

ISLAMOPHOBIA'S TRANSNATIONAL AND SETTLER COLONIAL REALITIES:
GAPS WITHIN ETHNIC STUDIES NARRATIVES

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Master of Arts

In

Ethnic Studies

by

Heather Porter Abu Deiab

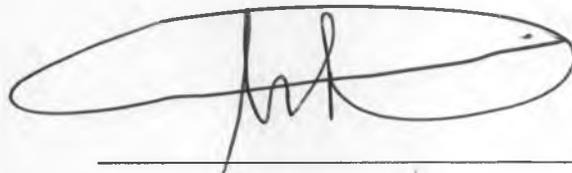
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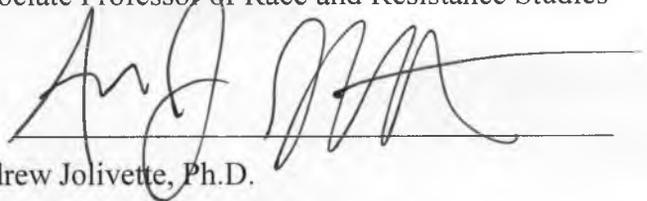
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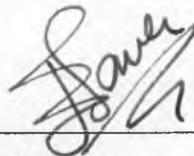
I certify that I have read *Islamophobia's Transnational and Settler Colonial Realities: Gaps Within Ethnic Studies Narratives* by Heather Porter Abu Deiab, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree Master of Arts in Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University.



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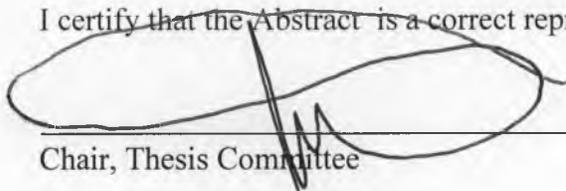
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ISLAMOPHOBIA'S TRANSNATIONAL AND SETTLER COLONIAL REALITIES:
GAPS WITHIN ETHNIC STUDIES NARRATIVES

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San Francisco, California
2016

This research traces Islamophobia from 1492 Spain to its institutionalization in the U.S. settler colonial state in 1776. I argue that settler colonial projects against Indigenous communities and colonized communities inform concepts of race that has developed U.S. Islamophobia and its distinct justifications. My project argues for the centrality of this history of Islamophobia and racial and religious oppression to theoretical frameworks within influential critical race studies and ethnic studies. I offer the tools of transnational and intersectional feminism, and recognition of settler colonialism as intertwined with European colonization as an approach to better incorporate these narratives. Finally I discuss how this invisibilization has undermined the institutionalization of the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diaspora (AMED) Studies at San Francisco State University. Ultimately my research underscores the need to recognize Islamophobia in studies of systematic oppression as well as the futility of separating the transnational beginnings of Islamophobia in the Americas as well as the grounded realities and struggles of Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. from critical race studies.

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this thesis.



Chair, Thesis Committee

5/25/16

Date

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INTRODUCTION

The category of Muslim in the U.S. is simultaneously a religious category and one that encompasses a broad race concept that connects a history of Native America to Black America to Immigrant America in the consolidation of anti-Muslim racism.

Junaid Rana, "The Story of Islamophobia" (2007, p. 3)

Rana speaks here to the core purpose of my thesis. He situates Islamophobia within a framework of critical race studies and as intertwined with the narratives of Indigenous peoples and communities of color in the U.S. I trace a history of Islamophobia from the rise of these discourses and actions in 1492 Spain to the institutionalization of the U.S. settler colonial state in 1776 to demonstrate the effects of Islamophobia on the development of U.S. settler colonialism and the early undertakings of racialization in North America.

I argue that colonial projects with a history of enslavement, genocide, exclusion, and indentured servitude against Indigenous communities and people of color inform concepts of race that have developed U.S. Islamophobia and its distinct justifications. While Islamophobia can be detected throughout the history of U.S. settler colonialism, its foundational elements go back to the Crusades, Spanish Inquisition and establishment of the western colonial era as well as to the otherization of Muslimness in Christian

Europe. The kidnapping and enslavement of Africans show very early travel of Islamophobia to the “New World” (Abdulhadi, 2014, p. 338). Colonial discussions on whether Indigenous people had souls (Wallerstein, 2006) would shape the racial hierarchy, and would further substantiate the colonists’ concept of whiteness and constructed supremacy.

In considering these histories, I critique and highlights the blindspots of some influential race theorists, which are, failing to acknowledge connections of Islamophobia to U.S. settler colonialism and of the concept of the Muslim (and the “Moor”) (Abdulhadi, *1492: Colonialism, Racism and Islamophobia from Andalusia to War on ‘Terror,’* 2015) to racial hierarchies within this country. Critical race narratives used in ethnic studies curricula ignore Muslim bashing and what we can call a historically specific instance of Islamophobia, including those scholars which focus on Indigenous genocide, the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans as well as migration and colonial narratives. By challenging the domesticity of these race studies (Abdulhadi, 2014), I am not only making overt the shortcomings of these histories but also proposing ways to remedy such gaps as I conduct my literature review.

I highlight this overlooked narrative to understand how Islamophobia and the real implications that the invisibilization of the history has had on the creation and stability of the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Studies program at San Francisco State University (SFSU). I further explore how Islamophobic and anti-Muslim discourses and actions have affected the most current struggle for the College of Ethnic

Studies and the threats against it in the forms of destabilization, defunding and a ongoing smear campaign. Accordingly, I will show how incorporating the historical trajectory of Islamophobia as part and parcel of critical race analysis that we employ, is necessary in the fight to save ethnic studies and protect the educational framework of social justice and further the transformation of critical race studies and the concepts of scholar responsibility.

First, to preface my graduate work, I must begin with the story of my academic career as it speaks to my positionality vis-à-vis this research. In my junior year as an undergrad at San Francisco State University I found myself struggling over my choice of major. I was taking classes in the Middle East and Islamic Studies (MEIS) Program and had located and completed all those classes that pertained to my interests. Yet I still found my knowledge not only incomplete but also inconsistent with my commitment to social justice. It was only when I looked beyond my department that I found classes that not only challenged me that which engaged my interest in working with, and being accountable to, my communities. These first classes were offered through the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies (AMED) Studies. After taking all those classes AMED had to offer, I was determined to graduate with a degree that reflected this knowledge, that represented the importance of the lived experiences of these communities and that centralized the importance of the production of knowledge for a just means at the center of the learning process. As a result, I declared and graduated with

a special major designed in consideration of and named after the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies.

Two years later, I joined the graduate program in Ethnic Studies at SFSU in the hope of continuing my research on the systematic oppression of Muslims as part of U.S. structural racism. As a Muslim woman whose research that focused on the racialization of Muslims, I struggled with and was disappointed by the fact that the Ethnic Studies Masters Program offered no AMED Studies. My cohort was required to study curricula in Africana, Latinx, Asian American and American Indian Studies. These seminars provided us with historical and theoretical frameworks for issues and lived experiences of these communities. While the required classes from the program were intense and interesting, the absence studies in and of Arab and Muslim communities was very frustrating. It soon became apparent to me that with no seminar on Arab and Muslim studies, and curricula which did not incorporate shared histories or intersectional realities of Muslim histories, the examination of Islamophobia as a long-standing and central strain of settler colonialism and the establishing of the U.S. settler colonial state was being overlooked. Additionally, representation of Arab and Muslims were being sidelined, and these communities were represented to me and my peers as a “foreign” contingent that did not have a place in the “here”--of the U.S. and Ethnic Studies, as articulated in our College.

As a student, I have witnessed the direct impact of Islamophobia on the AMED Studies program on an institutional level. Additionally, I have been present and engaged in the

most recent struggle against defunding and dismantling of the College of Ethnic Studies by the SFSU administration. This has influenced and directly contributed to my work in the following pages.

Thus, the framings of my research is shaped by my experiences as an Ethnic Studies graduate student. But why 1492--1776? While I agree with arguments that European conceptualizations of Muslim as “other” and the origin of religious hierarchies arose earlier than 1492 (Husain, 2016) and was enhanced by the Papal-led and sanctioned military Crusades, I see to 1492 as a turning point unto which the collapsed relationships and formulations of pagans, enemies and others becomes processed as a framework in which new bodies are organized and others disciplined. As I will discuss in depth later, Spain of 1492 would be the starting point of two projects which had resounding effects on the concept of race and to the historical oppression inherent in the U.S. settler colonial regime. These two historical turning points are the expulsion of the Muslims and Jews from Spain and the colonial invasion of the Americas beginning with Christopher Columbus (Shohat, 2013).

When considering the endpoint of this timeline (as an approximate 1776), my work is inspired by Lorenzo Veracini (2007):

In the U.S. the colonial issue is generally understood as definitively settled by 1783 (and perhaps reopened in 1898, but only as ‘an aberration’) which tends to pre-empt an appraisal of a couple of hundred years of settler colonization.” (p. 4)

Certainly, we recognized the institutionalization of the settler colonial state with the close of the eighteenth century, the period in which English settler colonists declared their separation from the British Empire. Additionally, these years mark the conclusion of the “Enlightenment” era with which secularization of racism and systemization of Western thought and perspective was established as dominant hegemony.

Throughout my work, I will be employ several terms that I wish to define here:

Islamophobia

First and foremost, I wish to define Islamophobia and my expressed usages of the term in my research. The term developed in 1980’s in response to U.S. imperialism and acts of exploitation in Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Afghanistan (Tamdgidi, 2012, p. 57) as well as the occupation of Palestine and the events of 9/11/2001 (Rana, 2007, p. 49). The Runnymede Trust’s definition in the report “Islamophobia: A Challenge to Us All” (1997) would further popularize the term. As they conceptualized it, “Closed views of Islam” are those in which Islam is:

- Seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities.
- Seen as separate and other-- (a) not having any aims or values in common with other cultures (b) not affected by them (c) not influencing them.
- Seen as inferior to the West--barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist.
- Seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorist, engaged in a ‘clash of civilizations.’

- Seen as a political strategy, used for political or military advantage.
- Criticisms made by Islam of 'the West' rejected out of hand.
- Hostility towards Islam used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
- Anti-Muslim hostility accepted as natural and 'normal.' (p. 2)

Here it is important to add the dimension of racialization theory, which scholars such as Junaid Rana (2006), Saher Selod and David Embrick (2013) have argued. Building upon scholar's work, Walter Mignolo (2006) defines Islamophobia, "As an accumulation of meaning from 1492 to today" (p.16). Ramon Grosfoguel and Eric Mielants (2006) consider Islamophobia as racism, cultural racism, Orientalism and epistemic racism, (p. 2) and Mohammad Tamdgidi (2012) instructs us, to "understand and help transcend Islamophobia in a world-history context" (p. 56).

This is essential when we consider that "the figure of the Muslim is one that has been historically racialized through popular forms of racial assignment based on a relationship of biological and cultural ideas...the ethnological history of the race-ing of Islam goes back to the genealogical foundation of the race concept" (Rana, 2007, p. 149). The theory of racialization makes a lot of sense when applied to Muslim. Selod and Embrick (2013) posit that:

Prior to imperialist classifications of race, religious identities were used to organize people into social, economic, and political hierarchies...Racialization as a concept reflects the changing meanings of race within different political, social,

and economic contexts producing a more expansive and complex discussion of race. (p. 646)

Such formulation opens up space to inspect the intersectional meanings of Islamophobia as well as expand the argument by Grosfoguel and Mielants that insists that imperality and coloniality:

...are not a past and transient, but a *continuing and structurally necessary* feature of the modern world, necessitating ever newer forms of what Hatem Bazian (2007) calls ‘organizing principles’ of imperial rule, for which various modes of cultural, religious, gender, and racial subordination and stratification are continually reinvented and employed to maintain the systemic status quo [italics added]. (as cited in Tamdgidi, 2012, p. 60)

Accordingly, we may understand the interrelated struggles, or how “racialized beings” are marked by a “colonial wound” (Mignolo, 2006, p. 13). As a process of racialization, Islamophobia “Should not be exclusively viewed as the process in which new racial categories are created...but should be used to understand how groups are rejected from whiteness and how race and racisms mutate and change depending on the social and historical context.” (S. Selod & D. Embrick, 2013, p. 652)

Orientalism

Edward Said’s foundational text, *Orientalism* (1978) introduced a name and framework for the West’s perceptions and depictions of an imagined “Orient” and East. More than just an inaccurate view of the people in the “Middle East,” Asia and North

Africa, Orientalism provided justifications to imperial and colonial projects by Europe, dominating hegemonic discourse on topics related to those of the East. As Said describes it, Orientalism is “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (p. 3). By setting up this dichotomy of West versus East, Orientalism has particular value as “a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient that it is a veridic discourse about the Orient” (p. 6). As productive of knowledge, Said asserted, “Orientalism is, and does not merely represent, a significant dimension of modern political and intellectual culture” (p. 53). Said demonstrates the ways in which knowledge about the “Orient” and Islam as a generalized understanding of a singular faith and a monolithic people, shapes not only notions of the East but the self-imagining of the West as well. As Said explains in *Orientalism* “As a discipline representing institutionalized Western knowledge of the Orient, Orientalism comes to exert a three-way force, on the Orient, on the Orientalist, and on the Western ‘consumer’ of Orientalism” (p. 67).

Anti-Muslim and Anti-Arab Racism

Throughout my work, I will be explicitly speaking of the trend of Islamophobia. However, it must be understood that this phenomena has worked alongside anti-Muslim and anti-Arab racism. In recognizing Islamophobia as a process of racialization, we can witness how the Arab and Muslim identity are often conflated and perceived as markers of “foreignness.” Steven Salaita (2006) explains the significance:

Arabs in the United States have inherited a peculiar history of exclusionary self-imagining developed during hundreds of years of dispossession and ethnic

cleansing in North America that gathered further momentum from within the institutions of slavery, segregation, and an especially resilient anti-immigration mentality. (p. 247)

Site-specific knowledge of the racial projects in the Americas and the position and subjectivity of Arabs and Muslims as they move throughout this system adds to my arguments that Islamophobia is a continual process of racialization.

Settler Colonialism

Settler colonialism as a project in which outside settlers invade and occupy a land includes genocide and enslavement as expressed inherent needs for its formation. With an official classification of a settler colonial nation between 1776-1783, the United States' projects of dispossession, genocide, enslavement and racialization begins in 1492 and ends with a period which has been depicted as a time of progress and modernity. Intersections of class/labor, nation, race and gender/sexuality require attention here as well as noted by Rabab Abdulhadi (*Problematizing Postcolonial Studies--Reproduction of Knowledge on Colonialism & Colonized*, 2015). Maya Mikdashi (2013) speaks to such intersections, "progress and private property came together. By linking one's relation to the land to one's civilizational status, the birth of liberalism was also a turning point in the legality of dispossession and genocide" (p. 24).

As we look at the transfer of the construction of hierarchies from Europe at the start of the western colonial period, we should also consider the links to global imperial

and colonial projects, as Veracini (2007) notes, “settlers carry colonialism ‘in their bones.’” (p. 2) And this will be especially apparent in the next section.

Racial Projects

I use this term as conceptualized by Michael Omi and Howard Winant’s (1994) influential work on racial formation. Per their definition:

A racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines. Racial projects connect what race *means* in a particular discursive practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially *organized*, based upon that meaning (p. 56).

Indigenous and Native American Communities

Indigenous peoples have a historical continuity within pre-“colonial” societies. Within the texts I summarize and review here, the terms Indigenous and Native American are both used. Outside of directly referencing the authors’ words, I do my best to use the most accurate term to the situations I describe. Rabab Abdulhadi (2011) reminds us that Indigenous peoples of the Americas must be recognized as the original, diverse and still existing inhabitants of the Americas which must be acknowledged and represented in our studies. Maya Mikdashi (2013) adds “It is a violence to consider Indigenous peoples one minority among many other in a multicultural state. Native Americans are not hyphenated Americans; they are not a particular or singular American cultural group. They did not arrive in ships or planes from other parts of the world” (p. 27). It is

important to keep this in mind as I discuss the greater racialization of the Native Americans and the conflation of their identities by the white invaders into a singular monolith of the “Indian.”

“Middle East” and “New World”

I must also remark on two geo-political terms. The first is “Middle East,” a region invented by Alfred Thayer Mahan for the purpose of demarking the territory rich in natural resources (Mignolo, 2006, p. 26). It inconsistently refers to Western Asia, Turkey, Cyprus and Egypt, sometimes the region also suggests inclusion of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of North Africa. As pointed out by Rabab (2014), it is a colonial term, and as such:

...a reference that more accurately points to the West or far-Western positionality vis-à-vis the region, but is not reflective of how the people that inhabit that region view their location; they exist at the center of their geography, not to the east, near east or middle of the east of it. (p. 336)

The concept was created as justification for a longer oppressive project and is contradictory to social justice frameworks. In the same vein, I would like to note that the concept of the “New World” as the land of the Americas, or sometimes North America or the U.S, as “discovered” by Europeans, is an active erasure of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas and a reduction of their diverse histories and lived realities. Therefore I use the double quotation marks to contest the colonialist meaning and the invention of the concepts in the white supremacist imaginary. I attempt to use both terms sparingly, and

most often for highlighting the colonialist perspective. In recognizing the decolonial perspective of this research, that is, a recognition of the cultural hegemonies instituted by European colonization and the response to these powers through the practice and approaches which work to undo its influence, in this specific case, via “epistemic reconstruction” (Quijano 2007, p. 176). I believe that it is also important to acknowledge that this work was produced at San Francisco State University, which sits on the stolen land of the Indigenous Ohlone people¹.

Having set the parameters of my work, defining the purpose, timeline and terms enclosed within, I may now begin to explore the trajectory of the following chapters. In chapter one, I compose a brief timeline of Islamophobia’s impacts and importance in the historical renderings. I will show the reality of Islamophobia as an interlinked history that provides a window into the understandings of the evolution of racial hierarchies of settler colonialism in the Americas from their origins in the Spanish monarchies’ determinant of purity of blood (Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006) to the debate at the School of Salamanca (Wallerstein, 2006). From there, I will discuss the proto-racist (not yet fully racist, although the consequences were not that different) (Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006, p. 3) framings as the start of the U.S. racial formations and the role such concepts played in dispossession, genocide and enslavement. I will then discuss the role of early colonial settlements and violence in the U.S. nation-building project. Highlighting the experiences the colonists brought along from Europe, I will also explore the colonial residue-those

¹ In the spirit of Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi, from whom I learned the importance of recognizing and stating this reality while doing any work, but especially decolonial research.

lingering effects of colonialism that challenge the “post” in postcolonial studies (and rightly so) and the recognition that colonialism leaves a lasting mark in which the restructuring of life around the project is not easily shaken off. The development of secular racism, Eurocentrist discourses and Orientalist views will close out the timeline at the end of the eighteenth century.

Chapter two is a literature review that will scrutinize the invisibilization of Islamophobia in influential race studies while suggesting methods for remedying this absence in these narratives. I will discuss the importance of the study of Arab and Muslim communities in ethnic studies, and the struggle for justice centered scholarship and pedagogy at the university. I will then introduce ways in which intersectionality as those points of intersecting identities such as race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, religion, nationality, language, etc interact within systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989) and feminist frameworks may assist in our understanding of common struggles and interconnected oppressions in regards to settler colonialism, colonialism and imperialism. Reflecting on these findings, I will zoom in on scholarly responsibility and the need for community-accountable research.

After examining the historical links of Islamophobia and the literature which exemplifies its necessity as part of critical race analysis, I will bring the conversation to the current struggle for the College of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University and the ongoing attacks the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies has experienced. In so doing, I will show how incorporating the impact of Islamophobia in

our curriculum and recognizing its role in the dismantling of the college will transform social justice education.

I will conclude my research in suggesting future work on this topic, including the expansion of the Islamophobia timeline and by problematizing a longer discussion with a study on anti-Muslim and anti-Arab racism as well as a longer history of Orientalism.

ISLAMOPHOBIA AS INTERLINKING HISTORIES

Perhaps we can begin by recalling what we're urged to forget about the USA and Europe? For example, that the USA is part of the territory many First Nation peoples have long called Turtle Island. To evoke this space's Native name is to resist forced amnesia about its status as a settler colony produced through attempted genocide, slavery and the many forms of labor exploitation of subjects from subaltern sites (in the sense of Gramsci) in the Global South and Europe.

Paola Bacchetta in a conversation with Jin Haritaworn, discussing the feminist queer trans-Atlantic. In "There are Many Transatlantics: Homonationalism, Homotransnationalism and Feminist-Queer-Trans of Color Theories and Practices." (2011, p. 137)

When Bacchetta speaks to the forced amnesia of the West, of the enslavement, genocide and exploitation that formed these nation states at the expense of colonized peoples, at what moment, indeed in what year and on which site, do we use as a starting point in beginning to reclaim the narratives and uncover those silenced histories?

If it is said that U.S. settler colonialism and racial projects began domestically, that the establishing moments are marked when the first invaders and colonists set foot on Indigenous land, to whom does this afford power? In using the hegemonic time and place pressed into dominant narrative, are we assisting the misrepresentation of the archive and

further centering white supremacist patriarchal capitalist heteronormative exceptionalism via this incorrect and inadequate tale? How does this unite those communities who have felt the effects of settler colonialism before it could even be named as so, in its journey and transmission from Europe to the U.S? Furthermore, what does this do to recognize the diasporic realities and intertwined pasts of Indigenous peoples and communities of color?

What does it mean to evoke the history of settler colonialism in discussion of the “transAtlantic” or rather, the transAtlantics? It is a recognition that settler colonialism and the corresponding race, class and sex/gender hierarchies did not develop in a vacuum. European colonists invaded the Americas with an established hierarchy, which was quickly applied and then transformed to meet the needs of the white colonists. The markers of difference that these colonists employed were based on the Muslim and Moorish “other.” From proto-racism, to racialization-the Muslim was firstly enemy (Husain, 2016), or a people of the wrong religion (Maldonado-Torres, 2006) and eventually the subhuman other (Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006). It is within the colonial projects of the Americas that these subjectivities--or identities as determined by the colonial power and through a binary framework which sought to label others while determining the concepts that would make up ‘Christianness,’ ‘Europeanness,’ and ‘Americanness,’ and which were transferred, evolved and spread. Islamophobia was the stepping stone in the routes taken, the justification for the “exploration” and the racialized body that would inform the genocide and oppression of the Indigenous peoples and the

kidnapping and enslavement of African populations. To acknowledge the settler colonial reality of the U.S. is to recognize the Indigenous and African American experiences. To know the settler colonial reality of the U.S. is to also identify and trace the Islamophobic attitudes and actions that informed the projects and racializations which worked for the institutionalization of the colonial state. And in the following pages, through my compiled history of settler colonialism between 1492 and 1776, I will present the intersecting trajectories of the communities changed by the swell of Islamophobia and its influence in this period.

Spain, 1492: In which the *Reconquista* is ended in a final battle, and the Inquisition's Cleansing of Blood and the Edict of Expulsion (known as the Alhambra Decree) were enacted against Muslims and Jews of Spain, while at the same time, Columbus sets sail--and in an effort to avoid the Muslim Moor enemy, goes west and "discovers" the "New World" (Shohat, 2013). These parallel moments would work in unison to build internal and external imagined boundaries, further stimulated by the burgeoning united Christian identity of the Europeans.

With the Castilian-controlled Spanish Empire capturing and take-over of the Iberian Peninsula, the long rule of the Muslim Moors end, and a shadow of persecution settled over the Jewish and Muslim communities in the region. While increased persecution against Muslims turned to outright violent expulsion, Christianity took hold in response to the freshly refortified Muslim enemy (Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006). With

the Alhambra Decree, Jews and Muslims were ordered to leave or convert upon the threat of death.

Identified as worshipping of the “wrong God,” those remaining Jews and Muslims were forced to convert throughout these events, when the concept of the purity of blood arises, in which only Christian-born Europeans could claim now true “cleanliness of blood and spirit.” Jews and Muslims were consistently vilified under the suspicion of practicing Judaism and Islam in secret. Ramon Grosfoguel and Eric Mielants (2006) note that that the “‘purity of blood’ served as a “technology of power to trace the religious ancestry of the population” (p. 3). Cleanliness of blood meant that even converts couldn’t reach the status of Christian born (and as concepts of supremacy becomes considered an essential aspect of character it evokes the formation of biological racism). Walter Mignolo in his work *Islamophobia/ Hispanophobia! (Re)Configuration of the Racial Imperial Colonial Matrix* (2006) complicates this further, he suggests the mixed-race Moors were already being positioned differently, as distinguishable from Visigothic whites from Spain” (p. 15). This stands to show that markers of racial difference, attached to a biologic impurity were already beginning to take hold.

These projects were, of course, inundated by other inherited meanings and ascriptions. Keep in mind that these moments followed closely on the heels of the Crusades--in part, an attempt to control Muslim routes (Shohat, 2013) and as well as sanctify the looting and stealing of land and from which, the gap between Christian aristocracy and peasants was closed, neutralizing class antagonisms and introducing a

projected racial sameness and unity in Christian (white) supremacy (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015, p. 33).

Walter Mignolo, reflects on the 1492 moment, “The conflict between Christianity and Islam became more focused in the Iberian Peninsula. The rapid rise of castile from a kingdom to a world and capitalist empire re-mapped the long history of conflict between Muslims and Christians.” (2006, p. 15) We may then understand how “When Western Christians arrived to las Indias Occidentales on Columbus’ map, they already had their experience of dispossessing people from their land and legitimizing Christian appropriation” (Mignolo, 2006, p. 24). Columbus is reflective of the escalating colonialist mindset and the transfer of these ideas between Europe and the Americas. The invader’s notion that Indigenous people would make “good servants” was based on his belief that Native Americans had “no religion” (Maldonado-Torres, 2006). Indeed, Spanish missionaries unable to categorize Indigenous belief structures into Abrahamic religious structure, assumed these peoples to be “under guidance of the Devil.” (Mignolo, 2006, p. 19)

With the struggle to subjugate Native Americans into this religious hierarchy, the invaders sought a new approach. Jews and Muslims were of the wrong God, the Indigenous peoples had no God, and therefore, how could they be incorporated into the already imagined subjectivities? The debate of Sepulveda vs. Las Casas in the School of Salamanca in the 1550’s attempted to determine the position of the Native Americans vis-à-vis the religion of the empire. Sepulveda argued that Indigenous people have no

soul and thus can be enslaved, which reflects the biological racism that was beginning to formulate and take hold, while Las Casas argued that Native Americans are “without a soul” and can be Christianized. Such an argument will reemerge as the cultural racism that serves white supremacist thinking later down the line. Las Casas called for Africans to replace the Indigenous peoples because Africans weren’t just people “without religion” but also “without a soul.” (Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006, p. 3)

We already know that the argument that Native Americans could be converted or “Christianized” did not protect the Indigenous populations. Neither conversion nor pacifism would protect the peoples, further cementing the idea that the concept of their sub-humanity was part of a growing racialized structure, which grew with the invaders’ and colonists’ white supremacy. (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015) In fact, it was this “decimation of Indigenous population not too long after discovery, led to the introduction of enslaved labor force from Africa” (Maldonado-Torres, 2006, p. 238). Maldonado-Torres (2006) explains the significance of the religious identifiers. It came to “serve a twofold role; it justified heavy and constant Christianization, while at the same time it legitimizes slavery on a new basis. Now slavery was not going to be seen as the outcome of war with infidels, pagans or idolaters, but as the natural condition of subjects whose very humanity was put in question.” (p. 237) According to the author, it was:

The introduction of the black African to the Americas...in the face of the decimation of indigenous peoples and increasing attempts to incorporate them within the socio-religious model based on epistemic differences among subjects

with different religions, black Africans not only provided labour but also served to confirm and deepen the standards of sub-humanity opened up by the new postreligious episteme...blackness thus became the non-religious, purely phenotypical and thus biological, determinant that indicated inferiority and enslaved nature. (2006, p. 239)

Add to this the evidence that African people's had been marked as "Moors" as understood to represent "Muslims" (Abdulhadi, *Situated Knowledge Production & Representation of Arabs and Muslims*, 2015) and we can understand that in conjunction with the debate over whether they possessed a soul, their enslavement was legitimized by the then valid terms of the Christian feudal episteme, according to which it was possible to enslave vanquished combatants and declare them enemies of the Christian faith. (Rana, 2007) Additionally, for greater context, we must reflect on the previous dispatching of several expeditions by the Portuguese state to Africa, in an attempt to find a sea-route that would lead through the invented boundary between the habitable temperate zone of Europe and the inhabitable torrid zones. This is an important marker in the notion of internal and external imagined boundaries, a transformation of the previous Christian geography which as described by Nelson Maldonado-Torres, saw Europe as the habitable lands graced by life. The newly "discovered" peoples of Africa upset this understanding and were quickly labeled Moors in an attempt to superimpose them into the existing hierarchy. Moor was a mark of "other" and whether the people encountered practiced Islam or not hardly mattered. (N. Maldonado-Torres, 2006)

Certainly though, we must also not discount the point that some of the West Africans kidnapped and enslaved were Muslims who carried with them their Muslimness (Abdulhadi, 2014). As a vital part of the Black diaspora, enslaved Africans practiced their religion in the Americas (Rana, 2007). With this, enslaved Africans would be assigned a new symbolic construct of race. Blackness becomes a biological marker of difference alongside the classification of being “without God.” And with the Eurocentric labeling, shared histories of coloniality are uncovered. Enslaved Africans did not choose to be labeled “Black” and Indigenous peoples did not choose to be subsumed under singular classification of “Indian,” (Mignolo, 2006) rather it was the invaders and settlers who determined the identity of the colonized people. Mignolo (2006) speaks to the significance of the transnational fortification of religious to racial thinking in the Americas,

In 1492, the Moors and the Jews were prosecuted in the Iberian Peninsula; Indians were ‘discovered’ in the New World and massive contingents of African slaves were transported through the Atlantic. The ‘discovery’ of the New World posed a different problem for Western Christians dealing with Muslims, Jews and Turks: if Jews and Moors were classified according to their belief in the wrong God, Indians (and later on Black Africans), had to be classified assuming that they had no religion. Thus, the question of ‘purity of blood’ acquired in the New World had a meaning totally different from the one it had in the Iberian Peninsula...the

New World brought a different dimension to the classificatory and hierarchical system.” (p. 17)

The experiences Europeans had with Muslims (or as Mignolo identifies them, “Moors”-- highlighting his position that a process of racialization based on racial difference was already underway) and Turks of the competing Ottoman Empire fueled the concept of the “enemy other” which would develop into the religious and then racial hierarchies that clung to the invaders as they arrived. This racist imaginary as influenced by throughout time, would be extended to all non-European people starting with African slave trade in sixteenth century. Previous slave trades (such as the Arab enslavement of Africans which most usually occurred as a circumstance of war), for comparison, were not based on racial lines and the enslaved were not treated as personal property and had opportunities for upward mobility (Abulhawa, 2013). Rather, this new classification was so influential and systematized that it then extended back to the people of the “wrong god,” outside of the Americas, furthering the imperial and colonial difference and once again, tying the U.S. settler colonial project back to its European roots.

A “hegemonic frame of knowledge” (Mignolo, 2006) was garnered from the Christian European experience with Muslims and evolved in the Americas, assisting in the building of the U.S. settler colonial project. In addition to this, a firsthand knowledge of subjugation based on the colonization of other Europeans by their own leaders would be brought over by the colonists.

In her book *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* (2015) Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz points to the effects of the Crusades in Europe. As a project which allowed peasantry to be terrorized and robbed, resulting in "European peasantry forced off land, no food, nothing to sell but labor," (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015, p. 33) a catalyst for migration and colonization begins.

A special focus on British colonists is in order, especially when we consider the end of our timeline (1776)--or the moment at which British settlers declared their "independence" from the monarchy and asserted their sovereignty on the land located within the thirteen original colonies of North America. With this, it is also interesting to note that many of the initial British settlers were military men with experience from the anti-Muslim crusades. (R. Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015, p. 59)

Furthermore, brutal settler colonial projects by the British in Scotland, Wales and Ireland, in which tactics of ethnic cleansing and displacement, served as practice for the brutal genocide of the Indigenous populations in the U.S. In fact, Ulster-Scots-settlers sent by Britain to Ireland coincided with colonization of U.S. and many settlers to U.S. colonies. (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015) And, in further recognition of the impact of the 1492 moment, we may reflect on how the Spanish caste system was absorbed by England and combined with perspectives from invasions of Ireland and the acts of settler colonialism and genocide (Mignolo, 2006). Junaid Rana (2007) explains the resounding effects of such an adoption, "Contact with the Spanish led to a configuration of Indians-as-Muslims; and the opposite took place in the British imagination--thinking of Islam and

Muslims through the Spanish ethnologies of American Indians in the configuration of Muslims-as-Indians.” (p. 154) Indeed, we know of the reality that, British men of letters and officers of the State did not look at the Ottoman Empire with friendly eyes.” (Mignolo, 2006) Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2015) expands upon this point:

Among the initial leaders of [the planting of the British colonies in North America] were military men—mercenaries—who brought with them their previous war experiences...those who had put together and led the first colonial armies...had fought in the bitter, brutal and bloody religious wars ongoing in Europe at the time of the first settlements. They had long practiced burning towns and fields and killing the unarmed and venerable. (pp. 59-60)

Other effects of this adoption of the otherization classifications and the travel of hierarchies from Europe to the U.S. can be seen in this additional example as supplied by Dunbar-Ortiz (2015), English parliament fighting perceived backwardness led to criminalization of women and “...in language reminiscent of that used to condemn witches [poor peasant women targeted after privatization of land], [English settlers] quickly identified the Indigenous populations as inherently children of Satan and ‘servants of the devil’ who deserved to be killed.” (p. 36) And later, during the infamous Salem witch trials, authorities of the town would justify their acts by suggesting that these settlers were “inhabiting land controlled by the devil” (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015, p. 36)

Such an illustration may allow us a segue into some brief analysis of the impact of gender and sexuality in the settler colonial project. Rana (2007) provides the following example:

Throughout the sixteenth century into the seventeenth and eighteenth, ideas of racial difference were encapsulated through religious difference, and in the case of Native Americans and Muslims, sexual difference...Through Christian eyes, both Muslims and American Indians were considered sodomites that engaged in widespread homosexuality...This inference was not only based on sexual practices deemed immoral, but the construction of forms of masculinity considered unsuitable to a patriarchal Catholicism. (p. 154)

Understanding of the U.S. projects of racialization helps us recognize how gender and sexuality may be applied, perceived or condemned in conjunction with racial thinking. As well, Maldonado-Torres (2006) highlights that “Since the sixteenth century, globalization has been driven by a form of power that brings together capitalism and race, mutually reinforcing structure of capitalism and race-shaped social and labor roles of genders” (p. 233) This is prevalent in the historical uncovering of realities such as male settlers being required to serve in the military in order to raze and raid Indigenous communities and work as slave patrols. (R. Dunbar-Ortiz, 2015). This also points to the gendered violence that serves the nation-building project. Discourses such as those showcased in the Orientalist narratives adopted by England, France and Germany which provided logic for the colonization of Africa and Asia. Pushed by economic interests and fueled by the

wealth that came from exploiting, decimating and enslaving the Indigenous and African peoples, European states proliferated such stereotypes of sex and gender unto the “natives.”

At this point, it would be proper to address the colonial residue that results from the colonial projects of these and other European nations. An interest in exploitation for natural resources provided a driving force for further evolution of the religious and racial hierarchies, similar to and building from its first display in the invasion of the Americas. Ramon Grosfoguel and Eric Mielants (2006) make these connections,

The association of Muslims with the colonial subjects of Western empires in the minds of white populations is simply a given in the core of the ‘modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system.’ This links Islamophobia to an old colonial racism that is still alive in the world today...Thus Islamophobia as a fear or hatred of Muslims is associated with anti-Arab, anti-Asian, and anti-Black racism. (p. 5)

And while we must heed the cautioning of Ella Shohat (2013) when she writes, “Eurocentrist discourse is not monolithic; it displays regional variations, even in the work of the same thinker” (p. 47). Thus, we need to recognize the intertwined and influential discourse that allows us to examine how aspects of these hierarchies are transferred and shared.

It was the influence of the Enlightenment and the ushering in of concepts of secularism and modernity in the eighteenth century that provided me a final point of analysis in the dynamics of Islamophobia and the institutionalization of the U.S. settler

colonial state. The resulting adoption of secular racism and the subalterization and inferiorization of Islam and others marked as non-European was influenced by the ego-politics in the style of Rene Descartes in the sixteenth century in which “Western men replace God as foundation of knowledge” (Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006, p. 8). Within their article, “The Long-Duree Entanglement Between Islamophobia and Racism in the Modern/Colonial Capitalist/Patriarchal World-System” (2006), Ramon Grosfoguel and Eric Meilants explore the concept of ego-politics, in which the Western male knowledge is situated as “universal, neutral, value free and objective” (p. 8) The claim of the “panoptic gaze” represented the view as “someone who is at the center of the world because he has conquered it” (2006, p. 8) White colonists, fully confident in their fantasy of superiority and secular virtue, change their perception of Muslims as the people of the wrong religion to a people without civilization. Similarly, the focus goes from an inferiorization of religions to an inferiorization of those practicing those religions (R. Grosfoguel & E. Mielants, 2006). Rana (2007) states, “Hence in the modern form of racism we see the displacement of religion and second the displacement of Islamophobia as racism.” (p. 153) This fits neatly with the explanation from Grosfoguel and Mielants (2006), “Descartes’ *ego-cogito* (‘I think therefore I am’) was preceded by 150 years of the *ego-conquiritus* (‘I conquer, therefore I am’). The God-eye view defended by Descartes transferred the attributes of the Christian God to the Western men” (p. 8) Such changes would aid in the development of what Mignolo (2006) describes as, “discourses

of fear and difference,” supporting coloniality as the concept of defending sites of power.
(p. 17)

In tracing the rise of religious to racial hierarchies, the influence on the evolving classifications of the non-European, I've identified the intersectional points between coloniality and sexual and gendered oppressions, showed the ways that Orientalism, European colonial and imperial projects continued to impact the process of U.S. settler colonialism and explored the ways in which a secularized racial thinking would usher in the founding of the state. By putting these historical narratives in conversation, I hope to have highlighted the interlinked histories and common struggles that I argue, must be introduced and sustained in a framework of comparative ethnic studies and critical race studies.

**INVISIBILIZING ISLAMOPHOBIA: WESTERNIZED UNIVERSITIES,
CRITICAL RACE FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS FOR JUSTICE IN ETHNIC
STUDIES**

“Settler colonialism is an inherited silence where you know memories are supposed to be.”

Maya Mikdashi, “What Is Settler Colonialism? (for Leo Delano Ames Jr.)” (2013, p. 31)

After 500 years of, westernized thought and the ongoing racialization, inferiorization and subjugation of U.S. settler colonialism, Indigenous communities and people of color still struggle to recollect, assemble and find space to recover and reclaim the histories washed away by the racist, sexist, patriarchal, capitalist systems that clouded the Americas in 1492 and rained down a storm which attempted to stifle and drown the colonized peoples. The colonizers have sought to control the narratives, fashion the archives and historicize themselves as hero. Within five centuries of Westernized universities, knowledge is “first Christian-centric, then Eurocentric, and, more recently, [corporate-centric].” (Grosfoguel, 2012, p. 84) When social theory from just five colonial states (England, France, Germany, Italy and the United States) dominate the field, how do we undo the white male European cannon which continues to see the colonized “other” as “object” rather than knowledge producing “subjects?” (R. Grosfoguel, 2012:

81 & 84) What challenges do we face and what inherited silences do we still struggle to uncover? And what tools may be useful in this historical and archeological project?

The foundational history of Islamophobia in U.S. settler colonialism is now evident from my examination. By showing links between developing racial categories and Eurocentrism, I have highlighted the hegemonic frame of knowledge that threatens the exclusion of this narrative. I will now examine how these histories of Islamophobia have been disregarded and what this means for the inclusion of Arab and Muslim narratives (and those of non-Arabs in Arab majority communities and non-Muslims in Muslim majority communities) in influential critical race studies and ethnic studies. The decolonization of academic spaces, suggests the need to go beyond a diagnosis and offer tools and frameworks which, in my opinion, contributes to the strengthening of social justice in academia and encouraging a transformation of the university. As an academic space which was created for people of color to tell their own stories and use community-based methodologies and conduct accountable research, ethnic studies is that relevant place in which those committed to social justice and for the resistance of Eurocentric discourse seek out scholarship for these transformations.

Having reviewed the development of Islamophobia from 1492 to 1776, it is surprising that influential scholars of critical race texts do not refer to this phenomena but rather, fail to conceptualize it as part of larger colonial and imperial project. In "The Story of Islamophobia" (2007) Junaid Rana follows the evolution of Islamophobia from Spain to the U.S., describing the points of change that influence the move from a

religious to racial hierarchy, incorporating a framework of racialization and a critique of critical race studies. The author shows that in texts such as Omi and Winant: *Racial Formation of the United States* (1994), George Fredrickson: *Racism a Short History* (2002), and Howard Winant: *The World is a Ghetto* (2009) (as examples of scholarly material that shape critical curricula) Islamophobia is either described as a side effect of anti-Semitism, as though Muslims were chased from the Iberian peninsula only as consequence of the expulsion of Jews (trivializing the perceived Muslim as other framework and invisibilizing the long history between Christian Europe and Muslim powers) or even suggesting that anti-Semitism was constructed through Moorish rule and then was adopted by the Spanish empire (Rana, 2007). Such perspectives further a notion of the Muslim as inherently violent and anti-Semitic which reflects the racist and Islamophobic viewpoints of some scholars as well as the disconnect between struggles for justice and the Muslim as person of color, while placing Muslims and Arabs in the realm of whiteness and by extension, white supremacy. Rana continues, “Scholars argue that the act of expulsion for Muslims was in the context of war, but for Jews it was the result of long-standing anti-Semitism” (p. 154). This blindness to the realities of Islamophobia and the oppression of Muslims leads to an incomplete understanding of the development of U.S. racial hierarchies.

In another problematic method, some scholars fail to examine the development of racialized thought from point of 1492 or disregard the development of hierarchies in the U.S. from the sphere of European colonial projects. Their studies focus on the eighteenth

century onward with no regard to the colonial projects of that period or the hundreds of years before it. Walter D. Mignolo examines these issues in his article, "Islamophobia/Hispanophobia: The (Re) Configuration of the Racial Imperial/Colonial Matrix." By showing the development of Islamophobia from a point of 1492 and identifying and naming the internal and external colonial/imperial differences which worked to racialize and otherize in the invasion of the Americas, being revitalized in the Enlightenment period and continuing its rationality up to today, Mignolo proves the interconnectivities within the settler colonial project in the U.S. and the European colonial and imperial race. The author identifies Anibal Quijano, Sylvia Winter and Immanuel Wallerstein as the producers of the foundational articles for the logic of the articulation of race and racism of the fifteenth and sixteenth century which have "shifted radically the perspective and conceptualization of race/racism from the internal history of European modernity...to the interrelated histories of modernity/coloniality." (2006, p. 18) According to Mignolo, their works have provided:

A conceptual reconfiguration of previous mutual conceptualizations between Christians, Moors, and Jews; b) the new configuration between Christians, Indians, Blacks in New World; c) the interrelations between (a) and (b); and--last but not least-- d) the translation of race into racism that took place in the sixteenth century that was (and still is) strictly related to the historical foundation of capitalism. (2006, p. 18)

With this review Mignolo states, “Today, scholars revisiting the concept of race--most of them in England, The U.S., Germany and France--start in the eighteenth century... [with] evidently no idea of what happened before 1760, as if the idea really emerged in the heart of Europe without any relation to the European colonies since the sixteenth century.” (p. 20) So we see that not only do we require 1492 as an earlier starting period than the eighteenth century, but a recognition of the reality of the U.S. settler colonial project as developing within the colonial and imperial projects of Europe, following the example of the works as described by Mignolo. Furthermore, we must be aware of the position of the Muslim as one of the bodies subjected in and whose otherization was influential to the colonization of the Americas.

Setting the time, place and context of Islamophobia within our studies also pushes us to expand the concept of race. Saher Selod and David Embrick attempt to do just that in “Racialization and Muslims: Situating the Muslim Experience in Race Scholarship.” Selod and Embrick (2013) define Islamophobia’s conceptual history as the “Racial ascription of bodily comportment, superimposition and dissimulation” (p. 651). They argue that the theory of racialization captures the fluidity of hierarchies, such as the development of racial thinking from religious otherization in the U.S. The authors state:

Racialization should not be exclusively viewed as the process in which new racial categories are created...but should be used to understand how groups are rejected from whiteness and how race and racisms mutate and change depending on the social and historical context. (p. 652)

This pairs firmly with my earlier historical compilation and especially with Junaid Rana's analysis. Rana (2007) detects the Muslim as the geographically external "other," based on those notions of body and cultural features. Furthermore we may link this to the naming of Black Africans "Moors" by the Portuguese sailors prior to 1492 and connecting them to this Muslim outsider. Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2006) notes in his historical analysis that it was with a geographical move through the Middle Passage, and the experience of kidnapping and enslavement that provided the conditions for the change in subjectivity from Moor to Black:

...black Africans ceased to be mere 'idolaters' and became *negros* and *negras*...*it was as if in the Middle Passage black Africans were born again into a new system of symbolic representation where the colour of their skin, rather than religion (true or false, existent or not), became in itself the mark of sub-humanity* (2006, p.239)

This also makes us witness to processes of racialization in which not just phenotypical differences but also geography, nation, culture, language, religion, gender and sexuality are tied to concepts of civilization or barbarity (Selod & Embrick, 2013). Understanding these factors in the process of racialized thinking would aid in the correction of those central critical race texts and allow us to extend the timeline and geo-political limits of U.S. settler colonial racial projects and fully recognize the impact of Islamophobia to the colonial and imperial matrix.

Unfortunately, the scholarly pursuits of such context is limited. Therefore, this erasure continues in some conversations of (or conversations without) the presence and impact of the transnational flow of power and hegemony. Having spoken to the shortcomings of some influential critical race studies, it is also necessary to speak to the site in which these studies are used--and the places where the curriculum has defined or disregarded Islamophobia. The space of ethnic studies is also challenged when it comes to recognizing the Arab and Muslim perspective and the subject of Islamophobia as part of the lived experience of these communities as well as a historical reality.

It is with this acknowledgement that I would like to touch on the consequences of domesticity in critical race and ethnic studies. Rabab Abdulhadi remarks in "Contesting the Foreign/Domestic Divide: Arab Revolutions and American Studies," (2014) that even "the most radical scholars and radical spaces" fall to the "conventional wisdom of the U.S. academy (and in public discourse) that developments outside U.S. geographical borders are 'foreign' (p. 335). In this article, she notes the role of the U.S. in the Arab World, via the interventions, invasion and doctrines in the region and identifying them as "an integral part of the U.S. formation as a settler colony that continues to need to intervene and expand." (2014, p. 339) Abdulhadi remind us that those invasions, intervention and oppression of communities who fall outside the U.S. borders are often unrecognized as connected to continual racial projects in the state. (2014)

Repercussions to the full meaning of Diaspora and transnational realities, result in the silencing of Arab and Muslim histories or their treatment as "special guests." Ella

Shohat critiques the concept as she calls it, "Terra Firma," in her 2013 article, "The Sephardi-Moorish Atlantic: Between Orientalism and Occidentalism." In this piece Shohat details the formation of what she calls Orientalist thought from a point of 1492 and within Eurocentric discourse whilst navigating the history of postcolonial theory while critiquing the "post" designation of colonialism, as well as criticizing the study of the "Middle East." She speaks to Abdulhadi's analysis of the domestication in her questioning of the ethnic studies and area studies designation "according to national or regional boundaries" and "in this sense both ...marginalize Middle Eastern Americans by positioning them as 'foreigners' to be studied merely 'over there,' denying their entry into a scholarly framework of race and ethnicity in the Americas." (p. 56) This "internal focus" of ethnic studies as she highlights, exemplifies the ways in which not only the colonial historical relevance of Islamophobia is discounted, but that the identities of Arab and Muslim are as well. In addition to the internal vs. external or the domestic perspective that some take on within ethnic studies, the problematic reality of identity politics is also challenging the inclusion of Arabs and Muslims, seen as outliers--in terms of both race and geography.

We may look to Junaid Rana (2007) to make the point that although the main markers of racism exist in the power of imaginary phenotypes, the reality of racial essentialism and racialization is far more complex. For within the recognition by Shohat (2013) that "Ethnic Studies...has generally assumed a limited and fixed conceptualization of American race/ethnicity...like the census, [Ethnic Studies] has defined itself primarily

thorough four ethnic categories: African-American studies, Asian American studies, Native American studies, and Chicano/Latino studies,” (p. 21) we notice that Arab and Muslim ethnicities are not explicitly invited to the table. Now, I do not intend to argue for an exceptionalizing of an “Arab and Muslim” department as especially more important than these others (Abdulhadi, *Situated Knowledge Production & Representation of Arabs and Muslims*, 2015). Rather, in the following deconstruction of the issues of “identity politics” in ethnic studies I suggest that a recognition of the common struggles shared by these groups must be better forged and an identification of the mutual histories as tied to colonialism and imperialism must be made.

As ethnic studies struggles within a Westernized university setting in which the white male cannon provides the structure for discourse, Ramon Grosfoguel (2012) calls for the production of “a pluriversal decolonial social science and humanities” (p. 84). In his article “The Dilemmas of Ethnic Studies in the United States: Between Liberal Multiculturalism, Identity Politics, Disciplinary Colonization, and Decolonial Epistemologies,” Grosfoguel critiques the Eurocentric epistemology which is guiding thought in Westernized Universities and the development of “an identitarian and culturalist reductionism that ends up essentializing and naturalizing cultural identities.” (p. 84) Detailing the issues as they affect ethnic studies via the practice of the “subaltern form of identity politics,” Grosfoguel summarizes,

...those forms of ‘identity politics’ that absolutize and privilege the ‘identities’ and ‘projects’ of their own ethnic/racial groups at the expense of other

racialized/inferiorized subjects lead them to view other ethnic/racial groups with suspicion and as competitors, including those who share a similar situation of ethnic/racial discrimination. The scholars who promote the worst forms of 'identity politics' in ethnic studies programs end up: 1) celebrating their own identity while leaving ethnic/racial hierarchies as such intact; or 2) emphasizing their own ethnic/racial group, gazing at their own naval and, as a result, considering themselves to be in constant competition with other groups that are equally discriminated against, thereby contributing to the reproduction of a system of 'divide and conquer' which also maintains intact the status quo of ethnic/racial hierarchies." (p. 86)

Having been placed outside the area of inquiry, Arabs and Muslims struggle for recognition. Furthermore, the principles of some ethnic studies academic spaces in which ethnic and racial groups develop and/or are pressured to take on a self-preserving functionality in contrast to a cross-department/scholarship mode, Arabs and Muslims are perceived as newcomers and not belonging, thanks to the blindness to the aspects of structural Islamophobia in settler colonial hierarchies, the invisibilization of the presence of Black Muslims among those enslaved, and the arrival of crypto-Muslims who were brought along with the Spanish "expeditions" to the Americas. Additionally, as interest in Arab and Muslim narratives focus on the moment of 9/11/2001, without recognition of their realities and experiences in their homelands or the diasporas, these communities struggle to build a place and secure the resources necessary for inclusion in ethnic studies

narratives. While departments built on those four ethnicities, Asian American Studies, Africana Studies, Raza/Latinx Studies and American Indian Studies hold histories and analysis that are intertwined with the history as I have presented it here, the curriculum is often bare of these issues or the realities of the transnational or Islamophobia's influence on settler colonialism in the Americas. Abdulhadi reminds us that the nature of ethnic studies should be justice-centered knowledge, the centrality of the lived experiences of marginalized communities, and community-accountable research (2014). This further strengthens the points that critical race theories and ethnic studies programs/departments or colleges that do not incorporate the impact of Islamophobia are not just missing key historical facts, but are rather creating hurdles for the work that we claim to be inherent to ethnic studies as well as erasing the presence of Arab and Muslims as oppressed groups and people of color and dissolving the connectivity between shared or interrelated struggles with other racialized groups.

As we trace the history of Islamophobia "then" we must also identify it in the "now." The centrality of this long-standing discourse, has been shown here to be a tool for Eurocentrist thought and white supremacist hierarchies. As a foundational instrument in the U.S. settler colonial project, Islamophobia settled in with the colonists and its roots would continue to fortify its expanding influence that began with the otherizing of the Muslim but that would develop into an ever greater space of racial thinking and white supremacist actions. Knowing Islamophobia in the contemporary period and pushing for the inclusion of Arab and Muslim focused studies means that anti-Arab racism and

Orientalism must also be acknowledged as contributing to and solidifying the evolution of white supremacy in the U.S. These interlinking processes must also be understood by their limitations, in order to recognize the spread and complexity of issues that Arabs and Muslims have faced in the past and the present. Furthermore, by interrogating the identification of Arab and Muslim as “foreigner” and the way that gender and sexuality is deployed in the study of these communities, we may include a much-needed analysis of gender and sexuality, furthering the scope of the impact their exclusion brings. I have shown how the Islamophobia of settler colonialism, along with Eurocentric discourse and the construction of a unified Christian whiteness began a hegemonic control over knowledge production. This too we must identify and bring into conversation with the challenges facing these communities and as a general trend that has worked against radical and critical analysis and inclusion in ethnic studies. As an example of the ways in which Arabs (and by some extents, Muslims) are removed from the lens of analysis and how they may be better incorporated, I present two articles dealing with these issues.

In his article, “Beyond Orientalism and Islamophobia: 9/11, Anti-Arab Racism, and the Mythos of National Pride” (2006) Steven Salaita recognizes the limitations of an inherited Orientalism and Islamophobia as explanations for the stereotyping and bigotry against Arab Americans. Although the title of his work suggests a departure from a discussion of Islamophobia, his points are innately tied to an exploration of the specificities of the phenomena that branch out as anti-Arab racism. He sets the stage for understanding the context of the racialized body as part of a greater settler colonial

tradition in the U.S. He states, "Arabs in the United States have inherited a peculiar history of exclusionary self-imaging developed during hundreds of years of dispossession and ethnic cleansing in North America that gathered further momentum from within the institutions of slavery, segregation, and an especially resilient anti-immigration mentality." (2006, p. 247) I agree with his point, as it recognizes the position of Arabs (as often conflated with Muslim) in the social-historical context of continual racialization.

Indeed, site-specific knowledge of the racial projects in the Americas is essential in our arguments that Islamophobia, as racialization, may develop new markers of difference to identify and stereotype Muslims. Salaita helps us recognize the limits of Orientalism, Anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia as well as the processes that inform it. Through this acknowledgement, we may encourage an examination of those aspects that have aided in the formation of Islamophobia in the United States and trace where it departs from other ideologies and racisms.

Salaita (2006) makes another point, "although diverse religiously, culturally, geographically, economically, and politically, Arab Americans generally have been homogenized in various American discourses as an unstable Southern/Third World (i.e., foreign) presence" (p. 245). Using this as a jumping off point, we may use Chandra Mohanty's analysis in her article "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" (1988) to further this examination and expanding this view of Arabs and Muslims as part of a conceptualization of "Third World women." In her inquiry into the treatment of these subjects as a "singular monolithic subject" Mohanty

shares with us those ways in which a Zed Press series on "Women in the Third World" draws out a consistent construction/imagination of the so called "Third World woman." She finds that these women are portrayed as "ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition--bound, religious, domesticated, family oriented victimized, etc." (1988, p. 65). This fuels the monolithic character created of these women, upholding a fictitious hierarchy in which Western women are representative of "true" emancipation and freedom. We see that racializations and generalizations to the imagined "East" or "Third World" as presented in western hegemony, serve to uphold a consideration of these women as opposite to those Western women whom study them. An implicit self must be maintained in this reflection of the "other" in which white, middle class feminists are painted as the "norm"--which is maintained as secular, educated, independent, empowered, etc. Such dichotomizations work to create a hegemonic imperialism, monopolizing knowledge production and projecting "Western" or "liberal" values onto persons whom are seen as in need of an intervention. U.S. settler colonialism also informs the ways in which bodies are racialized. The nation has been formed through racial projects such as the enslavement, genocide, expulsion, internment, segregation and indentured servitude.

So now that we know the struggles that I have treated to an analysis through the perspective of Arabs and Muslims issues, where do we go from here? What are the possible solutions to the mishandling of the history of Islamophobia, from the exclusion of Arab and Muslim issues from an ethnic studies narrative and the inaccuracies and inferiorization which occurs from the colonial--informed Eurocentric approach to

scholarship? In the following pages, I will provide some suggestions of tools and frameworks which may work to not only embolden critical race studies to adopt the Islamophobia timeline, but also to ensure the presence of Arab and Muslim concerns within ethnic studies.

Through his review of the impact of Westernized Universities and Eurocentric discourse on ethnic studies, Grosfoguel offers a way by which to redefine ethnic studies as “transmodern decolonial studies,” from which community knowledge is centralized and where there are opportunities to think “from” and “with” others whom have been “subalternized and inferiorized by Eurocentered modernity” (p. 88). He details:

It would also imply a transmodern dialogue between diverse ethico-epistemic political projects and a thematic internal organization within ethnic studies departments/program, one based on problems (racism, sexism, xenophobia, Christian-centrism, ‘other’ epistemologies, Eurocentrism, etc.) rather than either ethnic/racial identities (Blacks, Indigenous, Asians, etc.) or Western colonial disciplines (sociology, anthropology, history, political science, philosophy, arts, economics, etc.)...I am not implying that Latino Studies, African-American Studies, Asian American Studies or Native American Studies should not exist as such...What I am saying here is that inside each of these programs, the focus of research should be primarily based on problems rather than on affirming ‘identity politics.’ (2012, p. 88)

This transformation of critical race and decolonial education harkens to the proclamation by Audre Lorde, “The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” (Lorde, 2003, p. 27) For, to revolutionize the academic space which is ethnic studies, to practice decolonial academia and produce radical scholarship, it is necessary to forgo that compartmentalization built by the Eurocentric hegemony of the white supremacist settler colonial state. And it is not only the way in which we organize ourselves and recognize common struggles. I suggest it is also the greater inclusion of intersectionality by the welcoming in of feminist frameworks and the recognition of the settler colonial history of this nation state with an analysis of global imperial and colonial projects.

Take for this point, the framework of transnational feminism, which as described and complicated by Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar in the introduction to their book, *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis* (2012):

Transnational feminisms are an intersectional set of understandings, tools, and practices that can: (a) attend to racialized, classed, masculinized, and heteronormative logics and practices of globalization and capitalist patriarchies, and the multiple ways in which they (re)structure colonial and neocolonial relations of domination and subordination; (b) grapple with the complex and contradictory ways in which these processes both inform and are shaped by a range of subjectivities and understanding of individual and collective agency; and (c) interweave critiques, actions, and self-reflexivity so as to resist a priori

predictions of what might constitute feminist politics in a given place and time.
(p. 5)

Certainly this speaks to the ways in which I aim to incorporate the Islamophobia timeline within a framework of ethnic studies. Such intersections and positioning of critique allows for a complex methodology, as Nagar and Swarr propose, “adding context, complexity and fluidity to place, time struggle and dismantling them” (2012, p. 9). The authors challenge us to deconstruct dichotomies of “individually/collaboratively produced knowledge,” “academia/activism,” and “theory/method,” while reimagining the meanings of the “local/global, authenticity, translation and mediation.” (2012, p. 2)

In her work, “The War on Terrorism as State of Exception: A Challenge for Transnational Gender Theory” (2009), Sarah Blake suggests that the concept of territorialization or that manufacturing of cultural imaginaries, is informed by one another. Highlighting this issue, Blake proposes that gender theory and postcolonial studies must take on self-critique (2009, p. 61). Ella Shohat also speaks to this concept in a chapter of her book: *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices*, entitled, “Gendered Cartographies of Knowledge: Area Studies, Ethnic Studies and Postcolonial Studies” (2006) in which she recognizes that ethnic studies “brackets areas outside the American experience” and in which the ‘Middle East’ in ethnic studies “engenders U.S. nationalism” (p. 3). She locates binarism, in which “east” and “west” and “Black” and “white” result in what she labels an “on-hold analytical method” in which those not named are always waiting for their turn to speak, resulting in “gaps and silences.” (p. 3)

What she suggests instead is a “kaleidoscopic framework.” (p. 3) But one in which she posits, must not aim to universalize or become a relativist project. (p. 3) Shohat may also be brought into conversation with Grosfoguel’s theorizing, as she pushes for “experience and knowledge within a multicultural/transnational feminist project, in this sense, have to be articulated as dialogical concepts, an interlocution situated in historical time and geographical space.” (p. 8)

For a working example we may turn to discussions by two feminist scholars who showcase the criticalness for such analysis. Juliet Williams and Lila Abu Lughod speak not only of the complications we face when we discount a feminist analysis in ethnic studies, that is, one which focuses on the multiplicity of experience and recognizes the multiple productions of knowledge and stances from which we meet, but also offer solutions to the challenge of clearing the colonial residue and the imperial realities that threaten our academic spaces and our communities.

Furthermore, these authors critique the colonial feminist frameworks that work within the framework of liberalism and modernity, but for which analysis is reserved to be conducted by white women and analysis is done about Indigenous women and women of color, thus furthering that hegemony of white supremacy and Eurocentrism as introduced earlier in this research. They interrogate Islamophobia and Orientalism and showcase the ways in which gaps in the Westernized hegemonic narrative may be challenged. In her article “Unholy matrimony? Feminism, Orientalism, and the Possibility of Double Critique” (2009) Juliet Williams critically surveys the omission and

misrepresentations of the U.S. media (which we may extend to a representation of European and U.S. epistemologies) in its coverage of the concept of *sigheh* (temporary marriage in Iran--and elsewhere). By showing how the U.S. media paints a portrait of the practice as alien to U.S. values and practices, Juliet Williams' work highlights how in satiating a desire to otherize, attention is drawn away from the shared realities, which may challenge or undermine the continued ostracizing of Muslims as perpetual outsiders. Certainly Williams makes this clear with her example of the points of similarity between *sigheh* and the institution of marriage in the U.S.--despite the distancing practice through Orientalist tropes in the U.S. media which sets up a binary in which the U.S. (or Western culture) is morally superior and "modern." In this way she points out those ways in which Muslims and Islam are constituted as a strange people with bewildering customs that have borne no influence on the U.S. nor have been influenced by the U.S. From this point of view, Muslims have yet to reach their own period of enlightenment. Williams summarizes:

This sense of superiority depends, however, on an exoticization of temporary marriage that obscures points of similarity between marriage practices in Iran and in the United States and creates the grounds for politics of displacement in which the construction of other cultures as sites of decadence and decay distracts attention from fissures in normatively occurring closer to home." (2009, p. 627)

This critical analysis of gendered Orientalism and Islamophobia shows specific examples of how concepts of "Islam," the "Orient" and the "West" are produced but also the

treatment the concepts receives in U.S. hegemony. Lila Abu-Lughod sets a precedent in her deconstruction of cultural relativity in colonial feminist discourses and the justification for imperial ventures in her article, "Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others." Abu-Lughod shows that by relying so heavily on cultural frameworks, historical changes as well as political and economic influences are erased. She relates to us her story of being asked to comment for a news segment on women and Islam, "the questions were hopelessly general. Do Muslim women believe 'x'? Are Muslim women 'y'? Does Islam allow 'z'?" (2002, p. 784) This leads her to her argument on cultural framing and the intensified interest in "saving" women from an imagined threatening Islam. "The question is why knowing about the 'culture' of the region, and particularly its religious beliefs and treatment of women, was more urgent than exploring the history of the development of the repressive regime in the region and the U.S. role in this history" (2002, p. 784).

She explains that colonial feminism has served to justify intervention and has worked as a tool of colonialism. For example, in supporting interventionist tactics by the U.S. in Afghanistan, for the expressed need to "save women from the burka," colonial feminists appropriated the space that should have been reserved for Afghan women. (2002, p. 785) That is, that Afghan women suffered from the results of the invasion of Afghanistan rather than from their burkas, that the burkas has existed far before the implementation of Taliban rule, and that the burka was not seen as a representative of great oppression as imagined by these Western Feminists. In seeing the Muslim woman

as depoliticized, static, essentialized, the focus becomes examining how the cultural has resulted in the “backwardness” so clearly declared by some influential Western feminists. There develops an urge to investigate how “those” women (and their men) have evaded progressiveness that supposedly marks the First World.

Additionally, she explains how this affords Western feminists the opportunity to pick and choose those issues which represent the greatest oppression to the “other,” even while the West’s dangerous and destructive acts (but without the labeling of such projects as such) continually endanger these women. The Westernized University has assisted in making possible the invasion and subjugation of those states and people for which the U.S. has a “special interest” or for which foreign policy has been used as a concept to justify militarism, expansion, and exploitation (Abdulhadi, 2014). Those departments and programs which aid these projects in the production of weapons and knowledge on the “natives” are those driven by the concept that the U.S. holds an exceptional position. This adds an additional layer of understanding for how justifications of Islamophobia are presented and maintained in U.S. discourse.

In this theme of decolonial scholarship and production of knowledge for social justice, there is a need to discuss bringing together studies of coloniality, imperialism, and settler colonialism. Lorenzo Veracini reminds us in his article, “Settler Colonialism and Decolonisation,”(2007) that “settlers have no interest in co-existing,” (p. 3) it is essential that we heed his words. His warning, that I seek to emulate in the same work I attempt here, may be practiced in “decolonial ‘truth-telling’” as named by Nelson Maldonado-

Torres (2006), and balancing the “decolonial attitude [which] also involves an ethics of decolonial memory and a decolonial economy of giving. They are all parts of the technologies that form part of philosophies of liberation and the methodology of the oppressed.” (p. 242) This work includes continuing to illuminate those invisibilized narratives and histories, inviting in those subaltern communities, blooming the critique with underutilized intersections and feminist practice, and challenging the ongoing colonial process through recognition and transformation.

**ARAB AND MUSLIM ETHNICITIES AND DIASPORAS STUDIES:
STRUGGLING AGAINST INSTITUTIONAL ISLAMOPHOBIA**

The diverse communities connected to San Francisco State University have not been immune to larger socio-political trends that sanction overt manifestations of Islamophobia and anti-Arab discrimination and racism. Students of Arab and Muslim descent attending SFSU have reported experiencing more pronounced and heightened level of bigotry from classmates, professors, and the larger communities without receiving appropriate support to handle these instances. Student members of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) and the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS), in particular, have shared their detailed experiences of feeling hostility on the university campus in various forums on and off campus, with AMED and College of Ethnic Studies faculty as well as President Wong and other SFSU officials. "Proposal for the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies Minor," San Francisco State University, 2015.

Having reviewed the historical timeline of Islamophobia as a central component of U.S. settler colonialism, familiarized myself with the gaps in critical race studies and the challenges of ethnic studies, formulated suggestions and exemplified those needs for inclusion of Arab and Muslim histories and perspectives, I would now like to reflect on those very real issues of Arab and Muslim inclusion in the Westernized University. As a case study, I turn to that program with which I am very familiar, the Arab and Muslim

Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Studies program at San Francisco State University (SFSU).

In the history of the program, there has been a constant uphill struggle against the university and influential Zionist/pro-Israel groups outside of campus that are driven by Islamophobia and whom have used it in their attacks against the scholars with the program and AMED itself. These assaults have worked to carry out the program's defunding, the refusal to hire desperately needed faculty and not providing much needed resources and classes. Defamatory statements have been made not only by those outside groups, but the University president himself, who suggest that the Arab and Muslim focused studies are a threat to "civil discourse."

AMED was born in 2007, the most recent initiative to be added to the College of Ethnic Studies at SFSU, it is positioned as a section within the Race and Resistance Studies Program. It was developed as a result of complaints of unjust treatment of Arab and Muslim students on campus. In 2002 a task force was created by then University president Robert Corrigan, with the goal of investigating the campus climate in response to concerns from Jewish and Palestinian communities. (President's Task Force on Intergroup Relations Initial Focus on the Effect of Middle East Issues on Campus Life, 2002) Having come to the conclusion that the establishment of a program focused on Arab and Muslim studies was necessary and that, "The curriculum should be anchored in community fieldwork and authentic scholarship of the Arab and Islamic peoples first, and, second, from the perspective of recognized scholars and authorities in the study of

the Arab World and Islamic Civilizations and not from a Eurocentric or Colonial point of view.” (President's Task Force on Inter-group Relations Initial Focus on the Effect of Middle East Issues on Campus Life, 2002) With a focus on critical analysis, AMED was ushered into the College of Ethnic Studies. The program was initiated with the hiring of its senior scholar, Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi. With a promise for program development, a selection of courses and three faculty lines, the excitement for this initiative, the first and only one of its kind in the U.S. was possible. The focus of the curricula was not just centered on the Arab and Muslim communities, but rather, has always offered interdisciplinary analysis--covering frameworks of gender and sexuality, postcolonialism, resistance, area studies, sociology and always practicing what Dr. Abdulhadi would call, “the indivisibility of justice.” Such a concept has proved itself to be the beating heart of the work within AMED. Having hosted dozens of open classrooms, roundtables, and experts in a multitude of fields, the theme of each event has been focused on an epistemic and racial/ethnic diversity. AMED has always practiced according to a recognition of the importance of historical and socio-political context, continuity, resistance to colonial and imperial projects and recognition of interconnected struggles.

In 2009, though, as the General Union of Palestine Students (GUPS- a student historical organization, advised by AMED scholar Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi), once again faced discriminatory measures in response to their critical anti-Zionist work, the University administration retaliated by cancelling the search or the two tenure track faculty searches AMED was conducting. The night before he retired, the University

president deleted the lines from the budget. The faculty lines which were promised from the start were stripped from the initiative, the funds for running AMED were never returned. With a single faculty member tasked with teaching all classes, planning and holding all events, searching out and applying for grants and other program enrichment, as well as serving the communities represented in the initiative, AMED has no institutional support despite all best efforts. In the ensuing years, many attempts were made to reinstate the faculty lines and a basic operating budget. While the administration changed, with Leslie Wong taking the position of president, promises to return to AMED its necessities still went unfulfilled.

Continuing to offer exciting and cutting edge programming, another fight for AMED was underway as AMCHA, a Zionist watchdog group which is largely funded by right-wing pro-Israel, was attacking students and scholars practicing Palestine solidarity, leveled allegations at Dr. Abdulhadi that she had misappropriated University funds as she led an academic and labor delegation in Palestine earlier that year. Subjected to over a year of harassment, the University was slow to respond, taking over seven months to clear the Professor of all allegations but refusing to make their findings public. Two years later, defamatory articles published and a public campaign by AMCHA and their supporters, in which the AMED initiative is attacked, and a smear campaign is waged in McCarthyist style against the professor, were still found on the SFSU press website.

In 2015, despite the many roadblocks and attempts at silencing, the proposed AMED minor was approved by the SFSU faculty senate. AMED studies had reached the

next level, despite the lack of resources or institutionalized support. Within a year, the program has grown to have twenty AMED minor students. Most of these students are drawn from their interest in AMED classes. In fact, a majority of these students were not Arab nor Muslim, but they felt nourished by the concept of indivisibility of justice, the focus on common struggles, and the theme of the creation of scholarship for the sake of justice. Still within the throes of slow destruction by the university, in spring of 2016, San Francisco State University administration, namely President Wong and Provosts Sue Rosser have quietly attempted to dismantle the budget of the historic College of Ethnic Studies. The cuts to the college would mean the loss of all lecturers, a dismantling of all programs, the deferment of any Memorandums of Understanding and the end of the graduate program. The University, bolstered by corporate involvement and interests and guided still by that Westernized hegemony that is not unique, attempted to disclaim any wrongdoing or responsibility to this historic college and the students and faculty within. AMED took its place among the other departments and historical organizations to fight for the right for a social justice education and curriculum which reflected the lived realities of the students and scholars.

In the battle for academia which encompasses Abdulhadi's suggestions for "radical, critical, internationalist, and race-conscious scholarship" (2014, p. 335), AMED stands among the four departments, Africana Studies, Asian American Studies, American Indian Studies and Latino/a Studies and the Race and Resistance Program. Through a fight against the racist, sexist, capitalist hierarchy of the University administration, the

origins of settler colonial notions of white supremacy as embedded in the Westernized education becomes very obvious.

Despite a continued and growing student interest and support from the community, AMED is constantly struggling for basic necessities and support of our students while other colleges and programs that toe the line of Eurocentric hegemony flourish and receive elaborate praise and backing. Now, as a battle for the whole of SFSU Ethnic Studies is waged with San Francisco State Administration, threatening defunding of the college, the Islamophobia and blocking of the program may be understood within a greater scope of interest by the institutional powers to dismantle critical race studies and the radical and revolutionary lens that grow there.

We must challenge the institution's push to disregard Islamophobia in its broadest and most complete history. This requires recognition of Arab and Muslim ethnicities and Diasporas Studies as central to ethnic studies and for the protection and encapsulation of AMED within the broader race studies and Ethnic Studies itself. It also requires that AMED stand with Ethnic Studies in the fight against University destruction of our programs.

CONCLUSIONS

With the end of my research in sight, perhaps now is the time to put forth that probing statement by Ramon Grosfoguel, "Knowledge for what and for whom?" (2012, p. 82) In compiling a timeline of Islamophobia from Spain in 1492 to the institutionalization of the U.S. settler colonial project in 1776, I hoped to address the responsibility I hold by accumulating this information. Having exemplified the invisibilization of Arab and Muslim histories, the gaps of interrelated struggles within ethnic studies, after identifying those intersectional and transnational feminist frameworks which may work in unison to create a more robust and interconnected reality of decolonial studies and with the laying out of the history of AMED, a course of studies under attack, I still have more tasks at hand. Certainly to say that knowledge is produced for its own sake would prove me a hypocrite by my own definitions. The responsibility as a scholar, even the most junior, pushes me to realize the full potential of my findings. To do anything else would be to play to the dichotomies, those binaries which I critique here. Laying this work aside would be tantamount to abandoning those communities which I suggest have been invisibilized and sidelined via this examination of the history of Islamophobia and its inclusion (or exclusion) in a variety of spaces.

Ending at this point, I realize that it is my task to continue this research of a comprehensive and critical timeline of Islamophobia. While for now I focus on that period of 1492-1776, there is a great need to expand the conversation and make deeper

connections to the racial projects since the institutionalization of the U.S. settler colonial state. Additionally, such a narrative would also benefit from a thorough discussion of the intertwined nature of Orientalism, Anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia throughout these multiple periods. Most definitely the goal of my work is to highlight the importance of recognizing Islamophobia as central to and influenced by racial and religious hierarchies and following the path and evolution of such structures and their oppressions throughout time, and always continuing with a comparative lens.

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