



Chester Ronning Centre
for the Study of Religion and Public Life



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**

Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life
University of Alberta, Augustana

Presents
2nd International Fellows Conference

“Islamophobia and/in Post-Secular States”

Friday, November 12, 2021

9:00 -9:15 a.m.

Welcoming and Introductory Remarks

Sharmin Sadequee
Conference Organizer
Post-Doctoral Fellow
Chester Ronning Centre

Demetres Tryphonopoulos
Dean Augustana Campus, University of Alberta

Ian Wilson
Director of Chester Ronning Centre

9:15- 10:15 a.m.

Opening Address

Speaker: Jasmin Zine
Professor of Sociology and Muslim
Studies Wilfred Laurier University,
Toronto, Canada

“Home Grown” Islamophobia in the Great White North

10:15 – 10:30 a.m. Break

10:30 – 12:00 p.m. Panel 1

Politics, Media, and Islamophobia

Liyakat Takim (McMaster University, Ontario, Canada): “Islamophobia and Radicalization in the West”

Felipe Freitas de Souza (Sao Paulo State University, Brazil): “Islamic Panic in Brazil: The Fear of Islamization on a Social Media”

Patrice Brodeur (McGill University, Montreal, Canada): “Glocalizing Islamophobia for Contextualizing Forms of Islamophobia in Canada”

12:00 pm- 1:15 Lunch

1:15 – 2:30 p.m. Panel 2

Security and Racialization of Muslims

Alain Gabon (Virginia Wesleyan University, Virginia, USA): “The Radicalization of French Islamophobia”

Mohiaddin Mesbahi (Florida International University, USA) and Mohammad Homayounvash (Miami Dade College, Florida, USA): “The Modern Roots and International Context of Islamophobia Complex”

Nicole Lugosi-Schimpf (University of Alberta, Canada): “National Discourse in Canada and Hungary: Racialized Rhetoric of Indigenous, Romani, and Muslims Peoples”

2:30 - 2:45 p.m. Break

2:45 – 4:00 p.m. Panel 3

Law, State of Exception, and Capitalism

Jinan Bastaki (United Arab Emirates University, UAE): “The Best Muslims are the Ones Who Leave: Capitalism and the Limits of Accommodation”

Ibrahim Bechrouri (City University of New York): “‘L’esprit Defense’: How the Counterinsurgency Mindset Led to the Dismantling of the CCIF”

Saul Takahashi (Osaka Jogakuin University, Japan): "Muslims as the Permanent State of Exception: Japan and Denmark"

4:00 – 4:15 p.m. *Break*

4:15 – 4:45 p.m. *Panel 4*
Local Communities and Grassroots Activism

Azadeh Shahshahani (Project South, Atlanta, Georgia, USA): "Spying on the Margins: The History, Law, and Practice of U.S. Surveillance Against Muslim, Black, and Immigrant Communities and Contemporary Strategies of Resistance"

Saturday, November 13, 2021

9:00 - 10:15 a.m. *Panel 5*
Post-Secular and Reformation of Islam

Karim H. Karim (Carleton University, Ontario, Canada): "Countering the Clash of Ignorance: Are Cultural and Educational Approaches Effective?"

Dustin J. Byrd (Olivet College, Michigan, USA): "The Limits of the Translation Proviso: The Inherent Alien and the Willed-Community"

Yahya Jahangiri (Kowsar Institute for Advanced Islamic Science, Tehran, Iran): "The Role of Islam Phobia on Re-Thinking of Muslim Jurist to Suspend Sharia Rules"

10:15 - 10:30 a.m. *Break*

10:30 - 12:15 p.m. *Panel 6*
Faith, Community Building, and Resistance

Areesha Khan (Indian Institute of Technology, India): "Gender Public Sphere and Muslim Women's Resistance: An Analysis of Select Case Studies"

Jamil Kassam (University of Alberta): "Circles of Charisma: Privilege, Faith Identity, and Community Building in Addressing Islamophobia"

Samuel Victor (Cambridge University, London, UK): "Anti-Islamophobia and 'Changing Hearts': The Convergence of Pluralist and Evangelical Discourses in Tennessee"

Shreya Parikh (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Sciences Po Paris): "Talking about racism in the Arab world in the context of global Islamophobia"

12:15 - 2:00 p.m.

Lunch

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. *Keynote Address*

Speaker: Elizabeth Shakman Hurd
Professor of Political Science and
Religious Studies & Crown Chair in
Middle East Studies Northwestern
University

"'Real' Religion versus 'Political' Religion: The Politics of Countering Violent Extremism"

3:00 - 3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. *Panel 7*
Secularism, Islam, and Muslim "Otherness"

Zeineb Diab (McGill University, Montreal, Canada): "Bill 21 in a Conceptual Ecosystem of Otherness: Between Omnipresence and Absence(s)"

Matthew Hotham (Ball State University, Indiana, USA): "Jesus's Dog versus the Seven Sleepers: Companion Animals, Ritual Purity, and the Construction of Muslim Otherness"

Roshan Ara Jahangeer (York University, Toronto, Canada): "Good Islam, Bad Islam? France's Republican Principles, Anti-Veiling, and the 'New Secularism'"

4:30 - 4:45 p.m.

Break

4:45 - 5:30 p.m. *Panel 8*
Local Communities and Grassroots Activism

Nakita Valerio (Research Director) & Khaled Al-Qazzaz (Executive Director)
Institute for Religious and Socio-Political Studies (I-RSS), Canada: "Canadian
Islamophobia: Approaches, Interventions and Future Strategies"

5:30 p.m. Closing Remarks

Sharmin Sadequee & Ian Wilson

ABSTRACTS

OPENING ADDRESS

ABSTRACT: "Home Grown" Islamophobia in the Great White North

In the past four years Muslims in Canada faced two deadly terror attacks: the first at a mosque in Quebec City in 2017 that killed six men after evening prayers and the second in 2021 in London, Ontario where a Pakistani Muslim family was brutally run down and killed by a truck. Both assailants in these terror attacks were white men with far-right, Islamophobic ideals. The question many Canadians ask is what led to these tragedies? The ingredients that shape anti-Muslim racism operate on individual, ideological and systemic levels and are supported by Islamophobia networks that propagandize and monetize hate. This talk will unpack the dimensions of on "home grown" Islamophobia in Canada.

Panel Session 1 Politics, Media, and Islamophobia

ABSTRACT: Islamophobia and Radicalization in the West

Islamophobia is seen as [prejudice](#) against, hatred towards, or fear of Muslims or of ethnic groups perceived to be Muslim. It is also defined as intense dislike or fear of Islam, especially as a political force. Some commentators have posited an increase in Islamophobia resulting from the [September 11 attacks](#) while others have associated it with the increased presence of Muslims in the Western world. The media has also been criticized for perpetrating Islamophobia. Expressions used in the media such as "Islamic terrorism", "Islamic bombs" and "Muslim extremists" have all resulted in a negative perception of Islam. This paper will examine the various ways in which Islamophobia has intensified and even been legitimised in the West. The paper will then examine the role of the print and social media in promoting Islamophobia. I will demonstrate that the media is not monolithic. Cartoonists and other forms of the media subjugate Muslim women by denying them any representation in Islam except under oppression. The North American media also lumps Muslims together. Thus, majority of the Muslims who are opposed to violence receive scant attention in the media since their voices are silenced by the media. The paper will then examine the root causes of Islamophobia how has this escalated hatred for Islam and Muslims in the West. It will also discuss how Islamophobia has been a major factor in the radicalization of Muslims. It will be argued that Islamophobia has

marginalized large segments of the Muslim population. The paper will also examine the Qur'anic pronouncements against deviant movements that create a parochial and pseudo-Islamic movement like the takfirist and Salafis. What does the Qur'an have to say about such movements and how can they be combatted?

ABSTRACT: Islamic Panic in Brazil: The Fear of Islamization on a Social Media

The fear of Muslims is a theme expressed in publications on social networks in Brazil, where xenophobic representations are mobilized to build an Islamic enemy. Such fear does not arise in contemporaneity but refers to the first contacts between Christians and Muslims, when some European populations and members of Christian institutions identified the Muslims as being Satan's agents. Contemporaneously, politics has been articulated via emotions and feelings, including the threat that an external enemy poses to the way of life understood as "ours". In addition, the relevance of social networks in the organization of public debate is growing, and in these network, images circulate about a myriad of contemporary social agents, among them the Muslims. This research aims to study what we identify as Islamic panic, which manifests itself in publications on a social network. By Islamic panic we identify reckless apprehensions about Muslim, which define aversive characteristics, generalizing apprehensions about practitioners of Islam. The objective is to identify what Islamization is in the reading of these subjects and what are the main arguments used to understand this process. Data collection was carried out via non-participant observation, using the parameterized Twitter social platform search engine to find occurrences about the term "Islamization" ("islamização", in Portuguese), and its results were compared with theorizations on the topic of Islamophobia. As hypotheses, we indicate that discourses about Islamization reveal xenophobia, religious intolerance, prejudice against populations in underdeveloped countries and racism, as well as the spread of conspiracy theories that appeal to the idea of an Islamic threat.

ABSTRACT: Glocalizing Islamophobia for Contextualizing Forms of Islamophobia in Canada

While many academic and serious journalistic writings over the last decade have increasingly framed islamophobia within the global politics of racism and xenophobia (Morgan & Poynting, 2012; Kazi 2018; Renton, 2019; Special UN Human Rights Council Rapporteur 2021; Elshekh 2021), this paper will argue that there is a need for a conceptual framework that seeks to understand the modern global emergence of islamophobia in a post-secular age within glocal political dynamics in order to address varieties of islamophobia worldwide, including in Canada where at least two overlapping forms of islamophobia coexist, roughly equivalent to the primary geo-political linguistic divide between Quebec and the 'Rest of Canada'. This is evidenced by the contrast between the unique Quebec context that led to the emergence of Bill 21 in Quebec and the continued refusal of the current, and popular, party in power (CAQ) to recognize the existence of systemic racism in Quebec, in contradiction to the recent tri-partite near political consensus in the Canadian parliament condemning as Islamophobic, and the fruit of systemic racism, the terror killing of four of five Pakistani-Canadian family members in London, Ontario, on the evening of 6 June 2021. The conceptual framework presented in this paper builds on Brodeur's new (2021) Interworldview Dialogue conceptual approach that deconstructs multiple identities and power dynamics, relationally and glocally. It also provides a decolonial means to address how to begin redressing social and systemic injustices through the practice of compassionate listening within

deep and transformative dialogue so as to promote more distributive justice in a post-secular world.

Panel Session 2 Security and Racialization of Muslims

ABSTRACT: The Radicalization of French Islamophobia

This paper focuses on the recent mutation and dramatic expansion of France's securitization of Islam and Muslims and how those policies amount to an escalation and intensification of State and societal Islamophobia, cloaked in the rhetoric of national security and the defence of democratic Western values. President Emmanuel Macron's triple project of a "Global Security" bill, a "Law to Strengthen Republican Values" in order to fight "Islamist separatism," and a "Charter of the Values of French Islam" are different moving parts of the same enterprise, one that targets Muslims as a risk population and Islam as a dangerous religion in need of both repression, state control, and theological domestication. This enterprise is historically unprecedented in France's entire post-war era. The Islamic Charter in particular represents an authoritarian nationalization of Islam including its theology by a secularist State supposed to remain neutral in matters of religious doctrine and creed. Coupled with an eradicationist approach towards "Islamism" and "political Islam", the conjunction of the three projects has led France to cross a number of critical cultural, legal, and historical thresholds in manners that are alarming for the rule of law and the future of Muslims in France and Western Europe. This multi-pronged process violates all three fundamental pillars and principles of French *laïcité* (secularism) while claiming to uphold that principle. The Macron project, which has deep historical roots, thus turns France into a post-secular State in the name, ironically, of laicity and secularism. Fundamentally motivated by Islamo-paranoia, it restores a pre-modern or Napoleonic form of Gallicanism while inventing a whole new set of legal crimes such as "Islamism" and "separatism" and banning entire Islamic trends and schools of thought including "Islamism," "Salafism," the Tabligh, and the Muslim Brotherhood, whose criminalization is already well advanced. Furthermore, this enterprise legitimizes itself by invoking fraudulent yet popular "gateway drug" concepts and "conveyor belt" theories of radicalization and terrorism forged by certain Islamologists of the "continuum school," theories whose scientific and academic validity is inversely proportional to the enormous echo they receive in media, governments, and politics.

ABSTRACT: The Modern Roots and International Context of the Islamophobia Complex

Our paper will address the growing hyper-politicization of Islam in the West and Islam's designation as a security threat in the West after the Iranian Revolution and 9/11 events and how these two watershed events have created a permissive media-military-industrial-academic-think tank environment that feeds into and benefits from Islamophobia. We will delve into the history of the United States' interaction with and socialization into the Muslim world and analyze how this relationship's shallow historical roots have led to America's inability to view Islam as a civilization, paving the way for misperceptions, "parochialization" of Muslim issues and flippant generalizations about Islam at the political and societal levels in the US. We will analyze how the

resultant misguided paradigms and stereotypes like “the clash of civilizations” have contributed to Islam’s being viewed as an inherently menacing force vis-à-vis the West. Finally, our paper will discuss addressing and redressing these pathologies by de-politicizing the Muslim Americans and providing a more holistic platform for the Muslim community in the U.S. to present itself.

ABSTRACT: National Discourse in Canada and Hungary: Racialized Rhetoric of Indigenous, Romani, and Muslims Peoples

This paper explores how exclusionary nationalism is articulated through political discourse in Canada and Hungary to show how contemporary racism works in two different democracies, one post-colonial and one post-communist, respectively. Increasing hostility against racialized communities in both countries stresses the importance of examining the contours of this discourse and understanding why such rhetoric is appealing. Racialized discourse is not just the domain of words but rather, it sets the scene with individual, cultural, and structural consequences. A discourse historical approach is used to contextualize and identify key characteristics of racialized rhetoric to compare and contrast how anti-Roma (in Hungary), anti-Indigenous (in Canada), and anti-Muslim (both countries) discourses are constructed. Critical race and critical Indigenous theories are used to unpack the findings and critique how these categories are created and maintained. This study makes two significant contributions to the literature on racialization and comparative politics: First, it disrupts Canada’s international image as a successful multicultural mecca. Second, it reveals surprising connections and parallels between the seemingly divergent cases.

Panel Session 3: Law, State of Exception, and Capitalism

ABSTRACT: L'esprit de défense: How the Counterinsurgency Mindset led to the Dismantling of the CCIF

At the end of 2019, following the horrendous public execution of a teacher by an individual claiming to act in the name of Islam, the Macron government decided to dismantle the Collective Against Islamophobia in France (CCIF). One of the reasons given to justify this decision was that the CCIF, because it denounced institutional Islamophobia, incited acts of terrorism against French institutions and its workers. However, the dismantling of the CCIF took place in a much larger context. A context in which the Macron government has, from its inception, sought to discredit the CCIF, a staunch defender of Muslim rights. A context in which the CCIF has often represented a thorn in the side of the Macron government’s desire to impose ever more Islamophobic measures to satisfy an Islamophobic electorate. A context in which the Macron government, through a bill on Islamist separatism that uses the language of counterinsurgency, proposes to create a state of exception for Muslims living in France. Thus, the political reasons and strategies behind the dismantling of the CCIF deserve to be explored further. By explaining the social function of the CCIF and the role it filled within French society, this paper will demonstrate that the organization was mainly dismantled because it properly and efficiently defended the rights of Muslims in France. Relying on the idea of counterinsurgency as a tool of governance, developed by Mathieu Rigouste and Bernard Harcourt, this paper will then proceed

to explore how the French *esprit de défense* (defensive mindset) led to the dismantling of the CCIF and other Muslim organizations, a tactic that is part of a larger strategy deployed by the Macron government to exercise a form of colonial control over Muslim bodies.

ABSTRACT: The Best Muslims are the Ones Who Leave: Capitalism and the Limits of Accommodation

In 2016, then US presidential nominee Donald Trump called for “a complete shutdown of Muslims” entering the United States, and subsequently issued an executive order to ban people mostly from Muslim-majority countries. Anti-Muslim hate crimes in both North America and Europe have steadily risen, in addition to the election of far-right parties, many with an explicitly anti-Muslim agenda. Furthermore, controversies over halal meat have erupted in different areas, with some attempting to ban the practice. Paradoxically, this rise in blatant Islamophobia has been in tandem with the welcoming of other Muslims; for example, granting visa-free travel to Europe, as well as a visa waiver for the United Kingdom, for citizens of certain Arab Gulf States. Some high-end restaurants have started offering halal options, and some upscale department stores and shops have provided prayer rooms for Muslims. This paper will examine the legal regulation of these two concurrent developments, and posits that while the accommodation of Muslims from wealthier countries is largely related to the capital that they bring, it is also about the temporary nature of their stay. This Muslim is the tourist or the student who eventually leaves; s/he benefits the capitalist system and does not disturb the nationalistic landscape. This paper will explore this idea through the different developments in Western Europe and North America.

ABSTRACT: Muslims as the Permanent State of Exception: Japan and Denmark

Under the Global War on Terror, the ‘state of exception’ is no longer an exception, but a permanent state of affairs. Nowhere is this more blatant than in the wide array of violative policies that target Muslim minority populations. This presentation will examine the situation in two countries that have traditionally defined themselves as ethnically and culturally homogeneous: Japan and Denmark. In Japan, it came to light in 2010 through a mass leak of internal documents that the police had been conducting blanket surveillance of all foreign Muslims in the country, on the basis that they were potential terror threats. Mosques had been surveilled, people had been followed, and information had been collected on over 17,000 people, with factors such as the level of religious devotion taken as an indicator of potential terrorist inclinations. The media was at least tacitly supportive of this surveillance, and it was later ratified by the judiciary as acceptable and necessary.

In 2018, the Danish government adopted the ‘ghetto’ policy, under which particular areas were designated as ‘ghettos’ requiring special intervention. Alongside social indicators such as crime and unemployment is the requirement that a certain proportion of residents have a ‘non Western background’ – in practice, Muslim migrants and their descendants. ‘Ghetto’ residents are required to put their children in childcare from the age of one, so that they will learn ‘Danish values’, and penalties for crimes committed within ‘ghettos’ may be doubled. Though the ‘ghetto’ terminology has recently been revised, the policies remain the same.

Denmark is arguably more 'advanced' down the continuum of these policies, in that there is not even the pretext that Muslims are a security threat. Rather, they are branded as a threat to Danish values and culture, and as having formed a 'parallel society' within the country. However, similar narratives are also slowly emerging in Japan.

Panel Session 4 Local Communities and Grassroots Activism

ABSTRACT: Spying on the Margins: The History, Law, and Practice of U.S. Surveillance Against Muslim, Black, and Immigrant Communities and Contemporary Strategies of Resistance

Presentation and discussion of the report published from grassroots organization Project South about anti-Muslim surveillance and its impacts on communities of color and strategies of resistance. Taking a historical approach, we provide legal and social analysis of surveillance and make recommendations for resistance derived from building multi-level community alliance.

Panel Session 5 Post-Secular and Reformation of Islam

ABSTRACT: Countering the Clash of Ignorance: Are Cultural and Educational Approaches Effective?

A major preoccupation of individuals and organizations concerned about anti-Muslim discourse and actions is to pursue the most effective ways to change attitudes. This has been Aga Khan Development Network's (AKDN) general approach, which has several major projects in Canada, including the Aga Khan Museum (AKM, Toronto), the Global Centre for Pluralism (GCP, Ottawa), and parks. The Aga Khan (2008), the religious leader of Ismaili Muslims, frames misunderstandings about Islam as a "clash of ignorance" – a concept initially discussed by Edward Said (2001). Education, viewed as a primary Islamic ethic, is presented as an answer to the problem. The objective of AKM and the Aga Khan Garden (Edmonton) is to catalyze mutual understanding through learning. Pluralism, another central pillar in the Network's strategy, is viewed as a positive response to diversity and a means to address systemic injustice, inequality and exclusion. A century of communication research has shown that changing attitudes is a very complex and complicated endeavour. The major variables are: objectives, conceptual frameworks, messages, media, messengers, and audiences. AKDN's messages, developed in line with the above-mentioned objective and framework, centre around pluralism and civilization (namely, Muslims have sophisticated cultural and intellectual modes of interpreting and understanding the world). They are imparted through the media of the museum, parks, the botanical garden, and GCP. The messenger is the institutional network of the Aga Khan, which is transnational and around 100 years in the making. AKDN's audiences range from visitors to the museum, parks and garden to civil society members, government officials, and academics interacting with GCP. Whereas these engagements address the general societal ignorance about Islam and Muslims, they do not appear to communicate with the segments of the

population that are the most anti-Muslim in their attitudes and behaviour. This paper will inquire into the effectiveness of AKDN's approach.

ABSTRACT: The Limits of the Translation Proviso: The Inherent Alien and the Willed-Community

Since the Enlightenment, most Western European as well as the North American countries have moved from an ethnic-based community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) to an intentional democratic willed-community (*Willensgemeinschaft*), wherein the pre-political foundations of historical communities, such as ethnicity, language, religion, shared history, etc., no longer define the citizenry. Rather, "ascribed citizenship," as Jürgen Habermas describes it, is predicated on the general acceptance of constitutional ideals, values, and principles. Although ascribing to these democratic political ideals, Muslim communities nevertheless find themselves the victims of harassment, discrimination, and terror attacks because they are viewed as being ethnically – and religiously – alien to the White "ethnosphere" of the West. This paper argues two important points that underscore the challenges Muslims face in a post-secular society: (1) a large percentage of Westerners have never accepted the Enlightenment's divorce of ethnos from demos; such a distinction was merely a philosophical distinction made by elites. For many, ethnic "nations" could accommodate similar ethnicities, but not wholly different races and cultures. Therefore, this segment of the European/White population continues to reject the possibility of "others" being a part of the national demos within "their" closed ethnosphere. (2) Because of this first reality, the possibility of "translating" Islam into "publicly accessible language," wherein Islam can enter into the national discourse via secular language, is thoroughly handicapped, for the status of the language – be it religious or secular – is tied to a particular ethnicity that has been rejected as being inherently alien. As such, a translation of Islamic practical-ethical semantics, as Habermas calls it, into neutral language is seen as a backhanded attempt to "Islamize" the West. As such, there are limits to the "translation proviso" and the "mutual learning processes" that Habermas and Rawls before him have encouraged. I argue that a concerted effort to educate Westerners in the concept of the willed community as the basis of their national identity would be more fruitful for future relations between Muslims and non-Muslims than to attempt to translate Islam into secular language.

ABSTRACT: The Role of Islam Phobia on Re-Thinking of Muslim Jurist to Suspend Sharia Rules

Muslims deeply believe that Islamic rules *al-Ahkam al-Sharia*, are eternal. All Islamic denominations *Madhhab* despite internal differences, assume by consensus that what was considered as lawful *Halal* by Prophet Muhammad would be remained lawful until the Day of Judgment, And what was considered as unlawful *Haram* by him would be remained unlawful until the Day of Judgment. Hence, Muslim jurists and muftis try not to change these laws. Islam phobia affected the Muslims ideology and therefore provoked different reactions by them. This article seeks the jurisprudential response of Muslim muftis to this phenomenon. One of these reactions that has never or less been considered by scholars was the reaction of Muslim Muftis and jurists. They had two reactions: 1: external: condemning any phobia against Islam; 2: internal: Rethinking on the Shari'a rules that lead non-Muslims to misunderstand and consequently make phobia against Islam. This rethinking sometimes led to the suspending of sharia rule and then issuance of a new rules were safe from any phobia. Prohibition of the stoning by the Iranian judiciary and

themselves-bleeding on the day of Ashoura by most Shiite jurists, are samples of this rethinking. This plan was activated by Islamic jurist not only due to Islam phobia but also the elements and capacities within the Islamic jurisprudence. What capacities are there within Islamic jurisprudence that can play a role in reducing phobias and preventing any blasphemy and therefore reducing religious violence? The research tries among the elements to elaborate the status of expediency *Maslaha* in process of deducting rules meaning Ijtihad. Paper seeks the answer to this main question: dose *Maslaha* keep Muslim communities to be sacralized or lead them to be secularized or push them to post-secular atmosphere. It seems that with these rethinking, Islam phobia will not only be cured but also prevented.

Panel Session 6 Faith, Community Building, and Resistance

ABSTRACT: Gender Public Sphere and Muslim Women's Resistance: An Analysis of Select Case Studies

Once a secular country, India has seen a rising trend of Hindu nationalist sentiments under the majority government of BJP that has been peddling around Islamophobia. It has taken to the policies and execution of unbridled power against the minority Muslims in the country. It includes the arbitrary amendment and use of UAPA, an anti-terror law in India. Historically the anti-terror laws have been misused against the minorities in India and hence got abolished on the basis of their human rights violation. It subverts the presumption of innocence and holds the accused as guilty until proven innocent therefore enlarging the period of incarceration and court trial. This study is placed in the backdrop of rampant use of anti-terror laws against Muslims in India which has affected their lives in multiple ways. It takes the case of unjust incarceration of Muslim men accused of terrorism in Bangalore Blasts of 2008, Delhi riots 2020 and few other cases. It documents the Muslim women's resistance against dehumanization of Muslim men and their unjust incarceration. It aims to theorize resistance; existence and the process, from institutionally challenging the UAPA to their everyday interactions within their familial space and the state machineries. It also aims to document the strategies employed by these women of asserting their personal as political and their equal status as citizens and building communities and support groups. It happens in response to the evident entry of the state into their "personal" sphere. This study is based upon primary data sources of in-depth interviews done with the case studies and virtual ethnography. Secondary data sources include court orders, articles, reports, documentaries and media interviews. It looks at the vulnerabilities and disempowerment involved in the resistance of these women.

ABSTRACT: Circles of Charisma: Privilege, Faith Identity, and Community Building in Addressing Islamophobia

The attack on a Muslim family in June 2021 that left four dead and a young child seriously injured has been described as an act of terrorism that was motivated by anti-Islamic sentiments. While this horrifying act stunned Canadians from coast to coast and was condemned by politicians from all parties, Muslim leaders have considered this event as just the latest tragedy in a string of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim events that include the murder of a volunteer at the International Muslim Organization in 2020, the Quebec City mosque shooting in

2017, and various attacks on Muslim women, especially those who have chosen to wear the hijab. Statistics show that 46% of Canadians have an unfavourable view of Islam, more than for any other religious tradition (Angus Reid Institute, 2017); 52% of Canadians feel that Muslims can only be trusted “a little” or “not at all”; (Washington Post, 2012); and hate crimes against Muslims increased 9% in 2019 compared to the previous year (Statistics Canada). Muslim community leaders have demanded that governments do more in addressing the rise of Islamophobia and have recognized that education is key in tackling anti-Muslim bigotry. However, few have written about the roles that individual Muslims in positions of privilege can play in addressing many of the misconceptions about Islam. In my presentation, I will look at how certain Muslim figures living in a post-secular society who have what Weber has termed “charismatic authority” (be it inherent or borrowed) have been able to address stereotypes about the religion of Islam and change hearts and minds more effectively through their discourse, values, and actions rather than through didactic instruction about Islam.

ABSTRACT: Anti-Islamophobia and “Changing Hearts”: The Convergence of Pluralist and Evangelical Discourses in Tennessee

Between 2017 and 2020, I conducted fieldwork in Nashville, Tennessee, a mid-sized city in the heart of the so-called Bible Belt. Part of this research focused on the engagement of members of a white evangelical church in anti-Islamophobia activism. The main objective of their activism was to alleviate their fellow Christians’ fears about Islam and Muslims by encouraging the development of interpersonal relationships that bridged religious differences. In this paper, I use the example of a conference on Islamophobia hosted in the church’s worship hall as an ethnographic springboard for a discussion about how pluralistic and evangelical discourses converge around the suasive ambition to, in my interlocutors’ words, “change people’s hearts.” I highlight the ways in which, for these Christians, anti-Islamophobia activism was, paradoxically, inscribed morally within a religious hope for Muslims’ conversion to Christianity and drew upon the communicative techniques and principles for ethical self-making they used in various other domains of missionary work.

ABSTRACT: Talking About Racism in the Arab World in the Context of Global Islamophobia

How does one talk about racism in the Arab world in the context of global Islamophobia? – this is a question I posed to myself when I started to build my dissertation project examining racism in Tunisia. Should I shut up and never speak up about the racism that I have experienced in “Arab world” and its diaspora, because I am scared of the state as well as other political actors appropriating my critique to advance the Islamophobic discourses that circulate globally? Or should I speak up, risking instrumentalization and appropriation? Through an autoethnographic reflection from my experience of doing research on/in Lebanon, France, and Tunisia, I attempt to put to words the questions that continue to trouble me. I draw inspiration from Rochelle Terman’s article “Islamophobia, Feminism and the Politics of Critique” (2016) in order to reframe my reflections and put to question the choice that has been imposed upon me; I reflect on the “double bind” between Islamophobia and racial injustice that I feel trapped in, and on my desire to privilege a critique of western imperialism at the cost of discussions about racial violence.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

ABSTRACT: “‘Real’ Religion versus ‘Political’ Religion: The Politics of Countering Violent Extremism”

Today state-sponsored religious freedom advocacy and efforts to counter violent extremism, or CVE, are the bread and butter of foreign and security policy in Western democracies. This talk presents the categories of expert religion, lived religion, and governed religion, and explains how understanding the complexities of religion allows for a new perspective on the state policies vis-a-vis religious “extremism.” I suggest that the CVE/religious freedom agenda is a means to empower U.S. and European-friendly religions and their official representatives, and to disempower political opponents. These programs authorize leaders to speak on behalf of US, UN, or EU-sanctioned constituencies. As these religions and these leaders are empowered politically and religiously, and others are marginalized, it leads to a series of mini-religious and political establishments.

Panel Session 7 Secularism, Islam, and Muslim “Otherness”

ABSTRACT: Bill 21 in a Conceptual Ecosystem of Otherness: Between Omnipresence and Absence(s)

This presentation will discuss a diagram that emerged from my current doctoral research on Bill 21 in Quebec. The diagram takes the form of a conceptual ecosystem of otherness and is structured around 7 elements: Muslim otherness, international otherness, French otherness, Canadian otherness, Quebec inner otherness, “Québécois de souche”, and religious symbols. I developed this diagram on the basis of a two-step focused literature review. First, I analyzed the 15 expert reports submitted to the Quebec Superior Court as well as the report produced by Judge Blanchard. Secondly, I analyzed the book “Modération ou extrémisme? Regards critiques sur la loi 21,” with 15 academic chapters. The major ideas put forward in these two sets of sources have been organized into a conceptual diagram that goes beyond a binary conception (for or against Bill 21). This diagram shows that Bill 21 is a subject of great complexity that must be understood systemically. The theoretical approach used in Brodeur’s (2021) model of Interworldview Dialogue responds to this need for understanding greater degrees of complexity in three dimensions: the multiple levels of otherness raised, the dynamics between individual and collective identities as well as the power dynamics at work in a society such as Quebec. My observation is that Bill 21 is almost systematically approached with reference to only one or a few forms of otherness, never taking into account the full complexity of layers of otherness. Another observation is that although it concerns the prohibition of religious symbols, only one author addresses Bill 21 by way of defining religious symbols. Finally, this ordering in a

relational set of otherness reveals two extremes: the omnipresence of Muslim otherness, while there are two main absents: Indigenous and American otherness.

ABSTRACT: Jesus' Dog versus the Seven Sleepers: Companion Animals, Ritual Purity, and the Construction of Muslim Otherness

In *Religious Affects*, Donovan Schaefer draws attention to the affective component of religion. In one direction, affect theory allows us to blur the human-animal binary by inviting animals into a previously exclusively human category like religion. From another direction, affect theory allows us to “animalize” the human by showing the non-rational grounds on which we base our actions. Schaefer uses Islamophobic responses to the Park51 project to highlight this second point, noting that the exclusion of the Muslim other does not follow rational or logical patterns, but instead is motivated by affects that bring joy to the Islamophobe through a shared community of anger and the affective pleasure of luxuriating in rage. While Schaefer notes that contemporary American Islamophobia has a strong affective pull, Deleuze and Guattari highlight how cultures and civilizations have been placed on an evolutionary continuum based on whether they read their kinship with animals as literal or figurative—based on how strongly they draw the line between the human and the animal. Little examined in his work, however, is the ways that relations with animals are used to mark and generate the affective elements of Muslim difference. As American conceptions of the human-animal divide have changed, so too have the ways in which we mark civilized and non-civilized peoples. Barbarity and savagery are no longer (primarily) marked by attention to and kinship with parrots, for example (Smith, “I Am a Parrot (Red).”). Instead, properly categorizing animals (especially mammals) and treating them with kindness (dogs) or hostility (rats) according to that categorization becomes of a key marker of “civilization.” This paper proposes to extend Schaefer’s insights into the connection between affect, animality, and Islamophobia through examining one key way that Muslim difference is affectively evoked in popular representations of Islam: dogs and their purported ritual impurity. The paper will examine the portrayal of Muslims as dog-haters at odds with Euro-American culture in online Islamophobic memes. It will then discuss Muslim responses to this accusation, including those that implicitly accept the presumption that to be western is to invite dogs into one’s home as human-adjacent animal companions.

ABSTRACT: Good Islam, Bad Islam? France’s Republican Principles, Anti-Veiling, and the “New Secularism”

The murder of Samuel Paty, a French school-teacher who was beheaded by a young Muslim man in October 2020, provoked a widespread response from the French government. Mosques and Muslim associations were shut down, most notably the high-profile NGO that advocates for Muslim civil rights, the Collective Against Islamophobia in France. After announcing that “Islam is a religion that is in crisis all over the world,” (Al-Jazeera 2020) President Emmanuel Macron presented his plan defend secular values and to combat “Islamist separatism.” The bill to “strengthen republican principles,” presented in the National Assembly on December 9, 2020, will give government broader power to oversee religious funding and education. Critics argue that this bill targets Muslim places of worship, associations, and families as part of the France’s efforts to remake Islam into a version that is compatible with French secularism (or *laïcité*). In this presentation, I argue that France’s attempts to secularize Islam is nothing new. Since the

colonial period, France has used colonial governance to implement separate laws for Muslims in the vast territories under its rule. In the present context, secular governance is used to promote a specifically “French Islam” that is compatible with the government’s increasingly narrow vision of *laïcité*. I will examine the emergence of “the new secularism,” a term that was first articulated in 2003 by a centre-right strategist from former President Jacques Chirac’s political party, and the three pillars upon which it rests: 1) The promotion of secularism as a primary part of French identity, 2) anti-veiling, or the prohibition of “conspicuous religious symbols,” and 3) the promotion of “model minorities” from former colonies, who accept and support French republican values. Since then, this “new secularism” has served as the foundation for various laws that shape contemporary French politics, characterized by the intermingling of secularism, anti-veiling, and anti-Muslim racism.

Panel Session 8 *Local Communities and Grassroots Activism*

ABSTRACT: Canadian Islamophobia: Approaches, Interventions and Future Strategies

Presentation and discussion will focus on intervention strategies against Islamophobia comparing three western European countries (successes and failures) and acting as a consultant in the development of Canadian interventions through a collaborative effort with Muslim organizations. Presenters will offer approaches taken in Canada thus far and offer research-based recommendations going forward.

To learn more about the panelists, please [click here](#).