Orientalism in the Mirror

The Sexual Politics of Anti-Westernism

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Abstract

This article reflects on the convergence of revolutionary anti-capitalism and moral fundamentalism in the contemporary Islamic revival. It is concerned more generally with the recurrent appeal to fundamental value – of a sexual, genealogical or economic kind – in the history of anti-imperial and anti-capitalist movements. Exploring the tradition of Islamist philosophies of finance, the article suggests that Islamic political theology is unique in its ability to separate absolute law from territory (*pace* Schmitt). Transgressing the boundaries of nation-state postcolonialism, it thereby relocates absolute value, and hence absolute prohibition, in the realm of the sexual and the divine.

Key words

capitalism ■ imperialism ■ Islam ■ neoliberalism ■ postcolonialism ■ sexuality ■ theology

WITHIN FEMINIST and postcolonial theory, there has been a growing interest in the possibilities of religious revivalism as a site of cultural critique. The constitution of the modern, Western nation-state, it has been suggested, was crucially dependent on the exclusion of the non-secular other.[1] The post-national era would therefore seem to open up new horizons for the expression of a post-secular politics, particularly in those regions of the globe where the postcolonial modernizing project has so patently failed. Writing in the wake of 11 September 2001 and the Bush administration's war on terror, it is perhaps inevitable that North American theorists should have turned to the Islamic revival as a potent example of a decidedly post-secular mode of anti-imperialist politics.[2] Several feminist and postcolonial political theorists have

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attempted to open a dialogue with Islamic political thought and practice as a means of questioning both the imperialist politics of the US and the cultural imperialism of Western feminisms. Addressing themselves to the European and North American left, these theorists point out that Islamism has emerged as one of the most powerful discourses claiming to counter the impositions of US-based, global capitalism. This is a point that has been made most succinctly by Susan Buck-Morss when she insists that:

> We, as critical theorists, need to make Western audiences aware that Islamism as a political discourse embraces far more than the dogmatic fundamentalism and terrorist violence that dominate in the Western press. It is also a powerful source of critical debate in the struggle against the undemocratic imposition of a new world order by the United States, and against the economic and ecological violence of neo-liberalism, the fundamentalist orthodoxies of which fuel the growing divide between rich and poor. This is to say that secularization is no guarantee against dogmatic beliefs, and that even foundational religious texts are open to multiple interpretations. Islamism has become a site within civil society of social movements that struggle in the most diverse ways to come to grips with the inequities of modern life, which have developed within the period of dominance by the West. (Buck-Morss, 2003: 50)

However, it is Faisal Devji who goes furthest in his celebration of the mobilizing potential of Islamic jihad – comparing neo-Islamism to other transnational formations such as the environmental and anti-globalization movements, he claims that:

> . . . the jihad represents [new global relations] more fully than any other movement. In light of this situation, Al-Qaeda's very deliberate description of the jihad as a metaphysical struggle between Christianity, Judaism and Islam should be seen for what it is – an effort to define the terms of global social relations outside the language of state and citizenship. (2005: 76)

And, in the culminating passage of the book:

> . . . it is the jihad that completely fragments this tradition [of state Islam and its moderate liberal reformers] with Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri proving themselves to be greater revolutionaries by far than their liberal predecessors, whose heirs in the task of Islam's transformation they properly are. (2005: 164)

Calling in their different ways for a future politics of faith-based coalition, these theorists combine Edward Said's critique of orientalism with a vision of radical social transformation.[3]

Whether deliberately or not, they also re-enact Foucault's enthusiastic response to the Iranian Revolution of 1979, an episode which inaugurated his late work on the ethics of self-transformation and the politics of neo-liberalism.[4] It is surely not incidental that Foucault should have embraced

the revolutionary conservatism of the Iranian Revolution at a point in his work when he was looking at the rising political importance of economic neoliberalism. The Iranian Revolution coincided with the election of Reagan and Thatcher, the two politicians who most effectively implemented the precepts of Chicago School neoliberalism. Foucault's attention to these events – his conviction that resistance to neoliberal imperialism would take the form of radical social transformation, under the sign of divine violence – is remarkably prescient about our contemporary situation. His apologia for radical Islam is both prescient and reminiscent of those turning points in anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist movements when the nostalgia for fundamental value turns into a revolutionary appeal to divine law. Historically, these have been moments when the traditional distinctions between left and right become difficult to discern.

Mediating between revolutionary anti-capitalism and moral conservatism, radical Islam achieves consensus on one condition only – that absolute value, and hence absolute prohibition, be relocated in the most intimate sphere, that of familial, moral and sexual relations. This, it would seem, is the one point of convergence amongst the many religious revivals of the neoliberal era. In the face of a general loss of foundations – national, political and economic – the last bastion of absolute value is to be sought, and imposed, in a rigidly hetero-normative politics of desire. The calculation is clear enough in the rhetoric of the neo-evangelical right, whose principal concerns are the evils of liberal secularism, the breakdown of proper familial and sexual relations, and the moral decline of America. In the case of political movements that situate themselves in opposition to the West, the situation is further complicated by the possible slippages between anti-imperialism and a culture of reaction. When capitalism is feared for what it renders mobile, anti-imperialist movements run the risk of responding to economic, social and cultural dissolution through the obsessive re-imposition of genealogical purity. This danger has been implicit in the language of the Muslim Brotherhood right from the beginning, inasmuch as it relies on a chain of associations between capitalism, women's participation in the labour market, the degradation of women, prostitution and Western woman herself. It is also intrinsic to the more conservative strands of Islamic women's politics, in which Western-ness comes to be figured as a certain way of being female in public space. If the war on terror has clarified anything at all, it is that the fantasmatic construction of the feminine – the dividing lines between the slut and the pious woman, the mother/daughter/sister and the whore – is too often the frontier-line on which imperialist *and* anti-imperialist border politics are played out.

When feminist and postcolonial political theorists seek to align themselves with the religious revival of the other culture, they perform a kind of mirror-game that does nothing to unsettle this frontier. The claim to irreducible otherness – most often voiced in the name of the non-Western – is itself an act of genealogical purification, albeit one that situates authenticity in the space of otherness rather than sameness. This article asks: what

is at stake in the reduction of the multicultural to a pluralism of faith-based initiatives? What are the consequences for critique when the possibility of transitional relation (relation in and across the border) is prematurely collapsed into the politics of absolute, divine value? Far from marking a radical break with the presumed secular bias of Western imperialism, as a certain line of argument in the post-secular literature would seem to suggest, this vision is in perfect alignment with the political transformations of the British and US neoliberal state over the last decades, which has progressively sought to outsource social service provision to the faith-based initiative. More pertinently, it is in keeping with the push within US foreign policy to integrate the religious dimension into overseas military operations, diplomatic representation at the United Nations (UN), humanitarian aid and disaster response.[5] The regime of George W. Bush has been remarkably successful in installing the religious right at the very centre of government decision-making processes, thus establishing an effective alliance between the free-market neoliberal state and moral fundamentalism. But the possibilities of the faith-based alliance are also becoming visible at a global level. In seeming contradiction to the Bush government's adoption of an anti-Islamic crusading rhetoric, US delegations to the UN, in which the religious right is increasingly present, habitually form voting blocs with delegations from conservative Catholic and Muslim countries and share a common preoccupation with the degradation of women, abortion, sex trafficking, gay sex and HIV/AIDS as a symptom of cultural breakdown. And in conservative foreign policy circles, the idea of the tripartite faith-based alliance of monotheisms (Christian, Jewish and Muslim) is being seriously debated as a solution to the 'clash of civilizations'.[6] The growing international power wielded by the religious right does not simply emanate from a Western and Judeo-Christian sphere of influence to impose itself on the postcolonial world but is more often than not in synergy with the internal transformations of the post-developmental state itself, in which the alliance between a rentier-military political class and religious absolutist militias has become a modus vivendi.[7] Nor does this phenomenon lend itself to analysis through the familiar distinctions between right and left politics, since in many cases, and certainly in Western Europe, the transnational legitimacy of neo-fundamentalist Islamist groups has been secured via the support of the multicultural, Third Way left and the anti-imperialist far left (see Bhatt, 2006). Undercutting and in many ways confounding the political categories of nation-state imperialism, these apparent contradictions call for an analysis of affective resonance operating across seemingly implacable divisions of faith and doctrine.[8]

This article reflects on the possibilities of a transversal feminism in an era where the demarcation of cultures is so intimately tied to sexual politics. Is there a border politics of the sexual and, if so, how would it connect up with and complicate an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist politics today? Reflecting on the many cases in which the left has lent its support to authoritarianisms of one kind or another, this article attempts to

imagine an anti-racist and anti-capitalist politics that doesn't reterritorialize around the question of female piousness. My primary inspiration is not the tradition of Euro-American and Australian feminisms, but rather a certain current within the postcolonial literature of the ex-French empire. The diaspora of the (not entirely) dismantled French empire has produced a rich literature on the relationship between independence, the rise of postcolonial nativisms and European security politics. It has also initiated a powerful, though usually not reciprocated, dialogue with the tradition of French post-structuralist political theory. The case of Algeria is particularly interesting because its post-independence history has been one in which many of the pressing concerns of imperialist politics today have already been played out – the imposition of Washington-consensus style economic reforms by the postcolonial state, the rise of a popular fundamentalist movement and the encounter between migrant communities and European security politics. This article seeks to reincorporate the recent history of Algeria and its commentators into the contemporary debate about sexual politics, Islamic revival and postcolonial imperialism. Much of this literature involves a dialogue across postcolonial spaces – the French Caribbean, post-independence Algeria and Western Africa. In the concluding part of this article, I will be interested in two writers and friends, the West Indian poet and theorist Edouard Glissant and the Algerian novelist Assia Djebar, who offer a sustained reflection on the experience of multilingualism, transition and border-crossing from the point of view of the postcolonies. Marking their distance from all forms of neo-nativism, these philosophies articulate an internal critique of anti-imperialist politics that moves beyond the binaries of the contemporary literature on post-secularism.

Empire, Race, Sexual Politics

At the risk of obscuring cultural differences, I situate neo-fundamentalist Islam within the tradition of 20th-century revolutionary conservatisms, that is, the tradition which in its European version has taken the philosophical form of political theology and sovereign theories of law. With their evocations of the sacred, these philosophies are inseparable from an imaginary of blood and land, a syncretic nostalgia that melds the realities of imperial conquest and the science of biological race with pre-modern symbols of power. In the pre- or proto-fascist decade of the 1930s, such imaginaries had not yet settled comfortably into the state fascisms of Germany and Italy and were more often than not aligned with the extra-state constituencies of Catholicism. Historians trace their beginnings to anarcho-syndicalist philosophies of divine, law-making violence of the type espoused by Georges Sorel.[9] That such philosophies should lend themselves to both leftist anti-capitalism and the Catholic far right should alert us to the complexities informing all spontaneous political action and collective acts of faith.

Yet while Islamic jihad also has recourse to the militant activism of divine violence, there is undoubtedly something that distinguishes it from

other comparable movements and perhaps accounts for its unique vigour in the present moment. As some of its most interesting theorists have pointed out, the specificity of neo-fundamentalist Islam, as opposed to political or state-centred Islam, lies in its utter accommodation to the experience of cultural and religious deterritorialization (see especially Roy, 2004: 272–3; Sharabi, 1988: 142–3). However anti-democratic, neo-fundamentalist Islam has pushed the deterritorialization of faith further than any other comparable fundamentalist movement (religious Zionism and Hindu nationalism are arguably much more closely tied to a territorial model; evangelical Protestantism, on the other hand, especially in its Pentecostalist varieties, has been similarly successful in deterritorializing itself throughout the postcolonial world, although it remains tied to a certain notion of the promised land – embodied in North America, and increasingly with the rise of Christian Zionism, in Israel). In this way, it seems to signal a new genre of dissidence – one that has acquiesced to the deterritorializing conditions of a postcolonial, post-national era – and to invent the conditions of a uniquely contemporary anti-imperialism – an anti-imperialism of the diaspora. This is a point made as early as 1948 by the philosopher of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb, when he writes that:

> Perhaps the point of formal solidarity is that the Islamic world was composed of a number of provinces with widely different races and cultures ruled from a single centre. This is a mark of empire! But it is merely an outward mark. . . . Anyone who studies Islam and its way of governing knows for certain that it is the furthest thing from the empires we know today. For Islam gives equality to the Muslims from all parts of the world, and it rejects racial, national and regional partisanship. (Qutb in Shepard, 1996 [1949]: 107)[10]

Eliding the boundaries of biological race and national territory, Islamic jihad calls for a community of the faith whose reach is as expansive as that of the world market. Its deterritorializing impulse is at the same time contingent on a renewed appeal to genealogical law and order, which it relocates on a level that is both transnational and intensely intimate. Hence the anti-imperialism of the Muslim Brotherhood expresses itself as an over-riding concern with the circulation of women – the movement of women in the streets, across borders, between the family and work sphere. It obsesses over those forms of female labour that involve transit – prostitutes, air hostesses, journalists and women who work in what we would now call the international 'service' sector are singled out as particularly disruptive of Islamic social order. For Qutb, women's access to the labour market is merely an institutionalized form of prostitution, which in itself represents the most violent mark of the West's influence on a traditional Islamic way of life:

> It is well to remember that the West made women leave the home to work because the men there shirked their responsibility to support their families, and made their women pay the price of their chastity and their honour. Only thus were women driven to work. [. . .] It is well to remember that when women

> went out to work the materialistic West took advantage of their need and exploited the increased supply to lower their wages, and that employers used cheap women's labor to replace the workers who were beginning to raise their heads and demand a decent wage. (Qutb in Shepard, 1996 [1949]: 64–5)

Here, Qutb articulates an abiding concern of moralist responses to capitalism. For while capitalism routinely uses the cultural devaluation of women's work as a means of lowering the costs of labour, it simultaneously disrupts the institutions that have hitherto located women within a particular genealogical order, threatening to liberate them if not willingly at least by force from the established norms of cultural reproduction. In the mind of the moral philosopher, the body of woman is thus collapsed into the service rendered; labour confounded with commodification, and the commodity with the female sex, simply because, from his point of view, the disruptive influence of capitalist relations amounts to one and the same alienation. It is this logic of slippage that informs Qutb's particular concern with female labour. But at a deeper level, Qutb sees capitalism in general – based as it is on a usurious logic that eschews all fundamental value, all moral or transcendental limits – as leading to an illegitimate traffic in desire, outside the boundaries of familial life.[11]

Importantly, he envisages the fundamentalist solution as an alternative to the alienations of both capitalism *and* Marxism. As a response to the rampant fetishism of market economies, where all that is sacred melts into air, Islamic fundamentalism asserts a law of absolute value – divine law, and its correlate, the absolute, non-exchangeable essence of the Islamic woman/daughter/mother. And, unlike socialist Marxism, which in its most moralistic moments advocates a return to the fundamentals of production (labour as absolute source of all value), Islamic fundamentalism locates its absolute in the realm of *reproduction*. It is interested, however, not so much in the reproduction of biological race (which the concept of a transnational Muslim brotherhood is supposed to transcend) as the reproduction of desire – within absolute limits. As Qutb writes in his later work:

> Islam did not come to condone people's desires . . . rather, it has come to eliminate these completely . . . and to found human existence on a particular basis. It came to organise life once and for all. To construct a life which will spring wholly from [Islam] and which will be firmly united with the very core of Islam itself. (Qu'tb, 1981 [1972])

What makes this work so illuminating about the contemporary politics of reaction – as opposed to a conventional Marxist analysis of capitalism for example – is its refusal to separate the circulation of money from that of desire. For Qutb, the kinds of speculation involved in the creation of financial futures is only one manifestation of an abstract principle of movement called desire, while religious faith is the excess of desire recaptured within the lawful forms of circulation permitted by Islam. Qutb's theory of social

justice therefore depends on a rigorous typology of the legitimate transaction – both sexual and economic. While Islamic social justice ratifies wealth and the laws of private property it also conceives the right of ownership to be a kind of stewardship undertaken on behalf of God, the one sovereign and guarantor of value. The economic transaction is legitimate as long as it remains tethered to some kind of divine principle of proportion, which is itself taken to be equivalent to social justice. It is this foundation in the divine rather than the communist imperative of redistribution, that allows Qutb to establish the rules of Islamic social justice: wealth must not be allowed to accumulate in the hands of the few; a proportion of all wealth is to be redistributed to the poor in the form of *zakat*; and usury, as a form of accumulation that operates entirely in the realm of circulation, is strictly prohibited. This is not only because the creation of profit from interest leads to unjust social relations but also, and more importantly, because it disrupts the proper order of relations between the sexes, encouraging an excessive accumulation of desire beyond the limits prescribed by God:

> . . . the accumulation of wealth on one side and its absence on the other is a great force for corruption, even beyond the envy and resentment it stirs up . . . for wherever excess wealth is found, it is like excess vital energy in the body that must find an outlet, and there is no assurance at all that the outlet will be pure and safe. . . . Prostitution and all the drinking, gambling, white slavery, pimping and loss of virtue and honor that go with it are nothing but the symptoms of excessive wealth on one side and lack of it on the other. (Qutb in Shepard, 1996 [1949]: 132–3)

In this passage, Qutb establishes a strict homology between the surplus engendered by impure desire and the generation of illegitimate interest or *riba*. It is only logical then, according to Qutb and his inheritors, that Islamic finance should be inseparable from a consideration of sexual politics and that *anti-capitalism itself should take the form of a rigid sexual moralism*. That Islamic law applies overwhelmingly, although not exclusively, to women is simply assumed by Qutb – when he figures the dangers of excess wealth and excess desire, he imagines the man impelled to pay for sex and the female body sold for sex. Dirty money is synonymous with dirty women. It would be reductive, however, to conclude that the political theorists of the Muslim Brotherhood are simply anti-feminist or invested in the exploitation of women, since on the contrary they quite explicitly present the anti-imperialist project as an effort to restore woman to her proper place, and thus to save her from the degradation of the labour market. Indeed, a writer such as Qutb is not so much anti-feminist as interested in defining a proper woman's politics and a proper Muslim femaleness – a claim that is taken up by some of the more conservative strands in Islamic feminism.[12]

The problematic that is only touched upon in the work of earlier Islamic political theorists has become much more explicit in recent decades, where the emigration of money, of labour and cultures from traditionally

Muslim countries raises the spectre of a wholesale loss of familial and genealogical order.[13] Islamic neo-fundamentalism is able to accommodate itself with the experience of cultural deterritorialization only because it also offers – and enacts – an ingenious solution. Even as it deterritorializes, opening up the faith to an expansive brotherhood of displaced races and ethnicities, it relocates absolute value in the realm of sexual politics and the divine – that is below and above the arena of the nation-state. The post-colonial ideal proffered up by Islamic jihad is no longer the nationalization of the earth and its resources – collective appropriation in the form of the independent nation-state – but the intimate regulation of desire, on a trans-national and deterritorialized level. What distinguishes it both from earlier forms of political Islam and other reactionary religious movements, is its ability to separate sexual law from nationhood, race and land – *to render the prohibition of desire absolutely mobile*. Hence religious law – the call for Sharia law as a right to multicultural difference, valid across borders – becomes a means of preserving a residual, but absolutely non-negotiable sense of fundamental value, even in the face of a hopelessly transnationalized culture.

Neo-fundamentalist Islam therefore seems to contradict Carl Schmitt's (1993) assertion that the politics of sovereign law is necessarily based on land appropriation. Placed within the intellectual history of 20th-century revolutionary conservatisms, Qutb could be seen as the first philosopher of a transnational, non-territorial political theology. It is this particularity that renders his philosophy such a powerful blueprint for the absolutist movements of the postcolonial era.

Deterritorializing Faith – Rediscovering the Homeland

If there is anything that distinguishes Islamic jihad from previous forms of political Islam it is its aversion to the state-form. Neo-fundamentalist Islam is the child of deterritorialized capital.[14] Its history lies not so much in Iran and the theological state as in Saudi Arabia, whose power is immediately attuned to world financial markets. When Saudi Arabia began to promote its own particular brand of militant Wahhabi Islam in the 1970s, it was from the start envisaged as a transnational enterprise – the creation of a community of the faith transcending territorial borders, homogenizing alternative denominations and appealing perhaps most immediately to the growing number of urban poor living as labour émigrés in Europe. Its enemies were religious *and* secular – with its rising oil power, Saudi Arabia was seeking to displace both the influence of secular nationalism in the Arab world and the sudden emergence of a state-centred, Shi'ite Islam in Iran. And, not incidentally, it did so by leveraging its considerable investments in the deterritorialized petro-dollar markets of the 1970s. The growing influence of Wahhabi Islam worldwide must therefore be understood in its relationship to Saudi oil wealth and its recycling through world financial markets. It is through these channels that the most conspicuous supporters of Islamic charities (the Saudi royal family, but also innumerable private

donors and several ministries of the Saudi Arabian government) have established themselves as the managers of a vast funding conglomerate, whose goal is to propagate the Wahhabi faith via the conduits of militias, educational institutions, mosques, welfare centres and humanitarian aid.[15] The link, however, is not merely an economic one – for it can be argued that global capital doesn't simply enable but also inflects the faith form of neo-fundamentalist Islam, its vision of salvation, catastrophe and futurity.[16] Along with the contemporary forms of evangelical Protestantism, neo-fundamentalist Islam is much more immediately attuned to an investment – rather than a work ethic. It is therefore not incidental that the rising influence of Wahhabi Islam has been closely associated with a revival of interest in the principles of Islamic finance first outlined by the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan Al-Banna.[17] The influx of Saudi money gave real political force to the precepts of al-Banna, transforming an essentially doctrinal confrontation with the problem of usury into the institutional form of modern Islamic banking and finance. The novelty of Islamic finance is that it fully embraces the uncertainties of contemporary capital investment while seeking to uphold Quranic proscriptions against usurious forms of interest. Thus while Islamic banks forbid guaranteed rates of return on profit, they also offer a whole spectrum of profit-making ventures designed to circumvent this very proscription. In general these acceptable forms of investment involve a mutualization of the risks of investment between depositor and banker, a kind of shareholder democratism in which the volatilities of price are shared by an imagined community of like-minded investors. Through this mutualization, Islamic finance enables the faithful to reconcile themselves with the impiousness of usurious interest and thus to purify wealth-creation itself. In so doing, it transforms investment into an act of faith, reshaping the latter on the model of financial speculation.

There is of course considerable irony in the deterritorialization of the Islamic faith through the intermediary of the world financial markets, given the importance of these same markets to the Republican–Southern Baptist–oil alliance. Inasmuch as Islamic and evangelical neo-fundamentalism are enabled and shaped by speculative capital, they are invested in the same faith-form, the deterritorialized God of global finance.[18] In the indeterminate future of financial promise, the mutually exclusive cohabit and come together. Here West and non-West, the pious and the infidel, are inseparable and share in the expectation of wealth, the manna from heaven. Financial capital is, after all, the form of money that most dramatically undermines all semblance of fundamental value – territorial, productive, cultural – in favour of the transversal cohabitation of differences. It is only after the fact that these differences impose themselves as implacable contradictions. In this way, the community of believers is not only concerned with the affirmation of the faith, but also simultaneously with its mode of realization. In what actual limits will the indeterminate future nevertheless be confined? How will the promise of faith be realized in the present – to what forms of production and, more pertinently, reproduction will it give rise? It

is in this sense that neo-fundamentalist Islam has no trouble reconciling the uncertainties of mutualized faith with an equally forceful insistence on the necessity of moral law. The latter, it might be argued, assumes the role of fundamental value within an Islamic philosophy of finance. Hence, the investors who believe so ardently in the same indeterminate future, when it comes to the actualization of futures, are able to assert a fundamental moral difference. At the moment it is reinvested in the propagation of the faith, the speculative collusion between North American and Saudi money abruptly dissolves into the relentless opposition between West and non-West, which just as immediately breaks down into the difference between the virgin and the whore, the good and the bad woman, pure and dirty money. The schizophrenia that Western commentators so often attribute to the Saudi Arabian political class is therefore perfectly logical – and for that matter, so is the considerable intimacy of the US political class with Saudi Arabia. In the long run, both are invested in the same abstract faith form, speculative capital's indeterminate promise. The one is literally invested in the other. And whether in their modes of financial and religious trust, faith and hope, or their concern with the re-imposition of fundamental sexual laws, the evangelical and Islamist movements are stunningly in accord. It is only on the question of how the future is to be realized, distributed and shared that they necessarily part ways – and in this sense the clash of cultures is more a question of difference in redistribution than difference of faith.

The affinity of revolutionary Islam to the imaginary spaces of deterritorialized capital must also be placed alongside its tactical anti-statism, which it shares with neoliberalism. In this regard, notes Olivier Roy, the Taliban are exemplary. The tactics they deployed in Afghanistan marked a radical break with the project of a state Islam, with its vaguely leftist notions of national welfare and production (Roy, 2004: 97–9). Just as surely as market liberalization then, neo-fundamentalism aims to divest the state of the prerogative of legitimate violence. Its ideal state is one foregoing all welfare functions, reduced at the limit to a functional role, that of implementing religious law. Moreover, it calls for the devolution of police, security and welfare functions to the transnational faith-based initiative. In this way, it might be argued that the Taliban initiated a trend that has now become endemic to the neoliberal and postcolonial state – the outsourcing of police functions to the transnational, private militia and the sub-contracting of welfare to the faith-based initiative (the Taliban, who combined fighting the Northern Alliance with banning women from public life, seems to have accomplished the two functions). More generally, this goes together with a devolution of law itself, from the level of the state to that of a religious law – Sharia law – operating on a level that is at once highly parochial and at the same time (at least in principle) transnational (on this point see Roy, 2004: 97). The long-term aim of such a struggle is not so much to demolish the state but to remodel it in the service of divine law, a dream that culminates in the utopia of the global Islamic state or caliphate.

Two things should be noted in passing here – not only have the Taliban's strategies become characteristic of the way neo-fundamentalist Islam implants itself in other contexts, but these strategies have become ever more closely aligned with neoliberal market reform on the part of the post-developmental state.

Consider the case of Algeria, whose descent into civil war three decades after liberation from French colonialism has much to say about the intricacies of neoliberalism, anti-imperialist and neo-fundamentalist movements today. Mahfoud Bennoune (1990, 1999), the historian of pre- and post-revolutionary Algeria, points to the synergies between neoliberal market reform and the rise of neo-fundamentalism in Algeria, while acknowledging the ambivalent role of the state in both harnessing and policing the rise of a popular, anti-state Islamism.[19] The early fundamentalist movement, which was composed of landowners opposed to the socialist trade union movements and agrarian land reform (declared un-Islamic), had a decidedly middle-class, anti-socialist hue. But here as elsewhere, neo-fundamentalism only became a popular movement, recruiting many of its vigilantes and militants from the working class and unemployed, after a long detour via market reform and anti-socialist politics *on the part of the state*. A decisive turning point came in 1979. After two decades in which the postcolonial state had pursued a politics of industrialization and nationalization, the government of Chadli Benjedid (1979–92) abruptly implemented a series of market liberalization and privatization reforms, in many cases anticipating the demands that would later be imposed from the outside by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. The move had devastating economic and social consequences, with levels of unemployment reaching one quarter of the population and inflation increasing by 50 percent. The popular response remained ambivalent, however, even throughout the 1980s – in 1988, for example, street riots on the part of the young urban poor were accompanied by demands for education, social reform and job creation. The riots were repressed with extreme violence. They were followed by a sudden inflation of support for an emerging Islamist opposition, embodied at first in the FIS (Front Islamique du Salut), which went on to win the first multi-party democratic elections in Algeria. Faced with the probable victory of the FIS in subsequent parliamentary elections, the army imposed martial law in 1991 and then staged a coup d'etat in 1992. What followed was a decade-long civil war.

The Algerian government's response to the rising popularity of fundamentalist Islam requires reflection – not only because it was more ambivalent than is commonly assumed, but also because it anticipates the ways in which European states have learnt to accommodate movements of the far right within their own constituencies. While on the one hand the Algerian government countered the movement with a deployment of emergency powers, police brutality and outright delegitimation (the cancellation of elections won by the Islamists), its long-term response was to incorporate

the *moral politics* of the Islamist factions into its otherwise neoliberal political programme.

What is so striking about Algerian neo-fundamentalism – which, after all, claims to be a liberation movement – is the link it establishes between postcolonialism and the dissolution of moral and sexual values. The linking of the two is not incidental to a neo-fundamentalist politics. On the contrary, as Mahfoud Bennoune has forcefully argued, neo-Islamism understands the reimposition of sexual order as the very solution to imperialist oppression: 'attribut[ing] all the evils of Algerian society to the debauchery of women whom they saw as the prostitutes of the modern post-colonial situation' (in Karima Bennoune, 2002: 82).[20] This position was only strengthened by the legislative reforms of the Chadli government itself, which introduced draconian family law reform at the very moment it was dismantling the developmental nation-state and its redistributive welfare politics.[21] The simultaneous pursuit of neoliberal economic reform and neo-fundamentalist sexual politics is worth pondering over here, since it performs an act of faith-based mediation that is becoming a familiar tactic of neoliberal politics worldwide. Through its imposition of the Family Law Act of 1984, the Algerian government attempted to absolve the loss of national fundamentals – the reproduction of the nation as the dominant political form of life – by shoring up sexual values at a highly local, familial and private level.[22] Here as elsewhere, the nation-state's withdrawal from the arena of social reproduction is counteracted *by the state itself* through the selective implementation of religious law. Interestingly, and in spite of the standard claims of post-secular theory, in Algeria this process marked a *return* to the legal situation of pre-independence, French colonial rule, since the French state had in fact imposed sharia law on its Muslim subjects.

This is not to suggest that the cultural penetration of a 'proper' sexual politics in Algeria is reducible to its legalistic, state-imposed forms – as an 'aesthetics of the self', a practice of everyday piousness, dress and movement, it could never have flourished as it did without a campaign of threats and popular violence performed at the level of public space. Numerous testimonials on the part of Algerian women recount an extraordinary rise in assaults and assassinations in the course of the 1980s, a violence that pre-dated the later assassinations of male intellectuals, journalists, trade union workers and 'modern' teachers:

> Behavior such as working in non-traditional professions . . . as a school principal or woman activist is deemed *layadjouz* or forbidden and has led fundamentalist armed men to 'execute' women. . . . Paradoxically, while women have been killed for playing 'untraditional' roles, they have also paid with their lives for participating in 'traditional' activities. Working as a fortune teller, running a Turkish bath or hammam, or even being a hairdresser have brought death on women because such activities have been deemed immoral by fundamentalists. Other women have been threatened because they have been accused of being witches. . . . Women survivors are threatened with further punishment. . . . Many of these women have gone into hiding or fled

> to other parts of Algeria, becoming part of an increasingly large community of internal refugees seeking safe haven in other cities. . . . An even wider group of women than those who have actually experienced violent attacks have been subjected to harassment and threats; and, given the level of ongoing violence, these threats are terrifying and profoundly life-altering. Women's college dormitories were repeatedly besieged by FIS [Front Islamique du Salut] militants who threatened women residents, prohibiting them from entering or leaving. Often the authorities refused to interfere to protect the terrified women students. . . . [In Blida] a group calling itself the 'Redeemers' was established to patrol the conduct of women. . . . The slogan of this movement was 'all girls who go out at night shall die'. . . . The fundamentalist commitment to purification led also to attacks on individual women, particularly widows who did not remarry and other women who lived alone. (Karima Bennoune, 1995: 188–90, 195)

This account and others give some sense of the complexity of relations between the Islamist movements and the post-developmental neoliberal state in Algeria. Neo-fundamentalism presupposes a selective laissez-faire on the part of the state – thus at the height of the civil war, whole communes of Algiers were subject to a state of 'double siege' in which they were encircled at a distance by the army but subject to the unchallenged rule of Islamist militias in everyday life (Martinez, 2000: 150–2). It flourishes where the neoliberal state withdraws from social welfare and reproduction, claiming to reinstate divine law in the place left empty by a discredited secular and state law. This is not merely a nostalgic solution, but also a deeply innovative, productive and even 'revolutionary' one (if we understand revolution as implying radical social transformation rather than a repetitive conservatism). For a neo-fundamentalist politics, the practice of everyday sexual violence of the most banal kind (the targeting of unaccompanied women, homosexuals, the impure and the homeless) is elevated to the function of divine and law-making violence in the literal sense of the term. It combines all the spontaneity and 'lawlessness' of direct action with the extreme violence required by any attempt to impose absolute limits – for the first time. One of the most disturbing aspects of this violence is the fact that it is perpetrated in the name of anti-imperialist revolution.

Piousness and Women's Politics

Again it would be a mistake to assume that women are not implicated in the politics of divine law, except as its victims. This is a point made differently by the anthropologist Saba Mahmood in her work on the women's piousness movement in contemporary Cairo, and the practising Muslim feminist Asma Barlas, who offers a women-centred rereading of the Quran.

The work of Saba Mahmood focuses on the more mundane, performative aspects of the Islamic revival that are all too easily neglected in favour of the spectacular, media-oriented politics of Islamic jihad.

> In comparison with the other currents within the Islamic Revival, the mosque movement is unique in the extraordinary degree of pedagogical emphasis it places on outward markers of religiosity – ritual practices, styles of comporting oneself, dress, and so on. (Mahmood, 2006: 31)

These rituals of self-fashioning and comportment are more often than not the special province of women within the Islamist movement. In order to approach the specificity of this politics of habitus and ritual, Mahmood adopts a Foucauldian ethics of the self, filtered through Bourideu's notion of habitus and Butler's performance theory. What interests her in Butler's theory is its insistence on the discursive productivity of repetition rather than its attentiveness to the possibility of failure – and hence of resignification. She writes that:

> . . . one key tension in Butler's work owes to the fact that while she emphasizes the ineluctable relationship between the consolidation and destabilization of norms, her discussion of agency tends to focus on those operations of power that resignify and subvert norms. (2006: 21)

This is a dialectical tension that Mahmood wants to resolve – by a renewed attention to the norm and the myriad ways it can be repeated. Thus, she wants to:

> . . . move away from an agonistic and dualistic framework – one in which norms are conceptualized on the model of doing and undoing, consolidation and subversion – and instead think about the variety of ways in which norms are lived and inhabited, aspired to, reached for and consummated. (2006: 23)

Her ethnographic work with women in the mosque movement involves a close attention to the ritualistic practices of everyday comportment by which these women attempt to inculcate their bodies with the habits of shame, deference and endurance. These forms of embodied repetition and habitus, insists Mahmood, cannot be considered as mere reinscriptions of patriarchal power, since the women's mosque movement has considerably displaced the traditional structures of religious authority. Moreover, this women-led movement exercises a powerful regulative influence on the moral norms of life in Cairo, an influence that is strong enough to represent a significant threat to the Egyptian state. Although the female piousness movement is often dismissed as quietist, in comparison to the spectacular interventions of militant Islam, Mahmood is surely right to suggest that its political, indeed legislative, influence is of equal importance. However, inasmuch as her own method tends to operate in the iterative mode (repeating and validating the moral norms of her interlocutors), Mahmood offers little insight into the executive power by which divine law is imposed in the first place. Put bluntly: at what point does the female piousness movement lapse into a vice-squad politics in which the virtuous woman is called upon to uphold and police moral law? The normative repetition of female

piousness both rests on and calls for the imposition of divine law, and yet Mahmood stops short of addressing women's implication in the work of law-making violence.

Interestingly, then, the work of a feminist scholar of the Quran such as Asma Barlas, who subscribes to the most credulous of hermeneutics, ends up producing a much more effective intervention into the place of law. Where Mahmood speaks in the name of the performative, only to remain fixated on the work of repetition, Barlas, who claims to be channelling the voice of God, ends up transmitting a version of Islam that is anything but iterative. Reading backwards from the actual centrality of women's bodies and actions in the contemporary Islamic revival, Barlas argues that Islam privileges the law-making rights of women as mothers over and above those of fathers. Relying as it does on the homology between God's rights as sovereign creator and women's rights as foundation of the family, the 'Quran not only brings mothers into the same sphere of symbolic signification as that reserved for God, but, in so doing, it also privileges them over fathers' (Barlas, 2002: 178). And inasmuch as the Quran can be understood to place women-mothers in a privileged relation to divine law, it should logically endow them with a leading role in Islamic activism. The pious woman is thereby invested with the role of moral guardian and spokesperson for divine law – she *is* in fact divine law, the voice of God and the foundation of moral order – and is as least as implicated in the reinvention and repetition of law as the religious militant. The work of such feminist scholars is interesting because it both qualifies and extends the particular nature of the 'sexual problematic' outlined by male philosophers such as Qutb. This problematic is not necessarily centred on the distinction between pure men and impure women but more fundamentally on that between *pure and impure desire*, *legitimate and illegitimate sex*. For Barlas, piousness is the one law applicable to both men and women. 'In the Qur'an, chastity implies not virginity, asceticism, or renunciation, but a sexual practice that remains within the moral limits prescribed by God' (2002: 153). Within these limits, men and women are equally free to be sexual.

> Sexual morality, or purity, is a function not of one's nature or sexual identity, then, but of one's behaviour. Further, purity is not the absence of sex, but the absence of certain types of sex (adultery, fornication) and the valuation of purity, chastity, avoidance of lust and lewdness and so on. (2002: 155)

Far from undermining the foundational value of the family, it is the equality of men and women that allows Barlas to establish the divine lawfulness of heterosexual marriage (and by implication an absolute prohibition on all 'illegitimate' desire).[23]

Is it incidental that these theorists, who are so obviously engaged in the work of repeating an unspoken (Mahmood) or spoken (Barlas) foundation, are unable to address the question of fundamental value itself? Enacting the very legality it is attempting to investigate, this work cannot

explain why female bodies in particular are the site where religious norms are to be reproduced and divine law upheld.

Transit Politics, Sexual Politics

In contrast to these philosophies of genealogical law and repetition, Edouard Glissant offers a 'poetics of relation' in which the sacred, if it is anywhere at all, is to be found in the non-dialectical movement of passage or transit. Writing from the perspective of the postcolony, Glissant's is a critique of anti-imperialist movements that operate through a claim to cultural and genealogical purity. 'Whereas the Western nation is first of all an "opposite", for colonized people identity will be "opposed to" – that is, a limitation from the beginning. Decolonization will have done its real work when it goes beyond this limit' (1997: 17). Glissant draws his inspiration from Deleuze and Guattari's theory of nomadism, with the crucial difference that he is more interested in distinguishing between modes and kinds of nomadism, and therefore more attentive to the operation of power within the movement of deterritorialization. What Deleuze and Guattari fail to recognize is that deterritorialization itself can be a way of transnationalizing the 'imperative of the root', either through imperial conquest or the affirmation of a universalizing divine law. In the place of the 'nomadism' of the conqueror, Glissant proposes a politics of counter-deterritorialization that takes its cue from the actual bastardization of Caribbean cultures. The poetics of relation 'does not contribute to re-establishing the balance of a community; it commits the heresy of destroying the sacredness of filiation' (1997: 58). It connects 'against the root', and yet it is not indifferent to the historical *ramifications* of imperialism (1997: 15). To connect is to connect against all authenticities of race, culture and faith, even those that speak in the name of the irreducible other, without renouncing the imperial history of colonization and its legacy of power relations. Glissant's poetics of relation is therefore not reducible to a fetishism of desire, with its too facile celebration of the exchangeable indifference of cultures, races and genders. Relation is not transactionable. His philosophy is all the more powerful because it is inspired by a singular experience of deterritorialization, the Afro-Caribbean slave diaspora, with its history of violent displacements and forcible encounters between slaves, indigenous peoples and colonizers. While dwelling on the extreme violence of this history, he conceives of it not so much in terms of a loss of foundations but rather as a *complication* of the possibilities of movement. In Glissant's terms, we are complicated by the relations that engender us – the more fraught, even painful, the work of ramification, the more powerful are its possibilities of connection. Here ramification is potentializing rather than nostalgic and foundational. It extends to the cross-border political and cultural relations that can be established with other postcolonial spaces such as Algeria or the French *banlieue*, even while acknowledging the differences (even tensions) between them.

Glissant's notes on the poetics of relation are pursued in the work of his friend and interlocutor, the Algerian writer and film-maker Assia Djebar,

whose novels constitute a sustained reflection on Algerian postcolonial history, from the War of Independence to the Civil War of the 1990s. As an Algerian writer of Berber descent who has been excoriated for writing in French rather than Arabic, and who powerfully thematizes the importance of linguistic origins to Islamic neo-fundamentalism, Djebar has developed a unique practice of linguistic creolization or internal translation. In her later work, she attempts to write in a modern French inflected by the syntax of classical Arabic – a linguistic invention that betrays both French and Islamic linguistic purities (2003, 2006). These works, which are not quite fiction, are testimonials to friends and lovers (writers, journalists, teachers, musicians), many of them assassinated, some living in hiding as internal refugees and others who have fled overseas under threat from Islamist death squads. The characters of these stories live on the threshold – the French mother to Algerian children, traitor to the French occupiers, who lies in a coma in a French hospital and who cannot be buried alongside her husband until she converts to Islam; her son refused access to the Algerian Embassy in Paris because he grows a beard after the death of this mother; the woman teacher waiting at the ferry crossing to return to France, remembering her murdered colleague; the girl walking alone in the streets of Oran, disguising herself as a generic good woman, shortly after her friend is car-bombed, afraid that the same fate awaits her; the smile of a writer friend, the moment before he is murdered for crimes against Islam. The act of remembrance performs a return to the 'homeland' that is never quite accomplished before it provokes a sudden desire to escape.

> Coming and goings, round trips, slow returns . . . Going back to the homeland, to the earth, to my father's hearth . . . then retreating, the desire to leave . . . To leave it all behind, to go before any notion of return could present itself. To get a return ticket of course, just in case. (2006: 33–4)

Coming and going between Algeria and France in a context of rising xenophobia and border control in Europe, Djebar inhabits the crossroads where European security politics meets neo-Islamist fantasies of moral and cultural purification. Her reflections go beyond the familiar, state-sanctioned transit-points of a 'no-border' politics to investigate the thresholds of everyday movement that are the battleground of the Islamist revival. She therefore moves back and forward between the checkpoint, the detention centre and the embassy, to the classroom in Algiers, a space that was highly politicized during the civil war by Islamist teachers trained in Egypt, and the street, a borderland where the practice of everyday movement became highly fraught for women in particular. Her work is not heroic or liberating, but persists in the space of transition where communal and sexual politics are always unsettling each other. It is a space without resolution, even of the divine sort – but this is what makes it so compelling.

These are necessarily summary accounts of a complex and vast literature. By concluding with this work, I don't mean to overburden it with the

responsibility of mapping out political futures. I simply want to open up the space of exchange to include voices that move beyond the narrow alternatives of post-secular political theory (state secularism versus religious absolutism, liberalism versus revolutionary conservatism). Given the unmistakable preference of recent feminist and postcolonial theory for the culturally normative other – more often than not embodied in the figure of the pious woman – the question arises whether this literature is capable of perceiving the 'other' as anything other than an alternative foundation. A selective attention to the conservative other – the other who is most identifiable as such – can easily turn into reaction by proxy. By opening the space of dialogue to postcolonial philosophies of transit, the grounds for authentication fall away. Read alongside critical literature on the sexual and racial dynamics of imperialism, these philosophies suggest ways in which the politics of anti-capitalism can be pursued without seeking to reinvent a new, and absolutely pure, genealogical order.

Notes

1. This schematic perspective on religion in world history has produced something of a theoretical sub-genre on the themes of secularism and the state. It is indebted to the anthropology of Talal Asad (1993).

2. See, for example, Saba Mahmood (2006), who examines the religious practices of women in the mosque movement as a way of imagining a counter-politics to Western, imperialist, secular liberalism and its feminist avatars. See also Wendy Brown (2006) for a fairly representative example of the thesis that modern imperialism implies the triumph of the Western secular state and that fundamentalism itself is a projection of Western feminism. The 'post-secular' thesis is, however, far too diffuse and unquestioned to be attributed to any one particular author.

3. With varying degrees of distance, these theories are indebted to the deeply conservative religious anthropology of Talal Asad. Asad combines Edward Said's critique of orientalism with an affirmative politics of Islamic cultural authenticity and liberation. See Asad (1993: 263–4) for his arguments in favour of cultural unity, integrity and authenticity as mobilizing conditions for anti-imperialist politics. In *Powers of the Secular Modern* (2006: 279), Asad explains that his sympathy for Islamic fundamentalist movements comes from his perception that secular or Marxist opposition movements in the Middle East are unable to mobilize the masses.

4. For an illuminating analysis of Foucault's writings on the Iranian Revolution, including an appendix with translations, see Afary and Anderson (2005). See also Greason on the response of the anti-capitalist left to the Iranian Revolution (2005). It is quite striking that many of the truisms marshalled by the left in response to the Iranian Revolution – the essentially welfarist nature of religion and its commitment to social justice, the unified nature of class interests in the Middle East, female modesty as resistance to imperialism – are making a comeback, almost verbatim, in contemporary political discourse. See Foucault (2004 [1979]) for his first and last analysis of the economic logic of neoliberalism.

5. The convergence of foreign policy, social welfare and faith-based interventionism has been a particular concern of North American right-wing think-tanks for some time now. See for example the collection of essays in Abrahams (2001). Many

of the arguments put forward by the proponents of the faith-based initiative are taken up uncritically by post-structuralist theorists of the post-secular. With the establishment of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the Bush administration has opened up an unprecedented space of political intervention for religious organizations. For a preliminary account, see Farris et al. (2004) and Bartkowski and Regis (2003), who note that welfare-to-work has now merged with faith-based welfare reform. The outsourcing of social service provision to the faith-based initiative is by no means unique to North America. See for example Amara (2006) for an account of a similar process in the French *banlieues*. In Britain, several commentators have reflected on the de facto delegation of multicultural representation to conservative religious authorities. These include Bhatt (1997, 2006) and Husain (2007), a former member of Hizb ut-Tahrir, who offers an insider's account of the consolidation of an 'authentic' British Muslim identity under Blair. See also Esther Kaplan (2004: 232–43) for an account of conservative Christian activism in the UN.

6. See Walter Russell Mead's article (2006) in *Foreign Affairs* for a lengthy discussion of the possibilities of a global alliance of monotheisms. Mead notes that:

> . . . evangelicals have worked with Catholics against abortion and with both religious and secular Jews to support Israel; they could now reach out to support Muslims as well. . . . Muslims and evangelicals are both concerned about global poverty and Africa. Both groups oppose the domination of public and international discourse by secular ideas. Both believe that religious figures and values should be treated with respect in the media; neither like the glorification of casual sex in popular entertainment . . . fostering Muslim–Evangelical dialogue may be one of the best ways to forestall the threat of civilizational warfare. (2006: 42)

Interestingly, Faisal Devji makes a very similar suggestion when he proposes a global democratism of monotheistic faiths – although Devji sees Islam rather than Evangelical Protestantism as encompassing the other two.

7. Thus, the vociferous declarations of a US-aligned anti-terrorist state such as Pakistan can perfectly accommodate themselves with enduring support for a panoply of extra-state religious militia. See Bhatt (2007) for a subtle historical and conceptual analysis of this phenomenon.

8. In a different context, Connolly (2008) borrows the concept of 'resonance machine' from Félix Guattari to offer a very convincing reading of the contradiction-tolerant alliance between US neoliberal capitalism and the evangelical religious right.

9. See Richard Griffiths (2006: 11–28). I am assuming that the 'divine' character of the proletarian general strike is already implicit in Sorel's thought, despite Walter Benjamin's (1996) attempt to distinguish between a merely mythological and genuinely divine violence.

10. However, this shouldn't distract us from the civilizing role that Qutb attributes to Islam in Africa and to Islamism's own version of 'orientalism', which involves lurid fantasies about the decadence of the Far East. Interestingly, Qutb's references to the 'nudity' of the uncivilized Africans closely echoes his preoccupation with female dishonour.

11. For detailed readings of the political thought of Sayyid Qutb, see Euben (1999) and Tripp (2006: 150–80). Tripp is particularly illuminating on the importance of sexual politics within an Islamist anti-capitalism. See Fatima Mernissi (1992) for a trenchant feminist reconsideration of the intersections of capitalism, labour and sexual politics in the Arab world. Mernissi makes the pertinent point that 'fundamentalism was born in Egypt at the same time as feminism, and the two have never ceased to exist side by side' (1992: 162). See Maurer (2005) for a detailed anthropological study of Islamic finance which, however, unduly neglects the relationship between sexual and economic transaction in Islamic political thought.

12. For a discussion of such conservative women's activism in the context of Algeria, see Cherifati-Merabtine (1994: 53–62) and more generally Moghadam (1994: 5–6). Women have played an important role in the vice squad politics of fundamentalist movements from Iran to Algeria and Pakistan, but in general their activism receives much less attention than the more explosive forms of direct action usually performed by men. See also Chetan Bhatt (1997: 167–8, 225–7) for a comparable account of feminist activism within the Hindu far right. Bhatt notes that women militants are highly active in acts of communitarian violence, often directed against Muslim minority women.

13. Again Olivier Roy is very illuminating about the link between neo-fundamentalist Islam and the experience of migration. However, he has perhaps underestimated the importance of rising rates of unaccompanied female migration in fuelling the more virulent strands of Islamic fundamentalism.

14. I follow Olivier Roy (2004) in distinguishing between political or state-centred Islam and neo-fundamentalist or deterritorialized Islam, the latter being associated with the proliferation of globally active militia in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. However, it should be recognized that the two forms continue to coexist and that the relationship between the two is a fluid one.

15. For detailed discussions of all these issues see Kepel (2003: 78–80) and Burr and Collins (2006: 26–50). Kepel notes that contemporary Islamic finance really took off after the war of October 1973, when a dramatic increase in the price of oil led to the recycling of petro-dollars through the international banking system. He notes that:

> . . . after 1973, the oil-rich Wahhabites found themselves in a different economic position, able to mount a wide-ranging campaign of proselytizing. . . . The objective was to bring Islam to the forefront of the international scene, to substitute it for the various discredited nationalist movements, and to refine the multitude of voices within the religion down to the single creed of the masters of Mecca. The Saudis' zeal now embraced the whole world. (Kepel, 2003: 78, 70)

And on the connection between oil wealth, Wahhabite proselytism and sexual politics, see Fatima Mernissi (1992: 165–70).

16. On the connection between the actions of Islamic jihad and the speculative logic of the financial markets, see Devji (2005: 9–10). In certain militant sects of political Islam such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, God appears in the form of the non-insurable catastrophe risk. See, for example, Ed Husain's fascinating account of his participation in the UK-based Hizb ut-Tahrir movement, where he notes that:

> . . . Hizb ut-Tahrir believed that all natural events were acts of God . . . hence insurance policies were *haram*. Furthermore, the *kuffar* economic system should on no account be supported. Consequently, Hizb members could not insure their cars or mortgage their homes. (2007: 101)

17. Neo-fundamentalist Islam is vigorously opposed to usury and is thus confronted with the problem of how to justify its own reliance on interest-based capital. In this respect, it finds itself in a very similar position to Protestantism, which has traditionally entertained a very ambivalent relationship to capital. On Islamic banking see Burr and Collins (2006) and on the tensions between capitalism and Islam's moral economy see Charles Tripp (2006).

18. For an analysis of the actual relationship between the Bush family, the Saudi elite and Islamic fundamentalists prior to 11 September 2001, see Craig Unger (2006). Despite subsequent efforts to follow up a presumed golden chain of 'secret terrorist financing' leading from the Saudi Arabian elite and banking world straight to al-Qaeda, it might be assumed that the alliance is at once more diffuse and as indissoluble as ever – simply because US capitalism is still inextricably tied to oil.

19. See the interview with Mahfoud Bennoune in Karima Bennoune (2002). For a detailed history of the Algerian Civil War of the 1990s, see Martinez (2000).

20. For lengthier considerations of the Algerian case, see Mahfoud Bennoune (1999) and Cherifati-Merabtine (1994).

21. The Family Law Code of 1984 made all women minors in education, marriage, divorce, work and inheritance. Inheritance laws were reformed in accord with the principles of Sharia so that women could only inherit half as much as men. The passage of the code was followed by subsequent attempts to appease the legislative demands of Islamist groups such as the FIS. On all these points, see Turshen (2002).

22. For a more general discussion of this alliance between the post-national state and the anti-state fundamentalist movement, see Valentine M. Moghadam's introductory chapter (1994).

23. Barlas describes this as a familialist feminism, founded on 'a monotheistic perspective that legitimizes heterosexuality and sees the role of childbearing, but not necessarily childrearing, as the woman's function' (2002: 201). The Quran's views, she argues, are not necessarily incompatible with all modern, Western feminist theories but are close to those that do not attempt to 'delink reproduction and sexuality' and accord a central role to the family (2002: 202).

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