim women assign to it. Tellingly, books by Aswad and Bilge (1996), Bukhari et al. (2004), Haddad and Esposito (2000), Haddad (2002) and Roald (2001) all have photos of women in *hijab* on their covers, even though gender is only one aspect of the books’ subject matter.

Scholars have analyzed the veil from many angles, including historical and theological. In this article, we are interested in exploring only the sociological dimensions of its practice and meaning. Unlike Read and Bartkowski (2000), who focus on the meanings given to *hijab* both by those who wear it and those who do not, our original intention in this research was not to investigate *hijab* or its meanings. Also unlike Bartkowski and Read (2003), we do not compare the meanings constructed by ordinary women with the interpretations by theorists and theologians of Islam. Rather, we began the research interested in the religious lives of college-age young adults, specifically their involvement with religious organizations and institutions. Late adolescence and early adulthood is often a transitional point in identity development, and in the U.S. these years are often spent in college. Our research was motivated by questions about how involvement with religious organizations affects this identity moment.

Hijab, its meanings, and the consequences of wearing it were themes raised consistently in our individual and focus group interviews—often by the interviewees themselves. This is clearly an issue of concern for young American-Muslim women, and it has important identity implications. It was only after noticing a pattern of women themselves (and some young men) raising the issue that we began to formulate the research questions for this article. At that point the second author conducted interviews specifically investigating *hijab*. The analysis here uses data from both the fieldwork and the interviews. We argue that *hijab* is a symbol that condenses a number of issues for young Muslims who are in the process of constructing the practical dimensions of an American Islam.

WOMEN AND TRADITIONAL RELIGION

One way to frame the question about *hijab* and college-age women in the U.S. is to place it within the recent literature about women and traditional forms of religious practice. Scholars such as Davidman (1991) and Griffith (1998) have investigated why some upwardly mobile, achievement-oriented, American-born women voluntarily join religions that protect a traditional gender order. The feminist critique of religious patriarchy that emerged in the 1960s and early 1970s has become well known in American culture, and as a general rule Americans prize individual autonomy and release from external obligations or coercion. Given that college-educated, often middle-class women are generally immersed in modernist social and cultural worlds, the attraction to traditionalist religion seems to need explaining. Neither a straight interest-based answer (Marxian or rational-choice), nor a cultural assimilationist argument provides a coherent answer.

One persuasive answer regarding women and traditional religion has come from the study of white and black evangelical Protestant women (e.g., Griffith 1998; Lawless 1983). These scholars argue, with some variation, that women find themselves in a man's world in most of our societal institutions. This is particularly true for working-class women who have more limited professional or mobility opportunities, but it applies to all women. One institution in this man's world where women can exercise some control and autonomy and can gain some recognition for their efforts is religion. Religious organizations become relatively free spaces for women. Men may control the top leadership positions, and there may be restrictions on women's participation. Nonetheless, women actually run many religious institutions in practice, and they thereby become spheres of female empowerment and solidarity (cf. Warner 1993:1045).

Our research with young Muslim women who are active in their religion, both those who wear *hijab* and some who do not, suggests that these women would find interest-based answers to be missing a crucial dimension. Also, they probably would not endorse in its entirety the empowerment answer. Indeed, they would—and sometimes did—object to even framing the question in terms of “modern” women and “traditional” religion. These women are the daughters of immigrants and practice a minority religion in a country that does not understand it. They live in a city (and most attend college) where social, religious, and ethnic diversity is widespread and obvious. And they are at a stage of life where self and group identities are often in the foreground of consciousness and social life (see Peek 2005). We argue that donning *hijab* is a practice that allows young women to create some cultural space for themselves—it is a part of a larger identity project by second-generation Muslim young people to negotiate their dual identities as Muslims and Americans and gives them the opportunity to be part of both worlds.

METHODS AND DATA

We draw upon data gathered among young adults in a midwestern metropolitan area in two related research projects. The initial project focused on college-aged young people and their orientations to and involvement with religious organizations. We studied young people connected to their religion and their religious communities, as well as religious organizations run by and for youth. As a result of this research strategy, we draw no conclusions or generalizations about young people's religiousness generally or about those who have left their religion behind. We assume that developing a religious identity is important to the young people with whom we are concerned, and we investigated its attendant meanings and practices.

We gathered data through several methods. First we draw on data gathered under the auspices of the Youth and Religion Project (YRP), co-directed by R. Stephen Warner and Rhys H. Williams. The YRP used individual and focus group interviews, site visits at religious organizations and institutions, and visits with families from a sample that included white, black, and Latino Christians, Muslims, and Hindus. For this article we draw on the YRP Muslim data, that includes one individual depth interview with a Muslim woman, one focus group interview with eight Muslim women, and numerous site visits to religious organizations for worship services, religious lectures, and classes that included both men and women. The site visits involved two types of religious organizations: (a) practices and programs centered in masjids; and (b) autonomous, young-adult run organizations, including a university-based Muslim Student Association (MSA) and other organizations that exist independently from sponsoring institutions and are run by college-aged young adults. These data were collected primarily from 1998-2001, although some follow-up visits and conversations occurred in late 2001 and early 2002.

The second data source is an interview-based project spun off from the YRP. The second author interviewed 40 Muslim women ages 18-25, three-fourths of whom attended college. These interviews, conducted in 2001-02, focused specifically on the meanings of and decision to wear or not wear *hijab*. Half of these women were *hijabis* (those who wear *hijab*) and many were recruited through MSA organizations (at more than one university in our metropolitan area).

Many of the women we encountered are from Indian or Pakistani families—or in the shorthand we often heard, they are ethnically “Indo-Pak.” Others were ethnically Arab. Occasionally, we encountered Euro-American converts to Islam, but none of our individual interviewees was African American (one member of the focus group was black) or Asian. Some came from middle-class homes, often with one or more parents who are professionals and had been in this country for some time. Others came from lower-middle-class households, and had arrived in the U.S. more recently. Most of the young women we met and talked

to were from the city of our research site and lived in ethnically dense neighborhoods near other Muslims. However, some women, particularly in the MSAs at local universities, came from smaller towns or suburbs in the region and had lived mostly among non-Muslims; they generally had families who had assimilated fairly thoroughly. Many students at the universities in our research city still live at home and are at least somewhat involved in organized religious life with their parents and other family members—often in addition to involvement with the MSA or other youth-run organizations. Thus, different women faced different situations, and *hijab* is a response to different types of issues.

It is important to note the ethnographic position of the authors vis à vis the people with whom we talked and whom we observed. Neither of us is Muslim, and we made no attempt to hide that. We received permission from religious leaders to attend programs at masjids and autonomous organizations, and introduced ourselves as researchers at events or site visits. We both made a point of dressing relatively modestly and conventionally, in the middle-class garb that might be called “business casual.” Many organized religious activities among Muslims are gender segregated. Many researchers, such as Roald (2004) and Schmidt (2004), have noted how difficult that can make getting information across gender lines. Women conducted the formal interviews and the focus groups from which the material in this article is drawn; however, the first author visited many organizational meetings and events, and often spoke with young women informally at those occasions. His status as researcher and professor was well known and may well have been legitimating. The second author’s Indian ethnic identity and second-generation status may well have increased the trust respondents placed in her to report their stories carefully.

We are well aware of the extent to which many of the people we quote here were interested in representing Islam, and themselves, in a positive light. We accept that, in part because we are interested in how they construct what constitutes a “positive light” and what it means to them to be a “good Muslim.” Undoubtedly a different research strategy or different researchers would have produced data somewhat different from the data we gathered, but we do note that many of the responses we chart here resonate with other research (such as Read and Bartkowski 2000 or Schmidt 2004).

We begin our analysis by discussing the cultural contexts in which these young people live. For second-generation people trying to be both American and Muslim, these contexts are significant. Young Muslims are in the general process of constructing an American Islam, and, in particular, of negotiating gender roles that are religiously appropriate and also respect their commitments to full public lives in the U.S. We then turn to analysis of the observations of the research sites and the voices of the Muslim women themselves.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Two cultural contexts are significant for understanding young Muslim Americans and *hijab*: American emphasis on “equal rights,” and contemporary critiques of the moral status of American culture. We unpack each in turn.

Equality is a core American value, frequently expressed by the term, equal rights. The dominant American cultural interpretation of equal rights has two parts. First is that rights involve liberty from the control of external, especially institutional, authorities, and that these rights are the inalienable property of individuals. One is an individual, and is free, to the extent that one can make autonomous, individual decisions. Social obligations are legitimate only to the extent that they represent a contract between equal, consenting individuals (see Bromley and Busching 1988; Bellah et al. 1985; Williams 1995).

The second dimension of equal rights is the notion of treating all people the same. According to this interpretation of equal rights, responding to gender inequality means dismantling barriers to women in public life, organizational memberships, economic opportunity, and the like, especially through legal challenges. Many such challenges have been successful. Accompanying these changes in women’s legal and institutional statuses has been a degree of cultural androgyny, such as women wearing pants and playing sports, as well as the relaxation (though not elimination) of sexual double standards. Given these two interpretative themes of what constitutes equal rights—individualism and equal treatment—many Americans view any outward manifestations of difference as inequality.

The notion that difference is an indicator of inequality is most publicly institutionalized in the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, which held that separate is inherently unequal. That framework shaped the public’s understanding of the civil rights movement and the second wave of the women’s movement. Thus, “gender neutrality” has emerged as the cultural frame to solve the problem of gender inequality; it has achieved legitimacy as the culturally appropriate way to relate to individuals—both socially and politically (see Williams and Williams 1995). Equal rights as gender neutrality rejects any institutionally authorized sanctioning of behavior that separates the sexes or that applies to men and women differently.

Given this assumption, it is not difficult to see that *hijab*, in and of itself, can be considered a manifestation of inequality—women wear it, but men do not. In addition, the American media are full of stories about women’s oppression in Islam, such as the prohibition on women’s driving in Saudi Arabia and the Taliban’s vicious treatment of women in Afghanistan. Operating from this perspective, many Americans do not understand why second-generation Muslim American women wear *hijab*. It seems to many Americans to be an open admis-

sion of second-class status (this is not only a U.S. problem, see Shakeri's 1998 analysis of Canada).³

The second context in which second-generation Muslim women operate is the widespread debate and critique of American culture now current in media and politics. This includes critiques of American culture's materialism, individualism, and sexual openness. The critique is not limited to Muslims, but is common among both Muslim religious leaders and laity. During our fieldwork and interviews, we heard many criticisms of American society and culture, from its reliance on credit cards and personal debt, to its elevation of work and career achievement above family.⁴ Respondents often combined the defense of Islam's views on gender with a discussion of the problems of modernity, the threat of carnality to moral purity, and a rehearsal of the social problems in the United States that are allegedly caused by moral breakdown. In this frame, the idea of equal rights as promoting individualism is seen as one source of society's problems.

However, when the issue is gender and *hijab*, the heart of the Islamic critique of contemporary American society seems to be a basic distrust of human nature and its ability to resist sexual impulses. For example, we attended a summer camp run for youth at a local masjid. According to one of the male speakers, himself in his mid-20s, making a presentation at the camp to high school age males: "whenever a man and a woman are alone in a room together, there is always a third figure present, shatan [Satan]."⁵ Field notes from the same camp session on relations between men and women, but from a different speaker, reveal:

You know what this means: you see some girl wearing little more than a handkerchief for a dress, and the guy in us (we're all guys) says 'wow!' That's natural. We're human. But after that one look, we look away, because Allah has something better for us, paradise, not hell.

Fear of untrammelled sexuality appeared in a number of different settings. Many of these concerns focused on the threat to women from men's inability to control their sexual desires (cf. Read and Bartkowski 2000). However, in a number of talks we heard, the attention centered on the threat women pose to the moral

³The recent controversies in France regarding the veil have some similarities to U.S. issues, but important differences. One common theme is the tension between Muslim immigrants and the host country's national identity, and another is the tension between a universalist conception of equality versus external symbols of particularistic group membership. However, France formally defines its public square as secular, and thus the contention was more about religion, *per se*, than about inequality as such.

⁴See, for example, Beshir and Beshir (2001), an advice book for Muslim parents published by an Islamic publishing house. They list such things as "individuality," "physical indulgence," and "fulfilling desires" as aspects of American culture that clash with Islamic values and pose a challenge to raising Muslim teenagers.

⁵Mernissi (2003:42) quotes a very similar saying and attributes it to Abu Issa al-Tarmidi, a contributor to the *hadith*.

purity of men.⁶ In either formulation, American society's sexualized culture appears as a significant problem for Muslims and a threat to society's well being.

Thus, college-aged American Muslims have access to two distinct streams of cultural messages—equal rights vs. cultural decadence—that in many ways paint opposite portraits of what are the normatively appropriate relationships between men and women.⁷ As Ajrouch (2004) documents, this produces a contested space for ethnic, religious, and gender identity development. Ajrouch's respondents felt particularly caught between what they called the "boater" culture of their immigrant parents, and "white" culture of the United States. Religious understandings, Ajrouch shows, play an important mediating role in how gender is configured (even though only one member of her focus group participants wore *hijab*). Contested cultural space is not a new dilemma for immigrant populations or members of minority religions. But Islam's increasingly public and controversial place in American life, and the importance attached to *hijab* in understandings of Islam in the West, make this particularly acute.

CULTURAL WORK AND THE RELIGIOUS RESPONSE

American Muslims, especially young people born in the U.S., are aware of the conventional American assumptions about women's inequality in Islam (e.g., Hasan 2000). Further, college-age young people are in a period in the life course where issues of dating, romance, love, and sex are salient for people of all cultural and religious backgrounds. The distance between the practices and values of first-generation immigrants (our respondents' parents' generation) regarding sex and marriage and the so-called mainstream American culture of sex and romantic love is too wide to be ignored.

As a result, young Muslims in America are constantly engaged in the cultural work of trying to figure out appropriate gender practices for their situation. In our research, we heard formal presentations on Islamic dating and marriage prac-

⁶Mernissi investigates theories and approaches to sexuality in Islam, often contrasting them to those in Christianity. She holds (2003:30, 32-3, 41-5) that Islam's explicit theory of female sexuality considers it to be passive, and thus women must be sheltered from men's active sexual aggression. However, she also discerns an implicit theory that has an active conception of female sexuality, from which men must often be protected, lest social disorder result. Mernissi notes that both theoretical conceptions have resulted in the same practical solution—the veiling and subordination of women. Many of our respondents reject the idea that *hijab* represents subordination, but we heard many comments that showed a severe distrust or even fear of sexual desires.

⁷Read and Bartkowski (2000) and Bartkowski and Read (2003) provide thorough analyses of the debates about *hijab* itself within Islamic elite circles. We focus on the broader, everyday cultural debate between American conceptions of freedom and equality and Muslim notions of proper social values.

tices and informal discussions on appropriate ways to behave toward men and women. We attended workshops on Muslim parenting and read literature on what is permissible and forbidden for men and women to do. One major theme of these various settings and media was a denial that women's inequality was intrinsic to Islam. In almost every discussion of Islam, gender, or family that we heard in the course of this research, Muslim speakers (both male and female) went out of their way to claim "in Islam, women have equal rights," or "men and women are different, but that does not mean unequal." Some of these claims may have been for the authors' benefit—non-Muslims openly engaged in research. But we take as significant how often our respondents went out of their way—often completely unprompted—to make this point.

Several of our respondents clarified to us that equality as sameness was not how Islam views gender, but rather, that Islam emphasizes "equity." Equity was then interpreted in terms of complementarity of needs, functions, and contributions (cf. Bartkowski and Read 2003). This formulation includes a degree of essentialism that is often connected to biology, sexual drives, and the basic distrust of human nature and its ability to resist sexual impulses that we noted above.

Other respondents provided us with rationales for their understanding of women's equity in that they claimed women actually had an advantaged position, in some respects, as compared to men. For example, one respondent noted to us that in Islam, women are allowed to keep their own money, whereas the money men earn is the family's money and must support the household. In addition, a male elder from a masjid explained that, unlike in the west, women in Islam had never been considered "chattel" property (his term) and thus their issues were not the same as Western women's. Whether that claim is true is less relevant to our case than the way it demonstrates that Muslims in America are acutely aware of the clash between their practices and many Americans' notions of equal rights. We also note that these are not Victorian separate spheres arguments, because nothing in them necessarily mandates that women should remain only in the private domain of home and family. These claims were often articulated to us by women who are themselves creating very public, career-oriented lives.

Another example of the cultural work being done by American Muslims comes from a long evening's discussion of Islamic marriage practices, presented as one class in a series of talks geared for young people and held at a masjid (also in attendance were a significant number of people who looked more like parents than singles). The lecturer, an out-of-town sheikh who was an invited speaker, discussed courtship and marriage practices using the language of "rights" and "choice," repeatedly emphasizing that women as well as men are allowed to choose their partners. He questioned the wisdom of arranged marriages, claiming that without a chosen relationship, built on love, respect, and observance of Islam, a marriage could not be happy (note that "happiness" as a criterion for a good marriage was important). Arranged marriages, he claimed, were part of

Arab and Pakistani culture, not Islamically prescribed. We found it significant the extent to which the sheikh put Islamic practices in the U.S. within the language of choice and rights. Below is a passage, quoted from the first author's field notes, where the sheikh was discussing how men and women could begin to evaluate potential marriage partners:

A man can look at his prospective wife. This is unavoidable in the U.S. Since one will be "living with the choice for the rest of life" it is important that one look at one's spouse first. And, this should/can be done without her parents' permission. One can look at a young woman on the streets or in public. Indeed, one should look before one gets serious—it is important to protect the other's feelings, so that one does not reject them in a face-to-face meeting (say at the family house, etc.; that kind of rejection can be very painful to the young woman and her family).

Most of the lecture was from a male perspective—the sheikh often stumbling a bit to keep women's concerns in mind—but the framing was choice, rights, and equality .

Finally, at several points Muslims emphasized to us, and we observed, that there are definite rules of modesty for men as well—concern about moral purity and sexual control are not directed solely at women. In some discussions at the MSA at a local university we heard claims by young women that men, as well as women, should wear *jilbab* (a full length, long-sleeved robe)—thus rejecting the Western custom of pants. This was, in effect, a protest against a modesty double standard, as well as against dominant American norms of attire. Similar claims are evident in Hasan's (2000) book and among Ajrouch's (2004) respondents.

Young men themselves often emphasize the importance of their own modesty. At one work-service day attended by the first author, groups of young Muslims (males and females working in separate groups) were painting, collecting litter, and planting grass and flowers in an impoverished neighborhood. Quoting from field notes from that day:

Near the end [of the post-prayer lecture] was an admonition to the women working to keep their *hijabs* buttoned completely and to the men to have their shirts tucked in as they worked. He [the Imam] said, "men, we don't need to see your backs!" I did notice that while many of the...[male] volunteers had on t-shirts, they were generally t-shirts whose sleeves hung all the way to the elbow. None had on shorts or sleeveless tee/tank tops.

Male modesty in appearance was a point made a number of times in the functions we attended. Indeed, several observations in the first author's field notes from various site visits note that the author was dressed slightly "immodestly"—khakis and short sleeve, open-collared shirts—as compared to the Muslim men in the draping *shalwar kameez* clothing of South Asia or others in Western dress, but with their long-sleeve shirts buttoned all the way to the wrists and the neck.

RELIGION AND CULTURE

All of these examples point to ways in which Muslim Americans deal with the tension between dominant American constructions of equal rights, gender, and the status of women. The second generation is clearly working to find a “negotiated order” (Maines and Charlton 1985) in gender matters. They often have concerns about American culture but they cannot accept the traditional restrictions that many associate with Arab or Pakistani culture. They need to figure out how to be co-workers with professionals of the opposite sex and to find marriage partners without the arranged customs their parents may have used.

We found one particular discursive claim used by many American Muslims, both male and female, to deal with the cultural and potential logical tensions they face. Warner et al (2001) call this Islam’s “Teflon construction.” That is, things that are objectionable, or that are seen as restraining, unfair, or unwise, are deemed to be aspects of “culture” and can be jettisoned without damaging the purity of Islamic truth. Bad things slide off the “true Islam” as if it were coated with Teflon. Further, many respondents said that Islam should be purged of cultural pollutions; for example, some interviewees told us that Islam in America is “liberated” (one used that term) from the problems of Middle Eastern and other traditional cultures. Thus, the necessary reality of Islam in America—that it must adapt to a much different cultural environment from which it emerged—is turned into a virtue.

We heard many speakers make a distinction between religion and culture in this regard—for example, the sheikh giving the lecture on marriage and dating described above. We first became aware of it, however, in interviews with young women. We quote here from an individual interview, in which the respondent gives a clear account of how religion and culture can and should be distinguished. We note that though the interviewer occasioned this particular response by presenting the religion-culture distinction to the respondent, this line of questioning was itself prompted by the use of the religion vs. culture logic in a prior focus group interview:

I: [H]ow do you distinguish between something that’s religious and something that’s cultural?

R: [W]hat I try to do is look for very sound evidence when it comes to anything that anybody says to me that doesn’t make too much sense. Or a lot of times we go back to the life of the Prophet—peace be upon Him—and all the companions of the Prophet and the women at that time and how they lived their lives. [If] something is explicitly stated through the Hadith or [if I] see in the Qur’an that it’s wrong, then we leave it. And if it’s not explicitly said, then you consider it a gray area of where it’s controversial or you need to do further research. But I would never say, “Yes, this is a sin” if I’ve never found any sound evidence. [I]t may be something that people are ashamed of because of their own cultural background, which is natural.

I: So gray areas might be considered cultural?

R: I guess the more you understand your religion . . . once you get older, you begin to do research yourself. . . . There's so many things that can fall into that category when you begin to question where this is coming from. Some things are for example the way you get married, like arranged marriages compared to non-arranged marriages . . . [or] the way that the women dress. If you go to Africa, women don't wear what I'm wearing. No, they wear African clothing. And if they go to Turkey, they wear Turkish clothing. In the West, they go to some Limited Express at the mall and they get a skirt and a shirt. But the whole point is that everything is covered but the face and the hands. And everything is loose and covering all shape and form. So, in a case like this, you can see how there are so many different cultural influences in the way that people apply Islam. But again, it still complies with Islamic teaching. . . .

HIJAB AND AMERICAN MUSLIM WOMEN

This quotation leads us specifically to *hijab*, a cultural and religious symbol that we believe epitomizes the negotiation second-generation American Muslims do regarding their identities. Many of the women we talked to made a conscious decision to wear *hijab*; for some of our respondents this decision was not made until they were in college (see similar evidence in Schmidt 2004:101, 105-10). The decision was presented to us as having a number of dimensions, although it invariably involved a sense of religious obligation. A keyword in many of the explanations was “modesty.” Revealing too much of the body endangers the moral status of both men and women. *Hijab* helps protect women from men and men from women. These discussions of modesty often occurred in all male settings, or when men spoke to gatherings of men and women at a meeting or at *Jummah* (midday Friday) prayer.

Interestingly, in many of the notes gathered by the second author and other female research assistants, the discussions of *hijab* among young women themselves were often less about modesty and moral purity than about other interpersonal issues. Perhaps the modesty angle is so obvious to young women it need not be mentioned in all-female discussions, but our field notes and experiences did not report the types of fire and brimstone speeches and warnings of moral danger among young women that we witnessed regularly among young men. Rather, many discussions among young women were more about visibility, social ostracism, and public reputation.. One young woman told the second author, “If I don't wear the *hijab* the Muslim girls [at the MSA] will not acknowledge me.” Another said, “I don't like [her college's] MSA because all the girls want you to wear the *hijab* or else they are rude to you,” indicating the peer pressure and social expectations involved. Other dimensions of identity also intersect with religion for these second-generation youth in their cultural identity work. The first author's field notes from various MSA functions, such as potluck meals (not prayer services), indicate that a significant minority of the young women were uncovered—often seven or eight among the 30-odd women there. When asked

about this, one Arab informant replied that the ones without the *hijab* were definitely “Indo-Pak,” as “no Arab girl would be uncovered.”

Several women mentioned the benefit of gaining more respect from men after starting to cover. One meaning of respect in this case may be discouraging unwelcome flirting or sexual attention. It is not hard to imagine that women who cover are much less likely to be hit on by non-Muslim, or even Muslim, men. Such overt signs of piety help remove ambiguity from new social settings. Others may well react to a covered women differently, and co-religionists who may be present can react to such visible piety to help divert people from temptation. Women in *hijab* instantly signal who they are and what group they identify with, making clear their religious and community connections. Schmidt (2004) reasons that young women who wear *hijab* are more likely to be granted religious and moral authority among peers, particularly among groups such as an MSA, and thus taken more seriously. Similarly, Ajrouch’s (2004) respondents held higher behavioral expectations for covered women because of their easily visible claims to piety. We often heard women say they monitored their own behavior when wearing *hijab* because “you represent Islam” to others.

Emphasizing differences from non-Muslims is one key to understanding the identity functions of *hijab*. However, the young women we encountered were not all facing the same situations in college or vis à vis their families. Some came from families where their mothers did not cover; others came from families who worried about their daughters being alone among non-believers and exposed to big-city temptations. There are multi-directional pressures, and simultaneous negotiations involved, but despite varying logics, wearing *hijab* is a viable way of dealing with many of them. As with any social practice or embodied symbol, different people had different rationales for its use, and any given person often had more than one reason.

For many, wearing *hijab* and being involved in Islamically oriented organizations provide a way to escape parental authority and supervision, at least temporarily. These are very public young women, who drive around the city to various events, organize meetings of MSA and other religiously related groups, and plan for graduate school and careers. One local MSA itself recognizes this and offers workshops on things such as self-defense (showing the expectation that women would be without male escorts in many settings) and applying to medical school (one flyer noted explicitly “sisters are encouraged to attend”).

A couple of the women provided an account of *hijab* that emphasized the way in which it provides some insulation from the restrictions that might otherwise accompany their status as unmarried women. Their families often had traditional gender ideas and regarded their young women protectively. And yet, the young women want to take advantage of what America can offer them, and still consider themselves good Muslims. Wearing *hijab*, an outward, public display of piety and religious identity, can finesse the constraints that conservative gender roles might impose upon them. One young woman who did not cover told the second

author, “if I wore the *hijab* I would be able to do so much more.” *Hijab* is so symbolically loaded and so legitimate within the Islamic community—as is involvement in Islamic organizations and the women’s attention to their own religious education—that the women are insulated (at least to some degree) from reactionary backlash from Muslim men or other women (such as their mothers) protecting a traditional gender order. In another example, one interviewee suggested that other women on her campus often wore *hijab* just to be able to “date” without repercussions (although we note that she did not mean “date” the way most native-born middle class Americans would define the term). Similarly, while many of our respondents could not imagine themselves marrying someone about whom their parents disapproved, they also did not anticipate an arranged marriage of the type so many of their parents had. *Hijab* carves out a cultural space for young Muslim women to live lives that their mothers could barely have imagined (see a similar theme in Cainkar 1996 and Read and Bartkowski 2000) and still to be publicly Muslim.

Alternatively, other young women are trying to achieve some distance from their assimilating, Westernized parents, or are from areas in which there are very few Muslims at all. They come from situations in which they and their families were reasonably well-integrated into non-Muslim communities. Often the women in their family of origin did not cover, except when in the mosque. In establishing their own identities, these women are often resisting assimilationist pressures from their families. Their arrival at college was their first experience with all-Muslim circles of friends. They began to wear *hijab* as an expression of a Muslim identity-in-formation (on their way to what Peek [2005] would call a “declared identity”),⁸ as well as trying to fit in with a new crowd of friends. These women are creating identities that are distinct from their more Americanized families and that offer their own forms of autonomy. For example, one woman explained that going to college, meeting more Muslims, and continuing to learn more about her religion persuaded her to begin to cover: “It wasn’t really taught to me. My mom doesn’t wear it, my grandma doesn’t wear it. No one wears it. But I found out—I researched, I talked to people—just one day it hit me and I decided to wear it.”

Another young woman, whose friendship circles were all Muslim, related that she began to wear *hijab* in college, even over her parents’ objections. She grew up in a mid-sized community in a state without a significant Muslim popu-

⁸In her study of the events of 9/11, Peek (2005) distinguishes between “chosen” and “declared” identities, the latter being an intensification of self-identity following a crisis. Our impression was that we saw fewer *hijabis* immediately post 9/11, but we do not believe this changes the fundamental dynamic we report here. It seems to us that, while not as traumatic as a public crisis such as 9/11, many young people’s encounter with diversity and alternative social identities at college or in a metropolis, followed by finding a comfortable peer group, can result in something that approximates the sense of an emphatic declared identity.

lation, and her physician parents felt *hijab* to be unnecessary. Thus, *hijab* helps negotiate the generational difference with parents—establishing a distinct identity—as well as the difference with non-Muslim society. Many young American Muslims have experiences and knowledge that differ widely from that of their parents, whose social and cultural lessons are not very relevant to them. Many young people report that their parents—while culturally traditionalist—are lax or secularized in their religious practice. Consider this excerpt from a young woman:

My parents, my family has always been Muslim by culture which I mean . . . is not always very valid because I don't believe that . . . that God considers you a Muslim or a Christian or a Jew based on your blood or . . . something that you inherit. I believe . . . you have to make a conscious decision. And so, at first, I think my parents were Muslim by culture. . . [I]t wasn't until much later in life—my mother didn't begin covering until probably in her early 30s . . . I started [at] 16, 17 years old. And this is something—this is a general thing in any Muslim family. So I think there's been like a, you know, a rise in awareness, Islamic awareness, in my own generation compared to my parents' generation.

Note her emphasis on individual choice and conscious decision as the essence of authentic religious commitment. Also, how she separates what is “religious”—and thus a true aspect of Islam—from what is “cultural” and to be examined, evaluated, and perhaps discarded. By her account, her mother began covering about the same time she did—but she presents this as a trend that is going from the second generation to their parents' generation, rather than vice versa. This young woman is becoming an American in her approach to chosen, voluntaristic religiosity, and still preserving a distinctly Muslim identity, visibly proclaimed with *hijab*.

In effect, these young women are using *hijab* as a cultural resource to give some substantive meaning to their contentions that difference does not necessarily mean inequality. In the process, they are creating practical dimensions of an American Islam. As Read and Bartkowski (2000) also show, these young women are active agents and are able, to some degree, to create their own lives. *Hijab* helps them do so, while also keeping them anchored in a traditional identity and avoiding potential anomie.

FASHION AS AN AUTONOMOUS DYNAMIC

We have presented the decision to wear *hijab* as one of identity development and the re-orientation of college-aged women from their families to their peer groups. However, we want to note that wearing *hijab* has a fashion dynamic that cannot be fully accounted for by religious motivations or social, ethnic, or class backgrounds. Lieberson (2000) charts what he calls the independent cycle of fashion as a social phenomenon in its own right. We call upon that now because,

in our view, it is also indisputable that along with its religious and social meanings, *hijab* is a fashion statement. Schmidt (2004:105-10) refers to the *jilbab* and *hijab* as an “informal dress code” among the Muslims she met. In our experience, girls and young women talk about *hijab* with each other as if they were talking about their clothes from the mall. Further, the ways in which they wear *hijab*, for example, the different ways in which it is wrapped about the head and draped down over the shoulders, is subject to fashion, innovation, and trend. Young women experiment with different styles, teaching them to and learning them from their sisters and peers.

Further, as more and more young women wear *hijab*, others are now starting to wear the *jilbab*, the full-length robe. We have observed some women taking it a step further and wearing the *nikab* that covers their face. Part of this seems to be a dynamic where demonstrating one’s piety may require ever-increasing steps in order to distinguish oneself from the many others who are beginning to adopt the symbol. Paradoxically, as is the case with the display of many symbols, this increasing demonstration of piety is simultaneously a dimension of fitting in with religiously identified peer groups even as it distinguishes identity and status. Thus, while this increasing covering is on one level about religion, it is also the case that religion is just the substantive content with which statements of personal identity and social distinction are being made. We have not pursued these last observations systematically, but they do make sense of some of the internal personal and social dynamics we have observed within Islamic schools, masjids, and student organizations.

CONCLUSION

May Seikaly (1998:182) notes that “while the veil carries a religious significance, it is a social symbol as well; women have come to use it to fulfill other needs.” American society puts great emphasis on equality, independence, and the establishment of autonomous personal identity. We argue that the decision to wear *hijab* can work in just this way for many second-generation American Muslim women. They are creating cultural space for the development of autonomous selves through the use of this potent religious symbol. It emphasizes their Muslim identity and gives them some measure of autonomy, depending upon their personal circumstances, from: a) dominant American non-Muslim culture; b) their Westernized, assimilating parents; or c) their non-assimilating parents who hold expectations for them rooted in Arabic or Indo-Pakistani culture. Wearing *hijab* is, for them, a practical and useful response to living as young women in a nexus between two cultures and as members of a minority faith. They are able to carve out some autonomous cultural space with a public symbol that visibly repudiates the overly individualized culture of dominant American society and that gives them some room to feel at home and to prosper in both worlds.

In whatever situation these young women find themselves, they rely on the legitimacy of religion, and the Teflon construction of Islam as opposed to the polluting effects of culture, to provide them with opportunities to become simultaneously public women, young Americans, and good Muslims.

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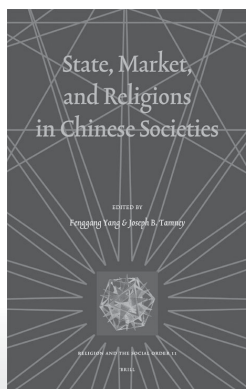
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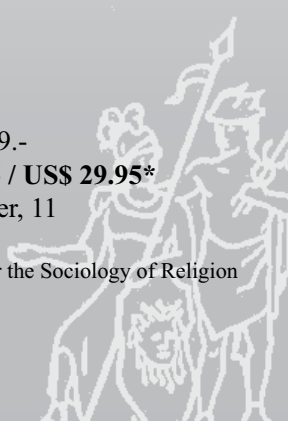
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France Upside Down over a Headscarf?*

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This article addresses the controversial banning of the headscarf (hijab) worn by Muslim girls in French schools. Before looking at the controversy itself, this study tackles theoretical questions regarding the assertion and recognition of specific identities in the public space, the neutral role that schools are supposed to assume, and the perceptions of Muslim women by themselves and by others. These issues are then situated within the specific socio-historical context of France to underscore the unique circumstances surrounding the banning of the headscarf. The article concludes by suggesting that, although the law banning the headscarf was passed for petty political reasons, an unintended benefit may result: French Muslims who do not want to impose the headscarf on their daughters may now be able to refer to the law to deflect criticisms of those in their communities and neighbourhoods who feel they are being unfaithful to religious practices.

There is no doubt that for an outsider, particularly a Muslim outsider, the recent law banning the headscarves (*hijab*) worn by Muslim girls in public schools in France is stunning. Who would have thought a piece of cloth could threaten the stability of the French state? How can the land of Human Rights be so intolerant? Why did it act so hastily? Currently, to find a spot in the marketplace of ideas, it pays to develop binary visions rather than to aim at complexity; and yet, offering a complex view of the situation is what this article intends to do.

Before looking specifically at the controversy surrounding the headscarf, this article will address three theoretical issues. The first relates to the declaration and recognition of specific identities in the public space, the second to the neutral role that schools are supposed to assume, and the third to the perceptions of Muslim women by themselves and by others (part 1). The second part of the article clarifies the specific context of France, specifically its sacralization of secularization; the difficult recognition of ethnic and religious differences; and the failures of the Republican model of social integration, all of which shed light on the acute tensions between Islamic demands for recognition and the Republic's emphasis on French nationalism (part 2). The final section of the article details

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the circumstances and reasons for the law banning the headscarf and concludes that although the law banning the headscarf was passed for petty political reasons, some French Muslims may benefit because they will be able to refer to the law to deflect criticisms from the community regarding their daughters' decisions not to wear the headscarf (part 3).

PART I: THEORETICAL ISSUES

Problematizing the Differentialist Approach to Identity

Cultures can be defined as systems of meanings and customs that are blurred at the edges (Nanton 1989:557). Banton (1970:66) suggests that "as individuals come to terms with changing circumstances, so they change their ways and shared meanings change with them." This perception could apply to Muslim girls born and socialized in France and opting to mark their religious identity conspicuously. The more immigrants and their children become legally part of a nation, the more some of them may be tempted to establish a distance with accepted conventions and norms. In Canada, Australia, and the United States, the ethnicization of minorities and claims for the recognition of differences have been interpreted by some as a legitimate reaction to the ethnicization of majorities, which prevailed for such a long time, and to the democratic corrosion of long-term commitments (Balibar and Wallerstein 1988; Sennett 1998). These countries have taken political and judicial measures to redress harms suffered by minorities. Recognition granted to differences of race, ethnicity, gender, and age has been founded on "a presumption of equal respect for cultural diversity," according to Charles Taylor's formulation (1994:39). In the U.S., for instance, ethno-racial lobbies since the 1950s have become tools for activist minorities willing to exert pressures on a system receptive to these types of demands.

This is not the case in France where the political system ignores ethnic and racial demands—for example, in rejecting the notion of a "Corsican people." In the U.S., the presence of minority middle classes fostered more tolerance for differences in the mainstream culture. Again, this is not the case in France where, for instance, there are few Members of Parliament of post-colonial origin and where the political representation of women in Parliament remains weak due to the unwillingness of political parties to open their ranks, despite the requirements of the law. However, the "differentialist" approach has its own problems which relate to the issue under discussion here, the ban on Muslim girls wearing *hijabs* in the public schools in France.

The major problem with the differentialist approach concerns the reification and essentialization of identities. According to the French saying, "Roses are not peonies but each rose is unique." Muslim girls with headscarves have more identities than this single, visible characterization. They have different motivations for their choice of visible difference. In a survey of one hundred girls wearing

hijabs, Gaspard and Khosrokhavar (1995) distinguished those who wear one because it is traditional (viz., their mother, grand-mother always did); those who want to avoid a conflict with their families who expect daughters to defend their honor and their virginity; those who use it not to be bothered by males in their neighborhood; and those who are more militant and use the *hijab* like a flag of revolt. Although this typology may be useful, it is not entirely convincing because it does not take time and place into account. Some girls may wear a *hijab* for a while and take it off, or the reverse. Some wear it when they leave their neighborhood, then put it in their bag.

Thus, as Anthony Appiah and Amy Gutmann observe, individuals cannot be categorized by one single reference. "Those who see a space of conflicts between the freedom of individuals and identity politics are right and what goes for one should not go for the other" (Appiah and Gutmann 1996:96). Thus the category "Muslim girls" needs to be deconstructed, something the political class, committed intellectuals, and the media did not do. "Why is there so much contemporary talk of identity, of large categories—race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality—that seem so far from the individual?" (Appiah and Gutmann 1996:93). The concept of authenticity is central here and the multiple belongings of each individual and of each community are not explored enough in the debates. It is more tempting to essentialize these girls than to examine their cases one by one.

Suart Hall rightly advocates fluid identity politics, recognizing the "fact that we are all made of multiple social identities and not of a single one. We are formed out of diverse categories and diverse conflicts the goal of which is to locate us socially according to multiple positions of exclusion and subordination which do not operate in us in the same manner" (Hall 1991:48). But such virtue cannot be expected from politicians. I would add that the differentialist approach too frequently ignores that individuals' identities are constructed out of a distance from, or even an opposition to, the community of belonging. Moreover, no identity, whether individual or collective, coincides with itself. We are always alien to ourselves and to others, as Julia Kristeva (1988) has argued. Complexity is required here.

Schools Helping to Construct Neutrality

The second theoretical point relates to the role of public schools in terms of national identity construction or, to put it in Balibar's words (2004:21-22), "to the relationship of neutrality emanating from the state and from the school." Some people argue that secularization means that public schools are neutral towards various expressions of religious beliefs and others that religious beliefs should not be tolerated inside school institutions. According to Balibar, they are both right. School is a space of transition between the public and the private spheres, but it is located in the public sphere. It thus needs to negotiate this contradiction.

On the one hand, schools have to facilitate individuals' identification with the universalistic values of the "political sphere" and social citizenship. To do so they have to detach individuals from their primary identities, which is a violent process. Only then will individuals be able to reclaim their former identities, Balibar says, but with the "distance" brought by the "political" identity they have acquired with education. On the other hand, the schools' mission is also to help individuals find the means to express their own ideologies politically. These two goals are clearly in conflict. "The public schools are not required to be as neutral as the state is supposed to be but *to operate a neutralization* or to bring *a surplus of neutrality* between two *non neutral* spaces, the public and the private ones, in order to establish a boundary between the two" (Balibar 2004:20). Ideally, the schools of the *République* should transmit knowledge, enabling students to become future autonomous citizens (in their minds and their bodies) with the capacity to live together and share common principles within a larger political body.¹

This is why neutrality is so important. However, compromises did occur. For instance, the French public schools have had to compromise this neutrality with the Roman Catholic Church as the dominant religion in France, not only in accepting religious holidays but in suspending school on Sundays and on Wednesdays to allow religious classes to take place. In Alsace and Moselle, a special regime has been authorized and religious teaching takes place in public schools, delivered by clergy members paid by the state (Beaubert 1990). Another compromise relates to bilateral conventions with countries of origin so that teachers sent by these countries would teach language classes in case the parents return to their home countries with their children. But in practice, as many Turkish and Moroccan parents discovered, many such teachers were inclined towards proselytism and praising radical Islamism, directly opposing principles of secularization.

Yet, if one hundred years ago French public schools managed to take crosses off classroom walls, it is another challenge currently to dissolve the gender boundary separating bodies and male and female imaginations as early as childhood (Guénif-Souilamas 2004:88). This is why the ban of the headscarf related to a claim of gender identity loaded with sexual desire that the educational institution feels it difficult to control. "The lack of interest of imams for sex is no more credible than that of priests of any religion and their emphasis on modesty and decency (*pudeur*) translates into an obsession more than a protection" (Balibar 2004:22).

¹I refer here to the concept of social citizenship associated with T.H. Marshall. For him, social citizenship refers to "a bond of a different kind, a direct sense of community membership based upon loyalty to a civilization which is in common possession. It is the loyalty of free men endowed with rights and protected by a common law" (Marshall 1950:40-41). It is only when this stage is reached, it seems to me, that other claims can be formulated.

The controversy over secularization in schools was not a goal but a means. According to Balibar (2004:27), “This is why it is so tragic that, confronted to a political conflict in its own sphere, both bounded and one step after another questioning most of its functions and practices, the educational institution lost so much confidence in its own capacities and in its future that it hurried and reduced the conflict to its most restrictive and least intellectual dimension, implicitly trusting its theorization to dogmatic ideologues and requiring a fictitious ‘solution’ from a political power which draws its sense of the state’s missions no further than in the reading of opinion polls.” The demand for a clear national law supporting secularization was a means for principals and teachers to protect themselves from controversies over their local regulation and a way to avoid an in-depth debate about gender boundary.

Who Should Define Women’s Ability to Assert their Rights?

Who is going to define the extent to which Muslim women have autonomy and the ability to choose to wear or not wear the *hijab*? The state? Inside or outside mediators? Public opinion? School authorities? Individual conscience? To answer this question, we must consider the on-the-ground experiences of Muslim girls, including the difficult relationship of majorities and minorities within the same community and the perceptions of Muslim women by themselves and by others.

Muslim girls with headscarves are a minority among Muslims in France. The turmoil arose over three girls who were expelled from their public school. Data from *Renseignements généraux* (the French intelligence service) identified about twelve hundred Muslim girls wearing headscarves in 2003 (Terray 2004:108). Most took them off to avoid expulsions from schools. The population of Muslims in France is estimated to be between three and six million, with only twelve percent of them saying that they go to the mosque every Friday (a percentage about equal to that of other religious practitioners in France). Which choice—that of 200,000 Muslim females or that of 1,200—should be protected in the public schools? Will Kymlicka (1995), an Anglophone Canadian social scientist, asserts that all cultural groups’ demands should be recognized, but he concedes that an identity group may exert its oppression on some of its members and that letting communities organize as they wish is problematic in a democracy ruled by common laws. For Charles Taylor (1994), numbers are important. If a difference makes sense for a large number of individuals over a long period, it is to be respected. Does that mean that consensus and length of time are essential dimensions? To what extent do “partial cultures” have as much legitimacy as those of majorities within the same cultural group?

The Muslim girls who were audited by the French presidential commission appointed to make recommendations on this complex issue (the Stasi Commission) claim that in the neighborhoods where they live, they are forced to cover up and lower their eyes. Otherwise, they are stigmatized as “whores” and

“bad Muslims” by the community. The 77-page Stasi report mentioned that violence is sometimes used to force preteen girls to wear headscarves. Some fathers or husbands have been reported to refuse to let male doctors treat their wives or daughters in hospitals, sometimes forcing women to give birth in dangerous conditions. Women, in particular refugees from Iran who settled in France, denounce this domination over women’s bodies by men and chant, as American feminists did decades ago, “Our bodies, ourselves.” They are the ones to decide (Amara 2003). The march launched by eight young women of Muslim origin around France calling themselves “neither whores nor submissive” represents a form of identity politics asserting other rights than those of Muslim girls with headscarves.

The Muslim girls I meet in my classes express forms of emancipation in subtle ways and find opportunities to melt into the mainstream. They claim that the control exerted by their brothers and their friends on their behavior and on the way they dress, for instance, has become suffocating. Some of them admit that they wear a headscarf when they leave their neighborhood, so as not to be bothered, but a larger group resents the domination exerted upon them, domination that they claim has intensified in the last ten years.

PART II: THE CONSTRUCTION OF OTHERNESS IN THE FRENCH CONTEXT

The three issues outlined above did not emerge in a vacuum, but rather exist within a unique socio-historical period in French society. In this section, I discuss how this specific context has developed and why it is important for understanding the current banning of the headscarf. For the past three decades or so, the traditional tools of socio-economic integration of European welfare states have eroded or collapsed. The rise of citizen-subjects claiming specific, multiple, and hybrid identities has left national elites confused as to what they should do to bring back some sense of cohesion to the populations they govern via state bureaucracies.

The Sacralization of Secularization in France

In France, the political principle of secularization (*laïcité*)—according to which everyone is part of a one and indivisible nation and equal before the law, whatever their origins, race, or class—has been losing ground since the 1970s. It is being replaced by a more individual model of membership, anchored in de-territorialized notions of personhood’s rights and entitlements (Soysal 1994:3). The bond between nationality and citizenship in France is unique. To become a citizen is to be part of a universalist group, a group that symbolizes public interest and whose recruiting is not based on the membership in a group with a prescribed status. This conception, opposed to the American one, explains why attempts by

immigrants, then by ethnic groups, to take advantage of their cultural markers as a resource to exert pressures on the system of redistribution have been discouraged and the futility of such efforts internalized. A survey among first and second generation immigrant organizations in the 1990s revealed that, for community leaders, social stakes were far more important than identity ones: "Citizenship and communitarianism were hardly quoted, not even the issues of the 'scarf' or multiculturalism" (Wihtold de Wenden 1992:39).

As shown by a major and unique study undertaken by demographers in 1993-1994, the lack of emphasis on cultural and racial differences in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods yields a commonality of views and goals among those who participate in these institutions. The function of myths and the impact of an ideology emphasizing freedom, equality, and human rights cannot be underestimated in the elements contributing to a nationalized French identity. On many dimensions, the trajectories of second or third generations do not seem to be significantly different from that of others, provided comparisons focus on identical social statuses (Tribalat 1995).

In this model of citizenship, secularization keeps religion at a distance. Since the French Revolution, the state has sought to protect individuals against pressures from intermediary and community bodies, particularly religious bodies. The 1905 law separating church and state was perceived as a victory for many French who, although they had been raised as Roman Catholics, believed the church's influence should be contained generally and kept out of the educational sphere in particular. Two other major religious bodies in France, Protestants and Jews, did not perceive any hostility towards religion in the 1905 law as it recognized the right of every individual to their own beliefs (Weil 2005:66-73). It cannot be denied, however, that the relationship of the state with religion has always been difficult and this may explain why secularization has gained the status of a religion—why it has become sacralized. The state keeps religion at a distance and yet gives it salience at specific moments, constructing categories that trigger fears, which is the case now with Islam. It is indeed an illusion to think that the boundary between political and religious opinions is impermeable.

A Difficult Recognition of Differences

That fundamentalist Islam should be used by some as a means of revolt against accepted conventions and norms is easily understood. Some Muslim girls with headscarves explain that it is out of a status of subordination and victimization in French society that they require their unique identity. "Belonging is an unquestionable good, indeed a necessary precondition for meaningful and effective political action and representation within any given society or social situation . . . [T]he whole point of the post-national 'beyond' the integrating nation-state is that there might be resources of power and cultural action, to be found by refusing (or better playing with) the logic of belonging; by rejecting, countering or evading social norms that are imposed and enforced on newcomers and out-

siders when they are integrated (or 'tolerated' or 'welcomed') into a national political and social culture" (Favell 1999:220). The French integrative machine—the school system in particular—which assimilated Corsicans, Bretons, Basques, patois-speakers, East European Jews, Poles, Spaniards, Italians, and Portuguese has not worked so efficiently for the children of post-colonial migrants. This failure is at the core of the headscarf controversy as the wearing of the headscarf even by a minority of Muslim girls challenges the modes of cultural assimilation performed by the public school system in France.

One needs to remember that there are few countries where civil society has been moulded for so long by the state, and that the laws of the Republic abolished intermediary bodies associated with the monarchic regime and religious hierarchy. Unlike the U.S., the state constructed itself against these intermediary bodies, liberating individuals from the control of the church and of the aristocracy. No legitimacy or rights were granted to associations drawing upon ethnic, racial, or religious identities. The centrality, continuity, and unitary identity of the nation-state were not questioned; communitarianism and balkanization along ethnic lines have been demonized ever since. Under this conception, the country is seen as temporarily multiethnic, but not as permanently multicultural.

Currently, however, the principles of secularization and equal treatment that had been the backbone of French national belonging are in deep crisis due to the macro-challenges posed by globalization, the European Union, a more competitive economy, and, most of all, the fact that French people from different national origins are becoming more autonomous, more heterogeneous, and more demanding. It is no longer possible to claim, through the magic of universal silence, that the phenomenon of racism and ethnic discrimination simply does not exist (Taguieff 2002). Institutions can no longer remain silent about what their agents know, hide, or sometimes reveal at the individual level. In essence, France is experiencing the ethnicization of social relations whereby groups are recognizing and setting boundaries and working to limit opportunities to groups outside of those boundaries.

As in other countries, two types of closure are usually at work in France. One is vertical, based on the defence of privileges fought for historically by dominant classes or groups, such as unions and civil servants. It explains why seven million jobs are still out of reach for non-nationals. The other is horizontal, working to preserve a distinction between "insiders" and "outsiders" (de Rudder et al. 2000:62). Due to the economic and social insecurities posed by the macro-challenges mentioned above, the vertical approach has dominated in the French public debate. Cultural assertion and denunciation of racism might have been more visible had the socioeconomic crisis of the two last decades not served to weaken or distort antiracist movements.

The stigmatization of "visible" second generation immigrants from formerly colonized countries cannot be ignored. How can this ethnicization of identities be explained in a country which does not recognize ethnicity in the public

sphere? Why are not they just considered members of the working class? As just noted, one explanation has to do with macro-changes in the social sphere. “Exclusions from the past are taken over by present exclusions and the changes induced in the role of nation-states give way to a neo-racism or even to a post-racism” (Balibar and Wallerstein 1988:19). Post-racism is to be understood as one of the multiple convulsive reactions to current macro-changes. New pathologies emanate from what Bauman (1998) calls *unsichersheit*—insecurity, uncertainty, and vulnerability—among groups who had hitherto received protection in terms of work, status, benefits, housing, and mobility for their children. “Who gets seated at the table and in what order matters less if the table is piled high” (Gitlin 1995:232). This is no longer the case. Current processes of disempowerment, disenfranchisement, and “social exclusion” fracture the political body and call into question the integrative function of the state. The growth of socio-economic inequalities, spatial polarization, long-term unemployment, the concentration of families with social problems in large public housing projects, and the failure of mass education to promote social mobility for lower classes are typical explanations for intolerance of cultural diversity.

The more “French” immigrant children become, the more the competition intensifies and the more ethnic markers are used to discard them. It is a racism without race, a cultural racism hidden under a public discourse on social disintegration. In distressed urban areas, suspicion becomes generalized among generations of different origin and mutual avoidance the rule (Body-Gendrot and de Rudder 1998). Alienated residents, whether old stock French, second generations, or even state agents working in derelict areas, share acute problems of social stigmatization and, as a consequence, establish bright boundaries between individuals and groups.

The Failure of Social Integration: Muslims as Second-Class Citizens

Concerning Islam, demands for its recognition have been timid, marked by a context of urban decay. Muslim immigrants settled in large apartment complexes built rapidly and cheaply in the *banlieues* to accommodate population growth and alleviate the pressure on city centers. Some 10 million housing units were thus built, most frequently—but not always—on cheap land, at the periphery of cities. Among other things, the problems with these urban spaces were environmental (the first oil shock prevented the development of adequate public transportation, of social amenities, and of commercial facilities), social (the arrival of working-class immigrants and their families, followed the exodus of former, upwardly mobile tenants), and political (a change in policies favored aid to home ownership over the improvement of public housing units).

The crisis was exacerbated by rising rates of long-term unemployment and under-employment, by a difficult mixing of cultures, and by the accelerated decay of the buildings (Body-Gendrot 1993). In the early 1990s, 50% of youth of Algerian nationality and 30% of Algerians with the French nationality were cur-

rently unemployed, including many who had some level of higher education. These facts were well known among the youth who started to leave school early and make a living out of the underground economy. The widespread vandalism of buildings and of public amenities is both a protest against social stigmatisation and an expression of frustration from vanished hopes of ever joining the mainstream.

The apparent absence of hope for a better future forms the background to young males' efforts at control over young women. Attempts at collective control in enclosed spaces are indeed frequently initiated by groups of young males searching for boundaries in a world which has largely been deserted by adults. It can be perceived as a takeover of authority. The *immigré* fathers of second generation males who came to France to work have often had little to pass on to them. Many Algerians fought against France during the colonial war (1954-1962), yet they later came to work in the enemy country. They did not become French themselves, but their children are French, brought up between two cultures. Other Algerians siding with France (*Harkis*) during the war experienced infamous conditions of living in camps and were neglected by the receiving country. What prevented the French from considering these *immigrés* as future citizens of the nation? An amnesic discourse of unity, already mentioned, prevented them from seeing that, like previous waves of immigration, those *immigrés* now settling in France were going to stay and be part of the nation. The 1970s were marked by the reunification of families after the doors of immigration closed, interrupting the flows back and forth across the Mediterranean Sea. *Immigrés* were no longer going to be just a labour supply responding to the needs of an industrial state and to its demographic concerns.

No research at that time focusing on workplaces, working-class history, family, or public housing took into account the impact of those *immigrés* on nation-building. One tenth of the population and its contribution were ignored in theory and in practice. The mothers who settled in France occupied indeed a subordinate position and did not learn French because no alchemist locally approached them to help them "melt in." The fathers, disrespected and humiliated throughout their work and residential experiences, remained silent because they did not feel that they "belonged" to the receiving country. With more precarious job conditions, an identity crisis erupted, a crisis of self-definition. Not being defined by work, how were these men going to exist?

Islamic Demands for Recognition in the Public Sphere

In response to these problematic social circumstances, different quests were launched. One of them was linked to Islam. Between 1975 and 1980, as the myth of return was fading away, unable to express themselves with a ballot, *immigrés* resorted to "political secondary rights." That is, they looked to mediating structures such as informal networks and associations, and asked for prayer-rooms and mosques (Body-Gendrot 1993). This particularist demand was accepted by local

authorities as a measure meant to appease reactions to segregation and racism. Negotiations with housing authorities or mayors over the control of religious spaces represented a process of settlement for Muslim fathers. They were eager to socialize their children through the transmission of a transplanted, socially acceptable Islam.

Then, in 1975, strikes were launched in hostels where single male *immigrés* dwelled. In the negotiations that followed, demands for prayer-rooms were taken into account and the managers of these hostels found it an acceptable way to buy social peace. The first claims for Muslim prayer-rooms erupted, then, in a context of an identity crisis. The following year, in 1976, during the month of Ramadan, a petition circulated requiring the creation of a mosque at Boulogne Billancourt and the management of Renault agreed. Unions then asked that the future mosques be under the leadership of unionized imams. The control of Islam thus became a stake between employers and employees, Islam being perceived as a vehicle for peaceful social relations. In large public housing projects, with their sons contesting their authority, Muslim fathers gradually got together in spaces which after a while became prayer rooms. Sometimes an imam was invited to teach religion to younger children. Again, the management of public housing projects approved the prayer rooms, and yet, it was from this residential space that the issue of Islam became visible in the public space.

After the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979, an influx of "oil-dollars" from the Arabic peninsula allowed the purchase of lands and buildings for mosques and Islamic associations' centers. In 1979, the building of a mosque in Mantes-la-Jolie in the Parisian region met with little opposition even though it was financed with Saudi Arabian and Libyan funds. But after the Iranian revolution, other similar projects ran into strong opposition, as this visible use of space provoked unrest among neighborhoods' residents. The extreme case is the city of Romans, a middle-sized city situated in the center of France where the mosque was bombed a few days before its opening during the night of May 2, 1982. Social scientist Gilles Kepel carried interviews there at that time: "See what happens in Iran, in Beyrouth?" a resident lamented. "Mr K. [a moderate Muslim leader from the city] promises that fundamentalists will not take over. What does he know? He won't watch the place night and day. At the hospital, Muslim nurses wear chadors and refuse to care for men. You would never have seen such a thing three years ago" (Kepel 1987:310). A politicization of the "non-political sphere" had taken place, the local sphere entailing a reclassification of political forces. The demagoguery of the far right targeting scapegoats for electoral returns was indeed able to link the themes of Islam, joblessness, and unrest in racist overtones. In neighborhoods with a high percentage of foreign populations, this xenophobic discourse was received favorably and the French working class was confronted with a dilemma: the racialization of its modes of thought and communication or the eradication of latent racism in the collective conscience. Islam thus appeared as a crucial detonator, revealing class and cultural contradictions.

This is the context in which the uneasy debate concerning headscarves needs to be understood. On the one hand, under the influence of Muslim leaders in the 1990s, a narrow interpretation of the Koran and of the position assigned to females took place. "Retrograde preachers nicknamed 'imams from the basements' developed a political, machist reading of the Koran, constraining individual freedoms . . . Many young men experienced a crisis due to school failure, unemployment and discrimination. They were stigmatized and had the feeling that they would never make it. In their quest for identity bearings, one of the only answers they found was radical Islam" (Amara 2003:74). Instead of solving conflicts with street educators or community leaders, imams now had the last word and became the new regulators of social control in the eyes of local authorities. This intrusion of religion into local affairs became a threat to Muslim girls' status. Why was not a wider support from French progressive minds brought to their cause?

PART III: THE LAW BANNING RELIGIOUS SIGNS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

It was only in 2004 that a law banning headscarves in public schools came to be seen by a majority of the French as a way to support the choice of Muslim girls who wanted to emancipate themselves from male or fundamentalist control in their communities. The Stasi report argued that without a law it would be impossible for students who were subjected to their peers' pressures, insults, and violence to denounce the perpetrators if they belonged to the same religious community. The denouncer would be seen as a traitor to his or her community. One example cited in the report concerns a student, with her arm broken out of physical violence, who lied to her parents to avoid denunciation and maybe retaliation. However, religious signs are not banned in universities or in the world of adults, since the latter have ways to defend themselves that juveniles do not have. Muslim women wanting to wear a scarf on a public job can look for justice in courts, just as Muslim converts did recently in New York.² The consensus in France is that girls with headscarves should not exert pressures on those without them. According to a December 18, 2003 editorial in the *International Herald Tribune*, the 69% of the French supporting the law banning the head scarf in public schools came from a wide political spectrum.

Article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights signed in Rome in November 1950 also deserves attention. It enforces the right of thought, con-

²The March 2002 case involved two Muslims who insisted on wearing their *hijabs* while driving New York City Transit buses and were ordered to remove their religious garments or to wear their uniform caps over their scarves. When they refused, they were transferred out of the public eye to jobs parking and cleaning buses.

science, religion, and the public expression of one's religious belief. But this right is limited in cases of public disorder or attacks on the freedom of conscience of others (Weil 2005:69). To invoke this limitation, the national governing body of a country must pass a law stating as much. This is part of the context motivating the French Parliament to get involved with the issue of veiling in schools.

Nevertheless, there is a more obvious reason for resorting to a law to settle the controversy, it is the politicization which surrounded this issue and turned France upside down. This could have been avoided. It is always difficult to rewrite the past, but the fact is that the wide coverage given to the controversy occurred after a teacher present at the school council called the Left newspaper *Libération* to draw its attention on the case of the two Levy girls who had been summoned by local school authorities for wearing headscarves. They were the daughters of a militant atheist Jewish lawyer and an Algerian teacher, and it seems that the use of the headscarf was meant to influence a family dispute. Soon after, the media became frantic. The outcome, given the religious and colonial legacy of France, was predictable. Teachers and principals claiming to fear the accommodation of religious particularisms and pressing for a law "protecting" them from the threat of "the Islamization of France" were a more profitable constituency for politicians than progressive constituencies favoring tolerance.

As remarked by Tocqueville, "in politics, fear is a passion which frequently increases at the expense of others. One easily fears anything when one no longer desires anything with fervor" (quoted by Terray 2004:110). Fears of fanaticism are the worst to combat and no one can evaluate how serious the threat of radical Islam is. The Stasi Commission openly denounced "political-religious militants," "extremist political and religious trends," an "activist minority," "organized groups testing the resistance of the *République*," and "political and religious communitarian groups," all of which more or less refer to Al Qaida in popular imaginations (Terray 2004:109). *Le Monde* rightly pointed out that what the Stasi Commission had undertaken was a sort of "psychoanalysis of the French conscience" (Citron 2003). Psychoanalysis supposes an anamnesis, a deconstruction and a reconstruction of the national memory taking totems and taboos into account and then giving birth to a hybrid, vivid, secular collective identity for which the country is currently not prepared. We wish it had been so. For more than twenty years now, the ideology of the far right has convinced a very large majority of the French, including the Left, that Arabs and Muslims will not melt in the French *République*, and any international event—most of all 9/11 and terrorist events in various countries—is used to give ground to xenophobia. What the headscarf issue reveals is the nature of ethnic boundaries marking differentiation between majorities and minorities in France. Ethnic markers such as religion and culture construct boundaries among peers with similar socio-economic life chances. The boundaries around the salience of ethnicity help people distinguish those who are like them and with whom they identify (roses) from those who are visibly "different" (peonies).

France has always experienced fear regarding the dislocation of its unity that would come from “Dangerous Others.” In the 20th century, the plots were said to come from the Free Masons, the yellow peril, perfid Albion, the communists, delinquent youth of post-colonial origin, and now Islamic fundamentalists. This construction of Dangerous Others who do not want to become the “Same in a One and Indivisible Republic” has been reinforced by politicians for petty profits in the same way as Europe has been scapegoated for all kinds of national failures by the same politicians. No wonder that the French would react with fear to an object that they cannot identify positively. That 90% of Muslims practice a peaceful Islam is shown in a 1987 survey (Leveau and Withol de Wenden 1987). That they wish to pursue upward mobility in French society for themselves and their children, as most French do, is also proven in survey after survey (Etienne 2004). However, no mass pedagogy is undertaken to tell majorities that they can live together harmoniously while still respecting differences.

Finally, as with other issues, a missed opportunity is once more to be regretted. The conditions of a genuine public debate have never been offered to French society. The public debate would have acknowledged the issues of Muslim immigration in France, of the social inequalities experienced by families of postcolonial origin, and of the discriminations they undergo which are not publicly denounced. It would have deconstructed imaginary fears linked to the threat of a communitarianism which does not exist as such (Body-Gendrot 2003). The debate would have denounced the amplifying role the media have when they play on fears. Political initiatives could have been taken to accelerate the social and political mobility of Muslim populations in French society, as was done with the second and third generations of European immigrants. It was easier for a short-sighted political class to opt instead for a narrowly focused law, a move fostering international misunderstandings. But maybe the unanticipated effect of the law is to be found elsewhere, as suggested by Weil (2005). When French nationality was ascribed automatically to *immigrés*’ children through birth, the parents were relieved that it occurred by itself as a constraint collectively imposed and not as the result of individual and voluntary actions. “Eventually, naturalization produced something like a satisfaction which, for a whole series of reasons, requires that it remain secret and, sometimes, to which one resigns,” Sayad observed (1999:352).

Similarly, it is likely that a large majority of Muslims in France who do not want to impose the headscarf to their daughters—but who also feel uncomfortable with being unfaithful to religious dictates and who are subjected to the pressures of friends, neighbors, or family members—are relieved, after all. From now on, they will be able to refer to the law to derail criticisms.

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From a Community of Believers to an Islam of the Heart: “Conspicuous” Symbols, Muslim Practices, and the Privatization of Religion in France*

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Based on interviews with North African women immigrants, this article examines how religious practices are constrained and the meaning of being a “good Muslim” is transformed in France. When Muslim women cannot celebrate religious holidays or pray five times a day, they instead focus on what is in one’s heart, an adaptation to a country engaged in an ongoing battle to keep religion out of the public realm. While many immigrants affirm that Islam should be kept at home, in private, an increasing number of their children seek visible symbols of religious/ethnic identity, such as the headscarf, suggesting the emergence of generational differences in the experience of Islam in France. The new French law banning headscarves in schools is decried by some first generation women, but just as many support the law, including many older, religious women. This article compares American and French perspectives on the separation of church and state and questions the underlying motives behind the contemporary arguments about secularism in France.

Waves of immigrant workers, family reunification policies, and children born in France have made Islam the second largest religion in France. Five million Muslims live in a country that has looked at religion with skepticism since the Enlightenment. From the French Revolution on, political battles have been waged to wrest control of the government and the educational system away from members of the largest religion, Roman Catholicism. The most recent battle in the struggle over *laïcité* (“secularism”) has affected Muslims directly. In 2004, “conspicuous” religious symbols, including large crosses, Jewish *kippot*,¹ and Muslim headscarves, were banned from French schools.

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¹*Kippot* are cloth skullcaps worn by observant Jews. The singular is *kippah*. In the United States, they are commonly known by the Yiddish term, “yarmulke.”

One of the aims of this article is to situate the various perspectives on this issue and how they are shaped by different socio-historical contexts. I thus provide some background on the differences between separation of church and state and conceptions of secularism in the United States and France. As Muslims in a secular society, Maghrebin immigrants in France have the choice of resisting, “establishing strong boundaries with the broader culture, resisting cultural encroachments as much as possible, and setting the group up as a radical alternative” or accommodating, “adapting certain features of the religion to make it more consonant with secular ways of life” (Davidman 1991:32). The Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian women I interviewed generally practiced accommodation. I thus examine how Muslim immigrant women’s religious practices and beliefs about how to be a good Muslim have changed since their arrival in France. I look at holidays and prayer and then focus on the contentious symbol of the veil.² Many North African women in France support the ban on the headscarf, but this tends to vary by age, with younger women more likely to accept the veil in school. Throughout the article, I also point out some of the contradictions between France’s position on secularism and the maintenance of Catholic traditions and question the importance of ethnicity, immigration, and Islam in shaping the new law banning religious symbols in school.

THE CONTEXT

This article is part of a larger study on North African women’s cultural expression, identity negotiation, and general adaptation in France (Killian 2006). France colonized the three central Maghrebin countries, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, and since World War II, these North African countries have been sending male laborers to France. Maghrebin women began arriving in large numbers in the 1970’s, thanks in large part to family reunification laws. The majority of North Africans in France are poorly educated and occupy the bottom rungs of the social structure.

I conducted and audio-taped in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 45 women in Paris and the surrounding suburbs between January and June 1999. I refer to respondents by pseudonyms and have changed certain details about them in order to protect their anonymity. All of the participants are first-generation Muslim immigrants from the Maghreb, but they differ on other characteristics such as age, country of emigration, ethnicity (Arab or Berber), education, employment history, marital status, and number of children. The sample consists

²In this article I use “headscarf” and “veil” interchangeably, even though the use of the word veil in French discourse is often politically motivated.

of 26 Algerians, eleven Moroccans, and eight Tunisians between the ages of 25 and 58, who have resided in France between one and 37 years (see Killian [2006] for more details).

France is often called a “*terre d'accueil*,” a welcoming country. However, the French do not see themselves as a people of immigrants the way Americans do (Horowitz 1998). Immigrants in France are expected to become French and not cling to hyphenated identities like Irish and Italian-Americans. The French method of integration implies a loss of ethnic identity and pressure to conform to a standard civic model. There is no concept of “minority group” in French legal texts; the “ethnic citizen” is not supposed to exist (Feldblum 1993). The French model of integration stands in opposition to the multicultural Anglo-Saxon model, which the French argue causes societal disintegration and ghettoization of minority groups (Feldblum 1993). President Jacques Chirac has said, “We cannot accept that France becomes a pluricultural society in which our historical heritage would be placed on the same level as this or that other recently imported culture” (quoted in Rude-Antoine 1997:89, translation mine). In the past couple of decades, however, the traditional assumption that immigrants would abandon their cultural traditions in favor of French civic culture is increasingly challenged by the growing numbers of visible immigrants and by the influence of the European Union, some of whose members are more tolerant of cultural pluralism.

Warner and Wittner (1998) point out that in the U.S., immigrants actively cling to religious traditions because religion has historically been the one cultural aspect in which they were not expected to gradually assimilate. This is due in part to the U.S.’s celebrated (and sometimes mythic) history of immigrants fleeing religious persecution abroad and finding a safe haven for practicing their beliefs in their new home. Immigrant parents may indeed emphasize religion in their children’s training because they view language and other cultural behaviors as already lost (Warner and Wittner 1998). In France, Maghrebin immigrants are also likely to place great emphasis on religion, but unlike the Americans, the French are less encouraging of religious difference and expect religious expression to be confined to the home and places of worship. Césari (2000:93) writes that France’s assimilation model “insists that if immigrants seek to become French citizens, they must eschew their foreign cultural, religious, political and ideological alliances. In other words, they must accept the already existing consensus of reality and polity of the prevailing system and assimilate into it, shedding all alien characteristics. The French policy of Gallicization sees the end result of integration as the privatization of religious practice, with the Muslim individuals becoming socially and economically assimilated.”

After months of study by the specially-appointed Stasi Commission, the French government passed a law in February of 2004 banning “*ostensible*” (which best translates as “conspicuous”) religious symbols—in particular, Muslim headscarves, Jewish *kippot*, and large Christian crosses—in school starting with the

2004-2005 school year (Stasi Commission Report 2003).³ This law was passed after a series of debates in 2003, despite the fact that the number of girls wearing headscarves to school had been declining for nearly a decade (Geisser 2003). In a poll conducted by CSA for the newspapers *Le Monde* and *La Vie* in January 2004, 76 percent of junior high and high school teachers pronounced themselves in favor of the ban on the headscarf (compared to 69% of French people and 42% of Muslims), yet 91 percent did not have a veiled girl in the school where they taught at the time, and 65 percent admitted that they had never seen a veiled girl in any school during their career. Of the 35 percent who had run across veiled girls in the careers, only five percent said it was a frequent occurrence (CSA 2004). That it was legislated against despite its rarity suggests that the veil has taken on a greater symbolic meaning in French society (Amiraux 2004). Auslander (2000) argues that public reaction against the veil is a way to reassert national identity at a time when France is feeling threatened by globalization, the European Union, and immigration. Geisser (2003:11) believes that “the defensive and punitive policies towards all visible signs of *Islamity*” are a response to fears of an “Arabo-Muslim menace” (translation mine).

The new law sums up the feeling of many French people reflected in statements made by former Prime Minister Alain Juppé: “[I]ntegration which confers rights, all the rights of the French, of course, with naturalization, also implies accepting a certain number of rules for common life, in particular performing national [military] service for France, when one wants to be French; accepting the role of the school as integrator and not multicultural...; and finally, accepting certain modes of social and family organization” (cited in Rude-Antoine 1997:93, translation mine). In an era that has recently made military service optional instead of mandatory, schooling is seen as the primary vehicle for making immigrants French.

The headscarf affair raises several issues for the French including how to interpret *laïcité*. Strong public support for the separation of the church and state, made law in 1905, remains prevalent in France today. *Laïcité* grew out of the Jacobin tradition and the long and hard-fought quest to purge the government and French public schools of Catholic influence. Thus, in the United States, “separation of church and state” means that the state cannot favor a particular religion and should not interfere with religion, a position McClay (2001) calls “negative” secularism. By contrast, in France, religion and religious symbols are simply not permitted in public institutions, a position McClay calls “positive” secularism. According to McClay (2001:59), negative secularism is “an opponent

³In previous pronouncements, only “*ostentatoires*” (in English, “ostentatious”) symbols that were considered proselytizing by nature were banned. Consequently, some school principals deemed the headscarf ostentatious, and therefore cause for suspension, and others did not. Crosses and *kippot* were not viewed as ostentatious, thus necessitating the change in language from “ostentatious” to “conspicuous” in order to include them in the ban.

of established belief—including a *nonreligious* establishment—and a protector of the rights of free exercise and free association. On the other hand, [positive secularism is] a proponent of established *unbelief* and a protector of strictly individual expressive rights, a category that includes right of religious expression.”⁴ Negative secularism in the U.S. allows politicians to proclaim “God Bless America” as long as they do not name a particular God, whereas positive secularism in France makes any public reference to God (e.g., on the currency) anathema. The difference in laws about marriage provides another good example of the contrast. In the U.S., a couple may marry civilly in order, but if they choose to marry religiously, this wedding is accepted by the state. In France, while many people have a religious ceremony, they must marry civilly in order to be legally recognized. In comparing the two contexts, the question becomes whether all signs of and references to religion must be kept out of the schools entirely or whether there is room for cultural and religious expression on the part of students, if not the teachers.

French politicians argue that the French Republic is under attack by forces antithetical to equality and freedom.⁵ Feminist groups and politicians alike believe that banning religious symbols in school will take pressure off Muslim girls who are forced to veil by their parents, by fundamentalist groups, or by peers who call them names and may even threaten violence against girls who do not veil. Given that one of the key arguments is peer pressure, the exact number of girls actually wearing the veil to school is important. Government estimates show a constant decline in the total number of headscarves in school, from 2,000 girls a year ten years ago to a little over 1,000 in 2004, and longtime Department of Education mediator Hanifa Chérifi puts the figure for incidents requiring her intervention at only 150 in 2003 compared to 300 in 1994 (*L’Humanité*, April 29, 2003). Yet members of the Stasi Commission argued that because so many girls were veiling, it was putting tremendous pressure on non-veiled Muslim girls to also adopt a headscarf. This is particularly crucial because the law only conforms to European human rights standards if it can be demonstrated that the religious expression in question must be restricted to protect public order or others’ rights and freedoms and that restriction is proportional to the desired goal (Weil 2005). Is it necessary to limit religious expression in order to protect the several

⁴While this distinction is useful, it also downplays some complex manifestations of *laïcité* in France. For example, rather than simply trying to separate church and state, in some respects the state is actually trying to subsume the Roman Catholic Church, to influence its spokesmen, and to control its funding (Bowen 2004). Similarly, the recent creation of the Council of Muslims of France is an attempt by the French government to gain some control over and nationalize “French Islam” (Kastoryano 2002). See also Fetzer and Soper’s (2005:73-76) discussion of “soft” vs. “strict” *laïcité* in France.

⁵Amselle (2003:120) points out that “...in the Enlightenment tradition, the philosophy of the rights of man discredits the legitimacy of any public expression of ethnicity or religion on the pretext that they entail fanaticism, despotism, and ignorance.”

thousands of schoolgirls who do not wear a headscarf from the thousand or so who do? Ultimately, politicians assert that the new law will help students get along with one another and ease ethnic tensions. Yet the law can be viewed as a blow to religious freedom, as constituting, in recently elected French President Nicolas Sarkozy's phrase, "secular fundamentalism" (Sciolino 2003). It may also lead to the creation of more Islamic schools encouraging further "*communitarianisme*" or "ghettoization" and less government oversight of education.

PRACTICING ISLAM IN FRANCE

How does living in a society as secular as France affect Muslims' religious practices? For the majority of the women I interviewed, Islam continues to play a very important role in their lives, even if they have lived in France for several years. Although one-third of the women interviewed do not actively practice Islam, they all self-identify as Muslims. Several of these women noted that they "believe but don't practice." Another third of the respondents are very religious, fasting during the month of Ramadan, observing food restrictions, and praying daily. The other third are also religious, respecting Ramadan, and not consuming pork or alcohol, but do not pray daily. Those participants who are religious talked at length about the challenges of practicing Islam in France and the accommodations they have made.

Keeping the Muslim Holidays

Coming from a Muslim society that follows the Muslim calendar, to a Catholic country that still follows many aspects of the Catholic calendar poses problems. One of the most frequent complaints women mentioned was the difficulties involved in celebrating Muslim holidays in France. Fasting during Ramadan is a uniting experience for the members of the community all showing their obedience to God in the same manner at the same time. In Muslim countries, the workdays during the month are often cut short. For the celebration of *Eid-el-Kebir*, which commemorates Abraham's sacrifice, Muslims ritually slaughter sheep and then feast with others. Both of these holidays are hard to celebrate in France in the same way they are carried out in the Maghreb. Fatima explains how her work interferes with the holidays:

Ramadan ... is very tiring here because we work. Because there, in Morocco, when it's Ramadan, we only work half a day. We have to work, but we work a half day, but not the whole day. Here you have to work your whole day without [eating]. As the French say, they don't give a shit. You have to do your day, and that's it. They don't want to know anything. You do your religion, you don't, you do your work, and that's it, no discussion. So I can't leave my job. I have to take care of my children and not find myself in the street, so I prefer to work. It's too tiring, too tiring.

Having to work is not the only factor that makes celebration difficult. When asked about celebrating the holidays, Telja raised other problems she faces:

It's too difficult because we can't make noise as we'd like. We don't have room, space like we'd like to celebrate. If we do a wedding, we have to search a year in advance. And that's what is missing, and it's a shame. Holidays are joy. That gets ruined. Sometimes going I don't know how many kilometers to do a wedding. We have to work when [a holiday] falls during the week. It's a shame that there aren't days like that for us, because the Muslim holidays are sacred.

When the Stasi Report that led to the ban on religious symbols in school was originally submitted to the French government, it also recommended making *Eid-el-Kebir* a national holiday, but this part of the proposal was rejected.

Prayer

In addition to holidays, participants spoke about prayer. Religious Muslims are supposed to pray five times a day, but as respondents pointed out, work, and life in France in general, make the hours of prayer hard to keep. Joumana notes that the "rhythm of life" in France makes prayer difficult, and that the French do not respect the Muslim day of prayer: "Catholics, Catholics don't care. ... Have to work on Friday. Normally, Friday is the day of prayer. It's sacred." Although Khadija explains that "for people who work, yes, yes, they can do their prayers by saving up all the prayers for the evening," those who do work full-time, like Fatima, often found this challenging.

No, I don't pray. I don't have time. It's hard. ... I'm telling the truth. I don't do it because it's hard. ... Prayer you have to stay at home to pray each morning, but you can save them, you do it at night. Me, when I get home at 8:00, it's not at that moment; I have to shower, cook. So I'm totally exhausted, my feet hurt, my head too, so I eat and I sleep, for the next morning and everything. God forgive me. And when I'm retired, if God lets me live until retirement, I'll do it.

Amel agreed:

Prayer, I did it in the beginning, but with my hours and everything it's hard. I remember in the beginning when I came, I already did it in Algeria, when I came, I tried to do it, but sometimes when I got home at 10:00 at night, I had to make it all up. And honestly, I wasn't concentrated on those things. When I was praying, it was 'when am I going to finish and be able to go to bed?' So I said to myself, it's hypocrisy; it would be better to stop. So I stopped. And it's true. I say to myself that God sees what I'm doing, so I don't have to think about praying. Well, maybe I'll do it someday, but the day when I think I can assume it, meaning do it well.

Those participants who do pray, whether five times a day or just occasionally, find that it brings them peace and a sense of well-being. They talked about

what Islam means to them and what it gives them. Souad explained why she started to pray:

I do my prayer so that my conscience, I'll be tranquil vis-à-vis God. Later we'll be punished if, it's like a debt, it's a debt to God. If we don't do Ramadan, we don't pray, um, it's a debt, and I'm happy to do it, to be at peace. It's like someone, you owe him money and you don't pay him, your conscience isn't tranquil. This, it's more even, because later you pay more, much more.

Keltouma spoke about prayer and about the role of religion in her life more generally: "I think that religion is an element that helps me ... that helped me surmount difficult moments in my life. For me, it's a moment of peace when I do my prayer, honestly I feel very, very good." Although Warda fluctuates on praying five times daily, she insists:

I don't go to bed without asking God forgiveness for everything I could have done that's not very moral, and where I concentrate a little on essential things. But it's, I mean, it's an individual prayer, profound, that doesn't need any exterior manifestation. I don't put down a rug, no one sees me do it. But I always give myself fifteen minutes to think about what I've done. Is it good? I'm a Muslim, have I conformed to what I believe? It's very important to me. It's a crutch I can't do without.

Warda's focus on an individualized relationship in Islam echoes the feelings of many other respondents who make assertions in France about keeping their religion private. Several women do use a prayer rug and wear a headscarf to pray, but they point out that this is done in the home and is therefore not a public expression of religion. For many older religious women, Islam is between oneself and God. It should be practiced in private and should not interfere with life in French space: on the street, and especially at work or in schools. Chafiq explains: "You do it for you; you don't do it for others. Me, I do Ramadan, I don't ask others to do it with me, or show others that I do it. If they ask me, okay, I'll say I do it, but if they don't ask me, it's not their business what I do at home. ... Intimacy is kept at home. You want to do your prayer, you do it at home."

The Headscarf

Despite the controversy surrounding the law banning religious symbols in school, the majority of French people support it. Many Muslims in France do as well. Recall that in the January 2004 CSA poll, 42 percent of Muslims favored the ban (CSA 2004). This was nearly perfectly replicated in my sample among the 43 respondents asked directly about the veil in school. Among the Muslim immigrants I interviewed who took a clear position for or against the headscarf in school, about 43 percent (12 of 28) were for preventing girls from wearing the headscarf to school, and just under 60 percent (16 of 28) opposed the ban. The other fifteen respondents in my sample made more nuanced arguments and/or had mixed feelings about it (see Killian 2003).

Eleven of the 43 respondents—ten of them among the most religious participants in the sample—argue that the veil is not really required in Islam, that other facets of the religion matter more, that a woman can dress modestly without covering her hair, or that one must not show off or try to stand out. Despite being raised in a society where many women veiled and having often veiled themselves while in the Maghreb, none of this group of respondents believes that to be a good Muslim woman one must veil. They focus on other aspects of their religion, asserting that Islam is “not doing bad things,” “helping people,” “being tolerant,” and “respecting the religion of others.” Souad, who prays five times a day, shuns alcohol and pork, and celebrates all the holidays, draws the line at the headscarf:

I am Muslim, and I am against this, against people who dress like this, who wear veils; I can't stand it. Because when you want to follow the religion, as we say, religion is in the heart. It's not wearing the veil and then behind it doing things that are against the religion. I am Muslim, I practice, I do Ramadan, I do my prayers, and it stops there. It's not worth it that I wear a headscarf, or that I have to go to work like that or to school. That I don't accept.

This response is especially revealing about a whole group of Muslims in France. Many immigrant women, many of whom grew up with the veil in their countries of origin, abandoned it in France to work, to be hired, to fit in. The traditional practice of veiling in Muslim countries demarcates men's space, or public space, from women's space in the home. Thus, in the Maghreb, women put on the veil to go out into the street and take it off at home. In France, where the street is no longer men's space but rather French space, the relegation of headscarves to the home demonstrates a case of cultural adaptation (Killian 2002). In coming to France, these Muslim women have become members of a minority group, and many were cut off from most of their family members. Religion, a communal affair in North Africa, became a private affair in France. As five participants put it, religion is an affair “of the heart.”

Discussing Islam and secularization, Babès (2000:32) writes:

[L]et us remain attentive to the evolution that is taking shape within the community. The question of religious practice is inseparable from faith and extends beyond orthodoxy. Canonic rites say nothing (or very little) on the question of deep belief, nor on practice in a broader sense (individual ethics). The relationship between spirituality and the norm is at the heart of the evolution of the relationship between, on one side the normative logic of the community, and on the other the demands of universal faith and spirituality in the middle of secularization. (Translation and italics mine)

This leads to a crucial question. When my interview respondents use the word heart, is it out of a conception of deep individual belief, or is it simply a reaction to trying to practice Islam in a context that shuns it, an instance of making religion internal and private because of external pressures? Amel gave up her prayers

at night because she was really thinking about going to bed, but this may be different from the insistence on the heart that comes when one realizes she is not allowed to show on the outside what she feels inside.

Although all religion in France is supposed to be private, the cultural climate and calendar are conducive to practicing Catholicism, while, as we have seen, they are not conducive to practicing Islam. Auslander (2000:288) argues that “[s]ecularism in France, then, is largely accommodating of Christianity but only partially of other religions...The requirement that people bear no distinctive signs of religious belonging and yet that they inhabit an everyday life that is rhythmized by the Christian calendar forces observant Muslims and Jews to make a choice. They can either be good French citizens and bad Muslims or bad Jews, or vice versa.” Banning the Jewish *kippah* and the Muslim headscarf is very different from banning large Christian crosses, as many devout Jewish men and Muslim women believe their religion *requires* that they cover their heads outside the home, while few, if any, Christians believe they must wear a cross. Thus, while Christians can effectively choose to put on or take off a religious symbol and be no less Christian for it, the new law forces some Jews and Muslims to “choose” between their religious obligations and going to school. In contrast to the French case, when an American Muslim girl in Oklahoma was suspended for wearing a headscarf to school in 2003, the Assistant Attorney General of the United States filed a complaint against *the school*. The complaint declared, “No student should be forced to choose between following her faith and enjoying the benefits of a public education. We certainly respect local school systems’ authority to set dress standards, and otherwise regulate their students, but such rules cannot come at the cost of constitutional liberties. Religious discrimination has no place in American schools” (United States Department of Justice 2004).

In a society that leaves little room for plural identities and expects immigrants to integrate by taking on French behaviors and values, immigrants who have lived in France for decades have learned to accommodate. When Telja says, “[m]y religion, I keep it inside of me. I don’t show anyone, because it belongs to me and God, nobody else,” a statement she would not have felt compelled to make in North Africa, she echoes Kastoryano’s (2002:50) pronouncement that after the passage of 1905 law in France separating church and state, “Belief in God was now only a private matter.” Instead of conforming to the norms they grew up with in the Maghreb, many older immigrant women have redefined what it means to be a good Muslim woman. For example, in discussing her life in Morocco, Najet says that “a real Muslim woman does not meet a man without her brother or husband, or someone from the family. A stranger, she won’t sit next to him, talk, discuss, won’t say anything.” Yet in France, going shopping, riding the bus, and other daily chores necessitate a breakdown of this segregation between the sexes, and Najet feels no less Muslim for it. By focusing on the purity of one’s heart and the expression of religion through private acts, this group of respondents has made compromises between their cultural customs and the

requirements of French society, but they are compromises with which they feel comfortable.

Many of these women came in an era when immigrants just wanted work and hoped to be overlooked by the French. Although they did not expect to fully belong to French society, they saw little reason to purposely mark themselves as foreign and other. Instead of mixing customs and creating new patterns of behavior no matter where one lives, these women feel that when in North Africa one should follow North African norms, and when in France, one should follow French norms, at least to a certain extent. Oumniya says simply, "Me, here in France, French habits. There I have Algerian habits. Here we live the French way. There we live the Algerian way." Najet agreed: "Yes. Do like there. If we're here, we do like here. That's it."

The participants who voiced this kind of negative reaction to the veil in school were of very similar backgrounds. Eight of the eleven were women over 40 with little or no formal education; of the three younger women, two stopped school before high school, and only one had been to college. All but one were observant Muslims, yet virtually all were against girls wearing the headscarf to school; only two had mixed feelings about the issue, and these two were both younger women. These women's position as immigrants with little education, especially those who came before the 1980's and 1990's, likely affects their views on the issue and their general strategy of accommodation rather than resistance. It is increasingly members of the second generation who choose to resist and criticize the compromises and adaptation of their parents.

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

For the most part, older, immigrant women continue to feel like foreigners in France. They identify with their countries of origin, rather than feeling French, or at best feel "half and half." Thus when they look at their lives, they feel grateful for what France has given them in terms of opportunities, rights, and economic benefits. None of the women over forty linked the headscarf affair to racism. They immigrated before the calls for multiculturalism that are sounded by those who arrived a decade later. Not surprisingly, then, the majority of the 3,000 protesters who marched against the new law in Paris on December 21, 2003, were women under the age of 40 (Ternisien 2003).

Members of the second generation lack the first generation's historical perspective, and while sometimes aware of the progress of North Africans in France, they focus primarily on the wrongs they see in the society today. Born in France or brought at a young age, they are more likely to feel French than their parents, and their comparisons are not to the Maghreb but to the situation of other French people. Where parents see improvements and opportunities, children see discrimination and rejection. Older immigrants are grateful for French literacy

programs, whereas their children realize that even advanced university degrees do not always guarantee employment.

The prejudice and discrimination they face causes some to abandon the job search or to decide not to pursue higher degrees because they do not translate into better employment. The feelings of rejection when they encounter racism and discrimination also lead to another problem for members of the second generation, an identity crisis (Begag and Chaouite 1990). Children of North African origin grow up speaking French, are educated in French schools, and often have French friends. The message they receive from society, however, tells them that because of their appearance they are Maghrebin. For those who do everything to integrate, especially those who do not speak Arabic and know little about Islam, the rejection by French society can be particularly hard and lead to confusion about one's identity. Others try to fight this rejection and assert a non-French identity as adolescents, deciding to adopt Muslim dress or become even more religious than their parents. As Leila, a 43 year-old Tunisian, explains: "[Muslim fundamentalists] try to manipulate young people. 'See you are rejected by France, by the school, by French society; they don't like you, they hate you, they're racist, so you better turn to religion. You have to distinguish yourself. You have to be different from those people.' And to be different how? It's refuse the other first. And even more, to not be like him even in your clothes."

Many of my younger immigrant respondents, especially well-educated women who had come to France during an era when discussions of cultural pluralism were beginning, recognized this and were much less likely to support banning the headscarf in school. While they often personally dislike the veil, they demonstrate an understanding of the choice to wear it by members of the second generation (Killian 2003). Keltouma rejects the pressure to conform to the norms of secularism: "Everyone has their principles, everyone has their traditions, these girls live here, but, well, we know that they don't have the same religion, that they don't have the same traditions." These young women use rhetoric of personal choice and the right to self-expression when arguing that the veil should be allowed. This discourse of rights and equality is seen as legitimate in the West and reflects the French education they received in North Africa and that many continued to receive in French universities after their migration.

Labiba demonstrates some of the different possible interpretations of secularism. On one hand she sees veiling as a private matter that should be respected by the state, even though veiled women circulate in public space: "I don't feel that they should interfere in the private life of people in the respect that we're in a secular country; France shouldn't take a position towards one religion to the detriment of another." This initial definition of secularism, tolerance of all religious symbols, is more in line with the American version of "negative" secularism that advocates neutrality and non-intervention in religion by the state. This, of course, is different from the meaning of *laïcité* held by many French people, which, we have seen, is closer to "positive" secularism. The French goal has been

to make everyone fit the French civic and cultural mold, and this objective is to be accomplished primarily in schools which, to achieve their ends, must be kept entirely free of religion. In other words, in order to truly be French, one must agree to support secularism by confining religious practice to personal time and prescribed places. Elsewhere in the interview, however, Labiba seems to contradict her earlier statement, showing that she too has absorbed these values to a certain extent: "I think that in a secular school, we should all be secular, otherwise we need to have religious school and then everyone is free to wear what he wants." What she is revealing here is a "soft" version of secularism that includes facilitating diverse religious practices by funding private religious schools, rather than the "strict" form of secularism, currently advocated by many French teachers' unions, where the state must maintain its neutrality by not supporting any form of religion (Fetzer and Soper 2005:73-74).

Finally, women who support girls' right to veil in the name of liberty of cultural expression often directly criticize the French state for being racist against Muslims. Yusra makes this case explicitly: "I find that it's really an attitude on the part of teachers that is really racist, truly. That, for me, is a racist act. We can not exclude girls because they wear the headscarf. . . . It's really pointing a finger at them, and then *vis-à-vis* the culture of the child, they say to her, 'Your culture, it's not good.' You don't have a right to judge like that." Support for this argument comes from those who highlight ways in which French schools are not secular when religions other than Islam are involved. According to Nour and Besma, two young, well-educated women:

Nour: Honestly, you know the secular school, it doesn't miss celebrating Easter, and when they celebrate Easter, it doesn't bother me. My daughter comes home with painted Easter eggs and everything; it's pretty; it's cute. There are classes that are over 80 percent Maghrebin in the suburbs, and they celebrate Easter, they celebrate Christmas, you see? And that's not a problem for the secular school. And I don't find that fair.

Besma: I'm going to repeat what a lot of Arabs say, there are schools in France, or universities in France, where there are no exams on Saturday because it's the [Jewish] sabbath, in the public schools, in the secular schools, and nobody talks about it. All that it takes is for the universities to agree. . . . The students manage to make an arrangement with the teachers. There's no officialization; it's informal. On Friday, they eat a lean meal, meaning a meatless meal because Catholics don't eat meat on Friday. We do Lent Friday in school cafeterias, and nobody protests. Nobody finds anything to say. So I find it completely petty to hide behind arguments that don't hold up, that aren't at all convincing, and all of sudden there are different rules for different groups.

It is important to note that prior to the new law, Christian crosses and Jewish *kip-pot* were frequently tolerated in French public schools. Auslander (2000:291) argues that "it is likely that the everyday signs of religious adherence to Christianity or Judaism have not been understood to threaten the foundations of the French nation because they are not associated with immigration (or racial

difference).”⁶ At one point during the headscarf affair of the 1990’s, François Bayrou, the Minister of Education at the time, declared that “France is a Judeo-Christian country,” despite the fact that Muslim girls were being excluded from school in the name of *laïcité*. Critics thus assert that the addition of the large crosses and Jewish *kippot* is simply to prevent charges that the government is being racist toward the law’s real target: Muslims (Stroobants 2003).⁷

CONCLUSION

Whereas most Americans’ belief in separation of church and state means that one faith cannot be privileged above another, for many French people a secular state means a duty to keep all manifestations of religion out of its institutions, including the school. With the arrival of new Muslim immigrants in the 21st century, whose children will be born and raised in France, the privatization of Islam in France will continue to be contested. The Muslim immigrant women I interviewed see the ban on headscarves in school differently from one another based on demographic factors, chiefly their age and their level of education. Older, less educated women may complain about the difficulties in keeping the holidays or praying five times a day in France, but many of them view the state’s ban on the headscarf in schools as legitimate. Their acquiescence in keeping religion at home is tied to their status as immigrant women of a generation that tried to stay invisible in order to avoid trouble. Younger women in France are more likely to assert the right to be both French and visibly Muslim.

In passing the 2004 religious symbols law, the French government implemented a symbolic measure. The national debate over the veil temporarily obscured many of the real problems that plague France including discrimination, unemployment, failing education, and the resulting violence in poor neighborhoods, issues forced back into public light during the series of riots by second generation youths in heavily immigrant suburbs in November 2005. How Muslims in France view the new law ten years from now is ultimately likely to depend on whether its effects are what French politicians are hoping for—integration, bet-

⁶In discussing the privileging of Christianity over other religions in France, Auslander (2000:288) notes that “[t]his fundamental inequality is . . . invisible to most French social commentators, politicians, teachers, and school administrators.”

⁷Despite months of study on the issue of religious clothing, schools, and secularism, the Stasi Commission failed to consider the Sikh turban, probably because the Sikhs are a small population in France and are not portrayed as trouble-makers. French Sikhs tried to argue that their turban is a cultural rather than religious symbol in the hopes of preventing its inclusion in the ban (Sciolino 2004). Their arguments failed, however, and three boys were expelled from school after the law went into effect in the fall of 2004, even though they had agreed to wear simple hairnets to tie back their hair rather than wearing the traditional turban (Amiriaux 2004).

ter education, and improved security—or whether, instead, it only increases ethnic tensions and further marginalizes the Muslim population. The latter is a particularly likely scenario if the French state fails to find concrete means to address the structural problems that disproportionately affect Muslim immigrants and their children.

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Global Contexts and the Veil: Muslim Integration in the United States and France*

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Integration of Muslims into Western societies has received growing attention in recent years. Of central concern has been whether norms based on Islamic beliefs hinder Muslims' ability to participate successfully in societies based on secular principles. Perhaps the most contentious issue involves the practice of veiling among Muslim women, which is commonly seen in the West as a sign of oppression. The articles that comprise this special issue, however, demonstrate the complexity of the veil as a symbol and of veiling as a practice. Drawing from multiple disciplines, the authors present research conducted in France and the United States to suggest that national context is a critical and influential variable, shaping the interpretations and motivations for veiling, and therefore identity patterns and integration among Muslims. Two core areas to consider in more depth include the ethnic stratification systems within each country, and the significance of gender in identity development.

Comparing Muslim integration in France and the U.S. offers an exceptional opportunity to consider how socio-political context shapes experiences. As stated in the introduction to this volume, Muslims make up the second largest religious group in both countries, yet the proportion in France is larger (8% of the population) than in the U.S. (1%). Perhaps more telling is the historical relation the country of origin has to the host country. Significant factors that differentiate the experiences of Muslims in France and the U.S. are the interplay between both places. Muslims in France are post-colonial immigrants, comprised primarily of north African settlers (from Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria). Muslims in the United States, on the other hand, appear more heterogeneous. They include immigrants from South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, as well as those Americans who converted to Islam.

The critical role that gender plays in immigrant adaptation in both France and the U.S. is also evident from the articles in this special issue. The present set of studies uphold the conclusions of previous research that a diversity of opinions

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exist among Muslim women about the necessity of veiling (Bartowski and Read 2003; Read and Bartowski 2000). The decision to veil is negotiated interpersonally. How interpretations of religious doctrine frame individual and group behaviors, particularly in the realm of gender and gender relations, is a critical area of inquiry. The veil is one symbolic gesture by which Muslim women in both countries attempt to maintain control over their lives.

Research on other recent second generation immigrant groups highlights both liberating and constraining forces at work for women. Boundaries that differentiate second-generation women from other groups in the host country involve relations of power—specifically gender hierarchies that serve to define authentic cultural characteristics by assigning women the role of upholding tradition (Das Gupta, 1997). Moreover, when faced with the prospect of being the cultural other, it is not uncommon for the second generation to resist subordination by making women and girls the point at which power is declared via traditional, ideal norms of appropriate behavior. These then develop into the parameters by which lines are drawn to demarcate in-group and out-group statuses (Espiritu, 2001). It may be that a Muslim identity is lodged in veiling behavior among girls so that the defining line against which to differentiate one as better than the dominant society rests in that behavior. Ultimately, moral superiority represents a strategy of resistance to the political and economic subordination experienced by Muslims. Similar to other research on children of Muslim immigrants, the focus on veiling in this special issue highlights gender as a critical factor in the identity formation process among immigrants and their children, particularly the restrictions placed on young women (Ajrouch 2004). The tension surrounding the practice of veiling illustrates the key place women's position and status play in immigrant adaptation.

The links between ethnic stratification, gender, and identity as they relate to the veil in France are considered by Body-Gendrot and Killian. Both acknowledge the importance of considering the context of the host country. Body-Gendrot explains that the United States legally recognizes differences by ethnicity and race whereas France, with its republican ethos, emphasizes a national French character rather than ethnic differences. Killian pushes the distinction further to suggest that understandings of secularity differ between France and the U.S. In France, secularity means removing from the public realm any sign of religion, whereas in the U.S. secularity allows broad latitude for the freedom to practice religion.

Both Body-Gendrot and Killian also suggest that ethnic inequalities in France shape opportunities for adaptation among Muslims. In particular, a high proportion of Muslims in France live in densely populated public housing areas with elevated levels of unemployment and little hope of social mobility. Most striking is that Muslims' experiences of discrimination are not publicly acknowledged or publicly denounced by the French government. These disparities in socioeconomic status and unacknowledged discrimination lead to exaggerated

expressions of masculinity and femininity. For example, Body-Gendrot suggests such conditions lead to more stress in relationships and an increased desire among men to achieve control at home. Indeed, she suggests that control over women provides a way to cope with unemployment and racism. Hence, it may be that some women are gently, and sometimes forcefully, encouraged to don the veil. Such actions may contribute to women becoming the visible symbol of Islam in France. In other words, one effect of pervasive discrimination is a bold-er announcement of the identity that larger society devalues; achieved by men expressing their masculinity as they monitor the behavior of women. Negative sanctions toward women who do not veil may constitute a pathway by which Muslim men seek control over their lives in a society that makes it difficult to attain a successful and meaningful role in the wider public arena. Body-Gendrot proposes, therefore, that the new law banning the veil from public schools may provide a way for Muslim women to escape internal ethnic pressures.

Killian, on the other hand, points to educational and generational differences to explain variation in attitudes toward the law. Older, first generation immigrants, especially those with lower education levels, seem more accepting of the new law. Younger generations raised in France, by contrast, see discrimination and a double standard in the law and are more like to question it. It appears that choosing to veil emerges as an important political maneuver among more recent immigrants and the second generation. Killian ends by stating that such a law will potentially result in heightened obstacles to integration, inflaming ostracizing tendencies and producing more severe segregation. If she is correct, the law will not generate the desired goal of Muslim immigrants becoming "French," but rather the exact opposite.

While in France the veil may represent an expression of control in the midst of severe discrimination, the veil in the U.S. represents an expression of American identity. The veil is presented as one pathway to developing an American Islam. All three authors who address the veil in the U.S. suggest that the American context, particularly adherence to freedom of religion and expression, inform second generation Muslim women's veiling practices. Moore, for example, argues that women wear the veil as a strategy to announce an American Islamic identity. She focuses on a series of legal cases that define acceptable public expressions of religion, particularly within the dictates of the separation between church and state. The First Amendment declaring separation of church and state is meant to prohibit the government from declaring and supporting an official state religion. Moreover, Moore argues that regulations on veiling emerge in historical and social contexts, leading her to suggest that asserting a right to veil is justified by the "language of rights, and thus, of citizenship," as well as by reference to religious sources. While both France and the U.S. view public education and schools as a significant socializing and assimilating institution for the country's future citizens, in the U.S. the veil controversy becomes a matter of religious freedom.

Presenting a similar argument, Haddad offers a historical analysis of the veil in the U.S., also suggesting that it has become a symbol of American Islamic identity. After 9/11 the veil became more threatening, representing an overt symbol of a religion linked to terrorism. Even so, Haddad notes a surge in veiling among the second generation, who are more likely to wear it as a way to cope with post-9/11 tensions in the U.S. In other words, young women embrace the American value of religious freedom by choosing to veil. She concludes that veiling may yield a potential pathway for promoting tolerance and understanding when veiled women can articulate American values as a rationale for wearing it.

Finally, Williams and Vashi also put forth the notion that wearing the veil is an expression of autonomy as second generation college-age women seek to carve out an identity within the tension between traditional Islamic and U.S. value systems. They contend that wearing the veil is a response to multiple issues, but ultimately supports leading a fully public life in the U.S. The veil provides an opportunity to be both American and Muslim—part of both worlds. Wearing the veil is a cultural resource that represents the voluntary nature of religion in the U.S. and becomes an expression and symbol of American values including equality, autonomy, and independence. In the end, Williams and Vashi conclude that wearing the veil is a choice, though sometimes shaped by peer pressure, to assert an identity. All in all, the “politics of veiling” reported in these studies of the U.S. are quite different from those documented in the studies of France.

The status individuals occupied in their country of origin, coupled with the stratification systems in the host country, may produce divergent integration outcomes for Muslims. For instance, in a comparative study of Lebanese Muslim immigrants to the United States and Somali Muslim immigrants to Canada, my colleague and I found that social status markers based on religion in the country of origin interacted with social status markers based on both race and religion in the host countries to influence various forms of identity development (Ajrouch and Kusow 2007). Specifically, Somalis used their religious identity to negotiate an alternative identity to the racial status accorded them via the visible minority hierarchy in Canada which categorized Somali immigrants as black. In particular Somali Muslim women were more likely to wear the veil in Canada than they were in Somalia. Lebanese Muslims, on the other hand, entered the U.S. legally classified as “white” and used that privileged status to raise an Islamic identity to the same status as the Judeo-Christian mainstream. When a decision was made to wear the veil, it was based on the American ethos of religious freedom. A more nuanced understanding of Muslim integration may be gathered from considering status positions in both the homeland and host country contexts.

In sum, this set of papers highlights the significance of ethnic stratification systems and gender to understanding identity boundaries among Muslims facing the challenge of integration in Western societies. How the laws of those nations, as well as the norms of both the host society and immigrant culture interact with

one another may yield various outcomes. Undoubtedly the structural arrangements of a nation will impinge on the ability of the immigrant group, regardless of their national origins or religion, to successfully integrate. Perhaps the most compelling evidence for the importance of structural arrangements within nations comes from a comparative analysis of Europe and the U.S., where immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries are living starkly different lives. According to Naim (2005), Arab Muslims living in Europe are poorer, less educated, and in worse health than the rest of the population, while their counterparts in the U.S. report better education and more wealth than the average American. Despite the fact that the veil is certainly a cultural expression, the articles in this special issue demonstrate that the motivation and meaning of the veil hinges on the various structural arrangements within each national context.

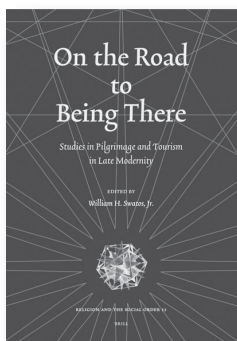
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On the Road to Being There

Studies in Pilgrimage and Tourism in Late Modernity

Edited by William H. Swatos, Jr.



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- Religion and the Social Order, 12

This volume consists of a collection of twelve empirical studies that address theoretical and practical issues relating to pilgrimage and tourism activities in late modernity. As a contribution to the *Religion and Social Order* series sponsored by the Association for the

Sociology of Religion, these studies are particularly directed to assessing both the role of religion in the pilgrimage/tourism nexus and the ways in which religious expressions have changed as a result of the technological and social changes of late modernity that affect human behavior in a more general sense. The chapters address neo-pagan pilgrimage tours to ancient pagan temples, travels to spiritual healers, the development of historical sites by American religious movements of nineteenth-century origin, labyrinths, pilgrimages that emphasize walking a journey rather than visiting buildings, virtual pilgrimage, the Roman Jubilee of 2000, Kyôto's Gion Festival, and similar topics.

William H. Swatos, Jr., is completing his first decade as Executive Officer of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, prior to which he served for six years as editor of *Sociology of Religion*. He is also executive officer of the Religious Research Association, senior fellow of the Center for Religious Inquiry Across the Disciplines at Baylor University, managing editor of the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, and an adjunct member of the faculty at Augustana College (Illinois). He received his B.A. with honors from Transylvania University, his M.Div. summa cum laude from the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Kentucky, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky, with honors in social theory. He is author, co-author, editor, or co-editor of over twenty books including the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society* (AltaMira 1998). His most recent book is *The Protestant Ethic Turns 100* (Paradigm 2005), co-edited with Lutz Kaelber. His current research in pilgrimage and tourism studies focuses on the Chapel of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Paris.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The History of the Riverside Church in the City of New York by PETER J. PARIS, JOHN W. COOK, JAMES HUDNUT-BEUMLER, LAWRENCE H. MAMIYA, LEONORA TUBBS TISDALE, and JUDITH WEISENFELD. New York: New York University Press, 2004, 350 pp.; \$35.00 USD (cloth).

Riverside Church has cast a long shadow not only in Manhattan but also in mainline Protestantism over the past three-quarters of a century. As a towering presence, it has borne the struggles and embodied the ambiguities of both church and culture. This Baptist-Congregational hybrid lends itself to superlatives. It was the product of a collaboration between two men who represented the pinnacles of wealth (John D. Rockefeller) and preaching (Harry Emerson Fosdick). Riverside has sought, and some would say successfully, to set the gold standard in church architecture, preaching, and public witness in the U.S. Its list of guest preachers reads like a “Who’s Who” of progressive faith-based politics: Martin Luther King, Jr.; Nelson Mandela; Caesar Chavez; Desmond Tutu; Reinhold Niebuhr; Andrew Young; Marian Wright Edelman; and others. Whether hosting James Forman when he introduced the Black Manifesto or sending its pastor, William Sloan Coffin, to visit the hostages in Iran, Riverside Church has maintained a significant presence on the national landscape.

So, it should come as no surprise that, in the tradition of producing church histories for congregational anniversaries, Riverside again did things in a big way. To mark its 75th anniversary, a blue ribbon panel of scholars was commissioned to write a critical history, directed by Peter J. Paris, Professor of Christian Social Ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary. The result is a multidisciplinary analysis of Riverside through the diverse lenses

of history (Hudnut-Beumler), homiletics (Tisdale), architecture (Cook), urban sociology (Weisenfeld), social ethics (Paris), and congregational ethnography (Mamiya). As such, it should be located within the multi-disciplinary field of congregational studies. But, true to the subject, this is not your home church’s congregational study.

The authors describe this complex congregation in exceedingly careful detail, including a number of archival photographs that bring the narrative to life. Unlike so many congregational histories, difficult periods of tension and conflict are presented alongside feel-good rehearsals of the glory days. Having a critical analysis of the church was, in fact, Riverside’s intention when they commissioned the project. The difference between their church fights and those of other communities of faith is that they end up on the front page of the *New York Times*. What is typical, however, is that Riverside’s conflicts—though writ large—are not unlike those within other American congregations. As like any First Presbyterian or Grace Lutheran, they have fought over race and homosexuality, money and pastoral authority, changes in worship and theological positions, and, of course, politics. Through the meticulous, respectful-yet-objective dissection of these conflicts on which the congregation’s plot turns, the readers are also given a window into the larger social history, and into how organizations and the individuals within them have negotiated cultural shifts. In this sense, the book is a gift not only to the congregation but to those interested in the intersection of church and society.

As a national “Protestant cathedral,” Riverside is nonetheless a rare breed: a theologically liberal, multi-racial, urban megachurch. Its survival and success challenge sociological prediction. Further, although church growth is often correlated with a high sense of corporate identity,



Riverside has consistently “blurred the distinction between the religious and the secular” (280) in its programming. It has had a high identity profile, but one which has been continuously contested. Its history is marked by chapters identified with each of its five senior pastors. In some sense, these were eras in which Riverside’s identity was renegotiated, if not reinvented.

The book suggests that its ability to accommodate change has kept this large institution relevant in a cultural context that has seen dramatic social changes in the past seventy-five years. Part of its flexibility is attributable to its multi-cell organization in which a dynamic and diverse number of sub-groups can find their niche and feel at home. In that sense, it is consistent with the genius of successful megachurches coming from very different theological orientations. Riverside has paid at least as much attention to cultivating its internal (bonding) social capital as it has to furthering its bridging social capital (aiming to be “interdenominational, international and interracial”)

The authors and the congregation should be commended for this unique contribution to the field of congregational studies. The research is comprehensive. But, missing is a final chapter synthesizing the elements. The broader audience of scholars, religious teachers, and leaders will want a deeper understanding of whether Riverside is an historical and social anomaly, or whether it is suggestive of ways that diverse and liberal communities of faith can successfully move in cultures while maintaining religious integrity. Perhaps that challenge will be left to the writers during their centenary celebration.

Katie Day
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Philadelphia*



The Penitente Brotherhood: Patriarchy and Hispano-Catholicism in New Mexico by MICHAEL P. CARROLL. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, 260 pp.; \$45.00 USD (cloth).

Historians, critics, and cultural activists agree that the *Fraternidad Piadosa de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno* has played a key role in the cultural and political history of New Mexico, from the turn of the 19th century forward. But the agreement ends there. From a perspective of the psychology of religion, Michael Carroll delineates some novel and controversial lines of argument while challenging such oft-repeated assumptions about the Brotherhood as its being a remedy to the scarcity of clergy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and that fervent New Mexican Catholicism is an unbroken legacy of four centuries. On one hand, he exposes the Orientalizing discourses that romanticize, medievalize, and disparage the Penitentes. On the other, he comes onto the scene as a self-styled “Young Turk,” making audacious leaps between otherwise carefully crafted arguments.

His most innovative and lasting contributions are twofold. First is the linkage between the emergence of the Brotherhood in response to the social and cultural impacts of Bourbon military and economic reforms and a crisis in traditional patriarchal authority. Next is a full historical contextualization of the key role of Padre Antonio José Martínez of Taos in the development of the Brotherhood.

The controversies that Carroll deftly anticipates stem from an attempted paradigm shift based on a refractory adherence to documentary history, a rejection of ethno-history as a kind of culturally privileged discourse, and a willingness to engage in heuristic psychological speculation based on the most fragmentary of evidence.

Carroll argues that the emergence of the Penitente Brotherhood brought New Mexico out of an essentially faithless era lacking in both the features of model Tridentine Catholicism and popular or folk

Catholicism. Prior to 1800 there are only three documented examples of ritual penance and almost no mention of places of worship. Likewise, there is little documentation of clothing in colonial New Mexico; but that is scanty proof that people went around naked.

The purported absence of folk Catholic elements does not bear up to full scrutiny. For example, it is true that pilgrimage does not emerge until the 19th century. Travel was restricted by the authorities and the dangers of the road, so sacred journeys to holy places were localized. Every community had a *Calvario* hill, the destination of Holy Week processions. Similarly, apparitions are rare in documents, but they abound in the popular memory. The Virgin of Guadalupe appeared at the foundation of Zacatecas in 1546 and at Jémez Pueblo along with San Diego de Alcalá in 1694. After appearing at Acoma in 1599, Santiago made a series of visits to the Pueblo to ensure its well being. As for virgins and santos, Guadalupe is as popular as Dolores, who is more closely linked to New Mexico. The Lady of Sorrows is ubiquitous in a dangerous and war-torn province, and she appears at the foot of the Cross every Good Friday. In the late 18th century, traders brought Santo Niño de Atocha back from Zacatecas. Before long the diminutive patron saint of travelers and captives made so many appearances that people offered him a continuous supply of shoes.

Carroll's daring psychoanalysis of paternal and filial male relations, as well as his identification of deeply embedded and latent homoerotic desire, hangs on the female gendered deathcart figure present in penitente chapels, sometimes nicknamed *Doña Sebastiana*. At the center of the argument is a deep conflation with the highly erotic iconography of the martyred *San Sebastián*, a saint almost unknown in New Mexico. Lady Death has many names and nicknames, some of which are playful and ironic, like *Doña Sebastiana*. The list includes, *La Huesuda* (Bony One), *La Pelona* (Baldy), *La Calaca* (Skeleton Lady),

La Parca (Stingy), and another *doña, La Catrina* (Her Elegance). How would this plethora of names fit into the psychological argument?

More deeply challenging is Carroll's suspicion that the spiritual and social discipline inspired by the Penitentes helped facilitate the American takeover of New Mexico. The Brotherhood produced a personality type with "a strongly internalized compulsion to obey authority figures charged with enforcing written codes," a law-abiding citizen not likely to protest or resist. Carroll overlooks the intensely resistant participation of the Brotherhood in the political process and in Mutual Aid societies.

At his best, Carroll challenges preconceptions about the *Hermandad de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno* and deconstructs Orientalist stereotyping. He demonstrates that the Brotherhood is not medievalist, but modern; and it historically responded to change with change. But, in the end, his leaping arguments and provocations, plus a lack of grounding, put him in the unenviable position of the zealous and hungry stranger, *pidiéndole peras al olmo*, demanding pears from the elm tree.

Enrique R. Lamadrid
University of New Mexico



There's Never Been a Show Like Veggie Tales: Sacred Messages in a Secular Market by HILLARY WARREN. Lanham, Md.: AltaMira Press, 2005, 135 pp.; \$55.00 USD (cloth), \$19.95 USD (paper).

Retailers have long known that when videos and DVDs appeal equally to children and to their parents, they hold especially good sales potential. No wonder, then, that a small company called Big Idea Productions garnered such remarkable success when it pitched the first completely

computer-animated children's video series. With dancing and singing vegetables, moral messages, catchy songs, and smart references to popular culture, the *Veggie Tales* video series, originally produced to introduce Bible stories to young children and eventually expanded through multiple merchandising tie-ins, became a best-seller in retail outlets such as Wal-Mart and Target. Most surprising is that Big Idea, the company behind *Veggie Tales*, ultimately folded. This story of the success and failure of a small evangelical media firm turns out to provide an excellent basis for questioning the marriage of religion and the marketplace as it exists at the beginning of the 21st century. It is a cautionary tale for those who have unquestioningly accepted the marriage of evangelical Christianity with capitalism, or who have celebrated the growth of the evangelical retail market as a marker of evangelicalism's success.

In Hillary Warren's timely and engaging book we learn why, in 1998, Christian retailers demarcated the children's video market as "BV" and "AV": before and after *Veggie Tales*. Readers learn the story of co-creator Phil Vischer's "big idea" of creating "values-based family media products." That he was able to do this with the high production values made inexpensive with recent technological advances, and just at a time when VCRs were becoming standard home equipment, proved serendipitous. Word Music got the series into Christian bookstores in 1994, and it succeeded largely based on the word-of-mouth it generated. When they entered the mainstream market, sales of the *Veggie Tales* videos outpaced video sales of *The Magic School Bus* and *Arthur*, both of which, in contrast, had the benefit of television exposure for the promotion of their brands. Despite the company's runaway success, however, by late 2002, the company found itself overextended. With multiple licensing agreements and promotional tie-ins, several spin-off series in the works, and the release of the major *Veggie Tales* movie *Jonah*, cash flow became a problem. In that same year, Lyrick Studios, original distributor of the

Veggie Tales series, sued Big Idea when the company signed a distribution agreement with Warner Home Video. When Lyrick won a settlement of more than \$10 million, Big Idea was forced to file for bankruptcy. Big Idea's assets, including the *Veggie Tales* product line, was purchased by Classic Media (owners of *Rocky & Bullwinkle* among other products), and has been produced under that company ever since. The success of *Veggie Tales* had spelled the failure of Big Idea's big dream of becoming a major Christian alternative to the Disney industry and its products.

Throughout the book, readers are treated to humorous plot summaries of *Veggie Tales* while also learning some of the subtleties of media genre production expectations. The *Veggie Tales* series is also placed in the historical context of Christian media and entertainment, extending from George Whitefield's populist revival messages to televangelism to the products of Focus on the Family. Readers also hear from *Veggie Tales* fans themselves, as Warren's interviews ably support her assertion that this series was unique in the level of enthusiasm it generated, particularly among mothers of young children. These were screen media products that were "safe," according to the mothers she interviewed: *Veggie Tales* presented updated Bible stories in ways that, in the mothers' minds, did not require fast-forwarding, monitoring, explanation, or censorship. Because they were also considered by many to be inoffensive, *Veggie Tales* were described as "safe" in that mothers felt they could recommend them to other mothers, regardless of religious orientations and commitments. Were they "Christian" videos? Some interviewed were not so sure, raising questions about the fact that the videos did not proselytize. Others, however, praised what they saw as the "Judeo-Christian" basis of the *Tales*, recognizing that the lack of proselytization was what made the series appealing beyond the evangelical market.

Warren, a former journalist, has written a fun and fast read for undergraduate

and graduate students that will impress with its depth while also bringing a smile to readers' faces. In sociology, media, religious studies, childhood studies, or American studies classes, the book can be used to generate many engaging conversations about the relationship between the commercial and the religious industries, fandom and faith commitments, economics in para-religious industries, and the role of media in religious socialization. Because many of today's students were probably raised on these videos, the book will prove especially pertinent. And professors wanting to "brand" their courses by giving away something to their students can take heart: there are still plenty of Junior Asparagus key-chains available for purchase on eBay.

Lynn Schofield Clark
University of Denver



Protestant Political Parties: A Global Survey
by PAUL FRESTON. London:
Ashgate, 2004, 184 pp.; \$99.95 USD
(cloth).

In *Protestant Political Parties* Paul Freston continues his project of overwhelming broad generalizations with the clear diversity present in actual empirical facts. Time and again Freston shows pluralism and diversity in varied contexts. Among the Protestant parties he reviews there are left and right, democratic and authoritarian, nationalist and internationalist, tolerant and intolerant, and the list could go on. Freston's portrayal is an achievement that I think virtually nobody else could pull off. It is rare that a scholar will be motivated enough to collect this much information about obscure and distant efforts at religious politics without having a strong agenda of his own.

But, of course, one inherent characteristic of historicist explanation is that the

null hypothesis is always unstable. Historicist explanations undermine existing abstractions through diversity. But, it does not take long for social scientists to again start asking whether they can find patterns in this diversity. Let me just suggest one direction by building off of a methodological characteristic of this type of large-scale survey. In numerous places, Freston suggests that many Protestant parties are debilitated by their lack of realism. For example, they assume a block vote of Protestants despite evidence to the contrary, think good intentions is the same as good government, and assume moral fiber will translate directly into incorruptibility. However, I wonder how much of this characterization stems from reliance on secondary data.

Let me first pause briefly to consider changes in sociological perspectives on realism. If we think back to Neil Smelser's *A Theory of Collective Behavior*, we will remember that he explains extra-institutional politics, what we now call social movements, in terms of a process of short-circuited social activism. Collective actors such as revolutionary guerrilla groups and messianic sects jump straight from abstract and ambiguous values to social action without understanding all of the complex "situational facilities" that intervene, by which he means the social processes and institutions through which goals are realized or frustrated. In Smelser's view, if these persons did understand situational facilities they would act through the pluralist political field, instead of through futile, inevitably doomed, utopian mobilization.

If you look at the social movements research of the past twenty years, you will see a very different attitude in which a lack of realism is considered a key element of collective action frames and mobilizing narratives. William Gamson, for example, in his study of television and political activism looked at what types of speech motivated and activated people. He wrote that "the hot cognitions of misplaced concreteness" can mobilize resistance at times when overdetermined structural analyses

leave people cold. In other words, distorted information often works better than true information.

With this in mind, I wonder if Protestant party leaders would look different if they were interviewed behind closed-doors, rather than portrayed based on secondary sources and their public pronouncements. Perhaps the lack of realism evident in the public pronouncements that appear in evangelical newspapers is less a reflection of leaders' thought processes than a reflection of their efforts to motivate and mobilize their constituencies. Perhaps these leaders are more realistic and pragmatic than their public pronouncements would lead us to believe.

In the case of Latin America, as in most other parts of the world, for better or for worse, we are seeing a long-term trend in which the basis of political cleavage is moving from class to culture, and the form of political mediation is moving from institutional actors like political parties to more ephemeral coalitions of civil (or in many cases uncivil) organizations. Economic and political globalization has reduced the viability of unions and working-class parties at the same time that it has undermined the power bases of those local elites not integrated into global flows of capital and politics. And these groups have increasingly turned to cultural identities as the basis for mobilizing political power. The success of indigenous identity politics in Ecuador and elsewhere provides one example. The entry of evangelical Protestantism and re-entry of the Catholic Church into politics provide two more.

Protestant Political Parties, like Freston's previous work, pushes us to stop reading the past into the present, and instead develop our theorizations from complex empirical reality. In both the industrialized North and the global South we need to look at Protestant parties as part of a relational field in which political discourse is increasingly refracted through cultural identities. We need to ask questions such as: How do these parties contribute to

a "moralization" of the public sphere? Are they changing the terms of debate about nation, democracy, and pluralism? Which marginalized peoples are they bringing into the public sphere, and what happens to them after the party dissipates? What are the parallel groups that are also mobilizing through cultural identities rather than class interests?

David Smilde
University of Georgia



Religious Influences on Health and Well-Being in the Elderly edited by K. WARNER SCHAIE, NEAL KRAUSE, and ALAN BOOTH. New York: Springer, 2004, 307 pp.; \$51.80 USD (cloth).

This book discusses the impact of religion on the health of the elderly. The first chapter, written by Neal Krause, is an introduction that explains the complexities of studying this topic. It focuses on three main questions: Why study religion? Why study religion and aging? What is the best way to approach the study of religion, aging, and health?

In discussing these three questions, the book stresses the need for a broad framework that includes religious practices and religious institutions. It goes on to describe the different models used to conceptualize religion and health. It also identifies the different dimensions of religion described in existing research. This opening chapter clearly states the need for expanding how researchers look at religion and health, and why doing so with respect to the elderly is a useful and necessary endeavor.

The next six chapters survey critical topics within the larger subject. What makes the book's approach so captivating is that each of these chapters is written by a different researcher in the study of religion

and health. These researchers are responsible for significant portions of the existing literature and methodologies found in this field today.

With the exception of the introduction, each chapter is followed by two separate commentaries / critiques, also done by well-known researchers whose work has often led to innovations in the field. This collaborative effort, formed from multiple sources and perspectives, shines an investigative light on each individual topic, yet combines the thoughts and discoveries presented into a cohesive work that helps us see the big picture more clearly.

The second chapter, by Ellen Idler, discusses theory and research related to one of the most commonly used measures of religiosity—religious observance / attendance—and its impact on health. She goes beyond a basic discussion of studies of the impact of frequency of attendance at religious services by emphasizing the need to understand each component that may play into this dynamic. This investigation into the underlying mechanisms of how religiosity affects individual health may serve as a catalyst to re-think methodologies for future research.

Jeff Levin wrote the third chapter, which gives thoughtful consideration to concepts and measures used to study prayer and health. This is followed by Kenneth Pargament and Gene Ano's chapter on the psychology of religion and coping. The subject of forgiveness and religiousness is tackled by Giacomo Bono and Michael McCullough in chapter 5. In chapter 6, Linda Chatters attends to how race and ethnicity may contribute to differences in religion and health associations.

In the book's last chapter, Linda George, Judith Hays, and Elizabeth Flint share their research on how patterns of religiousness through the course of life impact physical and mental health in late life. They state that this is one of the least used methods of studying the influence of religion on health, and they explain how methodology using life history calendars

can be a benefit to research. In addition, they advocate exploring underlying reasons for increases and decreases in religious participation throughout life.

The versatility of this book warrants special mention. It is effective as a survey of work that has already been done on this topic. At the same time, it serves as a well-spring of ideas for new research. It calls for a more expanded methodology into research on religion and health. And, while it focuses on issues related to the elderly, the principles laid out could shape research on any age group. This book also calls for the study of groups that have, to date, been mostly neglected in the field, and emphasizes the need to note the differences in studying this subject in the U.S. versus in other countries.

This book speaks from many analytical perspectives. But these perspectives combine into one message: There is a need to continue the empirical investigation of religion's influence on health, especially in older populations. The book acknowledges the complexities of conceptualizing and measuring "religion" or "religious involvement." And it is candid about the limitations of doing such research. Yet, it is also optimistic about the rewards of pursuing this work. It raises more questions than it answers, and it challenges us to look more deeply into the answers we already have. For these reasons, this work makes a valuable contribution to the present understanding of research on religion and health. It also serves as a road map to help chart directions for future endeavors in this field.

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Voices From the Pagan Census: A National Survey of Witches and Neo-Pagans in the United States by HELEN A. BERGER,

EVAN A. LEACH, and LEIGH S. SHAFFER. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2003, 304 pp.; \$29.95 USD (cloth).

Neo-Pagans are difficult to study because many keep their religious beliefs and practices secret. Fear of misunderstanding, ridicule, and overt discrimination are common. As a result, most research on Neo-Paganism has been ethnographic and focused on participants in festivals or organized covens. Berger, Leach and Shaffer correct this tendency to study highly committed practitioners who may not be representative of the religion as a whole by creating a quantitative survey instrument and making it accessible to a wider sample of Neo-Pagans. It was distributed by mail to the members and subscribers of Neo-Pagan organizations and publishers, on the Internet, and by word of mouth. This generated more than two thousand responses, which allows the authors to paint a detailed and authoritative picture of who Neo-Pagans are.

The authors find that Neo-Pagans are predominantly female, overwhelmingly Caucasian, generally middle-class, and educationally accomplished. They document interesting differences among those who self-identify as Neo-Pagan. Some belong to organized groups that meet for ritual celebrations, others "work" magic with a single spiritual partner, and about half of the respondents are solitaries who practice witchcraft alone. They also describe six different "spiritual paths" within Neo-Paganism. Wiccans, Pagans and Goddess Worshipers are the three largest subgroups, but there are also Druids, Shamans, and Neo-Pagans associated with Unitarian Universalism.

The most interesting and useful contribution the book makes is to describe such changes as increasing media attention and the aging of the Neo-Pagan population, and to explain how these bring tensions among Neo-Pagans to the fore. For example, the birth of children forces the Neo-Pagan community to re-consider what

it means to have a religion based on the radically individualist assumption that everyone can and should find their own unique "path." Controversies about whether Neo-Paganism should try to become more mainstream or whether popularization will dilute core beliefs are effectively illustrated using the written comments respondents provided for the questionnaires.

However, the book is mostly a report of comparisons the authors make among the different subgroups of Neo-Pagans, and between Neo-Pagans and the broader American population as represented in the General Social Survey (GSS). Few compelling findings are generated. This seems to be at least partly a product of the authors not handling the quantitative data very well. For example, when comparing Druids to the General Neo-Pagan Population (GNPP), they do not subtract the Druids from the GNPP (a close look at Tables 8 and 19 shows that the GNPP percentages do not change when the Druids are separated out). As a result, the Druids are being counted twice and compared to a population that still includes them, which would conceal any real differences.

When Neo-Pagans are compared to other Americans, some differences are found, for example, in political attitudes. However, there is no way to tell whether these differences have to do with the Neo-Pagans being Neo-Pagan or whether they result from their being mostly female, mostly caucasian, mostly middle-class, and highly educated because the authors do not mention having controlled for any of these variables. To keep the survey instrument from getting too long, the authors sacrificed questions about Neo-Paganism's unique features in order to include more questions that matched those in the GSS. This turned out to be an unhappy substitution, not just because the latter were not analyzed very rigorously, but because the book is short on experiential descriptions of ritual and magic.

In addition to such analytical problems, there are irritating shortcomings in

how the quantitative data is presented throughout the book. Many of the tables are improperly labeled. For example, Table 2 is simply titled "Attitudes toward the New Age" and reports response categories from "Strongly disagree" through "Strongly Agree" without saying what the statement in question was. This has to be extracted from the accompanying text, which defeats much of the purpose of separating the data out into a table in the first place. The authors do not report statistical significance for the patterns of difference they do uncover, and, since none of the tables include raw numbers, it is impossible for the reader to gauge this independently.

The authors are appropriately cautious in drawing conclusions from the data. This is commendable. But, because they examine so many (albeit interesting) questions across a very large number of variables, the core of the book reads as a tedious list of inconclusive statements. However, the introductory chapter on the adherents and history of Neo-Paganism is very interesting, as is the concluding chapter, which suggests avenues for future research.

Berger, Leach and Shaffer have shown that it is possible to gather useful data about Neo-Paganism, so their book should inspire other scholars to pursue these emerging questions. Given that a decade has already passed since they circulated their Pagan Census, a replication would also be worthwhile, providing a longitudinal perspective on this young, internally diverse religion.

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The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe by PHILIP S. GORSKI.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

2003, 249 pp.; \$52.00 USD (cloth);
\$21.00 USD (paper).

This book is adventurous, insightful, and provocative. It combines creative thinking with detailed scholarship to produce a new way of viewing the origins of the modern European state. It is also quite likely wrong, not so much in its details as in the conclusions that it draws from them. To this reviewer, it serves as a cautionary tale of what can happen when sociological thinking collides with the historical record. The book is definitely worth reading and belongs in every serious library. But it must be read carefully, with as much attention to what is left out as to what is claimed.

At root, Gorski attempts to wed Weber's thesis concerning the secular impact of Calvinism to Foucault's theory of the connection between social discipline and the modern state. Where Weber famously argued that Calvinism led people to worry about their salvation and thus to monitor their personal behavior, Gorski argues that Calvinists differentially monitored the behavior of others. The state became a tool for this monitoring, such that "the Reformation led to a general expansion of state infrastructure and a progressive rationalization of social-political ethics" (38). Religion was a prime source of state strength, through its role in disciplining individuals to accept social control—not always, but often enough that it cannot be left out of account. Other things being equal, Gorski writes, countries in which Calvinists dominated public life produced more active, organized state apparatuses than did countries in which Calvinists were less prominent. He does not claim that this was the only route to state-formation, nor was Calvinism necessary for strong states to emerge. But other theories of state-formation unjustifiably leave religion out of their accounts.

The bulk of the book consists of three long chapters on various confessional politics: one on the Netherlands (as a disciplinary revolution from below); one on Brandenburg/Prussia (as a disciplinary rev-

olution from above); and a third comparing various Lutheran and Catholic polities. In each, Gorski uses secondary historical sources to trace the development of state supervision of individual lives as well as the role of such supervision in developing state power.

We find fascinating material. He presents such things as tax and income figures for late 17th-century Holland, accounts of the establishment of Amsterdam workhouses in the same period, Frederick William of Brandenburg's Calvinist surveillance of his largely Lutheran subjects some thirty years later, Catholic efforts at social reform that used state power for social control, and so on. The Dutch case is the most important, because:

Despite the fact that the Dutch state was not especially centralized, bureaucratized, or monarchical, it was nonetheless able to maintain a large military, extract significant resources, and maintain a high level of social order. ... How can we account for a state that looks so weak in theory but acts so strong in practice? (55).

Gorski's all-purpose answer is that Calvin taught the importance of social order. God demands order, and Calvinists must provide it, by state force if necessary. Thus the Amsterdam *Tuchthuis*, Frederick's surveillance teams, and so on. On this evidence, religion matters in state-formation after all.

Yet two kinds of evidence seldom appear in this book—and never appear in connection with the Dutch case. The first is any record of what any “Calvinist” actually thought he was doing in creating disciplinary institutions. Did these so-called “Calvinists” actually hold the Foucauldian views that Gorski attributes to them? Letters and diaries would help, but they are not presented. The second is whether one can so neatly divide any early modern European country along confessional lines.

Two facts suggest otherwise. First, historian Susan Boettcher (“Confessionalization: Reformation, Religion, Absolutism, and Modernity,” *History*

Compass, 2/1, 2004) shows that the religious situation just across the border from the Netherlands does not suggest confessional rigidity. There, people who called themselves “Protestants” insisted on performing “Catholic” practices, even retaining Catholic priests to make sure that they were done correctly. Confessional lines, even when clear in theory, were not clear in religion-as-lived. Second, by the 16th century, the Dutch Reformation was less dependent on Calvin than on such home-grown covenantal theologians as Johannes Cocceius who emphasized the compact between God and His believers—and among the believers themselves.

Gorski fails to question his religious sorting system, and thus assumes clear historical divisions where none likely existed. He does not give us the actual views of religious actors, but deduces what those views were from the boxes into which he has placed them. Admirably, he admits that most professional historians do not support his views, and he goes into some detail about their differences. By the end of the book, even he finds his arguments thin, reducing them to a plea to take the various confessions seriously as one possible influence among many on the growth of the modern state.

We readers can grant him this much. We can appreciate his clear writing and the fascinating evidence he does marshal. We cannot, however, think his conclusions proved.

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Sociology and the Sacred: An Introduction to Philip Rieff's Theory of Culture
by ANTONIUS ZONDERVAN.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press,
2005, 207 pp.; \$50.00 USD (cloth).

In *Sociology and the Sacred*, Antonius Zondervan offers an interpretation of Philip Rieff's published works, with the explicit aim of introducing to readers his "sociology of the sacred." Chapter 1 is a short sketch of Rieff's life and academic career. In the succeeding five chapters, Zondervan interprets Rieff's published works conceptually and thematically. He traces the development of Rieff's theory of culture, and then expounds upon key themes in his work. In the final chapter, Zondervan summarizes Rieff's basic conceptual categories. He then assesses how Rieff's work relates to current debates on secularization and new religion.

Rieff's critique of modern Western culture forms the backdrop for his sociology of the sacred. He is highly critical of modern Western culture's psychotherapeutic focus, which he claims has prioritized individual needs over collective needs, and liberated itself from authority in favor of self-expression. To Rieff, then, the problem of the sacred (as well as modernity) is a problem of authority. Without a hierarchy of authority, and without a subordination of desire to "higher purposes," moderns become detached from the sacred order, which reveals itself primarily in the authoritative. Rieff believes that moderns are often seduced into believing that they can be liberated from authority, which he thinks is indestructible. In addition, he maintains that modern Western culture has misdirected its hope for liberation. What have to be liberated are not the instinctual impulses, but the higher powers that control those impulses.

Rieff's "sacred sociology" accords a central role to transcendence. Indeed, he believes that no culture can exist without a transcendental foundation because each originates in ideals belonging to a sacred order of existence. Modern culture, however, attempts to establish itself without any reference to a transcendental order of existence. Christianity itself does not escape Rieff's critical eye. According to him, it has integrated transgressiveness to the detriment of our culture. In this scenario, mod-

ern Christian culture has been destroyed by "the triumph of the therapeutic," the roots of which are traced back into Christianity itself.

Not surprisingly, Rieff is also highly critical of the new forms of religion, which tend to prioritize freedom and individuality. He believes new religions, tending to be therapeutic, deify the self. Since this purportedly constitutes "therapy," as opposed to "faith," Rieff does not consider this as a genuine openness to the transcendent.

Finally, Zondervan connects Rieff's works to the debates on secularization. He notes the similarities between Rieff's emphasis on cultural discontinuity and secularization theory. However, on theoretical grounds, Rieff believes that secularization is impossible since the core of culture is the interdict, which can be denied but never changed. Yet, Zondervan reminds us that cultural modernization has some secularizing effect, mainly because it "ingrained plurality in our cultures," which, in turn, "relativizes everything, including religion" (161). But modernization, too, provoked powerful movements of "desecularization." Although the power and influence of religious institutions declined in modern Western culture, old and new religious practices and beliefs continue to thrive in the lives of individuals.

In all, Zondervan's *Sociology and the Sacred* is a valuable companion to Rieff's works. He provides a comprehensive interpretation of Rieff's works, and he skillfully draws connections among theories about modernity across disciplines. The concluding chapter is particularly insightful, and offers one of the most fascinating points of the book: Zondervan's assessment of Rieff's writing style, which he describes as both fragmented (ironically resembling the late modern Western culture Rieff himself critiques) and polemical.

Although the concluding chapter is accessible, *Sociology and the Sacred* is not easy reading. This is partly attributed to the abstract nature of Rieff's topics. But the repetitive, overly verbose, and often tangential nature of Zondervan's style can

make reading this book an arduous task. It sometimes reads in a disjointed way, with ideas and topics bouncing around. These excursions prove distracting, as do the typos that appear throughout the book. Furthermore, a more critical assessment of Rieff would have added to this overview of his works. It would have been helpful, for instance, had Zondervan himself problematized more Rieff's tendency to focus on dichotomies (e.g., modern vs. premodern, individual vs. collective, ascetic vs. ecstatic, and instinctual vs. repressive). Another

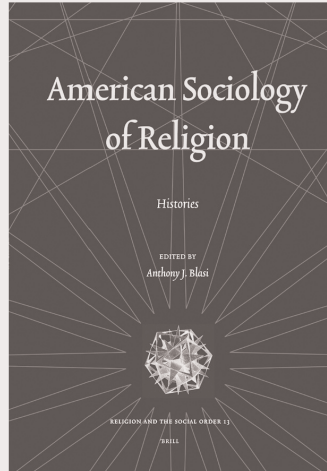
seemingly problematic area is Rieff's tendency to separate the social order, culture, and structure, despite proclaiming that one (the individual) is embedded within the other (culture or society). Despite these limitations, Zondervan provides a comprehensive summary and enlightening view of Rieff's work. More importantly, he reminds us of Rieff's contributions to contemporary sociology and to the sociology of religion.

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American Sociology of Religion

Histories

Edited by Anthony J. Blasi



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This is a collection of histories of various aspects of American sociology of religion. The contributions range from descriptions of early dissertations, accounts of changes in theoretical conceptualization, the evolution of studies of particular denominations, to the rise of new areas of inquiry such as globalization, feminism, new religions, and the study of the religious traditions of Latino/a Americans. Taken as a whole, the volume complements rather than duplicates commemorative issues of the relevant journals, which focused on the scholarly organizations in the field. It represents a first effort to develop an organized treatment of the fascinating history of the specialty in the U.S.A.

Anthony J. Blasi, Ph.D. (1974), sociology, University of Notre Dame, is Professor of Sociology, Tennessee State University and a Past President of the ASR. Recent books include *Diverse Histories of American Sociology* (ed.) and *A History of Sociological Research and Teaching at Catholic Notre Dame University* (co-author).

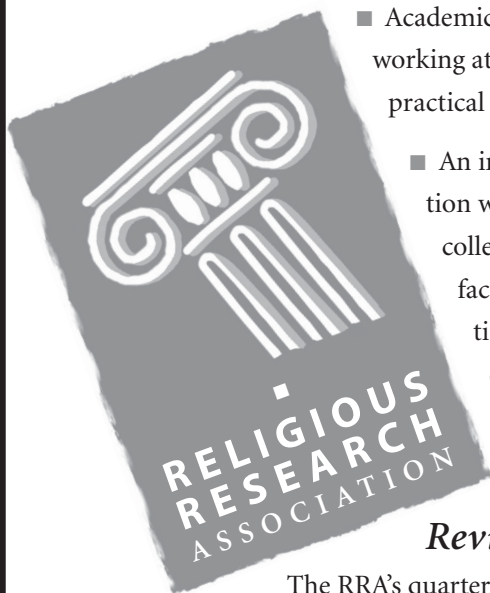


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