Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism

Human Rights Perspectives

Edited by Margaret L. Satterthwaite and Jayne C. Huckerby



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In the name of fighting terrorism, countries have been invaded; wars have been waged; people have been detained, rendered, and tortured; and campaigns for "hearts and minds" have been unleashed. Human rights analyses of the counter-terrorism measures implemented in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 have assumed that men suffer the most—both numerically and in terms of the nature of rights violations endured. This assumption has obscured the ways that women, men, and sexual minorities experience counter-terrorism. By integrating gender into a human rights analysis of counter-terrorismand human rights into a gendered analysis of counter-terrorism—this volume aims to reverse this trend. Through this variegated human rights lens, the authors in this volume identify the spectrum and nature of rights violations arising in the context of gendered counter-terrorism and national security practices. Introduced with a foreword by Martin Scheinin, former UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism, the volume examines a wide range of gendered impacts of counter-terrorism measures that have not been theorized in the leading texts on terrorism, counter-terrorism, national security, and human rights.

Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism will be of particular interest to scholars and students in the disciplines of Law, Security Studies, and Gender Studies.

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First published 2013 by Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada by Routledge 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 978-0-415-78179-4 (hbk) ISBN 978-0-203-08139-6 (ebk)

Typeset in Garamond by RefineCatch Limited, Bungay, Suffolk



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7 "Muslim fundamentalism" and human rights in an age of terror and empire

Amna Akbar and Rupal Oza¹

Introduction

In the decade since 11 September 2001, many prominent voices have deployed the need to "save Muslim women² and queers" as a moralistic justification for a web of military, intelligence, and humanitarian political projects (Ali 2010; Nesiah 2004; (Mikdashi and R.M. 2011; Puar 2007; Massad 2007) under the guise of the "War on Terror" (Engle 2007; Alvarez 2009). Yet the dominant public discourse is largely mute regarding the incalculable human toll stemming from these projects, including as felt by women and queers worldwide. Instead it focuses on the "terrorists," "militants," "insurgency," and "fundamentalism" against which these measures are targeted. These raced and gendered discourses can be broadly divided into two domains. The first is neo-conservative in nature and typified by Laura Bush's radio address in support of US military operations in Afghanistan: "The brutal oppression of women is a central goal of the terrorists . . . The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women" (2001). The neo-conservative position has been thoroughly critiqued. In this chapter, we are concerned with the second, related position, which we characterize as "liberal."

To analyze the political positioning of actors within the large liberal domain, we narrow in on two broadly defined groups. The first, which claims liberalism and even feminism, includes Asra Nomani,³ Irshad Manji,⁴ and Ayaan Hirsi Ali.⁵ We dub this the "good Muslim" position. Each of these activists claim "authentic" Muslim identity, and has gained tremendous popularity for her denunciation of "militant Islam." They call for efforts to reform Islam and to police fellow Muslims. But, most significant, through their public appearances and writing each mobilizes the "good Muslim"/"bad Muslim" discourse (Mamdani 2004), positioning herself as a liberal-modern, "good Muslim" subject juxtaposed against an illiberal and anti-modern one. This "good Muslim"/"bad Muslim" discourse has also been well critiqued (Mamdani 2004; Razack 2008; Maira 2009; Mahmood 2008). We briefly engage with it here to show the discursive landscape the "good Muslim" position has generated, providing authentic sanction to Islamophobic discourses where racial and gendered profiling is justified and unmoored references to

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"Muslim fundamentalism" go unchecked. In using the term "Muslim fundamentalism," we do not refer to a particular set of religious or cultural practices, but rather to the discursive terrain, that uncritically collapses Islam (or certain imagined practices of Islam) with illiberalism, and consequently considers "Muslim fundamentalism" as the legitimate target of the "War on Terror." The "good Muslim" position authorizes a landscape within which an ahistorical, decontextualized, and monolithic "Muslim fundamentalism" has meaning and legitimacy even among liberals and leftists.

Gita Sahgal and Karima Bennoune, whom we discuss in greater detail below, most notably represent the second liberal category, which draws on a particular global human rights and secular frame. We dub this the "secular feminist" position. Sahgal and Bennoune have situated themselves as the voices for Muslim women's human rights, unheard by the terrorists or the human rights groups working to address the abuses of the "War on Terror." This secular feminist group's history of engagement with women's human rights and human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and their commitments to "secular" politics, distinguish it from the "good Muslim" position.

We begin by describing how the "War on Terror" has mobilized particular human rights discourses to justify its imperial ambitions. Then we point out the important, while limited, post-9/11 shift marked by the work of US and UK human rights groups challenging their own governments' human rights abuses in the "War on Terror." Next we trace a particular secular feminist critique of human rights discourses' relative neglect of women's human rights. The secular feminists we focus on critique US and UK human rights organizations for partnering with or taking on cases involving Muslim men they consider "fundamentalist" and therefore dangerous to Muslim women's human rights. We briefly detail Gita Sahgal's concerns with Amnesty International's partnership with Moazzam Begg, and Karima Bennoune's critique of the Center for Constitutional Rights' (CCR) and the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) legal challenge to the US government's authorization for the targeted killing of US citizen Anwar Al-Aulaqi. Finally, we delve into a deeper critique of the secular feminist argument forwarded by Sahgal and Bennoune.

We make three observations about how this discourse constructs a secular imaginary in opposition to Muslim fundamentalism. First, secular feminist discourses traffic in a "good Muslim"/"bad Muslim" dichotomy, which relies on deeply essentialist constructions of culture and people, and endorses the dangerous us/them dichotomy of the "War on Terror." Second, secular feminists' concerns that "Muslim fundamentalist" religious codes impose and sanction violence on women relies on a myopia that understands Muslim women only as mute victims of Muslim men and Islam, and ignores the role of Western violence in defining Muslim realities around the world. Last, we unpack the assertion of secularism as the bulwark against a dangerous and spreading "Muslim fundamentalism" (Oza 2011).

We focus on a particular secular feminist position articulated through human rights discourses. In referring to a particular secular feminist position, and to human rights discourses, we understand these shorthand labels are far from ideal. Through our critiques, we do not mean to forsake secularist, feminist, or human rights frameworks, or to overlook existing plurality and contestations occurring within. Rather, we aim to engage in the moral and ethical considerations at work in deploying these frameworks in different ways. Our hope is that through this discussion we can generate a richer way of understanding and using rights discourses.

Human rights and terror discourses

The military, intelligence, and humanitarian arms of the US "War on Terror" rely on the construction of Islam as a threat in which Muslim men are savages, Muslim women are helpless victims, and the United States is the liberator cum savior (Abu-Lughod 2002; Kapur 2002a; Mutua 2002). This rescue fantasy mobilizes the same "savages-victims-saviors" metaphor that mainstream human rights discourses often deploy (Mutua 2001). As articulated by Makau Mutua, the savage in the metaphor is the "illiberal," "anti-democratic," "pre-modern," and "authoritarian" theocratic state of the global South (ibid.: 203). The victim is often represented by the face of a Third World woman who has been violated by the savage, "powerless," "helpless," "voiceless," and "innocent" (Mutua 2001: 228-30). The savior is "the good angel who protects, vindicates, civilizes, restrains, and safeguards" (Mutua 2001: 204), and its subjects of rescue are both the victims and social values like freedom and democracy. Saviors include Western governments, values, and cultures, and international NGOs that are "driven by a belief in the redemption of non-liberal, usually non-European, societies and cultures from human rights abominations" (Mutua 2001: 237). In other words, both the victims and violators are assumed to inhabit illiberal, anti-democratic societies in the global South, whereas the saviors come from the liberal, democratic global North.

Human rights discourses necessarily involve decisions about what types of violence and inequalities are recognized or prioritized as violations. Mutua's insight is in recognizing particular narrative patterns—the otherwise unspoken-of Eurocentric and male-dominant race, gender, and geo-politics that are often advanced under the guise of (even well-meaning) apolitical human rights work (2001; Brown 2004). Ratna Kapur warns that we ignore the politics of human rights to the peril of a larger social justice project (2006). For human rights work that draws on the savages-victims-saviors metaphor, the violence and inequalities that are included and excluded from the frame tend to ratify a Eurocentric liberal progress narrative. In recognizing violence and inequality, mainstream human rights discourse tends to privilege what colonialism privileged by focusing on the savagery of the local culture and obscuring structural inequality and the violence waged in the name of

human rights and civilization (Asad 2007; Butler 2009).

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As a result, the savages-victims-saviors framework produces onedimensional characters lacking agency or complexity, as well as narratives that marginalize or erase imperial violence and transnational and structural inequalities. In producing human rights subjects in clear-cut codependent categories of victim, savage, and savior, these human rights discourses transform complex social contexts, rife with inequalities and violence, into neat moral geographies (Brown 2004: 459-60; Abu-Lughod 2002: 783, 788-89). The logic demands indifference to, erasure of, or justification of the role of the savior in producing structural inequity, and of interconnected histories between the savior and the savage. For example, the standard narratives on the US occupation of Afghanistan elide the United States' longstanding role in building the Taliban, as well as the ongoing violence of the occupation (Nesiah 2006). The framework also excludes the possibility that the victims-and even the savages-those with the greatest stakes in and deepest knowledge of the dynamics at work, may have the agency required to decide whether reform is needed, what shape it takes, and whose help they may need to effectuate their campaigns (Harvard Law Review Association 2004; Gready 2010; Roth 2004). In significant ways, the savages-victimssaviors framework reflects the common tendency in Western human rights work to focus outward and abroad; to overlook questions of geography, ethics, and responsibility for the Western human rights NGO seeking to vindicate the rights of others abroad; and to ignore human rights abuses local to the NGO, as well as the home government's complicity in abuse at home and abroad.

We have highlighted the work done by scholars of Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) to bring into relief the dangerous potential for convergences between human rights and "War on Terror" discourses, and to stress the problems associated with particular human rights discourses authored by the "democratic" global North and directed toward the "theocratic" global South (Mutua 2001; Rajagopal 2006; Okafor 2005). TWAIL discourses echo those of anti-imperialist feminists who unpack the gendered and racial underpinnings of the savage-savior framework of imperial projects (Corrêa et al. 2008; Enloe 2000; Puar 2007).

As in the context of the "War on Terror," human rights discourse "sustain[s] and even justifie[s]" "the politics of inclusion and exclusion" (Kapur 2006: 665-69, 675-84), of othering and marking individuals as outside of liberalism's protections (Sheth 2009). Savages are considered threats to liberalism, human rights, and progress. By portraying savages as less deserving and less human, human rights discourse thereby suggests they are unworthy of human rights protections. In the current moment, the savages considered least worthy for the protections of both liberalism and human rights are Muslim men.

Interruptions

Despite the convergences between human rights and counter-terror discourses, post-9/11 US and UK human rights workers rose to challenge the abuses of

their own governments in the "War on Terror." In taking on their own governments, this work by Western human rights groups and lawyers constitutes a central challenge to the liberal assumption that "justice" and "democracy" are authored by the global North (Margulies and Metcalf 2010– 2011; Margulies 2010-2011). They have represented and worked with men held by the US government in Guantánamo Bay, Bagram Air Base, and secret and proxy detention sites around the world (Ahmed, et al. 2011; Patten 2009; International Justice Network 2011). More recently, as the US government's attention has turned domestically toward the "homegrown threat," they have also represented and worked with American Muslim communities. This work on behalf of individuals, families, and communities thought to be "bad Muslims" or "terrorists" (Stahl 2012; Latif v. Holder 2011; Akbar, et al. 2011) contests the logic and material consequences of a moral universe where Muslim ideologies, practices, and identities are equated with threat. By turning the lens on their own governments and considering "victims" at home, human rights workers have complicated the human rights and terror narratives in important ways (Weissman et al. 2012; Huckerby and Fakih 2011; Akbar, et al. 2011). Although US human rights groups had started to take on domestic human rights issues prior to 9/11 (LaBelle 2008), the work of US and UK human rights groups on behalf of Muslim men and communities targeted by Western governments in the "War on Terror" must be understood as marking an important shift toward more meaningful human rights discourses and practice—one more rooted at home, and therefore in a more complex sense of personal agency tied up in the abuse.

It all started with the Guantánamo litigation. In 2002, when CCR first decided to represent men detained at Guantánamo Bay, the men there were viewed as so dangerous as to be undeserving of legal counsel, and their lawyers were seen as unpatriotic. Indeed, the lawyers' work posed a direct confrontation to the US government's intention to render the men beyond legal protections. CCR's work radically challenged the public discourse on the necessity and righteousness of Guantánamo, and the evil that inhered in the detained men. CCR took on the work, despite criticism, and eventually built a large network of lawyers to represent the hundreds of men who have been held and released

The legal representation provided to the men at Guantánamo has not provided much in the way of legal precedent that meaningfully limits the executive (Huq 2010; Weiss 2012). In fact, as some have observed, over the past ten years the US legal system has been "Guantánamo-ized," paving the road toward a more draconian prison industrial complex, the National Defense Authorization Act, increased reliance on drones to kill rather than to detain, and tremendous judicial deference to prosecutorial discretion and police authority in prosecuting terrorism-related cases in the federal courts (Kassem 2011; Rovner and Theoharis 2012; Hajjar 2011). But the lawyering has proven a unique and important force for humanizing the men held there, contesting the war discourse, and manifesting in

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In taking up the cases of the men held at Guantánamo, lawyers resisted the dehumanization of the detained men. Lawyers brought claims on behalf of men indefinitely detained, arguing for their rights to have rights through assertions of human rights law, humanitarian law, and US law (Ahmad 2009). They brought claims in federal domestic courts, engaged various international and regional human rights mechanisms (including UN special rapporteurs), and produced human rights reports (Center for Human Rights and Global Justice et al. 2007; Stover and Fletcher 2009; Human Rights Watch 2005; International Justice Network 2011).6 Through these processes, human rights workers brought public attention to the men at Guantánamo, and the broader human rights implications of the "War on Terror."

But it is not only by bringing legal claims that lawyers humanized the men at Guantánamo. It was also in their willingness to associate with the men, and to put their bodies on the line, as it were. The lawyering insisted, even if in limited fashion, that the men in Guantánamo are subjects deserving of representation.

The lawyering also contested the moral and political terrain created by the "War on Terror," wherein the United States has exercised almost limitless power and discretion against the Muslim men it broadly charges as "terrorists" (Ahmad 2009: 1683, 1688, 1694). In pointing to the United States' torture, rendition, and detention of Muslim men-challenging and thereby framing it as worthy of question and critique—the lawvering disrupted the narrative of the "War on Terror" as a civilizing project with legitimate targets, and the United States or Western culture as a perfect, unblemished savior. It also points to the possibilities of a more meaningful, collaborative human rights discourse that does not rely on binaries between "us" and "them" or on erasures of particular sorts of violence. Rather, it is one in which we are all mutually engaged, with the complicated set of moral and ethical issues at stake in joint projects.

The savages-victims-saviors metaphor assumes a certain static quality to its stark cast of characters, with the clean-cut categories reifying each other. For example, casting the victim as helpless, without agency or voice, evokes the need for a savior. In holding the US and UK governments responsible for human rights abuses, and in arguing that male victims of the "War on Terror" have and deserve rights, the work on behalf of "bad Muslims" and "terrorists" disrupts the axes of the metaphor. The entities responsible for the abuses are the US and UK governments; those who are working on redress include entities within the United States and the United Kingdom (from within the "savage culture"); the individuals on whom much of the abuse was meted out are Muslim men (and their families).

When the United States is cast as the savage, Western human rights groups can no longer easily inhabit the role of the savior. The saviors are implicated in the abuse as constituents of the culture or state responsible for the abuse, transforming the human rights project into one necessarily joint and messy in nature. To imagine Muslim men as people worthy of rights and dignity also poses a challenge to the discourse. Whereas constituting brown women as victims in need of a white savior doverails with larger patriarchal and imperial narratives, reconstituting Muslim men, who are typically cast as savages, as victims draws them within the ambit of subjects deserving of rights and justice. In considering how the United States has victimized Muslim men, the lawyering interrupts the effort to cast a seamless narrative in which Muslim men are perpetually savage.

To be clear, we are not calling for a simple realignment of the savagesvictims-saviors metaphor, where Muslim men are victims, the United States is the savage, and Western human rights NGOs are saviors. Nor are we suggesting that Muslim women are not subject to male-dominant violence. Rather, we are imagining a human rights project with a commitment to engage with our intersectional realities as individuals who simultaneously may be subject to particular abuses and inequalities, perpetuating other abuses and inequalities, and speaking out against yet more abuses and inequalities. This project would allow for an understanding of Muslim women as agents in their own lives and participants in demanding their own change, while at the same time recognizing the multiple forms of violence to which Muslim women are subject, including male-dominant violence, conservative local and transnational religious forces, global capitalism, and the "War on Terror." The voices. realities, and agencies of those subject to the abuses would define the work. Human rights NGOs would start by holding their own governments accountable for their abuses, even (or especially) when those abuses are meted out against "excluded subjects" (Kapur 2006: 687). Human rights NGOs taking on transnational projects would take their cues from partners and movements in the countries where the abuse under consideration was being suffered, approaching the work with an ethic of collaboration and support.

Even as CCR and others charged the United States with grave human rights violations, those challenges had their limits. Most centrally, lawyers contesting detention of their clients at Guantánamo framed the "War on Terror" as "a betrayal of American values" and "commitment[s] to human rights and due process" (Forman 2009: 331). Rather than situating Guantánamo within the larger context of the American domestic prison system or military commissions, lawyers and human rights workers focused on it as an exception to the US norm. Lawyers and human rights workers thereby avoided confronting longstanding practices of criminalization of communities of color, the criminal justice system's structural inequalities, and the phenomena of mass incarceration in the United States (Margulies and Metcalf 2010–2011; Rovner and Theoharis 2012; Martinez 2008). The advocacy largely presented the United States as a fallen savior, a nation with an unblemished commitment equality and human rights until 9/11. Lawyers tended to situate the stakes in terms of the American values at stake, rather than the lives and realities of hundreds of Muslim men and their affected families.

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This framing obscured their clients and the grave human consequences of Guantánamo and the "War on Terror." Finally, the work focused on classic violations with which the human rights community has been preoccupied over time—torture and arbitrary detention conducted by a state actor, a focus that has spawned the long-standing critique of human rights discourse as focusing primarily on men's experiences with state-sponsored violence (Copelon 1994; Sahgal and Tax 2011; Bennoune 2008).

Despite its limitations, however, this work must be understood for the important way it marked a new era of contemporary Western human rights work. The challenges that emerged to counter-terrorism policies significantly highlighted the abuse of executive power, diminished judicial review, and stigmatization, profiling, criminalization of, and violence against Muslim communities around the world. In response to these challenges, however, voices within the human rights community expressed concerns that human rights advocacy to challenge the "War on Terror" neglected the experiences of women victims of terrorism. It is to this critique we now turn.

Gendered contests

Alongside criticisms about Eurocentricity, human rights discourse, doctrine, and work have long been criticized for focusing on, and being articulated predominantly through, male experiences with violence and inequalities, thus excluding women's myriad experiences of violence (MacKinnon 2007; Copelon 1994). This criticism can be seen to be at odds with the savagesvictims-saviors critique, which suggests human rights work focuses on women as victims. It may be a difference between legitimacy-lending motif and the nature of the work itself. But exploring the tension between these various important critiques of human rights discourses is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the criticism that human rights work tends to focus on male experiences applies equally to human rights challenges to the "War on Terror." For example, the advocacy by human rights groups has focused on the male targets of the "War on Terror," neglecting the impacts on the rights and realities of women. Much work remains to account for how counter-terror laws and policies have affected the lives of women worldwide (Huckerby and Fakih 2011; Akbar, Narula et al. 2011). That project of accounting seems particularly important given the "saving Muslim women" justification of the "War on Terror."

In this section we examine a particular strand of critique regarding the male-centeredness of human rights work, one that focuses on women victims of "Muslim fundamentalism." The discursive terrain of this critique is best represented by the controversy involving Gita Sahgal, the former head of Amnesty International's gender unit, and Karima Bennoune, a law professor who sat on the board of CCR and had previously served on the board of Amnesty International USA. We briefly detail the controversy as a backdrop to our engagement with their critique.

The controversy began in early 2010, when Gita Sahgal left Amnesty after publicly condemning the organization's decision to partner with British citizen Moazzam Begg, formerly detained at Guantánamo Bay,7 and the British human rights organization Cageprisoners in its campaign to close Guantánamo Bay. Sahgal was concerned that Begg was a misogynist "salafi jihadi" committed to the "Islamic Right" and the Taliban (Kerbaj 2010b; Sahgal 2010b; Guttenplan and Margaronis 2010). She publicized her criticism in the Sunday Times, arguing that Amnesty's work with the "salafi jihadi" Begg and the "jihadi" Cageprisoners "fundamentally damage[d] [Amnesty's] integrity and ... constitute[d] a threat to human rights" (Kerbaj 2010b, 2010a). A flurry of responses in Sahgal's favor spread on the Internet and in print media (Aaronovitch 2010; Gupta 2010b; Smith 2010; Editorial Comment 2010; Human Rights for All 2010; Hitchens 2010; Tax 2010b; Rushdie 2010; Kandiyoti 2010). Begg wrote a letter to the Sunday Times (2010b), then issued a longer statement responding to Sahgal and the larger set of issues her intervention reflected (2010a; see also Worthington 2010). The Sunday Times ran neither. After Sahgal resigned from Amnesty, an external review of Amnesty's relationship with Begg concluded that Amnesty did not perform "due diligence" regarding collaboration with Begg, but that even if it had, the relationship might not have been materially different (Gupta 2010a; Brittain 2010).

The Sahgal-Amnesty story coincided with headlines that the Obama Administration had placed Anwar Al-Aulaqi⁸ on Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and military "kill lists" (Priest 2010; Shane 2010; Cloud 2010; Entous 2010). Al-Aulaqi became the first US citizen approved by the executive for assassination without charge, trial, or conviction. After the reports emerged, Al-Aulaqi went into hiding, and the Yemeni government announced it would take measures to arrest and try him. Al-Aulaqi's father, Nasser Al-Aulaqi, retained CCR and the ACLU to challenge the US government's ability to place his son on the kill lists without process when he was in Yemen, outside the context of armed conflict.⁹

On 12 November 2010, CCR Board Member Karima Bennoune publicly condemned CCR's decision to represent Al-Aulaqi (Tran 2010). On grounds akin to those raised by Sahgal in her critique of Amnesty for partnering with Begg, Bennoune argued that in representing Al-Aulaqi, CCR undermined women's human rights (2010a; Sahgal 2010d; Women Living Under Muslim Laws 2010). CCR publicly defended its decision to file the suit (Quigley 2010; Tran 2010). CCR's decision drew support from journalist Victoria Brittain and Asim Qureshi of Cageprisoners (2010). On 7 December 2010, a US federal district court dismissed Al-Aulaqi's case on two grounds: that his father had no standing on which to bring the suit on his son's behalf, as Al-Aulaqi could come out of hiding to surrender himself to a US embassy in order to contest his placement on the kill list in court; and that the suit presented a nonjusticiable political question (Al-Aulaqi v. Obama 2010). In consultation with their client, CCR and ACLU did not appeal the ruling (Wittes 2011).

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Nine months later, on 30 September 2011, two CIA-operated unmanned predator drones launched the missiles that killed US citizens Anwar Al-Aulaqi and Samir Khan in Yemen (Savage 2011a). A few weeks later, on 14 October, another drone strike killed Al-Aulaqi's 16-year-old son, Abdulrahman, elsewhere in Yemen (Dilanian and Cloud 2011). To date, the United States has not made public the legal justification for the drone strike. 10 These were the second, third, and fourth high-profile assassinations carried out by the United States in 2011 outside the context of armed conflict. On 2 May 2011, American Special Forces killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan. The assassinations by drone reflected growing preference by the United States to kill, rather than detain, "insurgents," "militants," and "terrorists" by the unmanned, remote-controlled technology (DeYoung 2011; Woods 2011).

Our concern with Sahgal and Bennoune is not that they are engaged in critiques of human rights work challenging the "War on Terror," or that they are committed to articulating how women's experiences with violence and inequality often falls outside the frame of human rights work. To the extent their work starts in these places, we share their commitment to engaging the politics of human rights, its inclusions and exclusions, and how it translates into the lived realities of people around the world. Rather, we are concerned with the language and logic they leverage to articulate their critiques, which seem disturbingly proximate to the dominant discourse criminalizing Muslim identities and ideologies, and rendering invisible the state-sponsored violence suffered by Muslim men and women,

Both Sahgal and Bennoune criticize Amnesty, CCR, and the ACLU for their support of Begg and Al-Aulaqi, whom they characterize as misogynist men with "jihadist" leanings whose beliefs and conservative positions have the potential to harm women's human rights. Sahgal's argument is basic: Amnesty's work with Begg and Cageprisoners undermines its "integrity" as an organization that protects human rights (Sahgal and Tax 2011). She rests her argument on the allegation that Begg is a "salafi jihadi" associated with the Taliban. Sahgal's explanation of complex and variegated ideologies (Salafi Islam), histories (Taliban), and religious terms (jihad) is drawn from "experts" and a report entitled "Key Tendencies of the Islamic Right" by Awaaz: South Asia Watch, an organization she cofounded (2010c). Her concerns with Begg stem from tracking "salafi-jihadi groups [in Britain] that coalesce around bookshops and through connections in cyberspace and their strong links to armed groups operating in Pakistan" (ibid.: 3). In the context of this background, Sahgal articulates the most concrete allegation against Begg: the bookshop he ran prior to his move to Afghanistan sold books by Abdullah Azzam, reportedly a mentor to Osama bin Laden and cofounder of Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Reflective of the increasingly intense focus of the "War on Terror" on marking particular Muslim ideologies as criminal, Sahgal is not concerned with any crime that Begg has been charged with (to our knowledge, he has not been charged with any), or even any of his current activities (apart from his work with Amnesty). Rather, she focuses on the dangers his ideology presents. Sahgal's concerns with Amnesty's association with Begg congeal in a dislike for his views, which she sees as unacceptable for human rights advocates to hold. Sahgal argues that while Amnesty holds Begg out as a "perfect victim," he is nevertheless an imperfect human rights advocate from whom there must remain an "objective distance" (2010c: 2; Sahgal and Tax 2010). She notes, "[t]he issue is a fundamental one about the importance of the human rights movement maintaining an objective distance from groups and ideas that are committed to systematic discrimination and fundamentally undermine the universality of human rights" (2010d).

Ultimately for Sahgal, terms such as "salafi jihadi" and "salafi" seem to stand in for an entire set of arguments and political positions as if they are obvious markers—without need for verification—of bad, threatening Muslims. Indeed, she uses "salafi jihadi" (a term of fairly new vintage) and "salafi" quite freely and without any clear definition. She uses these terms to undermine Begg and Cageprisoners, resting on the larger ahistorical and decontextualized resonance of these terms in Western public discourse (Lauzière 2010; Euben and Zaman 2009). Sahgal portrays Begg singularly as a Taliban supporter who endorses jihad, and neglects any engagement with the work he has done in Afghanistan to set up girls' schools under Taliban rule, or his and Cageprisoners' work with families of men detained at Guantánamo. Similarly, in a rather decontextualized move she frames Begg's work in Bosnia as "a mindless 'jihadist' fantasy," rather than what he says was a response to the ethnic cleansing and mass rape of women (Begg 2010a). In her preoccupation with establishing Begg as a "bad Muslim" and an inappropriate human rights partner, she refuses to engage with details that would complicate her narrative, including his work responding to state violence to which Muslim men and women have been subject. She also amplifies his dangerousness as a Muslim man, and implicitly draws out her victimhood as a woman. For example, in an interview where she sat side by side with Asim Qureshi, and after she had already met Begg, Sahgal expressed "feeling profoundly unsafe" speaking with Begg and Qureshi, but was "willing to meet them" (BBC World Service 2010; Begg 2010a).

Sahgal says she opposes "the illegal detention and torture of Muslim men" at Guantánamo (2010d), but she is uncomfortable with Amnesty's collaboration with Begg and Cageprisoners. It is worth noting that Cageprisoners is the only human rights organization focused exclusively on advocacy for those detained in the "War on Terror" and their affected families, and it relies on former prisoners like Begg in carrying out this work. Sahgal writes that Amnesty's work with Cageprisoners as:

a major accolade and a global platform for what otherwise would have been an obscure outfit devoted to the promotion of those detainees and convicted prisoners from groups that are associated with Al-Qaeda and other exponents of the ideology that is known as salafi jihadism.

(2010c: 2; see also Bennoune 2010b: 681-86)

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In one fell swoop, then, Sahgal renders invisible Cageprisoners' human rights work, and frames the organization as one solely committed to promoting a frightening ideology. Equally troubling, she seems to condemn any and all partnership with former Guantánamo prisoners by human rights organizations, on the grounds that they are all "associated with Al-Qaeda and other exponents of the ideology that is known as salafi jihadism."

Separate and apart from how her language and logic is saturated in a troubling "War on Terror" discourse about the men at Guantánamo, this condemnation of partnership is troubling for at least three reasons. First, rights cannot be divorced from access to and capacity to enforce rights. The two are inextricably intertwined, especially because the Guantánamo question has always been partly about whether the men there have rights to have rights, to partake in the limited protections offered in a liberal society. Second, what emerges from Sahgal's position is a rather paradoxical move in which human rights organizations ought to protect Begg's human rights without allowing him to be actively involved in the process. In other words, the advocacy is possible only for those victims who are willing or are made to be silent, or for whom a particular discursive position can be crafted. Third, her logic reifies the human rights community as a place inhabited only by those with a particular set of values and imagined morality. In doing so, it constructs an elite and distant savior class in the human rights community that, in claiming to speak on behalf of universal principles, polices legitimate and illegitimate human rights partners. 11

Echoing Sahgal's position, Bennoune situates herself as an "international law professor of Muslim heritage" (2010a). She expresses concern at CCR's decision to represent Al-Aulaqi's "interests," stating that he is a "jihadist" and "not a detainee; he is still at liberty and able to gravely harm others by inciting and advocating murder" (Tran 2010). She argues that human rights advocates should "denounce" him rather than represent him, worrying that CCR and ACLU are "sanitising' Awlaki to western audiences" (Tran 2010; Bennoune 2010a). Similar to Sahgal, she articulates opposition to the US policy to which Al-Aulaqi was subject—in this case, extrajudicial assassination—but claims human rights groups should challenge the policy without "associating" with those targeted (Bennoune 2010a).

Bennoune is concerned with the threat Al-Aulaqi presents to human rights. She cites to his religious teachings and advocacy, including an article Al-Aulaqi authored in the al-Qaeda English-language magazine Inspire. In the article, he situates Western cultural assaults of the prophet Mohammad as a reflection of "deeply rooted historic hatred for Islam and Muslims," and calls for Muslims to "fight for," "instigate," "bomb," and "assassinate" to defend Mohammad's honor (2010). The article appears after a listing of individuals involved with various efforts, under an ominous header without a byline: "The Dust Will Never Settle." In addition to disclaiming human rights work on behalf of Al-Aulaqi, Bennoune advocates that he "should be brought to justice in accordance with international law for his own crimes against humanity" (Bennoune 2010a). Bennoune conveys her concern for the threat to women's

human rights by drawing on a dominant discourse in which Islam is considered fundamentally and uniquely incompatible with women's rights. Thus, her articulation of concern for the Oregon-based cartoonist Molly Norris (ibid)—who Al-Aulaqi mentions as the originator of the "Everyone Draw Mohammed Day" and appears on the list preceding his article—is enough to gesture to the already available rhetoric that is alarmed with Islam's treatment of women.

Although one might understand Sahgal's and Bennoune's interventions as distinct, we consider them analogous. Their critiques converge on a particularly dangerous point: they suggest that working to effectuate the rights of Begg and Al-Aulaqi, and others similarly situated, undermines human rights, and women's human rights in particular. They argue, in essence, that Begg and Al-Aulaqi are insufficiently embracing of liberal values, and stand for ideologies so repugnant as to bring into question whether human rights groups should partner with or represent these men. This effectively renders them each outside, or at least at the outskirts of, the protections of human rights. At times they seem to argue that to defend civil liberties vis-à-vis suspected terrorists is to actually defend terrorism. Moreover, they create a false dichotomy wherein one has to support either women's rights or the rights of men targeted by the "War on Terror." They fail to recognize the reality that these tensions are ever present in all human rights work; they cannot be ignored or bartered away, but must be engaged with head-on.

In making their arguments, Sahgal and Bennoune rely on reductive narrative frames of the "War on Terror." They take at face value the most dangerous forms of the allegations the United States levied against each Begg and Al-Aulagi (in the case of Begg in particular these are relatively insubstantial and obtuse). Instead, they rely on constant slippages that link Muslim political activities to terrorist activities and Muslim ideologies to violence. They equate the threat posed by individuals to the threat posed by the United States military and political complex. Their critiques dovetail with discourses justifying the "War on Terror," which make invisible and legitimate the inequalities and violence produced by the United States in Muslim countries and communities around the world. While they articulate opposition to the particular practices that directly targeted Begg and Al-Aulaqi—Guantánamo and targeted assassination—they nevertheless come remarkably close to discourses and logic that mark Begg and Al-Aulaqi, and by extension all "bad Muslims," as impossible human rights victims and inappropriate human rights partners. They render Begg, Cageprisoners, and Al-Aulaqi as credible threats to Western societies and women's human rights, and consequently deserving neither legal representation nor partnership or legitimacy in human rights work. Their vocabulary seems to serve the function of demarcating "us" and "them": those who are like us, and therefore members of the human community and deserving of rights, and those who are not, and therefore are not deserving of rights, protections, or our partnerships and engagement. Concretely, they add to the already great social costs that exist in working with stigmatized and targeted Muslim communities.

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In their desire to oppose Guantánamo and targeted assassination without collaboration or affiliation with those directly targeted by those policies, Sahgal and Bennoune promote a vision of human rights work where human rights advocates challenge abusive policies without speaking to, or instead speaking on behalf of, those subject to the abuses. They may argue that this cleavage is important only in the occasional circumstance, where the victimized subject is thought a terrorist, militant, or fundamentalist. But Sahgal and Bennoune are making their interventions in the context of "War on Terror" policies, where the innumerable targets are necessarily proclaimed by the state to be terrorists, militants, or fundamentalists. The fact of the targeting itself assumes the person is a nonconforming "bad Muslim" subject, and therefore an inappropriate human rights partner. Sahgal and Bennoune's interventions, then, seem to advise that human rights groups avoid consultation with targeted Muslims in a broad array of challenges to state counter-terrorism initiatives. In addition to all the questions of ethics and accountability such an approach raises, it seems particularly limiting where, as in the case of the "War on Terror," the policies in themselves draw their legitimacy from an obscuring of the human impacts. More recent efforts to challenge "War on Terror" policies have centralized the human casualties for precisely that reason (Akbar, et al. 2011). Removing from the picture those directly targeted would hollow out the human rights advocacy in its uphill battle to challenge the "War on Terror."

Furthermore, Sahgal's and Bennoune's eliding of the violence wrought by US counter-terrorism policies on Muslims (men and women) around the world frames this violence at best as unimportant, and at worst as legitimate. In reproducing human rights tropes that dehumanize Muslim men and women, they sanitize the role of the United States in Muslim societies and communities, and legitimize the larger project of the "War on Terror." Their denunciations of Begg and Al-Aulaqi form an important lynchpin of the discursive arc of their arguments, which conclude in an embrace of secular values that ultimately offer women protection. The last section of this chapter engages with this argument.

Critical intervention

Sahgal and Bennoune mobilize a particular secular feminist position that posits a secular imaginary in contrast with Muslim fundamentalism. It is articulated through a larger discursive arc that follows a specific trajectory. First, human rights organizations, such as Amnesty and CCR, should not collaborate with Begg and Al-Aulaqi because they are "bad Muslims." Second, "bad Muslims" are characterized by their "jihadist" leanings and their affiliation with "Muslim fundamentalism," which is tantamount to misogyny and violence against women. Therefore, Sahgal and Bennoune attribute "Muslim fundamentalism" and "bad Muslims" with responsibility for violence against women. Any form of collaboration with "Muslim

fundamentalists" then compromises women's human rights. Consequently, efforts to defend women's human rights become coterminous with efforts to critique misogynist "Muslim extremism." Thus, they finally argue that the protection of women's rights requires the defense of secular principles and mandates. Following this analytic arc, we offer critiques of this discursive logic and argue for more complex and contextual understanding of those in the crosshairs of empire.

In a rhetorical question, Meredith Tax, a US feminist author, distills one of the central concerns of the secular feminist position: "If the CCR becomes identified as defenders of Al-Awlaki, will women who are victims of salafijihadists feel they can trust you with their own cases?" (2010a). There are at least two significant problems with this question. First, her frame is misleading. CCR and ACLU were not "defending" Al-Aulaqi or his views. He was never charged with any crime against which they could defend him. CCR and ACLU were challenging the United States' right to engage in a policy of targeted assassination of one of its citizens. Second, she draws on the "good Muslim"/"bad Muslim" dichotomy, and projects that women—particularly Muslim women—will navigate complex subjectivities through the similar frames of reference. She does this by alleging that the victims of "salafijihadists" would be unable to trust organizations (in this case, CCR and the ACLU) that challenge the United States' intention to assassinate its own citizen, because the state's intended victim is a "bad Muslim." 12

Mahmood Mamdani has powerfully explained that in these dichotomous positions, "good Muslims are modern, secular, and Westernized, but bad Muslims are doctrinal, antimodern, and virulent" (2004: 24). "Good Muslims" do the work of generating important justification for imperial projects. The US imperial project needs different "accents" to "claim global validity . . . [I]t needs the support of native informers and comprador intellectuals with varying accents to their speech, their prose, and politics" (Dabashi 2011: 36; Maira 2009). In addition to aiding the imperial projects, the discursive terrain laid out by "good Muslims" also serves to author a narrative in which terms such as "Taliban," "jihad," and "terrorist" become part of an uncritical, freely used parlance for justifying the state's violence and intervention.

"Good Muslims," such as Asra Nomani, Irshad Manji, and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, mobilize a gendered-victimized "insider" status to provide credible access into the unfathomable world of the Muslim psyche, and to sanction violence and reprobation against the illiberalism and misogyny of Islam. Consequently, they are best positioned to denounce the crimes of their brethren and to articulate the violence targeted at Islam as legitimate and necessary. Manji weaves a narrative in which all that is free, liberal, and just is associated with "the West," while the opposed values are identified with Islam. Her ascent as a minor celebrity in the United States is based on her identity as a Muslim "refusenik" who rejects the "regressive" ways of Islam (Manji 2004). She posits Islam's regressive policies against "Western" modernity and her "feminist" and "queer" self in opposition to Islam. Similarly, Nomani presents

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herself as the "bad" Muslim's victimized "good" citizen, who is willing to be profiled because, as she says, "Profile me. Profile my family, because, in my eyes, we in the Muslim community have failed to police ourselves" (2010: 1, internal quotation marks omitted; 2012).

A word before we continue, on those who make claims of their "authentic" status within particular cultures. Knowledge gained from one's immersion in specific cultures and histories is significant, and may better equip us to discern meaning-making practices. But knowledge based on one's identity and experiences, as many within feminist theory have pointed out, is also partial, fragmentary, not linear, and, most importantly, not comprehensive (Mani 1990; Haraway 1998; Kaplan 1994; Mohanty 1988). It is contextual. The political and theoretical efficacy of a position of knowing is derived precisely by articulating its contingency. We must do the work it takes to "place" our analysis instead of deploying the god trick of speaking in absolutes. While Manji and others deploy "authenticity" to justify their racist claims, Sahgal and Bennoune too traffic in the currency of authenticity, as women of color with deep connections to the third world, but also as members, with long histories of work, of human rights communities.

While Sahgal and Bennoune do not advocate that Muslims should be racially profiled, they nevertheless traffic in a "good Muslim"/"bad Muslim" dichotomy in a way that legitimizes the discourse of dehumanization on which the profiling, detention, and assassination policies of the "War on Terror" are based. Adherents to particular Muslim ideologies-however basely understood-are considered so threatening that they renounce their right not to be assassinated or their ability to collaborate in human rights work. Thus, men such as Begg and Al-Aulaqi are not allowed legal representation to vindicate their rights of due process or space within public debate in which to participate. The logic brings into question the testimonies of the serious human rights abuses at Guantánamo because the person subject to the abuses and speaking about them allegedly supports the Taliban (Kerbaj 2010b; Sahgal 2010d). So is the credibility of an argument or testimony based on whether the person is a "good Muslim"? These discursive maneuvers serve not only to confine complex subjectivities of people into dyads, but also to limit and narrow what constitutes the domain of human rights and who gets to speak on its behalf.

Within Sahgal's and Bennoune's positions, "bad Muslims" are primarily identified by their misogynist illiberal views and by perpetuating violence, particularly against women. Their secular feminist position is centrally concerned with "victims" of "Muslim fundamentalism." Feminist scholarship has extensively explored the manner in which women disproportionately bear the adverse impacts of conservative factions of all religions (Burline 2004; Pellegrini and Jackobsen 2003; Najmabadi 2005; Bacchetta 2004; Basu 1995). But feminists have also noted that women's bodies and sexuality are often the first to be curtailed, enclosed, and brutalized—not only within the context of religious doctrines, but in other patriarchal orders and changing

political economic conditions (Ong 1997; Alexander 1994; Oza 2006; Toor 2011).

Sahgal and Bennoune deploy "Muslim fundamentalism" as if it was a phenomenon manifest in meaning, for which context, history, and specificity is unnecessary. In the logical universe from which they craft and borrow, "Muslim fundamentalism" appears primarily as a function of conservative beliefs held by men organized into state and non-state formations; by virtue of their beliefs and organization, they threaten liberal values. This accounting does not allow for heterogeneity within practices of Islam, or for political formations that draw from Islam or Muslim identity as a source of authority and legitimacy (Toor 2011; Lauzière 2010; Euben and Zaman 2009). It all but collapes "Muslim fundamentalism"—unqualified—into the *ipse dixit* enemy of liberalism.

Sahgal's and Bennoune's construction of women as victims of "Muslim fundamentalism" excludes both the possibility of men as victims, and the realities of violence and inequalities waged by forces apart from religious ones. 14 In this framework, women predominantly face the brunt of violence and are subject to its excesses, and violence is attributed only to local patriarchies. Curiously, in talking about Muslim women victims of Begg and Al-Aulaqi, Sahgal and Bennoune are altogether unclear on where these victims of concern are located. Do they reside in the local communities of which Begg and Al-Aulaqi are a part, or do they extend to the global community of women and/or Muslim women? This blurring is important, as it mirrors the anonymity of the victims in the savages—victims—saviors trope, and the obtuse nature of the threat of Islam in the "War on Terror" discourses; while it simultaneously enables human rights NGOs to act as the victims' voices, without any clear line of accountability.

While women do suffer the consequences of conservative ideologies, both religious and political, we are concerned with how Sahgal's and Bennoune's positions (and the savages-victims-saviors model) obscure complex realities in problematic ways. More often than not, victimhood is the frame through which Third World women are imagined—subject to, and victims of, their "cultures" (Kapur 2002a). While recognizing the enormous strides that international women's organizing has made to ensure recognition of women's rights as human rights, Ratna Kapur cautions that "an exclusive reliance on the victim subject to make claims for rights and for women's empowerment has some serious limitations" (2002b: 6). Kapur recognizes three problems in this narrative: first, that Third-World women are essentialized with a fixed set of attributes; second, that a deep cultural essentialism fuses culture and religion rendering them undifferentiated and ahistorical; and third, that framing Third World women as victims elicits an unproblematic narrative of rescue by Western state and non-state actors, undermining the agency and power of women and women's movements (ibid.).

The victimhood frame cleaves the discourse such that only women, and not men, are victims of "terror" and "fundamentalisms." Hinting at this skepticism

xander 1994; Oza 2006; Toor

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toward taking seriously rights abuses faced by Muslim men, Bennoune accuses the international human rights community of not taking "Muslim fundamentalism" seriously (2010b). She notes that while there have been extensive human rights violations against Guantánamo detainees:

characterizing all Guantánamo detainees only as "victims" is an oversimplification ... Just as we must consider the vital human rights concerns facing these detainees, including those who may be adherents of fundamentalist or jihadist movements, we must also consider the threats to human rights and international law some of them may themselves pose. Of course, one must be extremely careful of making unjustified assumptions about these individuals. On the other hand, it is clear that at least some of the remaining detainees are (or have become) committed salafi jihadists.

(ibid.: 678)

Bennoune cites only three individuals as "committed salafi jihadists" to support her claim: Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Abu Faraj al-Libi, and Ramzi Binalshibh, all held at Guantánamo and charged by the United States with being seniors in al-Qaeda or involved in organizing the attacks against the Twin Towers. Bennoune juxtaposes the "human rights concerns" faced by men held at Guantánamo with the "threat" some of them pose to "human rights and international law." In making this contrast, she suggests our concern with their human rights should be tempered, or that their detention is on the whole justified. Equally important, Bennoune's suggestion that the human rights community has cast the men at Guantánamo as helpless victims is decontextualized. To the contrary, the campaign for due process has faced an insurmountable mountain of public hostility for the detained men, and almost limitless deference by the courts to executive prerogative to hold the men without meaningful evidence or process.

In imagining women as the only victims, and as victims of "Muslim fundamentalism," Sahgal and Bennoune advance secularism as a bulwark against an expanding and dangerous "Muslim fundamentalism," and as panacea for its female victims. This argument serves as the conclusion of their position's discursive arc. They juxtapose women's equality and human rights against conservative religion, and Islam in particular. Indeed, in analyzing two cases regarding the right to wear "clothing ordained by Islamic beliefs" in European educational institutions, Bennoune has argued that courts rightly preserved secularism over women's rights to wear hijab or jilbab as a way to protect women's human rights (2007: 370). This secular feminist position endorses state interference in religious expression as a way to promote women's human rights.

Even putting aside that "secularism" itself is an opaque term in need of critical inquiry, secular politics does not guarantee women's rights or put an end to gender-based violence. Gender-based violence takes place even in countries with constitutionally mandated secular guarantees.

Bennoune and Sahgal emphasize that their concern does not lie just with "Muslim fundamentalism," but with all religious conservatism and extremism. But while there may be some understandable appeal to advocating for secularism, in the current moment, articulating secularism as a critique of "Muslim fundamentalism" requires significant contextualizing. Islam occupies a very different place in the global politico-economy than Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, or any other religion. In treating all religions as if they exist on the same political plane, the secular feminist position engages in an "error of equivalence" (Prashad 2011). 15 Even a cursory look at the major religions around the world reveals the dramatic differences in how they are understood, lived, justified, and targeted. Most other religions are not constantly required to justify their multidimensionality or their treatment of women and queers, as is Islam. Neither are the multiplicities of how they are lived collapsed into a set of coercive signifiers that stand in for the multidimensionality of belief (Mikdashi 2012). But Islam is read through a particular lens, one that refracts its differences as illegitimate, and the violence targeted at Muslims through the "War on Terror" as legitimate and necessary.

Jettisoning the frame of equivalence allows for a critical understanding of the ways in which particular politico-religious formations have been constituted by imperial ambitions. Unlike Hinduism, Christianity, or Judaism, the gunships of the empire are currently trained against Islam and Muslim communities in the name of "saving women" and countering terrorism. Any secularist project that does not take into account the structural implications of imperialism and power assumes that religious formations are separable from larger geopolitics and power formations. We are not making a linear argument that religions are a consequence of political economic forces. Rather, we are suggesting that any comprehensive and thorough understanding of the implications of the "place" of Islam in the contemporary moment needs to take seriously the dialectics with imperial ambitions.

Is it possible to generate a human rights, feminist position that takes an uncompromising anti-imperialist position? This requires understanding that imperial interferences in Muslim lands have long and bloody histories. Those histories are the rich contexts within which various expressions of Islam have found fertile ground, including those perceived by dominant Western public discourse as militant and fundamentalist (Ahmad 2008).

Conclusion

Our effort in this chapter has been to open up to critical inquiry gender and human rights discourses as they apply to Muslim subjects and "Muslim fundamentalism." The question of how human rights discourses relate in complex ways to Muslim subjects is essential now, as the road "to recapture the progressive and transformative terrain of human rights" must involve "the centering of excluded subjects, excluded zones and excluded histories" (Kapur 2006: 687).

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The position carved out by Sahgal and Bennoune is dangerous because of the way it excludes Begg, Al-Aulaqi, and anyone similarly situated from the protections of liberalism and human rights. The other real danger is their seeming insistence that human rights, particularly for women, can be achieved only through secular conditionality. Their position elides from critical scrutiny the manner in which political, economic, and imperial ambitions have had a significant role in structuring the realities through which vast numbers of people struggle. Feminist and human rights projects must provide space for multiplicity in lived experiences, and for the various community, family, political, ideological, and religion-based identifications that people around the world may choose. In the same way that a meaningful human rights project should account for the various structural forces that shape lived reality, forward-looking human rights and feminist visions must allow for plurality and difference. Lila Abu-Lughod advises:

the hard work involved in recognizing and respecting differences precisely as products of different histories, as expressions of different circumstances, and as manifestations of differently structured desires. We may want justice for women, but can we accept that there might be different ideas about justice and that different women might want, or choose, different futures from what we envision as best?

(2002:787)

A radical human rights project may be possible, but it must take seriously geography and responsibility, and allow for difference. By geography we mean that it matters from where a position is authored and toward whom. By responsibility we suggest that human rights work should have a rigorous and careful ethics. We must acknowledge that often the lack of "justice" and "freedom" over "there" is tied up with long and bloody histories of Western involvement—the various ways in which we might be implicated, through locations of geography or privilege. Contemporary justifications to re-engage those same lands may be a reconstitution of prior imperial ambitions. We must work to hold our own governments accountable. Moreover, whether working at home or abroad, we must centralize the experiences, movements, visions, and agencies of those suffering the human rights abuses and inequalities with which we are concerned.

Can we account for the full complexity of Muslim realities, marked as they are by the "War on Terror," the rise of religious conservatism worldwide (including in the United States), and the neoliberal state? Can we accept that the realities of Muslim women are tied up with the realities of Muslim men? That the realities of Muslim men are tied up with the realities of Muslim women? That Muslim realities are shaped, or at least touched by, the "War on Terror" and Western histories that precede it? That the "War on Terror" has had an incalculable human toll on Muslim men and women worldwide?

As primary targets of the "War on Terror," a project that has wide-reaching consequences for people worldwide, human rights and feminist movements must take seriously the lived realities of Muslim men and women. This requires an understanding of the role of the "War on Terror" in rendering Muslims more vulnerable to more violence and inequality, to more human rights abuses. It also requires partnering with Muslim communities and activists, including those directly targeted, in challenging the policies through which they are marked criminal, detained, and assassinated.

A more hopeful human rights project would address the complex realities of both our world and our individual subjectivities. A careful attention to complex contexts—our geography included—is not an automatic reneging on universal principles. How do we generate languages in which those imperial ambitions are held accountable, and our multiple visions and realities are honored? We must start with an articulation of the ways in which "there" is connected to "here."

Notes

1 We are deeply grateful for engagement with the ideas presented here from Ali Mir, Anthony Alessandrini, Arun Kundnani, Ashwini Rao, Cindy Soohoo, Cinnamon Carlarne, Darryl Li, Diala Shamas, Dina Mahnaz Siddiqi, Falguni Sheth, Janet Bauer, Jayne Huckerby, Jeanne Theoharis, Jennifer Gaboury, John Quigley, Leyla Mei, Madiha Tahir, Maya Mikdashi, Meg Satterthwaite, Nathan Freed Wessler, Petra Bartosiewicz, Ramzi Kassem, Rosalind Petchesky, Saadia Toor, Taymiya Zaman, Vijay Prashad, Zainab Akbar, Zayde Antrim, and Zohra Ahmed. We are indebted to the outstanding research assistance of Hannah Bloch-Wehba, the technical assistance provided by Mark Hylton, and incisive copy editing by Sarah Rutledge Gorman. Despite excellent suggestions and comments, all errors remain our own.

2 Not all Muslim women are deserving of being saved; wives of militants thought to be complicit with the crimes of their husbands are seen as justified subjects of targeted killing. For example, in the killing by drone strike of suspected Taliban militant Baitullah Mehsud and his wife in Pakistan, his wife was considered a legitimate or necessary casualty. We owe this point to Madiha Tahir and Saadia Toor.

A former Wall Street Journal reporter, Nomani was born in India in 1965 and came to the United States at age four. She covered the war from Pakistan after 9/11 for Salon.com, and was deeply affected by the kidnapping and death of her friend and colleague Daniel Pearl. Her book, Standing Alone: An American Woman's struggle for the soul of Islam, was extremely popular.

4 A journalist from Toronto, Canada, with roots in the South Asian diaspora, Manji's book, *The Trouble with Islam*, generated tremendous publicity and attention, as did her documentary film, *Faith Without Fear*.

5 Hirsi Ali is a Somalian—Dutch activist who garnered tremendous fame for her critical views on Islam. She is the author of several books, including the New York Times bestseller Infidel.

6 For cases, see, e.g., al-Maqaleh v. Gates 2010, Mohamed v. Jeppesen Dataplan 2010; Amnesty International USA v. C.I.A. 2010; El-Masri v. Tenet 2008; Boumediene v. Bush 2008; R (Binyam Mohamed) v. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs 2008; El-Masri v. U.S. 2007; American Civil Liberties Union v. Department of Defense (DoD) 2005; Rasul v. Bush 2004. ," a project that has wide-reaching n rights and feminist movements Muslim men and women. This the "War on Terror" in rendering æ and inequality, to more human with Muslim communities and in challenging the policies through and assassinated.

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history the New York wealth Secretary of 7 A dual British-Pakistani citizen, Begg grew up in England. In August 2001, Begg and his family moved to Afghanistan. After the US invasion of Afghanistan, they fled to Islamabad, Pakistan. On 31 January 2002, Pakistani police arrested. hooded, and cuffed Begg before he was taken to the US detention facility at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan. In February 2003, Begg was transferred to Guantánamo's Camp Delta. Begg spent almost two years at Guantánamo. Although no formal charges were ever brought against him, in November 2004 a Combatant Status Review Tribunal determined Begg was "properly classified as an enemy combatant." In January 2005, Begg was released to Britain. After his release, Begg became the spokesman for Cageprisoners, a UK-based human rights group focused on public education and addressing needs of Muslim men derained in the "War on Terror." Begg began working with Amnesty International in 2005. Amnesty partnered with Cageprisoners and Begg in its lobbying at Downing Street to close Guantánamo Bay, and on a tour encouraging European governments to accept Guantánamo detainees in need of repatriation (Begg 2006; Qureshi 2009; Newey 2006; Wheeler 2003; Wheeler 2002a, 2002b; Wolffe 2003; Hattenstone 2006; Ind 2006; PBS 2006; Rose 2004; "U.S. Sends Jailed Briton to Cuba" 2003; Cowan 2003; "U.S. Releases Terror Suspects" 2005; "Guantanamo four are released from custody without being charged" 2005; Sullivan 2005; "Around town: Ex-Guantanamo prisoner in city" 2006; Miller 2003; Affidavit of Solicitor Gareth Peirce 2004; Memorandum from Legal Advisor to Director 2004).

8 Born in 1971 in New Mexico, Anwar Al-Aulaqi grew up in Yemen, and then returned to the United States to study. Between 1994 and 2003, he served as imam at various US institutions. Post-9/11, Al-Aulaqi was lauded in the mainstream press as a moderate Muslim. The 9/11 Commission reported that in 1999 and 2000, the Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated Al-Aulaqi for connections to the charity Holy Land Foundation, but found insufficient information to support a criminal prosecution. Between 2003 and 2004, Al-Aulaqi moved to the United Kingdom, and then to Yemen, where he served as a lecturer at a university headed by a cleric designated by the United States and UN as a terrorist. The FBI interviewed Al-Aulaqi while he was imprisoned in Yemen for 18 months in 2006 and 2007. By 2008, the US Department of Homeland Security was publicly referring to Al-Aulaqi as a "radical." In 2009, after connections surfaced between Al-Aulaqi and Major Nidal Malik Hasan, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, and Faisal Shahzad, Al-Aulaqi began to receive sustained attention as a "radical." His online lectures—a large body of work explicating Islamic views on everything from weight loss to forgiveness—received a wide audience. More likely to have caught the attention of the United States were Al-Aulaqi's lectures challenging American imperialism through a religious vocabulary. Al-Aulaqi framed US military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan as American aggression against Muslims, had spoken about the dehumanization of Muslims by American policies, and had called on Muslims to conduct violent jihad against the United States. (BBC News 2011; Banda 2010; Complaint 2010b; Dodd 2010; Begg 2007; Johnston and Shane 2009; Raghavan 2009; Newton 2010; Johnsen 2010; Greenwald 2011).

9 On 16 July 2010, the US government added Al-Aulaqi to the Treasury Department's specially designated terrorists list, attaching criminal penalty to most any association with Al-Aulaqi, including the unlicensed provision of legal services. CCR and the ACLU petitioned the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) for license to bring suit on Al-Aulaqi's behalf. When OFAC did not grant the license, CCR filed suit in court challenging the constitutionality of the licensing scheme (see ACLU v. Geithner 2010). On 4 August 2010, OFAC granted the license (CCR 2010). On 30 August 2010, CCR and the ACLU filed suit against the President, CIA, and DoD, challenging Al-Aulaqi's placement on the CIA and military kill lists. The suit argued that under the US Constitution and international law, the United States was not permitted to unilaterally target Al-Aulaqi for death unless he posed specific imminent threat to life or physical safety, and no other means to stop him existed. The suit further sought standards the government uses to determine whether a US citizen can be targeted for death (Al-Aulaqi v. Obama 2010).

- 10 The New York Times reported that the memo "concluded that Mr. Awlaki could be legally killed," though it did not evaluate the evidence against him (Savage 2011b). The memo "considered possible obstacles" like the federal statute prohibiting Americans from murdering Americans abroad and the executive order banning assassinations "and rejected each in turn" (ibid.). The memo also rejected the relevance of Al-Aulagi's presence in Yemen, far away from the battlefield of Afghanistan, concluding he was participating in the "armed conflict" and that "the United States still had a right to use force to defend itself against him" (ibid.). On 5 March 2012, Attorney General Eric Holder defended the drone attack that killed Al-Aulaqi during a speech at Northwestern University (Holder 2012).
- 11 We owe these points to Arun Kundnani and Darryl Li (but see also Hortsch 2010).
- 12 We owe this point to Ali Mir.
- 13 We use this term in the manner in which Karima Bennoune uses it in her article debating these issues (2010b).
- 14 For elaboration of this position, see Secularism is a Women's Issue (n.d.). Bennoune does discuss shifting the human rights frame as one preoccupied with "victimhood as a status" rather than "victimization as an experience," but this analysis leads her to the paradoxical conclusion that Begg may not be qualified as a human rights advocate or partner (2010b: 677-86).
- 15 For Prashad, the problem of equivalence lies in equating the threat of conservative manifestations of Islam with that of imperial ambitions and other conservative religious ideologies, like Hindutva, that dovetail with those imperial ambitions. We make a different point here, one that is nevertheless part of this broader analytic.

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