DePAUL UNIVERSITY

# Creating Knowledge

## THE LAS STUDENT RESEARCH JOURNAL

Dear Students, Faculty Colleagues and Friends,

It is my great pleasure to introduce the fifth volume of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences' Creating Knowledge, our undergraduate student scholarship and research journal. First published in 2008, the journal is the outcome of an initiative to enhance and enrich the academic quality of the student experience within the college. Through this publication, the college seeks to encourage students to become actively engaged in creating scholarship and research and give them a venue for the publication of their essays. This fifth volume, like the ones that preceded it, gives considerable testimony to the creativity, hard work and sophistication of our undergraduate scholars. It is through the continuing annual publication of this undergraduate student journal that we aim to underscore that leadership within their disciplines requires students to not only be familiar with the knowledge base of the discipline, but to have the experience of being actively engaged in sustaining an intellectual community—understanding how their creative work and the work of others also depends on its dissemination and on the sharing of that knowledge within a community of scholars.

I want to congratulate, first and foremost, the many student scholars whose work is featured in this fifth volume of the journal. I also want to thank the students and faculty who served to make this publication possible—those who served on the editorial board that shaped this edition of the journal and reviewed the submissions of student work. I want to particularly thank Warren Schultz, Ph.D., associate dean for undergraduate studies, who spearheaded this year's efforts. To the students who are featured in this edition, it is my fondest hope that this will lead you to make similar contributions beyond the college and DePaul University. To one and all, my most sincere congratulations and gratitude.

*Charles S. Suchar*

Chuck Suchar
Dean

# GENDER DISPARITY IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA:
## IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT, FERTILITY, AND PRONATALIST STATE POLICIES

ALESSANDRA DECHANCIE*
*International Studies Program*

**ABSTRACT**    Russia's total fertility rate (TFR) has been below replacement level for the past decade, a trend that I examine in relation to the economic transition from Soviet communism to open market capitalism that took place across much of the 1990s. This decline is related to the fact that women experienced especially high levels of gender discrimination, particularly in the workplace. Gender discrimination existed in the Soviet state but was perpetuated and intensified in the process of economic transition. One response of the state has been initiating pronatalist policies. Yet, such policies have thus far been unable to reverse population decline. This paper analyzes why pronatalist policies have failed to increase Russia's TFR.

### Introduction

Russia is in the midst of a demographic transition that has captured the international attention of scholars, politicians and the media. In 2009, Russia's total fertility rate (TFR) was 1.6 children per woman, below the standard replacement level of 2.1 that maintains population stability.[1] Russia's crude death rate exceeded its crude birth rate in 2009, such that from 1990 to 2009 the country experienced a real population decline of –0.2% (see Figure 1).[2] One must analyze these statistics within the larger economic and social context for women throughout the twentieth century under two very distinct economies: socialist and capitalist. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and Russia's transition to a market economy affected employment patterns for women, while birth rates simultaneously plummeted. Soviet era technology was inefficient under a socialist economy, allowing for near universal employment. When the state implemented an open market system, technological efficiency increased and massive numbers

of people were laid off. With high unemployment came patriarchal pressures on women to retreat to the domestic sphere, thus "freeing jobs for the growing numbers of unemployed men."[3] The steadily decreasing birth rate through the 1990s alarmed state officials; as a response they enacted policies designed to encourage population growth, the most recent taking effect in 2007, but none so far has reversed population decline. The fault of these policies is that they offer short-term financial incentives for couples to have children, rather than structural economic reform. Ultimately, they fail to address the underlying causes of fertility decline: the state's economic instability and gender inequality in the labor market.

The first section of this paper addresses the patriarchy that existed under the centrally planned economy of the Soviet Union, and how it re-emerged under free market capitalism to reproduce extreme levels of gender inequality in the labor market. As the mode for producing capital goods

---

1    World Bank, *Data Catalog: World Development Indicators*, 38.

2    World Bank, *Data Catalog: World Development Indicators*, 108.

3    Lisa A. Cubbins, "Socioeconomic Resources, Gender Traditionalism, and Wife Abuse in Urban Russian Couples," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67, no. 1 (2005): 38.

became more efficient under capitalism, fewer laborers were needed, thus largely restricting women's employment opportunities and limiting their access to the highest paid jobs. Men assumed the dominant role of provider in society because of their access to these higher-paying jobs, while women were largely segregated to domestic roles or lower-paying service positions. Next, I examine the history of pronatalist policies in the Soviet Union and in the Russian Federation, where these policies have been used to realize two distinct goals: in the Soviet Union, to promote population growth to support the socialist economy, and in the Russian Federation, to reverse population decline. This examination contextualizes the history of Russian economic policies to understand the state's current position. Finally, I consider the recent case of Russia's 2007 policy to bolster birth rates by offering women financial incentives. I show how these incentives, which are supposed to work by providing finite economic assistance to women, will continue to fail unless the state recognizes the relationship between birth rates and conditions of women's employment. Until women are guaranteed the secure and equitable forms of employment that will provide lasting support to a future family, the birth rate in Russia will likely not see a significant increase.

### Gender and Employment in Post-Soviet Russia

Contemporary patterns of gender inequality in the Russian labor market have their roots in the socialist economy of the Soviet Union. After the Soviet collapse, Russia underwent a rapid economic transformation to capitalism in only seven years, roughly from 1991 to 1998. As a result of this economic reorganization and privatization, employment rates plummeted for both men and women. Under the Soviet Union, while women experienced near universal employment, they still played the role of the worker-mother and were expected to provide future workers for the state. In return for this dual responsibility, the Soviet state supported women in the work force through social programs, such as childcare services. Despite governmental support of women's employment, their workplace opportunities were limited to stereotypically

gendered positions in service-oriented fields such as healthcare, education and catering.[4] Men, meanwhile, were not expected to share the household's domestic labor, thus adding to the social and economic responsibilities of women. Thus, "despite [Soviet] egalitarian claims of socialism,"[5] the state promoted inequalities based on gender in the workplace, ones that would dramatically deepen upon Russia's integration into the global capitalist economy.

As a consequence of the state's economic transition to capitalism, it eliminated many of the social programs that facilitated women's integration into the labor market.[6] In the new market economy, women with children were seen as less cost-efficient employees than men and as less flexible in the workplace. Women's employment experience under the Soviet Union largely did not benefit them as they competed against each other, and against men, for jobs in the new market economy. Service sector skills and experience did not translate well to a new capitalist labor market that was largely unconcerned with women's lives or domestic skills, categorically restricting women from the labor force and encouraging their return to domesticity.[7]

Meanwhile, men's social roles were transformed by the economic transition to support patriarchy in the workplace. Capitalism cultivated higher social values and expectations for men than under socialism, when family income had been shared more equally between the sexes. In the capitalist labor market most new industrial workers were men, and as such, they emerged as the main breadwinner for most families. The Soviet system had stressed men's economic primacy by awarding them the

---

4   Theodore P. Gerber and Olga Mayorova, "Dynamic Gender Differences in a Post-Socialist Labor Market: Russia, 1991-1997," *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (2006): 2049.

5   *Ibid.*, 2048.

6   Sarah Ashwin, "The Influence of the Soviet Gender Order on Employment Behavior in Contemporary Russia," *Sociological Research* 41, no. 1 (2002): 21.

7   Balabanova, E.S., 2007, "Women's Economic Dependency: Nature, Causes and Consequences." *Sociological Research* 46, no. 2 (2007): 13.

most skilled and highest paid jobs, and capitalism drew on these differences to profitable effect. Whereas the Soviet state integrated women and extolled their status as mothers in society, capitalism increased efficiency by pushing women to the periphery of economic activity. Many women, cowed by their lowly economic position, stopped having children because of their economic disenfranchisement.

**Pronatalist State Policies in Russia**

Pronatalist state policies in Russia have not only emerged in times of demographic crisis, as is the case today, but had been in use throughout Soviet rule. In the Soviet Union, sustaining population growth was a critical resource in expanding the socialist economy. Soviet policies that encouraged population growth, or pronatalist policies, began in the 1920s when substantial losses suffered from war, revolution and famine prompted the new socialist government to focus its efforts on population growth. To promote these efforts and address the high demand for workers, state demographers "undertook the scientific study and rational planning of the population to ensure its optimal age and sex structure and continual expansion."[8] However, the research was often inconclusive and failed to prompt substantial reform, due in part to the pressures of working under a socialist ideology. The ideology proclaimed that it had completely eradicated class and gender inequalities, and did not facilitate any critical analysis of social or economic pressures on reproduction within the state.

In 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and as a response to the subsequent TFR decline, the state introduced what Louise Grogan terms "universal child benefits," or financial assistance to families to help defer childcare costs. In reality, the "universality" of those benefits was short-lived—in 1996 only one third of eligible families received benefits[9]. On a more fundamental level, the policy erred in assuming that simple financial incentives would motivate women to have children. Financial stability and guarantees for women in higher-status jobs lead to a more sustained increase in birth rates than a promise of short-term governmental incentives. Grogan conducted population surveys showing that Russian women with higher levels of education were more likely to have children than those with lower levels of education, pointing to the relationship between higher education (and a higher employment status, i.e. more job security) and a woman's propensity to have children.[10] Grogan uses this data to argue that improving real family incomes and economic stability for Russians, particularly for women, is an important incentive for women to have children rather than financial benefits from the government.

While the Russian state has employed pronatalist state policies under different guises under two distinct state economies, they share a misguided assessment of finding a "solution" to demographic issues. Particularly, they share a belief that women are the source of the problem, thus inhibiting a critical approach to designing pronatalist policies. Data collected by the United Nations Development Program supports a correlation between an increase in reproductive activity and policies that do not inhibit people from making personal lifestyle choices.[11] In order for future pronatalist policies to be effective, they must consider the larger history of such policies in the state, both in the Russian Federation and in the Soviet Union, to avoid repeating tactics that fail to promote structural change. This calls for a more critical view by policymakers on low fertility rates and their relationship to the unique economic pressures and social inequalities that women face.

8   Michele Rivkin-Fish, "Anthropology, Demography and the Search for a Critical Analysis of Fertility: Insights from Russia," *American Anthropologist* 105, no. 2 (2003): 291.

9   Louise Grogan. "An Economic Examination of the Post-Transition Fertility Decline in Russia," *Post-Communist Economies* 18, no. 4 (2006): 11.

10  Louise Grogan. "An Economic Examination of the Post-Transition Fertility Decline in Russia," *Post-Communist Economies* 18, no. 4 (2006): 33.

11  A. Kashepov, "Socioeconomic Determinants of the Demographic Situation in Russia," *Russian Social Science Review* 45, no. 2 (2004): 59-82; United Nations Development Program, *National Human Development Report.*

FIGURE 1

Natural Population Growth of Russia
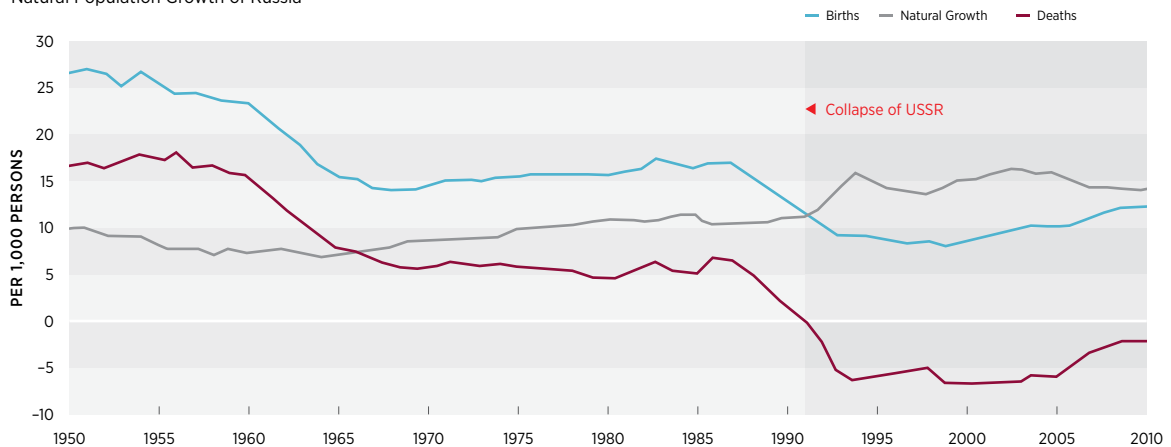


Source: Source: Kazuhiro Komo, "Explaining Fertility Trends in Russia" Centre for Economic Policy Research (www.CEPR.org) VOX paper, 2 June 2010, and demoscope.ru/weekly/ias/ias05.php?tim=0&cou=26&terr=1&ind=26&Submit=OK. (accessed 31 January).

**Russia's Current Demographic Crisis and Pronatalism**

Russia's current demographic "crisis," as some call it, is significant because its birth rate did not drop over the course of several decades, as is the case in most industrialized nations, nor did it decrease alongside increases in living standards, levels of education, or levels of women's employment. Instead, the birth rate rapidly decreased together with a decrease in living standards, education levels, and women's employment.[12] When the population first began to decrease in 1992, government initiatives tried to reverse the trend by promoting "childbearing values" in an effort to encourage women to have children. Moscow University Sociology professor Anatolii Antonov was a prominent scholar who, since the 1980s, criticized women for not having children or only having one child. State pronatalist policies adopted his moralizing rhetoric, claiming that women should focus on having children for the nation's sake, rather than focus on their own self-interests such as continuing education or job opportunities.[13]

This sentiment most recently surfaced in 2007 when Russia issued a policy providing generous subsidies and financial incentives to families having two or more children. Such subsidies (for housing, education and childcare) would reach up to USD 8,200 for children born between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2016.[14] The year 2007 did see an increase in TFR, rising from 1.296 in 2006 to 1.406 in 2007, and it further increased in 2009 to 1.537—the highest it has been since the TFR in 2000 of 1.2, but still well below replacement level.[15] Moreover, with the population in decline since 1989, there are fewer women having children now than in previous generations, meaning that TFR must be above 2.1 in order to substantiate population growth.[16] There is no guarantee that the slight increase in TFR following the 2007 policy will be long lasting, and it is unlikely that it will encourage a high enough birth rate to reverse population decline. True structural reform of the economy must take place to increase Russia's TFR well above 2009's rate and promote sustained, long-term population growth.

---

12 Kashepov, "Socioeconomic Determinants of the Demographic Situation in Russia," 60.

13 Rivkin-Fish, "Anthropology, Demography and the Search for a Critical Analysis of Fertility: Insights from Russia," 292.

14 Kumo, Kazuhiro. "Explaining Fertility Trends in Russia."

15 Carl Haub, "Russian Birth Rate Continues to Rise."

16 Ibid.

**TABLE 1**

Total Fertility Rates in Former Communist Countries

| | | 1965 | 1970 | 1975 | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1992 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Albania | 5.4 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 3.7 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 1.8 |
| | Bulgaria | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| | Czech Republic | 2.2 | 1.9 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| | Slovakia | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| | Hungary | 1.8 | 2.0 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| | Poland | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| | Romania | 1.9 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| **Former Yugoslavia** | Montenegro | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.6 |
| | Croatia | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| | Serbia | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| | Bosnia-Herzegovina | 3.4 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.2 |
| | Macedonia | 3.6 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| | Slovenia | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| **Former Soviet Union** — **Baltic** | Latvia | 1.7 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| | Lithuania | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 1.3 |
| | Estonia | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.5 |
| **East Slavic** | Russian Federation | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| | Belarus | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| | Ukraine | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.1 | 1.2 |
| | Moldova | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.7 |
| **Caucasus** | Armenia | 3.8 | 3.2 | 2.7 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| | Azerbaijan | 5.2 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| | Georgia | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.4 |
| **Central Asia** | Tajikistan | 6.6 | 6.8 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 5.5 | 5.1 | 4.9 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 3.5 |
| | Kazakhstan | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 1.8 | 2.2 |
| | Kyrgyz | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 2.4 | 2.5 |
| | Turkmenistan | 6.5 | 6.2 | 5.7 | 5.0 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.4 | 2.9 | 2.6 |
| | Uzbekistan | 5.5 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 2.6 | 2.4 |

## Conclusion

Russia's current demographic crisis does not have an easy solution, nor does it have a simple origin. The collapse of the Soviet Union spurred low TFR rates that occurred alongside high mortality rates, and as a result, the population has been shrinking over the past two decades. The state's rapid economic transition to a market economy had serious consequences for the population, and state pronatalist policies have thus far failed to acknowledge the relationship between women's overall standards of living and birth rates. Instead, pronatalist policies include moralizing rhetoric and short-term financial incentives. The state needs to address the social pressures that shape women and men's decision-making concerning children, especially in relation to the levels and kinds of employment available to women. The consequences stemming from patterns in Soviet employment and their effect upon Russia's current labor market for women must be properly contextualized. Future policies need to consider the history of population patterns in Russia and the economic realities facing women, in order to truly address the social disparities that are perpetuated by Russian capitalism. ▪

**REFERENCES**

Ashwin, Sarah. "The Influence of the Soviet Gender Order on Employment Behavior in Contemporary Russia." *Sociological Research* 41, no. 1 (2002): 21.

Balabanova, E. S. "Women's Economic Dependency: Nature, Causes and Consequences." *Sociological Research* 46, no. 2 (2007): 5-21.

Cubbins, Lisa A. and Dana Vannoy. "Socioeconomic Resources, Gender Traditionalism, and Wife Abuse in Urban Russian Couples." J*ournal of Marriage and Family* 67, no. 1 (2005): 37-52.

Gerber, Theodore P. and Olga Mayorova. "Dynamic Gender Differences in a Post-Socialist Labor Market: Russia, 1991-1997." *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (2006): 2047-2075.

Grogan, Louise. "An Economic Examination of the Post-Transition Fertility Decline in Russia." *Post-Communist Economies* 18, no. 4 (2006): 363-397.

Haub, Carl. "Russian Birth Rate Continues to Rise." Behind the Numbers. Published April 22, 2011. prbblog.org/index.php/2011/04/22/russian-birth-rate-continues-to-rise.

Kashepov, A. "Socioeconomic Determinants of the Demographic Situation in Russia." *Russian Social Science Review* 45, no. 2 (2004): 59-82.

Kumo, Kazuhiro. "Explaining Fertility Trends in Russia." VOX. Published June 2, 2010. www.voxeu.org/index.php?q=node/5132.

Rivkin-Fish, Michele. "Anthropology, Demography and the Search for a Critical Analysis of Fertility: Insights from Russia." *American Anthropologist* 105, no. 2 (2003): 289-301.

Toksanbaeva, M. "The Social Vulnerability of Women." *Russian Social Science Review* 42, no. 4 (2001): 22-33.

United Nations Development Program. *National Human Development Report: Russia Federation 2008: Russia Facing Demographic Challenges.* Published 2008. hdr.undp.org/en/reports/nationalreports/europethecis/russia/name,18666,en.html.

World Bank. *Data Catalog: World Development Indicators.* 2011. Accessed February 1, 2012. data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators.

Amy Cox | *Skalmad and the Ranger*

# EMBRACING THE SHADES OF THE CRESCENT:
## BRAZILIAN MUSLIMS AND THE PROJECT OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

Peter Dziedzic*
*Islamic World Studies*

**ABSTRACT**  This paper explores the experience of identity construction of Muslims in Brazil, where links to a proposed universal religious community are met with ethnic and national narratives. Islam in Brazil is being ethnicized by Arab immigrants and nationalized by Afro-Caribbean converts. Both communities, through struggling to carve out a specific niche in Brazilian culture and society, are employing the adaptability of the Islamic faith to both preserve and spread an Islamic identity in and of Brazil.

**Topic**

When a typical U.S. American hears of South America, Islam and Muslims do not often come to mind. However, Islam has been part of the five-hundred-year history of these Americas. This study seeks to bridge the study of the culture and politics of South America and the religious and sociological study of global Islam. Here, I focus on how the ethnicization and nationalization of Islam by various communities in Brazil helps define the "Brazilian" expression and experience of Islam.

**Methods**

I focused primarily on literature reviews and research. Since the study of Islam in Latin America is not yet a significant scholarly field in the United States, a lot of work was done to research recent theses on this issue of Islam in South America and the experience of Muslims in Brazil

**Implications**

The experience of Muslims in South America cannot be ignored. By understanding the experience of Muslims

in Brazil, we can understand how Islamic communities will play a larger role in national discourses across the continent. Understanding the challenges and opportunities of this growth is vital as religious diversity in South America becomes a greater reality in coming years.

> "All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over [an Iranian] nor [an Iranian] has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no supremacy over a black, nor a black has any superiority over a white—except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood."
>
> —*The Prophet Muhammad at his final sermon*

At the foundation of Islamic thought and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad are claims to universality that cut across ethnic, national, and other boundaries. However, as Islam has spread throughout the world over the centuries, it has taken root in a variety of cultural settings that seem to challenge this universality. How are ethnic differences framed and negotiated by the proposed universality of Islam? We see this occurring today in Brazil, where Muslims, while occupying a minority space in Brazilian

---

\*  Advisor: John Karam, Latin American Studies/Islamic World Studies. Spring 2011. pdzdzc@gmail.com

cultural and national narratives, are trying to navigate the proposed universality of Islam while adapting it to the unique cultural milieu of Brazil.

How do Muslims in Brazil navigate both a "Brazilian" cultural identity and a "Muslim" religious identity? Islam in Brazil has been ethnicized by Arab immigrants who wish to maintain links to the Arab world that harbored the growth and spread of Islam. Meanwhile, Islam has been also acculturated by communities of Afro-Brazilian converts that revert to a history of African-Muslim slavery in Brazil. I argue that the process of identity construction is not an either/or affair. Both communities are trying to carve a unique niche for Islam in Brazil, and it is in this struggle that both communities are shaping the Brazilian-Muslim experience.

Analyzing specific communities in which a significant Muslim population exists will allow insight into how both the immigrant Arab Muslims and the Brazilian converts experience identity construction. Three communities offer interesting insights into the different experiences of Brazilian Muslims: Foz de Iguaçu, with a predominantly Arab-Muslim population; Rio de Janeiro, with a large community of Brazilian converts; and São Paulo, with a unique confluence of both Arabs and Brazilian converts. While both Arab Muslims and Brazilian converts have many similar concerns and aspirations, they ultimately have two unique experiences of identity construction.

Foz de Iguaçu is located in the "Triple Border" region, the confluence of the national borders of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. The area may be home to some 20,000 Muslims, and the Muslim community is almost totally comprised of Arab immigrants and their descendants (Pinto 2010:9). In the city, there are institutions and communities of Shi'i and Sunni Muslims. While these communities have been divided by politicized boundaries, they have made a noticeable effort to preserve a religious-ethnic identity, maintaining an ethnic distinction within the Brazilian context.

[T]he Sunni and Shi'i community agree in their identification between Muslim and Arab identity. The leaders of both communities see their role as the maintenance of Arab Muslim identity of their community and its transmission to new generations. Indeed, neither the Sunni nor Shi'i community have any plan for attracting new converts to Islam, thus showing a complete identification of Islam and Arab ethnicity in their definition of the Muslim identity (Pinto 2010:10-11).

The Muslim community in Foz de Iguaçu shows a distinct effort to maintain their identity as Arabs and, more specifically, as Arab Muslims. The Muslims of Foz de Iguaçu are "strongly influenced by transnational Islamic movements and by the constant contact with Islam as practiced in the Middle East" (Pinto 2004:266). Further examples of this desire can be seen in the establishment of both Sunni and Shi'i private schools that teach Arabic to the descendants of Muslim immigrants in order to allow them to keep their linguistic and cultural ties with the Middle East.

Most of the Muslim institutions in Brazil were founded by Arab immigrant communities, primarily Syrian-Lebanese immigrants (De Oliveira 2005:3). "As most Muslim immigrants came to Brazil, they were identified with the Arab community already existing in Brazil...the Muslim identities in Brazil inherited the ambiguous position of the Arab/Syrian-Lebanese ethnic identity..." (Pinto 2010:2). Thus, as Islamic communities began to develop across Brazil, there was a tendency to associate Arab ethnicity with Islamic religiosity. Islam is not an "ethnic religion," but it became so in Brazil. Immigrant Muslims maintain very strong ties to ethnic identities alongside their "Brazilian" identities. Muslim immigrant communities are often distinguished as maintaining a preference for remnants of Arab culture and identity. In mixed communities comprised of both Arab Muslim and Afro-Brazilian converts, speaking in Arabic and emphasizing Arabic as the sermon's language shows how Arabs tend

not to embrace other Brazilians into a universal religion such as Islam.

Non-Arab Brazilians likewise note these differences, especially after the dissemination of various Islamophobic media discourses after the events of September 11. Anthropologist Hasan Shahid found that:

> A distinction between "Brazilians" and "Arabs" exists within the mosques…Despite the fact that some Arab Muslim families have lived in Brazil for three generations or more, the label of "*arabe*" still sticks with them, and they are generally not referred to as "*brasileiros*" within the spaces of the mosques. …Many of the converts I met often discussed the relationship between them and Muslims of Arab descent, frequently referring to the cultural differences that existed between them (Shahid 2010:33).

There are significant rifts between "Brazilian" and "Arab" Muslims, and these rifts developed through an image of Islam bound to Arabness. This, paradoxically, was a cause and effect of Arab Muslims sustaining and preserving an ethnic identity.

The connection of Arab Muslims to a transnational Islamic identity is emphasized by the arrival of sheiks from the Middle East who come to preserve the religion of the community. "It is common for Muslim governments… to send to Muslim communities outside of these Muslim countries sheiks, who…can lead the religious activities of the community of believers" (De Oliveira 2005:6). The arrival of religious leaders instills in the Arab Muslim communities a connection with an identity that transcends Brazilian culture and merits the arrival of Arab religious leaders.

The Arab Muslim communities are faced with the pressures of culturally assimilating the younger generations. Arab Muslims often give an ethnic character to Islam by distinguishing it as the "religion of origin" under the threat of Brazilian integration, displaying the primacy of an infused ethno-religious identity over a Brazilian identity. As such, Arab Muslim educational efforts focus on maintaining the ethno-religious identity of the younger generation and not on integrating converts. There have been Brazilian criticisms of these educational efforts. "Brazilians…argued that Arab Muslims have not taken serious effort in teaching non-Muslims about their religion, implying that the Muslim community is partially to blame for the misconception that Islam is solely an "Arab" religion…not a Brazilian one" (Shahid 2010:48). For Brazilians, there is a perceived lack of outreach among Arab Muslims.

While the desire to remain connected to an ethno-religious Arab Muslim identity remains characteristic among Arab Muslims in Brazil, the efforts of integration by these communities cannot be ignored. The schools in Foz de Iguaçu, beyond serving as vehicles for maintaining an ethnic identity, insert young Muslims into the Brazilian educational and economic context. Religious leaders from the Middle East have made efforts to prepare Brazilian leaders who speak Portuguese and who are aware of the Brazilian reality of plurality. Efforts have been made by the Arab Muslim community to work for genuine integration and to accept their Islamic identity in a Brazilian context, but for the majority of Arab Muslims, a strong and primary connection to Arab ethnicity is maintained.

In some contrast to Foz de Iguaçu, Rio de Janeiro is a community dominated by Brazilian converts. The community adopts a distinct process of integration in the broader society (De Oliveira 2005:13-14). For example, the language used for religious activities in these communities is Portuguese, not Arabic, and there have been efforts to promote Portuguese as the lingua franca. While Arab communities were responsible for establishing Muslim communities in Brazil, converts, or "New Muslims," are "currently the only possibility for real growth of this religion in Brazil, since immigration is declining" (De Oliveira 2005:21). Thus, there is a large

push to establish and cultivate a Brazilian-Muslim identity apart from Arabness. "Converts, conscious of their status, were inclined to create a distinct identity...Brazilian families have difficulty in fully integrating into the Arab Muslim community thus inspiring converts to foster and cultivate a localized Brazilian Muslim identity" (Shahid 2010:33). Similar to the stigmatization perpetrated by Arab Muslims, Brazilian converts cannot connect with the Arab-Muslim communities, thus inspiring converts to construct a localized Brazilian-Muslim identity. Converts thus must also reconcile their religious and cultural identities.

Brazilian Muslims looking to reconcile these two identities often look to the unsuccessful 1835 Malé slave rebellion in Bahia for justification. Muslims comprised a significant portion of the slave population in Brazil, especially in the early nineteenth century. Some converts today employ the memory of the Malé rebellion as a narrative to integrate Muslim identity within the Brazilian cultural identity. In the nineteenth century, "Islam was not the dominant religion among Africans in Bahia...it was a heavyweight contender in a cultural free-for-all" (Reis 1993:97). But now, in the twentieth century, Islam serves as a way for present-day Brazilian Muslims to relate to the nation. Brazilian converts also employ the proposed universality of Islam in order to justify a localized Afro-Brazilian expression in contrast to the Arab ethnic experience of Islam. Through this narrative, Afro-Brazilian converts were allowed a way to connect with a significant racial narrative, similar to the Arab immigrants. Afro-Brazilians often argue that "converting to Islam helped them become closer to their African roots, [and] they also took pride that Islam connected them to diverse groups of people around the world" (Shahid 2010:29). Islam serves as a vehicle for converts to connect with a cultural and transnational identity through the cultivation of a localized, Brazilian Islamic identity.

Converts often employ theological distinctions of Islam in order to justify their quest for, and preoccupation with, a Brazilian Muslim identity. "Islam is an inherently deterritorialized religion, a fact that many [converts] used to argue that a Muslim in Brazil is no different than a Muslim living elsewhere" (Shahid 2010:37). By citing the transnational reach of the Islamic ummah (community of believers), Brazilian Muslims display their preoccupation with formulating a localized identity. While such a localized identity would naturally become a part of a global Islamic community, the preoccupation with distinction shows the primary desire of Brazilian Muslims to be defined by their local context (as opposed to being absorbed or rejected by the Arabs).

While the desire for a localized identity is central to the work of Brazilian Muslims, there is also a sincere appreciation of the global Islamic community. "Their conversion to Islam allows them to feel like they share a set of values and experiences with Muslims living in other places. Because of this, they often feel a sense of solidarity with the global Muslim community as they see it" (Shahid 2010:37). The global Islamic community is integral to the experience of Brazilian Muslims and is shaped by their localized communal identity. Converted Muslims will often turn to digital resources, such as chat rooms, blogs, and social media sites, to connect informally with a global community, instilling both a sense of distinction (as a Brazilian Muslim) and a sense of being a part of a larger community (De Oliveira 2006:109).

The third community, São Paulo, is also diverse and consists of immigrants, the descendents of immigrants, and Brazilian converts. Forty percent of the entire Brazilian Muslim population is found in the São Paulo region (Shahid 2010:39). The confluence of the two Muslim populations allows for an analysis of the challenges and aspirations that are essential to both converts and Arab Muslims. Both communities feel a part of the broader Islamic community in light of recent portrayals and coverage of Islam in the media. Many Muslims recognize the condemnation of Muslims around the world and the need to disengage stereotypes to make Islam successful in Brazil (Shahid 2010:18). Both communities recognize

the need to make Islam relevant to younger generations. While each community, at this time, seeks to construct distinct identities—Arab Muslims with the preservation of an Arab-Islamic identity, and Brazilian converts with the cultivation of a form of Islam attuned to Brazilian history – both strive for an experience recognizing the global Islamic community in the local context, a context that is still being developed and shaped by the diversity of the Brazilian people and the multifaceted narratives of Brazilian history. For Arab Muslims and Brazilian converts alike in São Paulo, it is necessary for the survival of the faith, and these mutual aspirations will likely define the efforts of Muslims in Brazil in the coming decades.

Arab Muslims and Brazilian converts negotiate identity politics differently. Arab immigrants emphasize the primacy of their ethnicity, and Brazilian converts stress their country's historical references. However, both communities find common interest in ensuring the survival of an Islamic identity in Brazil. Both communities will have an essential role to play in the preservation of an Islamic identity in Brazil, and both groups will further negotiate their own visions of Islam in Brazil or the Islam of Brazil, working for the sustainability of the Islam of Brazilians—Arab, convert, or otherwise.

While Islam is indeed being ethnicized and acculturated, it is in this adaptability that Islam is maintained by both immigrants and converts. In this spirit, Brazil is indeed a part of the Muslim world, a welcomed arm of the transnational Islamic ummah. It is in these expressions—ethnicized Islam and acculturated Islam—that the universality of Islam will continue to exist thanks to its adaptability, and it is through the success and maintenance of these narratives that Islam will continue to grow throughout Brazil. ■

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

De Oliveira, Vitória Peres. 2005. "Islam in Brazil or the Islam of Brazil." *Religião & Sociedade*. 26: 1. pp. 83-114.

De Oliveira, Vitória Peres. 2006. "Conversion to Islam in Contemporary Brazil." *Exchange*. 35:1. pp. 102-115.

Pinto, Paulo Gabriel Hilu da Rocha. 2004. "Ritual, Ethnicity, and Religious Idnetity in the Muslim Communities in Brazil." In *Latin American Religions: Histories and Documents in Context*. Peterson, Anna and Vasquez, Manuel. eds. New York: New York University Press.

Pinto, Paulo. 2010. "Muslim Identities in Brazil: Shared Traditions and Cultural Creativity in the Making of Islamic Communities." Paper prepared for the "Islam in Latin America Workshop." Florida International University. Miami, Florida.

Reis, João Josè. 1993. *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Shahid, Hassan. 2010. *Reconstructing Identity: A Study of the New Muslims in São Paulo, Brazil*. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Kyle Goldberg | *Night Shift*

# URBAN AGRICULTURE AS CARBON SINKS IN CHICAGO

Eddie Kulack and Alex Vasquez*
*Department of Geography*

**ABSTRACT**   Recognition and support for urban agriculture in Chicago has been growing over the past few years, especially with an ordinance in September 2011 that incorporates urban agriculture into zoning codes. One underdeveloped area of research in urban agriculture is quantifying potential to sequester carbon in soils. This preliminary study is set up to start a framework for quantifying estimates of the carbon/nitrogen sink potential of urban agricultural soils. Given that there are an estimated 900+ sites in the city, these green spaces have a very large potential to sequester greenhouse gases and it is worth calculating their ecological service to Chicago.

## Introduction

In 2009, the Food Systems Report generated by the Chicago Food Policy Advisory Council and the City of Chicago's Department of Zoning and Planning advised and promoted local sustainable agriculture as part of the city's restructuring in urban planning policy, *GO TO 2040*. The purpose is summarized in two points, the first addressing the lack of access to healthy nutritious food by many communities, which has been correlated to recognized health problems in these communities. The second purpose, which is the focus of this paper, is creating a local food production and distribution system that is sustainable and does not compromise the future of the next generations.

One underdeveloped potential of urban agriculture is quantifying urban agricultural soils' potential to sequester carbon, as part of the goal to maintain local environmental sustainability. Carbon and nitrogen sequestration is the process through which $CO_2$ and $N_2O$ are absorbed from the atmosphere by plant life and stored as organic carbon in soils (US EPA, 2010). The removal of $CO_2$ and $N_2O$ as greenhouse gases is an ecological/economic benefit of these soils that has not been explored extensively in an urban context.

Recognition and support for urban agriculture has been growing from city officials, urban planners, and the city's communities. Mayor Daley introduced legislation on December 28, 2010 to incorporate community gardens and agriculture into Chicago's zoning ordinances. Recently on September 8, 2011, Rahm Emmanuel carried out and enacted this ordinance, which has begun the legal framework for urban agriculture to operate in the residential, commercial, business, and manufacturing districts of the city. The further expansion of urban agriculture warrants research into another major economic/ecological benefit these sites may have in carbon sequestration.

## Purpose

The primary purpose of this project was to conduct a preliminary study to analyze how community gardens and urban agriculture sites impact the carbon/nitrogen cycles. A positive impact on the carbon and nitrogen cycles can

reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, giving one more benefit to the impacts of green space in Chicago. It can help yield healthier plants because it is a vital nutrient for a plant's growth. It is also a component of the photosynthetic process and helps chloroplast production. Carbon is introduced into the soil through multiple ways, including the decomposition of plants, but the amount of carbon that can be sequestered by the soil is an overall aid to the ecosystem.

The soil's uptake of carbon aids the ecosystem in a few ways. It increases the biodiversity of an ecosystem by having more available nutrients for all plant species that can be the limiting factor of biodiversity. It also helps reduce the urban heat island effect indirectly by having more biotic area to absorb rather than reflect heat. The more carbon sequestered affects this process by increasing the amounts of carbon in the soil and removing greenhouse gases, which lessens the effects of climate change and heat island effects.

This preliminary study is set up to start a framework for quantifying estimates of the carbon/nitrogen sink potential of urban agricultural soils. Given that there are an estimated 900+ community gardens and agricultural sites in the city, these green spaces have a very large potential to sequester greenhouse gases, and it is worth calculating their ecological service to Chicago. We also sought to understand the scale of and the different frameworks in the development of current urban agricultural sites, and then build a comprehensive map of current sites using Geographical Information Systems (GIS). The locations of urban agricultural sites were used to create a service area map of 15-minute walking distances in order to see what areas have access to urban agriculture and community garden spaces. Kernel Density Estimation and K Function ArcGIS analytical tools were used to determine the spatial distribution characteristics of these sites. Urban agriculture in this paper will be simply defined as urban farms and community gardens that generate food production for consumption.

**Literature review**

Soil carbon sequestration is the secure storage of carbon in soil and has many benefits for the environment, plants grown in the soil, and people. Lal's article, *Soil Carbon Sequestration Impacts on Global Climate Change and Food Security*, helped us understand the process of soil carbon sequestration and the benefits it brings in relation to climate change and food security, and his recommendations to increase carbon soil sequestration. The article describes a few recommended management practices (RMPs) that are most relevant to increasing urban agriculture's carbon sequestration ability, such as mulch farming, no till farming, and adding compost. By absorbing carbon in soil, plant output is increased due to enriched soil from the increase in nutrients available, and as long as proper RMPs are in place, the cycle will continue to provide multiple health benefits for people.

Post and Kwon's article, *Soil Carbon Sequestration and Land-Use Change*, explains that soil testing for carbon sequestration change over time is done by sampling two different land-use categories that had been converted from agricultural use to forest or woody vegetation, and from agricultural to permanent pasture or grassy vegetation. This methodology will be helpful in carrying out this project over a longer time frame in the future and includes temporal analysis of carbon sequestration.

Richard Pouyat's article, *Carbon Storage by Urban Soils in the United States*, researches and analyzes estimates of the carbon storage capacity of soils for different land use types in six different cities, including Chicago, and finds that these soils have a significant potential to sequester large amounts of carbon (Pouyat, 2011). This paper has encouraged us to consider in the future doing widespread testing of a variety of green space soils to estimate their carbon storage capacity for comparison to urban agricultural soils. A variety of research also exists for inquiries into the carbon sequestration of conventional agricultural soils and is useful in its analysis of soil sequestration impacts in mitigating climate change, with

some that argue that although agricultural soils make modest contributions to mitigating climate change, there is no single solution, and diverse mitigation strategies will be required that incur other benefits to society (Hutchinson et all., 2007). Urban agriculture, therefore, with its diverse social, economic, and ecological benefits, can certainly be one mitigation strategy to consider.

Also of intrigue was Okvat and Zautra's article, *Community Gardening: A Parsimonious Path to Individual, Community, and Environmental Resilience*, which discusses the role community psychologists can have in contributing research to community gardening and also focuses on community gardens as a source of climate change mitigation. In regard to climate change mitigation, the authors identify a plethora of direct benefits that include sequestration from plant processes, reduced carbon emissions associated with sewer system cleaning of run-off water because they reduce run-off, the lowering of ambient temperatures which reduces energy usage of buildings, and reducing the carbon footprint of food consumption by local production, among other benefits. The indirect benefits emphasized that can have a significant impact are the educational components of community gardens that can be and often are associated with teaching and practicing principles of sustainability, which include those of climate change, conservation, and the impacts of our food systems (Okvat and Zautra, 2011).

**Methodology**

The locations of urban agriculture sites were found by compiling secondary source data, mainly found on the Internet on websites such as *Advocates for Urban Agriculture, NeighborSpace, GreenNet, Growing Power*, and other pages that promote urban agriculture in Chicago.

Community organizations, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and local government data also played a substantial role in providing access to records of urban agriculture location, use, and ownership.

The Social Science Research Center at DePaul University shared with us a masterlist shapefile of community garden sites in Chicago with permission from the DePaul Steans Center. This masterlist was a culmination of various non-profit listservs, academic research, and government data from non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and different city departments in Chicago. The masterlist originated from the ongoing research in community gardens and urban agriculture of professor Dan Block and a graduate student at the University of Chicago. The data from the shapefile contains over 900 community garden sites in Chicago. The accuracy of the data needs to be checked by fieldwork, on which the DePaul Steans Center is currently working. The first results of this research have shown large margins of areas for some community areas such as Pilsen, but smaller error in Rogers Park.

Soil testing

Our soil testing data is very small in scale and meant only for preliminary research and rough estimates of carbon and nitrogen sequestration. By selecting four sites randomly, we collected soil samples to test for soil organic carbon and nitrogen content, in order to see how they might impact those cycles. Samples were taken recently from May 5 to May 30, 2011. We sampled from the following sites: City Farm, Altgeld-Sawyer Corner Farm, Wind City Harvest, and the Chicago Lights Urban Farm.

Three-four soil samples from a depth of 20 centimeters were taken from each site. Each sample was recorded in a GPS receiver to be uploaded to our map documents. Preparation and testing of the soil samples was done in a laboratory of the DePaul University Environmental Science Department, guided by Dr. James Montgomery. Carbon and nitrogen testing was assisted by Margaret Workman. Samples were prepared by air-drying the

samples for several days to be sifted in a sieve in order to separate unwanted materials, such as rocks or wood chips, from the soil. Carbon and nitrogen concentration of each soil sample was tested using a Fison Elemental Analyzer. Samples were prepared with a mixer grinder, and 50-100mg of sieved ground soil was placed in foil capsules and run through the instrument. The pH testing was conducted by mixing 5 grams of a sample with 5mL of deionized water on a mechanical shaker for 1 hour. The samples were then measured for pH using an electrical instrument used to measure pH. The phosphorus testing was conducted by also mixing 2 grams of a sample with 20mL of mehlich 3 extractant on a mechanical shaker for 1 hour, which removes the phosphorus from the sample.

Soil tests of nutrients included tests with the corresponding units for organic carbon and nitrogen by mg, pH, phosphorus by µg·g-1. Results were used to determine rough estimates of the potential to store carbon and nitrogen at these sites based on several arbitrary assumptions. These assumptions included no change in organic carbon and nitrogen content, static levels of organic carbon and nitrogen throughout the soil structure, and assumptions on depth and size of sites. There is a large margin for error in logistical consistency when accounting for annual disturbances in the soil such as tilling, however we do not have the capacity yet to take some of these variables in consideration.

Estimates for carbon/nitrogen sequestration for a given area of soil were determined first by calculating the area of the sites. Shapefiles of the urban agricultural sites were drawn in ArcGIS based on GoogleEarth and field observations. After these shapefiles were made, the geometry (area) was calculated out of a function in ArcGIS. Since we sampled only from a depth of 20 centimeters, we only included analysis of soil up to this depth in our estimates. Area and depth were multiplied to determine the volume of soil. The density of soil was determined by a standard unit given for packed soil at 1600 kg/m3. The total amount of carbon/nitrogen stored was then calculated by multiplying the soil density by the average percentage of carbon/nitrogen stored for the four groups of samples. The average percentage stored excluded the compost samples for the Altgeld-Sawyer Corner Farm and Windy City Harvest.

**Results**

Our results showed variability between and also within the sites sampled for carbon and nitrogen concentration. Soil sequestration of carbon was significantly greater than nitrogen. The mean percentage of organic carbon concentration in the soils tested and the estimate for total storage of carbon for these sites are calculated and shown in Table 1. The same calculations for nitrogen sequestration are shown in Table 2. The highest total of carbon sequestered was 338901.76 kg/m³ at City Farm because it was the largest site and had a high percentage of concentration. The lowest was 6120.54 kg/m³ at the Altgeld-Sawyer Corner Farm because of its small size and lower percentage of concentration. City Farm had the highest amount of total nitrogen sequestered at 29989.77713 kg/m³, while Altgeld-Sawyer Corner Farm had the least, at 354.6293886 kg/m³. The highest amount of carbon sequestration concentration for a sample taken was at 20.1286%, at Windy City Harvest sample B, and the lowest was at 3.5844%, at Urban Lights Farm B, with the total mean for all 14 samples being 12.3580%. Windy City Harvest B also had the highest percentage of nitrogen sequestered at 1.8548%, and the lowest amount of nitrogen sequestered was Urban Lights Farm B with .2996%. The total mean for nitrogen sequestrated is 1.06% for the 14 sites. These amounts are attributed to differing agricultural practices and also variability in concentration throughout the soil structure.

Using the data from the community garden masterlist obtained, we produced several maps to demonstrate the

TABLE 1

Total Carbon Sequestered

| Name | Carbon % mean | Area m² | Depth m | Volume m³ | Soil density=1600 kg/m³ | Total carbon storage kg/m³ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City Farm | 13.5323% | 7826.2101 | 0.2 | 1565.24202 | 2504387.232 | 338901.7585 |
| Altgeld-Sawyer Corner Farm* | 6.3328% | 302.02499 | 0.2 | 60.404998 | 96647.9968 | 6120.536699 |
| Windy City Harvest | 18.6789% | 1244.83 | 0.2 | 248.966 | 398345.6 | 74406.54748 |
| Chicago Lights Urban Farm* | 7.8789% | 2616.02 | 0.2 | 523.204 | 837126.4 | 65956.69631 |

* Mean calculated without compost samples

TABLE 2

Total Nitrogen Sequestered

| Name | Nitrogen % mean | Area m² | Depth m | Volume m³ | Soil density=1600 kg/m³ | Total nitrogen storage kg/m³ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City Farm | 1.1975% | 7826.2101 | 0.2 | 1565.24202 | 2504387.232 | 29989.77713 |
| Altgeld-Sawyer Corner Farm* | 0.3669% | 302.02499 | 0.2 | 60.404998 | 96647.9968 | 354.6293886 |
| Windy City Harvest | 1.6566& | 1244.83 | 0.2 | 248.966 | 398345.6 | 6599.164155 |
| Chicago Lights Urban Farm* | 0.7966% | 2616.02 | 0.2 | 523.204 | 837126.4 | 6668.451555 |

* Mean calculated without compost samples

spatial extent and concentrations of community gardens in Chicago. Figure 1 features a Kernel Density map of urban agriculture in Chicago and a map using hot spot analysis with a grid format to generate the total number of sites in a given area. The Kernel Density map gradients are weighted by the concentration and distance of community garden sites seen by the points on the map and also the grid map. This map shows that the highest densities are in Little Village and the surrounding neighborhoods to the north and also concentrated in Rogers Park, Uptown, Edgewater.

An ethnic breakdown and service area map are displayed in Figure 2 for observations relating to where high and low concentrations of urban agriculture are occurring. The service area map shows a .5-mile service area for Chicago urban agriculture sites (left) next to an ethnic distribution map (right) of Chicago for comparison. The service area map indicates that the areas west, South Lawndale north to East Garfield Park, and also the area northwest of the loop, Humbolt Park, West town, and Logan Square, and the area in-between them have the most serviced area. The map also shows the least serviced by urban agriculture sites to be the corridor extending southwest from the loop from Brighton Park to Garfield Ridge and also northwest close to O'Hare from Montclare and Dunning north to Edison Park. (See Figure 3 for neighborhood names). As evidenced in the ethnic breakdown map to the right of Figure 1, the area west of the loop that is South Lawndale, more commonly called Little Village, is a highly concentrated area of Hispanics, as well as the area running northwest. The area north of little village and southwest of Logan Square and Humboldt Park is predominantly black and Hispanic. Another well-serviced area on the north side along the lakefront around Uptown and Edgewater is largely white with Asian and other minority groups. The areas with low service area are along the south west corridor starting at Brighton Park and are largely Hispanic with a high concentration of whites at the far west boarder.
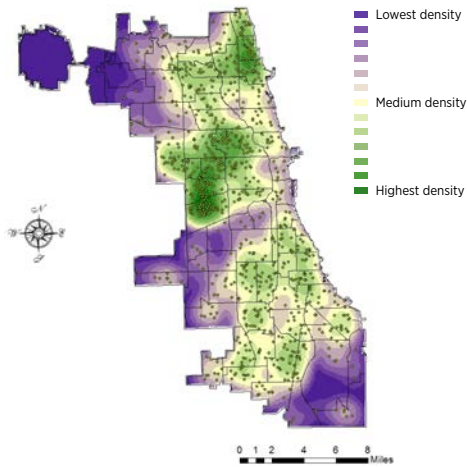
Chicago community garden density

Chicago community garden count

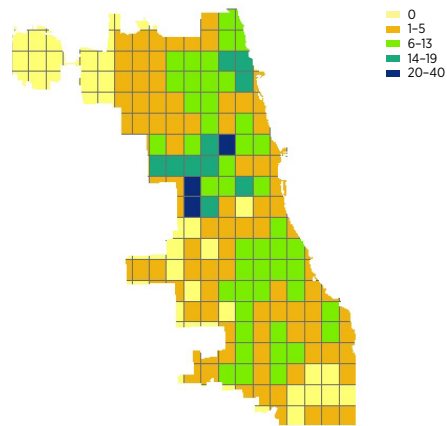Chicago urban agriculture sites: .5 mile service area
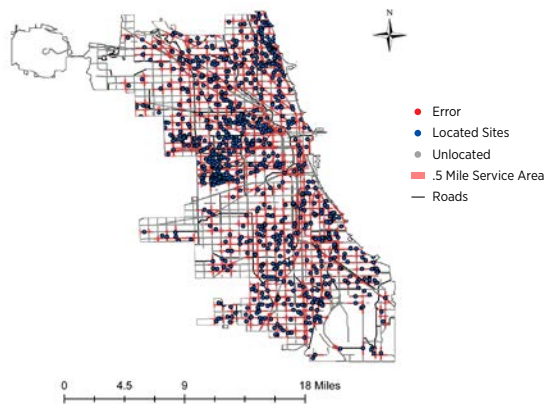
Chicago urban agriculture sites: Ethnic breakdown
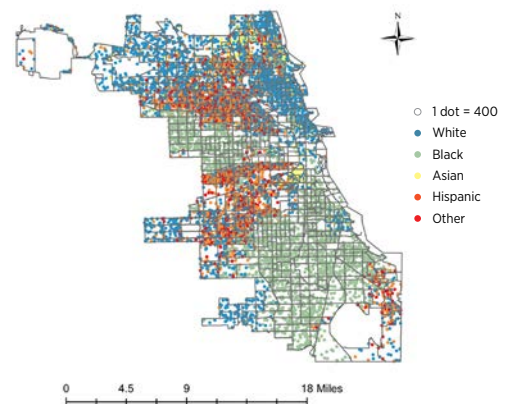


**Conclusion**

Our preliminary results show urban agricultural soils have a large potential to store carbon but very little nitrogen. With over 900 urban agriculture and community garden sites in the city that are continually growing, these soils are a valuable ecological resource with a plethora of other benefits. Further research needs to be carried out to approximate more accurate estimates and account for various variables in carbon sequestration. The main limitation we had on this project was the matter of time. Engagement with urban agricultural and community garden sites can take some time to develop with two people working on a project within nine weeks. The methodology for estimating carbon sequestration needs to be improved with precise measurement of the size of urban agricultural sites by the area, depth of soils, and

the mass of soils on the site in order to make an accurate estimate. In this regard, the project has a margin of error in calculating sequestration for sites throughout the soil structure because of the lack of the information mentioned above. Furthermore, temporal variability of sequestration needs to be tested by continuous sampling throughout a year. Clearly, the quantity of sites sampled needs to be expanded as well. This project would also benefit from data on the locations of farmers' markets and farm stands to analyze their accessibility to communities. In addition, plants and vegetation on these sites also store carbon and produce carbon, to which a net sequestration needs to be required to calculate the full sequestration value of the urban agriculture and community garden sites, which

would also require further research. In addition, another question for expansion of research relates to proper quantification of carbon emissions in just Chicago, and would therefore lead to more accurate estimates as to the percentage of emissions these soils store. As mentioned earlier, there are large margins of error in the masterlist of community garden locations and an accurate inventory that is kept up to date is essential for a variety of reasons. Currently, organizations such as the Advocates for Urban Agriculture are working on a shared online user inputted database and structure that could regularly update community garden sites, in which author Eddie Kulack is currently assisting. ■

**REFERENCES**

Getter, K.L., D.B. Rowe, G.P. Robertson, B.M. Cregg, and J.A. Andresen. 2009. "Carbon sequestration potential of extensive green roofs." *Environmental science & technology* 43 (19):7564-7570.

Hutchinson, J.J., Campbell, C.A., Desjardin, R.L. 2007. "Some perspectives on carbon sequestration in agriculture." *Agricultural and Forest Meterology* 142:288-302.

Lal, R. 2004. Soil Carbon Sequestration Impacts on Global Climate Change and Food Security. *Science*. 304 (5677): 1623-1627.

Post, W.M., and K. C. Kwon. 2000. Soil Carbon Sequestration and Land-use Change: Processes and Potential. *Global Change Biology*. 6: 317-327.

Pouyat, Richard V., Ian D. Yesilonis, and David J. Nowak. 2006. "Carbon Storage by Urban Soils in the United States." *Journal of Environmental Quality* 35.4 (2006):1566-1575.

Okvat, H, Zautra, A. 2011. "Community Gardening: A Parsimonious Path to Individual, Community, and Environmental Resilience." *American Journal of Community Psychology* (2011) 47:374-387.

U.S. EPA. 2010. "Carbon Sequestration in Agriculture and Forestry" www.epa.gov/sequestration/faq.html.

Jovone Evans  |  *Unititled*

# GHOST OF THE GALLOWS:
## THE HISTORICAL RECORD OF BLACK CAESAR

DEVIN LEIGH*

*Department of History*

**ABSTRACT**   This paper provides a detailed case study of an elaborate legend that grew out of a small kernel of historical truth. It scrutinizes the salient primary sources upon which the legend was based, seeking to determine the extent to which it owes its origin to verifiable fact. While the content of the paper pertains to the specific story of a black slave-turned-pirate who allegedly terrorized the mangrove swamps of south Florida during the early eighteenth century, the greater implications of the paper suggest that constructed narratives and invented traditions, though based in historical truth, say more about the cultural context, aspirations, and self-perceptions of the people who construct and perpetuate them than they do about the historical subjects that once provided the inspiration for their beginnings. The present study examines the historical basis of the legend in order to lay the groundwork for a follow-up investigation that will trace the development of the legend throughout the cultural contexts that perpetuated it for nearly three hundred years.

## Introduction

This paper is a historical investigation of a particular legend—that of Black Caesar, an eighteenth-century fugitive slave from the West coast of Africa operating as a pirate in American waters—that seeks to uncover the extent to which the legend was based in verifiable truth. On its surface, it is a specific case study of an obscure American archetype—the black pirate—but on its deepest levels, it is a commentary on how historians approach the task of analyzing modern legends that find their basis in a moment of historical truth, no matter how small that moment may be. Determining the historical truth behind the subject of a legend means scrutinizing the primary sources from the time period of that subject, something that this essay seeks to do, but that is only the beginning. A follow-up study must trace the development of the legend throughout the various contexts that created, reinvented, and perpetuated it, using the knowledge gained from the

initial historical analysis as a framework for evaluating what is fabricated and what is real. Only then can we begin to understand the unique reasons that lead people to appropriate, maintain, and shape some historical legends and not others.

## What we can know about the historic Black Caesar

The legend of Black Caesar refers to the stories of an African slave-turned-pirate who operated in the waters off south Florida during the early eighteenth century. He used the mangrove swamps of Elliot Key as his personal haven until he joined forces with the notorious English pirate Blackbeard, and ultimately died an ignominious death by hanging as a result of this acquaintance. For the purposes of this essay, he should not be confused with the nineteenth century Haitian pirate named Henri Caesar, who also operated under the moniker "Black Caesar."

The legend finds historical basis in a collection of stories told by a mysterious British author from the eighteenth century named Captain Charles Johnson. In the first

---

\*   Advisor: Gail Terry, Department of History. Summer 2011.
    devintleigh@gmail.com

edition of his *General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*, Johnson refers to an anonymous "Negro" who is widely considered to be Black Caesar.[1] The work is dated during the twilight years of the Golden Age of Piracy (~1700–1730), making it a valuable primary source. Unfortunately, the name "Johnson" is only a pseudonym and the author's real identity is shrouded in mystery. American scholar John Robert Moore once championed the theory that 'Charles Johnson' was a nom de plume of the contemporary English writer Daniel Defoe—author of the fictional autobiography *Robinson Crusoe*.[2] This theory prevailed for over fifty years until it was thoroughly debunked by scholars P.N. Furbank and W.R. Owen in their 1988 book *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe*.[3] Since then, the identity of Johnson has once again returned to obscurity and provides no clue to the context or reliability of his sources.

Johnson provides a colorful biography of the infamous pirate Blackbeard, also known as Edward Teach, in his *General History*. The biography includes a laconic anecdote pertaining to an anonymous "Negro" in the lower decks of his ship, the *Adventure*, during its final engagement with Royal Navy Lieutenant Robert Maynard at Ocracoke Inlet off the coast of North Carolina on November 22, 1718. According to Johnson, Blackbeard instructed this "Negro who he had brought up" to detonate a powder keg and destroy the *Adventure* in the hypothetical event that defeat became inevitable.[4] A near-facsimile of this anecdote was relayed in the unpublished letters of the Virginia Governor, Alexander Spotswood, who commissioned the expedition against Blackbeard.[5] In both cases, the would-be arsonist is cryptically described as an unnamed "Negro."

At the end of this biography, Johnson provides a list of fifteen captured members of Blackbeard's crew who were transported up the James River to Williamsburg, Virginia.[6] The name "Caesar" is among them. As Johnson indicates, thirteen of these fifteen prisoners were convicted of piracy and executed four months later (on March 12, 1719) near Capitol Landing Road in the same town. "Caesar" was one

of these condemned souls. The remaining two pirates were pardoned and acquitted. A 1992 excavation inadvertently uncovered the probable location of the eighteenth-century Williamsburg gallows, the spot where "Caesar" and these twelve others allegedly swung to four winds. The gallows were located outside the borders of colonial Williamsburg, about a one-mile tumbrel ride from the jail, and one hundred feet from the current junction of Capitol Landing Road and Maynard Drive.[7]

Unfortunately, the records of the Virginia trial—likely transferred from Williamsburg to Richmond when the capital moved in 1780—are believed to have been lost forever during an April 1865 fire.[8] Additionally, no contemporary sources on the trial records appear to have been created during the period between their composition and their supposed conflagration 146 years later, and court procedure did not require duplicates to be made. After all, this was before the 1730 establishment of a printing office[9] and such duplication would have been unnecessarily time-consuming. Notwithstanding this loss, the depositions of four other executed black pirates—taken during the Virginia trial—did survive because they had been stored in North Carolina, where they were used, but disregarded as testimony, in the trial of the Secretary of that colony, Tobias Knight, an alleged accomplice of Blackbeard.[10] The depositions suggest that "Caesar" was one of at least five black men condemned at Williamsburg on March 12, 1719.

However, there is no deposition by "Caesar." This absence, along with the presumption of coercion during the captives' four-month imprisonment and Knight's claim that the depositions were made "in hopes of obtaining mercy," led historian Robert Earl Lee to assert that "Caesar" had refused to testify in court as an act of allegiance to his pirate brethren.[11] This assertion is more an attempt to rationalize a lack of source information than a claim based on evidence, as there is no way to confirm why a deposition by "Caesar" does not exist today, if it ever existed at all. However, the depositions do say something. They say that "Caesar" is not the only suspect of the powder room

anecdote. There were more black pirates on board the *Adventure* during its final engagement at Ocracoke, and any one of them could have been the "Negro" fire starter.

Thanks to news coverage of the Ocracoke engagement and firsthand accounts of the skirmish, historians have reason to believe that at least six more black pirates were present on the *Adventure* at the time of Blackbeard's last stand, perhaps confirming the evidence of the Virginia depositions. Alexander Spotswood, in a letter to the Council of Trade and Plantations, says that a crew of eighteen men was present on the ship, and at least a third of them were "Negroes."[12] This estimation squares with a report made to the Admiralty by Captain Ellis Brand, a subordinate officer on the Blackbeard expedition. The report states that eighteen men were on board the pirate ship and six of these eighteen were "Negroes."[13] This number is further corroborated by contemporary newspaper accounts of the conflict, such as those printed in Virginia and London.[14]

Johnson's execution list refers to "Caesar," but this was likely not the person's real name; rather, "the name Caesar suggests [that] he had been a slave,"[15] as it was customary for slave dealers to bestow Euro-historic names to the "unnamed" Africans whom they captured and sold. This habit explains the biblical and Eurocentric names of three of the four black pirates who gave depositions against Tobias Knight in Williamsburg (James Black, James White, and Thomas Gates).[16] A bestowed name did not necessarily mean that there was any likeness between the named figure and the suggested namesake—for example, Black Caesar and Julius Caesar. However, it is possible that the name alluded to the fact that Julius Caesar dealt with piracy on the Mediterranean Sea,[17] or that it was an ironical reference to the Roman epithet that denoted imperial status. Lastly, because there is no record of "Caesar" joining up with Blackbeard, it is possible that his name was an appellation acquired while already on board. In this sense, it is interesting to note that Blackbeard and his crew looted and vengefully burnt a Boston ship called

the *Protestant Caesar* seven months before the skirmish at Ocracoke.[18]

Overall, the combined historical evidence allows scholars to verify six facts related to Black Caesar: at least six "Negroes" were present on the *Adventure* at the Ocracoke engagement, one of these "Negroes" was entrusted with the task of burning the ship in the event of defeat, at least five "Negroes" were tried and convicted in Williamsburg four months later in relation to Blackbeard, and a "Caesar" was among them, though "Caesar" was likely not this person's real name. As we shall see, the paucity of what we can know surrounding the life and death of Black Caesar sharply contrasts with the magnitude of all that we cannot know.

**What we cannot know about the historical Black Caesar**

To begin with, historians may never know if the "Caesar" from the execution list and the "Negro" from the powder room were one and the same. The sources examined in this study form the foundation of all that can be verified about the historical figure Black Caesar. There are no references to him remaining from Blackbeard's arrested ship, no trial records, and no primary sources pertaining to the captured pirates from the four-month period between their detainment and execution, though Johnson suggests that they told stories during this time.[19] Alexander Spotswood makes no direct mention of "Caesar" in his *Official Letters*, despite including his version of the powder room anecdote.[20] Other key players in the Ocracoke engagement—such as Lieutenant Maynard, Captain Brand, and Captain Gordon—are silent on the matter. Based on this evidence, historians cannot be certain that "Caesar" was even on the *Adventure* at Blackbeard's last stand. Primary accounts of the Ocracoke engagement reveal that only nine of the fifteen pirates who were tried in Williamsburg were direct captives of the conflict. The other six were rounded up in Bath Town afterward as suspected affiliates of Blackbeard.[21]

Even if "Caesar" was on board the *Adventure* during the battle of Ocracoke, there is no way to confirm that he was part of the crew. Both sides of this issue are arguable. Historian Marcus Rediker states that it was not uncommon for Blackbeard to employ black pirates on his seafaring exploits, stating that "60 of Blackbeard's crew of 100 [pirates] were black" at one time in 1718.[22] Archaeologist David D. Moore and researcher Mike Daniel state that according to depositions made at the trial of Major Stede Bonnet, to whom Blackbeard abandoned his original flagship, the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, Blackbeard once left Topsail Inlet with a crew of forty whites and sixty "negroes."[23] Also, the fact that Blackbeard moored at Ocracoke with such an uncharacteristically small crew—nineteen men, when he previously employed hundreds—makes it easy to believe that the captured black men were intimate confidants of Blackbeard. But the presence of black men aboard a pirate ship does not necessarily denote a multi-racial crew, especially in the case of Blackbeard, who was known to have acquired and harbored contraband slaves with the hopes of selling them to the American colonies for profit.[24]

If "Caesar" was once a slave, as his name suggests, then it is possible that Blackbeard conscripted him from one of the many slave ships he plundered during his two-year career as a pirate. Blackbeard stole 61 slaves out of a French slaver from Nantes named *La Concorde* near the Caribbean Island of St. Vincent in 1717.[25] On another occasion, Blackbeard took approximately fourteen slaves out of the brigantine the *Princess* while leaving Charleston in the wake of his famous blockade.[26] In both cases, it is unknown whether any of the acquired slaves assimilated with the crew. It is also possible that "Caesar" was acquired from a similar yet undocumented incident. When discussing the black pirates aboard the *Adventure* at Ocracoke, Arne Bialuschewski argues that "the fact that they were not killed or severely injured in combat indicates that they were not fighting members of the pirate crew."[27] The "Negro" in the powder room stayed below deck during the fracas, suggesting that he was a slave, rather than a free pirate who fought for his life.

Perhaps most importantly, nothing of Black Caesar's life prior to his enlistment with Blackbeard can be historically verified. The modern legend states that Caesar was a king stolen from the west coast of Africa and brought to America by way of a slaver that wrecked on the jagged Florida reefs in the late seventeenth century, but no slaver matching those specific circumstances appears in the historical record.[28] The legend states that Caesar plundered merchant ships from a base camp on Elliot Key, where he acted as the self-established warden of an ad hoc stone prison compound for over one hundred women. But the current in-house archaeologist of the Biscayne National Park, Charles Lawson, states that there is no archaeological evidence to suggest that such a stone compound ever existed on Elliot Key.[29] The label "Black Caesar's Rock" appears on a map of South Florida in the mid-eighteenth century,[30] but there is no way to verify whether it was named after "Caesar" himself. The legend states that Caesar embedded a metal ring in this rock so that he could capsize his boat to enable ambuscade and elude pursuers, but no metal ring exists today, if it existed at all. Black Caesar's much-talked-about caches of buried treasure have never been found, and a fantastic story of his mixed-race descendants can be traced to a Jim-Crow-era novel entitled *Black Caesar's Clan*. Finally, the presence of an equally undocumented homonymous black pirate in the early nineteenth century—fresh off the Haitian revolution—greatly obfuscates all knowledge surrounding the legend of the first. In the end, all we know is that the name "Caesar" somehow appears on a second-hand execution list of unknown authorship. The epithet 'black' was likely a sobriquet created sometime later for the purpose of racial identification, as there was no obvious contemporary reason to embed a racial distinction in the name of this particular pirate and not others. Yet, even this is only an assumption.

## Conclusion

Historical analysis of the available primary-source documentation from the lifetime of "Caesar" has revealed extreme incongruity between the historical record and the modern-day legend, suggesting that once people believed that "Caesar" was the "Negro whom Blackbeard had brought up," it became necessary to account for that upbringing with an origin story that entirely ignored the limits of primary-source documentation and logical inference, and instead spoke to the unique cultural contexts, aspirations, and self-perceptions of the people who continued to create, reinvent, and perpetuate it for the next 300 years. The next stage of this study must leave the historical period of its subject—Black Caesar—and trace the development of the legend from the early eighteenth century gallows to the modern day, asking why people decided to create their own Black Caesar, rather than the one that history gave them. ■

1  Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies & Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates* (Guilford, Connecticut: Lyons Press, 2010), 52.

2  John Robert Moore, *Defoe in the Pillory and Other Studies* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1939).

3  P.N. Furbank and W.R. Owens, *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

4  Johnson, 52.

5  Alexander Spotswood, "America and the West Indies: December 1718, 22-31," *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 30*: 1717-1718, ed. Cecil Headlan (1930): 424-446.

6  Johnson, 56.

7  Joe B. Jones and Charles M. Downing, *Phase III Data Recovery for Mitigation of Adverse Effects to Site 44WB66 Associated with the VNG Mechanicsville to Kingsmill Lateral Pipeline, City of Williamsburg, Virginia*. Prepared for Virginia Natural Gas, Inc. Technical Report Series No. 18. (Williamsburg: College of William & Mary, 1992).

8  Robert E. Lee, *Blackbeard: A Reappraisal of His Life and Times* (Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1974) 216-219.

9  Gail S. Terry and John M. Hemphill, "The Wheels of Government and the Machinery of Justice: the Workings of Virginia's Colonial Capitol." *Virginia Cavalcade* 38, no. 2 (1988): 63.

10 Lee, 153.

11 *Ibid.*, 153.

12 *Ibid.*, 114.

13 David Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and the Reality of Life among the Pirates* (New York: Random House, 1996), 196.

14 Arthur L. Cooke, "British Newspaper Accounts of Blackbeard's Death," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 61, no. 3 (1953): 304-307.

15 Cassandra Pybus. "Black Caesar: Our First Bushranger," *Arena Magazine* 57, (2002): 32.

16 Lee, 153. Johnson, 56.

17 Plutarch, *The Complete Collection of Plutarch's Parallel Lives Comparisons*, ed. Charles River Editors (Amazon Digital Services, 2011).

18 Johnson, 44.

19 *Ibid.*, 55.

20 Spotswood, 424-446.

21 Lee, 126.

22 Rediker, Marcus, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004) 54.

23 David D. Moore and Mike Daniel, "Blackbeard's Capture of the Nantaise Slave Ship La Concorde: A Brief Analysis of the Documentary Evidence." *Tributaries*, Vol. 11 (October): 27.

24 Spotswood, 424-446.

25 Moore and Daniel, 21.

26 *Ibid.*, 21.

27 Arne Bialuschewski, "Pirates, Black Sailors and Seafaring Slaves in the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1715-1726" *Journal of Caribbean Studies* 45, no. 2 (2011): 147.

28 The legend is an amalgamation of twentieth-century folkloric histories and internet sources that can be found in the bibliography of this paper under the heading "Sources of the legend."

29 Charles Lawson, resident archaeologist of the Biscayne National Park, phone conversation, November, 4th, 2011.

30 Dean Love. "Pirates and Legends," *Florida Keys Magazine.* (1st quarter, 1981): 10-14.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### SOURCES OF THE LEGEND (SELECTED)

Cross, James. *Blackbeard, or, the Captive Princess: a Serio-comic Ballet of Action in Two Acts*. London: J. Duncombe, 1798.

Love, Dean. "Pirates and Legends". *Florida Keys Magazine*. (1st quarter, 1981): 10-14.

McCarthy, Kevin M. *Twenty Florida Pirates*. Sarasota, Florida: Pineapple Press, 1994.

"St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum." The Pirate Museum. Accessed September 28th 2011. thepiratemuseum.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=95:black-caesar&catid=46:notable-pirates&Itemid=199

Terhune, Albert Payson. *Black Caesar's Clan: A Florida Mystery Story*. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1922.

True, David O. "Pirates and Treasure Trove of South Florida". Tequesta: *The Journal of the Historical Association of Southern Florida* (1947): 3-13.

Woodman, Jim. *Key Biscayne, the Romance of Cape Florida*. United States: Jim Woodman, 1972.

### ALL OTHER CITED MATERIAL

Bialuschewski, Arne. "Pirates, Black Sailors and Seafaring Slaves in the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1716-1726." *Journal of Caribbean Studies* 45, no. 2 (2011): 146-158.

Cooke, Arthur L. "British Newspaper Accounts of Blackbeard's Death." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 61, no. 3 (1953): 304-307.

Cordingly, David. *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and the Reality of Life among the Pirates*. New York: Random House, 1996.

Furbank, P.N. and W.R. Owens. *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

Green, Bartholomew. "The Boston Newsletter, Monday Feb 23rd-Monday Mar 2nd, 1719." In *The Golden Age: History and Interpretation*, 1660-1730. Cambridge: Pickering and Chalto Limited, 2007.

Johnson, Charles. *A General History of the Robberies & Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*. Guilford, Connecticut: Lyons Press, 2010.

Jones, Joe B., and Charles M. Downing. *Phase III Data Recovery for Mitigation of Adverse Effects to Site44WB66 Associated with the VNG Mechanicsville to Kingsmill Lateral Pipeline, City of Williamsburg, Virginia*. Prepared for Virginia Natural Gas, Inc. Technical Report Series No. 18. Williamsburg: College of William & Mary, 1992.

Lee, R.E. *Blackbeard the Pirate: A Reappraisal of His Life and Times*. Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1974.

Love, Dean. "Pirates and Legends". *Florida Keys Magazine*. (1st quarter, 1981): 10-14.

Moore, David D. and Mike Daniel. "Blackbeard's Capture of the Nantaise Slave Ship La *Concorde*: A Brief Analysis of the Documentary Evidence." *Tributaries*, vol. 11 (October): 14-31.

Moore, Robert John. *Defoe in the Pillory and Other Studies*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1939.

Plutarch. *The Complete Collection of Plutarch's Parallel Lives Comparisons*. ed. Charles River Editors. Amazon Digital Services, 2011.

Pybus, Cassandra. "Black Caesar, Our First Bushranger." *Arena Magazine*, vol. 57 (2002): 30-34.

Rediker, Marcus. *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2004.

Spotswood, Alexander. "America and West Indies: December 1718, 22-31," in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies,* vol. 30: 1717-1718. Ed. Cecil Headlan (1930): 424-446.

Spotswood, Alexander. "Feb 14th, 1719 Letter to Lord Cartwright, proprietor of North and South Carolina." In *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710-1722*. Richman, VA: the Virginia Historical Society, New Series, vol. I, II, 1882-1885.

Terhune, Albert Payson. *Black Caesar's Clan: A Florida Mystery Story*. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1922.

Terry, S. Gail and John M. Hemphill. "The Wheels of Government and the Machinery of Justice: the Workings of Virginia's Colonial Capitol." *Virginia Cavalcade* 38, no. 2 (1988): 56-65.

Ashley Marchi  |  *Millennium Yellow*

Ashley Marchi  |  *Pritzker Pandemonium*

# PASSE-PARTOUT:
## THE ESSENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

ANNIE McCALLUM*

*Department of Art, Media, and Design*

**ABSTRACT**   I thought that with time and study I would develop an understanding of the essence of photography, but my immersion in this art form has not made the medium any clearer. Although some think that a photograph is as real as the moment in which they experience the captured image, I believe that photography produces an image of the world. The image in the photograph stays the same, but our reaction to it changes

*I have lived on the lip of insanity, wanting to know reasons, knocking on a door. It opens. I've been knocking from the inside.* —Rumi

On the first day of class in ART 118: Thinking Photography, we were asked to write on the question "What is the essence of photography?" I remember being pleasantly surprised and a bit confused at how difficult it was for me to write about a medium I had been familiar for with much of my life. I thought I knew something about cameras and exposures and lighting, but actually I did not understand much about the essence of photography. I did find that there is more to this medium than meets the eye—my eye or the eye of the camera. It eased my disquietude to know that my inability to answer the question could be resolved before the course ended if I explored all the avenues that would be opened up to me. I pondered the question as I lounged in my *sanctum sanctorum* on my favorite couch, which exudes an air of comfort and inspiration, even though, by decorator standards, it saw its best day long ago.

As the quarter progressed, I began to understand more and more about the essence of this overwhelmingly impressive instrument, the camera. I came to realize what the essence of photography is for me and for those who became famous in the field. I began dissecting the core of photography by investigating pioneers in the field. I viewed films about their work, and examined my own photographs, all in an effort to explain the meaning of photography. Sometimes it was difficult to believe what I was reading or viewing. In a 1992 film entitled *Proof*, for example, a blind character named Martin uses the camera as a tool to reassure himself that what he sensed was real, even without being able to see.[1] How could a blind man use a camera? How could he "sense" what he was photographing? Yet he photographs scenes and individuals. Then he has his friend describe the photographs. He limits his friend's description to ten words. He writes these words on the back of the photograph as proof that the event occurred. In *Proof*, the audience sees and understands that the photograph has captured a time and a space. Thus, when Martin holds the photograph and someone reads the words on the back of the photograph, he retrieves the missing link—his sight—at that moment. For Martin, the photograph is just as real as the moment in which he shows the picture to his sighted friend.

---

*   Advisor: Steven Harp, Department of Art, Media, and Design. Fall 2011. ani.stwrt@gmail.com

1   *Proof*, a 1992 film directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse with performances by Hugo Weaving, Geneviève Picot and Russell Crowe (House & Moorhouse).

Though I do not concur with Martin that the photograph is as real as the moment in which I am experiencing it, I do believe that photography produces an image of the world instantaneously. We see and remember things we experience or come into contact with, yet with the passage of time we may not be able to retrieve the memories. In part, this may be why I take so many photographs of the same subject at different times and why I collect photographs I feel connected to. Even though I am barely in my twenties, I feel removed from so much of my life because of an inability to remember fully what took place at times in the past. When I return home and go through shoebox after shoebox of photographs, each image reminds me of my history. The photos remind me of all the other *mes* that are now in some sense gone, as are the places pictured. I am at times discouraged because I wish that there were more tangible proof of what has happened. I wish that someone had captured more of the in-between moments that were not important enough at the time, but would now serve to fill in the blanks. Where is the photograph that captures the crying temper tantrum that took place moments before the family portrait was taken? Before everyone was wearing a smile? When everyone was not so perfectly dressed?

Though the image in the photograph stays the same, our reaction to it and the way we see the photograph do change. Even though we hold the photograph in our hands as evidence, as witness, as proof, as did Martin in the 1992 film, our reaction to it is different. The author André Bazin believes the photograph to be a reproduction of reality.[2] I put Bazin's belief to the test when I look at the only family portrait that my family had taken by a professional photographer; although our faces are in focus, with just the proper amount of lighting, I know that this is not reality. Though Bazin believes the photograph is simply an object, the photograph will never allow Martin to fully see what has taken place and what he has photographed, as I will never be able to physically reenter the world of the photograph and ask the photographer to come back on a better day, a day when our expressions reflect true emotions. The viewers of the photograph are not privy to what was actually happening moments before. They are deceived by the smiles on the faces; they believe everyone was happy in that place, at that time.

I had thought that with time and study I would have come to a clear understanding and acceptance, but it seems my immersion has resulted in my ideas being as grainy as some of my less-than-successful photographs. Perhaps the essence of photography for me is closer to that of a character named Thomas in the 1966 film *Blow-Up*.[3] In *Blow-Up*, the photograph is made up of utterly disconnected moments, completely lacking in context. Thomas takes a series of pictures of a couple in a park one day. When the woman Thomas is photographing spots him, she instantly becomes alarmed. Intrigued by the woman's anxiety, Thomas takes a closer look at the photographs. New layers of reality appear with each enlargement of the photograph. As the blown-up photograph becomes grainier and grainier, however, the reality becomes less and less obvious.

The essence of photography is much more fragmented for Thomas, which makes it almost impossible to come to a single conclusion as to what that essence is. I seem to share that fragmentation with Thomas. I still feel that the essence, however fragmented, lies more in my connection with the world as I photograph it. I am outside a circumscribed inner world, looking at and trying to capture the wide world around me. I have a brand new link to the larger world. In some way, I have connected to what is called the universal key, the *passe-partout*. I become far less concerned with the technical aspects and far more interested in focusing and being in the present moment and looking at and participating in the world around me. Some people may

2  André Bazin and Hugh Gray, *What Is Cinema?* (Berkeley: University of California, 1967).

3  *Blow Up*, a 1966 film directed by Michelangelo Antonioni with performances by David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave and Sarah Miles (Bridge Films).

view this as escapism. I see it as completion. When my world is becoming fragmented, when I have no answers, or when I endeavor to frame the essence of photography, I am lost. I look for the *passe-partout*, the perfect frame for my picture or the universal key that will open the door to a more complete understanding. I am found.

In an attempt to get a better grip on this complex conundrum, I turned to comments by author Roland Barthes in his *Camera Lucida*.[4] During the 1960s, Barthes followed a structural philosophy, a system positing that all meaning could be deciphered through systems of relations. Like a language or a physical science in which interactions take place, Barthes believed that photography was not the "real thing." He looked for codes by which to understand photographs. How do we read a photograph? In what order? How does meaning enter? What about image? By what codes? The photograph, he found, is "a message without a code"; it is "an analogy so great that description is impossible."[5] Barthes' thoughts on the essence of photography changed over time. He came to believe that the photograph repeats what could never be repeated. It is the absolute particular, not distinguished from what it represents but absolutely connected to that "thing." By the 1980s, Barthes was echoing Bazin's point that the photograph is the object. Although I have already determined that the photograph is not the real object, what inspires me are Barthes' twin concepts, studium and punctum.[6] It is here that I find myself much more in agreement with Barthes. The studium presents meanings, which are culturally coded, and corresponds to the photograph's symbolic meaning. The punctum is completely idiosyncratic; it is not traditionally analyzable. It denotes the deeply emotional connection of the photograph, the moment, the photographer, and the viewer. The photograph has an effect beyond the frame. The punctum is the "subtle beyond." It inspires pensiveness. It resonates.

Removed as I am in time, space, and spirit from a photograph, I am strangely awed at how close I can feel to that photograph as I contemplate its content. Not long ago, I attended an exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago. On display were Richard Barnes's photographs of a cabin once inhabited by the Unabomber, which stirred something in me and remained under my skin for quite some time. In fact, it is still with me. The photographs that resonated with me capture the cabin, shot from all four sides, like mug shots.[7] Instead of people in a police lineup, it is a structure uprooted from its locale and, as it were, placed in a line-up. The exhibit brought me face to face with the Unabomber. He inhabited the photographs. The cabin, floating against a black backdrop, completely uprooted from its original, natural environment, was now merely an exhibit to be kept in a government file cabinet in case it was needed for the trial of the man who had inhabited it. I was overwhelmed. I was suspended in place and in time, witness to the planning, awaiting the catastrophe that was to occur. Of course the catastrophe had already happened, but the photographs were so powerful that I was frozen in the moment and that moment reverberated death.[8]

The photographs of the Unabomber's cabin felt like a resurrection. The casual viewer would not realize this cabin was the Unabomber's home. If the photographs were taken in the cabin's original environment, would that uneasy and eerie feeling still permeate? But taking the cabin out of its original setting, sending it floating into a new, open, visible space and illuminating it against a black background evoked another layer of disquiet in me. I felt I was invading the space of this brilliant but deranged individual. Here

---

4   Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).

5   Ibid.

6   Ibid.

7   Photographs from 1998 by Richard Barnes from the exhibition, *Unabomber Exhibit A-D*, at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, IL.

8   Barthes, *Camera Lucida*.

is where the punctum comes into play. Though the walls appear flat and there seems to be no dimension to the images, I imagine the things that the Unabomber thought about, the intricacy of his plans, and how he must have acted out his strategies in the cabin. While I feel removed from the time in which this cabin was occupied, as a viewer I am strangely close to the surface of the cabin's walls and much too close to the tragedy that followed. The punctum is my personal response, which is difficult to formalize in theoretical terms. It is the visceral reaction that resounds somewhere within me. It is the point in the corner of one's eye from which tears flow; it is the formation of the mouth before the sounds of laughter emerge from the throat; it is a nexus of sorts between the emotional and the physical worlds.

As I unwind here today on my couch—this couch rapidly withering away as more and more of its feather filling pokes out from a constrained space into a less restricted environment—I feel as though I have found a feather of what the essence of photography is for me. It is wandering around with acceptance, embracing everything around me. It softens my glaring at the world and permits the settling of things inside and outside of me. It is being receptive, blocking off my senses in order to create unimpaired viewing. The essence lies in the practice of unraveling the knots that separate me from everything and letting photography reconnect me in a free-flowing way to a deeper bond with the world around me. ▪

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Barnes, Richard. *Unabomber Exhibit A-D.* Photographs exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, IL, 1998.

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

Bazin, André and Hugh Gray. *What Is Cinema?* Berkeley: University of California, 1967.

Berger, John. "Uses of Photography," *About Looking.* Pantheon Books, New York, 1980, pp. 48-63.

Berger, John and Jean Mohr. "The Ambiguity of the Photograph," *Another Way of Telling.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1982, pp. 85-92.

*Blow Up.* Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni. Perf. David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave and Sarah Miles. Bridge Films, 1966. Film.

*Proof.* Dir. Jocelyn Moorhouse. Perf. Hugo Weaving, Geneviève Picot and Russell Crowe. House & Moorhouse, 1992. Film.

Rim, Carlo. "On the Snapshot" (1930), in *The Cinematic*, ed. David Campany. (Cambridge: MIT Documents of Contemporary Art Series, 2007).

Sekula, Allan. *Meditations on a Triptych.* Photographs created 1973–1978.

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977.

Wollen, Peter. "Fire and Ice" (1984), in *The Photography Reader,* ed. Liz Wells. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

# LITTLE INDIA:

## HOW TOURISM SHAPES AN ETHNIC HERITAGE

Kristin Mierzejewski*
*Department of Geography*

**ABSTRACT**   The purpose of my research is to identify the role tourism plays in shaping the ethnic heritage of Little India, Singapore. I suggest that a variety of groups, government agencies in specific, keep tourism a top sector in the country by manipulating Indian heritage to attract tourists. The urban redevelopment of Little India has turned the area into a visitor-oriented district where shops, restaurants and businesses cater to a culture of consumption. Such development has made it difficult for long-standing small businesses and inhabitants to survive. This case study of Little India demonstrates the impact tourism places on an ethnic heritage.

An ethnic heritage preserves and promotes cultural traditions, fosters mutual understanding, enriches lives, and celebrates heritage. Members within this group identify with each other through common characteristics, such as language, culture, and religion. Possessing an ethnic heritage is just one feature of an identity. Many countries use these human-made identities and heritages in ways to promote tourism. Singapore's multiculturalism is an important theme in the country's destination marketing and is depicted in promotional material. Government agencies manipulate culture and tourism to portray such ideal political ideologies. In this paper, I explore how tourism plays a large role in the development of Singapore and the tactics that the country uses to promote tourism. I will also discuss how culture is essential to its development, as well as the relationship between tourism and ethnic heritage in societal and managerial aspects. I will focus much of my research on a town in Singapore identified as Little India. This area is targeted by government agencies for tourism, forcing the Indian heritage and identity to

change continuously in order to keep tourism a top sector in the country.

The town of Little India is examined in terms of its ethnic heritage and the underlying dynamics of tourism. The area is considered an historic, commercial, and residential space in which citizens, tourists, government agencies, and private businesses all have a stake (Henderson, 2008, 332). Tourism is an active ingredient in the development of the area, as well as its conservation. I will observe the use of ethnicity as a tourist attraction with specific reference to Little India, where the mixture of ethnic affiliations is a defining characteristic of society. I will first go into detail about the continually growing sector of tourism in Singapore. I will then follow up with an examination of the relationship between tourism and ethnicity in Little India, as well as identify the controversies surrounding Little India's development, including the recently developed tourist attraction, the Mustafa Centre.

### Tourism in Singapore

Tourism is one of the largest and most dynamic sectors of the economy in the world today. Its high growth and development rates, considerable volumes of foreign

*   Advisor: Winifred Curran, Geography Department. Fall 2011.
    kmierzej@mail.depaul.edu

currency inflows, infrastructure development, and introduction of new management and educational experience affect various sectors of the economy, contributing positively to the social and economic development of the country as a whole. Tourism is a growing industry used by different countries throughout the world to stimulate their economies. Countries have noticed the increase in global travel and are taking full advantage. Tourism is vital to many states around the world due to the large intake of profit for businesses, as well as the opportunities for employment in the service industry. Therefore, the economic impact tourism offers is an important factor in state, regional, and community development (Stynes, 2002).

Even though tourism is often viewed as a positive reinforcement for a country and its economy, negative effects still play a role in that economy's development. Positive effects of tourism include the creation of employment, conservation of natural and historic spaces, and improvement of the economic and social culture of the local area and its population. These motives inspire and influence residents to support touristic planning and construction. Conversely, tourism comes with negative effects, including an increase in consumption of natural supplies, destruction of landscapes due to the building of new infrastructure, alteration of ecosystems, and the potential loss of traditional culture and habitat, as seen in the history of Little India's development (Savage, Huang, and Chang, 2004).

**Tourism and Ethnicity**

Because tourism is seen mostly through development projects or modern infrastructure, many do not realize the relationship between tourism and heritage at first sight. Countries are often seen using ethnicities and certain groups to "showcase" their culture, and in many situations, the state has leverage on how these ethnic communities are portrayed to the public. According to Joan C. Henderson, author of the article "Managing Urban Ethnic Heritage: Little India in Singapore" (2008), the state is manipulating these communities for economic revenue. She argues, "Reasons are principally economic and the images are selected to stimulate revenue, but there is the possibility of an underlying political agenda [as] tourism promotion is a vehicle for regimes to disseminate preferred views of a country and themselves" (333). Separating these touristic areas into "insider" and "outsider" groups is one way in which the political agenda changes the views of the country and the inhabitants of that country and culture.

Little India is considered to be one of these sites that struggles between the "insider" and "outsider" groups. The distinction of "insideness" and "outsideness" is recognized as follows: to be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside one is, the stronger the identity with the place; whereas from the outside, one looks upon the place as a traveler or tourist. In T.C. Chang's article "Singapore's Little India: A Tourist Attraction as a Contested Landscape" (2000), it is noted that the insider-outsider relationship is examined from three perspectives: "the relationship between tourists and locals; ethnic tensions between Indian and Chinese communities; and interaction between planners and users of the urban landscape" (343). The tourism industry often pushes for these tensions and demands re-creations of the traditional material culture, which encourages "excessive commercialization and trading in inauthentic goods and experiences" (Henderson, 2008, 333). Such a redefining of material culture is potentially threatening to the identity of an ethnic heritage, as the representation of the group can become stereotyped or falsely depicted.

As stated, the government authority is influential in how ethnic heritages are portrayed. Henderson argues in another article, "Ethnic Heritage as a Tourist Attraction: the Peranakans of Singapore" (2003), that motives are often economic, with images manipulated to "heighten" the destination's tourist appeal. She writes, "State-produced tourism promotion has been recognized as a channel for ruling elites to transmit their interpretations of a country's past, contemporary conditions and future

aspirations in accordance with the hegemonic agenda" (28-29). Ethnic groups are often dismissed and their opinions become obsolete because the state has the power and control to choose how a country or an area within that country is depicted for its tourists. Henderson (2008) states that ethnic cultures are threatened by tourism and "the commodification it engenders" (333). Despite the intimidation, she argues tourist interest and spending often protect and raise awareness of certain ethnic cultures; Henderson writes, "While frictions may be exposed and aggravated by tourism, it has the capacity to articulate, reinforce and protect ethnic and over-arching national identities in positive ways" (2008, 333). Tourism has the potential to question prevailing political ideologies instead of reinforcing them, although it is seen conversely in the case study of Little India.

## Little India

To set this paper in its proper perspective, a brief overview of Little India is needed. Little India is one of the most popular, free-access attractions visited by tourists in Singapore (Chang, 2000, 349). This town and ethnic group, which comprises 7.9 percent of the population in Singapore, attracts tourists with its exotic food and unique shops, offering a variety of retail outlets, restaurants, and services (Singapore Statistics, 2007). Little India was originally known as Serangoon Road and was dominated by an Indian jail and cattle ranch during the 19th century. Indian presence in Singapore is a legacy of the British East India Company trading station, established in 1819 (Henderson, 2008, 335). Many inhabitants from India were transported to Singapore to work on plantations or farms, specifically cattle ranches. As business in the cattle industry grew, the need for more labor arose. A changing focus from cattle to people peaked in the early 20th century, as farmland and stables were transformed into shops and residences. In the late 1980s, the conservation of historic areas was brought into effect by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), one of those areas being Little India. Ethnic neighborhoods, such as Little India, were "considered repositories of the [state's] fast-diminishing heritage which [gave] a sense

of place and identity to the country and its citizens" (Chang, 2000, 350-351). The Little India Historic District became finalized in July of 1989; 13 hectares encompassed nearly 900 shops, restaurants, and residences around Serangoon Road.

According to Chang, the transformation of Little India compares to the post-modernization of urban cities: "The redevelopment of ethnic [neighborhoods] for pleasure consumption, the emphasis on heritage conservation and the inevitable comingling of traditional land uses with enterprises are all characteristics of contemporary urbanization" (2000, 352). Little India saw many changes and much redevelopment throughout the last decade, and often these changes have disregarded the Indian heritage. The state saw potential within Little India for redevelopment; according to Henderson (2008), "The overriding priority of the government was economic growth and optimization of the commercial potential scarce land, leaving little enthusiasm for safeguarding built heritage" (336). Little India thus became an area of major development. Shops were restored and new businesses developed in hope of attracting tourists. The area became an established community full of rich customs and traditions, described with phrases such as "the heartland of Indian community," "a fusion of colors, sounds and scents," and "a variety of Indian products" ("Little India in Singapore," 2011). The state of Singapore uses excessively vivid and sensory images to promote a culture that most out-of-country tourists would be unaware of.

Although most of these tactics, such as appealing to the senses, would work for many tourist attractions around the world, Henderson (2008) argues that the marketing is misleading: "Its promises and development efforts have diminished Little India's character by making it difficult for long-standing small businesses and inhabitants to survive" (338). The people of Indian descent are often isolated because of the unrealistic approach the government takes to portray their culture. The urban redevelopment of Little India has turned the area into a visitor-oriented district

with shops, restaurants, and businesses catering to a culture of consumption; Little India is instead "burdened with the image of an 'Indian themed centre' far removed from the practicalities of daily living" (Chang, 2000, 355). This divergence between "Singaporeans" and tourists points to the fundamental ideology behind the "insider-outsider" discussion. The Singaporeans, or Indians, are considered the "insiders" who have been largely persuaded and pushed by the government, planning authorities, and the state for a necessary urban and cultural change to fit the needs of outside visitors. These authoritative groups are accommodating the retail needs of the tourists rather than caring for their very own inhabitants, often leaving residents feeling discriminated against.

The story of "the immigrant who overcame his humble beginnings" is another example of why native residents of Little India feel it is hard to survive in such an area where tourism is continually growing. The Mustafa Centre in Little India's Singapore is the best-known shopping center for tourists. It originated as a simple clothing shop managed by its current CEO Mustaq Ahmad at the age of 12, whose family migrated from North India. Over the years, the shop expanded, and Ahmad purchased multiple, larger units to support his growing business. Since then, the center has developed into a thriving, 24-hour, four-story mall ("About Mustafa," 2008). Many tourists who are aware of this story see it as a total representation of Little

India—a place where residents can survive without having an excess amount of wealth. Henderson (2008) writes that because of such stories, tourists conclude that the "lives of today's Indians are a happy co-existence of old and new, sacred and secular [in which] never is there strife" (338).

## Conclusion

The urban redevelopment of Little India has turned the area into a visitor-oriented district that caters to a culture of consumption. The reorganization of capital, labor, and people has made the city a place of mixed identities and borders. Little India offers heritage and culture, but through the global force of tourism. Tourism is an industry critical to the economic growth of Singapore. As one of the most popular attractions in Singapore, the role of tourism in Little India is the outcome of interactions amongst planners, tourism authorities, government agencies, and tourists themselves (Henderson, 2008, 342). Native residents often feel misrepresented because of their lack of influence in changes and developments regarding their community. Little India is a dynamic entity of Singapore, as it continues to develop in its appearance and purpose. Redevelopment of Little India illustrates how the government is constantly changing the traditional culture and heritage of Indian natives. Little India has become an economic, political, and cultural resource manipulated by government agencies to further progress and develop Singapore's tourism sector. ∎

REFERENCES

"About Mustafa." (2008). *Mustafa Online*, Web, 06 Nov. 2011. <www.mustafa.com.sg/aboutus.html>

Chang, T.C. 2000, 'Singapore's Little India: A Tourist Attraction as a Contested Landscape', *Urban Studies (Routledge)*, 37, 2, pp. 343-366, Academic Search Complete, EBSCO*host*.

Department of Statistics Singapore. 2007. www.singstat.gov. Accessed 7 Mar. 2011.

Henderson, JJ 2003, 'Ethnic Heritage as a Tourist Attraction: the Peranakans of Singapore', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 9, 1, p. 27, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

Henderson, Joan C. 2008, 'Managing Urban Ethnic Heritage: Little India in Singapore', International Journal of Heritage Studies, 14, 4, pp. 332-346, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

"Little India in Singapore." (2011). *Singapore Tourism, Singapore Travel, Asia Singapore Travel, Travel & Tourism in Singapore*. Web. 08 Oct. 2011. <singapore.tourism-asia.net/little-india.html

Savage, Victor R., Shirlena Huang and T.C. Chang. 2004. The Singapore Rive Thematic Zone: Sustainable Tourism in an Urban Context. *The Geographical Journal*. 170(3): 212-225. Accessed 6 Feb. 2011.

Stynes, Daniel J. 2002. Economic Impacts of Tourism. <www.msu.edu/course/prr/840/econimpact/pdf/ecimpvol1.pdf>. Accessed 2 Feb. 2011.

Annie McCallum  |  *Escalator in the SAC*

# THEN AND THEN:
## VICTORIAN WOMEN READING SHAKESPEARE

Rebecca Pasternak*

*Department of English*

**ABSTRACT**    Every generation makes Shakespeare its own, but this enterprise comes with risk. Using *Twelfth Night* as an example, this paper examines the efforts of two Victorian woman authors to mold Shakespearean heroines to the Victorian ideal. Shakespeare's work provided stability in the changing world of the latter half of the 1800's and provided crucial education for girls at a time of societal flux. To avoid impropriety the plays were drastically edited to make them appropriate for girls to read; pre-play histories were even imagined for the heroines. Such reinvention is a universal phenomenon that transcends culture and time.

Marjorie Garber's axiom, "Every age creates its own Shakespeare" is particularly true for the Victorian era. Perhaps because they were contending with a fast-paced world of booming industry, innovation, and change, with an uncertain future looming before them, Victorian critics looked back to past literature to find elements of stability. Therefore, long-held traditions and nationally beloved bards such as Shakespeare were given a specific type of critical attention. Indeed, as this paper will show, a paramount concern arising out of this time of upheavals was the "Woman Question," and many authors, particularly women authors, claimed that Shakespeare's heroines embodied ideals of a particular type of femininity hereafter referred to as Victorian womanhood. The desire to see Shakespeare's works as representative of one's own era is an inclination that is understandable given his universal appeal and acclaim. Within this process of appropriation, then, the plays—and the characters—obviously and necessarily take on characteristics peculiar to the era that is claiming them. Indeed, many contemporary critics judge, too harshly, writers from other eras and cultures for misreading or misusing Shakespeare; molding Shakespeare to one's own worldview is a universal enterprise and can perhaps even be a way to work out contemporary social issues. In this paper, I will focus on the play *Twelfth Night*, Victorian notions of womanhood, and Victorian interpretations of the character Viola offered by Anna Jameson and Mary Cowden Clarke to demonstrate how learned and respected Victorian women writers looked to Shakespearean heroines for affirmation—for themselves and their readers—that the restrictive role of the ideal Victorian woman was rooted in literary history.

### Contexts

The Victorian ideal of womanhood revolves around notions of submission and restraint. This model, Anne Russell notes, was becoming the accepted template for femininity by the 1830's. Sarah Ellis, author of didactic conduct manuals for young women, wrote in her 1839 work, *The Women of England, Their Social Duties, and Domestic Habits,* that "a high-minded and intellectual woman is never more truly great than when willingly and judiciously performing kind offices...in her private and domestic character" (54). This model accorded with society's deeply

---
*    Advisor: Francesca Royster, Ph.D., Department of English. Fall 2011.
     rbpasternak@gmail.com

ingrained belief that a woman belonged in the domestic sphere, and could promote peace and radiate goodness from her fireside. Indoctrinated with conduct manuals and essays produced by writers like Ellis, Victorians came to revere the "Angel in the House" (the title of Coventry Patmore's famous poem) and to think of the angelic role as natural and inherently feminine. It was within this model that women like Clarke and Jameson would attempt to fit Shakespeare's heroines, convincing the public and themselves that these characters embodied the virtues and ethics of Victorian womanhood.

In *Twelfth Night*, Viola disguises herself as a man in order to escape the attentions of men, but by virtue of this disguise finds herself taken into the confidence of the duke, Orsino. Viola promptly falls in love with Orsino, yet is sent by him to woo Olivia on his behalf. The duke believes that Olivia will be convinced of his love if Viola communicates it. However, Olivia quickly falls in love with the cross-dressed Viola. Before the confusion of the play is resolved in Act V, Victorian audiences would have witnessed a clash of sexual roles and boundaries completely at odds with conventional ideals of proper feminine behavior. The Victorian concerns about *Twelfth Night* were anticipated by Charlotte Lennox, who had written earlier of Viola's male disguise:

> A very natural scheme this for a beautiful and virtuous young Lady to throw off all at once the Reservedness of her Sex, mix among Men, herself disguised like one; and prest by no Necessity, influenced by no Passion, expose herself to all the dangerous consequences of so unworthy and shameful a Situation.
>
> <div align="right">(qtd. in Russell 43)</div>

As this paper will show, not all women writers were prepared to condemn Viola for her behavior. Mary Cowden Clark and Anna Jameson turned to their pens to rehabilitate her reputation and to appropriate Shakespeare's heroine as an example of the ideal Victorian woman.

## The Shakespearean Education of Victorian Women

As the nineteenth century progressed, writers strove to solidify at least one part of national history amidst the seeming instability of industrialization, scientific advancements, and innovation. Beloved literary works became symbols of immutable national heritage. Indeed it was "the Victorians who first associated Shakespeare with elevated notions of Womanhood" (Hankey 426) and it came to be believed (in the words of the *Ladies' Companion*) that he, "more than any other author, 'has seen most deeply into the female heart and is therefore the best instructor of women'" (qtd. in Gross 40). This investment in Shakespeare's ability to see clearly into women's souls and, indeed, his desire to champion them, is manifest in the utilization of Shakespearean heroines as a resource for teaching young girls how to be proper Victorian women.

Within the original texts of the plays, purely domestic, self-sacrificing, innately moral and altruistic women are somewhat lacking. However, Victorian girls and women were not reading the plays in the original text. Because of the important role Shakespeare played in the education of Victorian girls, the plays were often "mediated through Bowdlerizing editions of 'Shakespeare for Girls.'" Although Thomas Bowdler would be credited with the "infamous" 1807 *Family Shakespeare,* it was actually his sister, Henrietta Bowdler, who produced this edition (Bookman 403). This work promoted the "right type of Shakespeare—and the right Shakespearean heroines, as exemplary models or cautionary tales," so that women and girls could learn to love Shakespeare, that "Patron saint of Women" (Hankey 427), as he was known by the Victorians, albeit only through the mediation of a cleaned-up version. Thus the morals, values, and above all, the womanly traits that the daughters of Victorian England should embody, were, apparently, evidenced in the works and heroines of Shakespeare.

## Mary Cowden Clarke and "The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines"

Mary Cowden Clarke was, like Sarah Ellis, a teacher to

a vast audience of girls and women "on the subject of Victorian womanhood" (Gross 38). However, Clarke was also a Shakespearean scholar: she worked on a number of projects, including accepting what Richard Altick termed the "honour and sacred responsibility implied in being chosen as Shakespeare's first female editor" (Altick 185). Yet her most influential achievement, at least in her lifetime, was the publication of her "major imaginative work on Shakespeare, *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines in a Series of Tales*" (Gross 38) which appeared serially between 1850 and 1852. According to Altick, this work gained popularity in England as well as in America and "remained in young girls' hands down through the century and beyond" (138). The work imagined the lives of Shakespeare's heroines from their youth, before their entrance on the scene. Much like the Bowdlerization of Shakespeare's works in 1807, this project sought to inject morality into the lives of women like Ophelia, Rosalind, Juliet, and Viola.

Clarke wrote in the introduction to T*he Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines in a Series of Tales* that she hoped to "trace the probable antecedents in the history of some of Shakespeare's women" (Clarke v) and that the aim of the work "has been to invent such adventures as might be supposed to color the future lives" (vi). In the tale concerning Viola's girlhood, Clarke emphasizes her likeness to her twin brother, Sebastian. In "noting their wondrous and complete resemblance" Clarke emphasizes that it is Viola's "native costume [that] admitted of this similarity" between the twins, for "the dress of a female differed but little from that worn by men" (Clarke 394). In this way Clarke sanctions Viola's cross-dressing in *Twelfth Night* by showing that androgynous dress was a part of her native culture.

In his essay "Mary Cowden Clarke, 'The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines,' and the Sex Education of Victorian Women," George Gross notes that as this imaginative work was also a work of moral teachings and, bluntly, a form of sexual education for Victorian girls: "bad

women meet bitter ends, good women triumph" (Gross 39). Indeed, through her construction of the childhoods of Shakespeare's heroines, Clarke sought to appropriate the famous works for Victorian women by molding the girlhoods of Shakespearean women into didactic tales that articulated Victorian values. Clarke, though "obligated to use what evidence [could] be found in the plays" (42) in constructing her tales, allowed herself plenty of leeway to mold Shakespearean women to the template of Victorian womanhood and to use his heroines to urge her readers "to virtue" (39) because she created a new text based on the evidence from the plays. For example, Clarke's comments on androgynous clothing in Viola's native country would have given Victorian audiences an explanation for Viola's behavior in the play, but would not add anything contradictory to the play itself.

For Gross, it is what Clarke neglects to incorporate into her tales that deserves criticism. Clarke gives no account for how Viola becomes "the expert on love that Shakespeare presents" (Gross 43) as he has her conceal her own love for Orsino and actively court Olivia in his stead. Gross asserts also that Olivia's "sophistication in her dealing with the young Cesario," boldly and blatantly courting the convincingly cross-dressed Viola, "simply cannot be accounted for in Mrs. Clarke's fictional biography" (43). What is troubling about Gross's assessment of Clarke is that he acknowledges that her motivation in producing *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines* is the moral and sexual education of Victorian women through Shakespeare's heroines; therefore the objection that Clarke's work does not account for those elements in the play that do not accord with Victorian notions of sexual morality seems like an obvious one. Gross apparently expects that Clarke's project had no agenda and that it will account for all aspects of sexuality in the play. However, for her didactic purposes, Clarke needed to rehabilitate Olivia's and Viola's reputations for her particular audience. Thus, she understandably does not address the heroines' sexual awareness, a characteristic that was unredeemable by Victorian standards. By this omission, Clarke infuses

the leading ladies of *Twelfth Night* with exactly the type of sexual morality she hopes to present to her audience as ideal.

**Anna Jameson and "Shakespeare's Heroines"**

Perhaps the most influential Victorian woman writer on Shakespeare's heroines was Anna Jameson, whose pivotal work, Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical, and Historical, was soon known simply as Shakespeare's Heroines. Recent scholars have noticed how, even as Jameson passionately argues for the sedate femininity of Shakespeare's women players, her rhetoric does not hold up under the tensions and contradictions between Shakespeare's women and the ideal Victorian woman. However, her argument for the ever-present feminine character of Viola shows her determination to work through and defend her prescribed gender role utilizing beloved literary figures.

Jameson argues that Viola's initial decision to don male clothing is made after she has "ascertained that he [Duke Orsino] is not married, and that therefore his court is not a proper asylum for her in her feminine character"; in consequence she "attires herself in the disguise of a page, as the best protection against uncivil comments" (Jameson 149). For Jameson, Viola's actions stem from a need to shield her feminine virtue. What is more, despite her disguise, "the exquisite refinement of Viola triumphs over her masculine attire" (147) which further justifies Viola's behavior.

Anne Russell's 1991 article, "'History and Real Life': Anna Jameson, Shakespeare's Heroines and Victorian Women" offers a critique of Jameson's defense of Viola that points to its inconsistencies. Russell contends that Jameson's argument is cogent insofar as it accounts for genuine issues Viola may have faced as a woman in Illyria. However, notes Russell, "Jameson does not consider why Viola might not reveal her identity once she has met Olivia," and uses this "realistic" argument "only as long as such a strategy advances the defense" (43) of Viola. After this

initial defense gives out, the fact that Viola's true identity is always breaking through her male disguise becomes the redemptive quality in her.

Jameson's arguments about Shakespeare's heroines represent the tensions present within the author as she attempts to force characters like Viola into the role of an ideal Victorian woman. The result is like an ill-fitting puzzle piece and employs, as Russell correctly points out, multiple arguments that, together, do not wholly convince a modern reader that Viola's motivation to cross-dress is to preserve her feminine virtue. However, Russell focuses on the "contradictions" (46) in Jameson's argument and fails to acknowledge Jameson's social location as a Victorian woman, striving to meet standards and expectations imposed upon her. Jameson's right to view Viola's actions through the lens of her own gender role is incontrovertible and is, in fact, evidence that the prescribed position of the ideal Victorian woman was not innate and natural, but was, perhaps, something to be struggled with.

**Beyond the Victorians: Concluding Thoughts**

The fact that Victorian women writers thought critically about Shakespeare and sought to find echoes of themselves—or what was expected of them—in his heroines is not unique to the Victorian Era. This is something that every age does. We see it today with modern cinematic adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, new twists on stage performances, and books like Marjorie Garber's *Shakespeare After All*; we all want to believe that Shakespeare is writing about us, for us—and to us— and saying something profound that we can use to make sense of important issues. The role of the modern literary critic, then, is not to point out all of the discrepancies in varying interpretations but perhaps, to assess why such discrepancies may have been of such importance. In this sense, it is only natural that Victorian women, while chained to the fireside and obviously grappling with that domestic role, looked to the beloved works of Shakespeare to find evidence and affirmation for their proper place in society. ■

**WORKS CITED**

Altick, Richard D. *The Cowden Clarkes.* London: Oxford UP, 1948.

Brookman, Helen. "Shakespeare and Victorian Women/Women Writers and Nineteenth-Century Medievalism." Rev. of "Shakespeare and Victorian Women" by Gail Marshall. *Journal of Victorian Culture* 15.3 (2010): 402-06.

Clarke, Mary Cowden. *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines; A Series of Fifteen Tales.* Whttingham: Chiswick, 1879. *Google Books.* Web.

Ellis, Sarah Stickney. "The Women of England, Their Social Duties, and Domestic Habits." *Victorian Prose: An Anthology.* Eds. Mundhenk, Rosemary J., and LuAnn McCracken Fletcher. New York: Columbia UP, 1999. 53-57.

Garber, Marjorie. *Shakespeare After All.* NY: Pantheon Books, 2004.

Gross, George C. "Mary Cowden Clarke, 'The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines,' and the Sex Education of Victorian Women." *Victorian Studies* 16.1 (1972): 37-58.

Hankey, Julie. "Victorian Portias: Shakespeare's Borderline Heroine." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 45.4 (1994): 426-48.

Jameson, Anna. "Viola." *Shakespeare's Heroines: Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical, and Historical.* New York: AMS, 1967. 147-53.

Russell, Anne E. "'History and Real Life': Anna Jameson, Shakespeare's Heroines and Victorian Women." *Victorian Review* 17.2 (1991): 35-49.

Joseph Horton | *Ground Cover*

# IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE: THE ARAB COMMUNITY IN CHICAGO DURING THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

CASSANDRA RAMBO*
*Department of History*

**ABSTRACT**     Despite Chicago's claims of being a multi-ethnic city, little is known about Arab immigration to Chicago prior to the mid-twentieth century. In fact, the record is almost silent on the small Arab community that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in Chicago. This study examines contemporary constructions of the Arab community through an examination of articles published in the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Defender*. An analysis of these articles demonstrates that categories of race and religion were used to determine where Arab immigrants should be placed within the black-white racial binary common to American society at that time.

A deeper awareness of the early Arab immigrant experience in Chicago, from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century, offers critical insight into larger immigrant community developments. Employing anthropological questions and a historical methodology, this paper identifies the Arab immigrant community in Chicago with an emphasis on Syrians. It explores articles appearing in two newspapers, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Defender*, to discern where journalists and editors placed Arabs within the black-white racial binary prevalent in American society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To understand the early Arab community, the researcher needs to employ a degree of flexibility and maneuverability with source materials. Even though the Fourteenth Census, conducted in 1920, identified Chicago as having the fifth largest Syrian population in the U.S., there is little documentary evidence left of that community, a fact that can be attributed to a variety of factors, chief among them the small size of the initial community.

* John. T. Karam, Latin American and Latino Studies. Fall 2011.
cassandrarambo@gmail.com

### Early Arab Communities in Chicago

Organizers of the World's Columbian Exposition—held in Chicago from May to October, 1893—commissioned countries around the world to set up displays that would showcase their culture and customs along the Midway Plaisance, and it was here, among the various ethnological exhibits, that some of the first American notions of "the Middle East" emerged.[1] The first of two main waves of Arab migration to Chicago took place between the 1870s and 1924 when the National Origins Act was implemented.[2] The second wave began in the 1960s. With the restructuring of U.S. immigration policy and the Arab-Israeli War, there was a considerable influx of Palestinians.

Today, Chicago is one of the few places where persons of Iraqi, Jordanian, and Palestinian descent outnumber those of Lebanese and Syrian descent.[3] However, the first immigrants to Chicago were Lebanese Christians, who would often be characterized by terms like Turk, Syrian, Arab, and Mohammedan; I encountered all four labels in my sources, which ranged from 1880 to 1930. The U.S. Immigration Department did not differentiate between "Syrian" and "Turk" until 1897. A reader today may be further confused by geographic

designations. During the period under examination, the Ottoman Empire controlled Greater Syria, which consisted of the present-day nation-states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority.[4]

The earliest primary source material that reveals an Arab presence in Chicago is the 1895 *Hull House Maps and Papers*. The maps in this book provide a visual account of the multiple nationalities living within a third of a square mile around Hull House.[5] It is interesting to note that "Arabians" are differentiated here from "Syrians" given that newspaper articles were using the terms interchangeably. The claim that Syrians existed separate from Arabs is repeated in other publications as well, like the 1922 doctoral dissertation by Edith Stein. Within this dissertation, she locates two distinct communities of Arab immigrants, distinguishing between them based on religion.[6] The Christian Syrians lived on the West Side around 2600 West Ogden Avenue.[7] The Palestinian community, "said to be mainly Mohammedan," was located on the South Side in the vicinity of 18th Street and State.[8] This evidence, in conjunction with references in contemporary newspapers, reinforces the notion that there were at least two different groups of Arabic speaking communities in Chicago.

Building on that premise, several assumptions can be made about these colonies. The *Defender* and *Tribune* covered the Syrian settlement on the West Side considerably more than the Arab community on the South Side. One reason for this was the extensive reporting on a prominent church in the Syrian community: St. John the Baptist Melkite Greek Orthodox Church. This church, founded in 1894 at 323 S. Franklin Street, received considerable media attention, as it was the hub for the Syrian settlement downtown.[9] The church was a center where recent immigrants could interact in their native language and find strategies for surviving in Chicago.[10]

Why did this group have more visibility than the "Arab" Palestinian community? The two communities' religious affiliations provide a possible explanation for their visibility, namely the Syrian Orthodox Church's ties to the Roman Catholic community. The *Catholic New World*, a Chicago-based bi-monthly newspaper, periodically published articles on Maronite Catholics, including an 1894 article that detailed the arrival of a Maronite priest to New York City.[11] Followers of the Syriac Maronite Church of Antioch, Maronites belong to the Eastern Catholic Church, and are in full communion with the Catholic Church in Rome. If Catholics in Chicago were aware of Maronites in New York, one could infer the Syrian Catholic community's visibility in Chicago as well.

Compared to the Arab Palestinian community, Syrians obtained greater recognition from the wider Chicago community due to the similarities between Eastern and Western Christianity.[12] Beginning in 1891, the *Chicago Tribune* provided substantial coverage of Syrians in Chicago, focusing on religion as the community's most notable characteristic. The *Chicago Defender*, established after the *Tribune*, published its first article containing references to the Arab community in 1911. In general, the *Defender* tended to identify the "Arab" community versus Syrians and frequently described the group in hostile terms, featuring Arabs as the punch line of jokes and humorous stories. In one example, a small boy at a circus asks his father if the Arab circus performer were to fall and break his teeth, whether he would speak "gum Arabic."[13] Another article, entitled "Humor of the Cloth," points to Arab peoples' ignorance of liturgical traditions by means of a joke.[14] In order to be considered comical, some knowledge of a stereotype is required. From this, one may infer that an "Arab" stereotype existed at this point.

The *Tribune* and the *Defender* had divergent strategies for describing and identifying Arab immigrants in Chicago. In these strategies, race was not a fixed category. The place of Arabs was debated in a public forum. It is important to note that the *Tribune* was aimed at a middle-class white audience. The *Defender*, however, was an African-American newspaper based on Chicago's South

Side. Representing two different constituencies, these newspaper accounts also highlight the respective concerns of their own communities. Given this, one is able to locate Arab immigrants in the socio-racial spectrum according to the tendencies of each newspaper and to sense the newspapers' respective concerns about Arab immigrants.

## The "Syrian" Settlement according to the *Chicago Tribune*

On March 31, 1895, the *Chicago Tribune* published a five-page exposé entitled "The Syrian Settlement in Chicago." In the opening lines, the *Tribune* journalist establishes a main explanation for Syrian migration to Chicago:

> 'Down with the Sultan!' This is the sentiment of 1,500 Syrians who make Chicago their home. But the Sultan will not step down in response to this sentiment, and the Mohammedan religion stubbornly resists the advance of Christianity in the East—hence this little colony of Syrians in Chicago. Mohammed is no longer the prophet of their God. They have discarded the Koran for the Holy Bible. They are Christians—and exiles.[15]

This marks the beginning of the parallels that the *Tribune* drew between the Protestant struggle for religious freedom in America and Christian-Syrian resistance to an allegedly hostile Muslim Ottoman Empire. The *Tribune* embraced immigrants in drawing a Christian tie between early Americans and Syrians. It is as if Syrians were upholding an American tradition by standing up to religious persecution. Inherent in the quote is the assumption that progress is linear and that Syrians are on the front lines of advancement. The "advance of Christianity" also resonates with the advance of progress and modernity; this advance will supposedly happen when Christianity supplants Islam in the Middle East, and progress and modernity follow.

Further evidence of Christian Syrians' struggle for religious freedom is evident in a number of articles published in the Chicago newspapers. These articles range from reports on domestic unrest in Syria to Syrian patriots hiding out in New York City.[16] The articles demonstrate an avid interest in Christian Syrian liberation from the Muslim Ottoman Empire. There is no acknowledgement of other reasons for immigration to the United States, namely to avoid conscription in the Ottoman army and economic depression in the Syrian part of the Empire.[17]

The Syrian community is also depicted as a part of the larger multi-ethnic quilt of Chicago.[18] Several sections of an 1889 article entitled "Proof that Chicago is Cosmopolitan" allow us to locate the unique and varied immigrant communities of Chicago, including peoples of the Middle East.[19] The same theme is reflected in the 1903 article "Eat around World in Chicago." Here the reporter tempts visitors and residents to "visit every country in the world by virtue of the proxy of a dining card... traveling gastronomically from Sweden to Africa without paying more than five cents for carfare."[20] At a Syrian café one may sample "a dish made something like waffles... but inside the dish is the tenderest juiciest spring chicken in the world, smothered in gravy and encased in a corn stalk."[21]

Lastly, an examination of the portrayal of Syrian women in the *Tribune* yields a paradox in terms of the women's economic status as street peddlers. In "Syrian Shawl Venders Lend Picturesqueness to State Street," a journalist writes about a nameless female peddler who, after working all day, comes home to her husband and baby, both of whom "depend to a large extent upon her efforts for support."[22] The Syrian woman is a contradictory mixture of ultra-feminine beauty and masculine intelligence.[23] In the article "The Syrian Girl who Worships Men," the Syrian woman is tethered to her family. But it is her devotion to her husband and maintenance of the household that pushes her into the public sphere of peddling. Owing to

her role as a wage earner, "her intelligence far surpasses the men of her race."[24] In appearing to privilege Syrian women over men, the *Tribune* effectively demasculinized Syrian men.

### The "Arab" Settlement according to the Chicago Defender

While the *Tribune* articles focus mainly on Syrian religion, the *Defender* articles are primarily concerned with race—specifically, questioning where Arabs fit on the racial spectrum. In "White Men and Brown," white is defined as more than an ethnological designation; it is also understood as a scientific racial category.[25] This article describes the New York Syrian community as attentive to the debate concerning whiteness, demonstrating the importance of this topic to an array of ethnic groups. Syrians are interested in the definition of whiteness because it marks either their inclusion in or exclusion from white society. In recognizing Syrian immigrants' attempt to claim whiteness, this article also reveals an African American perspective on the historical construction of race in the U.S. As a vibrant black community took shape in early twentieth-century Chicago, African American journalists were discussing their own ideas about racial boundaries.

As mentioned previously, the *Defender* typically presented Arabs as the punch line of jokes or as an object of curiosity because of their superstitious culture.[26] In humorous stories or jokes, Arabs are portrayed as being out of touch with progress and reality. In an editorial which argues that African Americans have an established presence in the economic sphere of the United States, the author flippantly remarks that, "unlike the Arab, we [African Americans] would find it a difficult proposition to pack up our tent and leave."[27] As an antithesis to African Americans, Arabs are understood to be drifters with no social responsibility to a community. Other jokes feature Arabs as humorous due to their supposed lack of intelligence.[28] At a time when white Americans saw Arabs as traditional and superstitious—

in contrast to how they saw themselves as modern and rational—African Americans also seem to have accepted this dominant representation. As African Americans had to endure similar stereotyping by white Americans, they projected such ideas onto Arabs living on Chicago's South Side.

On August 5, 1916, the *Chicago Defender* published an editorial directed at President Woodrow Wilson, in which the author criticized the President's foreign policy stance on Turkey. Instead of voicing disapproval of Turkey's treatment of Christians in Syria, the author asks the President to "make some needed improvements right here at home before seeking other countries to show off in."[29] This article is remarkable for several reasons. First, it demonstrates that the *Defender* disputed the minority status of African Americans in Chicago. The article's acknowledged awareness of Christian Syrian oppression shows that the *Defender* and *Tribune* were in dialogue with one another. Furthermore, the *Defender* placed domestic issues of racial inclusion above international conflicts over religious freedom.

As a comparative study of newspaper articles from 1880 to 1930 reveals, Arab immigration was debated in terms of race and religion. Arab immigrants to Chicago did not form a singular, cohesive community. Although they shared a common language, there were at least two distinctive communities divided along religious and geographic lines. Because of their relatively small size, they were often left out of the ethnic narrative of Chicago; yet, one should be careful not to overlook Arab immigrants. ▪

1 The relationship between the 1893 World's Fair and Arab immigration to Chicago is a contested issue, largely due to the political implications associated with early Arab immigrants. Some scholars emphasize the role of the Columbian Exposition in stimulating immigration to the United States. Ray Hanania, a local author and journalist, claims there is a significant relationship between the origins of the Arabic quarter in Chicago and the presence of the World's Fair. Hanania, *Arabs of Chicagoland* (New York: Arcadia Publishing, 2005). Others cite socio-economic variables within the Ottoman Empire as the impetus for migration. Sarah Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

2 This Act, also known as the Asian Exclusion Act, severely limited immigration from around the world, but especially from countries in Asia and Eastern Europe.

3 Arab American Institute, *Illinois*, (Washington D.C., 2003) www.aaiusa.org/page/file/face0442ef9f25b322_ay0mvbdvo.pdf/ILdemographics.pdf. Although there were immigrants between 1924 and 1960, they did not come from any one state. Additionally, restrictions on immigration caused no significant demographic changes to the existing community.

4 Gualtieri, 11. For the purposes of this paper, I differentiate between Syrians and other Arabs even though they both spoke Arabic.

5 *Hull House Maps and Papers*, 1895 (homicide.northwestern.edu/docs_fk/homicide/HullHouse/NATMAP1.pdf). Other semi-comprehensive accounts include Louise Seymour Houghton's "Syrians in the United States" published in *The Survey Journal* in 1911. Several dissertations are also available at the University of Chicago library, including Abdul Jalil Al-Tahir, *The Arab Community in the Chicago Area, A Comparative Study of the Christian-Syrians and the Muslim Palestinians* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1952).

6 Stein, *Some Near Eastern Immigrant Groups in Chicago* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1922).

7 Stein, 78.

8 *Ibid*.

9 St. John the Baptist Melkite Greek Orthodox Church still exists today. In 1969, the Church moved to Northlake, Illinois. For more see, melkitechicago.org/about_us.html. The Syrian community was originally located downtown at Clark and La Salle, near Harrison and Congress. The group slowly migrated to Chicago's West Side. St. John the Baptist Church would follow, moving to Washtenaw Street and eventually to the suburbs.

10 Various *Chicago Tribune* articles refer to the Syrian settlement on Sherman Street. Sherman Street was renamed Financial Place (most likely in the early 1980s due to the demolition of the LaSalle Street station) and a new station was built under the Stock Exchange building. For example, "Syrians Join Hearts and Hands," *Chicago Tribune*, 6 March 1893.

11 "Another Maronite Priest," *Catholic New World,* 20 January 1894.

12 "Church for Syrians," *Chicago Tribune,* 31 July 1893. This article describes in great detail how the service was conducted. The service described was similar to Catholic mass, increasing the likelihood that readers understood and, to a degree, could identify with the rituals.

13 "Foolish Question," *Chicago Defender*, 17 August 1912.

14 "Humor of the Cloth," *Chicago Defender*, 20 December 1913.

15 "The Syrian Settlement in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, 31 March 1895.

16 "Serious Condition in Syria," *Chicago Tribune*, 29 November 1895, and "Who's Who and What's What," *Chicago Tribune*, 15 May 1899.

17 Gualtieri, 12.

18 Also see, "Traveling in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune,* 14 May 1905.

19 "Proof that Chicago is Cosmopolitan," *Chicago Tribune,* 20 November 1889.

20 "Eat around World in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune,* 27 September 1903.

21 *Ibid*.

22 "Syrian Shawl Vendors Lend Picturesqueness to State Street," *Chicago Tribune*, 11 December 1904.

23 "Women as street hawkers and peddlers are successful feminine intruders into the sphere of masculine occupations." A.F. Jordan, "Women as Street Peddlers; Need Widens Their Field," *Chicago Tribune,*, 11 October 1908.

24 "The Syrian Girl who Worships Men," *Chicago Tribune*, 26 February 1905.

25 "White Men and Brown," *Chicago Defender*, 4 June 1910.

26 See "Early Culinary Skill," *Chicago Defender*, 19 August 1911, and "Syrian Peasant Superstition," *Chicago Defender*, 26 August 1911.

27 "Editorial Article 2 [No Title]," *Chicago Defender*, 25 May 1912.

28 See "Foolish Question," *Chicago Defender,* 17 August 1912, and "Humor of the Cloth," *Chicago Defender*, 20 December 1913.

29 "Think it Over, Mr. Wilson," *Chicago Defender*, 5 August 1916.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

PRIMARY SOURCES

"Another Maronite Priest." *Catholic New World*, 20 January 1894.

"Church for Syrians." *Chicago Tribune*, 31 July 1893.

"Eat around World in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, 27 September 1903.

*Hull House Maps and Papers*, 1895: (homicide.northwestern.edu/docs_fk/homicide/HullHouse/NATMAP1.pdf).

"Proof that Chicago is Cosmopolitan." *Chicago Tribune*, 20 November 1889.

"Serious Condition in Syria." *Chicago Tribune*, 29 November 1895.

"The Syrian Settlement in Chicago." *Chicago Tribune*, 31 March 1895.

"Syrian Shawl Vendors Lend Picturesqueness to State Street." *Chicago Tribune*, 11 December 1904.

"Syrians Join Hearts and Hands." *Chicago Tribune*, 6 March 1893.

"Traveling in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, 14 May 1905.

"Who's Who and What's What." *Chicago Tribune*, 15 May 1899.

Al-Tahir, Abdul Jalil. *The Arab Community in the Chicago Area, A Comparative Study of the Christian-Syrians and the Muslim Palestinians*. PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1952.

Houghton, Louise Seymour. "Syrians in the United States." *The Survey Journal* (New York: 1911).

Stein, Edith M. *Some Near Eastern Immigrant Groups in Chicago*. Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1922.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Arab American Institute. *Illinois*, 2003 (www.aaiusa.org/page/file/face0442ef9f25b322_ay0mvbdvo.pdf/ILdemographics.pdf).

Aswad, Barbara C. *Arabic Speaking Communities in American Cities* (New York: Center for Migration Studies of New York, 1974).

Boosahda, Elizabeth. *Arab-American Faces and Voices* (Austin: University of Texas, 2003).

Gualtieri, Sarah. *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

Hanania, Ray. *Arabs of Chicagoland* (New York: Arcadia Publishing, 2005).

Naff, Alixa. *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

# MUSLIM INTELLECTUAL THOUGHT, ISLAMIC REVIVALISM, AND MODERNITY

MOHAMMAD SAGHA*
*Department of Political Science*

**ABSTRACT**    This study focuses on the relationship between power and thought, using a historical and comparative approach to contextualize a genealogy of Islamist intellectual development from the end of WWI to the dawn of the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979. This paper traces the roots of Islamism as an initial reform/opposition movement addressing the decline of Muslim powers in the world. The dynamic between the rise of secular state power and the Islamist opposition deeply influenced each side's ideas and discourse. These changes occur under a new pretext of state-building and "developmental ethos": the idea that the state is the ultimate authority for enacting economic development and social justice.

"The first and the most important question an intelligent and thinking existent should answer, and select one's way of life accordingly, by free will and rational choice, is whether we are gods or servants? If we accept that we are servants, the sign of servitude is to make our will fade away in Allah's will. Therefore, all affairs in our lives, whether individual, economical, governmental, or political, should be governed by the will of Allah; Vali al-'Amr should rule with Allah's permission as well. Otherwise—as the Late Imam Khomeini (r.) said— a person who rules without the permission of Allah and that of an Infallible is a taghut"

—Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi

## Introduction

The story of the Islamists is a story that is best told with the rise of the nation-state and the modern phenomena that gripped not only the Middle East, but the entire world. While most modern studies compare Muslim intellectual development with Western intellectual development (Mirsepassi), this study is more interested

in focusing the lens on how thinkers and elites in the Middle East intellectually transformed alongside the rise of the centralized state. The intellectual blossom of Islamic revivalism takes place during a time of profound change in the Middle East and the larger world. As James Gelvin states, "the twin towers upon which the modern age rests are an integrated and global economic system and a world system of nation-states" (Gelvin 7). These towers loomed large over the Middle East. The modern age ushered in a massive fundamental shift in the political economy of the region and a change in the power dynamics between previously independent actors such as the Ottoman Empire and new, European dominant forces. Just as important, there is a re-ordering of internal power relationships with authoritarian state Leviathans emerging under a pretext of what Gelvin calls "defensive developmentalism" (71). This study wishes, in particular, to magnify how the claim of fostering development (modernization) was and is used as a pretext for control, consolidation of power for state elites, and changing domestic political order in the Middle East, which in turn affects and shapes intellectual thought.

* Scott Hibbard, Department of Political Science. Fall 2011.
   mohammad22@mail.com.

**Theory/Methods of constructing framework**

This research question was inspired by Michael Fischer who states that "during the 1930s, Muslim intellectuals and politicians could point to Islam as a force holding back the progress of their societies. In contrast, from the 1970s onwards, no politician and few intellectuals would dare do such a thing" (Fischer 102). This poses the question of what is happening in between and why? Intellectual development does not happen independently of political and economic realities; instead, it is very much a product of its circumstances. In order to properly approach these circumstances, I conducted rigorous textual research. This research was centered, first, on a comparative and historical approach in order to appropriately frame the context; and secondly, on notions of political power and political economy and how these two approaches affect one another when it relates to intellectual thought.

The intellectual genealogy was structured under an explanatory framework provided through the critical theory approach developed by Bobby Sayyid in *A Fundamental Fear* along with a broadly encompassing historical approach by James Gelvin in *The Modern Middle East*. These works place Islamism within a strong theoretical context and highlight the various macro factors that shape socio-political realities. Simultaneously, Albert Hourani's *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* and Hamid Enayat's *Modern Islamic Political Thought* provided the basis for understanding the most important Islamist thinkers and how their thoughts evolved and interacted with each other.

This study attempted to incorporate the power dynamics related to the rise of the state with intellectual thought and describe how these dynamics shaped the domestic situations of individual states within the modern Middle East. It is often overlooked that modernity can be used as a tool of control within independent states. This paper sought to pay proper attention to this factor.

**Thought and Power**

In many ways, the relationship formed in the modern period between the central state and the people is best highlighted through the notion of developmental ethos: "The widely held belief that a leading function of government is to guide economic development and ensure social justice enabled governments in the region to concentrate an inordinate amount of power in their hands" (Gelvin 241). It is this concentration of power in the central state along with the ability of the state to actually physically extend its authority that disrupts the balance of state and society previously dominant in the Middle East (Katouzian appendix). The state fundamentally changes the power dynamics and a subtle, yet important shift happens in Islamist writings. Thinkers focus on the capture of the state as the primary means of advancing their vision of socio-political life, not necessarily because they want to, but because they have to; the state is simply all too present in society to be ignored. Prior to the ascendancy of the state, an informal separation of legitimacy existed between the Islamic clergy and ruling governments with each relegated to their own particular spheres of influence in politics and society. However, this is fundamentally altered by the rise of the state which increasingly looks to hegemonize legitimacy into one central, national institution that greedily extends into previous spheres of social life that were largely left alone by the state. Ataturk, for example, outlawed the wearing of the fez, introduced a new alphabet, and established an education system independent of the clerics (Findley 252). This amount of power projection is extraordinary.

**Continuity and change**

The monumental occurrence in the Middle East that demonstrated this new reality of integration into global markets and the establishment of the nation-state system is World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, which formally ushered in a new social, economic, and political order to the Middle East (Gelvin 182). The

formal disbanding of the caliphate by Mustafa Kemal in 1924 had profound psychological effects on Muslim thinkers and marks the end of an institution that, at least nominally, represented a legitimate Islamic framework of government hearkening back to the early days of Islam. Consequently, the umbrella under which subsequent events transpired and transformed regional realities—nationalistic fervor, authoritarianism, and secularism—is the result of the peoples and elites of the Middle East attempting to cope with new international realities, the most important challenge being that of state-building. The path to state-building was neither easy nor painless. With the rise of a new elite to establish the modern nation-state system, there were clear winners and losers as exemplified by the Constitutionalist movements which gripped Persia and the Ottoman empire and established the authority of a newly rising middle class within the domestic political order (Gelvin 151).

Intellectuals and elites in the Middle East, reeling from the sudden rise of Europe and decline of local powers began to ask themselves: "Why are we losing?" There were two logical answers to this question, both of them relating to Islam and the relationship that Islam has to what Gelvin calls the "development ethos." The first answer and the one that initially dominates politics in the region is what Bobby Sayyid calls the "Kemalist order", inspired by the politics of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the modern Turkish state and harbinger of a new dynamic of political order. This model believes that Islam itself is the problem, seeks to eliminate Islam from social and political spheres, and advocates a strict replication of the European path to modernization and secularization.

The second answer emerged from the shadows of the Kemalist/secularist project. It was an answer that asserted itself powerfully: Islamists who saw Islam as the solution and not the problem. They argued that Muslim societies had failed to adhere correctly to Islam and, as a result, declined as powers. In order to rise again, Muslim societies must revive the true Islam from the time of the Prophet. These Islamists wished to "hegemonize the general field of discursivity by constructing Islam as a master signifier, the point to which all other discourses must refer" (Sayyid 47). In other words, Islamism is a project that revolves around placing Islam as the overarching point of reference and ultimate source of legitimacy within the socio-political order. This socio-political order is based, as Scott Hibbard clarifies, on the argument that "God is the ultimate source of sovereignty, and Islam ought to provide the basis for legislation, law and governance" (Hibbard, unpublished). This is markedly different, not only on a political level, but on a social and cultural level from its secular predecessors because Islamists define Islam as "*din* (faith), as *dunya* (complete way of life), and as *dawla* (a state or political order)" (Sayyid 47). It is a mode of thought that transcends strictly political and social arenas—although these arenas will be the primary focus for the purposes of this paper. The Islamist project delves into the depths of articulating the purpose and goal of the human experience in a changing modern context.

### Secular rise, Islamist counter-attack

The term "Kemalist order" reflects a metaphor describing the types of regimes which emerged in the Middle East following decolonization (Sayyid 52). The fundamentals of Kemalism, such as its views on "republicanism, nationalism, populism, etatism [statism], secularism, and revolutionism" (64) resonate strongly in many key aspects of other authoritarian regimes such as Reza Shah's Iran and Gamal Abdel Nasser's Egypt.

Kemalists believed that the road to progress was emulation of a European model of secularism. "Islam was no longer linked with state power… Mustafa Kemal repeatedly described Islam as 'the symbol of obscurantism'; as 'a purified corpse which poisons our lives'; as 'the enemy of civilization and science'" (Sayyid 64-5). At the core of this thinking was the idea that modernization equals westernization. The Islamists disagreed with this

unimaginative model and when regimes such as Nasser's were "rudely awakened by the 1967 defeat" (Ajami, xiii)—which highlighted their significant shortcomings including corruption, incompetence, and despotic power concentration—the Islamists were there to articulate a new social and political vision for development.

These Islamic revivalists do not see modernization as completely synonymous with westernization. Instead, people like Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, viewed Islam as a rich treasure chest that held all the tools and answers that Muslims could use to govern themselves; he did not view Islam as an impediment in the modern world. As the foreword to Khomeini's key work, *Islamic Government,* states: "social problems require ethical and religious solution, and Islam is that all-embracing religion that can solve all problems, provided the thinkers and scholars of the Islamic world would face the challenge."

It is from within this framework that the Islamists strike back at the Kemalist-inspired secular absolutist regimes which dominated the region. The logic behind the Islamist response is quite evident in this regard as Rashid Rida, one of the key theoreticians of the Muslim Brotherhood, states: "just as no language should allow the grammatical rules of another language to govern its syntax and modes of expression, if it wants to keep its identity, no nation should adopt the laws of another nation without exercising individual judgement" (Enayat 78).

## Conclusion

Since the victory of Iran's Islamic Revolution, the secular-religious dynamics have been profoundly altered (Hibbard, *Religious Politics*) as once strictly secular states try to stake some of their legitimacy in Islam (see Baa'thist Iraq and Mubarak's Egypt, for example). Simultaneously, there is talk of a "post-Islamist" turn (Bayat). This "post-modern Islam" is described as a "shift from ideological Islam to civic Islam" (Adib-Moghaddam). The main distinction

between these two Islamisms is civic Islamism's relegation of Islam to a primarily public reference point, along with their willingness and eagerness to engage in democratic republican practices to gain power. The Muslim Brotherhood created a separate "Freedom and Justice" (FJ) party to run in Egypt's parliamentary elections; the secretary-general, Mohamed Saad Katani, declared that the FJ "is not a religious party but it's a civil party... with an Islamic reference'" (Hanna). Ennahda's Rashid Ghannouchi further differentiates civic Islamism from ideological Islamism by stating his party does "not need do impose Islam because it is the people's religion and not the elite's...Islam has not endured for so long because of states' influence but rather due to the large acceptance it enjoys among its adherents, in fact the state has often been a burden on religion" (Ghannouchi). Civic Islamism, in short, is more focused on multifaceted republican participation—their notion of Islamic Revivalism is not necessarily tied to state power. Ideological Islamism, on the other hand, has a stricter notion of tying religious revivalism to state involvement, manifesting itself in political and social order.

Once again, we witness Islamism changing alongside state power as both seek to legitimize their claim of establishing social and political order. Despite this civic-ideological distinction, Islamists still wish for the hegemony of Islam in the socio-political order. Whether that is achieved through a "civic" rather than "ideological" Islam is not as significant as actualizing the real, fundamental changes Islamism articulates. As Sayyid aptly states, "no doubt the Islamist tide will ebb and flow over the coming years, no doubt Islamists will suffer disappointments, and will advance and retreat. But as long as there are Muslims the promise and fear of Islamism will remain, for in the end, for us Muslims, Islam is another name for the hope of something better..." (Sayyid 60). ■

## REFERENCES

"Ayatollah Miṣbāḥ Yazdī." *Home Page*. Web. <www.mesbahyazdi.org/english>.

"Episode 6: Exclusive Interview with Dr. Ali Mirsepassi." *The Week in Green*. Hamid Dabashi, n.d. Web. <www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcbvE4NKD_k>.

"Islamic Government: Governance of the Jurist." *Ayatollah Khomeini*. The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works , n.d. Web. <www.al-islam.org/islamicgovernment/>.

Adib-Moghaddam, Arshin. "Do Tunisian elections mark shift to 'post-modernised Islam'? - CNN." *Featured Articles from CNN*. N.p., n.d. Web. <articles.cnn.com/2011-10-28/opinion/opinion_adib-moghaddam-tunisia-islam-shift_1_rachid-ghannouchi-islamic-ennahda?_s=PM:OPINION>.

Ajami, Fouad. *The Arab predicament: Arab political thought and practice since 1967*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. Print.

Bayat, Asef. *Making Islam democratic: social movements and the post-Islamist turn*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007. Print.

Enayat, Hamid. Modern Islamic political thought: the response of the Shīʿī and Sunnī Muslims to the twentieth century. London: I.B. Tauris, 2005. Print.

Findley, Carter Vaughn. *Turkey, Islam, nationalism, and modernity: a history, 1789–2007*. New Haven, Conn. USA: Yale Univ. Press, 2010. Print.

Fischer, Michael M. J.. *Iran: from religious dispute to revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980. Print.

Gelvin, James L. The Modern Middle East: A History. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. Print.

Ghannouchi, Rashid. "Transcript of Rachid Ghannouchis Speech at CSID-Tunisia." *Secularism and Relation between Religion and the State from the Perspective of the En-Nahdah Party*. Anwar Ibrahim Blog, 02 Mar. 2012. Web. 09 Mar. 2012. <anwaribrahimblog.com/2012/03/19/transcript-of-rachid-ghannouchis-speech-at-csid-tunisia-on-2-march-2012-on-secularism-and-relation-between-religion-and-the-state-from-the-perspective-of-the-en-nahdah-party>.

Hanna, Mike. "Mohamed Saad Katatni: 'Not a Religious Party'" *What Does the Muslim Brotherhood Want for Egypt's Future?* Al Jazeera English, 27 Nov. 2011. Web. 10 Mar. 2012. <www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazeera/2011/11/2011112694418337373.html>.

Hibbard, Scott W. *Religious Politics and Secular States: Egypt, India and the United States.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2010. Print.

Hibbard, Scott W., *Unpublished*. Chapter in forthcoming textbook.

Hourani, Albert. *Arabic thought in the liberal age*, 1798-1939. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1983. Print.

Katouzian, Homa. *The Persians: ancient, mediaeval, and modern Iran*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. Print.

Mirsepassi, Ali. *Political Islam, Iran, and the enlightenment: philosophies of hope and despair*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Print.

Sayyid, S.. *A fundamental fear: eurocentrism and the emergence of Islamism*. 2nd ed. London: Zed Books :, 2003. Print.
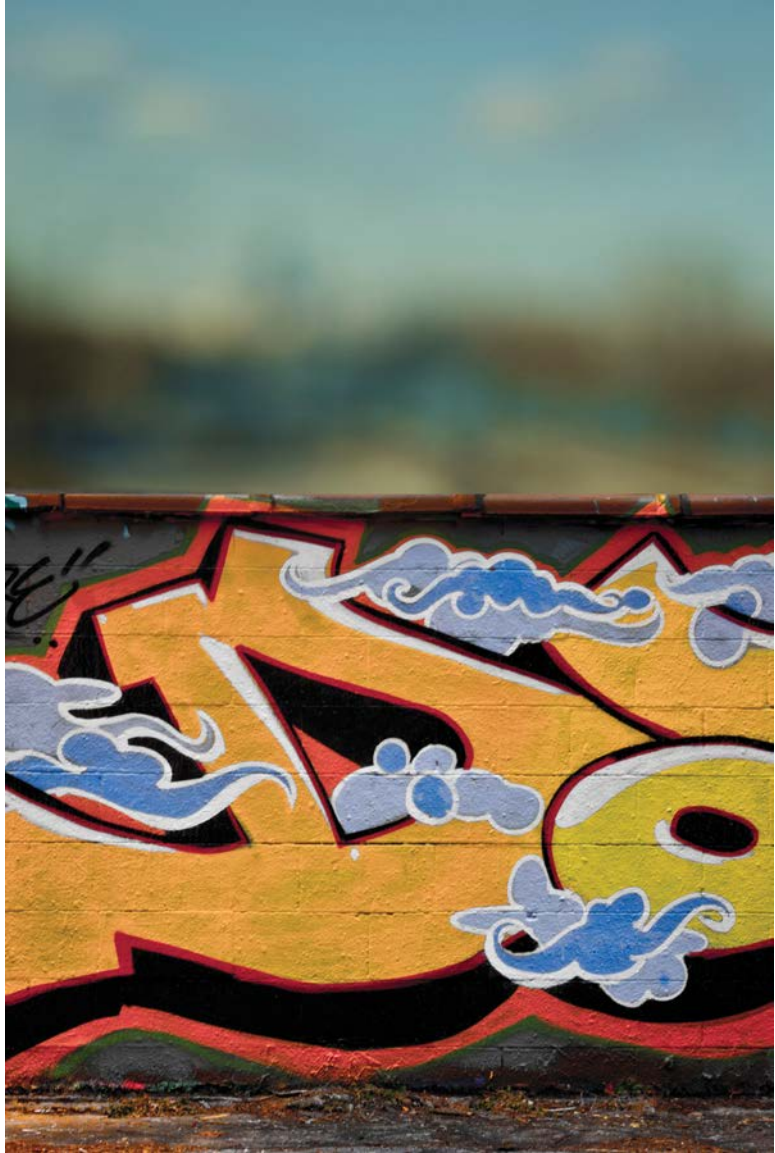
Jovone Evans | *Unititled*

# MAPPING DESIRE AND TYPING THE CITY:

## URBANISM, THE INTERNET AND SEGREGATION IN THE CITY

Zachary J. Stafford*

*Women and Gender Studies*

**ABSTRACT**   Mapping Desire and Typing the City is a project that looks at the popular site Craigslist, specifically their Missed Connections area, in order to explore the ways in which people are using online forums to construct narratives about experiences and missed attempts for love in and around the Chicago area. Missed Connections is a popular part of Craigslist and serves as a medium for personal ads to be placed. The project has tracked one week's worth of ads and used them as cardinal points in order to understand and construct the city. From these ads, rich information was discovered about the ways in which differently gendered persons were talking about desire, how sexuality was understood, the ways that race and class are handled online, and most importantly how people are negotiating the urban landscape and the online world in order to find love, lust, or to just voice a desire. For this part of the project only male identified persons were used in the comparative study. Methods and theories used for the project include: cyber-cartography, feminist/queer theory, and theories in urbanization.

## Introduction

*Craiglist.com* started in 1995 as an email distribution list for a few friends in San Francisco before becoming a classified site in 1996 mainly for the San Francisco and Bay Area. Not until the early 2000's did it begin to expand to other cities around the globe, leading to its current state as one of the most important websites on the w to date and one of the top 10 most trafficked in the world.[1] Though this site is one of the world's most visited sites, there has been little research done on the ways in which *Craiglist.com* is affecting different areas of people's lives. Most famously, *Craiglist.com* runs a personal section that has contributed to its notoriety, even inspiring numerous films over the years. This area of the site serves as a space in which people can leave ads for persons that

they would like to meet, or more popularly leave "Missed Connections" ads for people they have met and would like to meet again[2]. Missed Connection ads, I would argue, are a direct product of the internet age, due to the ways in which people are using them and meeting others through this medium. This medium of connection is very different from ads from the past in newspapers and magazines, due to the ephemerality[3] of the ads and the direct line of communication one is given if they decide to respond.

Missed Connections allows a user to post an ad articulating a moment during that day or an earlier day where they met another person(s) and had an encounter where desire was stirred, but due to various reasons they were not able to

---

\*   Sanjukta Muhkherjee, Women and Gender Studies. Fall 2011. zstaffo1@depaul.edu

1   2010.Top 10 Busiest Websites in 2010. blog.triphp.com/www/top-10-busiest-websites-of-2010.html

2   People can actually use 'missed connections' in whatever way they feel too. Many will use these ads to complain about ex-partners, find sex partners that they may have contracted an STI from, or to even just meet friends or a potential roommate.

3   Depending on amount of ads placed on the website, the missed connections will be online from anywhere to a few days to a month.

get that person's contact information. The ads on *Craiglist. com* allow them to leave a link where the person(s), if they read it, can reach out to them in hopes of the reconnecting. We see higher rates of these ads in cities due to greater populations and greater probability of meeting new people, making this not only a product of the internet, but also contingent on the city; therefore, the city and the internet must work together for people meeting one another to connect with on the site *Craiglist.com*. This interesting relationship between cities, people and the internet has not been explored much in the arena of sexuality or desire. Instead we see a greater emphasis on people analyzing areas of commerce on the site, which explore various social issues like housing discrimination as we saw in the Hogan and Barry study in 2011. In the study, they saw sharp changes in who was allowed to look at certain properties through communication on Craigslist.com, based on the ways the ads were racialized[4]. Also, another area of interest in regards to *Craiglist.com* research is in the study of HIV/ AIDS, mainly in men-seeking-men (MSM) groups and how the internet may affect the rates of infection through the use of this medium to find sex. Those studies vary in results and are highly controversial[5]. However, the study that I have conducted is unique and has yet to spark much attention within the world of academia and research. Within my study, I have gathered hundreds of ads placed on the Missed Connections area of the site and through certain research tactics, which I will explain below, explored the relationship between cities, people, and the internet. I was specifically interested in how Chicago was reflected in the ads in terms of geography, sexuality and segregation, and how these items played out online—hoping to see how different sexualities and bodies are managed within the physical boundaries of cities and online.

## Methods

The methodological approach to this project and paper rely on quantitative methods in what is called "Digital Cartography[6]," which uses online cartography to construct maps that are connected to physical locations. From October 26th to November 1st, 2011, I manually gathered all ads placed within the MSM and men-seeking-women (MSW) sections of the website and charted them on an Excel sheet. The ads were broken down into four columns on the excel sheets: exact place of interaction, type of place (e.g: transportation, gym, bar, etc.), the address or cross-streets, and age of person[7]. As long as the ads listed a combination of places, type of place or cross streets, I was able to determine the exact coordinates of the interactions so that they could be located on a map. Approximately 300 ads were captured; only 62.3% were used and were able to be mapped. Women, on average, rarely shared enough information within the time frame for me to actually map.[8] The data collected and logged on the Excel sheets were then inputted into to ArcGIS to geocode and map the geographic data, constructing the maps that are used and analyzed in this paper.

Once constructed, these Missed Connection maps became tools used to interrogate the city and give a visual representation to the ways sexuality, desire and segregation in the city are unfolding online. Using these constructed maps, I was able to pinpoint the locations in which certain male sexualities were being explored or reported online, and what parts of the city seemed to be more commonly sexualized in certain ways. Due to Craigslist.com sorting the ads by a labeling system that's based on sex-seeking-sex (e.g: male-seeking-male) I will only refer to persons using this medium with the terms MSM or MSW. This study is only interested in males due to lack of data found

4   Hogan, Bernie, and Brent Berry. 2011. "Racial and Ethnic Biases in Rental Housing: An Audit Study of Online Apartment Listings". *City and Community*. 10 (4).

5   Grov C. 2010. "Risky sex- and drug-seeking in a probability sample of men-for-men online bulletin board postings". *AIDS and Behavior*. 14 (6): 1387-92.

6   Cromley, Robert G. 1992. *Digital Cartography*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

7   The average age of users online was around 32 (self-reported) and this data is used in other projects on the topic of Craigslist.com

8   Women-seeking-women section was the most sparse—within a month there were only 10 ads, with only one with enough information to be mapped.

on women. From these maps, and the analysis below, I was able to find rich material that pointed us towards the idea that the internet may not be as boundless as has been hinted at in the past; and, in terms of geography, the internet may be just as connected to the users geographic location as the user is when moving about the real world.

**Scales and Locales, On/Offline Sexualities and Place**

Turning more specifically to the data, one will see that the points showing MSM and MSW men were not explicit in certain locations in the North and Downtown areas of Chicago; MSM and MSW men (mostly white) did not have certain places that constructed the city in ways that are as segregated as we see with racial distribution in Chicago[9]. Through this aspect of the data collected we can begin to see the way locales are either privatized or made public, what bodies are given private or public viewership, or how the scale of the city must be adjusted in order to interrogate the bodies and points shown through the maps of Missed Connections.

For MSW persons, the top three places to write Missed Connection ads were: public transit, bars and restaurants. Public transit had a rate of 33%, which is a large number of individuals looking for love, lust or desire in such a public place. MSM persons most commonly talked about: bars, gyms and public transit. At first glance, this shows similarities in places, but through greater inspection, what became obvious when analyzing the places discussed are the specificities of place in which MSW and MSW were discussing the city. The main difference was the private-ness and public-ness of locations discussed, and though

the points intersected at larger scales of place (e.g: neighborhood/regions of the city) there are very specific places in which these different sexualities were looking for and experiencing desires.

MSM men centralized their efforts and narratives in the Lakeview neighborhood of Boystown, which is the famous "gayborhood" that boasts a colorful and large gay community. The Strip, or Halsted Street, had the most activity on Craigslist.com, which is the location of most gay bars, gyms, sexual health facilities and shops in the city. Clark Street, which runs north to south diagonally through Chicago, is the borderline of Boystown and its brother neighborhood Wrigleyville; the home of the Chicago Cubs Baseball team and the most centralized area of stereotypical Midwestern heterosexuality and bar culture. Though Wrigleyville is the most visual marker of a heterosexual street, we can assume that most public spaces are presumed "straight" until proven otherwise.

Gill Valentine writes that, "Whilst heterosexuals have the freedom to perform their heterosexuality in the street—because the street is presumed to be a heterosexual space..."[10] To some, Boystown serves as the subversive physical space that resists Valentines argument; however, the data from the maps beg otherwise and show that even within the Boystown neighborhood MSM men were still only discussing sex and sexuality within the confines of explicitly gay bars, clubs, gyms and other locations, and rarely ever on the street. The three instances of which "street" interactions documented in the Lakeview neighborhood of Boystown were anonymous and episodic situations of sexual contact in the alleyways or parks that are in the neighborhood, making private spaces in public and enforcing the heterosexuality of the streets. Through the privatization of sexualities in cities, focusing them mainly in specific places, we can then understand why the points on the maps are where they are. They are not

---

9  Chicago is consistently ranked as one of the most segregated cities in the United States of America, thus one is able to see the sharp ways that the very geography of the city is centered on managing certain racial boundaries. Bogira, Steve. 2011. Separate, Unequal, and Ignored Racial segregation remains Chicago's most fundamental problem. Why isn't it an issue in the mayor's race? www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/chicago-politics-segregation-african-american-black-white-hispanic-latino-population-census-community/Content?oid=3221712 (Accessed March 20, 2012.)

10 Valentine, Gill, and Nancy Duncan. 1996. *(Re)negotiating the 'Heterosexual Street': Lesbian productions of space.* London: Routledge. (p. 1)

representative of the entire space or neighborhood, but instead specific businesses and places that are marked as queer, unlike the MSW persons who discussed their desires and interactions in very public places (e.g: Fullerton L Station and Milwaukee/Damen/North Avenue intersection led the pack.)

Through this analysis of locales and scales of the city, we can understand that sexualities are scattered all over the city and this might make one believe that there is more sexual equality within the city of Chicago, but through a deeper look we can see that this is not true and a segregation of sexualities is still as present as what we see with race and class. Also, MSM men are seen as feminized figures in society due to their attraction to men, and in a patriarchal society, we can understand that society seeks to manage and contain these persons through sexist and homophobic methods. We see this play out in the layout and everyday lives of individuals in Chicago. The feminization of these persons is linked to female bodies that literally disappear off the maps shown in this project. When mapping female experiences, I found an extreme lack of data that could be mapped and language that was more general in order to maintain as much ambiguity as possible. This was seen with the MSM persons as well, through their gravitation to specific locations to report experiences and even the language they used drew close parallels to identified female persons.

The reason for this is mainly due to a "fear of the city", which Rachael Pain writes about in her article "Gender, Race, Age and Fear in the City"[11] Pain discusses the paradox of perceived fears of the city for women and the actual violence that meets their bodies, along with the oppressive ways in which fear operates in the city to manage certain bodies and maintain racist, sexist and ageist ideologies that restrict any sort of social justice project to be enacted in urban environments. Pain does not really deal with homosexuality in the article, but we can see strong correlations between the ways in which women are mobilizing in the city and MSM persons, who have more social mobility with the privilege of maleness[12]. Through this lens, we can begin to see the maps of Missed Connections as mapping levels of power and privilege in Chicago that support patriarchal spatial distribution of bodies, ultimately showing oppression through desire.

## Conclusion

The Missed Connection Maps should be seen as a pursuit to interrogate the oppressive and segregatory ways in which the city is constructed and how people mobilize within its boundaries. These "coincidences" in trends of race, class and experiences are not so much serendiptous, but more a product of the city. Through this study, I have shown that sexuality in the city does not only have a geography, but also a social code—one that shows us who can be more public in talking and performing their sexuality in public spaces, and that others do not have the same amount of privlege. This project's main goal was to show the ways the internet is connected to the geography of places, but through this exploration I was able to show even more than places and space. I was able to show that even through the medium of the internet, very real ways in which we talk and find partners are active in the digital boundaries that are becoming ever so powerful. In this case study, MSM men not only discuss their sexualities within specific geographies, but also are more attracted to using the internet to do so—showing us an even more private geography where their desires can be voiced. Women's voices seemed not as present or public. We see this in real life—women do not catcall on the streets; they are not seen as 'safe' when walking around by themselves, but instead are thought to be private and passive. The maps constructed through *Craigslist.com* begin to show the very complicated ways in which feminity and

---

11  Pain, R. 2001."Gender, Race, Age and Fear in the City," *Urban Studies*, 38(5–6), 899 –913.

12  Foucault discusses in greater depth the ways that maleness is a power structure in society, which shapes discourse and helps support oppressive societal structures. Foucault, Michel. 1978. *The History of Sexuality*. (New York: Pantheon Books.)

masculinity function on different levels in cities and online when mixed with desire and sexuality.

Famous writer Napoleon Hill once said when discussing desire that, "Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire which transcends everything." What if this is true and our desires are the beginning of our goals? When thinking of the problematic ways in which desire has constructed itself online, many of the times showing oppression, segregation and erasure, these desires are the proof of the ways in which society is operating to maintain current frameworks, and making our goals oppression. If we take Napoleon Hill's line of logic, then these maps are the mapped points of desire, and also the mapped points of the places and ways different scales and locales of power and privilege in society are operating—we see the "maps of desire" as furthering the goals of sexism, racism, homophobia
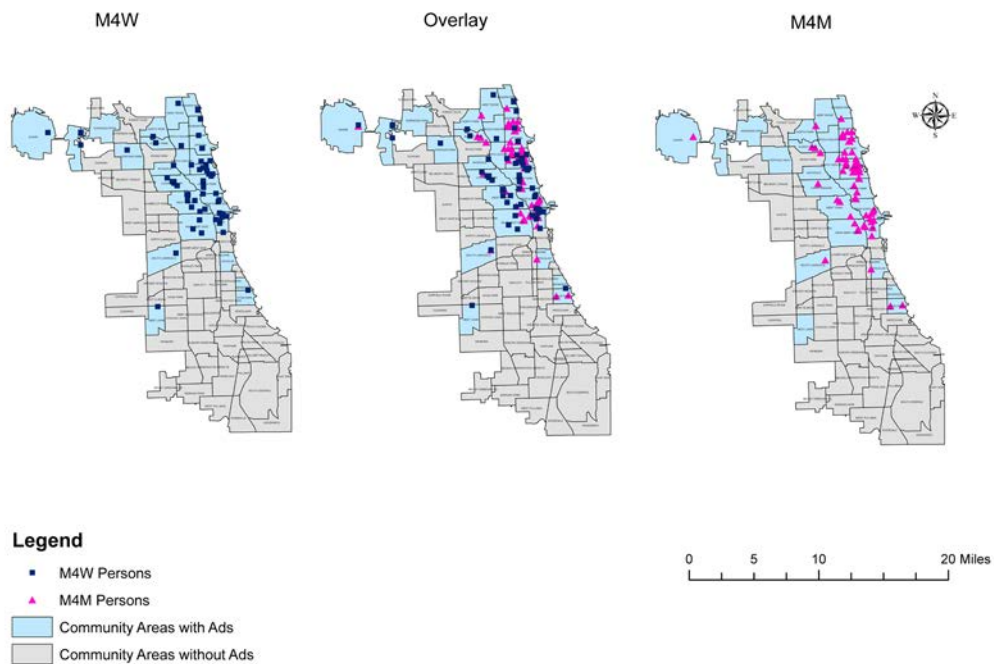
and the management of certain bodies in space. This concludes with a question that asks: are cities the epicenter of social problems or are social problems the foundation of cities?

### Acknowledgements

**FIGURE 1**

Spatial Distribution of Missed Connections

## REFERENCES

*American Journal of Public Health*, 91, 1494-1498. Le, C. N. (2008). *The model minority image. Asian-Nation: The landscape of Asian America*. Retrieved from www.asian-nation.org/model-minority.shtml.

Bogira, Steve. 2011. "Separate, Unequal, and Ignored Racial segregation remains Chicago's most fundamental problem. Why isn't it an issue in the mayor's race?" www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/chicago-politics-segregation-african-american-black-white-hispanic-latino-population-census-community/Content?oid=3221712: Accessed March 20, 2012.

Cromley, Robert G. 1992. *Digital cartography*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Daniels, J. (2009). *Cyber racism: White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

"Chicago's population drops 200,000" retrieved November 16, 2011 articles. chicagotribune.com/2011-02-15/news/ct-met-2010-census-20110215_1_census-data-collar-counties-population

"Ethnic and Racial Minorities and Socioeconomic Status" retrieved November 11, 2011 www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-erm.aspx

Foucault, Michel. 1978. *The History of Sexuality*. (New York: Pantheon Books.)

Grov C. 2010. "Risky sex- and drug-seeking in a probability sample of men-for-men online bulletin board postings". *AIDS and Behavior*. 14 (6): 1387-92.

Hogan, Bernie, and Brent Berry. 2011. "Racial and Ethnic Biases in Rental Housing: An Audit Study of Online Apartment Listings". *City & Community*. 10 (4).

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. [New York]: Random House.

Logan, A. 2008. "The State of Minorities: How are Minorities Faring in the Economy?" Center for American Progress. Retrieved from www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/04/minorities_economy.html.

Pain, R. 2001."Gender, Race, Age and Fear in the City," *Urban Studies*, 38(5–6), 899 –913.

Pew Internet and American Life Project, "Mobile Access 2011" Summary of Findings. (Retrieved November 15, 2011). www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Mobile-Access-2010/Summary-of-Findings.aspx

Rodgers, W. M. 2008. "Understanding the Black and White earnings gap: Why do African Americans continue to earn less despite dramatic gains in education?" *The American Prospect*. Retrieved from www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=understanding_the_black_white_earnings_gap

Ruddick, Susan. 1996. "Constructing Difference in Public Spaces: Race, Class, and Gender as Interlocking Systems". *Urban Geography*. 17 (2): 132.

Stafford, Zachary J., Matthew Walsh, Allaina Roberson. "*Mapping Desire and Typing the City*." Poster presented at the West Lakes AAG Conference, Chicago, Illinois, November 11, 2011.

Staeheli, Lynn A., Eleonore Kofman, and Linda Peake. 2004. *Mapping women, making politics feminist perspectives on political geography*. New York: Routledge

"The 22 Most Segregated Cities in America." Retrieved November 17, 2011 www.businessinsider.com/most-segregated-cities-in-america-2011-3#3-chicago-has-a-752-white-black-dissimilarity-score-20

Valentine, Gill, and Nancy Duncan. 1996. *(Re)negotiating the 'heterosexual street': lesbian productions of space*. London: Routledge.

# PAKISTAN'S BLASPHEMY LAWS AS A TOTEM

ABIR USMAN*

*Department of Religious Studies*

**ABSTRACT**    In recent years, Pakistan's blasphemy laws have become a hot topic in a nation whose Muslim population is at a staggering 95 percent. With dissent amongst politicians, scholars, and the populous, there is no consensus as to the validity of the laws in Islam. Through the application of theories such as Edward Said's orientalism and Emile Durkheim's totemism, I propose that the laws have no basis in the Islamic tradition and are merely a totem that unifies the nation under a singular ideology.

Asia Bibi, a Roman Catholic, was the first woman in Pakistan to be sentenced to hang on grounds of blasphemy and is currently in prison awaiting her day in court. Bibi was accused of blasphemy after offering her fellow farm workers some water. The women on the farm said that because Bibi was a Christian she had made the water impure. This triggered a heated controversy over religion (McCarthy, 2010) that ended with a charge of blasphemy against Bibi. What was said by Bibi remains unknown because if it was in fact blasphemous, then anyone who reports it could also be charged with blasphemy. There have been roughly 110 reported cases of blasphemy in 2009 and according to Pakistan's leading newspaper, *The Express Tribune*, there have been at least 39 people arrested for blasphemy in the past 25 years that have been killed before or during their trials.[1]

At the nascence of Pakistan, the nation's founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, wanted a nation where people could be proud of their country regardless of class, race, gender, or religious sect.[2] Jinnah's vision for Pakistan was one based on secularism, rather than theocracy. Although Pakistan was formed as a secular state with a Muslim identity, not everyone agreed as to what this Muslim identity would be. The blasphemy laws were one of a series of attempts by politicians to instill a Muslim identity by using religious ideologies to appeal to conservatives and to further conservative political agendas. The blasphemy laws, as understood today, are based in the Islamic tradition and have been codified by chief Muslim authorities. I argue that the blasphemy laws do not follow Islamic prescriptions, but rather are best understood as a provocative totem: an agreed upon symbol venerated by a group of people by virtue of its importance in the community's worldview, and in this case, around which Pakistani people can rally together to create a sense of community.

## The Law Defined

When the Pakistani Constitution was written in 1956, the

---

*    Advisor: Kalyani Devaki Menon, Ph.D., Department of Religious Studies. Winter 2012. abirusman@gmail.com

1    Usman, Ali "Minority Rights: Silence, increasing intolerance make for another grim year." 12/29/2011. tribune.com.pk/story/313492/minority-rights-in-pakistan-silence-increasing-intolerance-make-for-another-grim-year>.

2    In a 1947 address to his constituency, Jinnah said: "If you change your past and work together in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what his color, caste, or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to progress you will make."

state worked diligently to make sure that Islamic law, *Shari'a*, was not seen as the only mode of authority. They did this to ensure that legal decisions were also made by the courts and parliament, not just religious scholars (*ulama*). The *ulama* gained political support from the lower and middle classes, exploiting the population's passion for faith, and defining national identity as a means of persuasion for militant Islam and xenophobia. As a result of the populations' support for the *ulama,* politicians such as Zia Ul Haq tried to implement religious teachings into their own platforms.[3] Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Haq's predecessor, also felt the pressures of Islamization and introduced the notion of *Ahmediyyos* not being Muslim into law under section 298 C in the Pakistan Penal Code.[4] *Ahmediyyas* are a group of believers that identify with mainstream Sunni Muslim practices and beliefs, but disagree with the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

As a result of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's efforts to appease his religiously inclined constituency, the section was added to the Penal Code in 1984. This law, in addition to other blasphemy laws, is found in Pakistan's Penal Code under the categorization of "Offences Relating to Religion" and mandate government action against someone who blasphemes. Blasphemy, as defined by Merriam-Webster is "the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God."[5] "God" or "acts of insult" are not defined, but for the purpose of this paper, the Pakistani Constitution will outline what the act of blasphemy entails.

Article 295 of the Pakistani Code of Conduct in the Constitution outlines the various crimes deemed punishable by law. Article 295A establishes that blasphemy is the "Deliberate and malicious act intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its

religion or religious beliefs."[6] This offense is punishable with imprisonment for up to ten years, or a fine, or both. It is important to note the language used in this particular portion as "religious feelings" and "religious beliefs" are not explicitly defined as "Muslim religious feelings" or "Islamic religious beliefs"; rather, the beliefs are very Jinnah-esque in that they take into consideration all denominations of faith observed in Pakistan.

On the other hand, article 295 B focuses on Islam: "Defiling Holy Quran" is punishable with imprisonment for life, and in article 295 C, the "Use of derogatory words in respect of Prophet" whether via "imputation, innuendo, insinuation, directly, or indirectly" can be punished by death, imprisonment for life, and the individual is also liable to a fine.[7] This is where a specific religious tradition is brought into the limelight by blasphemy and where the political use of Islam shines through. Article 298 further determines that blasphemy has occurred when anyone "Utter(s) words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound any religious feelings."[8] Again, the switch is made back to an inclusive type of government that looks after the well-being of all its citizens and not just the ones who follow a specific religion. This constant tug-of-war between rights for all and rights for a few, not only reveals the demarcation of group boundaries but also suggests one group's superiority over another.

In order to understand this power structure, it may be useful to cite Edward Said's theory of *Orientalism*—a mechanism used for defining "the other"—to distinguish between people with different religious beliefs. *Orientalism* creates a sense of self-definition and becomes a basis for power and policy formation by the West with regard to the East, as the West is portrayed by colonizers as more advanced in thought and technology. Said explains that *Orientalism* is also "a style of thought based upon an

3   Forte, David F. "Apostasy and Blasphemy in Pakistan" *Connecticut Journal of International Law* v.l 0 no.27 (Fall 1994) p.13.

4   Bahadur, Kalim. *Democracy in Pakistan: Crises and Conflicts.* New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1998. Pg. 315.

5   "blasphemy." Merriam-Webster. 2011.

6   Pakistan Constitution. Sec. 295 & 298.1956. Print. <www.pakistani.org/ pakistan/lcgislation/1860/actXLVofl860.html>.

7   *Ibid.*

8   *Ibid.*

ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'"[9] and can even be considered as a particular style for dominating and restructuring nations and ideals. This restructuring of nations is exactly what we see through the creation of Pakistan's Penal Code, based upon the British Penal code imposed in 1860 by Lord Macaulay for colonial India. Following Said's theory, the Penal Code, founded upon the essentially religious character and excitability of Indians, provided a means for the British to colonize and control Indians, just as the Pakistan Penal code today provides a means to control its citizens. That is to say, if we understand that *Orientalism* assumes an inherent difference between "the West" and "the East" in the same way that Pakistan also assumes an inherent difference between non-Muslims and Muslims. Indeed, religious difference, as Peter Gottschalk suggests, is central to Pakistani constructions of self. Gottschalk argues that the *ulama* equate "Pakistan with Islam, and therefore, Pakistanis with Muslims."[10]

Defining Pakistan as an Islamic nation enabled Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Zia Ui Haq to appeal to the Muslim extreme right and stay in power. However, there have always been Pakistani politicians who opposed giving in to the radical right, particularly with regard to the blasphemy laws. For example, mobilized by Asia Bibi's predicament, Punjab governor Salman Taseer argued that the law had arbitrary parameters under which it was enforced, and believed that God, not the government, should make such rulings: "Frankly, it's up to God to decide whether I'm a Muslim or not, not some illiterate mullah [ulama] to decide I'm a Muslim or not."[11] Unfortunately, however, Governor Taseer was assassinated in January of 2011 for supporting the amendment of the blasphemy law.

## The Religious Merits or Lack Thereof

With the radical Islamist *mullahs* at the helm of the creation of blasphemy laws, it is only fair to question the religious basis of these laws. David Forte asserts that the Holy Quran mandates that punishment for a rebel against the faith is "eternal damnation, but imposes no earthly penalty."[12] The references to rebellion found within the Quran and *Sunnah* (mannerisms of the Prophet) are time specific and came about after the Prophet Muhammad's death when people were leaving the faith because they were unhappy with the leadership. Pakistani jurist, Rahman, explains that the verses being quoted from these Holy Scriptures and narrations by political figures and scholars are being altered to fit various agendas.[13] However, for the Pakistan of today, a nation that prides itself in being fundamentally based in Islam, current Pakistani law strays from textual prescriptions.

The Quran is most often quoted with regard to blasphemy in Surah Mai'dah, also known as "The Table." This chapter provides guidelines that God wants people to follow (e.g. the status on eating, drinking, gambling and so forth). With regard to blasphemy, the chapter states: "They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except One Allah. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy), verily a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them."[14] Further in the chapter (verse 86) it says: "...But those who reject Faith and belie our Signs—they shall be companions of Hell-fire."[15] While these lines explain the punishment God has warranted for blasphemy, it does not direct people to enforce these punishments themselves. By assuming that it is for the state to dole out punishment for blasphemy, the act becomes one of apostasy. In this case, Muslims no longer allow God to control the religious realm and instead take matters into their own hands.

9  Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Random House, 1978. Pg. 3.

10 Gottschalk, Peter & Wendy Doniger. *Beyond Hindu and Muslim: Multiple Identities in Narratives from Village India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. Pg. 18.

11 McCarthy, JuIie. "Christian's Death Verdict Spurs Holy Row in Pakistan". National Public Radio. 12/14/2010. <www.npr.org/2010/12/14/132031645/christian-s-death-verdict-spurs-holy-row-in-pakistan>.

12 Forte,1994, 1.

13 Forte, 1994, 44.

14 *The Holy Quran*: Translated Online Edition by Muhammad Asad. IslamiCity.com. <www.islamicity.com/QuranSearch>. Verse 5:73.

15 *The Holy Quran* 5:86

Nowhere is this phenomenon of Muslims taking religious matters out of the realm of the religious and into the realm of the political more apparent than in the denunciation of *Ahmediyyas* as non-Muslim. Article 298 C of the constitution states that a "Person of Quadiani group/ Ahmedi, etc., calling himself a Muslim or preaching or propagating his faith" is considered blasphemous and may be punished with up to three years of imprisonment.[16] *Ahmediyyas* have several denominations, the most controversial among them are the Qadiani *Ahmediyyas*, who believe that the prophecy did not end with Muhammad and despite Muhammad being the greatest of prophets, that "lesser" prophets still exist. The reason for the controversy is because "The majority of Muslims believe that the idea of the finality of prophet-hood 'has been unequivocally announced in the Holy Quran.'"[17] Lawrence Rosen argues that claiming that *Ahmediyyas* are not "real" Muslims is sinful by Islamic standards. He draws on a chapter in the Quran, Surah Hujarat, known as "The Dwelling." The verse states: "And neither shall you defame one another, nor insult one another by [defamatory] epithets: evil is all imputation of iniquity after [one has attained to] faith; and they who [become guilty thereof and] do not repent it is they, they who are evildoers."[18] Rosen believes the unfavorable act is equated to personal sin.[19] Consequently, who other than God can rightfully determine who is a follower of the faith or not?

There are Holy Scriptures and narrations in Islam with multiple interpretations. People no longer live in the time of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), and the *ulama* should not be considered a substitute for Him. Nevertheless, this is exactly what is happening in Pakistan. The blasphemy laws, in their vagueness and arbitrary parameters, create more questions than answers.

## Blasphemy as a Totem

Instead of trying to rationalize the blasphemy law within an Islamic framework, I propose that it is best understood as a totem. Emile Durkheim first theorized *totemism* when observing tribes in Austrailia. Totemism occurs when a tribe or clan chooses to associate itself with a specific animal (or plant) which serves as its sacred object or its "totem." Durkheim extends this theory further and states that religion "is an essentially social phenomenon, which encourages at all times a constraint upon the individual by imposing upon them the need for abnegation and disinterestedness."[20] In terms of the blasphemy law, the Pakistanis who adhere to the basic tenets of Islam and those who believe their religious leaders are educated and just in their rulings see these laws as a rallying point for society. Asad Ali Ahmed established that the blasphemy laws were "based on the assumption that Muslims were minimally united in their determination to protect the Prophet and the Revelation"[21] and in order to create this Muslim identity, the blasphemy laws were put into place.

Drawing on Durkheim, the blasphemy laws are in fact a totem, and what makes them particularly problematic is that they are viewed as the word of God. The construction of a place, people, and an idea makes it hard for the people within the community to see their situation as such. Edward Said hypothesized that "Orientals" succumbed to the stereotype and failed to question it because it had become so embedded into the culture.[22] If one strayed from the supposed norm, they would be an outcast and the binary system of "us" and "them" would permeate the fibers of society. Instead of trying to entertain the idea that the rulings for punishment within these laws are based on Islamic mandate, one should try to rationalize them

16 Constitution, 1984.

17 Valentine, Simon Ross. *Islam and the Ahmadiya Jama 'at: History, Belief, Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.129.

18 *The Holy Quran* 49:11.

19 Rosen, Lawrence. *The Justice of Islam: Comparative Perspectives on Islamic Law and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. 190.

20 Fish, Jonathan S. *Defending the Durkheimian Tradition: Religion, Emotion and Morality*. England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005. 80.

21 Ahmed, Asad Ali. "Specters of Macaulay: Blasphemy, the Indian Penal Code, and Pakistan's Postcolonial Predicament". Censorship in South Asia: Cultural Regulation from Sedition to Seduction ed. By Kaur, Raminder & William Mazzarella. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009. 184.

22 Said, 1984, 191.

in terms of context. Applying this theory to Asia Bibi's case, what was the context in which Asia Bibi supposedly blasphemed? Depending on the circumstances under which the charge was brought against Asia Bibi, we can better assess whether or not the village women merely succumbed to the stereotype by accepting the supposed binary of "us" (Muslims) versus "them" (non-Muslims) and placed Bibi in the dangerous situation she is currently in. On the other hand, we can also better assess whether the stereotype holds true and whether Bibi succumbed to her role as the "other" and blasphemed to make that distinction known.

Gottschalk states that "Western scholarship of South Asia often creates an expectation that the objects of its inquiry (Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs) will act according to the primary sources of their supposed identities (Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism) since their religious identities far outweigh any other identity."[23] In terms of South Asia, it is true that religion is one major identifier of the people who live there, but it must not be forgotten that it is not the *only* one. The issue is that the blasphemy laws in Pakistan were implemented according to the religious identities of those in power and served their personal and political agendas. It is on this premise of comparison in terms of political clout and xenophobia, which fall outside of the religious realm, that it can be concluded that the blasphemy law has no religious merit within Islam and is a totem used to rally people around a unified identity. ■

---

23 Gottschalk, 2005, 13.

**REFERENCES**

Ahmed, Asad Ali. "Specters of Macaulay: Blasphemy, the Indian Penal Code, and Pakistan's Postcolonial Predicament". *Censorship in South Asia: Cultural Regulation from Sedition to Seductioned*. By Kaur, Raminder& William Mazzarella. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009.

Usman, Ali. "Minority Rights: Silence, increasing intolerance make for another grim year." 12/29/2011. tribune.com.pk/story /313492/ minority-rights-in-pakistan-silenceincreasing-intolerance-make-for-another-grim-year.

Bahadur, Kalim. *Democracy in Pakistan: Crises and Conflicts*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1998. "blasphemy." *Merriam-Webster*. 2011.

Fish, Jonathan S. *Defending the Durkheimian Tradition: Religion, Emotion and Morality*. England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005.

Forte, David F. "Apostasy and Blasphemy in Pakistan" *Connecticut Journal of International Law* v.l0 no.27 (Fall 1994) p. 1-43.

Gottschalk, Peter & Wendy Doniger. *Beyond Hindu and Muslim: Multiple Identities in Narratives from Village India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Jinnah, Mohammad Ali. "Mr. Jinnah's presidential address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan". 8/14/47. www.pakistani.org/pakistan/ leg:i.slation/constituencaddress_11aug1947.html.

Masud, Khalid. "Apostasy and Judicial Separation." *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007.

McCarthy, Julie. "Christian's Death Verdict Spurs Holy Row in Pakistan". National Public Radio. 12/14/2010. www.npr.org/2010/12/14/132031645/ christian-s-death-verdict-spurs-holy-row-in-pakistan.

Pakistan Constitution. Sec. 295 & 298. 1956. Print. www.pakistani.org/ pakistan/leg:i.slation/1860/actXLVof1860.html.

Rosen, Lawrence. *The Justice of Islam: Comparative Perspectives on Islamic Law and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Said, Edward *Orientalism*. New York: Random House, 1978.

*The Holy Quran*: Translated Online Edition by Muhammad Asad. IslamiCity.com. www.islamicity.com/QuranSearch.

Valentine, Simon Ross. *Islam and the Ahmadiiya Jama'at: History, Belief, Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

Eric Veazie  |  *Edge of Infinity*