

American Freedom and Islamic Fascism: Ideology in the Hall Of Mirrors

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While democratic liberalism continually reimagines fascism as its monstrous Other, fascism might be better understood as its doppelganger or double.

Nikhil Singh, "Afterlife of Fascism"

The terrorism being combated by Superpower, while real enough, is one whose image Superpower's representatives have constructed. Superpower's understanding of the requirements of its own powers has been guided by the character it has chosen to bestow upon terrorism.

Sheldon Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated*

The Bush administration's post-9/11 diagnosis for the origins of the attacks was Islamic "hatred" for American freedoms: freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and democratically elected government. This freedom, Bush argued, is the crux of the difference between "us" and "them," what differentiates Islamic fundamentalism from the liberal, democratic West. This characterization of the Middle East and the Islamic world draws on classic colonial imagery of oriental despotism as well as rhetoric associated with other wars of global expansion like World War II and the Cold War. In Bush's September 20th speech to Congress and the American people, he identified the perpetrators of 9/11 as "heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century ... They follow in the path of fascism, Nazism, and totalitarianism."¹ This speech apparently set the terms of the debate, establishing mirroring discourses of freedom and fascism, discourses taken up nearly verbatim by the British and American media. The media became a potent arm in a propaganda war, projecting the threat to "our freedoms" onto an alien Islam, even as the Bush administration embarked on imperialistic wars abroad, strengthened the powers of the executive branch, suspended laws of *habeus corpus*, violated international law, and loosened restrictions on spying on American citizens, all in an atmosphere of chauvinistic patriotism and militarism. As fears grew about an unbounded American state sowing its influence across the globe, totalitarianism was projected onto Islamic political ambitions. After 9/11, the British and American media functioned as an ideological apparatus of the state embedded in the military, the marketplace of ideas became a "war of ideas," as the media offered their services as "laptop generals," using rounds from "thought-murder guns."² "We cannot kill all these people," Dinesh D'Souza wrote of the Muslim world, "We have to change their minds."³

By the time British and American intellectuals began theorizing the US security state as "inverted totalitarianism" (Susan Buck-Morss, Sheldon Wolin), neoliberalism as authoritarian (David Harvey, Wendy Brown, Eva Cherniavsky), and the United States' "empire of liberty" as fascist (Nihil Singh), the media had already bombarded public consciousness with arguments about the totalitarian nature of radical Islam.⁴ These intellectuals sought to invert, or somehow revert this discourse, by turning the charge of totalitarianism back on the state. "The Left," writes Slavoj Žižek in *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?* "has accepted the basic co-ordinates of liberal democracy ('democracy' versus 'totalitarianism,') and is now trying to redefine its (op)position *within* this space."⁵ Žižek argues that this space is a "stopgap: instead of enabling us to think, forcing us to acquire a new insight into the historical reality it describes, it ... actively prevents us from thinking."⁶ This basic coordinate of freedom versus fascism (or democracy versus totalitarianism, liberalism versus authoritarianism, the West versus Islam) is not just a stopgap, a closed, claustrophobic space within which thought can get caught, but a kind of hall of mirrors in which liberal ideology—whether secular or Islamic—indefinitely reflects back on itself.

This essay explores mirroring discourses of freedom and fascism through the figure of Sayyid Qutb, whose own theology of Islamic freedom was described in the British and American press as a "total dictatorship," a form of "extreme despotism," and one of the "grand totalitarian revolutionary projects of the 20th century," like those of "the Nazis, the Fascists, and the Communists."⁷ Only days after 9/11, the British and American media made Qutb the embodiment of the origins of Islamic fascism, identifying him as "the father of modern Islamist fundamentalism." From this intellectual legacy, a "direct line of influence" could be traced to the 9/11 hijackers, echoing Bush's declaration that they were the "heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century."⁸ Despite tenuous evidence that Qutb provided direct inspiration for armed struggle against the West, Qutb became shibboleth, "philosopher of Islamic terror," exemplar of a newly coined concept of Islamic fascism, and a psychological portrait of the symptoms of Islamic totalitarianism. This representation of the Islamic thinker appeared almost as a fantasy projected onto the other, a retroactivity of Cold War meanings, a mirrored projection of the US's past conflicts onto new enemies.

Political scientist Roxanne Euben describes Qutb, and Islamic revivalist thought in general, as the “enemy in the mirror,” presaging—in her 1999 book—the role he would come to play in the post-9/11 American public sphere. *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* analyzes “the ways in which Qutb’s anxieties about the costs of modern rationalism are mirrored in Western critiques of modernity,” comparing Qutb’s ideas to those of Richard John Neuhaus, Hannah Arendt, Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor, Robert Bellah and Daniel Bell.⁹ She also discusses how American fundamentalism and other religious revival movements have attempted to re-infuse the emptiness and disenchantment of postmodern existence with meaning. Qutb’s search for re-enchantment through religion resonates with the neoconservative appeal to the unifying power of religion in the face of the erosion of moral values. But Euben also draws on Richard John Neuhaus’s understanding of American politics as sliding into totalitarianism because it has stripped the public sphere of all contending moralities, other than Christian ones. These are the “projections and refractions” that she refers to in her book, the common malaise at the disenchantment of modern life, but how this critique—when coming from Islamic thinkers—is perceived as a threat to basic (Western, secular, Christian) values. Euben draws on Orientalism as a kind of projection of self, even as it refracts the image of the other. “In *Orientalism*,” she writes, “Said argues that the Orientalist discourse says more about its ‘authors’ than about its stated subject, the Orient that is the Other to our Self. Just so, my analysis of Qutb’s political thought can perhaps be understood as reverse Orientalism: in Qutb’s critique we can see how the other constructs what we regard as the Self. Here, then the question arises: do we see ourselves in this critique of the ‘Self’? To what extent does Qutb’s critique capture aspects of Western modernity we recognize? Might it illuminate our own understanding and experiences of modernity, or lend insight into aspects of our world we may be unable or reluctant to see?”¹⁰

Qutb’s Theology of Freedom

British and American media asserted that Sayyid Qutb’s ideas about *jihad* were a reaction to his stay in the US, a two-year educational exchange where he mainly studied in Greeley, Colorado. Ruthven called Qutb’s stay in the US “the defining moment or watershed from which ‘the Islamist war against America’ would flow.”¹¹ In “Is This the Man That Inspired Bin Laden?” Robert Irwin tied Qutb’s radicalization to his reaction to American freedoms. “Everything changed in 1948 when he was sent to study education in the US ... He was shocked by the freedom American men allowed their women ... After two and a half years of exposure to western civilization he knew that he hated it and, on his return to Egypt in 1951, he joined the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood.”¹² In *The New Yorker*, Lawrence Wright wrote about “The Man Behind Bin Laden.” “Qutb,” he says, “returned to Egypt a radically changed man. In what he saw as the spiritual wasteland of America, he re-created himself as a militant Muslim, and he came back to Egypt with the vision of an Islam that would throw off the vulgar influences of the West. Islamic society had to be purified, and the only mechanism powerful enough to cleanse it was the ancient and bloody instrument of *jihad*.”¹³ Picking up this cue, David von Drehle of the *Smithsonian Magazine* wrote, “Qutb refined a violent political theology from the raw anti-modernism of his American interlude.”¹⁴

Qutb was clearly many things to many people. He has been seen as an exemplar of Islamic liberalism, “John Locke of the Islamic world,” “philosopher of terror,” inspiration for Bin Laden, and totalitarian.¹⁵ Certain assumptions in the scholarly literature on Qutb found their way into the media—about his relationship to Islamic extremism, about the catalyzing effects of his American experience on his Islamic worldview, and about his relationship to liberalism.¹⁶ Contextualizing the historical and political conditions in which Qutb wrote helps in understanding the liberalist hermeneutics that Qutb adopted, a hermeneutics that led to his understanding of submission to God as freedom from all earthly tyrants. In this sense, Qutb can be seen as a *mujaddid*, a renewer of Islam for his time and place.¹⁷ Over the course of his career, he developed new modes of interpreting religious text, beginning with his literary exegesis of the Qur’an *Al-Taswir al-Fanni fi al-Qur’an* (Artistic Representation in the Qur’an, 1945). This can be considered the beginnings of his religious writings, soon followed up by his *Al-‘Adala al-Ijtima’iyya fi al-Islam* (Social Justice in Islam, 1949). Qutb was part of Egypt’s secular intelligentsia, educated at the teachers’ training college Dar al-‘Ulum rather than in religious institutions like al-Azhar. Scholars have struggled to understand this shift in Qutb’s ideological orientation, attributing it to certain catalyzing factors in his personal biography, but this shift was already taking place on a much larger scale in the Egyptian intellectual scene.¹⁸ During this time, the most prominent members of the secular intelligentsia began writing on religious themes, including biographies of the prophet, biographies of members of the early community and the prophet’s household, spiritual accounts of the pilgrimage to Mecca, and new treatments of the Qur’an by writers not formally trained in the religious sciences. One of the pioneers of this new orientation was Qutb’s mentor Mahmud ‘Abbas al-‘Aqqad, a celebrated literary critic who had shifted from a

wholesale advocacy of adopting romanticism in Arabic poetry to almost purely religious themes. Such writers wrested religious knowledge from the hands of the religious scholars, resulting in what some scholars have described as “the democratization of religious authority.”¹⁹

Many locate the emergence of the Islamic public sphere in the circulation of pedagogical materials by the Islamic revival in the 1970s, but its roots can be found in these earlier treatments of religious topics in print media.²⁰ These secularly educated intellectuals became key in formulating a new brand of religious thought in which we can see the interpolation, or perhaps translation, of certain secular liberal ideals (freedom, equality, social justice, women’s emancipation, democracy, etc.) into Islam. These forms of public debate were also accompanied by the emergence of a nascent civil society of an associational nature, of which the Muslim Brotherhood was but one part.²¹ At this time, there was a proliferation of associations of benevolent and reformist tendencies, some Islamic and some more secular in orientation. Recent theorists of Egypt have remarked on the recent flourishing of what has been termed “Islamic civil society,” of which this Islamic public sphere formed a critical part.²² Much attention has been paid the pedagogical nature of these proselytizing materials, known as *da‘wa* (roughly translated, “call to God”) literature, although less scholarship has focused on its early roots in a modernist Islamic world of letters that drew on secular, liberal conceptions of individual freedom, of human equality, and democratic participation. This literature and these associations became critical to the formation of an Islamic public sphere and an Islamic civil society, institutional arenas that became important sites of political contestation that “coalesce at the interstices of Egypt’s authoritarian state,” when party channels are blocked.²³ Since the late 19th century, the worlds of letters and associations have been critical means for the Egyptian populace to negotiate access to political power in the face of authoritarian governance, whether colonial, monarchical, socialist, or neoliberal.

When Qutb began writing his religious works *Artistic Representation in the Qur’an* (1945) and *Social Justice in Islam* (1949), Egypt was in the midst of intense revolutionary foment. There were increasing agitations against the corruption of the Egyptian monarchy, both politically and intellectually. The 1940s were characterized by a series of demonstrations, student uprisings, workers’ strikes, and social mobilization that were socialist, communist, and Islamic in nature.²⁴ 1948 was a particularly fraught year, as a secret cell of the Muslim Brotherhood assassinated Prime Minister al-Nuqrashi, and the monarchy assassinated Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna in retaliation. In the midst of the outbreak of the Arab Israeli war, the government began a campaign of mass arrests.²⁵ Qutb’s journalistic writings of this time took on an increasingly strident tone against the monarchy and its allies, as he called for new leadership of the nation.²⁶ A warrant was issued for Qutb’s arrest and his journal *Al-Fikr al-Jadid* (New Thought) shut down after only six issues. At this time, Qutb was sent to the United States on an educational mission as a kind of “exile,” saved from imprisonment through the intercession of powerful friends among the literary intelligentsia.²⁷ Just before his departure to the United States, he wrote *Social Justice in Islam*, a blueprint for liberal Islam as a political system and as a middle path between communism and capitalism. The book—written as discontent with the monarchy reached a pinnacle in 1948—projected ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity for the incipient Egyptian revolution.

Social Justice in Islam is a treatise of liberal Islam, identifying what Qutb calls three “pillars” of social justice in Islam analogous the five pillars of ritual practice (*‘ibadat*). His pillars of social justice echo the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—intrinsic existential emancipation (*taharrur wijdani*), human equality (*musawa insaniya*), and social solidarity (*takaful ijtima‘i*)—echoing the freedom, equality, and brotherhood of the first article of the UDHR. Published in 1949—only a year after the UDHR—*Social Justice in Islam* is a treatise for Islamic human rights, following the UDHR almost point by point on issues like freedom of property, freedom of assembly, freedom to form family, equality, freedom of speech, freedom of opinion, etc. Qutb deeply roots these principles in Islamic practice, arguing that Islam is a complete system for securing social justice, economically, politically, and ontologically. For Qutb, the first pillar of Islam, the declaration of faith “there is no god but God,” is as an expression of submission only to God, meaning freedom from submission to earthly masters. It means “inward emotional liberation from any kind of servitude (*‘ubudiyya*) to God’s servants (*‘ibad Allah*). This liberation is the first step toward the realization of a good and noble society in which all are equal.”²⁸ This concept, that submission to God means liberation from all earthly masters, informed all of Qutb’s subsequent writings, becoming a leitmotif of Islam as liberation from human tyranny. But these concepts were not entirely new, but had their roots in Islamic thought of Arab awakening (Nahda) in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Muhammad ‘Abduh, grand mufti of Egypt at the turn of the century, reformer, and modernist, described a similar notion of human freedom in Islam in his *Risalat al-Tawhid* (Message of Unity, 1897), a series of lectures presented while exiled by the British administration in Egypt. “The human being, became a slave [*‘abd*] to God alone, free from bondage [*‘ubudiyya*] to all beside Him. He then had

a right to the freedom due to the free, no high or low in this right, no superior or inferior, no disparity between people except in their acts, no preference except in their minds and knowledge.”²⁹ Even as ‘Abduh and Qutb appropriate ideas of freedom and equality, they Islamicize them through reference to the Qur’an, the early community, and key concepts and terms from the theological tradition. These ideas were formulated both within a historically constituted Islamic discursive tradition and within modernist, liberal political thought. In the context in which it was written, 1948 Egypt, it was a critique of the corrupt monarchy and its connections to the (feudal) landowning class. In the context of Qutb’s subsequent writings, it became a critique of Nasser’s secular authoritarianism. This was not a critique that Nasser liked to hear. It cost Qutb ten years imprisonment and eventually, his life. In 1966, he was executed by Nasser.

Even though Qutb’s political activism evolved in response to local political conditions, post-9/11 American and British media accounts attribute his radicalization as a reaction against American culture. It is also clear that his increasing political radicalization was the *cause* of his sojourn to the United States, not its *result*. Moreover, the media uniformly asserted that Qutb joined the Muslim Brotherhood when he came back from the US in 1951, as an expression of his animosity to the West. Qutb, however, did not join the Brotherhood until two years after his return, after a rift had emerged between Egypt’s new revolutionary government and the Muslim Brotherhood. After the Free Officers’ Revolution of July 1952, there was an initial convergence between the aims of the revolutionary command council and Qutb’s ideas. Immediately after the revolution, Qutb reportedly presented a lecture on “Spiritual and Intellectual Liberation in Islam” at the Officers’ Club, with Nasser in attendance and was offered the position of minister of cultural affairs.³⁰ But as Nasser began flexing his authoritarian muscles, ousting president Muhammad Nagib and putting him under house arrest, a rift opened with the Muslim Brothers, most likely because a shift toward secular socialism. Only then did Qutb declare his allegiance to the Brotherhood. Soon thereafter, Nasser began a campaign to eradicate the Brotherhood after an assassination attempt on his life. Although not directly implicated in the attempt, Qutb was imprisoned in a roundup, later released, but reimprisoned again in 1956. One commentator refers to Qutb’s time in prison and his torture (naked, smeared with animal fat and attacked by dogs) as an Islamic passion play.³¹ It was during his time as a political prisoner that Qutb’s philosophy of Islamic freedom hardened into a theology of modern jihad against tyrannical earthly systems.

It is a movement to wipe out tyranny and to introduce true freedom to mankind ... It [is] the defense of man against all those elements which limit his freedom ... When we take this broad meaning of defense we understand the true character of Islam, and that it is a universal proclamation of the freedom of man from servitude to other men ... Indeed it strives through preaching and exposition when there is freedom of communication and when people are free from all these influences, mentioned obstacles and practical difficulties are put in its way, it has no recourse but to remove them by force so that when it is addressed to peoples’ hearts and minds they are free to accept or reject it with an open mind. Since the objective of the message of Islam is a decisive declaration of man’s freedom, not merely on the philosophical plan but also in the actual conditions of life, it must employ jihad.³²

Several times, Qutb reiterates the Qur’anic verse “there is no compulsion in religion” (2:256) and restates the philosophy of the Muslim Brotherhood that religion should be spread through preaching. But jihad is necessary, he argues, when there is no freedom of speech under tyrannical political systems. Several political theorists argue that these later writings develop a theory of Islamic political sovereignty through Qutb’s notion of God’s *hakimiyya*, or sovereignty.³³ Yet this concept is also closely connected to a conception of human sovereignty, where “intrinsic existential emancipation” is secured through a kind of “spiritual social contract,” through submission (by choice, not compulsion) to God’s authority.

These passages from *Milestones* led two journalists, one British and one American, to conclude that Qutb posed a “totalitarian menace.”³⁴ Paul Berman, writing in *The New York Times Magazine*, “Philosopher of Islamic Terror,” concludes that Qutb was clearly formulating a totalitarian doctrine.

It was a vision as grand or grander than Communism or any of the other totalitarian doctrines of the 20th century. It was, in his words, ‘the total liberation of man from enslavement by others.’ It was an impossible vision—a vision that was plainly going to require a total dictatorship in order to enforce: a vision that, by claiming not to rely on man-made laws, was going to have to rely, instead, on theocrats, who would interpret God’s law to the masses. The most extreme despotism was all too visible in Qutb’s revolutionary program. That much should have been obvious to anyone who knew the history of the other grand totalitarian revolutionary projects of the 20th century, the projects of the Nazis, the Fascists, and the Communists.³⁵

In another article, Berman comes to a similar conclusion about 9/11. The present conflict, he says, is “following the

twentieth-century pattern exactly, with one variation: the antiliberal side right now, instead of Communist, Nazi, Catholic, or Fascist, happens to be radical Arab nationalist and Islamic fundamentalist ... They are the heirs of the twentieth-century totalitarians. Bush said that in his address to Congress on September 20, and he was right.”³⁶

Garden of Earthly Delights

In painting a psychological portrait of the symptoms of Islamist totalitarianism, the media fixated on what they saw as Qutb’s sexual repression. This portrayal resonated with the Bush administration’s rationale for war in Afghanistan, as a war to liberate its women, what journalist Paul Berman called “the first feminist war in all of history—the first war in which women’s rights were proclaimed at the start to be a major war aim.”³⁷ The double justification for war—thwarting Oriental despots and liberating their women—eerily echoes earlier rationales for colonial occupation. Several thoughtful analyses of this war imagery compare the mission to unveil women in Afghanistan to nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonial feminism.³⁸ This is not just a fantasy of liberating brown women from brown men, but also a particularly American fear of white women’s sexuality threatened by brown men. As Laura Bush said in her radio address about “The Taliban’s War on Women,” “Civilized people throughout the world are speaking out in horror, not only because our hearts break for the women and children in Afghanistan but also because we see a world the terrorists would like to impose on the rest of us.”³⁹ This fear of brown men’s aggressive sexuality took another form when projected on the Muslim man—it took on a particularly repressive quality. The fantasy of free bodies circulating for consumption contrasted with the abject image of the repressed female body in bondage to the tyrant. The media delighted in both aestheticized spectacles of Muslim women in burqas and the image of what Qutb calls the freely seductive American woman who openly communicates her sexuality with “expressive eyes and thirsty lips the round breasts, the full buttocks, and the shapely thighs and sleek legs” that the American woman shows “and does not hide.”⁴⁰ This quote from Qutb circulated in the media as an explanation for Islamist hostility against American freedom, sexual and otherwise.

Media accounts of Qutb and his writings focused on a minor series of articles he wrote about his experience studying abroad in the United States between 1948 and 1951. In “The America I Have Seen: In the Scale of Human Values,” Qutb records diverse observations about American cultural rituals (the man was clearly suffering from culture shock). His shock at American sexual mores, the general interpretation goes, drove him to develop an ideology of anti-American jihad. According to this logic, jihad takes as its object American sexual freedoms, making the stakes of the struggle none other than the liberty of American bodies. The British and American media argued *en masse* that it was this experience of the pleasures and freedoms of America that drove Qutb to his radicalism and ultimately, led to the attacks of 9/11. “Sex and jihad,” Jonathan Raban wrote of Sayyid Qutb and the 9/11 attackers in *The New Yorker*, “are intimately entwined.”⁴¹ In “Philosopher of Terror,” journalist Paul Berman characterized Qutb’s voyage to the US as “a ghastly trauma, mostly because of America’s sexual freedoms, which sent him reeling back to Egypt in a mood of hatred and fear.”⁴² Yet “The America I Have Seen: In the Scale of Human Values” is a relatively benign analysis of the customs and rituals (watermelon, hair cuts, lawn mowing, football, jazz) of post-war America.⁴³

One scene from “The America That I Have Seen,” a church dance where “Baby, It’s Cold Outside” played, became an object of inordinate media attention.⁴⁴ The church dance, the interpretation goes, was for Qutb a veritable “sexual ‘jungle’” and America a “land of pleasures without limit,” and this is what Qutb objected to.⁴⁵ Qutb’s description of the church dance revolves around how churches use advertising and sexuality to attract worshippers, like merchants selling wares to customers.

Each church races to advertise itself with lit, colored signs on the doors and walls to attract attention, and by presenting delightful programs to attract the people much in the same way as merchants or showmen or actors. And there is no compunction about using the most beautiful and graceful girls of the town, and engaging them in song and dance, and advertising ... The minister does not feel that his job is any different from that of a theater manager, or that of a merchant ... Success will reflect on him with fine results: money and stature. The more people that join his church, the greater his income.⁴⁶

Qutb’s criticisms—of religion as a form of commerce, or commerce as a form of religion—are uniformly glossed for his description of the sexual atmosphere of the church dance, of the “tapping feet, enticing legs, arms wrapped around waist, lips pressed to lips, and chests pressed to chests. The atmosphere was full of desire.”⁴⁷ The image of the darkly brooding, alienated outsider, intruding on—and judging—the innocence of American sexual freedoms becomes the leitmotif of media accounts of the episode. But the framing arguments—of the spiritual hollowness of American

materialism and the materialism of American spirituality—become an affront to American freedoms. The threat lurking on the periphery of this picture is no longer from the Cold War, but now from Islamic radicalism. Qutb is retroactively portrayed as an analogous enemy, one that carries on the totalitarian threat to American liberties and its consumer desires. Consumer desires thwarted by Islamic totalitarianism blurred with thwarted sexual desires, as the specter of Islamic radicalism threatened to rob American and British consumer citizens of their libidinal investment in an economy of freedom.

In these accounts, Qutb epitomizes the sexual Puritanism of radical Islam, a Puritanism shocked by the sexual license of American society. The proliferation of discourses about Islam's sexual repression enabled the media to speak out against Islamic fascism, with the declared objective of restoring fundamental liberties under threat. As Foucault observes in *The History of Sexuality*, "What sustains our eagerness to speak of sex in terms of repression is doubtless this opportunity to ... promise bliss, to link together enlightenment, liberation, and manifold pleasures; to pronounce a discourse that combines the fervor of knowledge ... and the longing for the garden of earthly delights."⁴⁸ Islamists are most criticized for forgoing the pleasures of earthly delights for those of the next world, which becomes the repression leading to their violent outbursts. For Foucault, this "sexual sermon" has become its own kind of theology, one he says, that has a "market value attributed not only to what is said about sexual repression, but also to the mere fact of lending an ear to those who would eliminate the effects of repression."⁴⁹

Even as discourses proliferated around the sexual repression of Islamic radicals, they were also portrayed as sexually obsessed, by American women and by virgins in heaven, as flip sides of the same coin. In these accounts, depictions of Qutb slide into the 9/11 attackers in a single "psychosocial" portrait of the Islamic radical. Sex, "shameless, American, *jahili* sex was clearly on the mind of this lifelong bachelor. The word 'desire' ripples through *Milestones*," wrote Jonathan Raban for *The New Yorker*. He describes Qutb as having a suicide bomber's mentality, describing his "garden of delight" in exceedingly earthy terms.

It's easy to see death's erotic allure for a man of Qutb's temperament, raised on the Koran's worldly and sensual depiction of the hereafter. The Gardens of Bliss resemble nothing so much as the great Playboy Mansion in the sky, watered by underground springs (all sorts of delightful wetness abound in Paradise), and furnished with cushions and carpets designed for life on the horizontal. Male entrants are greeted by 'companions'—'maidens, chaste, restraining their glances, whom no man or jinn before them has touched' ... the Koranic Paradise remains obdurately earthbound, full of nubile girls unzipping plantains. It reads like the dream of a repressed and awkward man who might be a young soldier on a foreign posting, or Sayyid Qutb in Greeley, Colorado, or Mohamed Atta in Harburg, Germany.

Another journalist, Malise Ruthven, argues for Islamic terrorism's roots in sexual frustration with pop psychology, substantiated by reference to experts on Islam: "Sexuality ... is at the heart of the crisis ... sexual anomie may generate feelings of rage directed at the 'West' as the source both of temptation and the corruption of morals."⁵⁰ His profile of Sayyid Qutb's "sexual frustration, touched with paranoia" is used to explain the mentality of the 9/11 attackers: "the sexual misery experienced by 'testosterone-sodden young men too unattractive to get a woman in this world' could make them desperate enough to go for the '72 virgin brides, guaranteed eager and exclusively promised for martyrs in the next life."⁵¹ In classic orientalist style, not only does sexual repression become the object of imperialism's liberatory promise, but the garden of earthly delights becomes neoliberalism's promised reward, in contrast to the deferred gratification of both the Protestant ethic and Islamic revivalism.

If European orientalism fantasized the East as a sexually available odalisque, or female slave, this more recent incarnation of orientalism imagines the abjection of women in burqas, freed by Operation Enduring Freedom's military might. Yet it is precisely this sexual release that is imagined as the motive for Islamic violence, where death becomes a kind of sexual *jouissance* (or *petit mort*). The fantasy of sexual liberation through the violence of war promises its own kind of *jouissance*, reinforced through a pervasively masculinist military culture that takes the liberation of repressed women as its object. The supposed Islamist hostility against political and economic freedoms became yoked to the sexual in public discourse, as the bodily interface on which Islamic totalitarianism played out. As Foucault argues, the proliferation of discourses around sexuality is a technique of power, and the assertion of repression simply titillation toward the multiplying of these discourses. The promised liberation of imperial war is abetted by the panoptical gaze of its media and its promise to lay bare obscure sexualities. This promised liberation is predicated on semiotic regimes that colonize Muslim bodies for consumption. These discourses affirm the value of the neoliberal body, liberated from the fetters of a communist—or Islamic—inflected totalitarianism.

Islamic Fascism

The notion of Islamic fascism emerged the day of Bush's speech to Congress in an article by Christopher Hitchens jointly published in *The Guardian* and *The Nation*. In it, Hitchens refers to "the bombers of Manhattan" as "fascism with an Islamic face" and "Islamic fascism" as "an enemy for life."⁵² Before Bush's speech, the concept of Islamic fascism hardly existed. Afterward, hundreds of articles in the British and American media employ the term "Islamic fascism." A LexisNexis search of the phrase turns up only five instances in the decades before Bush's speech. Since, the term has been used over 1868 times.⁵³ Most notably, "Islamic fascism" does not appear at all between September 11th and September 21st—not until Hitchens's article that was published simultaneously with Bush's September 20th speech. Given the time difference between London and Washington, *The Guardian* article would have come out almost at the same time as the speech. Was this a felicitous coincidence? Inside communiqué? Like Bush, Hitchens rhetorically and ideologically connected Islamic extremism to communism. In a column on "Islamofascism," William Safire identified Hitchens's "fascism with an Islamic face" as "a play on Susan Sontag's phrase about the Polish coup of 1981 'fascism with a human face,' in turn based on the 1968 'Prague spring' theme, 'Communism with a human face.'"⁵⁴ The formula was picked up in an article on "Terror, Islam, and Democracy" in the *Journal of Democracy*, where Qutb's thought is described as "Leninism in Islamist dress." Francis Fukuyama would repeat this idea in an article on the connection between Qutb and Bin Laden, entitled "Heil, Osama."⁵⁵ By 2007, David Horowitz's Freedom Center was gearing up to ignite a grassroots movement for "Islamofascism awareness" on college campuses.⁵⁶ Spurred on by assertions of repression, these are the proliferating discourses of liberation.

The concept of Islamic fascism clearly has its roots in colonial notions of "oriental despotism," however, the origins of the concept can be found in the stirrings of the Cold War. The sociologist Jules Monnerot first formulated a concept of communism as a "secular religion" with fascist designs to establish a universal state (an "*imperium mundi*"). In his *Sociologie du communisme* (1949), he calls communism "The Twentieth Century 'Islam'" and "'Islam' on the march," characterized by tyranny, absolutism, and totalitarianism—an analogy over which he squabbled with Hannah Arendt.⁵⁷ Intelligence officer and Princeton professor Manfred Halpern would translate this concept of Islam as fascist in his own writings on the Muslim Brotherhood as a "neo-Islamic totalitarian movement." In Halpern's *Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa* (1963), funded by the Rand Corporation, he writes, "The neo-Islamic totalitarian movements are essentially fascist movements. They concentrate on mobilizing passion and violence to enlarge the power of their charismatic leader and the solidarity of the movement. They...entirely deny individual and social freedom."⁵⁸ In this genealogy running from Monnerot to Halpern, classic oriental despotism became "twentieth-century 'Islam'" which became communist totalitarianism which again became Islamic fascism. This ideological apparatus remained remarkably resilient. At the Berlin Wall in November 2009 for the anniversary of its fall, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton compared communism to religious extremism—clearly referring to Islam. Commenting on Clinton's speech, David Satter of *Forbes* wrote, "Communism and political Islam are essentially the same. Both are radical ideologies that divide the world into the elect and the profane. Both deny individuality and suppress free will. And both treat man-made dogma as infallible truth and seek to impose it by force ... Our response to the claims of totalitarian ideology is traditionally to defend freedom ... radical Islamic ideology ... relies on the same psychological mechanisms and has the same results as atheistic Communism and Nazism."⁵⁹

Even as the language of totalitarianism recalled Cold War tensions, it obscured the actual politics that contributed to the rise of al-Qaeda and the Taliban. It is common knowledge that the Taliban and al-Qaeda were political and ideological inheritors of the Afghan *mujahidin*, funded by the Carter administration to fight the Soviet occupation. The role of Cold War geopolitics in contributing to the rise of al-Qaeda was obscured from public discourse, as attention focused on Sayyid Qutb as "Osama's brain" and "the man who inspired Bin Laden."⁶⁰ Allegiances became confused, as Islamist radicals were interpreted as a product of communist totalitarianism, rather than the proxies of the US's Cold War ambitions. When the media called Qutb "the father of Islamic fundamentalism," they mnemonically reiterated Bush's concept of ideological inheritance, calling up the specters of communism and Nazism. Through such rhetorical moves, Islamic totalitarianism crystallized into the opposite of freedom, whether economic or political. Even as both Republican and Democratic administrations drew on the clash of civilizations imagery, they seemed to embrace the idea that this conflict would be ideological and economic, rather than cultural and religious.⁶¹

With attention focused on the cultural and religious, rather than the ideological and economic dimensions of the conflict with the Muslim world, several media pieces drew attention to intellectuals' complicity in promoting and fostering terrorism. A little over a month after 9/11, Judith Shulevitz took up the idea of liberal treason through Mark

Lilla's idea of "philotyrannical intellectuals." She began the article with Sayyid Qutb as an example of the role intellectuals can play in politics comparing him to intellectuals that were communists and Nazi sympathizers (like Martin Heidegger and Carl Schmitt). Shulevitz repeated Bush's language: "If we have learned anything from the 20th century and its murderous utopianisms—Stalinism, Nazism, Maoism, Khmer Rougeism, a list to which we must now add Islamic extremism—is that there are ideas that demand an uncompromising rebuttal." She then compares American intellectuals' "anti-Americanism" in the face of 9/11 to Heidegger's Nazism and to Qutb's "original" brand of totalitarianism.⁶² Similarly, Hitchens's articles accused intellectuals ("the Noam Chomsky-Howard Zinn-Norman Finkelstein quarter") of complicity in 9/11 through their rationalizations of the attacks. *The Economist* repeated Hitchens's accusation nearly verbatim, with an editorial entitled "Treason of the intellectuals?" criticizing the intelligentsia for its anti-war stance.⁶³ Such sentiments helped spawn an industry of watchdog groups devoted to monitoring these intellectuals, their teaching, and their activities. Campus Watch, *FrontPage* magazine, and David Horowitz's Freedom Center all criticize the "'unholy alliance' between campus leftist and jihadists seeking to undermine the War on Terror." A recent article on *FrontPage*, entitled "Why They Hate Us," reviews *United in Hate: The Left's Romance With Tyranny and Terror*. The book draws a line between the totalitarianism ascribed to Castro and Mao, its "death cult cousin Islamism," and American intellectuals.⁶⁴

Islamic fascism is a concept particularly empty of meaning; already in 1946 George Orwell observed that fascism as a political concept had been abused and consequently, "now has no meaning, except in so far as it signifies 'something not desirable,'" just as words like democracy and freedom have no real definition, but connote something good or praiseworthy. "Words of this kind," wrote Orwell, "are often used in a consciously dishonest way." Similarly, the word "totalitarian" is used "in most cases more or less dishonestly."⁶⁵ An article in *The American Conservative* on Horowitz's "Islamofascism Awareness Week" (and Hitchens's defense of the initiative) seemed to echo Orwell's sentiment: "The word 'Islamofascism' never had any meaning, except as a catch-all for whatever regimes and groups the word's users wished to make targets for military action. Hitchens is also well known for his tendentious misunderstandings of all forms of religion, likening theism to a supernatural totalitarian regime and attributing all the crimes of political totalitarianism to religion. It was therefore appropriate that he should promote the term 'Islamofascism' since it defines a religious movement in the language of secular totalitarianism ... Horowitz and his allies use 'Islamofascist' to group together the many regimes and groups they wish to cast as a cohesive, united enemy, conflating mutually hostile forces into a single, undifferentiated mass."⁶⁶ By evoking Nazism, the idea of Islamic fascism summons up a virulent form of anti-Semitism coupled with violent global expansion. Even Niall Ferguson described "Islamofascism" as a "caricatured World War II idiom ... In fact, there is virtually no overlap between the ideology of al Qaeda and fascism. It's just a way of making us feel that we're the 'greatest generation' fighting another World War, like the war our fathers and grandfathers fought. You're translating a crisis symbolized by 9/11 into a sort of pseudo World War II."⁶⁷

The conflating of Islamic radicalism with authoritarian government depends on a blurring of distinctions between Arab nationalism and Islamism, even though these movements have a fraught history of conflict (i.e., Gamal Abd al-Nasser and Qutb, Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden). The conflation has the effect of both racializing Islam and Islamicizing Arabism. This is not only very problematic in the study of the Middle East, but it fabricates its own form of anti-Semitism, where religion and race become one. This conflation served the particular political interests of the Bush regime at a particular moment in time, as the religious extremism of Al-Qaeda was equated with Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist authoritarianism.⁶⁸ Even as the concept of Islamic fascism raised fears of anti-Semitic violence associated with both Arab Nationalism and Islamism, there was little consciousness of the anti-Semitism of an essentialized, racialized Arab-Islamic world.

In media accounts of Qutb, the religious politics of the Muslim Brotherhood (and Islamic movements in general) were equated with the secular socialism of Arab nationalism (like that of the Ba'ath and of Nasser). The tendency to identify Arab nationalist states with Islamism inverted basic facts about their relationship: any cursory glance at Middle Eastern history shows postcolonial authoritarian states (Egypt, Algeria, Syria, Tunisia, Iraq, formerly Iran) struggling to contain religion, by force, surveillance, policing, torture, and incarceration. The Bush administration actively promoted confusion and slippage between secular regimes and religious groups in the concocted connections between Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden, the stirrings of which began with Bush's post-9/11 speech to Congress and extended through Colin Powell's presentation to the United Nations. The imagined alliance between secular regimes and Islamic parties, groups, and movements was repeatedly invoked as evidence of Islam's imperialistic designs on the globe. The understanding of a blocklike, undifferentiated mass of radical Arab Muslims gained momentum as the concept of Islamofascism took root, propagandistically unifying the British and American public behind the drive for

“democratic” freedoms in the Middle East.

Paul Berman, a self-professed “leftwing hawk” who advocated a “just war” for democracy, perpetrated this perspective.⁶⁹ In the aftermath of 9/11, he published a number of articles on the subject of “terror and liberalism,” using Sayyid Qutb as an example of Islamic fascism and totalitarianism. (His descriptions of Qutb appear almost wholly lifted from Lawrence Wright’s *The Looming Tower* and Malise Ruthven’s *Fury For God*.) Berman continually describes the Islamic movement as advocating a “blocklike society,” inventing a neologism evocative of the Soviet bloc or the communist bloc. He conflates communism, Marxism, Nazism, and fascism with Arab nationalism and Islamism, saying that their “blocklike characteristics ... were always the same.” Berman collapses Baath with the Islamists, writing, “They imagine that at the end they, too, will succeed in establishing a blocklike, unchanging society ... They are the heirs of the twentieth-century totalitarians.” This kind of perspective extended into the Obama era, not only with Hillary Clinton’s comparison of religious fundamentalism to communism, but also through its continuity in the press. Just after the 2008 elections, an opinion piece by Jeffery Kuhner of *The Washington Times* exemplifies the slippage between movements, historical terminology, context, and ideologies, warning that Obama

... fails to grasp the essential reality of our time: The Muslim world, stretching from north Africa to south Asia, is in crisis and seethes with violent radicalism, jihadism and Islamic fundamentalism...On Sept. 11, 2001, America was not attacked by a single terrorist group led by a sadistic mastermind; it was attacked by the forces of an ideology—Islamic fascism—that has taken root within the Middle East and is supported or encouraged by thousands of other like-minded terrorist groups, tens of millions of Muslim extremist, and numerous regimes such as Saddam’s Iraq, Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah’s mini-state within Lebanon. Al Qaeda is not the only terrorist network seeking America’s destruction. We are not simply fighting Al Qaeda. We are fighting the political-religious movement of Islamofascism. We are not engaged in law enforcement action; we are engaged in a wider war—an ideological war against those who reject the modern world and seek to impose a global Muslim empire.⁷⁰

Secular dictatorships in the Arab world (Iraq, Egypt, and Syria) are conflated with religious states (Iran, Saudi Arabia), political Islam (Hezbollah and Hamas) and Islamic extremism (al Qaeda). In this way, the enemy is essentialized in classic colonial terms, as an oriental despot, religious fanatic, and anti-liberal. The Arab despot merges with the Muslim despot, interpreted through European totalitarianism and fascism, becoming communist and Nazi. Through the relentless association of Islamism with communism, Stalinism, and totalitarianism, there is a deliberate slippage between economic and political frames of reference. Islamism is interpreted as opposed to not only political liberties (such as democratically elected governments and voting rights) and civil liberties (such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion), but also a free market economy.

The totalitarianism ascribed to Qutb’s discourse on freedom reflects less on the realities of Islamic politics than on the ways the discourse of freedom has been employed in the American public sphere as a technique of government. Such a discourse of freedom is what Foucault calls “the correlative of the deployment of apparatuses of security.”⁷¹ An apparatus of security, Foucault says, “cannot operate well except on condition that it is given freedom ... the possibility of movement, change of place, and processes of circulation of both people and things. I think it is this freedom of circulation, in the broad sense of the term, it is in terms of this option of circulation, that we should understand the word freedom, and understand it as one of the facets, aspects, or dimensions of the deployment of apparatuses of security.”⁷² In this sense, the discourse of freedom in the media appears as de-centralized, capillary, and perhaps illusorily democratic, emanating from principles of freedom of opinion and expression. The free circulation of these ideas as commodities work in the interest of US security, not only as an ideological arm of the state, but also of the economy where war is one of its most voracious consumers. The insistence on the free circulation of ideas and on the freedom of citizens to consume them is one of the basic ways in which liberal political discourses have been bent to neoliberal economic aims. Although there is clearly a distinction between secular, liberal democratic forms of government and economic liberalism, they become fused through the portrait of the enemy, as simultaneously against political and economic freedoms.⁷³ In this way, the “free speech” of the media becomes an apparatus of security, a technology of power carried out through reliance on “freedom” of production and consumption—a freedom that transforms into its own technology of coercion.

American Totalitarianism

Published in January 2001, Zizek’s *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?* presciently resonated in the stirring of discourses around totalitarianism later that year. Zizek critiques how the charge of totalitarianism has been leveled

against the Left. Liberalism, he argues, manages to bring together new ethnic fundamentalisms and the Left, “as if the two were somehow deeply related, two sides of the same coin, both aiming at ‘total control’... This combination is the new form of the old liberal notion that Fascism and Communism are two forms of the same ‘totalitarian’ degeneration of democracy.”⁷⁴ Zizek seems to be predicting the connection between Islamic fascism and dangerous, treasonous intellectuals made by Horowitz, Hitchens, Shulevitz, and *The Economist*. But Zizek similarly critiques the Left’s deployment of “totalitarianism” as a retaliatory weapon. Leftist critiques of neoconservatism as fascist, neoliberalism as authoritarian, or liberal democracy as totalitarian rehearse Liberalism’s dichotomous oppositions that trap discourse in a own hall of mirrors, where one form of totalitarianism always reflects another’s liberation. This is not just a Foucauldian notion of power always framing resistance in its own terms, but also of liberalism’s ability to close off ruptures that seek to break with its inner logic.

Liberal democracy is shot through with fundamentalism, both ethnic and religious, Zizek argues. “Rather than two opposing forces in an ideological battle (as presented in mainstream US media and politics), liberal democracy and fundamentalism are two components of the current ideological formation.”⁷⁵ This fundamentalism, Jodi Dean argues in her analysis of Zizek’s politics, sets up a “basic framework so apparently immune to contestation and renegotiation.”⁷⁶ Zizek frames this fundamentalism as a kind of “Messianic longing” in liberalism which constantly longs for “Otherness.” Any positive incarnations of “democracy to come” are countered by a “Messianic longing for the Otherness ... haunted by an insistent spectre ... an Otherness which never acquires positive features, but always remains withdrawn, the trace of its own absence.”⁷⁷ Bush’s messianic evangelicalism of (neoconservative) democracy in the Middle East saw Islamic fascism as its Other, a demonic shadow of this purifying force, a shadow never quite real, but always a projection. The figure of the brooding, withdrawn Qutb at the fringes of the church dance, became the incarnation of this otherness, a spook haunting American post-war prosperity. His dark presence, indeed, his very blackness, inscribes his logical place at the edge of suburban life in Greely. In the media accounts, he never becomes a humanized figure, never the vulnerable, tortured body speaking out against earthly tyranny, but always just a dark reflection on the surface of American society. He is the necessary fiction of the threatening outside sustained to consolidate the body politic from within.

That being Nubian in Egypt and black in America had completely different meanings is implicit in narrative accounts of Qutb’s American experience. “America in 1949 was not a natural fit for Qutb,” says Robert Siegel of National Public Radio, “He was a man of color ...”⁷⁸ In this narrative construction, Qutb comes face to face with the truth of his “swarthinness,”⁷⁹ a revelatory truth that he took back to Egypt and came to inform his radical interpretation of Islam. This implied fear of black radicalization in the United States—a radicalization that has, on occasion, found its expression through Islam—became juxtaposed onto a “fear of a Muslim planet.” The post-World War II era in which Qutb visited the US was a period of black mobilization around issues of racial justice. In Nikhil Singh’s *Black is a Country: The Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*, he describes how black movements saw struggles for racial justice abroad as “strangely analogous” to black struggles in the United States in post-World War II America. Just at the moment that the US had to galvanize a unified public behind its expansionist mobilization, black movements began coalescing as a popular front calling for racial justice at home. This historical context in which the media framed Qutb’s visit speaks to public anxiety about such external and internal threats. 9/11 enflamed such fears, with its particular mix of the suburban citizen blending into the landscape of middle class normalcy, threatening to blow up this dream from within. In the aftermath of 9/11, questions about the allegiances of the Muslim American community epitomizes these fears, most recently expressed in opposition to mosque building at Ground Zero as the desecration of “hallowed” ground.⁸⁰

In his article “The Afterlife of Fascism,” Singh reorients the ethnic violence associated with fascism on American soil. Arguing that the racist nature of westward expansion has found renewed expression in recent imperial ambitions abroad, he draws parallels between the “‘proto-totalitarian’ scene of westward expansion,” and the “fascisms of the current moment.”⁸¹ He argues for the ethnic and racial character of what Langston Hughes calls “our native fascisms,” which Singh situates in a genealogy of US slavery, racism, and manifest destiny. The article reinterprets Hannah Arendt and Karl Polyani’s argument about fascism as “the offspring and symptom of a crisis of liberal empires and their ostensibly democratic regimes ... the authentic genealogy of Nazism was in the history of colonial expansion ... within ‘the Subterranean stream of Western history.’”⁸² Singh analyzes the fascisms of the current moment as the “afterlife” of prior fascisms in US history, a specter haunting US political culture, the second coming of seemingly dead ideas. Singh masterfully re-appropriates what he paints as the ‘original’ meaning of fascism, turning the weapon back on its wielder. In the context of his discussion of black struggles for freedom, this is a deft move. In the wake of Bush’s revival of the discourse of totalitarianism, it has the feel of holding up a mirror to state rhetoric.

In *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?* Zizek observes that the elevation of Arendt is a sign of the defeat of the Left, that they have become trapped in “the basic co-ordinates of liberal democracy (‘democracy’ versus ‘totalitarianism,’ etc.)” as the Left gets stuck defining their position within the closed, claustrophobic space defined by liberal discourse.⁸³ “What is interesting to note here,” Zizek observes, “is how even the predominant ‘critical’ philosophical response to hegemonic liberalism, that of the postmodern deconstructionist Left, relies on the category of ‘totalitarianism’... ‘Totalitarianism’ is thus elevated to the level of ontological confusion; it is conceived as a kind of Kantian paralogism of pure political reason, an inevitable ‘transcendental illusion’ which occurs when a positive political order is directly, in an illegitimate short circuit, identified with the impossible Otherness of Justice.”⁸⁴ While Zizek says that the notion of totalitarianism “stops thought,” these inverted discourses of freedom and fascism trap thought in an ontological space of reflexivity, where an infinity of discourses on totalitarianism/freedom proliferate. Through the “technological reproducibility” of the media, this becomes a prison of infinitely refracting images, where all we see are products of our own discourses bouncing back at us. The Other is only an illusory projection of the self, inverted—America looks at Sayyid Qutb looking at America. This is one of the effects of mass media, narcissistically reverberating its image back to itself, seeing only the Self in the Other. The short circuit is a kind of unending loop posing the question about who is free and who is enslaved, a question that has unendingly plagued US history.

Eva Cherniavsky, in her own analysis of the totalitarian nature of neoliberal society, puts a finger on something Hannah Arendt “consistently describes as a fictive quality. It is not always evident how this fictionalized reality compares to ideology.” Cherniavsky writes of a “simulacral public realm” that prohibits the distinction between fact and fiction, between true and false. “Arendt terms precisely ‘ideological’ the capacity to declare an entire people as your enemy (to constitute ‘objective’ enemies whose targeted status is entirely independent of their actions or intentions), a reversal that tends to affirm the function of ideology in ‘transforming reality.’”⁸⁵ The media remarkably performed its task in the mobilization of the masses, through processes of what she calls hypermediation and a pervasive, nearly impenetrable veil of propaganda. These liberal discourses of freedom and fascism—whether secular or religious, Western or Islamic—become trapped in the “simulacral public realm,” a hall of mirrors, Zizek’s “stopgap.” That public sphere—that place for pursuing the freedom “central to the rights society exists to defend”—has become a space of reflexivity should come as no surprise.⁸⁶ The media sees itself as “both autonomous and sovereign with respect to the state,” yet the verbatim reiterations of state discourse on Islamic totalitarianism and American freedoms betray a “structural blindness to the material conditions of the discourses it produces and circulates,” and the conditions under which the “marketplace of ideas” became a “war of ideas,” or what Orwell refers to as the “dogfight” between freedom and fascism.⁸⁷ This public sphere proliferates a false image of who the actual enemies of its freedom really are.

The convergences between the Bush administration’s official interpretation of events and the media’s representation of them points to the dissemination of these discourses at a capillary level, through channels circulating in the public sphere. Bush made freedom the cornerstone of his criticism of Islamic radicalism, but it only emphasizes the ways in which freedoms were circumscribed in post-9/11 America. The accusation of fascism and Nazism also clearly raises the specter of anti-Semitism. There is no denying anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish rhetoric of militant groups like al-Qaeda. It is a connection that became essential to the definition of Islamofascism and even the very motor driving this definition. But the accusation of anti-Semitism raises questions about the anti-Muslim rhetoric implicit in both these media accounts and the charge of Islamofascism. The fear of a global Jewish threat taking over the world helped legitimize military expansion abroad, the very point made by Arendt, Singh, and Wolin, but also by Kuhner, Shulevitz, and Laura Bush about Islamic radicals. The understanding of Islamic fascism as diametrically opposed to liberal democracy divides the world into “two gigantic hostile camps”—what Hannah Arendt calls “one of the basic totalitarian tenets,” but perhaps similarly one of the basic tenets of liberalism.⁸⁸ In the web of knowledge woven around Islam, a consensus of meaning was reached about its homogenous nature, its geographical scope, and its ideological leanings. The conceptualization of Islamic fascism drew on quasi-academic and neo-orientalist knowledges for justification. Qutb, an until-then relatively unknown theorist of political theology in Islam, became a virtual synecdoche of “radical Islam” in all its forms.⁸⁹ Although the media does not consciously adopt a stance of reflective self-criticism, the torrent of attention directed toward Qutb, the obsessing over his American experience, and the desire to know how and what the enemy thinks about “us” all speak of a vaguely narcissistic interpretation of Qutb and his writings.

One article about Qutb, published in *The New Yorker* in February 2002, was structured quasi-autobiographically, with Jonathan Raban drawing parallels between his own alienation in the spiritual wasteland of low rent, cement block

tower housing and Qutb's experience of American culture and Muhammad 'Atta's experience of American suburbia. He suggests, as do many others, that the hijackers' radicalism was "hatched" first in the thought of Sayyid Qutb, who was reacting against American sexuality, and then in the "low-rent, multilingual, rootless suburbs" that resemble the landscape of Raban's own youth. What strikes him most is the normalcy of the hijackers, their ordinariness as they blended into the landscape. Raban seems to be suggesting that the banality of evil lies somewhere in the tower blocks of suburban tenements, rather than in the hijackers' Islamism. This "normalcy" is reflected in their credit card trail that reads like a script of the American landscape. They "left a forensic spoor of brand names across the length and breadth of the United States. We know them best as efficient modern consumers—of Parrot-Ice, Tommy Hilfiger, Econo Lodge, AAA discounts, Starbucks, Cyber Zone, Golden Tee '97 golf at Shuckum's Raw Bar and Grill, Salem cigarettes, Heineken and Budweiser, Chinese takeout from Wo Hop III, lap-dancing at Nardone's Sports Go-Go Bar and the Olympic Garden Topless Cabaret."⁹⁰ Raban then turns to Qutb's criticism of the morally bankrupt West, observing that his perspective finds resonance in not only the thought of Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee, but in T.S. Eliot's vision of "spiritual ruin" in the "The Waste Land." It is a "world view that recoils from the spiritual emptiness of the urban-industrial West ... Far from being antiquated or alien, most of the intellectual baggage of the jihad movement ... is disconcertingly familiar."⁹¹

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Notes

¹ President George W. Bush, “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People,” September 20, 2001, <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/11/bush.speech.text/>. These words resonate with those of Arthur James Balfour as he lectured in the House of Commons on Britain’s problems in Egypt: “You may look through the whole history of the Orientals in what is called broadly speaking, the East, and you never find traces of self-government. All their great centuries have passed under despotisms, under absolute government. All their great contributions to civilization—and they have been great—have been made under that form of government...Is it a good thing for these great nations—I admit their greatness—that this absolute government should be exercised by us? I think it is a good thing,” quoted in Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1975), 32-33.

² In Paul Berman’s *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: Norton, 2004), he refers to the press’s role in advocating war strategy as “laptop generals” (181). The “single round from my thought murder gun” is from Jonathan Raban, “My Holy War: What Do a Vicar’s Son and a Suicide Bomber Have in Common?” *New Yorker*, February 4, 2002, 28.

³ Dinesh D’Souza, “Osama’s Brain: Meet Sayyid Qutb, Intellectual Father of the Anti-Western Jihad,” *Weekly Standard*, April 29, 2002, 1.

⁴ Susan Buck-Morss, *Thinking Past Terror: Islamism and Critical Theory on the Left* (London: Verso, 2003), 30-31; Sheldon Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated: Managed Democracy and the Specter of Inverted Totalitarianism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). An early incarnation of this appeared as “Inverted Totalitarianism,” *The Nation*, May 1, 2003. In David Harvey’s *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), he observes that “neoliberalism in its pure form has always threatened to conjure up its own nemesis in varieties of authoritarian populism and nationalism...it is interesting to note how neoliberalization in authoritarian states such as China and Singapore seems to be converging with increasing authoritarianism evident in neoliberal states such as the US and Britain” (81). Wendy Brown’s “American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization,” *Political Theory* 34 (2006): 690-714 describes how the “Frankfurt school intellectuals and, before them, Plato theorized the open compatibility between individual choice and political domination, and depicted democratic subjects who are available to political tyranny or authoritarianism precisely because they are absorbed in a province of choice and need-satisfaction that they mistake for freedom” (705). Eva Cherniavsky, “Neocitizenship and Critique,” *Social Text* 27:2 (2009): 1-23. Cherniavsky also makes an argument about modernity’s totalitarianism. Nikhil Singh, “The Afterlife of Fascism,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 105:1 (2006): 71.

⁵ Slavoj Žižek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?: Five Interventions in the (Mis)use of a Notion* (New York: Verso, 2001), 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Paul Berman, “The Philosopher of Islamic Terror,” *New York Times Magazine*, March 23, 2003.

⁸ Robert Irwin, “Is This the Man Who Inspired Bin Laden?: Sayyid Qutb, the Father of Modern Islamic Fundamentalism” *The Guardian*, November 1, 2001; David Von Drehle, “A Lesson in Hate,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, February, 2006.

⁹ Roxanne Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 11.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 124-25.

¹¹ Malise Ruthven, *A Fury For God: The Islamist Attack on America* (London: Granata, 2002), 76. The book grew out of an article written just after 9/11, “This Man May Become Our Nemesis: For the Muslim Dispossessed, Bin Laden is the New Saladin,” *The Guardian*, October 10, 2001.

¹² Irwin, “Is this the Man Who Inspired Bin Laden?”

¹³ Lawrence Wright, “The Man Behind Bin Laden,” *New Yorker*, September 16, 2002. Wright’s *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage, 2006), based on the 2002 article, won the Pulitzer Prize for general non-fiction in 2007 and was on the *New York Times*’s list of 2007’s top ten books. Before becoming an expert on Islamic thinkers, Wright wrote the screenplay for *The Siege* (1998), a movie about a terrorist attack on New York City. The poster read: “Freedom is history.”

¹⁴ Von Drehle, “A Lesson in Hate.”

¹⁵ In Sayyid Qutb, Leonard Binder sees “ideological and rhetorical possibilities for the coexistence of fundamentalism and liberalism.” Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 22. Muqtedar Khan, “Syed Qutb—John Locke of the Islamic World?” *The Globalist*, July 28, 2003.

¹⁶ Some scholars of Qutb argue that his transition from “a moderate radical Islamism... in the late 1940s and then to an extreme radical Islamism during the rest of his life” was chronologically divided by his sojourn in the United States. William E. Shepard, “The Development of the Thought of Sayyid Qutb as Reflected in Earlier and Later Editions of ‘Social Justice in Islam,’” *Die Welt Des Islams* 32:2 (1992): 201. John Calvert’s work has especially contributed to this misperception. Others, however, argue for an “inner continuity of his thought... as an extension, and not a negation, of the previous phase.” Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi’, *Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 139. Political scientist Gilles Kepel’s famous book *The Prophet and the Pharaoh* was first published in French

with the subtitle *Aux sources des mouvements islamistes* (Paris: Seuil, 1984); in English the subtitle read *Muslim Extremism in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). The work of William E. Shepard, Olivier Carré, and Sayed Khatab provide excellent close readings of Qutb's writings and intellectual contributions. Salah 'Abd al-Fattah al-Khalidi's scholarship in Arabic is a nearly comprehensive chronicle of Qutb's life and works, as are Adnan Musallam's writings (in Arabic and English) on the progression of Qutb's ideas and life.

¹⁷ John O. Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: *Tajdid* and *Islah*," in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 33.

¹⁸ Charles D. Smith. "The Crisis of Orientation: The Shift of Egyptian Intellectuals to Islamic Subjects in the 1930s," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, no. 4 (October 1973): 382-410. Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, "Print Culture, Social Change, and the Process of Redefining Imagined Communities in Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31:1 (1999): 81-94; see especially Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation: 1930-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁹ Charles Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 105.

²⁰ Dale Eickelman and Armando Salvatore, "Muslim Publics," *Public Islam and the Common Good*, eds. Dale Eickelman and Armando Salvatore (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Armando Salvatore, *The Public Sphere: Liberal Modernity, Catholicism, Islam* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Dale Eickelman and Jon Anderson, eds. *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003).

²¹ Lisa Pollard, "Egyptian by Association," *Nationalisms and Salafis* workshop, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (February 10, 2010).

²² This is what Wickham refers to as the "parallel Islamic sector," made up of private mosques, Islamic voluntary associations, welfare societies, cultural organizations, schools, commercial and business enterprises, like banks, investment companies, manufacturing firms, and publishing houses. These arenas of civil society, she writes, became "important sites of Islamic political experimentation." Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 97, 216. Asef Bayat talks about "civil Islam." "Alongside the political core [of al-Azhar] stood the vast sector of 'civil Islam' with its large religious welfare and professional associations, Muslim youth and women's groups, and Islamic activism in universities, schools, and neighborhoods." Asef Bayat, *Making Islamic Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 137.

²³ Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 94-5.

²⁴ Joel Beinin and Zachary Lockman, *Workers on the Nile: Nationalism, Communism, Islam, and the Egyptian Working Class* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1998), 257-461.

²⁵ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 63, 71.

²⁶ Adnan Musallam, *From Secularism to Jihad: Sayyid Qutb and the Foundations of Radical Islamism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 70-71.

²⁷ Sayed Khatab, *The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb: The Theory of Jahiliyya* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 50, 57. Salah 'Abd al-Fattah al-Khalidi, *Amrika min al-Dakhil bi Manzar Sayyid Qutb* (Algiers: Dar Madani, 2002), 19-20.

²⁸ Sayyid Qutb, *Al-'Adala al-Ijtima'iyya fi al-Islam* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1975), 10. There have been several translations of *Social Justice*—by John B. Hardie, a revised version by Hamid Algar, and finally William E. Shepard's study of Qutb's changes over the book's six editions. William E. Shepard, *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism: A Translation and Critical Analysis of Social Justice in Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996) and Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, trans. John B. Hardie, translation revised by Hamid Algar (Oneonta, NY: Islamic Publications International, 2000). Although Qutb asserts the ontological equality of human beings before God, he allows for certain inequalities—in the division of labor between men and women, for example. This, however, can be seen as perfectly in keeping with liberalism, as Wendy Brown's essay on "Liberalism's Family Values" so eloquently demonstrates. Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 135-66.

²⁹ Muhammad 'Abduh, *Risalat al-Tawhid* (Cairo: Dar al-Manar, 1949), 156. Muhammad 'Abduh, *Theology of Unity*, trans. Ishaq Musa'ad and Kenneth Cragg (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), 125.

³⁰ Hamid Algar, "Introduction" to *Social Justice in Islam*, 4-5.

³¹ Adam Curtis, "Baby, It's Cold Outside," *The Power of Nightmares: The Rise of the Politics of Fear*, BBC Two (October 20, 2004).

³² Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 197?), 64-5. Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (Damascus: Dar al-'Ilm, no date), 62-3.

³³ Yvonne Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of the Islamic Revival," in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 89-90. Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and the Pharaoh* (London: Al-Saqi, 1985), 13, 45, 60, 63. Sayed Khatab, *The Power of Sovereignty: The Political and Ideological Philosophy*

of *Sayyid Qutb* (London: Routledge, 2006), 22-46.

³⁴ Ruthven, *A Fury For God*, 90-92.

³⁵ Berman, "Philosopher of Islamic Terror."

³⁶ Paul Berman, "Terror and Liberalism," *The American Prospect*, October 2001.

³⁷ Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism*, 195.

³⁸ Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," *American Anthropologist* 104:3 (2002): 784; miriam cooke, "Saving Brown Women," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28:1 (2002): 469; Kevin J. Ayotte and Mary E. Husain, "Securing Afghan Women: Neocolonialism, Epistemic Violence, and the Rhetoric of the Veil," *NWSA Journal* 17:3 (2005): 121.

³⁹ Laura Bush, "Radio Address to the Nation: The Taliban's War Against Women," Crawford, TX, November 17, 2001. The speech coincided with the simultaneous release of the U.S. Department of State's "Report on the Taliban's War Against Women," Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, November 17, 2001.

⁴⁰ For discussions of the spectacle of unveiling in the media as a rationale for war, see Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), 141-48 and Myra Macdonald, "Muslim Women and the Veil: Problems of Image and Voice in Media Representations," *Feminist Media Studies* 6:1 (2006): 7-23.

⁴¹ Raban, "My Holy War," 28.

⁴² Paul Berman, "The Philosopher of Islamic Terror."

⁴³ Qutb published his impressions of America in the magazine *Al-Risala* (November 5, 1951), reprinted in Salah 'Abd al-Fattah al-Khalidi's *Amrika min al-Dakhil: Bi Manzar Sayyid Qutb* [America from the Inside: In Sayyid Qutb's View] (Algiers: Dar Madani, 2002). A translation can be found in Kamal Abd al-Malek's anthology of Arab writing on America, *America in an Arab Mirror: Images of America in Arabic Travel Literature* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2000), 9-27.

⁴⁴ Robert Siegel, "Sayyid Qutb's America: Al Qaeda Inspiration Denounced U.S. Greed, Sexuality," National Public Radio, May 6, 2003; Curtis, "Baby, It's Cold Outside," *The Power of Nightmares*; Raban, "My Holy War," 28. Ruthven, *A Fury For God*, 78, 80.

⁴⁵ Von Drehle, "A Lesson in Hate."

⁴⁶ Qutb, "America I Have Seen," 19.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 20.

⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1 (New York: Vintage, 1990), 7.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ruthven, *A Fury For God*, 122.

⁵¹ Ibid, 99.

⁵² Christopher Hitchens, "On the Brink of War: Let's Not Get Too Liberal: Western Governments Are Responsible For Many Wrongs in the Muslim World, but That Does Not Justify Fascist Fundamentalism," *The Guardian*, September 21, 2001; Christopher Hitchens, "Against Rationalization," *The Nation*, October 8, 2001. Also see Hitchens's "Of Sin, the Left & Islamic Fascism" in the web version of the same issue <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20011008/hitchens20010924> and Hitchens's "Defending Islamofascism," *Slate*, October 22, 2007.

⁵³ LexisNexis Academic, accessed August, 2010.

⁵⁴ William Safire, "Islamofascism, Anyone?" *New York Times*, October 1, 2006. Safire's column traces the first usage to an article by Malise Ruthven in *The Independent* (September 8, 1990). "There is what might be a political problem affecting the Muslim world. In contrast to the heirs of some other non-Western traditions, including Hinduism, Shintoism, and Buddhism, Islamic societies seem to have found it particularly hard to institutionalize divergences politically: authoritarian government, not to say Islamo-fascism, is the rule rather than the exception from Morocco to Pakistan."

⁵⁵ Laden and Roya Boroumand, "Terror, Islam, and Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 13:2 (2002): 8. "Qutb's brand of Islamism," the Boroumands write, "was informed by his knowledge of both the Marxist and fascist critiques of modern capitalism and representative democracy." They argue that the Muslim Brothers spread their ideas using "organizational and ideological tools borrowed from European totalitarianism" (8-9). Francis Fukuyama and Nadav Samin, "Heil Osama, The Great Reformer," *The Times* (London) September 29, 2002.

⁵⁶ Horowitz has dedicated his career to exposing the relationship between Islamic radicalism and American university professors. David Horowitz, *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left* (Washington, DC: Regnery Press, 2004); *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America* (Washington, DC: Regnery Press, 2007); David Horowitz and Jacob Laskin, *One Party Classroom: How Radical Professors at America's Top Colleges Indoctrinate Students and Undermine Our Democracy* (New York: Random House, 2009).

⁵⁷ Jules Monnerot, *Sociologie du communisme* (Paris Gallimard, 1949). The translation, *The Sociology and Psychology of*

Communism, trans. Jane Degras and Richard Rees (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1953), seems to anticipate a report published by the Library of Congress on *The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism* taking Islamic groups as its principal focus. Rex Hudson, *Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1999). The fitting of Islam into the mold of not just communism and totalitarianism, but of Nazism and fascism has continued into present scholarship, even as the fit is recognized as dubious by experts like Walter Laqueur. See his *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), especially the section on Postfascism and chapter on “The Origins of Islamic Fundamentalism,” 164-69.

⁵⁸ Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 135-6.

⁵⁹ David Satter, “Yesterday Communism, Today Radical Islam: The Cold War and the War on Terror,” *Forbes*, November 3, 2009.

⁶⁰ Irwin, “Is This the Man Who Inspired Bin Laden?” D’Souza, “Osama’s Brain.” See Mahmood Mamdani’s *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, The Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Doubleday, 2004). The first chapter challenges Huntington’s understanding of the clash as cultural and religious rather than economic and political and Chapter Three discusses the Cold War politics of Afghanistan.

⁶¹ Huntington interprets “the latest phase of the evolution of conflict in the modern world” as civilizational, not ideological. “The fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural.” For him, religion is the most salient difference between civilizations. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?* *Foreign Affairs* 72:3 (Summer 1993): 22.

⁶² Judith Shulevitz, “The Close Reader: At War With the World,” *The New York Times*, October 21, 2001.

⁶³ *The Economist*, “Treason of Intellectuals?” October 6, 2001.

⁶⁴ Ben R. Furman, “United in Hate,” *FrontPage Magazine*, February 27, 2009. <http://97.74.65.51/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=34110>

⁶⁵ George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language,” in *A Collection of Essays* (New York: Harcourt, 1946), 162.

⁶⁶ Daniel Larison, “Term Limits,” *American Conservative*, November 19, 2007, <http://www.amconmag.com/article/2007/nov/19/00015/>

⁶⁷ Niall Ferguson, “A War of the World,” interview, in *Conversations with History*, Harry Kreisler (October 19, 2006) <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people6/Ferguson/ferguson06-con5.html>.

⁶⁸ Fukuyama and Samin, “Heil Osama, The Great Reformer.” A LexisNexis search of “Saddam and Hitler” renders more than 3000 results both before and after 9/11, e.g. Hans Magnus Enzenberger, “The Gulf War: The Second Coming of Adolf Hitler, Hans Magnus Enzenberger views Saddam Hussein in the Mirror of German History and Concludes that He Must Be Destroyed,” *Guardian* (London), February, 1991 and Suzanne Fields, “From the Holocaust to Saddam: Mislearning the Lessons of History,” *The Washington Times*, April 5, 2004, 19.

⁶⁹ Berman, *Terror and Liberalism*, 8.

⁷⁰ Jeffrey T. Kuhner, “Obama’s Delusion,” *The Washington Times*, November 23, 2008.

⁷¹ Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2009), 48.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 49.

⁷³ In Wendy Brown’s essay “Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy,” *Theory and Event* 7:1 (2003) she painstakingly outlines the differences between the term liberal in American parlance, political and economic liberalism, and neoliberalism. Although she articulately argues for great differences between the different political rationalities, there appears to be overlap in media conceptions of Islam’s opposition to political and economic liberalism. Also see her “American Nightmare” that explores more closely the relationship between neoliberalism, neoconservatism, the resurgence of religion in politics, and what she terms “de-democratization”.

⁷⁴ Zizek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?* 5.

⁷⁵ Jodi Dean, *Zizek’s Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 104.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Zizek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?* 153.

⁷⁸ Siegel, “Sayyid Qutb’s America.” For Qutb’s unnatural fit into the fabric of American suburban life of lawns and cheerleaders, also see Adam Curtis’s *The Power of Nightmares*.

⁷⁹ Yvonne Haddad writes, “The swartheness of his complexion may have been a contributing factor in his sensitivity to what he experienced as strong racial prejudice in the United States.” Haddad, “Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of the Islamic Revival,” 69.

⁸⁰ Laurie Goodstein, “Around Nation, Heated Debates on New Mosques: Shades of Ground Zero,” *New York Times* (August 8, 2010), 1.

⁸¹ Singh, "Afterlife of Fascism," 78.

⁸² Ibid, 81.

⁸³ Zizek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?*, 3.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 73.

⁸⁵ Cherniavsky, "Neocitizenship and Critique," 18.

⁸⁶ Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 87.

⁸⁷ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 67-74. For a discussion of the "marketplace of ideas," see David S. Allen's *Democracy, Inc.: The Press and Law in the Corporate Rationalization of the Public Sphere* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 37-8.

⁸⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1967), 367.

⁸⁹ As Judith Shulevitz says in her New York Times article "At War With the World," Qutb had a direct influence not just on the 9/11 attackers, but on "the Saudi Arabian Muslim opposition; the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria; the Palestinian group Hamas; the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon; Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman...and the Iranian writer Ali Shariati, who helped foster the Islamic revolution in Iran."

⁹⁰ Raban, "My Holy War," 28. Like Ruthven, Berman, and Wright's profiles of Qutb, his article was also turned into a full-length book. *My Holy War: Dispatches From the Home Front* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2006).

⁹¹ Raban, "My Holy War," 28.